



VALUATION OF MORAL INFORMATION BY JUVENILE DELINQUENTS: A PSYCHO- SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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DUAL MORALITY IN JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

Hardcore juvenile delinquents (JDs) inhabit a moral universe different from non-delinquent society, a universe in which preying is an integral part of a day's work (Bartollas, 1985; Glueck & Glueck, 1968; Matza, 1964; Strasburg, 1978). JDs view the world as 'dog eat dog' in which they continually need to guard against harmful intentions. At the same time they are under continuous criticism from non-delinquent society for behaving aggressively and for having harmful intentions.

Thus, JDs are constantly exposed to two opposing moral perspectives, one non-delinquent, the other deviant. The idea that the latter perspective is a reflection of the former is well-established in the sociological literature (e.g., Cohen, 1955). Following this view, JDs must incorporate a double moral perspective, their own and the non-delinquent one. This is because delinquents, who are outside the non-delinquent limits, continually validate their own morality against that of their majority-culture non-delinquent counterparts.

A working hypothesis can be formulated whereby whatever the spontaneous moral valuation of JDs, they seem to be capable of adopting the opposing perspective by demonstrating a non-delinquent mode of valuation. Assuming that the gut moral response of a delinquent adolescent is concrete and focuses on salient aspects of an anti-social act (i.e., damage), he may relate to motivational aspects of that same act (e.g., intentions) in cases when it is instrumental to do so or when led to identify with a non-delinquent moral perspective (which

presumably allocates substantive significance to intention as well as damage).

MEASUREMENT OF MORAL JUDGMENT

Attribution or assignment of blame has been the conventional means for the study of moral judgment. The main line of work has emphasized two variables, intent and damage, in both law and moral psychology, especially in the developmental context initiated by Piaget (1932/1965). Accordingly, these specifications were chosen as a basis for study here. One issue concerns the relative reliance of JDs on these two variables in making judgments about a harmful action. Existing studies do not generally address the issue of relative reliance on intent and damage in JDs' moral judgments. Work using Rest's *Defining Issues Test* has studied predelinquent and delinquent populations (e.g., McColgan et al., 1983; Rest, 1986), but this does not seem to relate to the intent-damage issue.

To pursue this issue, an information processing approach was adopted based on Anderson's (1981) theory of information integration. Applications of this theory to moral judgment via functional measurement (Anderson, 1982) have found considerable evidence for a fairly general moral algebra. Judgments about punishment, obligation, fairness, and other moral aspects of behavior have been shown to obey simple algebraic rules (e.g., Anderson & Armstrong, 1989; Farakas & Anderson, 1979; Leon, 1980; Ostrom, Werner, & Saks, 1978; Surber, 1977, 1982). Extensive work in this area has been conducted by Leon (1980, 1982, 1984), who found evidence for a quite general application of moral algebra in judgments of anti-social behavior in children.

Anderson (1991) proposes a conceptual framework for the study of blaming and avoiding blame. Blaming is a natural judgmental response to a breach of cultural or social conventions. It is thus suitable for empirical investigation of social predispositions, social interactions, and social motivation. A blame response is a reflection of the way common knowledge about prohibited acts is organized. The generalized blame schema,

$$\text{Blame} = \text{Culpa} \oplus \text{Consequences}, \quad (1)$$

indicates that blaming is a subjective integral of two pieces of moral evidence. One involves an observer's notion of a harmdoer's obliga-

tion to avoid doing harm. Another is the observer's estimation of the severity of the harm done. The integration operation symbolized by \oplus , appears to be averaging (Anderson & Armstrong, 1989; Hommers & Anderson, 1991; Leon, 1984; Surber, 1977, 1982). Intent to do harm and damage are sampled in this context as instances of culpability and consequences, respectively. Functional measurement (Anderson, 1982) is able to provide exact tests of the schema with full allowance for subjective values of intent and damage for the individual judge.

Aggressiveness is a central issue in JDs' culture, and thus judgment of aggressive acts may serve as an appropriate measure of their moral valuation. It is considered here a special case of blame assignment. In order to try to establish generality or to identify boundaries for the present findings, blame and aggressiveness schemas were operationalized in Experiments 1 and 2 of this study.

Moral schemas are inferred from responses to factorial combinations of intent and damage information. Following Anderson (1982, section 6.1.2), a moral index was computed for each subject, based on ratings of the entire stimulus set according to the following equation:

$$R_{ij} = SI_i / (SI_i + SD_j) \quad (2)$$

R_{ij} is the ratio between the effect of intent information (SI_i) and the sum of intent and damage (SD_j) information. Thus, R_{ij} represents the relative effect of intention ranges from 0 to 1. The higher the value, the greater the relative effect of intention. Changes in moral ratio are considered reflections of a shift in moral code.

INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION

Bartollas (1985) presents a history and typology of juvenile institutions, implicitly distinguishing between long-term residential settings such as jails, detention centers, cottages, and farms on the one hand and short-term shelter care and training schools on the other. He concludes that even the best of these facilities can lead to negative and often violent behavior. Although no doubt true in some sense, criminologists have not found a clear moral dividing line between delinquent and non-delinquent adolescents due to their institutional affiliation. An attempt to study adolescents from institutions with various educational or correctional orientations may allow for an operational means to identify some distinction between delinquents and non-delinquents.

In order to differentiate between delinquent and non-delinquent adolescents, both extremes of the related institutional spectrum were sampled. From the deviant end, 14- to 15-year-old JDs were sampled from a detention center in which practically everyone has a long recorded history of criminal violations. In addition, two groups of subjects of the same age were drawn from a vocational school for marginal delinquents and a regular junior high school, thus covering a range from most deviant to non-delinquent adolescents.

Non-delinquents are hypothesized to rely more heavily on intention than damage in their moral judgments. This is derived from a non-delinquent moral orientation typical of their main socialization agent, i.e., their high school. JDs can be viewed as concrete thinkers, relying more on the concrete and practical aspect of the relevant evidence, i.e., damage. Finally, in order to examine individual differences in moral valuation among adolescents, each of the three samples included violent and non-violent members. These distinctions are operationalized and tested in Experiments 1 and 2. Experiments 3 and 4 examine shifting from a damage-only schema to one involving intent as well in the judgment of JDs.

EXPERIMENT 1: JUDGMENT OF AGGRESSIVENESS AND BLAME

Method

Design

The subject was read a short narrative describing an attack by one boy on another. The narrative specified the degree of harm intended and the extent of harmful consequences as follows: "Imagine a situation in which one boy attacks another and (slightly, moderately, or severely) hurts him. In questioning these boys, it is concluded that the attacker had (slight, moderate, or strong) intentions to hurt the other boy."

Both intention and damage had three levels (specified in parentheses), and these were combined in a 3×3 factorial design to yield nine narratives. Subjects were asked to make the following judgments after each narrative: "To what extent can this behavior be labeled aggressive?" and "To what extent can the attacker be blamed for his behavior?" All nine stories were judged for each question, the two questions being posed in separate sessions conducted one week apart.

Subjects and Institutions

Subjects were recruited from three schools: (1) a maximum security institution for JDs with criminal records; (2) an open institute for marginally delinquent (MD) adolescents without criminal records, and (3) a regular high-school for non-delinquent adolescents (NA). All schools are public, government-supervised, and are located in the suburbs or towns surrounding Tel-Aviv. The teachers in charge in these institutions each selected a group of 20 boys from among the ninth and tenth graders. Half of the members of each group had records of having been involved in violent incidents at the institution or school. The other half were selected from among those without violent records and were matched for relevant parameters such as educational achievement by the teachers and counselors in their respective institutions.

Procedure

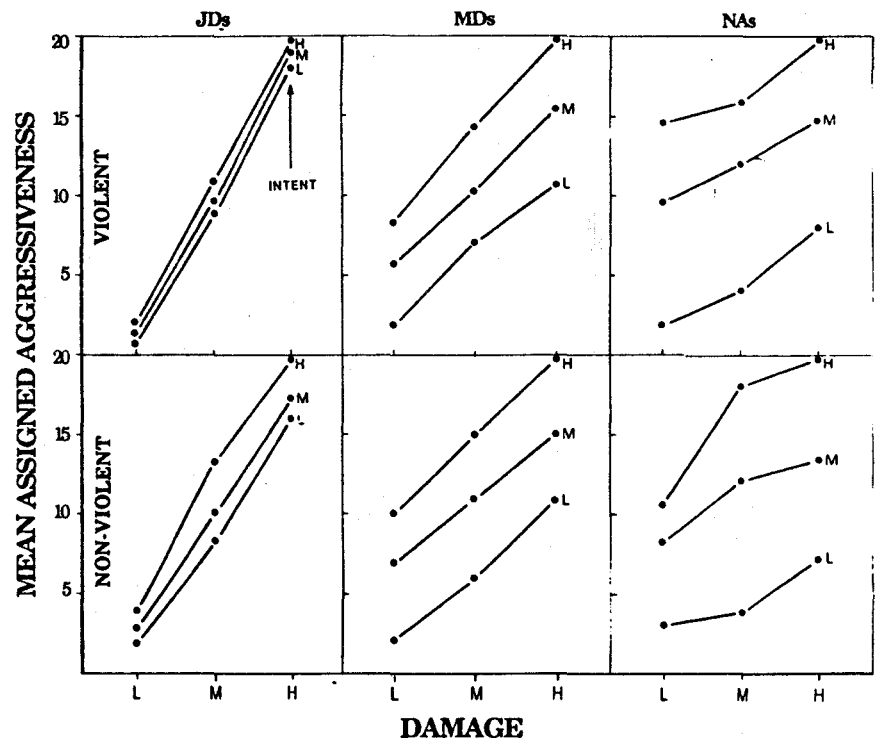
Each subject was tested individually. Following a period of instruction, calibration, and warming-up, the subject was orally presented with intent and damage information as a framework for construction of a complete incident and encouraged to generate a vivid image of how the episode developed. He was told to relate to the episode as if he himself had observed it. For each of the nine episodes included in the design, the subject was asked to reconstruct the critical information in his own words and then to build a story around that information based on his own experience regarding violent incidents among his age-wise cohorts.

The experimenter encouraged the subject to form as live a scenario as possible from the incidents to be judged, (which turned out to be very natural for the subjects). The experimenter was rigorously instructed to allow a rating response (on a 20-point scale) only in cases of successful application of this procedure. Expressions such as "That son-of-a-bitch" or "What a dirty thing to do (translated freely from idiomatic Hebrew)," directed towards the attacker, frequently accompanied subjects' story production. The entire procedure involving judgments of the nine narratives was replicated following a 10-minute break.

A week later a replication of the same experiment was conducted. This time, rather than judging aggressiveness, the subject was asked to assign blame to the harm-doer in each episode.

FIGURE 1.

Assigned aggressiveness as a function of information about intent and damage in JDs, MDs and NAs



Results and Discussion

Judgment of Aggressiveness

The most striking result is that the violent JDs judge aggressiveness almost entirely on the basis of the harmful consequences of the action described in the episode; the intention of the harm-doer has almost no effect.

The violent JDs' judgments are plotted in the upper left panel, where the near identity of the three curves signifies that the three

levels of intention made little difference. Damage information has large effects, which are clear in the upward slope of the curves. Although the intention to do harm was specified in the same explicit way as the damage, these violent JDs did not assign to it meaningful importance.

The effect of damage becomes gradually moderated among MDs and NAs (the middle and rightmost panels of Figure 1). At the same time, the curves become more distant from each other, signifying the increased importance assigned to intention.

A tendency for non-violent JDs to relate to intention is pointed to by the somewhat wider spacing of the curves in the lower leftmost panel. This tendency for somewhat greater reliance on intention among those with non-violent predispositions is apparent among MDs as well, as implied by the wider spacing between the curves in the lower middle panel as compared to the upper middle panel. This trend, however, is not evident in the judgments of the NA group.

The main concern of this study lies in the relative effect of the two pieces of moral evidence as expressed in the moral ratio, $\text{Intent}/(\text{Intent} + \text{Damage})$. The moral ratios are consistent with the conclusions from Figure 1. The value for the 10 violent JDs was .01, which indicates a negligible effect of intention. The value of .06 for the non-violent JDs is low, although greater than for the violent counterparts. The marginal delinquents showed greater preference for intention. The moral ratio value for the violent MDs (.29) is much greater than either group of JDs. Here, too, for the non-violent MD counterparts the effect of intention was greater (.47). Both violent and non-violent non-delinquent adolescents show meaningful preference for intention with moral ratios of .82 and .88, respectively. Only in this latter group did violent and non-violent subjects have similar moral ratios.

A comparison of the moral ratios across all three institutions reveals a much greater difference than between the violent and non-violent subjects within each institution. The mean moral ratios for JDs, MDs and NAs were .04, .38 and .85, respectively. The overall means for the violent subjects was .37 and for the non-violent subjects .47. Institution thus accounts for the greater portion of the between-conditions variance. Institutional affiliation was found to be highly significant, $F(2,54) = 1620.00$, $p < .01$, in a two-way ANOVA of the moral ratios. The violent-non-violent factor was also significant, $F(1,54) = 75.13$, $p < .01$. The commanding advantage in favor of institutional affiliation is consistent with the visual analysis regarding

the superiority of sociological reference over violent predisposition for this context.

Identification of integration rules is not essential in this context, since the focus is on relative effect of intent information. Nevertheless, the near parallel nature of the curves within the different panels in Figure 1 deserves mention due to its role in integration theory. Parallelism is indicative of a linear model, of the form given for the blame schema in Equation 1. Although some deviations from parallelism do appear in Figure 1, as in the lower right panel, this general pattern of parallelism will appear even more clearly in the subsequent experiments.

Judgment of Blame

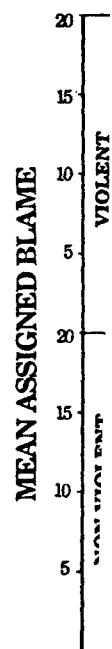
Judgments of blame by the same subjects follow the very same trend as judgments of aggressiveness. These are plotted in Figure 2 in the same format as Figure 1. The three curves in the upper leftmost panel of Figure 2 are nearly identical, signifying little difference between the three levels of intention.

There is again a steady trend across the social sub-groups from almost no effect in violent JDs to a greater effect of intention than damage in the non-delinquent subjects. Damage again had a greater effect in the JDs' judgments, as implied by the almost maximal upward slope of the curves in the two leftmost panels of Figure 2. Gradually less effect of damage is evident in the judgments of the marginal and non-delinquent adolescents. At the same time, NAs show a preference for intention, as implied from the increased distance between the curves. Parallelism is again visible in the four rightmost panels of Figure 2, excluding minor deviations.

The moral ratios mirror the visual impression from Figure 2. The effect of intention in the judgments of JDs was negligible; the effect for the non-violent adolescents among them was twice that of the violent group (.08 and .04, respectively). In contrast, the NAs, not showing a noticeable difference between non-violent and violent adolescents (.87 and .82), relied heavily on intention. The violent and non-violent MDs fell between these two groups, the latter showing a greater effect for intention (.31 and .44, respectively). A two-way ANOVA yielded a large main effect for institutional affiliation, $F(2,54) = 500.83$, and a relatively small main effect for predisposition, $F(1,54) = 15.82$ ($p < .01$), corroborating the findings from judgments of aggressiveness.

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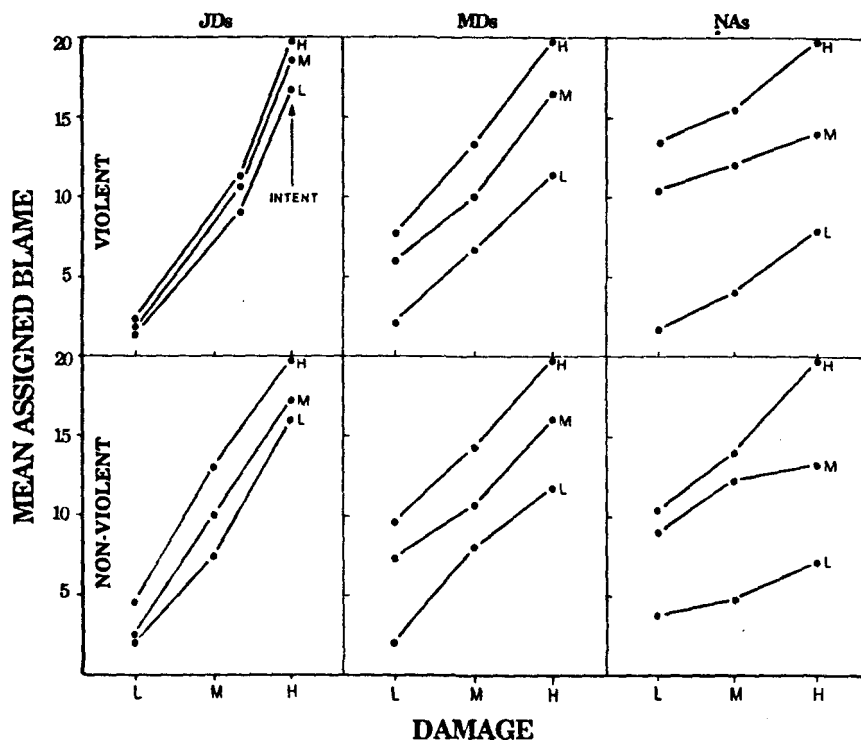


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FIGURE 2.

Assigned blame as a function of information about intent and damage in JDs, MDs and NAs



EXPERIMENT 2: SCHEMA OF REVERSE CAUSAL ORDER

Rationale and Method

A modification of the original design was implemented to further examine the findings showing sociological variation. This transformation yielded an experimental reverse of the traditional causal order between intent and assigned moral denigration (aggressiveness or blame), as follows:

$$\text{Intent} = \text{Blame (or Aggressiveness)} - \text{Damage.} \quad (3)$$

Reappearance of the findings of Experiment 1 under the inversed stimulus-response arrangement of Equation 1 above will imply support for the previous conclusions or will set limits on those conclusions.

The same 60 subjects from the same three educational institutions participated in this experiment two weeks after Experiment 1. The same subjects were used in order to study stability in the moral schema applied in judging anti-social behavior. The stimulus narrative for these experimental variations was as follows: "Imagine a situation in which one boy attacks another and (slightly, moderately, or severely) hurts him. In questioning these boys, it is concluded that the attacker behaved in a (slightly, moderately, or very) blameworthy/aggressive manner." As in the previous experiment, the subject was told to relate to the episodes as if he himself witnessed it and encouraged to generate vivid images of the incidents. He was asked: "How much harm did the attacker intend?"

The subject was first asked to rate intentions in light of evidence about aggressiveness and damage related to the behavior of the harm-doer. Then, a week later (a month following the original experiment), the same subjects were exposed to a variation of this procedure. This time information about blameworthiness replaced information about the harm-doer's aggressiveness. All other details of this procedure were the same as those in the two previous experiments.

Results and Discussion

The violent JDs made their judgments primarily on the basis of damage, intention playing only a minimal role. The role of intention gradually increased across social subgroups, superseding damage in the non-delinquent non-violent sub-group. In a left to right survey of Figure 3, this can be seen from the steep slope (damage) of the curves which abruptly shifts to a moderate slope and is accompanied by a simultaneously wider spacing (intention) between the curves. Parallelism, this time, is evident in all four relevant graphic patterns in Figure 3 (the rightmost), providing reaffirmation of the same trend noted in Figures 1 and 2. An ANOVA based on moral ratios showed a large main effect for institution, $F(2,54) = 853.31$, and a noticeably smaller effect for predisposition, $F(1,54) = 39.92$ ($p < .01$), implying once again that institutional affiliation is associated with a larger share of moral schema variance.

FIGURE 3.

Assigned intent as a function of information about aggressiveness and damage in JDs, MDs and NAs

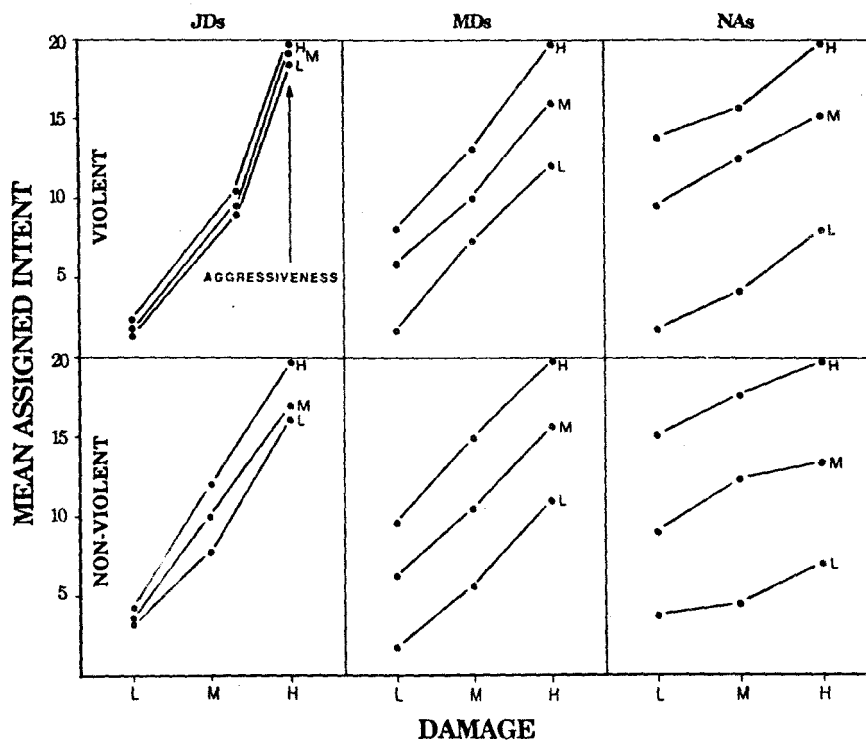
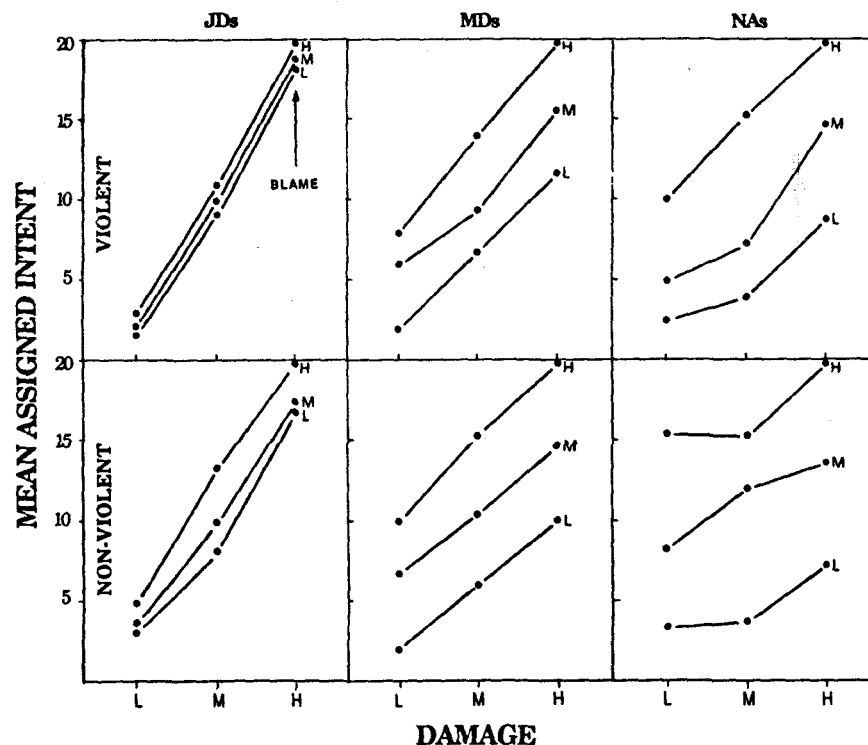


Figure 4 represents judgments of intention by the same subjects, this time exposed to a replication of the design involving reversed causal order. The only difference was that information about blame assigned to the harm-doer replaced information about aggressiveness. Figure 4 shows the same pattern of results as in previous modifications of the original design. This holds for the relative effect of intent as the primary focus of inquiry as well as for parallelism. An ANOVA of moral ratios again yielded effects for institution and predisposition, $F(2,52) = 874.38$, and $F(1,54) = 27.93$, respectively ($p < .01$).

The findings of Experiments 1 and 2 show considerable invariance in moral valuation across two judgmental perspectives (aggressive-

FIGURE 4.

Assigned intent as a function of information about blame and damage in JDs, MDs and NAs



ness and blame) as well as two variations of stimulus-response order. Table 1 summarizes the moral ratios across the four variations of the original design (in Experiments 1 and 2) to provide an overall look at the entire pool of data. The mean moral ratios in Table 1 indicate that there is a great deal of consistency in the gradual shift across the four experimental conditions. The differences in moral valuation between the two extremes of social affiliation ranges along the majority of the moral ratio scale, while the differences between violent and non-violent adolescents are relatively small. Reliance on intention by the JDs is almost nil; the mean moral ratios for the violent JDs ranges

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TABLE 1

Mean Moral Ratios for Judgments by Juvenile Delinquents (JDs), Marginal Delinquents (MDs) and Non-Delinquent Adolescents (NAs) in the Four Variations of Experiments 1 and 2

EXPERIMENTAL VARIATIONS BACKGROUND	EXPERIMENT 1				EXPERIMENT 2			
	I		II		I		II	
	Viol.	NV	Viol.	NV	Viol.	NV	Viol.	NV
JDs	0.01	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.01	0.05	0.02	0.06
MDs	0.29	0.47	0.31	0.44	0.27	0.45	0.31	0.47
NAs	0.81	0.82	0.82	0.87	0.80	0.87	0.81	0.86

between .01 and .04 in the different experimental variations, and it ranges between .05 and .08 for the non-violent JDs. Moral ratios range from .80 to .82 for the violent NAs and from .82 to .87 for the non-violent NAs. These scores range from .27 to .31 and from .44 to .47 for the violent and the non-violent MDs.

Schema homogeneity is most salient in the JD group in all experimental conditions. NAs, and MDs to an even greater extent, demonstrated considerably more between-subject variability with regard to the relative preference for intention. JDs' judgments were found thus far to rely heavily on damage information. The other, more non-delinquent, subjects demonstrated reliance on both pieces of moral evidence. The parallelism reflected in their judgments implies an average of intent and damage on the basis of simple weighting. These findings are comparable to Leon's (1980, 1982, 1984) results for moral judgments of young children and those of Wolf (1989) and Wolf, Moav and Silfen (1991) for non-delinquent adults. This invariance of integration functions across diverse populations in terms of age as well as socio-cultural background accentuates the uniqueness of the issue dealing with JDs' morality. The relative intra-group homogeneity among JDs, whether violent or non-violent, might serve as another indication that they have some special moral code which sets them apart from more non-delinquent adolescents. Due to the issue raised in the introduction regarding a double moral perspective, their 'moral

specialization' in ignoring intention seems to deserve further investigation.

EXPERIMENT 3: THE ROLE OF PREDISPOSITION INFORMATION IN JUDGMENTS OF BLAME

Rationale and Method

The main purpose of this experiment was to clarify the apparent tendency of the JDs to undervalue intention. The findings thus far point to some invariance in damage-only valuation by this group. This might be taken as indicative of a sociologically-based trend typical of a criminal sub-culture. However, JDs belong to a social group which is constantly designated as deviant in comparison to non-delinquents in their surroundings. Thus, unlike NAs, they are continually exposed to a double moral perspective—the non-delinquent one and their own, and are assumed to develop a dual moral schema. If this is the case, what the above findings show is only an overt, i.e. sociological, aspect of JDs' morality. A covert, non-delinquent, side of their morality may become observable when the stimulus material is designed to accentuate the deviant versus non-delinquent background of the participants in the episode to be judged. When both attacker and victim are described as violent, i.e. belonging to deviant culture, JDs' moral valuation is hypothesized to reflect similar reliance on damage information as found previously, where no explicit information about the predispositional nature of attacker and victim was primed. If, on the other hand, the participants are described as non-violent, imputation of normativity is expected, thus leading to reliance on intent as well as damage information. The nine stories used in Experiments 1 and 2 were adapted, then, by adding personal background information describing the attacker and the victim as being either violent or non-violent.

The stimulus narrative was as follows: "Imagine a situation in which one boy known to be (violent/non-violent) attacks another who is known to be (violent/non-violent) and (slightly, moderately, or severely) hurts him. In questioning these boys, it is concluded that the attacker had (slight, moderate, or strong) intentions to hurt the other boy."

As before, subjects related to the episodes as observers of real incidents and constructed live descriptions of the events. Subjects were asked to make the following judgment after each narrative: "To what

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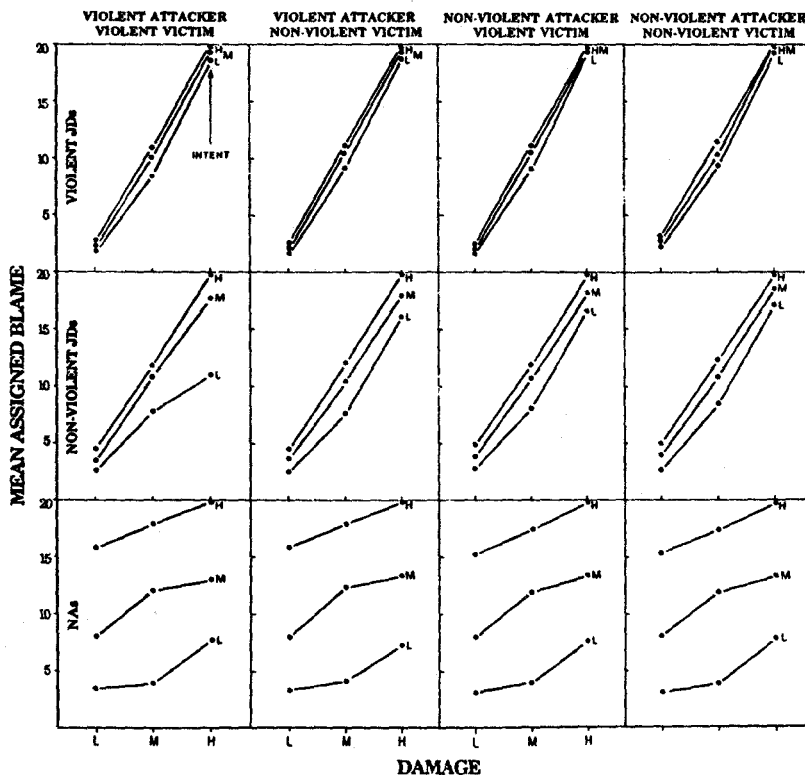
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MEAN ASSIGNED BLAME

extent can the attacker be blamed for his behavior?". This design involves manipulation of four sources of information, two of them related to moral evidence (intention and damage) and two related to violent predisposition of the actors in the episode.

The same 20 adolescent JDs from the maximum security school together with the 10 non-violent non-delinquent adolescents who participated in the previous experiments were tested in Experiment 3. Subjects were tested individually in a single session three months

FIGURE 5.

Assigned blame as a function of information about blame and damage and attacker/victim violent/non-violent predisposition in violent and non-violent JDs and non-violent NAs



after Experiment 1. This time only a single repetition of the entire procedure was conducted.

Results and Discussion

The personal background information has virtually no effect. The four columns in Figure 5 represent responses to different combinations of information concerning the personal background of the attacker and the victim. Each row thus presents the response of one subject group across the four information conditions.

The four graphic patterns in each of the three rows in Figure 5 are virtually identical: There is practically no effect of personal background information, with only one deviant point out of 108 in all of Figure 5. The moral ratios confirm this conclusion, as can be seen in Table 2. The three comparisons across experimental condition show that the relative reliance on intention is not influenced by information about personal background. Moral ratios for the violent JDs across the different experimental conditions are virtually zero. The values for the non-violent JDs range across 11/1000 of the scale, and those values for NAs cover a relatively narrow range as well (40/1000). Parallelism is again evident in the judgments of the non-delinquent adolescents (bottom panels), who relied on both pieces of information.

An ANOVA for two repeated measures (attacker and victim) and for an independent factor representing group shows that the only significant moral ratio difference relates to group, $F(2,27) = 4111.03$, $p < 0.01$. The two pieces of evidence about the personal background of

TABLE 2

Mean Moral Ratios for Four Personal Background Information Conditions in Judgments by Juvenile Delinquents (JDs) and Non-Delinquent Adolescents

Attacker: Victim:	Violent		Non-Violent	
	Violent	Non-violent	Violent	Non-violent
Violent JDs	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00
Non-violent JDs	0.04	0.06	0.00	0.01
Non-violent NAs	0.88	0.88	0.87	0.84

the attacker and the victim and all interaction models were found to be far from significance ($F < 1$). These findings provide additional support for the conclusions based on visual impression.

EXPERIMENT 4: JUDGMENTS FROM A NON-DELINQUENT PERSPECTIVE

Rationale and Method

Experiment 4 is a further attempt to stimulate reliance on intent information as well as damage by JDs. So far, the subjects were instructed to focus on the behavioral aspect of the anti-social act to be judged. JDs, however, may have learned to differentiate between judgment of social wrong-doing and assignment of a socially negative label to a protagonist. In our terms, there is a difference between judging aggressiveness of a given attacking act and labelling the attacker as aggressive.

It was assumed that JDs have two different moral schemas—their own and that of non-delinquents. They are socialized to play a role complementary to that of law-abiding citizens and to demonstrate 'appropriate' judgment in cases when they are acting within a non-delinquent social setting. Intention has a central portion of the moral schemas of a mature non-delinquent adult. Based on the assumption that JDs have a good grasp of non-delinquent schemas, it is hypothesized that while focusing on damage information in accounting for anti-social episodes they will meaningfully rely on evidence about intention as well.

Our attempt to prime use of non-delinquent schema by JDs in the moral judgment of anti-social behavior was two-pronged. One, indirect way was to shift the focus of judgment from the behavioral-circumstantial aspect of the episode to the labels people attach to the attacker. The other, direct way was to ask subjects to assume the perspective of their educational supervisors.

The indirect strategy is based on the assumption that a circumstantial or opportunistic mode characterizes the spontaneous judgmental approach of JDs. A request to label the harmdoer, rather than his behavior, is assumed to channel the JD subject's judgment toward what he might consider typical of the way non-delinquents judge juvenile delinquents. To capture this approach, subjects were asked to concentrate on aggressiveness as a personal attribute of the attacker. Their task was to assign a label to the attacker and to judge the extent to which he might be considered aggressive.

The other attempt at priming the use of non-delinquent schemas by

JDs was rather direct. JD subjects were instructed and encouraged to make their judgments from the perspective of their natural role counterparts, namely, their teachers and counselors.

As in all previous experiments, the experimenter instructed the subjects to adopt the perspective of a real observer. Subjects were the same 20 JDs as participated in the previous experiments. In the first modification, involving judgments of the aggressiveness of the attacker as a personal attribute, the entire sample of 20 JDs participated. The design and stimulus episodes were an exact replication of those used in Experiment 3. Another modification, involving judgment from a non-delinquent perspective, was an exact replication of the design of Experiment 1 and included only a complete factorial combination of intent and damage information. The judgmental task was to determine to what extent the subject's supervisor would assign blame to the attacker's behavior. This time only the 10 violent JDs participated, making judgments by taking the perspective of their supervisors. Both modifications were conducted two weeks after the previous experiment.

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Results and Discussion

Labeling the Attacker

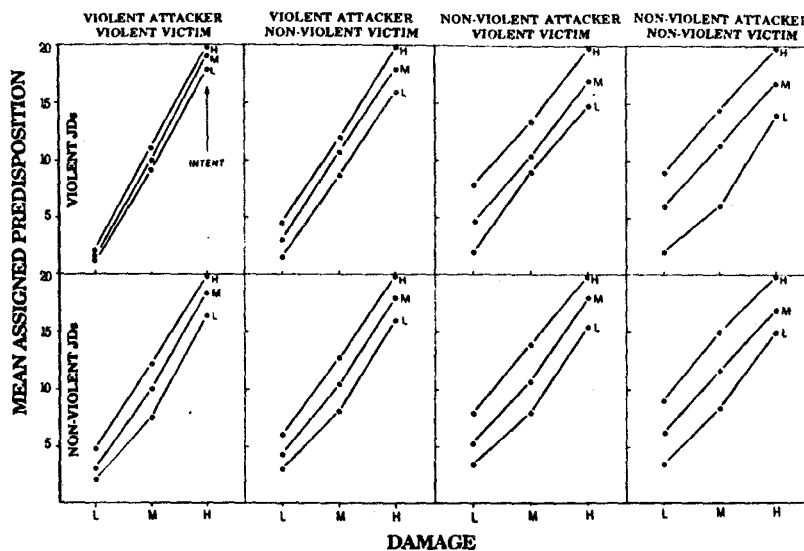
Violent JDs, although still relying more on damage information, for the first time in the present series of experiments related meaningfully to evidence about intentions. This trend for the labeling judgments can be seen in Figure 6.

The upper leftmost set of curves in Figure 6 is compacted and has a strong upward slope, as was the case for violent JDs in the three previous experiments. This implies strong reliance on damage information and negligible reference to intention. However, a left-to-right horizontal comparison among the different graphic structures reveals a gradually increasing separation between the curves along with a moderation of the slope, especially in the upper four panels which represent the responses of the violent JDs. This time, only when both attacker and victim were perceived by violent JDs as having an attribute (violence) similar to themselves, the previous tendency to devalue intention appeared again. This might imply that in the previous experiments violent predispositions of the actors were imputed by the JDs. The above trend appears in a somewhat moderated fashion in the judgments of non-violent JDs (lower panels), the modera-

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FIGURE 6.

Assigned aggressive predisposition as a function of information about blame and damage and attacker/victim as well as violent/non-violent predisposition in violent and non-violent JDs



tion lending support to our conclusion that violent JDs identified the actors as belonging to their own social group.

Breaking of the moral code of the JD subjects became possible only in the current experiment, when the scope of judgment shifted from the behavior of the attacker to the violent nature of his character. Table 3 reduces the above findings to moral ratios.

The most striking difference seen in Table 3 is in the moral ratios of the violent JDs. Their scores in the conditions where the attacker was described as violent were fairly low (.06 and .02 for non-violent and violent victims, respectively) while these scores were considerably higher where the attacker was described as non-violent (.22 and .15, respectively). A similar, yet more moderate, trend appears in the moral ratios of the non-violent JDs.

The above shift in moral ratios can be interpreted in light of our previous supposition with regard to social classification of the actors

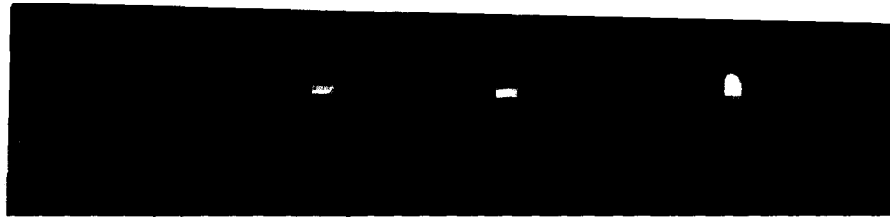


TABLE 3

Mean Moral Ratios for Four Personal Background Information Conditions in Judgments by Violent and Non-Violent Juvenile Delinquents

Attacker:	Violent		Non-Violent	
Victim:	Violent	Non-violent	Violent	Non-violent
Violent JDs	0.02	0.06	0.15	0.22
Non-violent JDs	0.05	0.08	0.12	0.21

by those who made the judgments. When the JD relates to actors with a non-delinquent (non-violent) attribute (see the rightmost cells of Table 2), he seems to apply a more norm-based schema involving meaningfully greater reliance on intent information, regardless of whether he himself is classified as violent or non-violent.

A 3-way ANOVA (Group X Attacker X Victim) yielded a three-way interaction, ($F(1,17) = 4.54, p < .05$). The largest portion of interactive variance lies in the two-way interactions of Group and Attacker, $F(1,18) = 22.21$, and Attacker X Victim, $F(1,18) = 19.30$ ($p < .01$). The remaining Group X Victim interaction was far from significance, $F(1,18) > 1$. This set of interactions implies that information regarding the attacker strongly contributed to shifts in the relative effect of intention, while information about victim mattered much less. This becomes evident in light of the noticeably large main effect for information about the attacker, $F = 734.07$, as compared to the main effect for victim information, $F = 56.04$ ($p < .01$). The main effect for Group was far from significance ($F < 1$).

Role Reversal

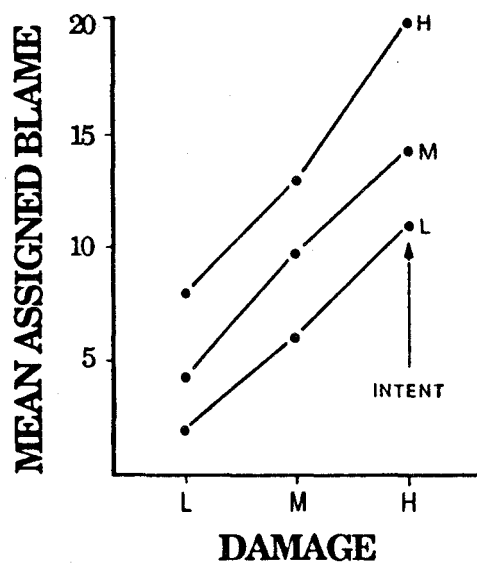
Another experimental attempt to prime a shift in valuation from damage to intention involved only the violent JDs. They were exposed to the same stimulus combinations used in Experiment 1, while being instructed to adopt a judgmental perspective appropriate to their educational supervisors. The results, which are depicted in Figure 7, show a shift to a schema based on both damage and intention. This is seen in the noticeably wide distance between the curves, even

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wider than the previous non-violent social episode of the shift and .04 in 1 In summ mented in 1 ences from lar to their and intenti iment was tors, prima judge. The intention. conditions notable, es

FIGURE 7.

Assigned blame as a function of information about intent and damage in violent JDs



wider than the distance of the curves in the most successful trials of the previous modification (rightmost panels of Figure 6), in which a non-violent attacker and a non-violent victim took part in the anti-social episode. The mean moral ratio here (.32) exemplifies the extent of the shift in the violent JDs' relative reliance on intention from .01 and .04 in Experiment 1.

In summary, the two modifications of social perspective implemented in this experiment successfully shifted the JDs' moral preferences from damage when judging actors with personal attributes similar to their own to a schema based on information about both damage and intention. The schema shift in the first modification of this experiment was found to be a function of the perceived distance of the actors, primarily the attacker, from the personal attributes of the JD judge. The greater this distance, the more the relative emphasis on intention. An even greater emphasis on intention was attained under conditions of reversed role perspective. In both cases the change was notable, especially given the invariance found in the previous experi-

ments under changing conditions of judgmental focus (aggressiveness and blame) and an inverse of the stimulus-response arrangement.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The findings show that moral judgment of violent episodes, operationalized in terms of information integration, can be shown to follow a psycho-sociological function. The function takes the form of compensatory changes in the relative reliance on intent and damage information in the judgment of aggressive acts. The more deviant the subject, the less relative emphasis he places on intention. The juvenile delinquent subjects, especially the violent ones, relied almost entirely on evidence about damage in judgments that focused on the behavioral-circumstantial aspect of physical attack, while the non-delinquent adolescents placed greater value on intent to do harm; the marginal delinquents fell in between. The results suggest that the way a young adolescent values moral evidence is related to his institutional affiliation, and to a lesser extent to his own interpersonal disposition.

Valuation differences between juvenile delinquents and adolescents with a rather non-delinquent, non-delinquent institutional affiliation were found to be invariant across the first three experiments. While these differences attained considerable generality, the nature of the psycho-sociological function is yet to be determined. A general issue which can be raised from our findings is whether adolescents' moral schemas can be predicted by the nature of their institutional affiliation.

In Experiments 1-3 JDs consistently based their judgments on damage information, refraining from assigning substantial value to intention. This finding might be regarded as support for the intuitive hypothesis that JDs are not only behaviorally but also morally deviant. A post-experimental, open-ended questionnaire was administered to five of the violent subjects from the JD sample and to five non-violent JDs. In relating to the perceived value of intent and damage, the responses (translated freely from the idiomatic Hebrew of JDs) are well-represented by the following sample of answers: "Damage is more important because this is what the judge sees." "If you steal, it doesn't matter whether you planned it; the main thing is that you stole." "If you do something and you're not caught, you're clean." "If somebody else did it and you take the rap, you pay." "The main thing is what you do, not what you think." "Even in the institution, you're guilty

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when caught red-handed and not for things you intended but didn't get caught for."

Generally, the content of the responses to the questionnaire indicates that JDs have a unique value system which differs from that of their non-delinquent counterparts. They seem to perceive themselves as different from adolescents not involved in crime, while those whom they confront (primarily law enforcement officials) are perceived as hostile.

Following a common sense (as well as Piagetian) conception, judgments based on consequences reflect a lack of social experience. The personal, social history of a juvenile delinquent is filled with episodes that a mature, non-delinquent person rarely experiences during his entire lifetime. In fact, JDs are a group of over-experienced adolescents. However, despite their 'rich' life experience, their judgmental schemas documented in Experiments 1-3 were like those expected of naive human beings who are assumed to relate only to the consequences of anti-social acts. This issue stresses the need for examination of how social or educational experience (or the lack thereof) may lead to certain preferences in moral valuation.

Experiment 4 manipulated judgmental perspective. The results present a problem for a conclusion which relates to behavior and judgments made by JDs as different expressions of the same moral predisposition. If, as implied by both the hard data and soft evidence, JDs are characterized by an exclusive set of values, then they are not expected to be able to adopt judgmental schemas typical of non-delinquent society. The facile shift of violent JDs to the rather non-delinquent schema (found in Experiment 4) suggests that their morality may be manifested in their ability to modify their relative reliance on intent/damage information. That trend seems to be primed by the social environment in which they find themselves and by their immediate perception of role expectations, and is deserving of further conceptual and empirical elaboration.

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