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THE LOSER SYNDROME IN JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

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THE LOSER SYNDROME IN JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquents are frequently described as being self-defeating. A related clinical feature of the delinquent is the expressed feeling of having few, if any, choices. In spite of the various rationalizations and projections which juvenile offenders verbalize regarding their offenses, they act as if they live in a world which is essentially oppressive, and as if their choices of alternative ways of acting are severely limited. A typical statement is as follows: "No matter what I do, I'm going to get into further trouble." They do not view themselves as the source of action; they seem to feel controlled by external determinants and see themselves as "born to lose."

While there is considerable clinical evidence pointing to a pattern which may be called the loser syndrome (Lampl-De Groot, 1949; Blos, 1965; Zilboorg, 1949; Halleck, 1967), little or no research has been done to describe the personality dimensions of this configuration. Halleck (1967) points out the need for such research:

Hopefully, other students of behavior may be able to present more refined and more useful descriptions of the criminal's perception of his world. Studies of the phenomenological world of the criminal may ultimately have great value in helping the criminologist formulate explanations as to why some people choose criminality . . . (p. 199, italics mine).

It is the purpose of this research to explore and to clarify the dimensions of what we shall identify as the loser syndrome.

The Perception of Personal Freedom

Recently, there has been an increasing interest in the extent to which individuals feel able to choose or to exercise control over their lives. The impetus for this interest may well stem from concern about the helping process. That is, the helping process must always be mediated through the individual's conception of himself as one who can choose to change.

Temerlin (1963) proposes that one defining feature of the self-actualized, well integrated individual is his ability to make decisions about his life. Such a person feels that he is the active agent of his own behavior and that the choices he makes in life are a function of his own wishes and are within his control. Conversely, neurotic, and to a much greater extent psychotic, individuals characterize themselves as living in a world which is determined from without. That is, events happen to them. They feel controlled by external forces. Their feeling of a freedom to choose occurs infrequently. Often such individuals report that something happened

to them not because they wanted it that way, or because they made it happen, but because some force over which they had little or no control was set in motion. It is critical to note, as with Temerlin, that this perception of one's situation has the effect of absolving the individual of responsibility.

It is clear that such a self-view obtains in the case of juvenile delinquents and adult criminals. Certainly, statements reflecting such a self-perception are frequently encountered by those working with delinquents: "I got into trouble by running around with the wrong crowd," or "I got caught because I wasn't very lucky."

In commenting on the issue of the perception of determinism, Lipton (1955) points out that a person experiences a feeling of being free as a result of normal ego development. Lipton views the experience of being determined as developmentally more primitive than the perception of freedom of will.

A similar differentiation, related to the perception of free choice, lies in the area of internal versus external control of reinforcement. This conceptual framework is an outgrowth of work by Julian Rotter. In a monograph, Rotter (1966) reports research on an objective test scale which attempts to measure the degree of internal-external control (I-E Scale) an individual feels he has regarding his life. The I-E concept deals with the extent to which an individual perceives events as being consequences of his own behavior,

and therefore under his control (Internal Control), as opposed to being unrelated to his behavior, and hence beyond his personal control (External Control). The latter implies that events are to a large extent determined by fate, luck, and other forms of magic.

There are, therefore, aspects of Rotter's work which are relevant to the present study on the loser syndrome in delinquents. That is, Rotter (1966) states that there is a clear-cut relationship between the feeling of internal control and the experience of success. He proposes that scores at the extremes of the internal-external continuum are probably related to maladjustment. Furthermore, more seriously disturbed individuals tend to perceive themselves as being externally controlled:

The internal subject with a history of failure must blame himself. In regard to the other end of the distribution, externality may act as an adequate defense against failure, but very high scores toward the external end may suggest, at least in our culture, a defensiveness related to significant maladjustment. (Rotter, 1966, p. 16).

Thus, we see various authorities, operating within quite different theoretical frameworks, noting the relationship between self-defeating behaviors and the experience of being helpless.

Historical Concepts of Losing

A review of the history of criminology reveals a predominately deterministic orientation. That is, most efforts

to describe criminality are organized around explicating the causes or antecedents of criminal behavior. There is, however, a noteworthy paucity of efforts to investigate systematically the phenomenal field of the offender.

Early attempts of the anthropological-biological investigators involved explaining criminality on the basis of certain inborn characteristics. For example, early researchers, such as Lombroso (1911), identified a distinct type, a born criminal, on the basis of certain malformations of the skeleton and skull.

Among the post-Lombrosian students of criminology, there have been many attempts to demonstrate the biological basis of criminality. Briefly, these authorities have assumed that criminals are born rather than made. For example, Lange (1929) focused upon the incidence of delinquency among twins. The rate of incarceration was higher for both members of a monozygotic pair, whereas the chances of only one member going to prison were greater in the case of the dizygotic pairs. Kretschmer (1921) and later Sheldon (1949) attempted to demonstrate that delinquent youth have certain characteristic body types. Sheldon developed a system using bodily measurements which he expressed in terms of a numerical rating scale called a somatotype. He found that delinquents tended to have a well proportioned and muscled body build (mesomorph). Further, Sheldon noted that distinct temperamental patterns were associated with a particular body type. For example the

mesomorph group is described as having a dynamic personality, being self-assertive, and interested in strenuous physical activity.

There are numerous criticisms of the constitutional approach to delinquency (Hall and Lindzey, 1957; Mannheim, 1965) which need not be reviewed here. However, it is worth noting that by operating in this framework investigators supported a literal concept of being born to lose. These writers, of course, were concerned with the causes of criminal behavior and were not attempting to solve the problems involved in helping the criminal to change.

Psychoanalysis and the Need to Lose

Psychoanalytic contributions to understanding criminal behavior are either directly or indirectly extensions of Freud's proposal that criminality is motivated by a sense of guilt. In 1916, Freud indicated that this sense of guilt was undifferentiated and as such could not be explained by the individual even to himself. In discussing the nature of such crimes as fraud and theft, Freud writes:

The analytic work then offered the surprising conclusion that such deeds are done precisely because they are forbidden, and because by carrying them out the doer enjoys a sense of guilt, of which he did not know the origin, and after he had committed a misdeed the oppression was mitigated. The sense of guilt was at least in some way accounted for (Freud, 1916, p. 179).

In referring to Freud's concept of the criminal from a sense of guilt, Zilboorg (1949) comments on the criminal's fatalistic need to lose:

Freud . . . pointed out the existence of individuals who seek (unconsciously) various manners of self-defeat, and who while seeking all that is good and right seem to get into various troubles as if with uncanny fatality . . . [p. 400].

We have two forces at work: first, in committing an offense the individual may anchor his sense of oppression and, as it were, make sense of it; secondly, if he is caught and punished he is freed in that he has paid for his crime. --

Relationship between Oppression and Anti-Social Behavior

Those involved in criminal anthropology have attempted to relate crime to certain inborn characteristics while personality theorists such as Freud have offered dynamic explanations. However, in order to consider how the delinquent's experience becomes related to his behavior, it is useful to posit an intervening variable, the self-concept. Indeed, one group of experimenters utilize the self-concept to explain why, in view of similar external conditions, some boys become delinquent and others do not. A series of recent studies relating delinquent behavior to self-image (Reckless, Dinitz and Kay, 1957; Dinitz, Reckless and Kay, 1958) have demonstrated that youngsters who saw themselves as "good boys" appeared to be more insulated against getting into trouble with the law even though they resided in a high delinquency area. Boys who had a poor self-concept were much more vulnerable to delinquent behavior.

The proposed loser syndrome is a way of describing and identifying the self-concept of delinquents. This study focuses upon the relationship between the delinquent's view of himself as a loser and his seeming need to persist in a pattern of behavior which is both overtly aggressive and self-defeating. The dynamics of the relationship between seeing oneself as a helpless victim and adopting aggressive, sometimes self-aggrandizing, behavior has been discussed by numerous theorists. Sullivan (1953) has proposed the term "Malevolent Transformation" which describes how individuals who have felt rejected and depressed during their lives turn this hate back on other people in the form of aggressive behavior.

Similarly, Friedlander (1949) points out the gross disturbance in the early home environment of delinquents particularly in the interruption of their relationship with parents. Among delinquent youngsters, she notes a high incidence of separation experiences along with inconsistent discipline do not allow the child to develop sufficient control over his instinctual urges. In turn, he does not learn to adequately test reality.

Blos (1965) and Eissler (1949) comment upon the apparent position of omnipotence on the delinquent adolescent. Blos feels that the onnipotence so frequently observed among delinquents is in reality a mask covering up feelings of dependency and helplessness. As such, the delinquent's acting

out behavior represents a need to constantly prove to himself, that the environment does not indeed have any power over him. Related to this, Eissler (1949) notes that the delinquent acts as if magic is central to his manipulation of the world. In this context, aggressive, acting out behavior is viewed as a means of restoring an inflated feeling of omnipotence. Such a maneuver then serves as a defense against depression, panic, and weakened ties with reality. This position is highly precarious; thus, instead of enhancing feelings of security, the sense of being externally controlled is probably increased.

There is some empirical research to support this. Eron, Walder, Toigo, and Lefkowitz (1963) and Grygier (1954) have demonstrated that the degree of oppression or cruelty experienced is related to the intensity of subsequent aggressive behavior. For instance, Eron et al. (1963) have shown that children who were rated by peers as most aggressive in a classroom situation were found to have been subjected to the highest incidence of cruel punishment by parents. Grygier (1954) states that there is a relationship between oppression, the feeling of helplessness, and acting out behavior. In this research, the author studied two matched groups of displaced Polish subjects who had experienced varying degrees of oppression under the Nazi regime. One was a group which subsequently became delinquent; the other was a non-delinquent group. Using projective tests as a measure of personality (Rosenzweig Picture-Frustration Study and Thematic Apperception Test),

Grygier found that the delinquent group (which had experienced the greatest degree of oppression in Nazi concentration camps) tended to possess certain common personality characteristics.

Because Grygier's study has relevance for this research, it will be described in more detail. The delinquent group was matched with the non-delinquents on a number of variables such as intelligence and social class. They differed considerably in the extent to which they had experienced oppression. Grygier found that the delinquents perceived the world as far more frustrating, and their aggression was directed outward at the frustrating individual or situation. He further showed that the delinquent group acted in an aggressive manner, but fantasized themselves as being the victim. That is, they felt rejected, and were much more pessimistic about the world than the non-delinquents. Grygier implies that the delinquent group experienced themselves as being far more limited in their perception of freedom and choice. In evaluating the differences in the T.A.T. data he states:

The difference between delinquents and non-delinquents as measured by the T.A.T. seem to be even more revealing . . . the main characteristic of the delinquent population as opposed to the non-delinquent is that their whole perception appears to be coloured by a feeling of the overwhelming power of an inimical press (Grygier, 1954, p. 207).

A further, quite striking finding of this study was that those who had experienced the severest forms of oppression in the concentration camps proved to have a subsequent delinquency

rate which was 45 times that of the overall displaced persons group which had been exposed to a less intensive degree of oppressive experience.

An Integrated View of Delinquent Behavior

In a recent book, Halleck (1967) strives to present an integrated and comprehensive view of criminal and delinquent behavior. His presentation is organized around the offender's perception of himself in the world. Further, Halleck specifically takes account of the experience of oppression, the related feeling of helplessness, and the precipitation of aggressive anti-social behavior. Basically, Halleck views crime as an adaptive mechanism which is "chosen" in the face of a feeling of helplessness when other choices appear to be or are in reality limited.

Oppression is defined as the individual's experience of extreme stress in an interpersonal situation:

. . . when others attempt to arbitrarily to control, deprive or abuse him . . . In this context oppression implies neglect, selfishness or malevolence on the part of others (Halleck, 1967, p. 67).

Two varieties of oppression are distinguished: that which is real, or objectively measurable; and that which is imagined, or perceived with no apparent source in the objective world. The first category includes social and interpersonal stress which may or may not be direct and recognized. As an example of indirect and unrecognized oppression Halleck cites the case of the child who is subtly rejected by parents in spite of the

fact that they constantly verbalize their love and affection for him. The second form of oppression, which indeed has no objective source in reality, include misunderstood oppression, self-inflicted oppression, and oppression which is projected onto others. However, irrespective of the source of the oppression--whether rooted in the external world or within the individual--the subjective experience is typically one of "helplessness" or "powerlessness." The oppressed individual attempts to diminish his subjective feeling of helplessness and to return to a less painful state of homeostatic equilibrium.

Halleck suggests four general categories of adaption which can be chosen to combat this feeling of helplessness. The first two areas refer to behaviors which are within the law, socially acceptable, and considered normal. The individual may accept the feeling of oppression and helplessness and abide by the rules of society (Conformity) or he may attempt to alter the environment in a legal manner (Activism). The other two categories, which are directly pertinent to this research, are classified under Mental Illness and Criminality. It is significant to note that Halleck distinguishes between two forms of mental illness. The first is what is traditionally considered to be neurosis and/or psychosis. This adaption is defined as

. . . an active but indirect effort to change the environment by the communication of suffering. This

adaption requires following specific rules which society lays down for illness behavior (Halleck, 1967, p. 81).

In contrast to this, the second subdivision of mental illness Halleck (1967) defines as "psychotic behavior which involves breaking the rules of society" (p. 81). This adaption includes criminal behavior in that the rules of society are violated, yet resembles mental illness because of the unreasonableness of the behavior. The fourth adaption is labeled criminality and is based on an attempt to change the environment through illegal means.

The distinction between "psychotic behavior which involves breaking the rules of society" and criminality is crucial. In another context, Jenkins (1955) makes the differentiation between adaptive and maladaptive delinquency. He clearly considers the latter to be a form of emotional disturbance in that such maladaptive behavior is not in the pursuit of a goal, but is self-destructive and is often the result of a gross frustration of the individual's primary needs. This is contrasted with the successful criminal career which Jenkins views as an adaptive one. Such individuals could not be considered emotionally disturbed but are products of social disorganization.

Both Halleck and Jenkins are suggesting that there are two general types of offenders: those who are emotionally disturbed and those who might be considered relatively normal from a clinical point of view. Very probably, the maladaptive

(mentally ill in Halleck's terms) delinquent feels more oppressed and is less well integrated than the normal or adaptive delinquent. The relationship between repetitive self-defeating behavior and internal confusion has been suggested in a recent study by Thorp and McCune (1967). They demonstrated that recidivists in a training school population tended to produce a greater elevation on the Schizophrenic Scale of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory than do non-recidivists.

Halleck recognizes that the question of what factors determine which adaptational mechanisms an individual will choose is a highly complex one. The probability of choosing crime as an adaption is more likely when gratifications are not available in other adaptations or when other modes of behaving are actively restricted by other people. He goes on to state that under conditions of oppression, criminal behavior may indeed have an advantage over other adaptations. For example, when an individual is involved in motoric acting out, he feels less helpless:

. . . because the criminal is more "the master of his own fate," he is less likely to feel himself directed by strange and uncontrollable forces (Halleck, 1967, p. 76).

The more the offender's behavior is a response to severe oppressive stress, the more irrational is his criminality likely to be. Criminal behavior will seem to be more unreasonable if the oppression itself is experienced as indirect and

unreasonable. Under conditions of severe or unrealistic oppression, criminal behavior represents an intense struggle for personal control. As such, the criminal act becomes maladaptive because the main goal is one of relieving psychological tension.

Anecdotal Observations of the Loser Syndrome

In addition to the references cited which suggest the presence of a Loser Syndrome, there is also anecdotal evidence. Many offenders view themselves as individuals who are destined to failure and defeat in life. Indeed, "Born to Lose" tattooed on the body, is exhibited as a trademark of such a self-concept. Another less frequently observed tattoo is "13½." This is a condensation of "12 on the jury, a judge, and half a chance." Perhaps a better known motto of the same order is "Hard luck" which was tattooed on the notorious Billy Cook.

Institutionalized delinquents may be observed to participate in complex rituals which involve a belief in magic. The dynamics underlying these ritualistic games typically involve, "who is going to make who do what." That is, magical devices are the means by which some boys are able to exercise control over others. For example, those boys who have more status either by virtue of their greater length of stay in the institution or by their greater number of commitments, are able to exercise control over the boy having lesser status by "putting him in a fix." This is usually done with some gesture or magic slang word. Such an act appears to be

analogous to voodoo magic. In this case, the victim can remove the curse only with the aid of a boy who has sufficient status to do so. Those boys who have become most identified with these games appear to have the poorest prognosis.

CHAPTER II

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study will explore the loser syndrome as a personality configuration, aspects of which exist on a continuum. The loser syndrome has been characterized as including a view of the world as an oppressive place which does not provide adequate gratification. The loser experiences a profound sense of helplessness, internal turmoil, and more closely resembles the so-called psychotic offender. The loser subscribes to an underlying belief that his life is determined by such factors as chance, fate, and luck. Underlying his perception of himself is the assumption of a destiny to fail. The loser has difficulty in testing reality; further, he may be unable to control his aggressive impulses.

The above may be stated in the form of three general propositions:

1. A group of adolescents who have been identified as losers will be severely limited in the ability to organize and control their experiences. Ego functions will be poorly integrated.

2. A group of adolescents who have been identified as losers will appear to have the subjective feeling of

helplessness. They will not conceive of themselves as the active agents of their own behavior.

3. A group of adolescents who have been identified as losers will respond to frustration in an extrapunitive manner. They will behave as if there is no alternative but to direct aggression immediately onto the perceived source of frustration.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Setting of the Study

This study was conducted at the Helena State School which is a treatment oriented institution for boys between the ages of 10 to 16 years. Each of these youngsters has been declared delinquent by the courts of Oklahoma. Offenses range from truancy to car theft and burglary and more infrequently include charges such as rape and murder. The average population of the school is 150 boys. This number varies considerably, as the institution has no control over its intake. The average length of stay for a boy in the institution is 7.3 months.

During the past eight years, there has been an increasing emphasis within the school upon rehabilitative and therapeutic goals. A large interdisciplinary staff comprised of psychologists, social workers, educators, and cottage supervisory personnel function as a team under the supervision of the superintendent and his assistant.

Within the past year, a number of major administrative changes have taken place. These have been organized around two principles. First, in order for a boy to change, he needs

ample opportunity for involvement and interaction with both peers and adult staff members. Second, change is facilitated when a boy is allowed to be a participant in the decision making process as it pertains to him. At the present time, each of the eight cottage units housing a maximum of 24 boys is administered by a cottage committee. This committee, made up of a co-ordinator, social worker, and cottage supervisor, is responsible for the majority of decisions regarding a boy's stay at the school. For example, in frequent contacts with the boy, the cottage committee assumes responsibility for matters such as planning his program while in the institution, dealing with disciplinary problems, and making recommendations to the superintendent for his release. At a cottage level, the present structure allows for the committee to get to know a boy quite well and to evaluate his behavior. The committee sees the boy in a variety of individual and group contacts both formal and informal.

Selection of Subjects

Two groups of boys were established: a group identified losers and a group identified as winners. Because of the close daily contact the boys in each cottage have with each other, as well as their contact with the cottage committee, it was decided that the cottage provided a natural unit from which subjects might be selected. Boys were placed in the two groups on the basis of (1) peer and (2) cottage committee nominations.

Peer group rating forms (See Appendix A) were simultaneously administered to all boys in the institution. Each boy worked individually in his room to avoid discussion of ratings with other boys. These forms were administered by a staff member, usually the social worker.

The peer group rating form presented a paragraph which described a theoretical boy named Pete. The paragraph was constructed to make the description congruent with the conception of the loser presented earlier. Below the model paragraph, a list was presented of all of the names of the boys living in the rater's particular cottage. That is, although the format was the same on all of the rating forms, a given boy rated only peers living in his own cottage. The instructions required that the subject first read the model paragraph and from the list of names (1) circle the names of the five boys who were most like Pete and (2) underline the names of the five boys who were least like Pete. Subjects were also asked to rank order the list of names assigning the number 1 to the boy who was most like Pete, 2 to the boy who was next most like him etc., until all of the boys in the cottage were rated.

The rank order numbering was used as a check on the boys' understanding of the task. For example, if those boys who were nominated as "most like Pete" did not receive the lowest numbers - i.e. one through five, or those chosen as "least like Pete" did not receive the highest numbers, the

instrument was individually readministered and explained by the investigator. Of the total population of 136 subjects who filled out the rating form, 32 or 24% fell into this category.

Boys in the youngest age cottage (average age 13 years) were eliminated from the study because of a lack of agreement among their peer group ratings. At the institution, this group is often characterized as being more immature, impulsive, and having a shorter attention span than the older boys. It may have been that factors such as these intruded upon their ability to deal appropriately with the task of peer nomination.

Ratings were obtained from the three members of the cottage committee who were administered the same form which the boys had completed.

All rating sheets from both cottage peers and cottage staff were tabulated for each cottage in terms of a frequency count of the number of votes each boy received as being most and least like the theoretical boy described. In order for a boy to qualify as a subject in the study, two criteria were established. First, each subject was among those boys who received the five highest number of votes as either being most or least like the boy described in the model paragraph. Second, each subject was also among those boys who received a minimum of two of the possible three nominations from his cottage committee. Those boys who were nominated as being

most like Pete were placed in the Loser Group and those boys who were picked as least like Pete were defined as the least like the loser or Winner Group.

Both groups of boys were matched for race and intelligence in order to control for these variables; Negro and Indian boys were thus eliminated. All boys were given a paper and pencil intelligence test, the California Mental Maturity Test. The groups were equated for intellectual ability. The loser group had an overall (combined language and non-language) mean I.Q. of 90.3, and the winner group a mean I.Q. of 96.0.

The average age of the loser group was 15.1 years as compared with 15.4 of the winners.

There were no significant differences between the two groups on the above variables. When the final screening was completed, 14 boys remained in each group.

TABLE 1

Intelligence Level and Age of the
Loser and Winner Groups

Group	Mean I.Q.	Mean Age
Losers (N=14)	90.3	15.1
Winners (N=14)	96.0	15.4

The Testing Phase

A battery of four tests were individually administered to each of the 28 boys. Two testing sessions averaging

approximately 45 minutes each were used. The total testing time was about 1½ hours.

The battery consisted of six selected cards of the Symonds Picture Story Test, the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank (High School Form), a short "life story" and the adult form of the Rosenzweig Picture Frustration Study. A number of factors, both practical as well as clinical, determined the choice of these tests. Each of these instruments is relatively brief to administer, tends to be interesting, and is easily comprehended by adolescents. These factors are especially important when one considers that delinquents are typically characterized as having a short attention span and low tolerance for frustration. This battery permits personality description from a number of points of view, and taps fantasies as well as expressions of wishes, impulses, and anxieties. Furthermore, certain of these instruments would provide sufficient data to allow skilled and experienced judges to evaluate broad personality dimensions. A brief description of each of these tests follows:

Symonds Picture Story Test: This test is a projective technique comparable to the Thematic Apperception Test. The stimulus pictures are likely to evoke fantasies from adolescents (Symonds, 1949). The test is comprised of 20 ambiguous pictures depicting adolescents. The subject is asked to make up a story about the picture involving what is happening, what has preceeded the action, and what the outcome will be. The

underlying rationale of the test is that by projecting himself into the story which he tells, the subject will reveal his own latent wishes, impulses, and anxieties.

For the purpose of this study, six of the picture story cards were selected in order to provide a sample of fantasy material across a number of areas including attitudes toward parental figures, aggression, isolation, and punishment.

Cards A1, A4, A7, B6, and B9 were presented to each subject. The instructions were designed to evoke responses related to the subject's ability to deal with conflict (See Appendix B). That is, the directions were modified to convey to the subject that the figures in each picture were experiencing a problem and that he was to organize his story around this problem. All testing was conducted by the investigator. Stories were tape recorded and later transcribed verbatim. All boys were told that this testing would be used for research purposes and would in no way affect their stay in the institution.

Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank: The high school form of the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank was also administered to all subjects in the usual manner. This test (Rotter and Willerman, 1947) contains 40 sentence stems. The subject is asked to complete these into sentences which express his true feelings. The rationale of the sentence completion test method assumes that the responses which the

subject produces are a reflection of his own wishes, desires, fears, and attitudes.

Life Story: Each subject was asked to provide autobiographical material. For this task, he was provided with a supply of blank paper and pencil and asked simply to write his "life story." No further cues were provided and no time limit was set for this task. This test was the least structured.

Rosenzweig Picture Frustration Study: This test (Rosenzweig, 1945) consists of 24 ambiguous cartoons showing individuals in various frustrating interpersonal situations. The subject is asked to fill in the verbal response of the cartoon figure who has been frustrated. The test assumes that through a projected conscious or unconscious identification with the frustrated individual, the subject will respond in a manner which is reflective of his own feelings toward dealing with frustrating stress. Objective scoring criteria have been developed for this test (Rosenzweig, Flemming, and Clarke, 1947) along two basic dimensions, those of (1) direction, and (2) type of aggression. Direction refers to what extent aggression is directed outwardly to the source of the frustration (extrapunitive) as opposed to being turned back upon oneself (intrapunitive) or minimized (impunitive). There are other scorable criteria relating to the "type of reaction" which involves such factors as whether the frustration is viewed

merely as a barrier as opposed to whether the subject is attempting to seek a solution to the frustrating situation.

The Rosenzweig Picture Frustration Test was administered to all subjects in the conventional manner and scored according to criteria discussed in Rosenzweig's revised manual (Rosenzweig et al., 1947). For this study, the scores of the Rosenzweig test were analyzed by the investigator in terms of the differences between winners and losers on the dimension of direction of aggression. This segment of the study was specifically related to the proposition which stated that the group identified as losers would respond to frustration in an extrapunitive manner and find themselves limited in being able to perceive alternative ways of directing their aggression.

Judges' Ratings of the Data

Experienced clinical psychologists rated the data on two dimensions: psychological integration and subjective feeling of autonomy. The final definitions of these dimensions were arrived at through a pilot study using staff personnel familiar with the population involved. The description of the concepts of Integration and Subjectively Felt Autonomy were evaluated and redefined a number of times until the participants in the pilot had agreed that a clear definition had been obtained.

Dimension A, which was a test of Proposition One, focused upon how well emotionally integrated the boy was viewed

to be. This scale was constructed as a rather broad one relating to a concept of "mental health." It was defined in the instructions as:

This dimension is a highly complex one involving how well integrated this youngster appears to be. By integrated, we mean that he is able to make socially acceptable judgements and show a reasonable amount of self-control. He can see the world clearly and accurately and act in a relatively competent, masterful, and autonomous manner. At the other end of the scale, he would be described as confused, unreasonable, and prone to distort reality in terms of his own immediate needs and to act in a self-defeating manner. In other words, this scale is intended to be broad enough to include the range of what we mean by "mental health."

Dimension B, which was a test of Proposition Two, was related to the issue of the boy's subjective feeling of freedom of choice and felt autonomy. It was defined for the judges as follows:

This dimension involves your opinion regarding this youngster's subjective feeling of freedom of choice. Consider the question of to what extent he feels that he is the active agent of his behavior as opposed to viewing the world as an unpredictable place where things happen due to such uncontrollable factors as chance, fate, or luck. That is, on one end of the scale the youngster feels that he is able to determine his future and what happens to him. At the other extreme, he views himself as a victim made helpless either by external (reality) or internal (psychological) pressures over which he has little control.

The judges were two clinical psychologists who had Ph.D. degrees. One judge had over twenty years experience working with a wide variety of adolescents including delinquents. He is currently supervisor of the Psychological Unit of the Oklahoma Department of Public Welfare. The other judge had five years experience in the area of direct clinical

services to delinquents. At the present time, he is Clinical Director at a training school for delinquent girls. The judges were not aware of the precise nature of the study, nor the hypotheses proposed.

The transcripts of the six Symonds Picture Story Test cards, the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank, and "Life Story" of each subject were coded and all names were removed. The order of winners and losers were randomized.

The task of the two judges was to rate each boy on a five point scale along Dimensions A and B. In order to capitalize upon the clinical sensitivity of the judges and to allow them maximal freedom to draw upon their experience in making inferences from the psychological data, the instructions were left relatively unstructured (See Appendix C). Prior to making any ratings, the judges met with the investigator and discussed the content of the rating sheet until both judges felt confident that they clearly understood the meaning of the dimensions and scales and that they shared a common frame of reference. The judges were further instructed first to scan all of the test data in order to familiarize themselves with the quality of responses as a whole.

It should be noted that both scales which contained five points each were deliberately weighted in the negative direction. That is, each scale had three categories of deficit--mild, moderate, and severe--and two positive categories, average and above average. This weighting seemed

reasonable in view of the fact that all of the subjects in the study were institutionalized. Furthermore, in the pilot study, it was found that judges were not able to make differentiations at the positive end of the scale.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Analysis of Judges' Ratings

Reliability of ratings. Because each of the judges' ratings were made independently, it was first necessary to determine reliability between the ratings of the two judges. A Pearson r correlation between the ratings of both judges was computed for both Dimensions A (Integration) and B (Autonomy). For Dimension A, $r = +.86$ and for Dimension B, $r = +.94$. Both of these correlations were significant at the .0001 level, thus establishing a high level of reliability between the two sets of ratings.

Sargent (1961) points out that a high degree of judge agreement represents independent confirmation of an observation. She argues that where there is a high level of reliability, this also implies that there is a significant degree of validity to the concept under investigation.

Relationship between Dimensions A and B. The next phase of the analysis involved an attempt to determine to what extent Dimensions A and B were related to each other. It was suspected from an inspection of the raw data (See Appendix D) that Dimensions A and B were separate yet highly

correlated aspects of the loser syndrome. In order to evaluate this possibility, a Pearson r correlation was computed between Dimensions A and B using the judges' mean ratings of each subject. This produced a value of $r = +.98$ which is significant at the .0001 level. On the basis of this statistic, the two rating scales were found to be interdependent. That is, if a judge saw an individual boy as being weak on one dimension, the judge also rated the boy as being low on the other and vice versa.

Characteristics of Losers and Winners. A more critical phase of the analysis involved determining whether the two established groups, Losers and Winners, could be differentiated on the basis of the judges' evaluation of the test data. That is, did the two groups differ along the dimensions of ego integrity and felt autonomy?

It was proposed that the group of Losers would be rated more deficient in the areas of ego integration and felt autonomy. In order to test these propositions, boys who were rated by both judges as having a severe deficit in both Integration and Autonomy were compared with the remaining subjects. That is, those boys with four ratings of "1" were placed in one category while boys obtaining any other configuration (which would necessarily have to include at least one higher rating) were placed in another category. As can be observed from Table 2, 11 subjects in the Loser group and 3 subjects in the Winner group were given four "severe deficit"

ratings of "1." Only 3 Losers and 11 Winners received ratings higher than the configuration of four "1"s. The distribution of these ratings are shown in graph form in Figure 1.

TABLE 2
Comparison of Judges' Ratings Between
Losers and Winners*

Group	No. of boys with ratings of "1" only.	No. of boys with other configurations.
Losers (N=14)	11	3
Winners (N=14)	3	11

*The Chi Square between the four groups (df=1) was found to be 7.58. This establishes a significance level of .01.

These results clearly support the speculation that Losers and Winners can be differentiated in the predicted direction on the basis of judges' evaluation of test responses. Dimensions A and B were found to be highly interdependent. This suggests that both factors are aspects of the Loser Syndrome. Support is thus given for Propositions One and Two.

Analysis of the Rosenzweig Data

The analysis of the Rosenzweig Picture Frustration Test data related specifically to aspects of the Loser Syndrome predicted in the third proposition. That is, the Losers would be more extrapunitive than the Winners, and the Losers would perceive fewer alternatives for coping with frustration.

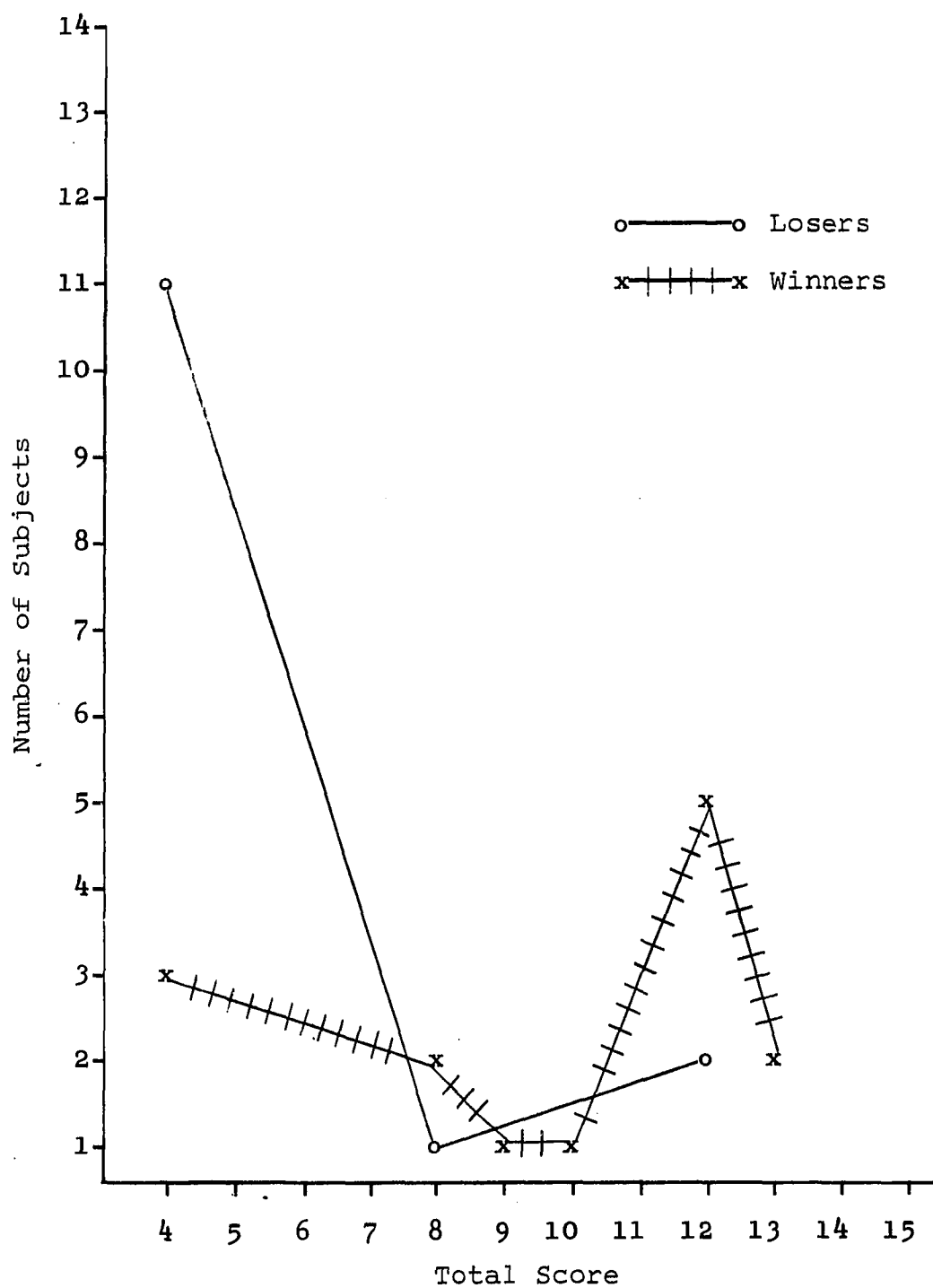


Figure 1

Distribution of Total Scores of Judges' Ratings
for Winner and Loser Groups.

In order to test the first aspect of this proposition, extrapunitive, the Losers were compared with the Winners in terms of the total E score. The total of E represents all variations of extrapunitive responses where aggression in response to frustration is directed outward as opposed to being turned back upon oneself (I response) or avoided (M response). These data (See Appendix D) were analyzed by using a t test. Table 3 shows that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the Losers and Winners on the total E dimension. This was found to be true at the .05 level of significance. Losers, therefore, appear to be more extrapunitive than Winners.

TABLE 3

Means Standard Deviations and t-Test of Losers
and Winners on Total E Dimension

Group	S.D.	Mean	t	p
Losers (N=14)	6.63	13.47	1.81	.05
Winners (N=14)	4.79	9.36		

In order to evaluate the second aspect of the third proposition, that Losers are more limited in finding alternative ways of coping with frustration, scatter scores were computed for each group. As noted previously, one may respond to the Rosenzweig figures in one of three categories (E, I, M). Since there are 24 cartoon situations in the test, it was

assumed that if the subject utilized a maximum number of categories, his responses would divide up into eight to each scoring group. While this test may not elicit an even number of responses in each category, it was possible to compute a scatter score which might serve as an index of how much a given subject deviated from this expected 8-8-8 pattern. This was done by subtracting eight from each subject's E, I, and M scores (disregarding plus or minus direction). The deviation scores for each dimension were averaged to produce a scatter score. This score could range from 0 where there would be a maximum use of categories (8-8-8 Configuration) to 10.6 where all 24 responses fell into the same category.

The scatter scores of the Losers and Winners were analyzed by using a t test. Table 4 shows that there is a significant difference between the mean scatter scores of Losers and Winners. This was found to be true at the .05 level of significance. This finding supports the proposition that Losers are less likely to respond to the Rosenzweig test in a variety of ways, but tend to respond primarily in one manner or category.

The analysis of the Rosenzweig test data thus confirms both aspects of Proposition Three. Losers respond to frustrating situations in an aggressive extrapunitive manner. They seem to have a limited repertoire of responses in responding to frustration.

TABLE 4

Means Standard Deviations and t-Test of Losers
and Winners and Scatter Scores

Group	S.D.	Mean	t	p
Losers (N=14)	3.06	4.96	1.77	.05
Winners (N=14)	1.60	3.30		

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study lend support to the proposal that the Loser Syndrome is a useful concept when applied to juvenile offenders. From a large population of delinquents, two significantly different groups could be identified by peers, by the institutional staff, and by expert judges. Although the dimensions of this concept are global in definition, Losers and Winners appeared to have distinctly different characteristics. Further, these distinct characteristics are discernible in quite different types of data and from quite different perspectives.

Clinical Aspects of the Loser Syndrome

As noted previously, the judges were able to differentiate accurately 11 of the 14 Losers on the basis of test data alone (.01 level of significance). An attempt was made to specify the characteristics of the test data which seemed to have accounted for this high level of discrimination.

Following the completion of their ratings, the judges were consulted regarding what aspects of the tests most affected their judgements. They reported that there were a

number of reoccurring themes which influenced their judgements as to which boys were most deficient on both Ego Integration and Autonomy dimensions. The most salient of these will be discussed and illustrated with examples from the actual test data. These examples have been drawn from a number of different subjects in the Loser group. The code number of each subject follows the quotation.

Deficiency in critical ego functions. One striking feature which appears with frequency in the data of the Losers is a lack of critical judgement regarding the expression of impulse. Aggression and sexuality are poorly differentiated and such references seem to flow together, often in a confused manner. One defining feature of those boys who were rated a deficient, was the exaggerated departure from "accepted" attitudes toward sexual behavior. The Losers were typically spuriously frank, blasé, and used the vernacular excessively. They tended to have excretory associations with sexual acts. Sexuality was often defined as a means of mutual exploitation. Such an example may be illustrated by one subject's response to Card A4 of the Symonds Picture Story Test:

See, this girl's a prostitute. She's going to live with this old guy. He's been f...ing the s... out of her every night. She's decided that he's a queer so she wants to cut out. She needs some dough. So he gets real p...ed off. He gives her money, so she's going to cut out someplace and meet a guy and get happily married and be a dope addict . . . (S.1).

The judges inferred that the unreasonable thema which the Losers produced masked a subjective feeling of emptiness.

It is as if through seeking pleasure, these youngsters are able to escape massive feelings of loneliness and isolation. For example, in the sentence completion test they respond, "I like ... to f... and get drunk (S.26)"; "Sometimes ... I like to f... for hours and hours (S.7)"; and "The happiest time ... is when I get drunk (S.19)."

A number of Losers produced responses which clearly expressed feelings of confusion. Sentence completion items include, "My mind ... is off (S.1)"; "My mind ... is not all there (S.10)"; and "My mind ... is all mixed up (S.15)."

The Rosenzweig data lends further support to the observation of the generalized uncritical manner in which the Losers respond to frustration. It was found that when confronted with a frustrating situation, they tended to react in a blatantly aggressive and rebellious manner. Their responses were heavily saturated with profanity.

In short, there was much evidence from the Loser Group to suggest that these youngsters demonstrate a deficiency in their ability to cope with reality in acceptable ways. Their responses tend to be unreasonable, unrealistic, and disjunctive.

Feelings of oppression and helplessness. Another characteristic of the Loser Group is the perception of the world as an oppressive place and a feeling of helplessness. The Loser demonstrates little striving for success in life.

His perception of the world is often dominated by a feeling of futility.

The feeling of oppression is often expressed by these youngsters quite directly: "I feel ... like the world is always against me (S.28)"; "I feel ... that everybody is treating me wrong (S.7)"; "I want to know .. why everybody is down on me (S.10)." At times, the oppression was experienced more indirectly, such as perceiving little choice in being able to cope with family relationships:

Looks like his old lady here. Well, the boy's mother is giving him a lecture and the boy is sitting back and taking it and that's it. (Q. What's going to happen?) She's going to tell his old man, and his old man is going to beat the f... out of him. (Q. Does he think it's fair?) Nope. (Q. Why does he put up with it?) He's a puss. (Symonds Card A7, S.10).

Concomitant with the feeling of oppression is the experience of futility and the inability to resolve conflict. It is as if many of the Losers perceive little or no hope for themselves: "I can't ... seem to find a way out (S.4)"; "I can't ... seem to stay out of trouble (S.10)"; and "I can't ... do much of anything (S.19)."

The fatalistic position of the Losers clearly implies a feeling of being determined, often a feeling of helplessness. This is illustrated by the following Symonds Picture stories drawn from the Loser Group:

He just got out of the pen and he's trying to figure out where he wants to go or what he wants to do. (Q. What's he thinking about?) Probably he's happy he's out. Thinking of all the time he's been there. (Q. What's going to happen?) I think it's about 75%, no 85% of 'em go back.

(Q. What do you think is going to happen to him?) He'll probably go back. (Q. For what?) Robbery. (Symonds Card A1, S.26).

This is a little boy. He started off when he was a little boy and started running away, stealing cars, and getting into trouble. And now he's in an institution, in solitary right now. He's in detention. And he's going to be locked up in institutions the rest of life cuz right now he's just feeling sorry for himself. That's all. (Q. Why is he going to be locked up the rest of his life?) Cuz it looks like he don't give a darn about what's going to happen. He's just going to sit there and take it. He don't want to change or nothing. (Symonds Card B6, S.27).

This guy just got caught doing something. He's sitting in jail now waiting to go to the pen. He got from ten to life and he probably committed murder. He looks like he's dead to the world. He ain't got nothing to think about. His mind is dull. All he can see is grey walls. He can't see no sunshine. (Q. What's going to happen?) He's going to spend life or close to it in the pen or he's going to commit suicide while in there or try to break out and get shot. (Symonds Card B9, S.26).

Frequently, the Life Stories of the Losers were quite short, cryptic, and poorly organized. The implied feeling is that events are perceived as a series of disjointed experiences over which they neither feel nor acknowledge very much control. For example, when one boy was asked to write his life story, he produced:

My Life Story

When I was on the outside, I stole cars, money, bicycles, a Honda. Busted into a station. I stole some beer, whiskey. Busted into pop machine. Stole battery, watch, radio, hub caps, tubes, T.V. set. A lot more stuff. Again, of course they talk me into it or I would not have did it.

The End (S.19)

The feeling of a limited perception of choice is also validated in the Rosenzweig data. It was previously noted that

the Losers produced a large number of E or extrapunitive responses to the exclusion of reacting in other ways. These youngsters tended to stereotype their responses almost as if they could not allow themselves to perceive other means of coping with frustration.

Losers compared with Winners. It is quite possible that the term Winner is a misnomer, for there is no evidence yet to demonstrate that the boys in the Winner Group are any less self-defeating in terms of the extent of their subsequent anti-social behavior.

For the purpose of this study, the Winner Group was selected to provide a contrast control group against which the Loser population could be studied. The evidence from this study suggests that a significant variable which differentiates the two groups lies in differences in self-concept. In contrast to the Losers, the Winners view themselves as more adequate, e.g., they are less likely to feel themselves victims and they express a higher aspiration level. They express themselves in a more socially acceptable manner. They are more critical in their judgements and express a greater recognition of the necessity for impulse control. The Winners appear more organized in their thinking. This can be illustrated from some of the Symonds Picture Stories drawn from group:

He's done something wrong and his mother is telling him why he shouldn't do it and what's right and what he should do in the future. (Q. What did he do that was wrong?)

Stole something. (Q. What does he think about what his mother is telling him?) He feels ashamed that he did it and feels that his mother is right. (Q. What's going to happen?) He's going to quit and do what's right from now on. (Symonds Card A7, S.17).

This looks like some unhappy teen-ager sitting in some old house thinking things over. He might not get along with his parents and he might be thinking of running away from home or leaving home or joining the army or something. Maybe he just had a fight with one of his friends. He looks like he's not too happy about things. That's all I can tell you about that. (Q. What's going to happen?) He'll probably leave home and after he finds out that he cares for home more than he thought he did, he'll come back. (Symonds Card B6, S.3).

It looks like this mother and a kid here and she is talking to him giving him a blessing or something, or praying, and it looks like they are both pretty poor folks. She is probably talking to him about something that he has done, or should do, or something like that. (Q. How does he feel about it?) I imagine that he's listening to it pretty hard. (Q. What's going to happen?) Well, he will probably try to go out and work or something and get a job for himself. They may need some food or something. I imagine that if he does get a job, he will probably support his mother and maybe get married or something, and get him a house. He will probably get married and maybe his mother will live with him and he'll support them all, I guess. (Symonds Card A7, S.16).

It was observed that those boys who were nominated as most resembling the Winner, tended to be those youngsters who were viewed as the most adequate by their peers and were often the leaders in their respective cottages. It may be that those boys who were chosen as the Winners tended to be among the more proficient manipulators in the institution. Certainly many of them had previously been involved in a considerable amount of delinquent behavior. In contrast, the Losers tended to be less efficient manipulators, often had difficulty in forming close friendships with their peers, and were considered

to be the "goof ups" in their cottage. Such a contrast between Winners and Losers is analogous to the previously made distinction between the adaptive and maladaptive delinquent.

These distinctions need to be clarified by additional research; however, certain general statements about the two configurations may be mentioned at this point. The Loser is maladaptive perhaps because he has not differentiated a means of controlling his impulses. He pushes, unthinkingly, toward immediate satisfaction. The Winner, on the other hand, may be relatively well defended, even over controlled. Briefly, the former may be described as undifferentiated; the latter as mal-differentiated. The Winner, while being well socialized, may have the firmly crystallized defenses of the character disorder. Although such a youngster may adjust well to the training school by "playing the institution game," when he is released, further difficulty is a strong possibility.

The personality characteristics of Losers and Winners offer implications for differential treatment. In the case of the Losers, therapeutic efforts might be organized around providing these youngsters with an environment which might facilitate ego growth. That is, on the assumption that Losers are best described as undifferentiated, and typically have low opinions of their own ability for mastery, they should be placed in a situation where certain of their needs are met. The mere verbalization of concern for them is not sufficient. They need good food, good fun, and interaction with people

who can be compassionate and tolerant. Perhaps even more critical is the need for the experience of an ever increasing degree of success in skills as well as in interpersonal relationships. Only out of such a matrix can ego develop. This does not imply a limitless environment, for these youngsters must also feel that the adult is indeed capable of providing necessary limits.

The Winners, in contrast, need the opportunity to modify their defenses. This may, at times, require dramatic intervention on the part of the staff which may involve putting the boy in the position of an emotional crisis. In other words, Winners are better able to make use of a program geared for character disorders. Confrontation, for instance, may be a technique which is of help much earlier in the therapeutic program.

It may well be that the real "winners"--those boys who have the greatest capacity to change their self-defeating behavior--were not chosen as subjects in the study. That is, many of those boys who were popular and perhaps best liked by both peers and staff often have the poorest prognosis by virtue of their capacity to be quite charming and manipulative. It has been observed at the training school that frequently those boys who are not particularly popular indeed have the most favorable prognosis. These are the boys who are least identified with anti-social values.

Limitations of the Study

Definition of the concept of the Loser Syndrome. It should be noted that this study was aimed at making an initial attempt to document and evaluate the usefulness of a construct, the Loser Syndrome. This construct was embedded in contemporary theoretical frameworks. Because this study was exploratory in nature, the dimensions rated were rather crude and global. It was noted that these dimensions of Ego Integration and Autonomy were found to be highly correlated with each other. From this it might be argued that they are both aspects of the same and perhaps broader dimension. The evidence from the clinical data suggests that both factors are relevant through highly related aspects which characterize the Loser Group. However, these dimensions are perhaps too global in nature and will need to be further clarified, expanded, and redefined as other variables come into focus.

Accuracy of the judges' ratings. It was found that the judges were able to differentiate the two groups with a high degree of accuracy. However, the samples were small; generalizations from the data must be highly tentative. It would seem worthwhile to repeat the study using a larger number of subjects in order to determine whether similar results could be found in other populations of delinquents, including female offenders and older criminals.

It was found that of the total population, six boys were misidentified by the judges. Three boys from the

established Loser Group obtained a more positive evaluation by the judges than the severely deficient (1-1-1-1) configuration. Also, three boys from the established Winner Group were rated severely deficient (1-1-1-1) by the judges. An attempt was made to evaluate the source of this error.

Of the three Losers who were rated high, one boy (4-3-3-3) was a highly neurotic youngster who produced long and complex test responses which contained a good deal of guilt laden material. This boy was considered to be quite atypical in the training school. While his self-image and behavior were quite consistent with the Loser Syndrome, the complexity of his test responses led the judges into giving him a higher rating. There was much ambivalence on the part of at least one judge regarding another subject (2-2-2-2) who gave the boy the benefit of the doubt between ratings of one and two. The third misidentified Loser (4-3-3-3) apparently "faked good" on his responses, thus making him appear more adequate.

Of the three boys in the Winner Group who were rated low, one subject who had a good deal of intelligence obviously "faked bad" in that he approached the tests in a facetious manner and deliberately distorted his responses. This was a strategy which was not detected by the judges. The other two subjects may well have been misidentified Losers when nominated by their peers and cottage staff. Observation of the characteristics of their test responses showed them to be highly saturated with features associated with the Loser Group.

The need for additional criteria. Because the focus of this investigation was limited to psychological dimensions, no effort was made to relate the Loser Syndrome to the delinquent's actual behavior. From this study, a number of questions might be raised which would merit further investigation. For example, what is the relationship between the boys characterized as Losers and their actual behavior in terms of the type and frequency of their offenses? What are the implications of one's self-view of being a loser and recidivism rates? What historical factors in the youngster's life such as patterns of socialization within the family might contribute to a boy's feeling of being a Loser? Can this pattern be observed among delinquent girls? Is there a relationship between the Loser Syndrome as a self-view and the prognosis for subsequent adjustment? These are but a few of the many questions which might be further explored perhaps through the development of different and more sophisticated techniques.

Significance of the Loser Syndrome

The significance of the Loser Syndrome lies in the observation that such a framework provides a means of conceptualizing at least a certain segment of delinquents from a fresh etiological perspective. Such a finding underscores the observation that indeed not all delinquents are alike. This study suggests that it is possible to differentiate delinquent boys on the basis of their self-view as a Loser.

From this, as previously discussed, may follow differential treatment techniques. Hopefully, this study will provide stimulation for further research into the phenomenology of the Loser Syndrome.

It is necessary to interject a final and serious note of caution. This investigation has focused upon the delinquent's view of himself as a loser. The Loser Syndrome which has been described in this study can be considered only a convenient means by which to conceptualize how these offenders define themselves. It is by no means intended as a diagnostic category. It has not been established at this stage that there is any relationship between the youngster's view of himself as a loser and his capacity to change. This is critical, for, among those working with adolescents, it is a common observation that adolescents will often behave in accordance with the adult's expectations of them. It would thus do a youngster a gross injustice to label him as a loser. Rather, the challenge to those working with delinquents is one of utilizing their fullest resources to allow these youngsters to develop a more positive view of themselves.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

This study introduced and explored the usefulness of a concept, The Loser Syndrome, among a population of juvenile delinquents. This concept was rooted in the notion that a certain segment of delinquent boys act as if they view the world as an extremely oppressive place which does not provide them with adequate gratification. They experience a sense of helplessness and confusion. Such youngsters do not view themselves as the active agents of their own behavior and feel that events happen as a function of such variables as chance, fate, or luck. In short, they appear to feel that no matter what they do, they are "born to lose."

Two groups were selected from a resident population of boys at a state training school for delinquents. On the basis of peer group and adult staff nominations, these two groups were identified as Losers and Winners. The Loser Group was made up of those boys whose behavior was most congruent with the investigator's description of a hypothetical Loser. The Winners served as a contrasting group made up of those boys who appeared least like the loser.

The general propositions tested predicted that the Losers would be more deficient in the areas of ego functioning, subjective feeling of autonomy, and capacity to effectively cope with and control aggressive impulses. As a test of these propositions, both groups of subjects were given a battery of projective tests which included selected Symonds Picture Story cards, the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank, a short "Life Story," and the Rosenzweig Picture Frustration Study.

The data were evaluated through ratings made by experienced clinical judges and statistical techniques. Each of the propositions were supported in the predicted direction. The Loser and Winner Groups were found to be significantly different.

The findings of this study lend support to the proposal that the Loser Syndrome is a concept worthy of further investigation. The Loser Syndrome is intended as a conceptual aid to clarifying how the delinquent views himself. However, the present study must be viewed as an initial attempt to define a concept.

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APPENDIX A
PEER RATING FORM

Cadillac Cottage

Name _____

Instructions

Read the following paragraph:

Pete feels like he is a born loser. Nothing good ever happens to him and he feels like the world is against him. Everything he plans turns out bad and he feels that life is unfair to him. He thinks that he is not able to do much about what is going to happen to him and is afraid that no matter what he does, he will get into a lot more trouble with the law.

Below is a list of the boys in your cottage. Think about the above paragraph and the list of the names below and follow these three instructions:

1. Put a circle around the names of the 5 boys from this list who are most like Pete.
2. Underline the names of the five boys from this list who are least like Pete.
3. Put a 1 in the space in front of the name of the boy in your cottage who is most like Pete. Put a 2 in front of the name of the boy who is next most like him, a 3 in the space in front of the boy who is next like him, etc., until you have rated every boy. Do not rate on who you would like as a friend but who acts and feels most like Pete. Include yourself in these ratings. Your ratings will not be seen by any other boys.

_____ Mike A.	_____ Pete I.	_____ Tom P.
_____ Pete A.	_____ Bob J.	_____ Chester S.
_____ Bob F.	_____ Ralph J.	_____ Paul S.
_____ Tom G.	_____ Jack L.	_____ Mike T.
_____ Pete G.	_____ Eddie L.	_____ Neil V.
_____ Steve H.	_____ Paul M.	_____ Tom W.
_____ Dale H.	_____ Eddie M.	_____ Don W.

APPENDIX B

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SYMONDS PICTURE STORY TEST

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SYMONDS PICTURE STORY TEST

I have some pictures here which I am going to show you one at a time. Each picture shows someone who is having some kind of problem. I want you to make up a story about what is happening in the picture now, what has happened before, and what is going to happen. Just use your imagination and try to make up the best story you can. Because it would be hard for me to write down your stories as fast as you talk, I'm going to tape record them so that I can remember them.

APPENDIX C
JUDGE'S RATING FORM

Subject Code Number _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RATING TEST BATTERY - LS STUDY

Attached to each of these rating sheets is a test battery obtained from an adolescent boy. The data consists of typed responses to 6 of the Symonds Picture Story Test cards, the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank, and a short "life story." Before making any ratings, please scan through the data from all boys in order to familiarize yourself with the quality of responses as a whole. Then, considering the test data from each boy, make a judgement on each of the two dimensions discussed below. Rate all boys on Dimension A first and then go back and rate each individual on Dimension B.

DIMENSION A

This dimension is a highly complex one involving how well integrated this youngster appears to be. By integrated, we mean that he is able to make socially acceptable judgements and show a reasonable amount of self-control. He can see the world clearly and accurately and act in a relatively competent, masterful, and autonomous manner. At the other end of the scale, he would be described as confused, unreasonable, and prone to distort reality in terms of his own immediate needs and to act in a self-defeating manner. In other words, this scale is intended to be broad enough to include the range of what we mean by "mental health."

Please indicate your rating by placing a check (✓) on the appropriate point of the scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Severe	Moderate	Mild	Average	Above Average
Deficit in	Deficit in	Deficit in	Integration	Integration
Integration	Integration	Integration		

Which segment of the data was most significant in determining your rating?

_____ Symonds Stories

Please Check: _____ Rotter

_____ Life Story

DIMENSION B

This dimension involves your opinion regarding this youngster's subjective feeling of freedom of choice. Consider the question of to what extent he feels that he is the active agent of his behavior as opposed to viewing the world as an unpredictable place where things happen due to such uncontrollable factors as chance, fate, or luck. That is, on one end of the scale the youngster feels that he is able to determine his future and what happens to him. At the other extreme, he views himself as a victim made helpless either by external (reality) or internal (psychological) pressures over which he has little control.

Please indicate your rating by placing a check (✓) on the appropriate point of the scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Severe	Moderate	Mild Deficit	Average	Above Average
Deficit in	Deficit in	in Felt	Felt	Felt
Felt Autonomy	Felt Autonomy	Autonomy	Autonomy	Autonomy

Which segment of the data was most significant in determining your rating?

Please Check: _____ Symonds Stories
 _____ Rotter
 _____ Life Story

APPENDIX D

RAW DATA

RAW DATA OF LOSER GROUP

Subject	Judge 1		Judge 2		*Rosenzweig Scores		
	Dim.A	Dim.B.	Dim.A	Dim.B	E	I	M
1	1	1	1	1	12.5	6.5	5
2	2	2	2	2	20.5	0	3.5
3	4	3	3	3	10.5	8	5.5
4	4	3	3	3	15.5	5	3.5
5	1	1	1	1	20.5	2.5	0
6	1	1	1	1	19.5	4.5	0
7	1	1	1	1	2.5	13	7.5
8	1	1	1	1	16	6	2
9	1	1	1	1	22	1.5	0.5
10	1	1	1	1	5	8	11
11	1	1	1	1	7.5	8.5	8
12	1	1	1	1	4	10	10
13	1	1	1	1	22.5	0.5	1
14	1	1	1	1	11	7	5

*Subject 5, 7, and 14 omitted one item on Rosenzweig Test.

RAW DATA OF WINNER GROUP

Subject	Judge 1		Judge 2		Rosenzweig Scores		
	Dim.A	Dim.B	Dim.A	Dim.B	E	I	M
1	3	3	3	4	3.5	8.5	12
2	2	2	2	2	12	7	5
3	3	3	3	3	6	8	10
4	3	3	3	3	11.5	5.5	7.0
5	1	1	1	1	19	4.5	0.5
6	1	1	1	1	16	0	8
7	3	3	3	3	2	11	11
8	3	3	4	3	4.5	9	10.5
9	3	3	3	3	5	13.5	5.5
10	2	2	2	2	14	5.5	4.5
11	1	1	1	1	11	5	8
12	2	2	3	3	3	15	6
13	3	3	1	2	10.5	7	6.5
14	3	3	3	3	11	5	8