

January 1972

## Students and Their Opinions: The Golden Gate Law Review's High School Legal Education Project

Miron L. Straf

Morton S. Tenenberg

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/ggulrev>

 Part of the [Legal Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Miron L. Straf and Morton S. Tenenberg, *Students and Their Opinions: The Golden Gate Law Review's High School Legal Education Project*, 2 Golden Gate U. L. Rev. (1972).  
<http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/ggulrev/vol2/iss1/8>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Academic Journals at GGU Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Golden Gate University Law Review by an authorized administrator of GGU Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [jfischer@ggu.edu](mailto:jfischer@ggu.edu).

**STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS:  
THE GOLDEN GATE LAW REVIEW'S HIGH SCHOOL LEGAL EDUCATION PROJECT**

**Miron L. Straf**  
**Department of Statistics**  
**University of California, Berkeley**

**and**

**Morton S. Tenenberg**  
**Department of Teacher Education**  
**California State College, Hayward**

### Focus of the Research

The purposes of the research conducted with the Golden Gate Legal Education Project were twofold: to obtain various descriptive information about participating students and to examine their opinions concerning various questions deemed by the project planners as crucial issues involving citizens and the law. In contrast, the conducted research did not attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the legal education project. Readers interested in a rigorous assessment of the impact of the project will be disappointed in the scope of the research undertaken. Their desire for an evaluation of the project is shared with project coordinators and staff who wish answers regarding which elements of the project were most effective and should, accordingly, be continued, as well as which elements need further development or alteration.

### Limitations to Evaluative Designs

Major decisions regarding the research component of the legal education project were made during the late summer and early fall of 1971. At that time, various expectations of the project coordinators pointed to serious limitations in the scope of any systematic investigation of course effects. The expectations included:

Some students would participate as part of a required social studies course while others would elect to be included in the project;

Students in the project would exhibit wide variation in achievement, ethnic and economic background, present capabilities, place of residence, and many other related variables;

Project teachers would exhibit a range in political

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

77

orientation, teaching style and educational philosophy;

The specific curriculum of project classes would vary considerably in content, teaching methodology, and range and type of student involvement (variation in these areas was encouraged by having each teacher-law student tutor team cooperatively plan its own particular project);

Opportunities for studying groups of comparison group teachers and students with characteristics comparable to project participants appeared very unlikely.

Taken together, these anticipations presented insurmountable obstacles to assessing the effectiveness of the project. All research designs that could possibly be used to evaluate project impact are based on the ability of the researchers to "control" for the potential influence of non-project variables on student learning and opinion.<sup>1</sup> In this situation, such control was impossible. There was, for instance, no way of determining which combinations of the many teacher, law student, curriculum, and high school student variables would occur within the project. The impact of various combinations, some effective and some not, could well cancel each other out and result in extremely useful patterns among the data being obscured. Furthermore, without a suitable comparison group of non-project students, any apparent change in project participants could easily be attributed to influences other than the project--for instance, the "halo" effect of enthusiastic teachers, the impact of highly publicized or momentous legal events such as the Angela Davis trial and the

1. For a discussion of the problems in assessing the effect of educational programs and of suitable research designs, refer to D. T. Campbell and J. C. Stanley, "Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research," *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, ed. N. L. Gage (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1963).

Soledad Brothers trial,<sup>2</sup> or even the influence of movies appearing during the project period--witness the recent commercially produced film on the Sacco and Vanzetti trial.

In summary, various anticipated features of the project, characteristics of the participants, and the absence of suitable comparison groups combined to preclude any rigorous investigation into the effects of the course on students. The conducted research focused instead on describing the student participants as a group and examining their opinions in some critical areas involving citizens and the law.

#### Teachers and Law Student Tutors

The procedures used to identify the twenty-eight teachers who participated in the legal education project have been explained in detail in an earlier article in this volume.<sup>3</sup> Despite the efforts of the project coordinators to recruit as diverse a group of teachers as possible, taken together, they may not have been representative of Bay Area high school social studies teachers. All had been associated with Constitutional Rights Foundation projects in the past or were referred by previous CRF participants--selection factors that may have resulted in teachers with various attitudinal or other characteristics being systematically, though inadvertently, excluded from consideration. We can, with even more certainty, state that the group was not randomly selected and that no sampling

2. One class did, in fact, visit a session during the celebrated "Soledad Brothers" trial, and students were reportedly searched before being allowed to enter.

3. See p. 9.

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

79

procedure was employed to preclude the possibility of systematic but unknown bias in the selection.

Similarly, we cannot state that the law student tutors as a group were chosen randomly or were necessarily representative of law students in the Bay Area or even at Golden Gate College, School of Law. In fact, as is clearly indicated in the earlier article mentioned above, the methods and criteria used in the recruitment of potential law student tutors were purposely designed to attract interested law students willing to commit the time and effort necessary to carry through intensively during the whole period of the project.

These remarks are not intended to imply that the project should have been carried out by either a representative or random sample of social studies teachers and law student tutors. They are included to underscore the inadvisability of generalizing from the experiences of this project to others and to caution readers against drawing simplistic explanations for what happened during this project or unwarranted implications for designing legal education projects in other settings.

Law student tutors and teachers were paired by the project coordinators. In some cases, combinations occurred by chance; in others, the desires of the law student to work in a particular kind of school, e.g., one with high minority student body, or the distance from the law student's place of residence to the various schools influenced pairing decisions. Each "team" was to determine jointly its own legal education curriculum, with the extent of student involvement in such determining left to the discretion of each "team."

Student Participants

How did students become participants in the project? There were three ways. Almost one-third (30.7 percent) of the project students, depending on the school, elected to take a course in constitutional law. These students made their choice among several other alternative social studies electives.

A smaller group of project students, approximately 15 percent of the total number, were asked in a required eleventh or twelfth grade social studies class, e.g., American Government, Civics I, Civics II, whether as a part of the regular course they wished to be included in the legal education project. Both teacher and law student tutor briefly explained the project and students expressed their preference. All classes in which this procedure was followed elected to be included in the project.

All other project students, approximately half (54.8 percent) of the total, became participants by virtue of being assigned to a required eleventh or twelfth grade social studies class which by chance happened to be included in the project. Project teachers chose one or more of their classes for inclusion in the project based on the schedule of the law student.

The project students, taken as a group, cannot be considered to have been randomly selected; furthermore, we cannot tell whether as a group they are representative of all eleventh and twelfth graders in the Bay Area or even representative of the student bodies in their own schools. Nonetheless, as will be seen below in detail, the group did exhibit the

extent of diversity hoped for by the project coordinators and, in this sense, may reasonably be considered to include the range of student characteristics found within the San Francisco Bay Area.

#### Design of the Questionnaire

We met on several occasions with law students participating in the project and with representatives of the Constitutional Rights Foundation to select a number of subjects that were of interest to them and which could meaningfully be studied from a questionnaire. We decided to study students' opinions about the project, their interest in law as a career, and their opinions on some aspects of courts and judicial procedure, of law enforcement, and of their interpretation of laws and constitutional rights. The twenty-two questions that we formulated appear in this report with the responses of 677 students of the 34 classes participating in the project.

There were two formats for the opinion questions. The first seven of these were multiple choice. Each was followed by a number of lettered responses, and the instructions to the student were to "...circle the one letter which corresponds to the statement that best describes your feelings." In each of the remaining fifteen questions, the student was presented with a statement, below which appeared the numbers 1 through 7 with the words "Strongly Agree" under 1, "Neutral" under 4, and "Strongly Disagree" under 7. Preceding these questions were the following instructions:

For questions 20-34, please circle the single number under each statement which best describes your feelings about that statement. The middle and end numbers are labeled



but you may circle any number to indicate your feelings.  
If your feelings are neutral or if you have no opinion,  
circle "4".

In order to analyze the variability of the responses among the students, we included twelve personal questions. The first of these requested the occupation of a student's father. This information was used to assign each student to one of four ordered socio-economic status (SES) classes. A list of jobs used in this question, the instructions for answering it, and an explanation of the assignment of SES classes appear in the appendix. Using multiple choice questions, we asked the student for his sex, age, race, whether or not he was a U.S. citizen, the approximate portion of class periods he attended, his average grade in high school, his further educational plans, and whether or not he participated in the police patrol car ride program. Because of the differences in how members of racial groups refer to their group and the ambiguity of the classification "white," in each choice for the response to the question about race, were listed all popular names. This question and the one about further educational plans appear in the appendix to this report with the students' responses.

Since we wanted to study attitudes toward law enforcement, it was necessary to inquire about a student's involvement with the police and courts. We asked the following three questions with a "yes" or "no" choice for response:

Have you ever had an unpleasant experience with a police officer?

Has a close friend or relative of yours ever had an unpleasant experience with a police officer?

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

83

Have you ever appeared before a judge or juvenile authority after being charged with a violation or a criminal offense?

Selection of the Comparison Group

Some differences and effects of variables among the responses to our opinion questions are to be expected even for students not in the project. In order to corroborate the effects and variability that we might observe, a similar questionnaire was given to 237 other students from eight of the high schools in which there were classes participating in the project. Each high school teacher in the project was asked if he would select another class or classes of students similar to the one in the project in which to administer another questionnaire. Nine teachers so cooperated and gave the questionnaire to students in eleven other classes. Although this comparison group allowed us to study differences between the responses of students in the project and those not participating, it was not our purpose to study effects of the project in this manner. Neither group was selected from respective larger populations in an appropriate manner for us to make inference about the differences between the populations. Nevertheless, the responses of the comparison group were of assistance to us in the study of effects within the project group. Moreover, questions of interest for further study were raised when differences between the responses of the two groups occurred.

With one exception, the comparison group questionnaire consisted of the 30 questions which were not specific to the project. In one question, those in the project were asked whether legal education should be required in high schools; the corresponding question for the comparison group asked

if a student would take a course in law if it were offered.

Administration of the Questionnaire

To obtain permission to administer the questionnaire from authorities in the San Francisco Unified Public School District and the Archdiocese of San Francisco, we sought to obtain approval of the questionnaire from each of the twenty-eight teachers in the program. A memo sent to each teacher described some of the questions we would ask and explained that, although individual responses would be anonymous, the responses would be identified by class and teacher. Only a sample of questions was presented to the teachers for their approval. The design of the questionnaire was not complete at that time; moreover, in order that the questionnaire fairly reflect students' opinions, we did not want to reveal all of the questions. The sample included, with some rewordings, the personal questions, but did not include the questions concerning average grade, the police patrol car ride, and an unpleasant experience with a police officer. Only four opinion questions were presented to the teachers; and, of these, three appeared in the questionnaire (two questions asking for an opinion of whether legal education in high schools should be offered and the importance of the participation of law students in a legal education program and one question asking whether the workings of the courts are fair). The entire questionnaire, however, was presented to the appropriate agencies for their approval. All but one of the teachers agreed to administer the questionnaire.

Near the completion of a class' course or a comparable term of the course for a class that would continue the study of law, the teacher

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

85

received questionnaires sealed in an envelope with instructions not to open the envelope until he was ready to administer the questionnaire at the very next meeting with his students. Except for absentees, students were given the questionnaire during a usual class period. It was designed to be taken in approximately 40 minutes. On the first page was a letter requesting the cooperation of the student and containing some instructions. The student was asked not to write his name on the questionnaire and to seal the completed questionnaire in a blank envelope with which he was provided. In the instructions to the teacher were the replies to frequently asked questions about how to indicate a father's occupation, procedures for preserving anonymity in the case of a fire drill or other interruption of the class, and instructions for administering the questionnaire to absentees. The teacher was also asked to complete a class information sheet indicating the numbers present and absent and information about the project for his class. From this information sheet, and from logs completed by law students and teachers, we obtained for our analysis some information that was common to all students in any particular class.

An especial effort was made to obtain responses from those students who were absent on the day their class received the questionnaire. We told each teacher the importance of obtaining responses from all of the students in the project, and provided them with extra questionnaires, envelopes and postage. Moreover, each teacher received at least one letter and one phone call as reminders. A special effort though unsuccessful, was made to solicit the cooperation of the one teacher who

refused to give the questionnaire. In this one class, the teacher did not originally accept the project, but replaced another teacher who had made the arrangements for the class.

In spite of our efforts, the proportion of no responses was high. It is difficult to compare the number of responses to official enrollments, as some classes have students who, although they are officially enrolled, rarely come to class. Nevertheless, counting the numbers that the teachers reported of those absentees who did not take the questionnaire at a later time, and the 32 students enrolled in the class that did not take the questionnaire, we received the responses of 75 percent of the students in the project.

The percentages of no responses among the 34 classes in the project ranged from 0 to 58 percent. The teachers of the 26 classes in which the proportion of no responses was more than one-eighth were asked if the absentee rate on the day the questionnaire was administered was unusual. In 23 of these classes, the teachers said that the attendance was either better, average, usual, or what was to be expected. Two teachers compared the attendance for Fridays since they administered the questionnaire on such a day, and one compared the attendance to what was expected for a day on which there was a school assembly. Included among these 23 classes are two in each of which only seven of fifteen students responded. The two teachers remarked that a 53 percent absentee record was very typical. In the remaining three classes with large no response rates, two teachers with no response rates of 4/21 and 9/28 remarked that the absentee rate was a little higher than usual, and one with a no response rate of 18/31 said that his absentee rate was quite high.

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

87

To summarize, the classes participating in the project usually had a large number of absentees. This fact and the one class that did not receive the questionnaire made for a large no response rate of 25 percent, despite our efforts to follow up. Nevertheless, in only three classes was the attendance when the questionnaire was given lower than what was to be expected and a number of teachers reported a higher attendance record than usual. Moreover, a few were conscientious in administering the questionnaire to absentees.

Ten of the 677 questionnaires had some page missing. In addition, one or two others were missing the question that identified sex. This question appeared at the bottom of the page that continued the list of possible jobs for a father's occupation. In each case where this page was missing, the student circled a job from the list on the previous page. Although the questions and pages were numbered and each teacher received extra copies of the questionnaire, none of those students who were missing a page brought it to the attention of their teacher.

Some teachers received extra packets of questionnaires for students in the comparison group. Although the packets were marked, in one class, 27 students participating in the project received the questionnaire designed for the comparison group.

#### Coding and Analysis of the Data

The responses to each question, with two exceptions, were assigned a respective numerical code with a separate code for a missing response. The no responses were tallied separately even for those questions with a "neutral," "no opinion," "undecided," "not sure," or "don't know"

category. The variable sex was not assigned a no response code: only eight project students did not respond to this question. No response codes were assigned in cases where there were missing pages and for the omitted questions and the altered one for the class that received the incorrect questionnaire. The responses to the two questions concerning a personal unpleasant experience with a police officer and knowledge of such for a close friend or relative were combined into a single scale with four categories. In the First category were those students who responded "yes" when asked if they have ever had an unpleasant experience with a police officer. In the second category were those who either answered "no" or did not respond to that question but said that a close friend or relative has had an unpleasant experience with a police officer. In the third category were placed those who said they have had neither a personal unpleasant experience with an officer nor did they know of a close friend or relative who has had such an experience. In the fourth category were placed all those with other combinations of responses and no responses.

The responses were coded, tabulated and verified by editors of the Golden Gate Law Review who were not assigned to work with a specific class and a member of the staff of the Constitutional Rights Foundation. Even though the sealed responses were anonymous, no law student was permitted to see the responses of a class with which he worked. Tabulating the responses before they were keypunched permitted us to be alert for qualified answers and multiple responses. In the case where a written statement appeared next to a response, we coded the reply as

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

89

a no response if the question was qualified in any manner. If the written statement offered an explanation for a student's reply without qualifying the question, we coded the indicated response. Qualifications to answers were most frequent for two questions ("If you needed help, would you go to a policeman?" and "Do you think police accuse you of things you didn't even do?") which had a "yes," "no," and "not sure" choice for a response. These two questions were taken from a 1967-69 poll<sup>4</sup> of 10,000 students in grades three through twelve in ten schools systems in various parts of the state of Michigan. If a response to a scaled opinion question was made by circling two consecutive numbers, the number nearest 4 (the neutral category) was coded. If two nonconsecutive numbers were circled, the reply was coded as a no response.

Some information about the project in a student's class obtained from the class information sheets and logs was also coded and tabulated. The tabulated data were then sent to keypunchers for transcription and verification. The data were analyzed on a Control Data 6400 Computer at the Computation Center of the University of California, Berkeley. We used the program NWAY prepared by the Computation Center at Stanford University and which was modified and adapted for the Control Data 6400 by John M. Wells at the University of California, Berkeley. This versatile program directs the printing and requested statistical analyses of

4. Donald H. Bouma, *Kids and Cops: A Study in Mutual Hostility* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969).



contingency tables for two cross-classified polytomies that may be conditioned on the levels of other variables.

Project Student Diversity

The legal education project coordinators hoped that the project would be carried out with senior high school students exhibiting a broad range in ethnic background, social economic status (SES), and school achievement. The distributions for ethnic groupings, SES levels, U.S. citizenship status, and average grades shown respectively in Tables 1, 3, 5, and 6 indicate that the expectations regarding diversity were met. For instance, a little less than half (46.6 percent) of the project students who took the questionnaire identified themselves as members of the minority groups indicated in Table 1. The largest minority group represented is black (128 students, about one-fifth of the total project group). All other minority groups together constitute more than one-fourth (27.5 percent) of the total. Table 3 shows that all four SES levels were well represented in the project group. Approximately one-fifth of the students are in both the highest and lowest levels (21.7 and 19.8 percents respectively), with the remainder (16.4 and 32.8 percents) appearing at the second and third highest levels. From Table 5, we find that about one-fifth (18.9 percent) of the project group taking the questionnaire were born in foreign countries and are either naturalized U.S. citizens (8.1 percent) or not presently U.S. citizens (10.8 percent). The distribution of average grades in school as reported by project students (Table 6) shows about a third (32.9 percent) for "C," somewhat over half (54.9 percent) for "B," and 8.1 percent for "A." Though some students did indicate average grades of

TABLE 1

Distribution of legal education project male and female students among ethnic groups.

Sex	Ethnic Groups									Total
	White	Black	Asian	Chicano	Latino	Filipino	Indian	Other	NR	
Males	208 (58.9)	55 (15.6)	32 (9.1)	20 (5.7)	14 (4.0)	10 (2.8)	1 (0.3)	11 (3.1)	2 (0.5)	353 (100%)
Females	143 (45.2)	73 (23.1)	27 (8.5)	17 (5.4)	17 (5.4)	15 (4.7)	3 (0.9)	17 (5.4)	4 (1.3)	316 (100%)
Total	351 (52.6)	128 (19.1)	59 (8.8)	37 (5.5)	31 (4.6)	25 (3.7)	4 (0.6)	28 (4.2)	6 (0.6)	669 <sup>a</sup> (100%)

TABLE 2

Distribution of comparison group male and female students among ethnic groups.

Sex	Ethnic Groups									Total
	White	Black	Asian	Chicano	Latino	Filipino	Indian	Other	NR	
Males	61 (56.5)	17 (15.7)	22 (20.4)	0	2 (1.8)	3 (2.8)	0	3 (2.8)	0	108 (100%)
Females	86 (68.8)	15 (12.0)	11 (8.8)	1 (0.8)	1 (0.8)	4 (3.2)	1 (0.8)	6 (4.8)	0	125 (100%)
Total	147 (63.2)	32 (13.8)	33 (14.0)	1 (0.4)	3 (1.3)	7 (3.0)	1 (0.4)	9 (3.9)	0	233 <sup>a</sup> (100%)

<sup>a</sup>There were 8 students in the project and 4 students in the comparison group whose sex was unknown.

TABLE 3

Distribution of project ethnic groups among SES levels.

SES Level	Ethnic Groups				Total
	White	Black	All Others	NR	
Highest	106 (30.2)	9 (6.8)	30 (16.1)	2 (25.0)	147 (21.7)
Second	72 (20.5)	9 (6.8)	28 (15.1)	2 (25.0)	111 (16.4)
Third	114 (32.5)	46 (34.8)	59 (31.7)	3 (37.5)	222 (32.8)
Lowest	38 (10.8)	45 (34.1)	51 (27.4)	0	134 (19.8)
NR	21 (6.0)	23 (17.4)	18 (9.7)	1 (12.5)	63 (9.3)
Total	351 (100%)	132 (100%)	186 (100%)	8 (100%)	677 (100%)

TABLE 4

Distribution of comparison group ethnic groups among SES levels.

SES Level	Ethnic Groups			
	White	Black	All Others	Total
Highest	71 (48.0)	4 (11.8)	16 (29.1)	91 (38.4)
Second	29 (19.6)	1 (2.9)	12 (21.8)	42 (17.7)
Third	25 (16.9)	12 (35.3)	17 (30.9)	54 (22.8)
Lowest	14 (9.5)	9 (26.5)	6 (10.9)	29 (12.2)
NR	9 (6.1)	8 (23.5)	4 (7.3)	21 (8.9)
Total	148 (100%)	34 (100%)	55 (100%)	237 (100%)

TABLE 5

Distribution of U.S. citizenship status within project ethnic groups.

U.S. Citizenship	Ethnic Groups				
	White	Black	Asian	All Others	Total
Native born	318 (90.6)	110 (83.3)	33 (55.9)	76 (59.8)	537 (80.3)
Naturalized	15 (4.3)	16 (12.1)	7 (11.9)	16 (12.6)	54 (8.1)
Not a citizen	17 (4.8)	1 (0.8)	19 (32.2)	35 (27.6)	72 (10.8)
NR	1 (0.3)	5 (3.8)	0	0	6 (0.9)
Total	351 (100%)	132 (100%)	59 (100%)	127 (100%)	669 (100%)

TABLE 6

Distribution of average grade as reported by legal education project students.

	Average Grade						Total
	A	B	C	D	F	NR	
Number	55	372	223	8	5	14	677
Percent	8.1	54.9	32.9	1.2	0.7	2.1	100

TABLE 7

Age distribution for project and comparison group students.

Group	Age								Total
	14 or less	15	16	17	18	19	20 or more	NR	
Project	0 (1.0)	7 (14.8)	100 (65.0)	440 (65.0)	109 (16.1)	15 (2.2)	2 (0.3)	4 (0.6)	677 (100%)
Comparison	4 (1.7)	30 (12.7)	25 (10.5)	129 (54.4)	46 (19.4)	2 (0.8)	0	1 (0.4)	237 (100%)

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

93

"D" and "F," the numbers and related percentages are small. From this distribution it might be inferred that a relatively insignificant proportion of the least successful high school students were exposed to project experiences. Several considerations, however, caution against this speculation. First, we do not know what proportion of students in the schools involved, or in the Bay Area generally, have average grades of D or F. We cannot, therefore, know whether the proportions shown for the project group are representative. Secondly, we do not know the distribution of average grades for students who did not take the questionnaire due to absence. School personnel in general report that absenteeism is highest among those who are least successful in school. If this is indeed the case, the proportion of very low achieving students (as indicated by grades) who participated to some extent in the project is higher than it appears from Table 6.

Important Variations

Some interesting differences within the project and between the project and comparison groups should be noted. Table 1 shows slightly more males than females (353 and 316, respectively) for the project group. The distribution of males and females into ethnic groups is highly similar except for the white and black categories. Whereas there is a greater percentage of males among whites (59.3 percent of whites are males and 40.7 percent are females), the reverse is true for blacks (43.0 percent of blacks are males and 57.0 percent are females). Accordingly, the percentage of males who are white (58.9 percent) is larger than the percentage of females who are white (45.2 percent), with the reversed situation

for males who are black (15.6 percent) and females who are black (23.1 percent). The data presented in Table 2 show a different picture for the comparison group students. Here females outnumber males (125 to 108), and the percentage of females who are white (68.8 percent) is greater than the percentage of males who are white (56.5 percent)--just the reverse of the project group. White students are represented more heavily in the comparison group (63.2 percent) than among project participants (52.6 percent); accordingly, there is a greater proportion of minority students in the project group. Though the comparison group has a larger percentage of Asian students, it has a smaller percentage of black students, and, in contrast to the project group, almost no students identifying themselves as Chicano or Latino.

Variations among SES distributions for project ethnic groups is quite apparent in Table 3. (For this Table and for Table 4, all ethnic categories appearing in Table 1 except white and black have been combined into the category "All Others.") The most striking differences are between white and black categories. For example, approximately half of the white students (50.7 percent) are in the two highest levels compared to 13.6 percent of the black students. Over one-third of the black students (34.1 percent) appear in the lowest SES category compared to only 10.8 percent of the white students.

The data given in Table 4 concerning SES levels for the comparison group indicate, in general, that this group had a greater proportion of students toward the high end of the SES scale than the project group and a smaller proportion toward the low end of the SES scale. The pattern is

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

95

particularly evident for the white and "All Others" categories. For example, close to one-third (31.2 percent) of the project non-black minority students ("All Others") were in the two highest SES levels compared to half (50.9 percent) of the comparison group's non-black minority students. Along the same lines, 43.3 percent of white project students appear in the two lowest SES levels compared to only slightly more than one-fourth (26.4 percent) of the comparison group whites.

Further indication of differences between the project and comparison groups taking the questionnaire can be seen in Table 7. The proportion of younger students--ages 14, 15 and 16--is greater in the comparison than in the project group.

#### Educational Intentions

With respect to educational plans (Tables 8 and 9), a greater percentage of the comparison group than the project group indicated intention to graduate from a four-year college. A similar difference appears for students intending to go to professional or graduate school after college. Combining these two categories gives the percentage of students indicating intentions to pursue at least four years of post high school studies--53.9 percent for project students in contrast to 66.7 percent for comparison group students. At the other end of the educational experience scale, slightly higher percentages of project than comparison group students view high school graduation as terminal (10.8 percent of the project group and 4.6 percent of the comparison group); the same is true for students intending to go to technical, nursing or business school after graduation from high school (9.7 percent of the project group and 6.3 percent of the

TABLE 8

Educational intentions of legal education project students within ethnic groups.

Ethnic Groups	Educational Intentions								Total
	Might not finish high sch.	Finish high sch. only	Tech./nurs./ bus. sch.	Some college	Four yrs. college	Grad. sch. after college	Don't know	NR	
White	1 (0.3)	25 (7.1)	23 (6.5)	55 (15.7)	119 (33.9)	86 (24.5)	40 (11.4)	2 (0.6)	351 (100%)
Black	1 (0.8)	20 (15.2)	25 (18.9)	16 (12.1)	44 (33.3)	20 (15.2)	5 (3.8)	1 (0.7)	132 (100%)
All others	0	27 (14.5)	17 (9.1)	30 (16.1)	46 (24.7)	46 (24.7)	20 (10.8)	0	186 (100%)
Total	2 (0.3)	72 (10.8)	65 (9.7)	101 (15.1)	209 (31.2)	152 (22.7)	65 (9.7)	3 (0.4)	669 (100%)

TABLE 9

Educational intentions of comparison group students within ethnic groups.

Ethnic groups	Educational Intentions								Total
	Might not finish high sch.	Finish high sch. only	Tech./nurs./ bus. sch.	Some college	Four yrs. college	Grad. sch. after college	Don't know	NR	
White	0	8 (5.4)	8 (5.4)	15 (10.1)	56 (37.8)	44 (29.7)	15 (10.1)	2 (1.4)	148 (100%)
Black	0	2 (5.9)	4 (11.8)	9 (26.4)	12 (35.3)	4 (11.8)	3 (8.8)	0	34 (100%)
All others	0	1 (1.8)	3 (5.5)	5 (9.1)	21 (38.2)	21 (38.2)	4 (7.3)	0	55 (100%)
Total	0	11 (4.6)	15 (6.3)	29 (12.2)	89 (37.6)	69 (29.1)	22 (9.3)	2 (0.9)	237 (100%)

TABLE 10

Distribution of educational intentions of project students within SES levels. (N = 614)

SES levels	Educational Intentions								Total
	Might not finish high sch.	Finish high sch. only	Tech./nurs./ bus. sch.	Some college	Four yrs. college	Grad. sch. after college	Don't know	NR	
Highest	1 (0.7)	13 (8.8)	5 (3.4)	11 (7.5)	48 (32.7)	54 (36.7)	15 (10.2)	0	147 (100%)
Second	0	7 (6.3)	7 (6.3)	13 (12.6)	34 (30.6)	38 (34.2)	11 (9.9)	0	111 (100%)
Third	1 (0.5)	24 (10.8)	22 (9.9)	46 (20.7)	74 (33.3)	33 (14.9)	20 (9.0)	2 (0.9)	222 (100%)
Lowest	0	18 (13.4)	23 (17.2)	20 (14.9)	42 (31.3)	19 (14.2)	12 (9.0)	0	134 (100%)

TABLE 11

Distribution of educational intentions of comparison group students within SES levels. (N = 216)

SES levels	Educational Intentions								Total
	Might not finish high sch.	Finish high sch. only	Tech./nurs./ bus. sch.	Some college	Four yrs. college	Grad. sch. after college	Don't know	NR	
Highest	0	3 (3.3)	2 (2.2)	9 (9.9)	38 (41.8)	36 (39.6)	3 (3.3)	0	91 (100%)
Second	0	0	6 (14.3)	4 (9.5)	17 (40.5)	9 (21.4)	6 (14.3)	0	42 (100%)
Third	0	4 (7.4)	2 (3.7)	7 (13.0)	19 (35.2)	15 (27.8)	7 (13.0)	0	54 (100%)
Lowest	0	1 (3.5)	5 (17.2)	7 (24.1)	7 (24.1)	5 (17.2)	3 (10.3)	1 (3.5)	29 (100%)

comparison-group). All of these differences are not inconsistent with the variation between SES and ethnic composition already reported for the two groups--assuming, of course, that a relationship exists between educational intentions and SES level, on one hand, and ethnic groupings, on the other. These assumptions are supported by various data appearing in Tables 8-11. In general, minority students and students in the two lower SES levels show higher percentages than others of intending only to finish high school and intending to attend technical, nursing or business school after high school graduation. White students and students in the first two SES levels in the project show higher percentages than others in intending to receive at least four years of academic work after high school graduation.

#### Contact with the Law - Police

Several questionnaire items deal with students' previous contact with agents of the law. Two ask if they or a close friend or relative ever had an unpleasant experience with a police officer. Tables 12 and 13 summarize the results for project males and females, respectively. In reading the tables, it is important to bear in mind that individuals who responded "yes" to both a personal and "a close friend or relative" unpleasant experience are included in the category "personal" and are not included in the category "friend or relative."

The patterns for project males and females are dissimilar. Males indicated by a greater percentage (47.3 percent) what they perceived as unpleasant police experience than females (28.8 percent). A smaller percentage of males (24.8 percent) than of females (33.0 percent) responded



TABLE 12

Experience with a police officer within ethnic groups for male project students.

Unpleasant police exp.	Ethnic Groups				
	White	Black	Asian	All Others	Total
Personal	103 (49.5)	26 (47.3)	10 (31.3)	27 (48.2)	166 (47.3)
Friend or relative (no pers. exp.)	53 (25.5)	21 (38.2)	10 (31.3)	9 (16.1)	93 (26.5)
Neither	50 (24.0)	7 (12.7)	12 (37.5)	18 (32.1)	87 (24.8)
NR	2 (1.0)	1 (1.8)	0	2 (3.6)	5 (1.4)
Total	208 (100%)	55 (100%)	32 (100%)	56 (100%)	351 (100%)

TABLE 13

Experience with a police officer within ethnic groups for female project students.

Unpleasant police exp.	Ethnic Groups				
	White	Black	Asian	All Others	Total
Personal	48 (33.6)	19 (26.0)	5 (18.5)	18 (26.1)	90 (28.8)
Friend or relative (no pers. exp.)	44 (30.8)	38 (52.1)	5 (18.5)	26 (37.7)	113 (36.2)
Neither	49 (34.3)	13 (17.8)	17 (63.0)	24 (34.8)	103 (33.0)
NR	2 (1.4)	3 (4.1)	0	1 (1.4)	6 (1.9)
Total	143 (100%)	73 (100%)	27 (100%)	69 (100%)	312 (100%)

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

99

that neither they themselves nor a close friend or relative had had an unpleasant experience. These patterns of differences between males and females appear within ethnic groups in Tables 12 and 13 as well as for the project group as a whole.

Differences also appear among the distributions for ethnic groups in response to the question about unpleasant police experience. The "neither" category shows particularly marked variation with both black males and females showing percentages considerably smaller than others. The distribution for Asians, both males and females, shows a considerably lower percentage for the category "personal" than other groups and a higher percentage than others for "neither." The distributions for non-black minority students ("All Others") show less overall indication of unpleasant police experience than for either white or black groups, e.g., the smaller percentage (21.2 percent) of females indicating personal unpleasant experience, the smaller percentage of males indicating "close friend or relative" experience, the larger percentage for both males and females in the "neither" category.

In summary, males reported what they believe to be an unpleasant police experience more frequently than females, blacks more frequently than other ethnic groups, Asians less frequently than other ethnic groups, and non-black minority students less frequently than either whites or blacks. High proportions, roughly three-fourths (73.7 percent) of project males and two-thirds (65.1 percent) of project females, indicated that they had had an unpleasant experience with a police officer or had a close friend or relative with a similar experience or both. It should be emphasized that in all cases

TABLE 14

Distribution of appearances of male students in the project before a judge or juvenile authority for violations or criminal offenses within ethnic groups.

Appearance for violation or criminal offense	Ethnic Groups				
	White	Black	Asian	All Others	Total
Yes	58 (27.9)	13 (23.6)	3 (9.4)	16 (28.6)	90 (25.6)
No	150 (72.1)	41 (74.6)	29 (90.6)	39 (69.6)	259 (73.8)
NR	0	1 (1.8)	0	1 (1.8)	2 (0.6)
Total	208 (100%)	55 (100%)	32 (100%)	56 (100%)	351 (100%)

TABLE 15

Distribution of appearances of female students in the project before a judge or juvenile authority for violations or criminal offenses within ethnic groups.

Appearance for violation or criminal offense	Ethnic Groups				
	White	Black	Asian	All Others	Total
Yes	21 (14.7)	14 (19.2)	0	8 (11.6)	43 (13.8)
No	122 (85.3)	58 (79.4)	27 (100.)	61 (88.4)	268 (85.9)
NR	0	1 (1.4)	0	0	1 (0.3)
Total	143 (100%)	73 (100%)	27 (100%)	69 (100%)	312 (100%)

TABLE 16

Distribution of appearances of male students in the comparison group before a judge or juvenile authority for violations or criminal offenses within ethnic groups.

Appearance for violation or criminal offense	Ethnic Groups				
	White	Black	Asian	All Others	Total
Yes	26 (42.6)	3 (17.7)	1 (4.6)	22 (25.0)	32 (29.6)
No	34 (55.8)	14 (82.3)	21 (95.4)	6 (75.0)	75 (69.4)
NR	1 (1.6)	0	0	0	1 (0.9)
Total	61 (100%)	17 (100%)	22 (100%)	8 (100%)	108 (100%)

TABLE 17

Distribution of appearances of female students in the comparison group before a judge or juvenile authority for violations or criminal offenses within ethnic groups.

Appearance for violation or criminal offense	Ethnic Groups				
	White	Black	Asian	All Others	Total
Yes	7 (8.1)	1 (6.7)	0	1 (7.7)	9 (7.2)
No	79 (91.9)	14 (93.3)	11 (100.)	12 (92.3)	116 (92.8)
Total	86 (100%)	15 (100%)	11 (100%)	13 (100%)	125 <sup>a</sup> (100%)

<sup>a</sup>There were no students in the no response category.

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

101

individuals were responding to their own subjective criteria for "unpleasant."

Contact with the Law - Court Appearance

One questionnaire item asks students if they have "appeared before a judge or juvenile authority after being charged with a violation or criminal offense." An individual making such an appearance could have been summoned for allegedly committing a traffic offense (for which appearance before a juvenile authority is required for those 17 years of age or under). Tables 14 and 15 summarize the responses of project students; Tables 16 and 17, the responses of the comparison group. Considerably higher percentages of "yes" answers appear for males than for females both for project and for comparison group students as a whole as well as within the various ethnic groups indicated. Over one-fourth of the project males and the comparison group males reported, in effect, having been arrested or summoned before a juvenile authority. Asian students, both in the project and comparison groups, indicated an exceedingly low incidence of such arrests or appearances in contrast to other ethnic groups.

Within the project group, the distributions of answers for white and black students are quite similar indicating that for project students, the incidence of court or youth guidance center appearances was not higher among black students.

We were interested in whether the proportion of students reporting what they perceived as an unpleasant experience with a police officer could be attributed to those students who were arrested and charged with

TABLE 18

Distribution of appearances of students in the project before a judge or juvenile authority for violations or criminal offenses within each level of an unpleasant police experience. (N = 666)

Appearance for violation or criminal offense	Unpleasant police experience		
	Personal	Friend or relative (no pers. exp.)	Neither
Yes	99 (38.2)	25 (11.7)	11 (5.7)
No	160 (61.8)	188 (88.3)	182 (93.8)
NR	0	0	1 (0.5)
Total	259 (100%)	213 (100%)	194 (100%)

TABLE 19

Distribution of appearances of students in the comparison group before a judge or juvenile authority for violations or criminal offenses within each level of an unpleasant police experience. (N = 236)

Appearance for violation or criminal offense	Unpleasant police experience		
	Personal	Friend or relative (no pers. exp.)	Neither
Yes	37 (43.0)	2 (3.0)	3 (3.6)
No	48 (55.8)	64 (97.0)	81 (96.4)
NR	1 (1.2)	0	0
Total	86 (100%)	66 (100%)	84 (100%)

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

103

violations requiring some kind of court or youth guidance center appearance. Tables 18 and 19 summarize police experience responses by responses concerning such an appearance for project and comparison groups, respectively. In both, for students indicating an unpleasant personal experience with a police officer, the percentage reporting no such appearances is appreciably higher than the percentage answering "yes" to a court or youth center appearance. Apparently, there are even students (11 in the project and 3 in the comparison group) who did not consider being charged with a violation or criminal offense as involving an unpleasant experience with a police officer.

#### Law Career

Of interest to the project coordinators and staff is whether or not experience in the project had any influence on student consideration of a career in law. Two questionnaire items refer to this area. One asks about present outlook; the other asks whether the legal education course had an effect on this outlook. Here is the first item:

Are you considering law as a possible career?

- a. Yes, it is the career I plan to go into.
- b. Yes, it is one of a few careers I am considering.
- c. It is only a slight possibility.
- d. I definitely do not want to go into law as a career.
- e. Undecided.

Tables 20 and 21 summarize the responses of project and comparison group students for males and females separately and combined. As might be anticipated from present patterns among American professions, a greater

TABLE 20

Distribution of project males' and females' possible law career plans.

Sex	Possible law career plans						Total
	a. Yes	b. One of several	c. Only slight	d. No	e. Undecided	NR	
Males	34 (9.6)	64 (18.1)	91 (25.8)	110 (31.2)	48 (13.6)	6 (1.7)	353 (100%)
Females	17 (5.4)	41 (13.0)	70 (22.1)	142 (45.9)	42 (13.3)	4 (1.3)	316 (100%)
Total	51 (7.6)	105 (15.7)	161 (24.1)	252 (37.7)	90 (13.4)	10 (1.5)	669 (100%)

TABLE 21

Distribution of comparison group males' and females' possible law career plans.

Sex	Possible law career plans						Total
	a. Yes	b. One of several	c. Only slight	d. No	e. Undecided	NR	
Males	4 (3.7)	19 (17.6)	27 (25.0)	37 (34.3)	19 (17.5)	2 (1.9)	108 (100%)
Females	3 (2.4)	15 (12.0)	25 (20.0)	72 (57.6)	10 (8.0)	0	125 (100%)
Total	7 (3.0)	34 (14.6)	52 (22.3)	109 (46.8)	29 (12.4)	2 (0.9)	233 (100%)

TABLE 22

Percent of students within ethnic groups rejecting law as a possible career.

	Ethnic Groups					
	White		Black		All Others	
	Project	Comparison	Project	Comparison	Project	Comparison
Number	138	65	54	17	58	27
Percent of group	39.3	44.2	42.2	53.1	31.5	50.0

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

105

percentage of males than of females in the project and in the comparison group indicated that they view law as the career into which they intend to enter or as one of several being given serious consideration (responses a. and b.). Conversely, a greater percentage of females than of males rejected law as a possible career (response d.).

Project students responded with only slightly higher percentages in the three categories indicating some degree of interest in a law career (a., b. and c.). The largest difference appears for the response rejecting law as a career (response d.), 46.8 percent for the comparison group in contrast to 37.7 percent for the project group.

A comparison of the proportion of students within ethnic groups rejecting law as a career gives further evidence of possible course influences. Table 22 summarizes these data for both project and comparison group students. In each case, the percentage for project students is lower than that for the comparison group, and in the case of both black and non-black ("All Others") minority groups, the difference is quite dramatic: 42.2 percent compared to 53.1 percent, 31.5 percent compared to 50.0 percent!

A large percentage of project students (46 percent of the males responding and 41 percent of the females responding) indicated increased interest in law as a possible career due to the course, in response to this question:

What effect did this course have on your possible plans for a career in law?

- a. Has made me more interested in law as a possible career.



- b. Has made me less interested in law as a possible career.
- c. No effect.

Within ethnic groups 43.3 percent of white students responding, 38.7 percent of black students responding, and 47.9 percent of non-black minority students indicated increased interest due to the course, with less than 10 percent for each group indicating decreased interest.

Can the apparent influence of the course on law career plans be attributed to prior interests and dispositions of students who elected to be included in the legal education project? Of the 276 project students responding that the course increased their interest in law as a possible career, 112, or 40.6 percent, had elected to take the course. Of the 53 students indicating that law is the career they intend to pursue, half (50.9 percent) were students who had elected to be included in the project. It turns out, however, that those able to elect the course were predominantly white students (79.3 percent). Thus the apparent (and relatively weak) influence on white students' law career plans can to some extent be attributed to the predispositions of white students opting to take the legal education course. The apparently stronger influence on minority students' plans, however--particularly the trend toward not rejecting law as a possible career--cannot be explained in this fashion and the hypothesis in this area of course effects on minority students is strengthened.

#### Should There Be High School Legal Education?

Table 23 summarizes the project students' opinions regarding the desirability of legal education in high schools. At least one-third of the

TABLE 23

Opinions of project students regarding desirability of high school legal education within ethnic groups. (N = 631\*)

Opinion on legal education	Ethnic Groups		
	White	Black	All Others
Should be required	122 (35.6)	41 (36.0)	74 (42.5)
Should be elective	218 (63.6)	67 (58.8)	94 (54.0)
Not necessary	2 (0.6)	2 (1.8)	1 (0.6)
No course	1 (0.3)	4 (3.5)	5 (2.9)
Total	343 (100%)	114 (100%)	174 (100%)

TABLE 24

Percentages of project students within each SES level indicating that legal education should be required and an elective.

Legal education	SES levels			
	Highest	Second	Third	Lowest
Should be required	37.4%	39.6%	35.5%	33.3%
Should be elective	59.2%	56.8%	54.5%	56.1%

\* This table excludes 19 no responses and the responses of 27 students who took the comparison group questionnaire that did not include this question.

TABLE 25

Opinions of project students within ethnic groups regarding the importance of law students to high school legal education projects.

Law student importance	Ethnic Groups								Total
	White	Black	Asian	Chicano	Latino	Filipino	Other	NR	
Very important	120 (34.6)	46 (38.7)	12 (21.0)	16 (43.2)	15 (48.4)	8 (36.4)	9 (31.0)	9 (34.6)	228 (35.1)
Important	210 (60.5)	58 (48.7)	40 (70.2)	19 (51.4)	15 (48.4)	14 (63.6)	17 (58.7)	14 (53.5)	377 (58.0)
Unimportant	11 (3.2)	8 (6.7)	3 (5.3)	2 (5.4)	0	0	1 (3.4)	1 (3.9)	25 (3.9)
Should not be involved	1 (0.3)	4 (3.4)	4 (1.8)	0	1 (3.2)	0	2 (6.9)	2 (8.0)	10 (1.5)
NR	5 (1.4)	3 (2.5)	1 (1.8)	0	0	0	0	0	10 (1.5)
Total	347 (100%)	119 (100%)	57 (100%)	37 (100%)	31 (100%)	22 (100%)	29 (100%)	26 (100%)	650 <sup>a</sup> (100%)

<sup>a</sup> This table excludes 27 students who took the comparison group questionnaire that did not include this question.

white, black and non-black minorities ("All Others") indicated that legal education should be required. Over half of the students in each group responded that legal education should be an elective. In contrast very small percentages indicated that such education is not necessary in high school or that there should be no course at all. It is interesting to note, however that minority students did show higher percentages than white students in these two latter categories--a total of 5 percent of black students and more than 3 percent of non-black minority students.

With regard to socio-economic status, the distribution of responses within SES levels is strikingly similar. The percentages of the various SES groups indicating that high school legal education should be required and the percentages indicating that legal education should be an elective in high school appear in Table 24.

#### Importance of Law Students

Of particular interest to the project staff is the opinion of students regarding the contribution of law students to legal education programs. These are summarized in Table 25 by ethnic groups. A very high percentage (93.1 percent) of all project participants indicated that law students were at least "important"; over one-third of all ethnic groups, except Asian and "Other," responded "very important" as did almost half (48.4 percent) of the Latino group. Black students as a group appear less convinced of the value of law students to high school legal education as evidenced by the fact that one-tenth (10.1 percent) circled the "unimportant" or "should not be involved" responses and that the combined percent for "important" and

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

109

"very important" (87.4), though quite favorable to law students, is lower than that for any other ethnic group.

Fairness of the Courts

In response to a question about the fairness of the courts, the various ethnic groups exhibited differing patterns of answers. The distributions for project students are summarized in Table 26. Black students as a group tended to view the courts as less often fair than did other ethnic groups, exhibiting the highest combined percentage (12.9 percent) for the two lowest response categories, and the lowest combined percentage (43.2 percent) for the two categories indicating court fairness. Asian, Chicano and Filipino students, in contrast, tended to rate the courts as more often fair than did other ethnic groups. Among these three groups, only one student indicated that the courts are either "almost always unfair" or "always unfair." Approximately two-thirds of each of the Asian and Chicano students' responses (66.1 and 65.8 percents, respectively) are in the categories indicating court fairness; 80 percent of the Filipino students' responses were also in these two categories.

Table 27 compares the ratings for those project students who have appeared before a judge or juvenile authority after being charged with a violation or criminal offense with those project students who have not had such an experience. It is interesting to note that the students who have not been charged with a violation or criminal offense tend to rate the courts as more often fair, though the trend is not a marked one. A comparison of the opinions of project and of comparison group students who have so appeared

TABLE 26

Distribution of opinions of project students within ethnic groups regarding the fairness of courts.

Courts	Ethnic Groups								Total
	White	Black	Asian	Chicano	Latino	Filipino	Other	NR	
Always fair	10 (2.8)	8 (6.1)	6 (10.2)	2 (5.3)	4 (12.5)	8 (32.0)	2 (6.3)	1 (12.5)	41 (6.1)
Fair except rarely	188 (53.6)	49 (37.1)	33 (55.9)	23 (60.5)	14 (43.8)	12 (48.0)	13 (40.6)	2 (25.0)	334 (49.3)
Often unfair	127 (36.2)	48 (36.4)	19 (32.2)	12 (31.6)	8 (25.0)	3 (12.0)	13 (40.6)	2 (25.0)	232 (34.3)
Almost always unfair	5 (1.4)	12 (9.1)	0	0	1 (3.1)	0	0	2 (25.0)	20 (2.9)
Always unfair	1 (0.3)	5 (3.8)	0	0	0	1 (4.0)	1 (3.1)	0	8 (1.2)
NR	20 (5.7)	10 (7.6)	1 (1.7)	1 (2.6)	5 (15.6)	1 (4.0)	3 (9.4)	1 (12.5)	42 (6.2)
Total	351 (100%)	132 (100%)	59 (100%)	38 (100%)	32 (100%)	25 (100%)	32 (100%)	8 (100%)	677 (100%)

TABLE 27

Distribution of project student opinions of court fairness for those charged with and those not charged with a violation or criminal offense. (N = 674)

Appearance for violation or criminal offense	Opinion of courts						Total
	Always fair	Fair except rarely	Often Unfair	Almost always unfair	Always unfair	NR	
Yes	6 (4.4)	59 (43.4)	53 (40.0)	4 (2.9)	3 (2.2)	11 (8.1)	136 (100%)
No	35 (6.5)	274 (50.9)	179 (33.3)	15 (2.8)	5 (0.9)	30 (5.6)	538 (100%)

TABLE 28

Distribution of opinions of court fairness for project and comparison groups students who have appeared before a judge or juvenile authority.

Group	Opinion of courts						Total
	Always fair	Fair except rarely	Often Unfair	Almost always unfair	Always unfair	NR	
Project	6 (4.4)	59 (43.4)	53 (39.0)	4 (2.9)	3 (2.2)	11 (8.1)	136 (100%)
Comparison	3 (7.1)	12 (28.6)	21 (50.0)	2 (4.8)	0	4 (9.5)	42 (100%)

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

111

before a judge or juvenile authority (Table 28) shows a tendency on the part of the project group to rate the courts more often fair, suggesting that the legal education project may have in this area affected the opinions of students charged with violations or criminal offenses.

The data in Table 29 indicate that visits to either a criminal or civil court by project students did not appear to have an effect on opinions of court fairness since the distributions in these columns and the one for students not visiting any court are highly similar. In contrast, students visiting both criminal and civil courts show a lower percentage than others in the "fair except rarely" category and a higher percentage than others in the "often unfair" category, suggesting that visits to both types of courts may have somehow influenced a number of students to feel the courts are less often fair than they once thought. This bears much further investigation, however, since a number of alternative explanations may account for the observed pattern--such as the potential influence of particular criminal trials seen by the various groups.

Table 30 gives the ratings of project students who engaged in mock trials in their classes and those in classes where mock trials were not held. The data indicate a weak tendency for students in classes carrying out mock trials to consider the courts more often fair than students without this experience--witness the difference in percentages for the "fair except rarely" column (51.9 percent compared to 43.5 percent) and the "almost always unfair" column (1.9 percent compared to 5.3 percent). Future programs involving mock trials should be investigated for further

TABLE 29

Distribution of project student opinions of court fairness for type of court visit. (N = 677)

Opinion of courts	Type of court visit			
	Criminal	Civil	Both	None
Always fair	30 (8.8)	5 (4.9)	3 (1.8)	3 (4.3)
Fair except rarely	178 (52.3)	52 (51.5)	70 (41.9)	34 (49.3)
Often unfair	104 (30.6)	31 (30.7)	74 (44.3)	23 (33.3)
Almost always unfair	8 (2.4)	2 (2.0)	8 (4.8)	2 (2.9)
Always unfair	5 (1.5)	1 (1.0)	1 (0.6)	1 (1.5)
NR	15 (4.4)	10 (9.9)	11 (6.6)	6 (8.7)
Total	340 (100%)	101 (100%)	167 (100%)	69 (100%)

TABLE 30

Opinions of court fairness for project students with and without mock trial experience. (N = 677)

Mock trial	Opinion of courts						Total
	Always fair	Fair except rarely	Often Unfair	Almost always unfair	Always unfair	NR	
Yes	27 (5.8)	243 (51.9)	157 (33.5)	9 (1.9)	5 (1.1)	27 (5.8)	468 (100%)
No	14 (6.7)	91 (43.5)	75 (35.9)	11 (5.3)	3 (1.4)	15 (7.2)	209 (100%)

evidence in this area.

Seeking Police Assistance

Two questionnaire items were drawn from Bouma's book *Kids and Cops*.<sup>5</sup> One concerns seeking police aid; the other, police accusations. To parallel Bouma's questions used in a study of the opinions of 10,000 youth in Michigan, a "not sure" category was included in our responses. The question about police aid follows:

If you needed help, would you go to a policeman?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure.

Table 31 summarizes project students' responses for the total group and for ethnic groups. Almost half (48.3 percent) of the total group indicated they would go to a policeman if in need of help (Bouma reports 57 percent for his total group); ten percent responded "no" (Bouma: 22 percent); well over one-third (38.2 percent) responded "not sure" (Bouma: 21 percent). Differences among ethnic groups are apparent. Black students and those in the "All Others" category indicated being less inclined than white and Asian students to seek police assistance. Close to one-third (35.2 percent) of the black students said they would seek help if needed (Bouma reports 54 percent for black students), but over one-sixth (17.2 percent) said they would not seek police help (Bouma: 24 percent for black students). In contrast, well over half of the white students

5. Ibid.



TABLE 31

Distribution of responses of project students to "If you needed help, would you go to a policeman?" within ethnic groups.

Seek police help	Ethnic Groups				Total
	White	Black	Asian	Others	
Yes	195 (55.6)	45 (35.2)	30 (50.8)	50 (40.0)	320 (48.3)
No	23 (6.6)	22 (17.2)	2 (3.4)	20 (16.0)	67 (10.1)
Not sure	124 (35.3)	52 (40.6)	27 (45.8)	50 (40.0)	253 (38.2)
NR	9 (2.6)	9 (7.0)	0	5 (4.0)	23 (3.5)
Total	351 (100%)	128 (100%)	59 (100%)	125 (100%)	663 (100%)

TABLE 32

Responses to question about seeking police help for project students with different police experiences. (N = 666)

Seek police help	Unpleasant police experience		
	Friend or relative (no pers. exp.)		
	Personal	Neither	
Yes	97 (37.5)	105 (49.3)	125 (64.4)
No	34 (13.1)	20 (9.4)	12 (6.2)
Not sure	112 (43.2)	83 (39.0)	56 (28.9)
NR	16 (6.2)	5 (2.4)	1 (0.5)
Total	259 (100%)	213 (100%)	194 (100%)

TABLE 33

Responses to question about seeking police help for those project students who have and who have not appeared before a judge or juvenile authority for violations or offenses. (N = 674)

Seek police help	Appearance for violation or criminal offense	
	Yes	No
Yes	56 (41.2)	273 (50.7)
No	23 (16.9)	44 (8.2)
Not sure	49 (36.0)	206 (38.3)
NR	8 (5.9)	15 (2.8)
Total	136 (100%)	538 (100%)

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

115

indicated they would seek police help and only 6.6 percent said they would not.

Do previous experiences with the law influence students' opinions regarding whether they would seek police assistance? The data in Table 32 suggest that perceived unpleasant experience with a policeman is related to opinion about seeking police aid. The relationship appears stronger if the experience has included personal unpleasant contact than if it has been confined to close friends or relatives. For instance, a little over one-third (37.5 percent) of project students with "personal" experiences indicated they would seek help in contrast to roughly half (49.3 percent) of the students in the "friend or relative" category (almost two-thirds, 64.4 percent, of those in the "neither" category answered "yes"). The tendency of opinion to be related to the degree of personal involvement also appears in the "not sure" category: 29 percent for students with neither "personal" nor "friend or relative" unpleasant experience; 39 percent for "friend or relative" unpleasant experience; 43 percent for "personal" unpleasant experience.

The pattern of a much larger proportion of whites than of blacks in the project who would seek police assistance holds within each level of an unpleasant experience with a police officer for each sex except for those females who have had a personal unpleasant experience with a police officer. In that category, however, 16 percent of black females with such an experience said they would not seek police assistance compared to 2 percent of white females with a personal unpleasant police experience. In addition, the association of a larger proportion for students who would not

seek police assistance with a more personal level of an unpleasant experience with a police officer holds within black and white ethnic groups in the project.

Table 33 summarizes responses of students who appeared on a charge in court or before a juvenile authority and those without such experience. Differences in opinion do appear, with students who have appeared in court or before a juvenile authority showing a tendency to seek police help less than students without such experience. The differences, however, are not as great as for the comparisons among other sub-groupings of project students reported above--such as, the difference in opinion between black and white students and the difference between students reporting unpleasant police experience and those reporting no such experience.

#### Accused by the Police

The second questionnaire item from Bouma's study is:

Do you think police accuse you of things you didn't even do?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure.

Table 34 summarizes the responses for the total project group and for ethnic groups. Over two-thirds (68.7 percent) of the black students answered "yes" in contrast to appreciably smaller percentages for the other ethnic groups. (Bouma: white - 36 percent; black - 68 percent). Asian students show a smaller percentage (28.8 percent) than the others in the "yes" category, and a considerably higher proportion (almost half - 49.2

TABLE 34

Distribution of responses of project students to "Do you think police accuse you of things you didn't even do?" within ethnic groups.

False police accusation	Ethnic Groups				Total
	White	Black	Asian	All Others	
Yes	128 (36.5)	88 (68.7)	17 (28.8)	44 (35.2)	277 (41.8)
No	100 (28.5)	12 (9.4)	12 (20.4)	26 (20.8)	150 (22.6)
Not sure	113 (32.2)	21 (16.4)	29 (49.2)	49 (39.2)	212 (32.0)
NR	10 (2.9)	7 (5.5)	1 (1.7)	6 (4.8)	24 (3.6)
Total	351 (100%)	128 (100%)	59 (100%)	125 (100%)	663 (100%)

TABLE 35

Distribution of opinions regarding police accusations for male (M) and female (F) project students within ethnic groups. (N = 663)

False police accusation	Ethnic Groups									
	White		Black		Asian		All Others		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Yes	83 (39.9)	45 (31.5)	40 (72.2)	48 (65.8)	9 (28.1)	8 (29.6)	22 (39.3)	22 (31.9)	154 (43.9)	123 (39.4)
No	76 (36.5)	24 (16.8)	6 (10.9)	6 (8.2)	6 (18.8)	6 (22.2)	14 (25.0)	12 (17.4)	102 (29.1)	48 (15.4)
Not sure	45 (21.6)	68 (47.6)	4 (7.3)	17 (23.3)	17 (53.1)	12 (44.4)	18 (32.1)	31 (44.9)	84 (23.9)	128 (41.0)
NR	4 (1.9)	6 (4.2)	5 (9.1)	2 (2.7)	0	1 (3.7)	2 (3.6)	4 (5.8)	11 (3.1)	13 (4.2)
Total	208 (100%)	143 (100%)	55 (100%)	73 (100%)	32 (100%)	27 (100%)	56 (100%)	69 (100%)	351 (100%)	312 (100%)

percent) of Asian students than others marked "not sure." (Bouma found 23 percent of his total group responded "not sure"; he did not report results separately for Asian students.) With respect to this latter category, black students appear more secure about their answers, showing 16.4 percent "not sure" (Bouma: 16 percent), in contrast to other groups (for example: whites - 32.2 percent; Bouma reports 27 percent for whites).

Table 35 summarizes male (M) and female (F) responses regarding false police accusations. For all ethnic groups except Asian, females have smaller percentages than males in the "yes" and "no" categories and larger percentages than males in the "not sure" categories. This latter difference is particularly large for whites (male: 21.6 percent; female: 47.6 percent) and blacks (male: 7.3 percent; female: 23.3 percent). The Asian group shows a reverse pattern of sex differences: larger percentages for females than males in the "yes" and "no" categories; a smaller percentage than males in the "not sure" category.

Perception of unpleasant police experience appears to be related to opinion regarding false police accusation. In Table 36, the percentage of "yes" responses to false police accusations increases steadily and noticeably as police experience becomes more personal ("neither": 20.6 percent; "friend or relative": 41.8 percent; "personal": 57.5 percent). Conversely, the percentage of "not sure" responses increases as the experience becomes less personal ("personal": 19.7 percent; "friend or relative": 37.1 percent; "neither": 44.3 percent). Similar patterns are seen in Table 37: students who appeared in court or before a juvenile

TABLE 36

Opinions regarding false police accusations for project students with different police experiences. (N = 666)

False police accusation	Unpleasant police experience		
	Personal	Friend or relative (no pers. exp.)	Neither
Yes	149 (57.5)	89 (41.8)	40 (20.6)
No	51 (19.7)	39 (18.3)	59 (30.4)
Not sure	51 (19.7)	79 (37.1)	86 (44.3)
NR	8 (3.1)	6 (2.8)	9 (4.6)
Total	259 (100%)	213 (100%)	194 (100%)

TABLE 37

Opinions regarding false police accusations for project students with different court-juvenile authority experiences. (N = 674)

False police accusation	Appearance in court or before a juvenile authority	
	Yes	No
Yes	75 (55.2)	206 (38.3)
No	30 (22.1)	120 (22.3)
Not sure	25 (18.4)	194 (36.1)
NR	6 (4.4)	18 (3.4)
Total	136 (100%)	538 (100%)

authority report a higher percent of false police accusation and a lower percent of "not sure" responses than do students without court or juvenile authority experiences. Of interest is the near identical percentages in the "no" category. Apparently 30 of the students who appeared in court or before a juvenile authority do not feel the police accuse them of things they "didn't even do" despite the fact that they presumably have been accused and charged with violations of the law.

#### Scaled Opinion Questions

About half of the responses in the project group were on the disagreement side of the scale for the statement of question 20, "The Constitution and the Bill of Rights (the first ten amendments) have little meaning to present day society," and one-fourth were in category 7 (Strongly Disagree). (See Figure 1.) The responses, however, varied among ethnic groups. Blacks, Latinos and Filipinos each had a larger proportion on the lower side (in the direction of agreement) at each level of the scale than did Asians or whites. (See Table 38 and, for the comparison between blacks and whites, see Figure 2.) This difference between blacks and whites is also present in the comparison group. A higher level of socio-economic status (SES) was associated with a stronger level of disagreement among those in the project. (Goodman-Kruskal  $\gamma^6 = .22$ ) Nevertheless, the

6. If you selected two individuals at random from the respondents in the program group and knew that they were not in the same SES class and had different responses, then gamma is the difference in the probabilities that their SES classes and responses occur in like order (one of the individuals is higher on both) and in unlike order. See Leo A. Goodman and William H. Kruskal, "Measures of Association for Cross Classifications," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 49 (1954): 732-764.

Question 20. The Constitution and the Bill of Rights (the first ten amendments) have little meaning to present day society. (N = 667)

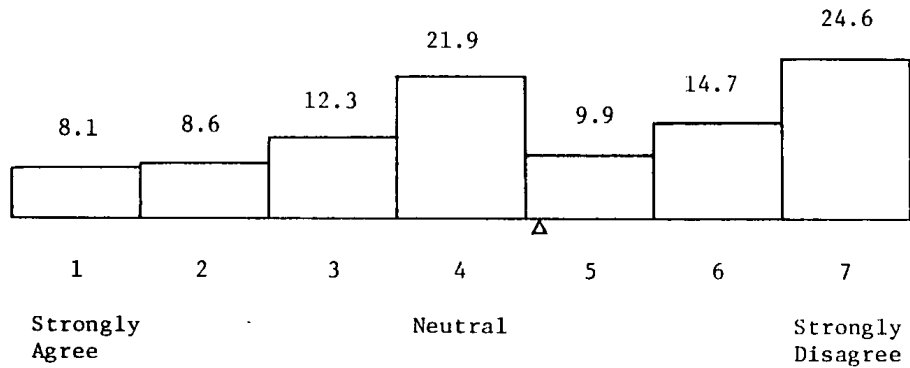


Figure 1. Percents of respondents in the project to question 20. (The mean response is indicated by a Δ on the scale.)

TABLE 38

Responses of students in the project to question 20 by ethnic groups. (N = 637)

	Strongly Agree		3	Neutral		Disagree Strongly		NR	Total
	1	2		4	5	6	7		
White	12 (3.4)	27 (7.7)	40 (11.4)	53 (15.1)	40 (11.4)	72 (20.5)	106 (30.2)	1 (0.3)	351 (100%)
Black	20 (15.2)	15 (11.4)	18 (13.6)	42 (31.8)	5 (3.8)	9 (6.8)	19 (14.4)	4 (3.0)	132 (100%)
Asian	3 (5.1)	6 (10.2)	8 (13.6)	13 (22.0)	7 (11.9)	6 (10.2)	15 (25.4)	1 (1.7)	59 (100%)
Chicano	3 (7.9)	0	4 (10.5)	11 (29.0)	7 (18.4)	3 (7.9)	9 (23.7)	1 (2.6)	38 (100%)
Latino	3 (9.4)	4 (12.5)	4 (12.5)	10 (31.3)	1 (3.1)	4 (12.5)	5 (15.6)	1 (3.1)	32 (100%)
Filipino	8 (32.0)	1 (4.0)	3 (12.0)	9 (36.0)	2 (8.0)	0	2 (8.0)	0	25 (100%)



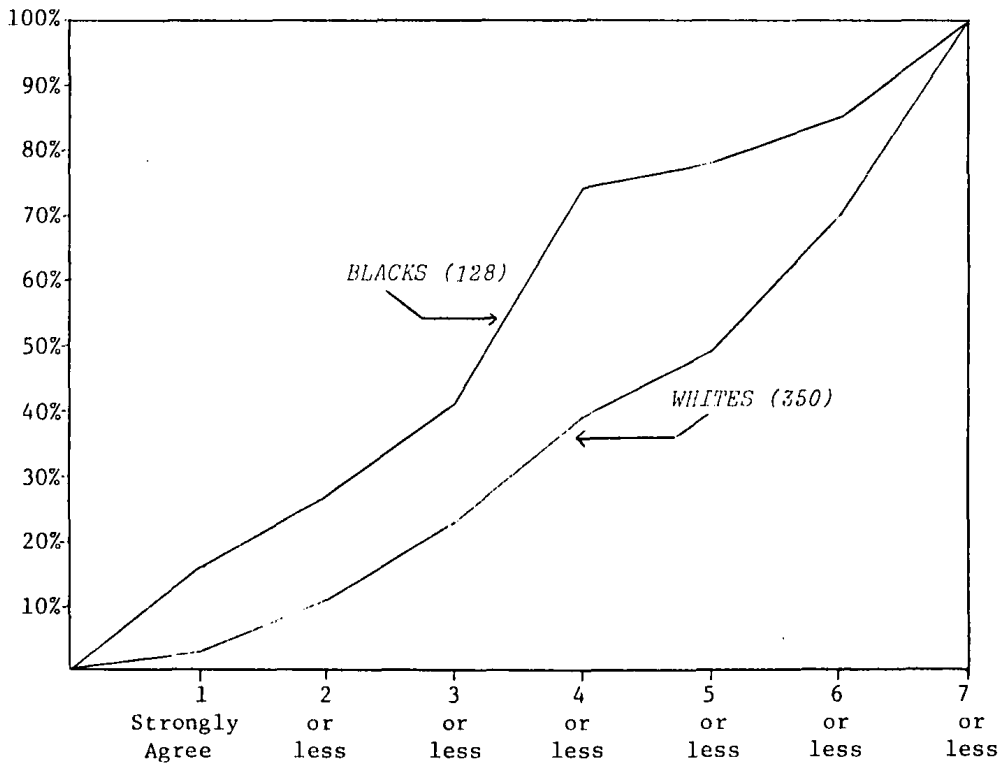


Figure 2. Percent of respondents to question 20 for blacks and for whites in the project.

Question 21. Our system of justice is rigid. It does not respond to the changing needs of society. (N = 663)

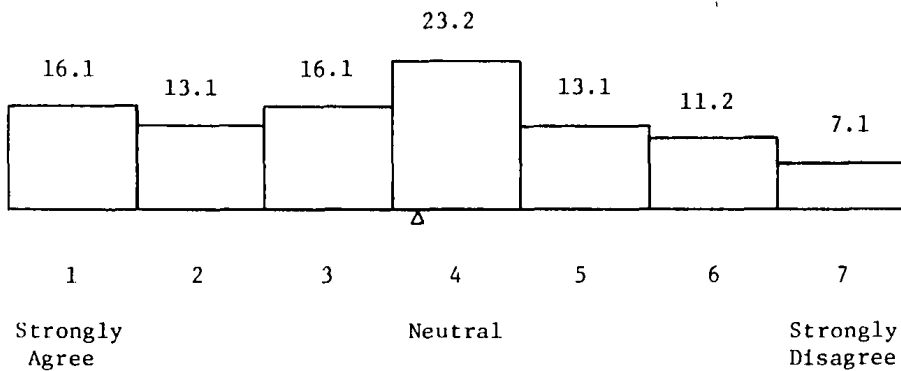


Figure 3. Percents of respondents in the project to question 21.

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

123

difference between blacks and whites holds within each SES class.

Racial differences were also present among the responses to question 21 (See Figure 3.), "Our system of justice is rigid. It does not respond to the changing needs of society," with 31 percent of blacks and 30 percent of Latinos in the project who responded in category 1 (Strongly Agree), as compared to 10 percent of the whites' responses. Again blacks and Latinos each had a larger proportion on the lower (agreement) side at each level of the scale than did whites, and a similar relation held for the blacks and whites in the comparison group. (See Table 39.)

Another statement dealing with change in law over time was question 28, "The Supreme Court should change its interpretation of the Bill of Rights as society changes." Over half of the respondents in the project agreed with this statement and one-fourth circled 1 (Strongly Agree). (See Figure 4.) Differences among the ethnic groups were not as significant as those to questions 20 and 21. Although whites (mean response = 3.0) agreed more strongly than blacks (mean response = 3.3), the blacks in the comparison group (mean response = 2.6) agreed more strongly than whites in the comparison group (mean response = 3.1); and these relations are present within each sex. Contrary to the responses of whites and Asians, blacks had a higher mean response in the project group than in the comparison group. Perhaps some blacks in the project learned and appreciated the original formulation of the Bill of Rights or some interpreted the phrase, "as society changes," to mean as popular opinion changes and, thus, agreed less strongly than blacks in the comparison group.

TABLE 39

Responses of students in the project to question 21 by ethnic groups. (N = 637)

	Strongly Agree		3	Neutral		Disagree		Strongly	NR	Total
	1	2		4	5	6	7			
White	37 (10.5)	56 (16.0)	63 (18.0)	56 (16.0)	63 (18.0)	51 (14.5)	24 (6.8)	1 (0.3)	351 (100%)	
Black	38 (28.8)	13 (9.9)	18 (13.6)	32 (24.2)	7 (5.3)	8 (6.1)	8 (6.1)	8 (6.1)	132 (100%)	
Asian	8 (13.6)	8 (13.6)	12 (20.3)	19 (32.2)	3 (5.1)	7 (11.9)	1 (1.7)	1 (1.7)	59 (100%)	
Chicano	6 (15.8)	2 (5.3)	4 (10.5)	12 (31.6)	3 (7.9)	5 (13.2)	5 (13.2)	1 (2.6)	38 (100%)	
Latino	9 (28.1)	0	5 (15.6)	11 (34.4)	3 (9.4)	1 (3.1)	1 (3.1)	2 (6.3)	32 (100%)	
Filipino	2 (8.0)	3 (12.0)	3 (12.0)	8 (32.0)	4 (16.0)	0	5 (20.0)	0	25 (100%)	

Question 28. The Supreme Court should change its interpretation of the Bill of Rights as society changes. (N = 662)

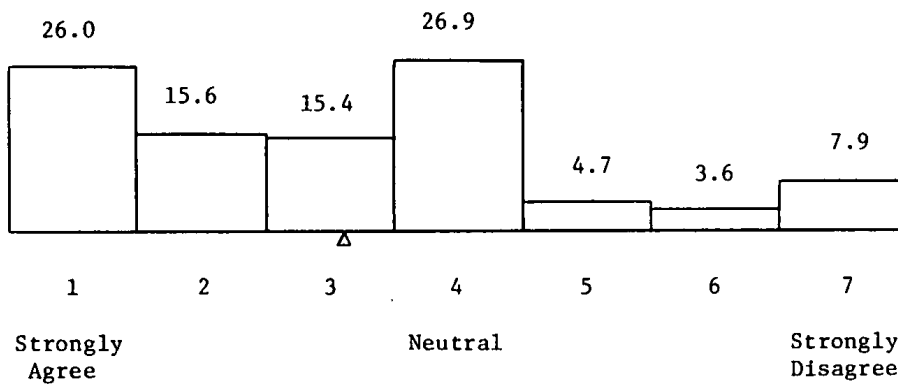


Figure 4. Percents of respondents in the project to question 28.

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

125

In the first of three questions dealing with law enforcement, significant differences among ethnic groups are present for the responses to the statement of question 22 (See Figure 5.), "In general, police officers recognize and respect a citizen's constitutional rights." In the project group, 45 percent of blacks circled 6 or 7 (the extreme categories for disagreement) while 17 percent of whites so responded. (See Table 40 and Figure 6.) In the comparison group, the respective proportions were 53 percent and 20 percent. Those admitting to having been arrested were stronger in their disagreement than those who said they had not been arrested. (See Table 41.) This relation is present within each ethnic group and was more pronounced in the comparison group. When the responses are divided among the categories used for a personal unpleasant experience with a police officer or knowledge of such for a close friend or relative, we see that, as an unpleasant experience with a police officer becomes more personal, the level of disagreement increases (Goodman-Kruskal gamma = .32 for the project group and gamma = .45 for the comparison group). (See Table 42 and Figure 7.) This association is present among blacks and among whites and the difference between blacks and whites is present within each category of an unpleasant experience with a police officer.

Question 25 was the second dealing with law enforcement (See Figure 8.), "Generally, laws are enforced equally against the rich and poor alike." With the exception of the 25 Filipinos and 4 American Indians, the modal response<sup>7</sup> in each ethnic group was 7 (Strongly Disagree) and the proportions

7. The modal response is the category with the greatest number of respondents.

Question 22. In general, police officers recognize and respect a citizen's constitutional rights. (N = 667)

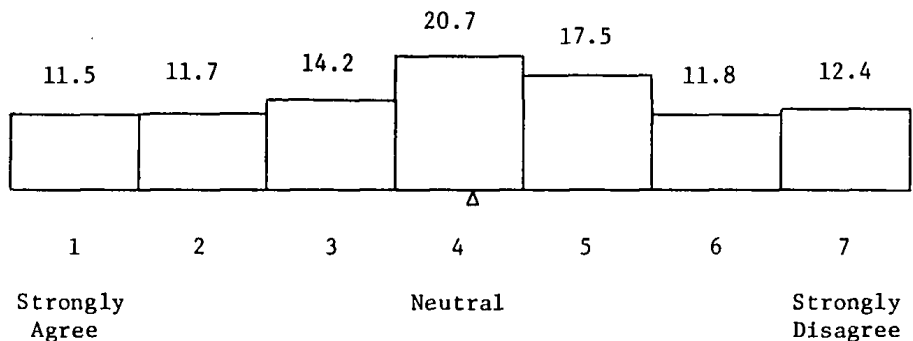


Figure 5. Percents of respondents in the project to question 22.

TABLE 40

Responses of students in the project to question 22 by ethnic groups. (N = 637)

	Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly	NR	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
White	44 (12.5)	54 (15.4)	56 (16.0)	64 (18.2)	75 (21.4)	34 (9.7)	24 (6.8)	0	351 (100%)
Black	6 (4.6)	5 (3.8)	11 (8.3)	27 (20.5)	17 (12.9)	21 (15.9)	39 (30.0)	6 (4.6)	132 (100%)
Asian	6 (10.2)	10 (17.0)	9 (15.3)	17 (28.8)	6 (10.2)	6 (10.2)	3 (5.1)	2 (3.4)	59 (100%)
Chicano	4 (10.5)	2 (5.3)	6 (15.8)	9 (23.7)	6 (15.8)	6 (15.8)	5 (13.2)	0	38 (100%)
Latino	6 (18.8)	2 (6.3)	6 (18.8)	9 (28.1)	3 (9.4)	2 (6.3)	3 (9.4)	1 (3.1)	32 (100%)
Filipino	7 (28.0)	2 (8.0)	3 (12.0)	3 (12.0)	2 (8.0)	4 (16.0)	4 (16.0)	0	25 (100%)

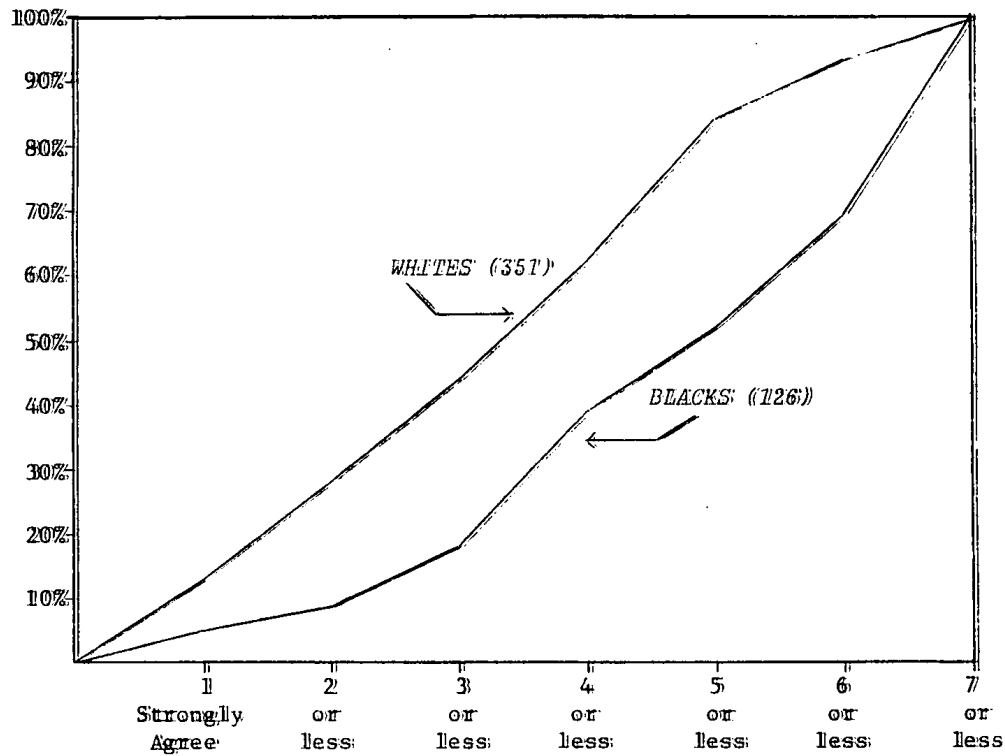


Figure 6.. Percent of respondents to question 22 for blacks and for whites in the project.

TABLE 41

Responses of students in the project to question 22 for those arrested and those not arrested. (N = 674)

	Strongly Agree:		Neutral		Disagree Strongly		NR	Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6			7
Arrested:	11 (8.1)	11 (8.1)	17 (12.5)	16 (11.8)	26 (19.1)	23 (16.9)	29 (21.3)	3 (2.2)	136 (100%)
Not arrested:	66 (12.3)	67 (12.5)	78 (14.5)	121 (22.5)	91 (16.9)	56 (10.4)	53 (9.9)	6 (1.1)	538 (100%)

TABLE 42

Responses of students in the project to question 22 by levels of an unpleasant experience with a police officer. (N = 666)

	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	Neutral 4	5	Disagree 6	Strongly 7	NR	Total
Personal	21 (8.1)	21 (8.1)	26 (10.0)	48 (18.5)	51 (19.7)	44 (17.0)	45 (17.4)	3 (1.2)	259 (100%)
Friend or relative	18 (8.5)	24 (11.3)	29 (13.6)	42 (19.7)	42 (19.7)	27 (12.7)	28 (13.2)	3 (1.4)	213 (100%)
Neither	38 (19.6)	32 (16.5)	37 (19.1)	46 (23.7)	22 (11.3)	8 (4.1)	8 (4.1)	3 (1.6)	194 (100%)

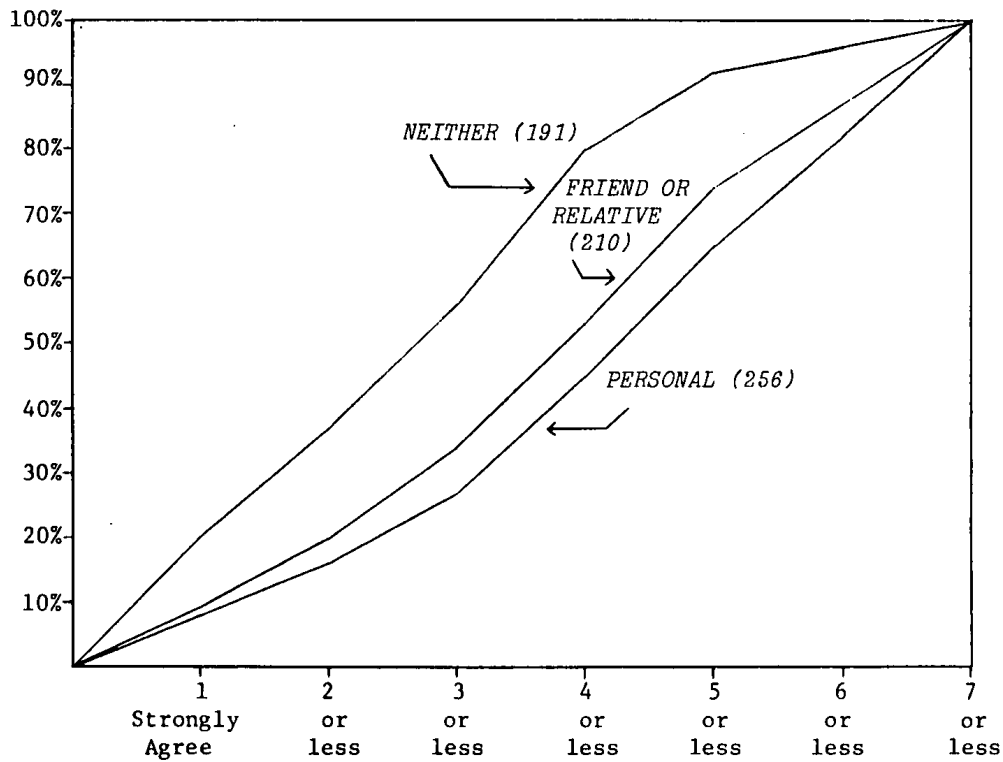


Figure 7. Percent of respondents in the project to question 22 for three levels of an unpleasant experience with a police officer.

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

129

of respondents circling 6 or 7 ranged from approximately 50 percent for each of Asians, Chicanos and Latinos to 55 percent for whites and 59 percent for blacks.

The third statement about law enforcement was question 31 (See Figure 9.), "Police treat members of my race or ethnic groups more harshly than they treat most other people." It is difficult to compare the responses of whites, since they may include different ethnic groups; but among our eight ethnic groups, whites disagree most strongly with this statement and blacks agree most strongly. Of those responding, 61 percent of the blacks circled 1 (Strongly Agree) compared with 2 percent of the whites; and 5 percent of the blacks circled 7 (Strongly Disagree) compared with 45 percent of the whites. (See Table 43.) The responses of these two groups are similar in the comparison group. Even within each level of an unpleasant experience with a police officer for males and for females, blacks and whites are the extreme ethnic groups in response to this question.

The effect of a visit by a policeman among the responses to question 31 was little and in the opposite direction from what would be expected. Among black males, the mean response of those 29 responding whose class had a policeman talk to them was 1.8, whereas the mean response of the 22 black males not in such a class was 2.2. For the two corresponding groups of 34 and 38 black females, the respective mean responses were 2.1 and 2.3. This pattern of a smaller mean response for those in a class in which a policeman visited holds for the white males (The respective mean responses



Question 25. Generally, laws are enforced equally against the rich and poor alike. (N = 668)

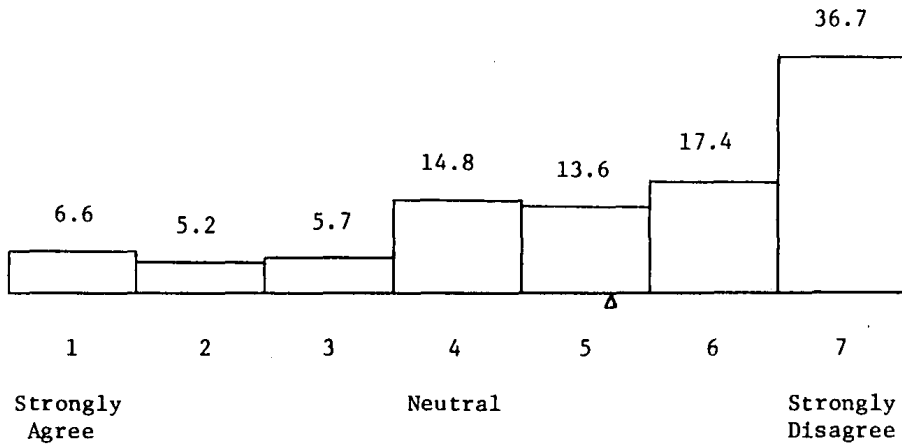


Figure 8. Percents of respondents in the project to question 25.

Question 31. Police treat members of my race or ethnic group more harshly than they treat most other people. (N = 655)

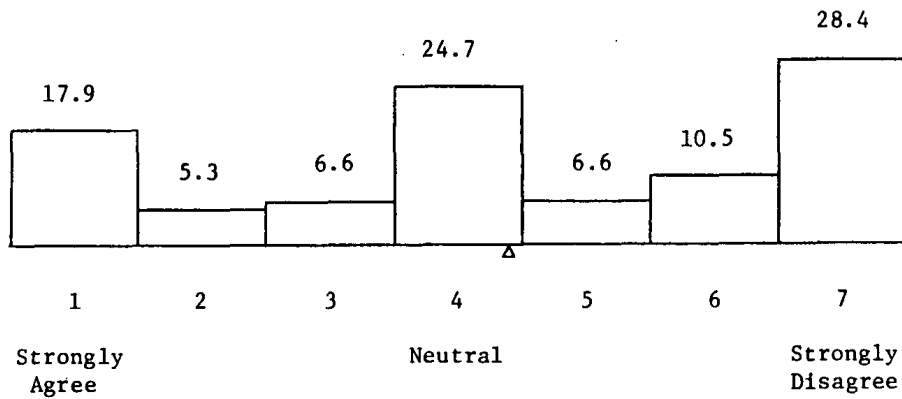


Figure 9. Percents of respondents in the project to question 31.

TABLE 43

Responses of students in the project to question 31 by ethnic groups. (N = 637)

	Strongly Agree		3	Neutral	5	Disagree Strongly		NR	Total
	1	2		4		6	7		
White	6 (1.7)	5 (1.4)	9 (2.6)	93 (26.5)	27 (7.7)	50 (14.3)	154 (43.9)	7 (2.0)	351 (100%)
Black	78 (59.1)	12 (9.1)	7 (5.3)	16 (12.1)	5 (3.8)	3 (2.3)	6 (4.6)	5 (3.8)	132 (100%)
Asian	8 (13.6)	7 (11.9)	10 (17.0)	17 (28.8)	5 (8.5)	7 (11.9)	5 (8.5)	0	59 (100%)
Chicano	8 (21.1)	2 (5.3)	8 (21.1)	6 (15.8)	2 (5.3)	5 (13.2)	6 (15.8)	1 (2.6)	38 (100%)
Latino	7 (21.9)	5 (15.6)	2 (6.3)	10 (31.3)	2 (6.3)	0	3 (9.4)	3 (9.4)	32 (100%)
Filipino	2 (8.0)	1 (4.0)	3 (12.0)	9 (36.0)	2 (8.0)	1 (4.0)	6 (24.0)	1 (4.0)	25 (100%)

Question 23. A private attorney provides a better defense than a public defender. (N = 665)

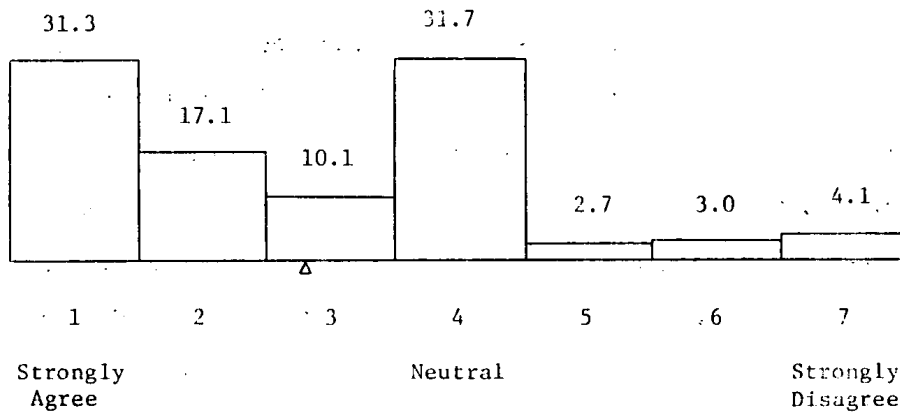


Figure 10. Percents of respondents in the project to question 23.

are 5.3 and 5.8.) and females (The respective mean responses are 5.6 and 5.9.) and for each sex among the other ethnic groups combined.

Few students disagreed with the statement of question 23 (See Figure 10.), "A private attorney provides a better defense than a public defender." There were 10 percent of those responding in the project group and 11 percent of those responding in the comparison group who agreed. The patterns of responses were similar for each ethnic group. Whites had a mean response of 2.7 in both the project and comparison groups, whereas blacks in the project (mean response = 2.9) agreed less strongly than blacks in the comparison group (mean response = 2.5), and the difference for blacks is present for each sex. There were negligible differences in the responses between those whose class did have or did not have an attorney speak to them (the respective mean responses were 2.8 and 2.9), with one exception: in the one class that listened to an attorney but did not visit a court, none of the 17 students in that class disagreed with this statement and 9 of them circled 1 (Strongly Agree).

Another statement dealing with judicial procedure was question 27, "Judges, not juries, should decide if a defendant is guilty or not." (See Figure 11.) Two-thirds of the respondents in the project are on the disagreement side of the scale with 76 percent of whites (mean response = 5.7) disagreeing compared to 57 percent of blacks (mean response = 5.0). Among the latter, males (mean response = 5.3) disagreed more strongly than females (mean response = 4.8). The comparison group had larger proportions on the disagreement side for blacks (65 percent) and for whites (80 percent)

Question 27. Judges, not juries, should decide if a defendant is guilty or not. (N = 663)

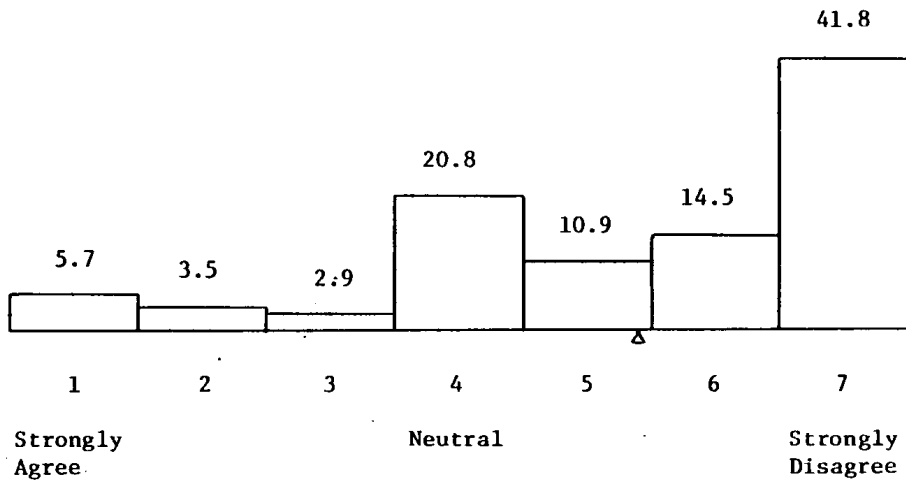


Figure 11. Percents of respondents in the project to question 27.

Question 34. In some criminal cases, the accused should be required to testify. (N = 665)

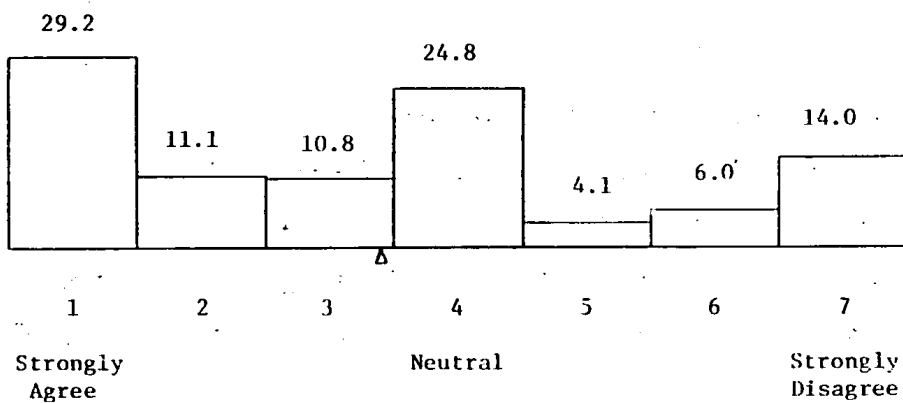


Figure 12. Percents of respondents in the project to question 34.

and for each sex within each of these races than the project group. Students in the project who have learned that, contrary to popular opinion, most cases are decided by judges alone and who have seen judges handle cases equitably alone might not disagree with the statement of question 27.

A third statement about judicial procedure was question 34. Over half the respondents in each of the project and comparison groups agreed with the statement, "In some criminal cases, the accused should be required to testify," (See Figure 12.) with 1 (Strongly Agree) the common modal response for each group. A larger proportion of blacks (60 percent in the project group) agreed than whites (46 percent). Although there was little difference between the responses of males and females among whites in the project, black females (mean response = 2.6) were stronger in their disagreement than black males (mean response = 3.4). The responses of the project group also vary among SES classes, with some association of a higher SES level with increased disagreement ( $\gamma = .13$ ): 40 percent of those in the lowest SES class circled 1 (Strongly Agree) compared to 22 percent of those in the highest SES class.

In 1951, the Purdue Opinion Panel published the results of a poll of high school students entitled, *Does Youth Believe in the Bill of Rights?*<sup>8</sup> in which they presented the statement, "Persons who refuse to testify against themselves (that is, give evidence that would show that they are guilty of

8. H. H. Remmers and D. H. Radler, *The American Teenager* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill Co., Inc., 1957) pp. 186-189.

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

135

criminal acts) should either be made to talk or severely punished." The choices for response and their respective proportions were Agree (33 percent), Disagree (47 percent), and Uncertain (20 percent). In comparison, our statement is modified by the phrase, "In some criminal cases...", and neither does it mention punishment nor does it emphasize that testimony may be incriminating. Nevertheless, if we presume that most of those in the project group were aware of this constitutional right of a defendant ("No person...shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself..."), it is surprising that as few as 24 percent of that group disagrees with the statement of question 34, even though it is larger than the corresponding 17 percent for the comparison group.

Question 24, "If a jury decides a person is guilty of a crime, that person definitely committed the crime," (See Figure 13.) is so qualified by the word definitely that over half of the students in each of the project and comparison groups circled 7 (Strongly Disagree). There were some differences among ethnic groups, with the proportions of responses that were 7 (Strongly Disagree) ranging from 36 to 40 percents for Filipinos and Asians respectively to 52 and 58 percents for whites and blacks. It would have been interesting if, as a comparison, we had presented some with the statement qualified by very likely or almost surely.

A surprising and somewhat disturbing observation is that one-fourth of each of the project and comparison groups agree with the statement of question 26, "There are times when proper legal procedures should give way to immediate punishment," (See Figure 14.) and the proportion of responses of the comparison group that disagreed with this statement (49 percent) was

Question 24. If a jury decides a person is guilty of a crime, that person definitely committed the crime. (N = 668)

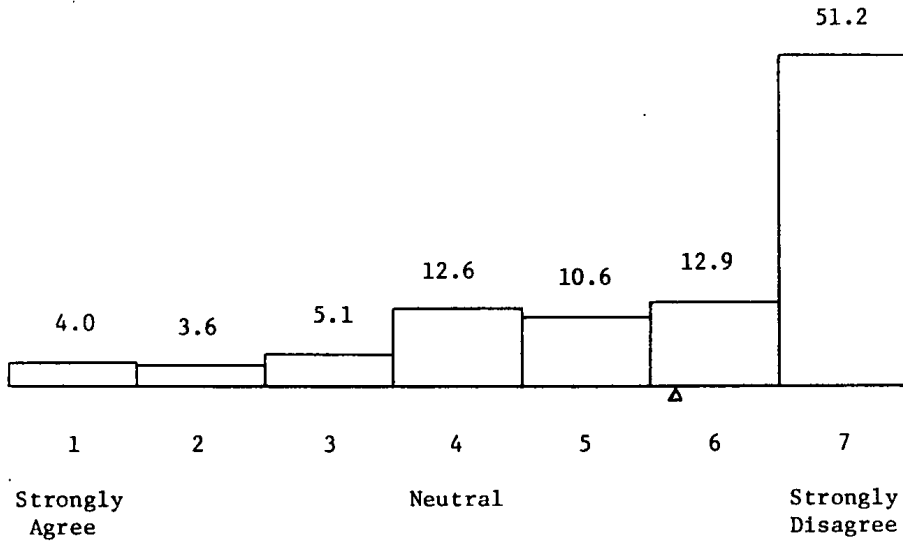


Figure 13. Percents of respondents in the project to question 24.

Question 26. There are times when proper legal procedures should give way to immediate punishment. (N = 655)

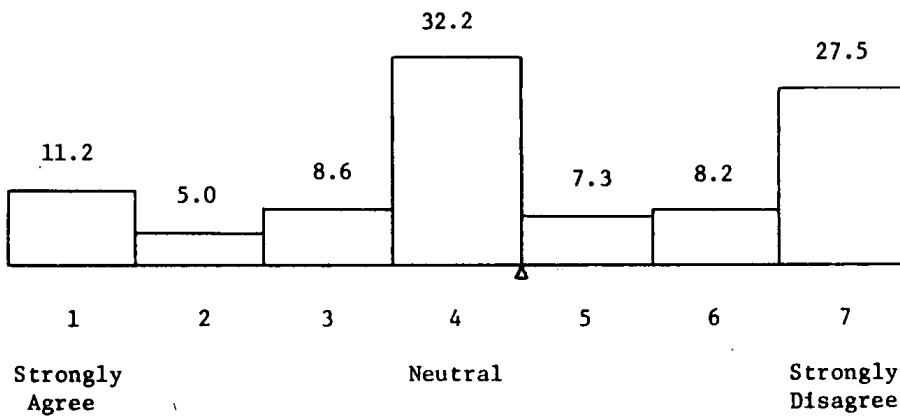


Figure 14. Percents of respondents in the project to question 26.

## STUDENTS AND THEIR OPINIONS

137

larger than that of the project group (43 percent). There are some differences among the races and differences between the project and comparison groups varied from one ethnic group to another. The difference in the responses of whites in the project and comparison groups was small: the respective mean responses were 4.7 and 5.0, with the difference larger for males (The respective mean responses were 4.7 and 5.2.) than for females (The respective mean responses for white females were 4.6 and 4.8.). The blacks in the project, however, agreed much more than the blacks in the comparison group: the respective mean responses are 4.6 and 5.4, with the difference approximately the same for each sex. The respective proportions of blacks agreeing were 23 and 7 percent. Conversely, 25 percent of the Asians in the project group (mean response = 4.1) agreed compared to 55 percent of the Asians in the comparison group (mean response = 3.5). In the project group, the modal response for whites was 7 (Strongly Disagree), whereas in each of the other ethnic groups, the modal response was 4 (Neutral or No Opinion). (See Table 44.) There is some association in the project group of a higher SES class with increased disagreement ( $\gamma = .12$ ): the proportions of the responses that are on the disagree side of the scale for our four SES classes from lowest SES to highest SES are, respectively, 35, 41, 47, and 49 percents.

Another statement dealing with procedural safeguards is question 30, "Courts must protect constitutional rights even if it means some criminals are not convicted." In the project group, 20 percent of the responses were on the disagree side of the scale (21 percent of the males and 19 percent



TABLE 44

Responses of students in the project to question 26 by ethnic groups and by sex. (N = 663)

	Strongly Agree		Neutral			Disagree Strongly		NR	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<b>Females</b>	16	2	9	52	10	12	38	4	143
	(11.2)	(1.4)	(6.3)	(36.4)	(7.0)	(8.4)	(26.6)	(2.8)	(100%)
<b>White</b>									
<b>Males</b>	28	16	17	37	17	21	70	2	208
	(13.5)	(7.7)	(8.2)	(17.8)	(8.2)	(10.1)	(33.7)	(1.0)	(100%)
<b>Black</b>									
<b>Females</b>	6	4	8	26	4	4	17	4	73
	(8.2)	(5.5)	(11.0)	(35.6)	(5.5)	(5.5)	(23.3)	(5.5)	(100%)
<b>Males</b>	6	1	2	15	3	4	18	6	55
	(10.9)	(1.8)	(3.6)	(27.3)	(5.5)	(7.3)	(32.7)	(10.9)	(100%)
<b>Asian</b>									
<b>Females</b>	3	1	1	15	1	2	4	0	27
	(11.1)	(3.7)	(3.7)	(55.6)	(3.7)	(7.4)	(14.8)		(100%)
<b>Males</b>	2	0	8	15	2	2	3	0	32
	(6.3)		(25.0)	(46.9)	(6.3)	(6.3)	(9.4)		(100%)
<b>All Others</b>									
<b>Females</b>	6	3	5	30	4	6	11	4	69
	(8.7)	(4.3)	(7.2)	(43.5)	(5.8)	(8.7)	(15.9)	(5.8)	(100%)
<b>Males</b>	6	6	4	19	4	2	13	2	56
	(10.7)	(10.7)	(7.1)	(33.9)	(7.1)	(3.6)	(23.2)	(3.6)	(100%)

Question 30. Courts must protect constitutional rights even if it means some criminals are not convicted. (N = 662)

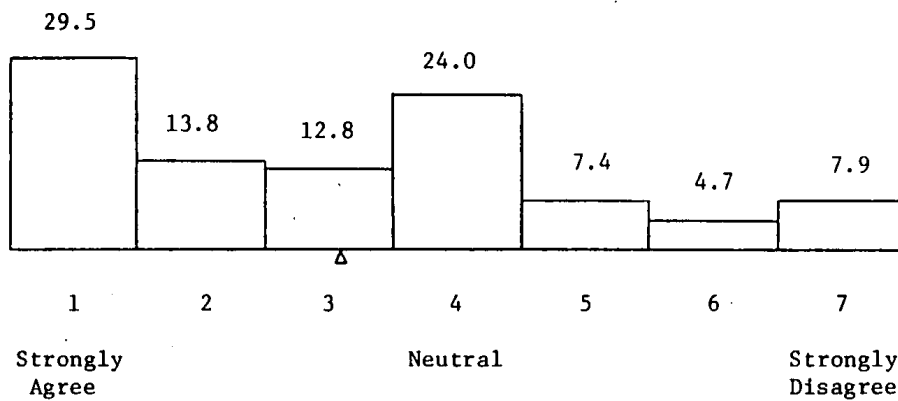


Figure 15. Percents of respondents in the project to question 30.

of the females). (See Figure 15.) The modal response for males was 1 (Strongly Agree) compared to 4 (Neutral or No Opinion) for females, due, for the most part, not to racial differences, but to the fact that white females (mean response = 3.2) were less strong in their agreement than white males (mean response = 2.9). (For the sex difference among whites, a Wilcoxon rank-sum test corrected for ties by midranks gives a two-tailed p-value of .08.) The modal classes for males and females in the comparison group were also 1 and 4 respectively.

Almost one-fifth (18 percent) of the responses in the project group were on the disagreement side of the scale for question 29, "People should not try to change laws through violence or threat of violence," (See Figure 16.) with significant differences among the ethnic groups. For our six predominant groups, the mean responses ranged from 2.2 for Latinos (10 percent of their responses are on the disagreement side) and 2.3 for whites (14 percent disagree) to 3.4 for Filipinos (28 percent disagree) and 3.5 for blacks (30 percent disagree). (See Table 45 and, for the comparison between blacks and whites, see Figure 17.) Asians in the project (mean response = 3.0) disagreed more than those in the comparison group (mean response = 2.3). There were negligible differences between the mean responses in the project group and in the comparison group for each of blacks and whites, but the small difference for whites was the result of two opposite differences for males and for females: the mean responses for white males in the project and comparison groups were 2.3 and 2.8 respectively, whereas white females had respective mean responses of 2.2 and 1.7.

In what may be expected from the response to question 29, almost

Question 29. People should not try to change laws through violence or threat of violence. (N = 666)

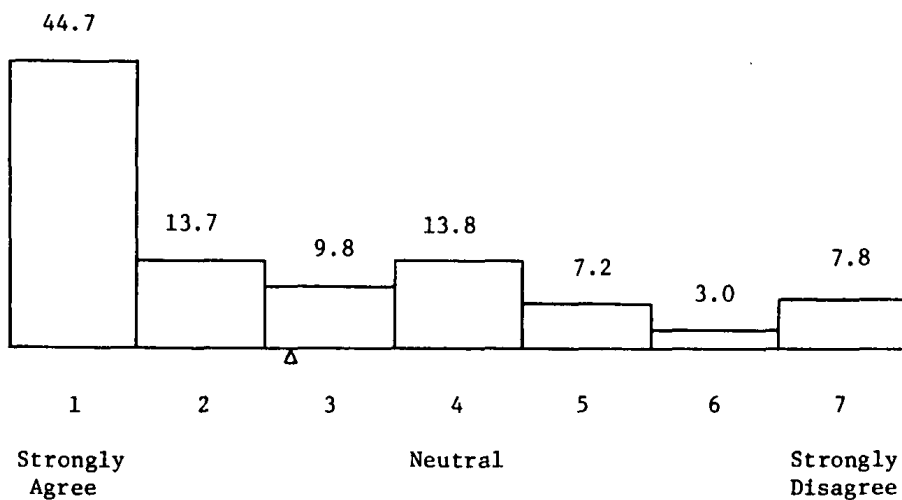


Figure 16. Percents of respondents in the project to question 29.

TABLE 45

Responses of students in the project to question 29 by ethnic groups. (N = 637)

	Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree Strongly		NR	Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6			7
White	179 (51.0)	57 (16.2)	33 (9.4)	29 (8.3)	26 (7.4)	11 (3.1)	12 (3.4)	4 (1.1)	351 (100%)
Black	42 (31.8)	10 (7.6)	11 (8.3)	26 (19.7)	10 (7.6)	5 (3.8)	23 (17.4)	5 (3.8)	132 (100%)
Asian	21 (35.6)	8 (13.6)	7 (11.9)	10 (17.0)	4 (6.8)	2 (3.4)	7 (11.9)	0	59 (100%)
Chicano	14 (36.8)	7 (18.4)	6 (15.8)	6 (15.8)	3 (7.9)	0	1 (2.6)	1 (2.6)	38 (100%)
Latino	17 (53.1)	3 (9.4)	2 (6.3)	6 (18.8)	2 (6.3)	1 (3.1)	0	1 (3.1)	32 (100%)
Filipino	9 (36.0)	2 (8.0)	0	7 (28.0)	2 (8.0)	0	5 (20.0)	0	25 (100%)

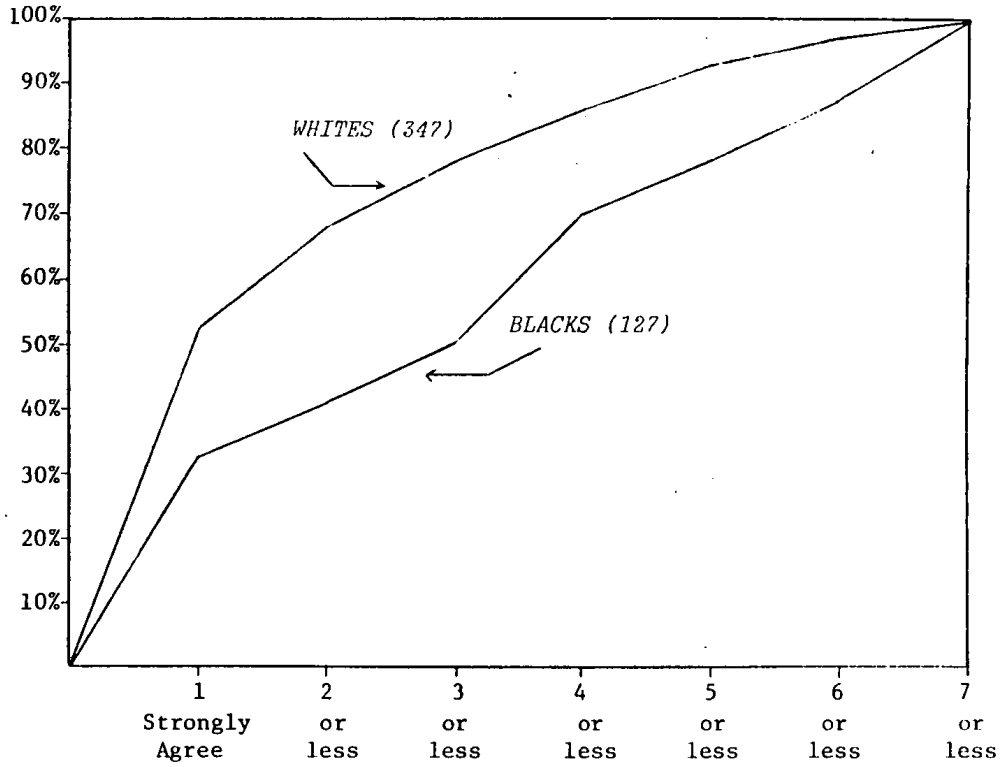


Figure 17. Percent of respondents to question 29 for blacks and for whites in the project.

Question 32. People should disobey laws that they feel are unjust.  
(N = 663)

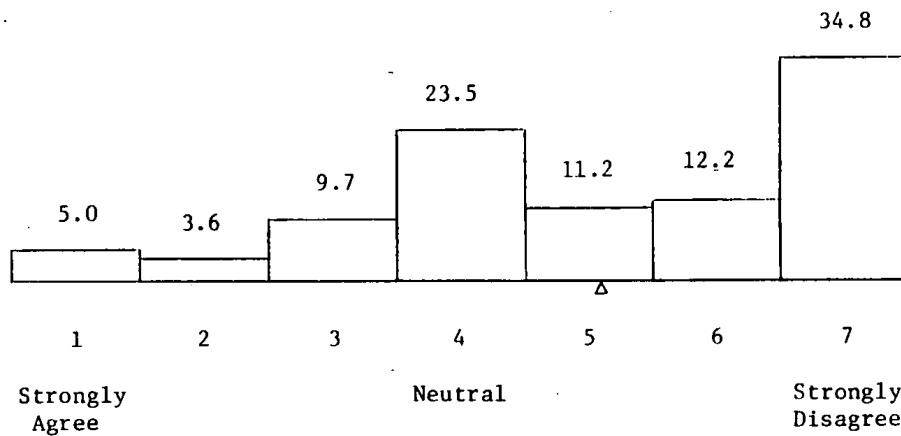


Figure 18. Percents of respondents in the project to question 32.

one-fifth (18 percent) of the responses in the project group were on the agreement side of the scale for question 32, "People should disobey laws that they feel are unjust." (See Figure 18.) Asians had the largest proportion on the agreement side among all ethnic groups for males (31 percent of Asian males agree) and for females (22 percent of Asian females agree) in the project. This phenomenon may be due to the publicity of school busing in Chinese communities. The mean responses of Asian males and females in the project (4.1 and 5.0 respectively), however, were lower than the corresponding mean responses (5.1 and 5.4) in the comparison group. On the other hand, black males in the project (mean response = 4.8) disagreed more strongly than those in the comparison group (mean response = 4.0) and the same relation was the case for black females: their respective mean responses were 5.3 and 4.7. Among males in the project, whites (mean response = 5.3) disagreed more than blacks (mean response = 4.8), whereas black and white females in the project had a common mean response (5.3). (See Table 46.)

In the project group, those who circled 1 (Strongly Agree) in question 29, indicating they disapprove of violence, disagreed with the statement of question 32 more strongly (mean response = 5.6) than those who indicated they condone violence by circling 7 (Strongly Disagree) in response to question 29 (mean response = 4.7). (For a comparison of those on the agreement side of the scale in question 29 with those on the disagreement side, see Figure 19.) In the comparison group, this difference was more pronounced: the respective mean responses are 5.9 and 4.2.

Among the ethnic groups in the project, blacks and Latinos are the ones who most strongly agreed with the statement of question 33 (See Figure 20.),

TABLE 46

Responses of students in the project to question 32 by ethnic groups and by sex. (N = 663)

	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	Neutral 4	5	Disagree 6	Strongly 7	NR	Total
<b>Females</b>	2 (1.4)	7 (4.9)	18 (12.6)	23 (16.1)	15 (10.5)	23 (16.1)	53 (37.1)	2 (1.4)	143 (100%)
<b>White</b>									
<b>Males</b>	10 (4.8)	4 (1.9)	20 (9.6)	38 (18.3)	22 (10.6)	28 (13.5)	84 (40.4)	2 (1.0)	208 (100%)
<b>Females</b>	2 (2.7)	1 (1.4)	5 (6.9)	23 (31.5)	4 (5.5)	9 (12.3)	28 (38.4)	1 (1.4)	73 (100%)
<b>Black</b>									
<b>Males</b>	5 (9.1)	3 (5.5)	3 (5.5)	13 (23.6)	4 (7.3)	2 (3.6)	19 (34.6)	6 (10.9)	55 (100%)
<b>Females</b>	1 (3.7)	2 (7.4)	3 (11.1)	6 (22.2)	3 (11.1)	3 (11.1)	9 (33.3)	0	27 (100%)
<b>Asian</b>									
<b>Males</b>	5 (15.6)	1 (3.1)	4 (12.5)	8 (25.0)	9 (28.1)	1 (3.1)	4 (12.5)	0	32 (100%)
<b>Females</b>	3 (4.3)	3 (4.3)	3 (4.3)	25 (36.2)	8 (11.6)	7 (10.1)	19 (27.5)	1 (1.4)	69 (100%)
<b>All Others</b>									
<b>Males</b>	2 (3.6)	3 (5.4)	7 (12.5)	18 (32.1)	5 (8.9)	6 (10.7)	13 (23.2)	2 (3.6)	56 (100%)

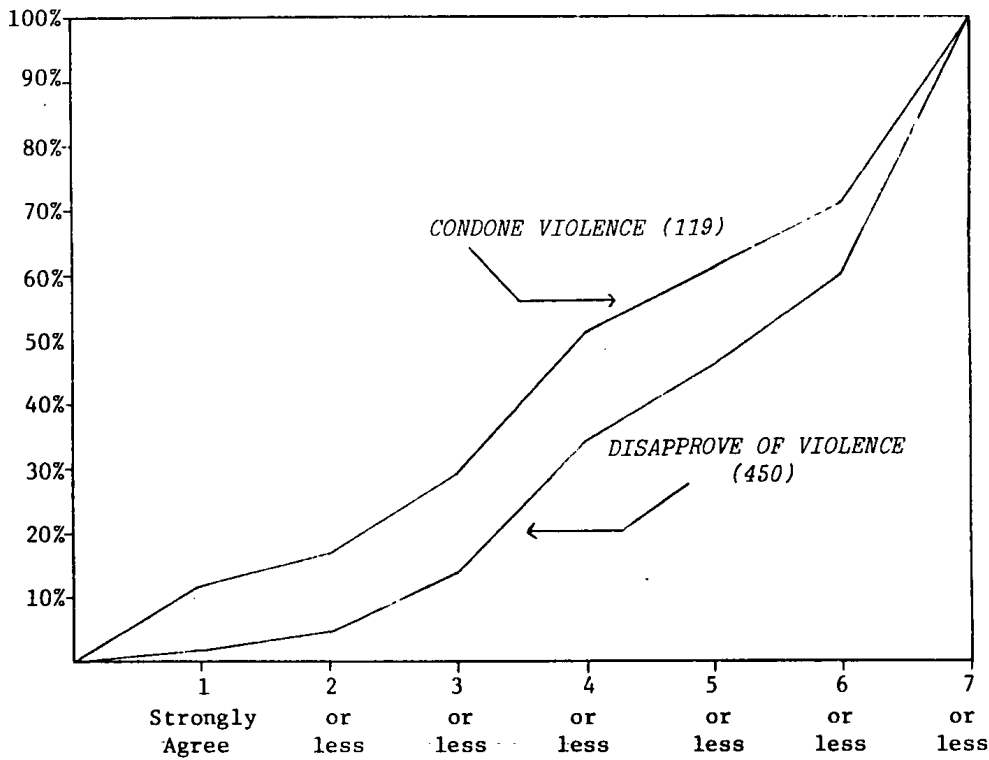


Figure 19. Percent of respondents in the project to question 32 for those who agree with question 29 (disapprove of violence) and for those who disagree (condone violence).

Question 33. Our system of justice discriminates against minorities.

(N = 657)

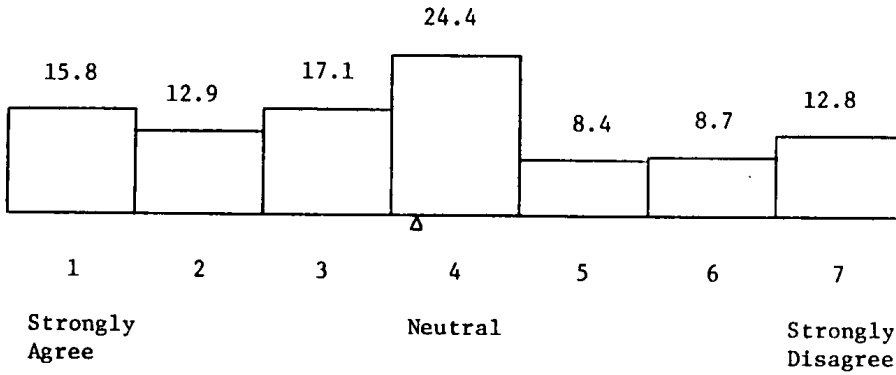


Figure 20. Percents of respondents in the project to question 33.

TABLE 47

Responses of students in the project to question 33 by ethnic groups and by sex. (N = 663)

	Strongly Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly	NR	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<b>Females</b>	18	25	35	28	8	10	16	3	143
	(12.6)	(17.5)	(24.5)	(19.6)	(5.6)	(7.0)	(11.2)	(2.1)	(100%)
<b>White</b>									
<b>Males</b>	27	25	35	33	22	23	42	1	208
	(13.0)	(12.0)	(16.8)	(15.9)	(10.6)	(11.1)	(20.2)	(0.5)	(100%)
<b>Females</b>	17	14	7	26	2	2	3	2	73
	(23.3)	(19.2)	(9.6)	(35.6)	(2.7)	(2.7)	(4.1)	(2.7)	(100%)
<b>Black</b>									
<b>Males</b>	17	6	6	9	3	3	5	6	55
	(30.9)	(10.9)	(10.9)	(16.4)	(5.5)	(5.5)	(9.1)	(10.9)	(100%)
<b>Females</b>	3	2	6	7	3	4	2	0	27
	(11.1)	(7.4)	(22.2)	(26.0)	(11.1)	(14.8)	(7.4)		(100%)
<b>Asian</b>									
<b>Males</b>	4	3	3	12	6	2	2	0	32
	(12.5)	(9.4)	(9.4)	(37.5)	(18.8)	(6.3)	(6.3)		(100%)
<b>Females</b>	8	5	9	27	6	3	6	5	69
	(11.6)	(7.2)	(13.0)	(39.1)	(8.7)	(4.3)	(8.7)	(7.2)	(100%)
<b>All Others</b>									
<b>Males</b>	8	4	9	15	3	7	7	3	56
	(14.3)	(7.1)	(16.1)	(26.8)	(5.4)	(12.5)	(12.5)	(5.4)	(100%)

"Our system of justice discriminates against minorities." Their respective mean responses were 3.1 and 3.4, compared to 3.9 for whites. Among whites in the project, the females (mean response = 3.6) agree more strongly than males (mean response = 4.1). The opposite, however, is the case in the comparison group, in which the mean responses for white females and males were 4.3 and 3.5 respectively. (See Table 47 and, for the comparison between blacks and whites, see Figure 21.)

#### Concluding Remarks

We have described the diversity of the students in the project and have analyzed a number of their opinions about the project and on issues of law and law enforcement. Although some comparisons were drawn between those students in the project and those in a comparison group, it was not our purpose to infer the effects of the project on the responses to questionnaire items.

From the facts that many students in the project expressed an increased interest in law as a possible career as a result of their course, that very few of them felt that a course in law was unnecessary, and that a very large proportion of them indicated that the participation of law students in a high school legal education program was important, we infer that most viewed the project as a valuable experience and as a program that should be continued.

In investigating the opinions of students, we found that their responses were susceptible to the influence of many variables. In addition to the differences that occurred on some items between males and females and among ethnic groups and levels of socio-economic status, effects occurred



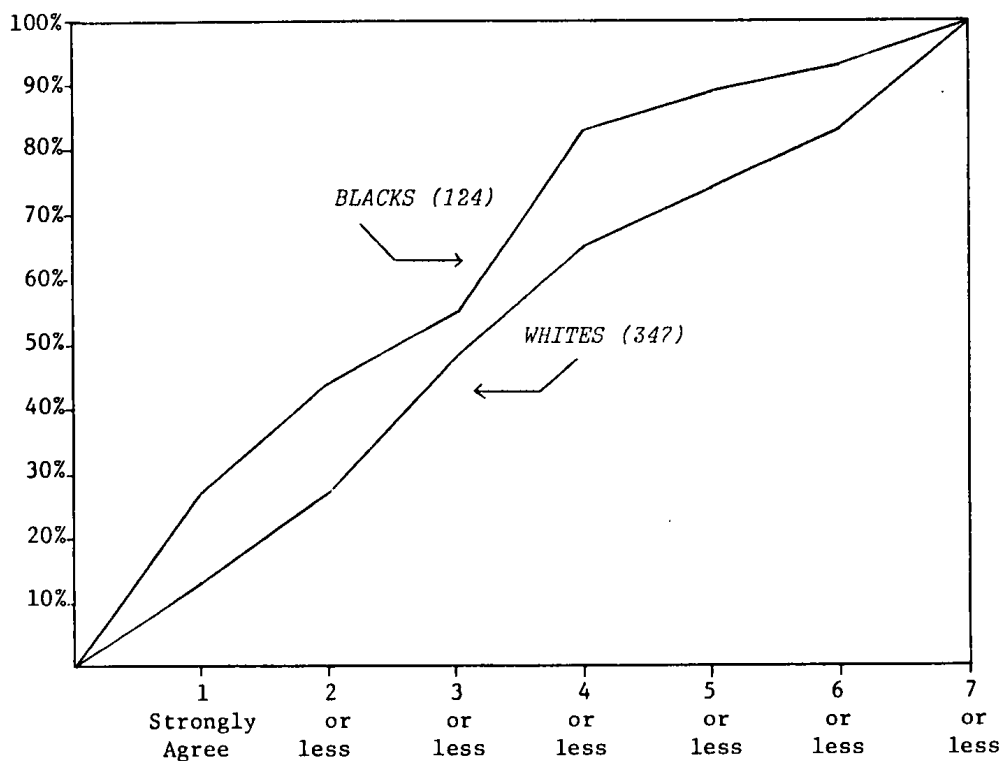


Figure 21. Percent of respondents to question 33 for blacks and for whites in the project.

from other variables (e.g., a perceived unpleasant experience with a police officer, an appearance before a judge or juvenile authority, and even opinions on other questionnaire items). Research studies that describe the opinions of high school students on issues similar to the questionnaire items and especially those studies that measure the effects of a high school curriculum on such opinions should consider the influence of these variables. It may be that what is necessary in order to change the popular view on such issues is to deal directly with the influencing variables. Whether to infer this, however, would at least require a different type of research to investigate the reasons for the responses of high school students to such personal questions as we have asked.

#### Acknowledgment

We wish to express our thanks to the Golden Gate Law Review and the Constitutional Rights Foundation for underwriting the expenses for key-punching, computer time, and materials for the questionnaire. We are appreciative of the cooperation of the law student tutors and high school teachers in administering the questionnaire and for the assistance of the law student editors in coding, tabulating, and verifying the responses. Our thanks also go to Jerome Smith and John Wells of the Computation Center of the University of California, Berkeley, for their patient instruction and assistance in the running of the program NWAY. For their help in the choice of topics and the design of the questionnaire, we are grateful to Naomi Lauter, Ronald and Kathryn Bogard, and Edward Cheever. Our especial thanks go to Kathryn Bogard for coordinating the myriad tasks involved in this study, included among which were the editing and typing of the manuscript, as well as performing many of the duties herself.

