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THE PERCEIVED SERIOUSNESS OF CORPORATE CRIME AND  
PROPERTY CRIME BY SOCIAL CLASS  
AND EXPOSURE TO PRISON

THESIS

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By

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The problem of this study concerns the perception of the seriousness of corporate and property crime by groups from various social classes and groups with diverse exposure to prison. Hypotheses relating sex, race, age, exposure to prison, and social class to the perceived seriousness of the two types of crime are presented. In order that these hypotheses be tested, the 211 respondents from prison and the 182 respondents from the general population ranked five corporate and five property crimes according to seriousness. The findings reveal no significant differences by sex, race, and age. Within all social classes and all categories of exposure to prison, no significant differences between the perceived seriousness of corporate and property crimes exist.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES. . . . .	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Statement of The Problem	
Discussion of Terminology	
Significance of the Research	
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE . . . . .	9
The Public's Perception of the Seriousness of Corporate Crime and Property Crime	
Factors Related to the Differential Perception of the Seriousness of Corporate and Property Crime	
Differences in the Perception of the Seriousness of Corporate and Property Crime by Social Class	
Differences in the Perception of the Seriousness of Corporate and Property Crime by Exposure to Prison	
III. HYPOTHESES . . . . .	23
Statement of Hypotheses	
Operational Definitions	
IV. SAMPLE . . . . .	30
Sampling Procedure	
Description of the Sample	
V. METHOD OF ANALYSIS . . . . .	33
Analysis of Individual Crimes by Five Social Factors	
Analysis of Corporate and Property Crimes by Five Social Factors	
Analysis of the Rankings of Corporate Crime and Property Crime by Social Class and Exposure to Prison	

	Page
VI. FINDINGS. . . . .	37
Analysis of Individual Crimes by Sex, Race, Age, Social Class, and Exposure to Prison	
Analysis of Corporate Crime and Property Crime by Sex, Race, Age, Social Class, and Exposure to Prison	
Analysis of the Rankings of Corporate and Property Crimes by Social Class and Exposure to Prison	
VII. DISCUSSION. . . . .	57
Theoretical Explanations of the Findings	
Theoretical Implications of the Findings	
Limitations of the Study	
VIII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	66
APPENDIX A . . . . .	68
APPENDIX B . . . . .	70
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	84

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Description of the Sample. . . . .	70
II. The Perception of the Seriousness of Auto Theft by Five Social Factors. . . . .	71
III. The Perception of the Seriousness of Robbery by Five Social Factors. . . . .	72
IV. The Perception of the Seriousness of Theft Over Fifty Dollars by Five Social Factors . . . . .	73
V. The Perception of the Seriousness of Check Forgery by Five Social Factors. . . . .	74
VI. The Perception of the Seriousness of Burglary by Five Social Factors. . . . .	75
VII. The Perception of the Seriousness of Defect Concealment by Five Social Factors. . . . .	76
VIII. The Perception of the Seriousness of Worker Mistreatment by Five Social Factors . . . . .	77
IX. The Perception of the Seriousness of Pollution Violation by Five Social Factors. . . . .	78
X. The Perception of the Seriousness of False Advertising by Five Social Factors. . . . .	79
XI. The Perception of the Seriousness of Insurance Fraud by Five Social Factors. . . . .	80
XII. The Perception of the Seriousness of Corporate Crime by Five Social Factors. . . . .	81
XIII. Mean Rank Scores for Individual Crimes by Social Class and Exposure to Prison . . . . .	82
XIV. Rankings of Corporate Crime and Property Crime by Social Class and Exposure to Prison . . . . .	83

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of The Problem

The courts treat white collar crime less severely than other types of crime. Sutherland (5, p. 46) offers three factors as possible explanations for this differential implementation of law. They are the status of businessmen, the trend away from punishment, and the relatively unorganized resentment of the public against white collar crimes.

The main factor explored in this research is the degree of consensus in the community concerning the seriousness of white collar crime relative to other types of crime. Specifically, selected corporate crimes and property crimes are compared for their relative seriousness as perceived by various social groups within the community. The following question is posed by this research: Is there a difference by social groups in the perceptions of the seriousness of corporate and property crime that might demonstrate the relatively unorganized resentment of the public against corporate crime? A statement of the problem is that a lack of consensus exists among various social groups concerning the relative seriousness of corporate crime.

The social groups used to develop the problem are of two main types. Groups from various social classes are compared and analysed. Also, groups with diverse exposure to prison are studied. The assumption is that these groups generally exhibit greater diversity of opinions than most other groups within the society.

### Discussion of Terminology

#### Definition of Terms

The terms white collar crime, corporate crime, traditional crime, and property crime are often used when discussing the problem of this research.

White collar crime is defined by Sutherland (4, p. 40) as "crimes committed by persons of respectability and high social status in the course of their occupations." The crime must be related to the person's occupation. A businessman who commits murder is not a white collar criminal; however, one who illegally manipulates stocks is. The white collar criminal must be of high social status. A junk dealer who sells fake antiques is a criminal, but not a white collar criminal. However, a corporation executive who misrepresents a product commits a white collar crime. The white collar criminal must be a person of respectability. A boss of an organized crime syndicate may cheat consumers through a legitimate business, but because of his reputation he is not a white collar criminal. On the other hand, a businessman



who heads the local crime commission and who becomes involved in a price fixing scheme is a white collar criminal. Respectability, high social status, and the commission of crimes through their occupations are the characteristics of white collar criminals. Usually, these white collar offenses result in civil rather than criminal penalties.

Geis (3, p. 16) developed three typologies of white collar crime. First, the crime may be committed by an individual through his profession as in the case of a doctor who performs an illegal operation. Second, an employee may perpetrate a crime against his employer as in the case of embezzlement. Third, the crime may be committed by policy-making officials for their corporations. The latter type of white collar crime is labeled corporate crime.

Corporate crime may involve the policy-making executives of a single corporation or of several corporations. Anti-trust violations and price fixing schemes involve conspiracies of several corporations. Some corporate crimes that involve only the executives of a single corporation are false advertising, the concealment of defective parts in merchandise, the mistreatment of workers, pollution law violation, and insurance fraud. The corporate crimes committed by executives of a single firm are used in this research.

Traditional crimes, unlike white collar crimes, are long established in the common law. These crimes are reported

in official statistics such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports. They include crimes against the person, sex crimes, narcotic law violations, crimes against public order, and property crimes. Usually, these traditional offenses result in criminal rather than civil penalties.

Property crime is the form of traditional crime used in this study. These crimes include auto theft, check forgery, robbery, burglary, and larceny. Some of these crimes may lead to the personal injury of the victim, but they are differentiated from crimes against the person. The primary goal of property crime is not injury to the victim but is economic gain. The motive, however, may be the result of several other factors such as excitement seeking.

#### Comparison of Corporate Crime and Property Crime

The corporate crime of a business firm is analogous to the property crime of an individual. Sutherland (5, pp. 218-220) compares corporate criminals to professional thieves. A large portion of corporate offenders, like professional thieves, are recidivists because they persistently violate the law even when reprimanded. The illegal behavior of corporations, like that of professional thieves, is much more extensive than official records indicate. The professional thieves' contempt for law is comparable to the

corporate executives' customary contempt for governmental regulation. Corporate criminals are usually organized for their illegal activity as are professional thieves. Like the professional thief who steals, the businessman who violates corporate regulations generally loses no status among his peers. Within their own respective peer groups of other businessmen or other thieves, the criminal in both instances is given support for his behavior through rationalizations and other definitions favorable to his illegal actions.

Important differences in these crimes concern the offenders' self conception and the public's perception of their relative seriousness. Sutherland (5, p. 221) maintains that, unlike the corporate offender, the professional thief is defined as criminal by the public. The professional thief proudly accepts this definition while the corporate offender endeavors to maintain the image of respectability both to himself and to the public.

Property crime and corporate crime differ in their impact upon society. The financial loss to society is undoubtedly greater for corporate crime (5, p. 12). Unlike property crimes, corporate crimes can lead to lower social morale and greater disorganization within society. The general distrust of economic and governmental institutions created by corporate crime may greatly undermine the foundations of the democratic process (5, p. 13).

### Significance of the Research

The public's perception of the relative seriousness of property and corporate crimes seems to be the major difference between them. As Taft (7, p. 242) states, "[Corporate crime] is most distinctively defined . . . in terms of attitudes toward those who commit it."

A debate among criminologists demonstrates the importance of this distinction. Sutherland (6, p. 6) first raised the question, "Is 'white collar crime' crime?" His answer touches upon the very meaning of criminality. He maintains that a certain act is criminal if it is proscribed by statute and is punishable. The criterion of punishability, rather than actual punishment, would include corporate offenses as crime. Arguing against this definition, Burgess (2, p. 32) says that the stigma of crime must be attached to an act before it can be considered a crime. He points out that no concerted efforts by significant opinion leaders are made to halt corporate offenses unlike the case for the more traditional crimes. Therefore, Burgess asserts that his criterion of criminality excludes corporate offenses as crime.

Aubert (1, p. 264) says, ". . . if it were to be taken for granted without further research that all traditional crimes fulfill the criterion [that an act must carry the stigma of crime] while none of the white collar crimes do, it is merely a way to dispose of a complicated empirical

problem in the guise of a mere conceptual clarification and definition."

Research into the public's perception of the seriousness of different types of crime may clarify the issues raised by this debate. For an act to have been made illegal when no one thought it to be a crime seems inconceivable. The fact that corporate offenses are proscribed by law seems to support the idea that some groups in society stigmatize these acts along with other offenses as crime. The discovery of some of these groups would seem to be an important step for criminological theory.

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## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Some of the literature related to the public's perception of crime is reviewed below. The factors explored in the review are the differences within the general public of the perceived seriousness of corporate and property crime, the elements related to these differences, social class differences, and differences by exposure to prison.

#### The Public's Perception of the Seriousness of Corporate Crime and Property Crime

Ross (25, p. 44) was the first sociologist to assert that the public perceives business crimes as less serious than other crimes. Sutherland (28, p. 51) maintained that the public lacks the same organized resentment against corporate crime as it does against other serious violations. In reiterating these points, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (22, p. 185) says, ". . . it is apparent that the present concern with crime is not directed at white-collar crime but at 'crime on the streets'." Many sociologists concur with these assertions (5; 26; 30; 31, p. 137; 159; 242; 260).

Some theorists discuss the possibility of moral dissensus concerning the relative seriousness of corporate crime (10; 28, p. 564; 46). Aubert (1, p. 265) found that in Norway economic interest groups such as labor unions and businessmen greatly differ in their perceptions of the seriousness of business offenses. Clinard (6, p. 91) reports that during World War II a similar disparity of opinion existed between farmers and laborers on the one hand and businessmen on the other. In both studies, businessmen are the least severe in their appraisal of corporate crime.

Reviews of some empirical studies of the public's attitude toward property and corporate crimes follow. The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (22, p. 164) reports that the general public is greatly worried about such property crimes as burglary and robbery. The concern over these crimes is fairly widespread in all segments of society and includes non-victims as well as victims. Clinard (7, p. 264) found very few respondents who would recommend jail terms for businessmen who intentionally violated wartime price regulations. The leniency existed despite the public's strong support of these controls. Newman (20) reports that the public would be more severe with businessmen who violate pure food laws than the courts. The penalties chosen by the public, however, are far less severe than those given for property crimes by the court.



Newman's hypothesis that sentences for business violators recommended by the public would be similar to court sentences for burglary and larceny is not supported. A study by Rose and Prell (24) shows that sentences imposed by the court may not be an expression of the public's sentiments for any crime. This study suggests that Newman's findings may not be an accurate measurement of differences in the perception of the seriousness of the two types of crime.

Gibbons (16) avoids the problem raised by Rose and Prell. He asks respondents to choose sentences for a variety of crimes. The public, he reports, generally treats all crimes more severely than the courts do. For property crimes, the respondents choosing jail sentences range from sixty-two percent for forgery to ninety-two percent for robbery and burglary. For corporate crime, the percentages range from forty-three percent for false advertising to fifty percent for antitrust violations. From those respondents who choose jail sentences, robbery and burglary are generally given sentences of over five years; antitrust violations are usually sentenced from one to five years; auto theft, check forgery and false advertising are most often sentenced to terms of six months to one year. This study shows that in the public's mind, corporate crime is generally viewed as less serious than property crime. It also implies, however, that corporate crime is considered much more serious than records of prosecution would indicate.

The factors that may influence the choice of sentence such as social class, race, age, and sex are not explored in this study.

A survey using a nonrandom sample of readers of Psychology Today (12) points to a possible change in public attitude. The sample of well educated, young people chooses corporate crime more often than property crime as the worst type of crime. Crimes of violence are determined to be the worst by a majority of respondents. Conclusions are difficult to draw from this survey since only one type of crime could be chosen as the worst. There is no way to predict how respondents who choose crimes of violence as the worst would respond when the categories of crime are limited to corporate and property offenses.

Some sociologists express the opinion that a trend toward a more severe reaction against corporate crime exists among the public (10; 18, p. 580; 480). This trend tends to be reflected in the literature but is not conclusively demonstrated.

#### Factors Related to the Differential Perception of the Seriousness of Corporate and Property Crime

Several factors are related to the public's less severe attitude toward corporate crime. The factors explored below are the effect upon victims, social position of offenders, effects of the media, public ignorance, and differential social organization.

### Effect Upon Victims

Sutherland (28, p. 50) explains one difference of corporate crime from other offenses as being the diffuse effect of the crime toward its victims. The effects may be spread over long periods of time and among millions of people. Clinard and Quinney (5, p. 137) agree with this evaluation!

A study by Lang and Lang (17) demonstrates why the diffuse effect upon victims may be related to the public's perception of the seriousness of the crime. They found that offenses with identifiable victims are judged the most serious. Because of their diffuse and complex nature, corporate crimes are characterized by a lack of identifiable victims.

### Social Position of the Offender

In commenting on the public's perception of crime, Schur (26, p. 158) states, "... our 'official' comprehension of how criminals are situated in our society tends to reflect the distribution of attitudes and power in that society more than it does the real distribution of criminal behavior."

Vold (31, p. 254) adds, "Attribution of high status is made by the same community that decides whether and to what extent specific misconduct shall be called 'crime'..."

The public's perception of the seriousness of corporate crime relative to other crimes may reflect the continuing

power of business and its values throughout society (26, p. 163). Sutherland (28, p. 224) agrees that this differential perception like the differential implementation of laws regulating business is largely due to the status and power of businessmen. Traditional offenders are usually from the lower classes and are, therefore, unable to control the societal symbols of prestige.

#### Effect of the Media

Sutherland (28, p. 247) states that the public agencies of communication (largely controlled by powerful groups) are highly critical of the traditional offenders but are not similarly critical of corporate offenders. Clinard (6, p. 86) reports that during World War II, newspapers had policies of reporting only convictions of wartime regulations and not charges or allegations brought against businesses. The same procedure was never instituted for traditional crimes. A survey of newspapers conducted during the electrical company conspiracy trial of 1960 shows this same bias against reporting corporate crime (21). The fact that this trial resulted in unprecedented jail terms for corporate executives generated relatively little interest from the newspapers. Of those newspapers that did report the trial, none of them stressed that the corporations were declared guilty of crimes by the court. Instead, their emphasis was on the individual executives who were sentenced.

Besides the aspect of under-reporting of corporate crime, the media may affect public opinion in other ways. The constant hyperbole and high pressure techniques of television advertising and the mass depersonalization of seller-consumer relations are elements of the media that may contribute to the public's inurement to the practice of consumer fraud (26, p. 169).

#### Public Ignorance

Perhaps because of the de-emphasis on corporate crime by the media, public ignorance of the nature and pervasivity of this offense may exist. Dershowitz (9, p. 305) maintains that moral opprobrium does not exist in relation to corporate crime because of the public's lack of awareness concerning corporate criminal liability. Fisher and Withey (11, p. xii) found few respondents who could identify the terms monopoly, antitrust suit, Sherman Anti-Trust Act, and interlocking directorate which are often associated with corporate offenses.

#### Differential Social Organization

Differences in the public's perception of the seriousness of corporate and property crime may result from differential social organization (28, 255). Certain groups within society are unable to organize solidly against business offenders because these groups hold conflicting standards. In opposition to these groups, business is tightly organized

with definitions less severe toward corporate crime and with fewer conflicts in standards. Similarly, in low income areas, the local community is unable to organize against juvenile gangs and professional crime syndicates which are highly organized. This differential social organization is associated with the circular relationship between enforcement of law and public mores. The social conflict concerning corporate crime hinders effectively law enforcement which lowers moral resentment against the proscribed behavior.

An example of this process is reported by Aubert (1, p. 269). In Norway, the labor movement and the government agencies it controls (with definitions favorable to severe treatment of business offenders) are in conflict with the business interests and their governmental supporters (with definitions unfavorable to severe treatment). With these governmental agencies in conflict, prosecutions of business violations are slow and inefficient. This ineffective enforcement of business regulations creates attitudes in the general public of the relative harmlessness of these offenses.

The groups in possible conflict over the relative seriousness of corporate crime in America are not conclusively elaborated by empirical research.

Differences in the Perception of the Seriousness of  
Corporate and Property Crime by Social Class

The evidence is unclear as to the relation between dissensus concerning corporate crime and social class.

Sutherland (28, p. 47) maintains that there is toleration for corporate offenses by individuals in the same socio-economic class as the violator. Bauer (3) reports that business students not only tolerate corporate offenders, but identify strongly with a harsh version of caveat emptor as the proper morality for business. Cohen and Hodges (8, p. 323) found that unlike other social classes, the lower class most often agrees that businessmen and professionals are not trustworthy and gain position through "cheating or underhanded dealing." Ball and Friedman (2, p. 415) cite a study conducted during the 1930's that reports the display of greater tolerance toward an act when the social class positions of the person committing the act and the one passing judgment converge.

Other studies fail to support these findings. In Newman's study (20, p. 231) of the public's attitude toward a form of corporate crime, no differences in attitudes by social class are found. The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (22, p. 162) discovered that instead of displaying tolerance, the lower class expresses greater fear of burglary and robbery than other classes. These two crimes are usually associated with members of the lower socio-economic class (27, p. 182).

From these studies concerning the attitudes toward the seriousness of crime by social class, little can be concluded. The evidence is meager and ambiguous.

Differences in the Perception of the Seriousness of Corporate and Property Crime by Exposure to Prison

Dissensus possibly exists between those members of society who are traditionally labeled as criminal and those members who are not.

Garfinkel (13) explores the effects of trial, sentencing, and imprisonment upon people. After going through this process of public degradation, the individual comes to view himself as something different from and lower than the other members of society.

Within the prison, individuals are confronted with an inmate code which Clemmer discusses (4). Included in this code is the dogma that official corruption is widespread and that the inmates' incarceration is a part of this corruption. Gibbons (15, p. 271) in supporting the existence of the dogma says, ". . . it is possible to gather up an abundance of statements by articulate criminals and delinquents in which these individuals allude to the facts of white-collar crime as one basis for their grievances against 'society'." As an example one inmate states, "And look at all these so-called businessmen. . . . They swindle orphans and poor people out of their savings and insurance money--but did you ever hear of them getting a bit like ours? Not on your life." (30, p. 522).



Rasmussen as well as Sykes and Matza (23; 29, p. 566, 644) concur that the inmate code includes the dogma of condemning business offenders along with the rest of "legitimate" society.

Sykes and Matza (29) maintain that the adoption of the inmate code by the individual (who has been publicly degraded) is an attempt to neutralize guilt feelings or feelings of remorse. One of the mechanisms of this neutralization process is "condemnation of the condemners." As Sykes and Matza explain (29, p. 668), "The delinquent shifts the focus of attention from his own deviant acts to the motives and behaviors of those who disapprove of his violations. His condemners, he may claim, are hypocrites [and] deviants in disguise. . . ." McCorkle and Korn's (19) concept of "rejection of the rejectors" refers to a similar process. The extent to which this rejection process is a reaction to guilt feelings or rather a reaction that indicates genuine feelings of oppression is an open question.

The effect of being degraded by the court and the exposure to the inmate code may influence the individual's perception of the relative seriousness of corporate and property crime. The prison subculture may be in dissensus with other subcultures and groups on this question. As Geis (14, p. 14) points out, no studies exist which might demonstrate or clarify these relationships.

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## CHAPTER III

### HYPOTHESES

#### Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are used to demonstrate differences, if any, between various social groupings regarding the perception of the seriousness of corporate and property crime. In these hypotheses, the seriousness of corporate crime is always in terms of its relation to the seriousness of property crime.

The hypotheses are stated positively below. Hypotheses one, two, and three are used to determine whether the factors of sex, race, and age must be treated as control variables.

H1) Sex is related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime.

H2) Race is related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime.

H3) Age is related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime.

The relationship of social class to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime is developed with the following hypotheses.

H4)a The upper class perceives property crime as being more serious than corporate crime.

H4)b The middle class perceives property crime as being more serious than corporate crime.

H4)c The lower class perceives corporate crime as being more serious than property crime.

The relationship between exposure to prison and the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime is developed by the following hypotheses.

H5)a Non-prisoners perceive property crime as being more serious than corporate crime.

H5)b First offenders in prison perceive corporate crime as being more serious than property crime.

H5)c Recidivists in prison perceive corporate crime as being more serious than property crime.

For purposes of testing, the hypotheses are stated in their null form.

H1) Sex is not related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime. If this null hypothesis is rejected, then sex must be used as a control variable.

H2) Race is not related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime. If this null hypothesis is rejected, then race must be treated as a control variable.

H3) Age is not related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime. If this null hypothesis is rejected, then age must be treated as a control variable.

H4)a The upper class perceives no difference in the seriousness of property crime and corporate crime.

H4)b The middle class perceives no difference in the seriousness of property crime and corporate crime.

H4)c The lower class perceives no difference in the seriousness of corporate crime and property crime.

H5)a Non-prisoners perceive no difference in the seriousness of property crime and corporate crime.

H5)b First offenders in prison perceive no difference in the seriousness of corporate crime and property crime.

H5)c Recidivists in prison perceive no difference in the seriousness of corporate crime and property crime.

In all instances, the null hypothesis is rejected when significance is at the .05 level.

#### Operational Definitions

The independent and dependent variables are operationally defined below.

#### Independent Variables

The independent variables are sex, race, age, social class, and exposure to prison.

Sex.--This variable refers to the dichotomy of male and female. Sex is operationally defined as the response to the question concerning sex recorded on the questionnaire. (See Appendix A, Question 1.)

Race.--Race refers to the ethnic groupings of White, Black, and Chicano. Race is operationally defined as the

response to the question concerning race recorded on the questionnaire. (See Appendix A, Question 2.) The racial category of White includes the responses "White", "Caucasian", and "Anglo". The category of Black includes the responses "Black", "Afro-American", and "Negro". The category of Chicano includes the responses "Chicano", "Mexican-American", "Latin-American", and "Spanish American".

Age.--This variable refers to the age categories of young and old. Age is operationally defined as the response to the question concerning age recorded on the questionnaire. (See Appendix A, Question 3.) The age category of young includes responses of nineteen through twenty-nine. The category of old includes responses of thirty through forty-four. These age categories are determined by a division at the median of the sample distributed along an age continuum.

Social Class.--This variable refers to the social class categories of upper class, middle class, and lower class. Social class is operationally defined as the social position score on the Hollingshead social class scale (1, pp. 28-41). The respondent's education and the head of household's occupation are scaled and weighted individually and are then combined to obtain a social position score. The head of household is the person in the residence with the highest rated job according to the Hollingshead scale. For prison inmates, the main occupation prior to commitment is used.



For inmates nineteen and twenty years of age and for those who indicate no occupation, the parents' occupation is used. Education and occupation are determined by responses to questions concerning these factors recorded on the questionnaire. (See Appendix A, Questions 4-11.)

The range of scores for each social class is eleven through thirty-six for upper class, thirty-seven through fifty-eight for middle class, and fifty-nine through seventy-seven for lower class. These ranges of scores are based upon a tripartite division of the general population sample distributed along a continuum of social position scores and are applied to the entire sample.

Exposure to Prison.--Non-prisoners, first offenders, in prison, and recidivists in prison are the categories for exposure to prison. Non-prisoners are respondents in the general population who indicate on the questionnaire that they have served no time in juvenile or adult correctional institutions. First offenders are respondents who indicate on the questionnaire that they are serving their first commitment in an adult correctional institution. Recidivists are respondents who indicate on the questionnaire that they are serving at least their second commitment in an adult correctional institution. A commitment is a prison term in which at least six months have been served. (See Appendix A, Questions 12-15Y)

### Dependent Variable

The dependent variable, the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime and property crime, is operationally defined through the respondents' rankings of ten crimes according to seriousness. (See Appendix A, Question 16.) Five of the crimes are corporate crimes (false advertising, defect concealment, worker mistreatment, pollution law violation, and insurance fraud), and five are property crimes (auto theft, check forgery, robbery, burglary, and theft over fifty dollars).

For purposes of statistical analysis, the rankings of crime are treated in three ways. First, the rank scores for each individual crime are divided into the categories of high, medium, and low seriousness through a division of the sample into three groups of similar size. This division is made separately for each crime. Second, the overall rankings of property and corporate crime are divided into the categories of high, medium, and low seriousness through a division of the sample into three groups of similar size along a continuum of cumulative rank scores. Third, mean rank scores are obtained for each crime within each category of social class and exposure to prison. The mean rank scores for these crimes are then ranked according to seriousness.

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## CHAPTER IV

### SAMPLE

#### Sampling Procedure

The two sources for the sample are the prison and the general population.

The prison sample is from five adult correctional institutions. In four of them, the sample consists of five percent of all drug offenders on their present commitment from nineteen to forty-four years of age who have served at least six months of their sentence. In the other institution, the sample consists of fourteen percent of the total population of drug offenders with limitations identical to the other institutions. Drug offenders were used because the crimes for which they are incarcerated are neither corporate nor property crimes. The total prison sample of 227 includes 6 respondents who were absent from the testing sessions, 2 respondents who refused to participate, and 8 respondents who failed to answer a sufficient number of questions for analysis. The final sample includes 211 respondents from the prison population.

The general population sample is from McKinney, Texas. Census tracts were examined to determine areas of racial concentration in order to provide a sample that as closely

as possible matches the prison sample by race. A sample of seventy-five city blocks was drawn. Thirty-eight blocks were randomly selected from the census tract containing the largest percentages of Blacks and Chicanos. Thirty-seven blocks were randomly selected from the remaining three census tracts in McKinney. Three houses were chosen randomly from each block. Each house was contacted, and all people between the ages of nineteen and forty-four were asked to complete the questionnaire. Of the total sample of 217 houses, 107, or 49.3 percent, had at least one person within the required age range. Thirteen houses were either vacant, or the residents could not be contacted. The ninety-seven remaining houses lacked people of the required ages. Within the 107 houses, 205 respondents between the ages of nineteen and forty-four were contacted. Twenty-three respondents, or 11.2 percent, refused to participate in the study. The final sample includes 182 respondents from the general population.

#### Description of the Sample

A description of the sample by sex, race, age, social class, and exposure to prison is presented in Table I. (See Appendix B, Table I.)

The general population sample is 48.4 percent male and 51.6 percent female. The prison sample is 75.4 percent male and 24.6 percent female. When the samples are combined, the percentages are 62.8 percent male and 37.2 percent female.

The racial composition of the general population sample is 53.3 percent White, 30.8 percent Black, and 15.9 percent Chicano. The prison sample is 34.6 percent White, 35.1 percent Black, and 30.3 percent Chicano. The combined sample is 43.2 percent White, 33.1 percent Black, and 23.7 percent Chicano.

The age composition of the general population sample is 47.3 percent young and 52.7 percent old. The prison sample is 50.2 percent young and 49.8 percent old. The combined sample is 48.9 percent young and 51.1 percent old.

By social class, the general population sample is 30.2 percent upper class, 35.2 percent middle class, and 34.6 percent lower class. The prison sample is 7.7 percent upper class, 32.7 percent middle class, and 59.6 percent lower class. The combined sample is 18.2 percent upper class, 33.8 percent middle class, and 40 percent lower class. Three respondents provide insufficient information for classification by social class.

By exposure to prison, the percentages are 45.8 percent non-prisoners, 35.7 percent first offenders, and 18.5 percent recidivists. Four respondents in the general population sample have served terms in adult or juvenile correctional institutions and are therefore excluded from any exposure to prison categories. None of the respondents in the general population indicate having ever been employed at a correctional institution.

## CHAPTER V

### METHOD OF ANALYSIS

#### Analysis of Individual Crimes by Five Social Factors

Each of the ten crimes is individually analysed for its degree of seriousness as perceived by the sample for the factors of sex, race, age, social class, and exposure to prison. The rank scores of seriousness from one (most serious) to ten (least serious) are divided into the categories of high, medium, and low seriousness through a division of the sample into three groups of similar size. This division into groups of high, medium, and low seriousness is made separately for each crime. The relationship between the degrees of seriousness and the social factors are statistically analysed with the chi-square test (1, pp. 212-221). Statistical significance is at the .05 level. This procedure produces a more complete description of the findings and demonstrates the respondents' perceptions of seriousness for each individual crime.

#### Analysis of Corporate and Property Crimes by Five Social Factors

The degree of seriousness for corporate crimes are analysed by sex, race, age, social class, and exposure to prison. The categories of high, medium, and low seriousness

are obtained by dividing the sample into three groups of similar size along a continuum of cumulative rank scores from fifteen through forty. A score of fifteen indicates that the respondent ranks the corporate crimes as one through five in seriousness. A score of forty means that the respondent ranks them as six through ten. The categories for corporate crime have the cumulative rank scores of fifteen through twenty-three for high seriousness, twenty-four through thirty-two for medium seriousness, and thirty-three through forty for low seriousness. The degrees of seriousness are exactly the reverse for property crime; when corporate crime is "high", property crime is "low".

The relationship of each social factor to the degree of seriousness is analysed. This step serves two purposes. First, null hypotheses one, two, and three are tested to determine if sex, race, or age are intervening variables. Second, social class and exposure to prison are explored for their relationships to the perception of the seriousness of corporate and property crime. These relationships are tested with the chi-square test. Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

Analysis of the Rankings of Corporate Crime and  
Property Crime by Social Class  
and Exposure to Prison

Within each category of social class and exposure to prison, a mean rank score for each crime is determined. The



mean rank scores for all ten crimes are ranked from high to low in each category of social class and exposure to prison. The orders of these rankings are statistically analysed with the Mann-Whitney U test (1, pp. 197-201). The test measures differences in central tendency for the rankings of the two types of crime.

The rankings of crime are analysed for each category of social class (upper, middle, and lower) within the general population sample, the prison sample, and the combined sample. This procedure tests null hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c.

The rankings of crime are also analysed for each category of exposure to prison (non-prisoners, first offenders, and recidivists) within each social class and for the combined sample. This procedure tests null hypotheses 5a, 5b, and 5c.

In the above procedures, a null hypothesis is rejected if the Mann-Whitney U test is significant at the .05 level. If necessary, the factors of sex, race, and age are treated as control variables in these procedures.

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## CHAPTER VI

### FINDINGS

#### Analysis of Individual Crimes by Sex, Race, Age, Social Class, and Exposure to Prison

The report of findings on individual crimes is based on the data presented in Tables II through XI. (See Appendix B, Tables II-XI.) Below, each social factor is explored for only the crimes with which significant relationships exist. Significance is at the .05 level with the chi-square test.

#### Sex

There is a significant difference by sex for the crime of robbery. This crime is perceived as more serious by males than by females. Males are 45.4 percent high in seriousness, 27.5 percent medium, and 27.1 percent low. Females have 30.8 percent with high seriousness, 37 percent with medium, and 32.2 percent with low. (See Appendix B, Table III.)

The remaining nine crimes have no significant differences by sex.

#### Race

Race is significant for the crimes of insurance fraud, false advertising, defect concealment, and pollution violation.

Insurance fraud is regarded as more serious by Blacks and Chicanos than by Whites. Blacks are 36.2 percent high in seriousness, 28.5 percent medium, and 35.3 percent low. Chicanos have 30.1 percent with high seriousness, 41.9 percent with medium, and 28 percent with low. Whites are 18.8 percent high in seriousness, 39.4 percent medium, and 41.8 percent low. (See Appendix B, Table XI.)

False advertising is judged as more serious by Chicanos and Blacks than by Whites. Chicanos have 30.1 percent with high seriousness, 33.3 percent with medium, and 36.6 percent with low. Blacks are 27.7 percent high, 45.4 percent medium, and 26.9 percent low. Whites have 25.3 percent with high seriousness, 29.4 percent with medium, and 45.3 percent with low. (See Appendix B, Table X.)

Defect concealment is perceived as more serious by Whites than by either Blacks or Chicanos. Whites are 47.1 percent high in seriousness, 32.3 percent medium, and 20.6 percent low. Blacks are 32.3 percent high, 40 percent medium, and 27.7 percent low. Chicanos are 31.2 percent high in seriousness, 38.7 percent medium, and 30.1 percent low. (See Appendix B, Table VII.)

Pollution violation is viewed with most seriousness by Whites, with intermediate seriousness by Chicanos, and with least seriousness by Blacks. Whites have 41.2 percent with high seriousness, 32.9 percent with medium, and 25.9 percent with low. Chicanos have 34.4 percent with high seriousness, 33.3 percent with medium, and 32.3 percent with low. Blacks

are 24.6 percent high, 34.6 percent medium, and 40.8 percent low. (See Appendix B, Table IX.)

There are no significant differences by race for any of the remaining crimes.

#### Age

Age is significant for the crimes of robbery and pollution violation.

Robbery is considered more serious by the old than by the young. The old are 45.8 percent high in seriousness, 30.8 percent medium, and 23.4 percent low. The young are 33.9 percent high, 31.2 percent medium, and 34.9 percent low in seriousness. (See Appendix B, Table III.)

Pollution violation is deemed more serious by the young than by the old. The young have 41.7 percent with high seriousness, 30.7 percent with medium, and 27.6 percent with low. The old have 26.9 percent with high, 36.3 percent with medium, and 36.8 percent with low seriousness. (See Appendix B, Table IX.)

There are no significant differences by age for the remaining crimes.

#### Social Class

Social class is analysed within the general population, within the prison, and for the combined sample.

General population sample.--Social class in the general population is significant only for the crime of burglary.

This crime is perceived with most seriousness by the upper class, with intermediate seriousness by the middle class, and with least seriousness by the lower class. The upper class is 34.6 percent high in seriousness, 32.7 percent medium, and 32.7 percent low. The middle class has 20.3 percent with high seriousness, 45.3 percent with medium, and 34.4 percent low. The lower class is 11.2 percent high in seriousness, 44.4 percent medium, and 44.4 percent low. (See Appendix B, Table VI.)

For the general population, social class is not significant for the remaining crimes.

Prison sample.--Social class in the prison sample is significant for the crimes of check forgery and worker mistreatment.

Check forgery is judged to be most serious by the lower class, intermediately serious by the upper class, and least serious by the middle class. The lower class is 30.6 percent high, 34.7 percent medium, and 34.7 percent low in seriousness. The upper class has 12.5 percent with high seriousness, 50 percent with medium, and 37.5 percent with low. The middle class is 19.1 percent high in seriousness, 26.5 percent medium, and 54.4 percent low. (See Appendix B, Table V.)

Worker mistreatment is viewed with most seriousness by the middle class, with intermediate seriousness by the lower

class, and with least seriousness by the upper class. The middle class has 51.5 percent with high seriousness, 20.6 percent with medium, and 27.9 percent with low. The lower class is 31.5 percent high in seriousness, 31.5 percent medium, and 37 percent low. The upper class has 18.7 percent with high, 31.3 percent with medium, and 50 percent with low seriousness. (See Appendix B; Table VIII.)

Social class is not significant in the prison sample for any of the remaining crimes.

Combined sample.--When the general population sample and prison sample are combined, social class is significant for the crimes of check forgery and worker mistreatment.

Check forgery is regarded as more serious by the lower and upper classes than by the middle class. The lower class is 28.9 percent high in seriousness, 34.2 percent medium, and 36.9 percent low. The upper class is 25.3 percent high, 42.3 percent medium, and 32.4 percent low. The middle class has 22.7 percent with high seriousness, 26.5 percent with medium, and 50.8 percent with low. (See Appendix B; Table V.)

Worker mistreatment is considered to be most serious by the middle class, intermediately serious by the lower class, and least serious by the upper class. The middle class is 48.5 percent high, 23.5 percent medium, and 28 percent low in seriousness. The lower class has 38 percent with high seriousness, 29.4 percent with medium, and 32.6 percent with

low. The upper class is 26.8 percent high in seriousness, 32.4 percent medium, and 40.8 percent low. (See Appendix B, Table VIII.)

For the remaining crimes, social class in the combined sample is not significant.

#### Exposure to Prison

There are significant differences by exposure to prison for the crimes of robbery, theft over fifty dollars, and defect concealment.

Robbery is perceived with most seriousness by recidivists, with intermediate seriousness by first offenders, and with least seriousness by non-prisoners. Recidivists are 50 percent high in seriousness, 36.1 percent medium, and 13.9 percent low. First offenders are 46 percent high, 26.6 percent medium, and 27.4 percent low. Non-prisoners are 32 percent high, 32 percent medium, and 36 percent low in seriousness. (See Appendix B, Table III.)

Theft over fifty dollars is believed to be most serious by recidivists, intermediately serious by first offenders, and least serious by non-prisoners. Recidivists have 36.1 percent with high seriousness, 37.5 percent with medium, and 26.4 percent with low. First offenders have 28.8 percent with high seriousness, 33.8 percent with medium, and 37.4 percent with low. Non-prisoners are 32 percent high, 21.9 percent medium, and 46.1 percent low in seriousness. (See Appendix B, Table IV.)



Defect concealment is viewed as more serious by non-prisoners and recidivists than by first offenders. Non-prisoners are 43.8 percent high in seriousness, 34.8 percent medium, and 21.4 percent low. Recidivists have 44.4 percent with high seriousness, 30.6 percent with medium, and 25 percent with low. First offenders are 28.8 percent high, 40.3 percent medium, and 30.9 percent low in seriousness. (See Appendix B, Table VII.)

#### Summary of Individual Crimes

Auto theft.--This property crime has no significant relationships with any social factor. (See Appendix B, Table II.)

Robbery.--For this property crime, the factors of sex, age, and exposure to prison are significant. Males are more severe than females and the old are more severe than the young in their perceptions of this crime. Recidivists are more severe, first offenders intermediately severe, and non-prisoners are least severe in their judgments of robbery. (See Appendix B, Table III.)

Theft over fifty dollars.--For this property crime, the factor of exposure to prison is significant. Recidivists are most severe, first offenders are intermediately severe, and non-prisoners are least severe in their judgments of theft over fifty dollars. (See Appendix B, Table IV.)

Check forgery.--For this property crime, the factor of social class in only the prison and combined samples is significant. In the prison sample, the lower class is most severe, the upper class is intermediately severe, and the middle class is least severe in their judgments of check forgery. In the combined sample, the lower and upper classes are more severe than the middle class. (See Appendix B, Table V.)

Burglary.--For this property crime, the factor of social class in only the general population sample is significant. The upper class is most severe, the middle class is intermediately severe, and the lower class is least severe in their judgments of burglary. (See Appendix B, Table VI.)

Defect concealment.--For this corporate crime, the factors of race and exposure to prison are significant. This crime is perceived as more serious by Whites than by either Blacks or Chicanos and is viewed as more serious by non-prisoners and recidivists than by first offenders. (See Appendix B, Table VII.)

Worker mistreatment.--For this corporate crime, the factor of social class in only the prison and combined samples is significant. In both samples, the middle class is most severe, the lower class is intermediately severe,

and the upper class is least severe in their judgments of worker mistreatment. (See Appendix B, Table VIII.)

Pollution violation.--For this corporate crime, the factors of race and age are significant. Whites are most severe, Chicanos are intermediately severe, and Blacks are least severe in their judgments. Pollution violation is viewed more severely by the young than by the old. (See Appendix B, Table IX.)

False advertising.--For this corporate crime, the factor of race is significant. This crime is judged as more serious by Chicanos and Blacks than by Whites. (See Appendix B, Table IX.)

Insurance fraud.--For this corporate crime, the factor of race is significant. This crime is regarded as more serious by Blacks and Chicanos than by Whites. (See Appendix B, Table XI.)

#### Analysis of Corporate Crime and Property Crime by Sex, Race, Age, Social Class, and Exposure to Prison

This step tests null hypotheses one, two, and three to demonstrate whether sex, race, and age are necessary as control variables. The relationship of the seriousness of corporate crime to social class and exposure to prison is also explored. References to the seriousness of corporate crime are always made in its relation to the seriousness of

property crime. The data analysing corporate and property crime for sex, race, age, social class, and exposure to prison are reported in Table XII. (See Appendix B, Table XII.)

#### Sex

Null hypothesis one states that sex is not related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime. The data fail to reject this null hypothesis. Males are 33.2 percent high in seriousness, 32.8 percent medium, and 34 percent low. Females are 34.9 percent high, 30.8 percent medium, and 34.3 percent low in seriousness for corporate crime. With 2 degrees of freedom, the chi-square of .194 is not significant. Therefore, sex is not an intervening variable.

#### Race

Null hypothesis two states that race is not related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime. The data fail to reject this null hypothesis. Blacks are 30 percent high in seriousness, 36.9 percent medium, and 33.1 percent low. Chicanos are 35.5 percent high, 35.5 percent medium, and 29 percent low. Whites are 35.9 percent high, 26.5 percent medium, and 37.6 percent low in seriousness for corporate crime. With 4 degrees of freedom, the chi-square of 5.174 is not significant. Therefore, race is not an intervening variable.

### Age

Null hypothesis three states that age is not related to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime. The data fail to reject this null hypothesis. The young are 39.1 percent high in seriousness, 30.2 percent medium, and 30.7 percent low. The old are 28.9 percent high, 33.8 percent medium, and 37.3 percent low in seriousness for corporate crime. With 2 degrees of freedom, the chi-square of 4.673 is not significant. Therefore, age is not an intervening variable.

### Social Class

The relationship of social class to the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime is explored for the general population, the prison, and the combined samples.

General population sample.--There is no significant difference by social class in the general population for the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime. The upper class is 30.9 percent high in seriousness, 20 percent medium, and 49.1 percent low. The middle class is 40.6 percent high, 34.4 percent medium, and 25 percent low. The lower class is 41.3 percent high, 30.1 percent medium, and 28.6 percent low in seriousness for corporate crime. With 4 degrees of freedom, the chi-square of 9.074 is not significant.

Prison sample.--There is a significant difference by social class in prison for the perception of the seriousness

of corporate crime. This type of crime is perceived with most seriousness by the middle class, with intermediate seriousness by the lower class, and with least seriousness by the upper class. The middle class is 45.6 percent high in seriousness, 23.5 percent medium, and 30.9 percent low. The lower class is 23.4 percent high, 41.1 percent medium, and 35.5 percent low. The upper class is 18.8 percent high, 37.5 percent medium, and 43.7 percent low in seriousness for corporate crime. With 4 degrees of freedom, the chi-square of 12.497 is significant.

Combined sample.--There is a significant difference by social class for the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime when the general population and prison samples are combined. Corporate crime is viewed as most serious by the middle class, as intermediately serious by the lower class, and as least serious by the upper class. The middle class is 43.2 percent high in seriousness, 28.8 percent medium, and 28 percent low. The lower class is 29.4 percent high, 37.4 percent medium, and 33.2 percent low. The upper class is 28.2 percent high, 23.9 percent medium, and 47.9 percent low in seriousness for corporate crime. With 4 degrees of freedom, the chi-square of 14.179 is significant.

#### Exposure to Prison

There is no significant difference in the perception of the seriousness of corporate crime by exposure to prison.

Non-prisoners are 37.1 percent high in seriousness, 29.2 percent medium, and 33.7 percent low. First offenders are 29.5 percent high, 34.5 percent medium, and 36 percent low. Recidivists are 31.9 percent high, 36.2 percent medium, and 31.9 percent low in seriousness for corporate crime. With 4 degrees of freedom, the chi-square of 2.707 is not significant.

#### Summary

Sex, race, and age are not significant factors influencing the perception of the seriousness of corporate and property crime. Therefore, controlling for these variables is unnecessary when analyzing social class and exposure to prison.

The further analysis of social class is indicated due to the significant relationships found in the prison and the combined samples. Because of the significant relationship of social class in prison, exposure to prison may be a significant factor when social class is treated as an intervening variable.

#### Analysis of the Rankings of Corporate and Property Crimes by Social Class and Exposure to Prison

A mean rank score is determined for each crime by social class in each type of sample and by exposure to prison in each social class and in the combined sample. These data are presented in Table XIII with column one representing the rank order of individual crimes for the overall sample. (See Appendix B, Table XIII.)

To show the tests of significance for hypotheses 4a, 4b, 4c, 5a, 5b, and 5c, Table XIV is presented. (See Appendix B, Table XIV.) The rankings of corporate and property crimes in Table XIV are based upon the mean rank scores presented in Table XIII. The hypotheses related to social class and exposure to prison are explored below.

#### Social Class

Hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c relate the perception of the seriousness of corporate and property crime to social class.

Hypothesis 4a:--Null hypothesis 4a states that the upper class perceives no difference in the seriousness of property crime and corporate crime.

The respondents in the general population exhibit a tendency toward perceiving property crime as more serious than corporate crime. This trend is not significant with the U score of 8. For the general population, the data fail to reject null hypothesis 4a.

For the prison, the rankings of the upper class tend toward greater seriousness of property crime. This trend is not significant with the U score of 9. For the prison, null hypothesis 4a is not rejected.

When the general population and prison samples are combined the respondents show a tendency of judging property crime more severely than corporate crime. This trend is not



significant with the U score of 7. The data do not reject null hypothesis 4a in the combined sample.

With the failure to reject the null hypothesis in the general population, the prison, and combined samples, hypothesis 4a is not supported. The data do not demonstrate that the upper class views property crime as more serious than corporate crime.

Hypothesis 4b. -- Null hypothesis 4b states that the middle class perceives no difference in the seriousness of property crime and corporate crime.

For the general population, the rankings incline toward greater seriousness of corporate crime. This tendency is not significant for the U score of 11. The data fail to reject null hypothesis 4b in the general population sample.

In the prison, the rankings of the middle class demonstrate a tendency of greater seriousness for corporate crime. This trend is not significant with the U score of 9. The data fail to reject null hypothesis 4b in the prison sample.

In the combined sample, the rankings incline toward greater seriousness of corporate crime. This tendency is not significant for the U score of 11. For the combined sample, null hypothesis 4b is not rejected.

With the failure to reject the null hypothesis in the three samples, hypothesis 4b is not supported. The data

fail to demonstrate that the middle class perceives property crime as more serious than corporate crime.

Hypothesis 4c.--Null hypothesis 4c states that the lower class perceives no difference in the seriousness of corporate crime and property crime.

In the general population, the rankings tend toward greater seriousness of corporate crime. This trend is not significant with the U score of 10. The data fail to reject null hypothesis 4c in the general population sample.

For the prison, the rankings of the lower class show an inclination toward greater seriousness of property crime. This trend is not significant for the U score of 11. The data do not reject null hypothesis 4c in the prison sample.

When the prison and general population samples are combined the respondents exhibit a tendency of judging property crime more severely than corporate crime. This trend is not significant with the U score of 11. The data fail to reject hypothesis 4c in the combined sample.

With the failure to reject the null hypothesis in the three samples, hypothesis 4c is not supported. The data do not demonstrate that the lower class perceives corporate crime as more serious than property crime.

#### Exposure to Prison

Hypothesis 5a, 5b, and 5c relate the perception of the seriousness of corporate and property crime to exposure to prison.

Hypothesis 5a. -- Null hypothesis 5a states that non-prisoners perceive no difference in the seriousness of corporate crime and property crime.

In the upper class, non-prisoners are prone to rank property crime as more serious than corporate crime. This tendency is not significant with the U score of 8. The data fail to reject null hypothesis 5a in the upper class.

In the middle class, non-prisoners are inclined toward ranking corporate crime as more serious than property crime. This tendency is not significant with the U score of 11. Null hypothesis 5a is not rejected for the middle class.

In the lower class, non-prisoners tend to rank corporate crime as more serious. This trend is not significant for the U score of 12. For the lower class, the data fail to reject null hypothesis 5a.

When the social classes are combined, non-prisoners rank corporate crime as slightly more serious than property crime. This tendency is not significant for the U score of 12. The data fail to reject null hypothesis 5a in the combined sample.

With the failure to reject the null hypothesis in any of the social classes and in the combined sample, hypothesis 5a is not supported. The data do not demonstrate that non-prisoners perceive property crime as more serious than corporate crime.

Hypothesis 5b.--Null hypothesis 5b states that first offenders perceive no difference in the seriousness of property crime and corporate crime.

In the upper class, first offenders are inclined toward viewing property crime as slightly more serious than corporate crime. This trend is not significant with the U score of 11. The data fail to reject null hypothesis 5b in the upper class.

In the middle class, first offenders tend to judge corporate crime as slightly more serious. This trend is not significant for the U score of 12. Null hypothesis 5b is not rejected in the middle class.

In the lower class, first offenders are prone toward ranking property crime as more serious. This tendency is not significant for the U score of 10. The data fail to reject null hypothesis 5b in the lower class.

When the social classes are combined, first offenders rank corporate crime as slightly more serious. This tendency is not significant with the U score of 12. For the combined sample, null hypothesis 5b is not rejected.

With the failure to reject the null hypothesis in all social classes and in the combined sample, hypothesis 5b is not supported. The data do not demonstrate that first offenders perceive corporate crime as more serious than property crime.

Hypothesis 5c.--Null hypothesis 5c states that recidivists perceive no difference in the seriousness of corporate crime and property crime.

For the upper class, an adequate number of cases for recidivists does not exist. The upper class for recidivists is not analysed.

In the middle class, recidivists tend to view corporate crime as the more serious crime. This trend is not significant with the U score of 9. The data fail to reject null hypothesis 5c in the middle class.

In the lower class, recidivists incline toward slightly greater seriousness for corporate crime. This tendency is not significant for the U score of 12. The data do not reject null hypothesis 5c in the lower class.

When the social classes are combined, recidivists rank corporate crime as more serious than property crime. This tendency is not significant with the U score of 10. Null hypothesis 5c is not rejected in the combined sample.

With the failure to reject the null hypothesis in the middle and lower social classes and in the combined sample, hypothesis 5c is not supported. The data fail to demonstrate that recidivists perceive corporate crime as more serious than property crime.

#### Summary

With the rejection of null hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c, a relationship of social class to the perception of the

seriousness of corporate and property crime is not supported. Further, the rejection of null hypotheses 5a, 5b, and 5c does not support a relationship between exposure to prison and the perception of the seriousness of the two classes of crime.

The cumulative rank scores presented in the last column of Table XIV show that corporate crime falls within the medium range of seriousness for all categories of social class and exposure to prison except one. (See Appendix B, Table XIV.) The combined sample under the upper social class falls within the low seriousness range by only one cumulative rank score. The ranges of high, medium, and low seriousness are identical to those in Table XII. (See Appendix B, Table XII.)

The significant relationships of social class in the prison and combined samples reported in Table XII are not found when the Mann-Whitney U test is applied. For all the classes within both samples except the upper class of the combined sample, the cumulative rank scores of seriousness for corporate crime fall within the medium range indicating slight differences between the perceived seriousness of the two types of crime.

## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSION

None of the groups that were analysed exhibit any significant differences in their perceptions of seriousness of corporate and property crime.

A review of the data on individual crime reveals little disagreement within any of the social variables as to the seriousness of these crimes. For the variable of race for which there are divergent perceptions for four corporate crimes, the direction of significance on two of the crimes toward low seriousness for whites is counterbalanced by high seriousness for whites on the two other corporate crimes. For the other variables, either the same counterbalancing of factors occurs, or the number of crimes with significant differences in perceived seriousness is low. The general form of the rankings of individual crimes shows that most of the corporate crimes fall within the middle range of seriousness while the property crimes are often at the two extremes. The result of these patterns is the finding of consensus within all variables that corporate crime and property crime are of equal seriousness.

Theoretical explanations of these findings, implications for theories, and some possible empirical limitations of the study are discussed below.

### Theoretical Explanations of the Findings

Possible explanations concerning the findings by the variables of exposure to prison and social class are explored.

#### Exposure to Prison

Contrary to predictions, inmates have the similar perception of the general population that corporate and property crimes are of equal seriousness.

This finding may be due to the type of inmate selected for study. Possibly, drug offenders do not share the same norms and values of other offenders. Various subcultures may exist in prison of which drug offenders represent only a few. Differential participation in these subcultures and possible orientations toward values and norms outside the prison may keep any dogma from becoming widespread throughout the prison (11, pp. 543-546). As a process of neutralizing guilt feelings engendered by public degradation, the drug offender may not only "condemn his condemners" (13, p. 663) but may also condemn other types of offenders in the prison. Using property or other types of offenders as comparison groups may allow the drug offender to feel relatively guiltless. This process described in the literature on reference group theory (8) may influence the drug offenders' perceptions of the seriousness of crimes. The use of other types of offenders might alter the findings.



The possibility also exists that factors influencing the prison culture may be increasingly felt within the general population. A consciousness of powerlessness and alienation may be developing rapidly within American society (4, 5, 7, 10). This consciousness might be similar to that of inmates and may influence the perception of the seriousness of crime by lowering the prestige of powerful groups that may become involved in corporate crime.

#### Social Class

The findings that all social classes similarly perceive corporate and property crime with equal seriousness may reflect several changes within society. The perception of the seriousness of corporate crime may be related to the factors of public ignorance, the media, the social position of the offenders, and the conception of the victim. (See Chapter II, pp. 13-15.) Just as these factors may have been responsible for the findings of earlier studies that corporate crime is perceived less seriously, the findings of the present study concerning social class may be partly due to changes in these factors.

First, the public's awareness concerning the facts of corporate crime may be increasing. Several consumer groups have recently been involved in educating the public about consumer rights and corporate offenses (9). In addition, recent political scandals involving corporations may have

raised in the public's mind the specter of crime in high places.

Second, the communication media have presented to a greater extent than in the past the facts of corporate crimes and have aided the effectiveness of consumer rights groups through publicity. The media have also brought to public consciousness the plight of poor people which has added to greater sympathy and understanding for their situation. Through the civil rights movement that has included several low income groups, lower class perceptions of American society have become more widespread. The newspaper and electronic media may have been the major conveyance for the diffusion of lower class values into the higher classes. Included in this value system is the ideology of widespread official and corporate corruption (2, p. 323).

Third, the social position of the offender seems to exert less influence upon public opinion. The apparent trend away from a business dominated value system has removed many of the cultural symbols of prestige that businessmen accused of corporate crime can manipulate to gain public approval.

Fourth, the concept of the victim may be changing to more fully include the public at large. Greater concern seems to exist that public institutions can be undermined by corruption involving government and corporate officials.

Changes in the above factors may have interacted to reduce differences in perceptions of seriousness for corporate

and property crime. The opinion of some sociologists that the public is moving toward more severe reactions against corporate crime seems to be supported by this study (3; 6, p. 580; 480). The possibility logically exists, however, that property crime is viewed with less seriousness than it was in the past. There is no evidence to support this possibility.

#### Theoretical Implications of the Findings

The findings may have implications for two criminological theories. Sutherland's concept of differential social organization and Burgess' definition of crime may be affected.

#### Differential Social Organization

The findings might appear to refute Sutherland's concept of differential social organization (12, p. 255). The argument could be made that with no groups in conflict over the seriousness of corporate crime, the existence of differential social organization is not exhibited. However, when it is considered that greater public resentment may have resulted from the lower conflict of standards between those interest groups opposed to corporate offenses, the theory seems to gain support. These more tightly organized groups such as those involved in the consumer movement can better compete with the business interests in shaping public attitudes. The factors of the media, greater public awareness, the decline of business values, and the changing conception

of the victim have all interacted with the concerted efforts of interest groups to organize solidly against business offenders. These are the conditions under which Sutherland's concept of differential social organization would predict greater resentment against corporate crime.

#### Definition of Corporate Offenses as Crime

The findings seem to resolve the debate between Sutherland and Burgess concerning the definition of crime. (See Chapter I, p. 6.) The argument of Burgess (1, p. 23) that corporate offenses are not crime because the public does not attach the stigma of crime to them is not supported by the findings. The public considers corporate offenses to be as criminal as property offenses. Sutherland's idea that conflicting organizations within society affect the choice of acts to be proscribed by law seems more viable. The fact that an act (such as a corporate offense) is punishable argues for the existence of some groups that stigmatize the act as criminal. Whether the general public agrees with this stigmatization seems to be dependent upon the influence exerted by each of the conflicting groups in society. When business exerts more influence, corporate offenses seem to be less serious; when groups opposed to business are able to exert more influence, corporate offenses seem to be more serious. The period with the most vigorous prosecutions of corporate crime was the depression of the 1930's when businessmen had

lower prestige and labor unions were gaining influence (12, p. 27). The period of the early 1970's with its greater influence of consumer and environmental groups may rival the depression years for court litigation against corporate offenders (9).

#### Limitations of the Study

Certain empirical shortcomings may have affected the findings.

For the crimes of robbery and burglary, many respondents may picture a violent confrontation between the victim and the criminal. These crimes are most often ranked one and two in seriousness by all groups studied.

The attitudes of the general population sample from McKinney, Texas, may not be representative of the general public attitudes in the United States. Many of the respondents in the upper class are not in occupations that would tend to put them in close contact with business or corporate executives. Other cities may experience greater influence from large corporations and might exhibit different results.

The general population sample includes a disproportionate number of Blacks and Chicanos who are generally members of the lower and middle classes. Since social class is determined by a division of the general population sample,

this division may not be representative of the class structure of McKinney or any other community.

The findings are limited to a relatively young group of people. The average age of about thirty is well below the average of McKinney or any other community. The age limits are determined by the age range in prison. This low age range might also affect social class since younger people generally are not in the upper classes.

The above points may constitute sources of bias and should be considered when evaluating the findings.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem of this research concerned the degree of consensus among various social groups as to the relative seriousness of corporate and property crime. It was hypothesized that variations would be found by sex, race, age, social class, and exposure to prison. All categories within each of these social variables exhibit no significant differences in the perception of the seriousness of corporate or property crime. Within certain empirical limitations, the conclusion is made that consensus on the question of the seriousness of corporate crime is high. It is also concluded that corporate crime is viewed to be as criminal as traditional property crime.

The latter conclusion conflicts with the findings of most of the previous studies on this question. The findings of the present study may reflect changes in the public's consciousness related to a decline in business values and to a rise in understanding and sympathy for the problems of lower income groups. These changes may partially be the result of greater media exposure given to groups who have definitions favorable to more severe treatment of corporate offenders.



The findings seem to support Sutherland's theory of differential social organization. The apparent rise in public resentment against corporate crime may be the result of influence by groups that have solidly organized in opposition to these offenses. These groups are comparable to organizations (such as crime commissions) that are solidly organized to fight traditional offenses.

The findings raise several questions for further research. First, if public resentment against corporate crime is rising, are prosecutions, convictions, and length of sentences for these crimes increasing as the theory of differential social organization seems to predict? Second, are the perceptions of drug offenders representative of the prison population, or do various subcultures exist in prison that might alter the findings when different types of offenders are studied? Third, how much do general feelings of powerlessness and alienation affect the perceptions of the seriousness of crimes committed by powerful individuals? Fourth, instead of corporate crimes being resented more than in the past, is it possible that property crimes are resented less? Fifth, are there other groups not explored in this study that exhibit opinions at variance with those found in this research? For further clarification of the findings of this study, these questions need to be explored.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Sex:
2. Race:
3. Age:
4. What is the highest grade you completed in school?  
(Circle one)  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 College: 1 2 3 4 5+
5. (a) Have you attended a business or trade school?  
(Circle one)  
Yes No  
(b) If answer to (a) is "Yes", did you finish the course?  
(Circle one)  
Yes No  
(Questions 6, 7, and 8 given to general population only.)
6. What is your present occupation? (Be as specific as you can.)
7. What was your occupation just prior to the present one?
8. List two occupations which your husband (wife) has had.  
(1) \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
9. (Questions 9 and 10 given to prison inmates only.)
9. What was your occupation just before your present commitment?  
(Be as specific as you can.)
10. If you have had any other occupations, list two of them.  
(1) \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

11. List your parents' (or guardian's) main occupation.

Father \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mother \_\_\_\_\_  
 Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

(Questions 12 and 13 given to general population only.)

12. Have you ever been committed to a juvenile correctional or training school? (Circle one)

Yes No

13. Have you ever served time in a state or federal correctional institution? (Circle one)

Yes No

(Questions 14 and 15 given to prison inmates only.)

14. Indicate the number of times that you have been committed to an adult correctional institution.

1 2 3

15. How many months have you served on the present sentence?

\_\_\_\_\_

16. There has been a lot of argument about which crimes are the most serious ones. Of the following crimes put a "1" in front of the crime you think is most serious, a "2" in front of the crime you think is second most serious, a "3" in front of the crime you think is third most serious, . . . and so on until you get to the crime you think is least serious and put a "10" in front of that one. Use each of the ten numbers only once. That is a "1" can be put down only one time, a "2" only one time and so on until you put each number down only one time. Read all the statements before marking any of them.

- \_\_\_ a person steals a car.  
 \_\_\_ a company uses false advertising.  
 \_\_\_ a person forges a check.  
 \_\_\_ a company purposely hides defects in its products.  
 \_\_\_ a person holds up or robs a store.  
 \_\_\_ a company takes advantage of its workers.  
 \_\_\_ a person burglarizes a house.  
 \_\_\_ a company dumps pollution into a river daily.  
 \_\_\_ a person steals over \$50.  
 \_\_\_ a company makes an insurance claim it knows is false.

APPENDIX B

STATISTICAL TABLES

TABLE I  
DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

Social Factors	Type of Sample					
	General Pop.		Prison		Combined	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sex						
Male	88	(48.4)	159	(75.4)	247	(62.8)
Female	94	(51.6)	52	(24.6)	146	(37.2)
Total	182	(100.0)	211	(100.0)	393	(100.0)
Race						
Black	56	(30.8)	74	(35.1)	130	(33.1)
Chicano	29	(15.9)	64	(30.3)	93	(23.7)
White	97	(53.3)	73	(34.6)	170	(43.2)
Total	182	(100.0)	211	(100.0)	393	(100.0)
Age						
Young (19-29)	86	(47.3)	106	(50.2)	192	(48.9)
Old (30-44)	96	(52.7)	105	(49.8)	201	(51.1)
Total	182	(100.0)	211	(100.0)	393	(100.0)
Social Class						
Upper	55	(30.2)	16	(7.7)	71	(18.2)
Middle	64	(35.2)	68	(32.7)	132	(33.8)
Lower	63	(34.6)	124	(59.6)	187	(48.0)
Total	182	(100.0)	208*	(100.0)	390	(100.0)
Exposure to Prison						
Non-Prisoners	..	..	..	..	178**	(45.8)
First Offenders	..	..	..	..	139	(35.7)
Recidivists	..	..	..	..	72	(18.8)
Total	..	..	..	..	389	(100.0)

\*Three respondents are unclassified by social class.

\*\*Four respondents in general population had served terms in adult or juvenile correctional institutions.

TABLE II  
THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF AUTO THEFT  
BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Auto Theft						Statistical Significance
	High *(01-04)		Medium (05-07)		Low (08-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	85	(34.4)	83	(33.6)	79	(32.0)	$X^2 = .389$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Female	54	(37.0)	45	(30.8)	47	(32.2)	
Race							
Black	44	(33.8)	41	(31.5)	45	(34.7)	$X^2 = 2.918$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Chicano	32	(34.4)	27	(29.0)	34	(36.6)	
White	63	(37.1)	60	(35.3)	47	(27.6)	
Age							
Young (19-29)	65	(33.9)	59	(30.7)	68	(35.4)	$X^2 = 1.953$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Old (30-44)	74	(36.8)	69	(34.3)	58	(28.9)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	23	(41.8)	19	(34.6)	13	(23.6)	$X^2 = 3.573$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	20	(31.3)	23	(35.9)	21	(32.8)	
Lower	28	(44.5)	22	(34.9)	13	(20.6)	
Prison							
Upper	6	(37.5)	7	(43.8)	3	(18.7)	$X^2 = 4.477$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	18	(26.5)	20	(29.4)	30	(44.1)	
Lower	43	(34.7)	35	(28.2)	46	(37.1)	
Combined							
Upper	29	(40.8)	26	(36.6)	16	(22.5)	$X^2 = 8.740$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	38	(28.8)	43	(32.6)	51	(38.6)	
Lower	71	(38.0)	57	(30.5)	59	(31.5)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	70	(39.3)	62	(34.8)	46	(25.9)	$X^2 = 8.515$ <u>NS</u> df=4
First Offenders	48	(34.5)	44	(31.7)	47	(33.8)	
Recidivists	20	(27.8)	20	(27.8)	32	(44.4)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.

TABLE III  
THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF ROBBERY  
BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Robbery						Statistical Significance
	High *( 01 )		Medium (02-04)		Low (05-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	112	(45.4)	68	(27.5)	67	(27.1)	$X^2=8.299$ <u>S</u> df=2
Female	45	(30.8)	54	(37.0)	47	(32.2)	
Race							
Black	59	(45.4)	39	(30.0)	32	(24.6)	$X^2=3.781$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Chicano	31	(33.3)	32	(34.4)	30	(32.3)	
White	67	(39.4)	51	(30.0)	52	(30.6)	
Age							
Young 19-29)	65	(33.9)	60	(31.2)	67	(34.9)	$X^2=7.983$ <u>S</u> df=2
Old (30-44)	92	(45.8)	62	(30.8)	47	(23.4)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	25	(45.5)	14	(25.4)	16	(29.1)	$X^2=8.619$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	19	(29.7)	22	(34.4)	23	(35.9)	
Lower	13	(20.6)	23	(36.5)	27	(42.9)	
Prison							
Upper	7	(43.7)	5	(31.3)	4	(25.0)	$X^2=1.935$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	29	(42.6)	21	(30.19)	18	(26.5)	
Lower	64	(51.6)	36	(29.0)	24	(19.4)	
Combined							
Upper	32	(45.1)	19	(26.8)	20	(28.1)	$X^2=1.876$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	48	(36.4)	43	(32.6)	41	(31.0)	
Lower	77	(41.2)	59	(31.5)	51	(27.3)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	57	(32.0)	57	(32.0)	64	(36.0)	$X^2=15.651$ <u>S</u> df=4
First Offenders	64	(46.0)	37	(26.6)	38	(27.4)	
Recidivists	36	(50.0)	26	(36.1)	10	(13.9)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.

TABLE IV

THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THEFT OVER  
FIFTY DOLLARS BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Theft Over Fifty Dollars						Statistical Significance
	High *(01-05)		Medium (06-08)		Low (09-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	76	(30.8)	82	(33.2)	89	(36.0)	$X^2=5.538$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Female	47	(32.2)	33	(22.6)	66	(45.2)	
Race							
Black	40	(30.8)	37	(28.5)	53	(40.7)	$X^2=2.015$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Chicano	30	(32.3)	23	(24.7)	40	(43.0)	
White	53	(31.2)	55	(32.4)	62	(36.4)	
Age							
Young (19-29)	52	(27.1)	63	(32.8)	77	(40.1)	$X^2=3.789$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Old (30-44)	71	(35.3)	52	(25.9)	78	(38.8)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	23	(41.8)	9	(16.4)	23	(41.8)	$X^2=6.011$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	14	(21.9)	18	(28.1)	32	(50.0)	
Lower	20	(31.7)	14	(22.2)	29	(46.1)	
Prison							
Upper	6	(37.5)	4	(25.0)	6	(37.5)	$X^2=3.352$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	24	(35.3)	20	(29.4)	24	(35.3)	
Lower	34	(27.4)	50	(40.3)	40	(32.3)	
Combined							
Upper	29	(40.8)	13	(18.4)	29	(40.8)	$X^2=7.789$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	38	(28.8)	38	(28.8)	56	(42.4)	
Lower	54	(28.9)	64	(34.2)	69	(36.9)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	57	(32.0)	39	(21.9)	82	(46.1)	$X^2=12.052$ <u>S</u> df=4
First Offenders	40	(28.8)	47	(33.8)	52	(37.4)	
Recidivists	26	(36.1)	27	(37.5)	19	(26.4)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.

TABLE V

THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF CHECK  
FORGERY BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Check Forgery						Statistical Significance
	High *(01-04)		Medium (05-07)		Low (08-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	61	(24.7)	80	(32.4)	106	(42.9)	$X^2=1.469$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Female	42	(28.8)	50	(34.2)	54	(37.0)	
Race							***
Black	42	(32.3)	39	(30.0)	49	(37.7)	$X^2=4.847$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Chicano	20	(21.5)	36	(38.7)	37	(39.8)	
White	41	(24.1)	55	(32.4)	74	(43.5)	
Age							***
Young (19-29)	42	(21.9)	65	(33.9)	85	(44.2)	$X^2=3.926$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Old (30-44)	61	(30.4)	65	(32.3)	75	(37.3)	
Social Class							***
General Pop.							***
Upper	16	(29.1)	22	(40.0)	17	(30.9)	$X^2=3.690$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	17	(26.6)	17	(26.6)	30	(46.8)	
Lower	16	(25.4)	21	(33.3)	26	(41.3)	
Prison							***
Upper	2	(12.5)	8	(50.0)	6	(37.5)	$X^2=10.004$ <u>S</u> df=4
Middle	13	(19.1)	18	(26.5)	37	(54.4)	
Lower	38	(30.6)	43	(34.7)	43	(34.7)	
Combined							***
Upper	18	(25.3)	30	(42.3)	23	(32.4)	$X^2=9.879$ <u>S</u> df=4
Middle	30	(22.7)	35	(26.5)	67	(50.8)	
Lower	54	(28.9)	64	(34.2)	69	(36.9)	
Exposure to Prison							***
Non-Prisoners	48	(27.0)	60	(33.7)	70	(29.2)	$X^2=1.937$ <u>NS</u> df=4
First Offenders	39	(28.1)	42	(30.2)	58	(41.7)	
Recidivists	15	(20.8)	27	(37.5)	30	(41.7)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.



TABLE VI  
 THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF BURGLARY  
 BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Burglary						Statistical Significance
	High *(01-02)		Medium (03-05)		Low (06-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	63	(25.5)	97	(39.3)	87	(35.2)	$X^2=5.536$ df=2
Female	42	(28.8)	53	(36.3)	51	(34.9)	
Race							
Black	33	(25.4)	50	(38.5)	47	(36.1)	$X^2=2.126$ df=4
Chicano	22	(23.7)	41	(44.1)	30	(32.2)	
White	50	(29.4)	59	(34.7)	61	(35.9)	
Age							
Young (19-29)	53	(27.6)	66	(34.4)	73	(38.0)	$X^2=2.097$ df=2
Old (30-44)	52	(25.9)	84	(41.8)	65	(32.3)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	19	(34.6)	18	(32.7)	18	(32.7)	$X^2=10.278$ df=4
Middle	13	(20.3)	29	(45.3)	22	(34.4)	
Lower	7	(11.2)	28	(44.4)	28	(44.4)	
Prison							
Upper	5	(31.3)	6	(37.4)	5	(31.3)	$X^2=1.612$ df=4
Middle	21	(30.9)	21	(30.9)	26	(38.2)	
Lower	40	(32.3)	47	(37.9)	37	(29.8)	
Combined							
Upper	24	(33.8)	24	(33.8)	23	(32.4)	$X^2=2.288$ df=4
Middle	34	(25.8)	50	(37.9)	48	(36.3)	
Lower	47	(25.1)	75	(40.1)	65	(34.8)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	38	(21.4)	75	(42.1)	65	(36.5)	$X^2=5.783$ df=4
First Offenders	44	(31.7)	46	(33.1)	49	(35.2)	
Recidivists	22	(30.5)	29	(40.3)	21	(29.2)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.

TABLE VII

THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF DEFECT  
CONCEALMENT BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Defect Concealment						Statistical Significance
	High *(01-03)		Medium (04-07)		Low (08-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	97	(39.3)	85	(34.4)	65	(26.3)	$X^2=1.172$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Female	54	(37.0)	58	(39.7)	34	(23.3)	
Race							
Black	42	(32.3)	52	(40.0)	36	(27.7)	$X^2=10.731$ <u>S</u> df=4
Chicano	29	(31.2)	36	(38.7)	28	(30.1)	
White	80	(47.1)	55	(32.3)	35	(20.6)	
Age							
Young (19-29)	76	(39.6)	69	(35.9)	47	(24.5)	$X^2=.228$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Old (30-44)	75	(37.3)	74	(36.8)	52	(25.9)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	24	(43.6)	18	(32.7)	13	(23.6)	$X^2=1.339$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	29	(45.3)	24	(37.5)	11	(17.2)	
Lower	25	(39.7)	23	(36.5)	15	(23.8)	
Prison							
Upper	6	(37.5)	7	(43.7)	3	(18.8)	$X^2=2.366$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	27	(39.7)	24	(35.3)	17	(25.0)	
Lower	39	(31.5)	46	(37.0)	39	(31.5)	
Combined							
Upper	30	(42.3)	25	(35.2)	16	(22.5)	$X^2=3.759$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	56	(42.4)	48	(36.4)	28	(21.2)	
Lower	64	(34.2)	69	(36.9)	54	(28.9)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	78	(43.8)	62	(34.8)	38	(21.4)	$X^2=9.567$ <u>S</u> df=4
First Offenders	40	(28.8)	56	(40.3)	43	(30.9)	
Recidivists	32	(44.4)	22	(30.6)	18	(25.0)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant; "NS"--not significant.

TABLE VIII

THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF WORKER  
MISTREATMENT BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Worker Mistreatment						Statistical Significance	**
	High *(01-03)		Medium (04-06)		Low (07-10)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Sex								***
Male	98	(39.7)	69	(27.9)	80	(32.4)	$X^2 = .069$ df=2	<u>NS</u>
Female	56	(38.4)	42	(28.8)	48	(32.8)		
Race								
Black	51	(39.2)	37	(28.5)	42	(32.3)	$X^2 = 5.252$ df=4	<u>NS</u>
Chicano	44	(47.3)	26	(28.0)	23	(24.7)		
White	59	(34.7)	48	(28.2)	63	(37.1)		
Age								
Young (19-29)	76	(39.6)	56	(29.2)	60	(31.2)	$X^2 = .329$ df=2	<u>NNS</u>
Old (30-44)	78	(38.8)	55	(27.4)	68	(33.8)		
Social Class								
General Pop.								
Upper	16	(29.1)	18	(32.7)	21	(38.2)	$X^2 = 6.241$ df=4	<u>NS</u>
Middle	29	(45.3)	17	(26.6)	18	(28.1)		
Lower	32	(50.8)	16	(25.4)	15	(23.8)		
Prison								
Upper	3	(18.7)	5	(31.3)	8	(50.0)	$X^2 = 10.392$ df=4	<u>S</u>
Middle	35	(51.5)	14	(20.6)	19	(27.9)		
Lower	39	(31.5)	39	(31.5)	46	(37.0)		
Combined								
Upper	19	(26.8)	23	(32.4)	29	(40.8)	$X^2 = 9.643$ df=4	<u>S</u>
Middle	64	(48.5)	31	(23.5)	37	(28.0)		
Lower	71	(38.0)	55	(29.4)	61	(32.6)		
Exposure to Prison								
Non-Prisoners	75	(42.1)	50	(28.1)	53	(29.8)	$X^2 = 8.387$ df=4	<u>NS</u>
First Offenders	44	(31.7)	47	(33.8)	48	(34.5)		
Recidivists	33	(45.8)	13	(18.1)	26	(36.1)		

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.

TABLE IX

THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF POLLUTION  
VIOLATION BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Pollution Violation						Statistical Significance
	High *(01-03)		Medium (04-07)		Low (08-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	85	(34.4)	81	(32.8)	81	(32.8)	$X^2=.191$ df=2 <u>NS</u>
Female	49	(33.6)	51	(34.9)	46	(31.5)	
Race							
Black	32	(24.6)	45	(34.6)	53	(40.8)	$X^2=11.045$ df=4 <u>S</u>
Chicano	32	(34.4)	31	(33.3)	30	(32.3)	
White	70	(41.2)	56	(32.9)	44	(25.9)	
Age							
Young (19-29)	80	(41.7)	59	(30.7)	53	(27.6)	$X^2=9.801$ df=2 <u>S</u>
Old (30-44)	54	(26.9)	73	(36.3)	74	(36.8)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	16	(29.1)	19	(34.5)	20	(36.4)	$X^2=3.877$ df=4 <u>NS</u>
Middle	29	(45.3)	17	(26.6)	18	(28.1)	
Lower	21	(33.3)	22	(34.9)	20	(31.8)	
Prison							
Upper	7	(43.8)	3	(18.7)	6	(37.5)	$X^2=5.628$ df=4 <u>NS</u>
Middle	26	(38.2)	25	(36.8)	17	(25.0)	
Lower	34	(27.4)	44	(35.5)	46	(37.1)	
Combined							
Upper	23	(32.4)	22	(31.0)	26	(36.6)	$X^2=6.176$ df=4 <u>NS</u>
Middle	55	(41.7)	42	(31.8)	35	(26.5)	
Lower	55	(29.4)	66	(35.3)	66	(35.3)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	65	(36.5)	56	(31.5)	57	(32.0)	$X^2=3.550$ df=4 <u>NS</u>
First Offenders	50	(36.0)	47	(33.8)	42	(30.2)	
Recidivists	18	(25.0)	27	(37.5)	27	(37.5)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.

TABLE X

THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF FALSE  
ADVERTISING BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: False Advertising						Statistical Significance
	High *(01-04)		Medium (05-07)		Low (08-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	66	(26.7)	84	(34.0)	97	(39.3)	$X^2=1.355$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Female	41	(28.1)	56	(38.3)	49	(33.6)	
Race							
Black	36	(27.7)	59	(45.4)	35	(26.9)	$X^2=12.685$ <u>S</u> df=4
Chicano	28	(30.1)	31	(33.3)	34	(36.6)	
White	43	(25.3)	50	(29.4)	77	(45.3)	
Age							
Young (19-29)	52	(27.1)	68	(35.4)	72	(37.5)	$X^2=.019$ <u>NS</u> df=2
Old (30-44)	55	(27.4)	72	(35.8)	74	(36.8)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	12	(21.8)	16	(29.1)	27	(49.1)	$X^2=5.828$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	20	(31.2)	24	(37.6)	20	(31.2)	
Lower	23	(36.5)	18	(28.6)	22	(34.9)	
Prison							
Upper	4	(25.0)	5	(31.3)	7	(43.7)	$X^2=1.029$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	15	(22.1)	29	(42.6)	24	(35.3)	
Lower	32	(25.8)	47	(37.9)	45	(36.3)	
Combined							
Upper	16	(22.5)	21	(29.6)	34	(47.9)	$X^2=5.260$ <u>NS</u> df=4
Middle	35	(26.5)	53	(40.2)	44	(33.3)	
Lower	55	(29.4)	65	(34.8)	67	(35.8)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	53	(29.8)	56	(31.5)	69	(38.8)	$X^2=3.700$ <u>NS</u> df=4
First Offenders	37	(26.6)	51	(36.7)	51	(36.7)	
Recidivists	15	(20.8)	31	(43.1)	26	(36.1)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.

TABLE XI  
 THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF INSURANCE  
 FRAUD BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Insurance Fraud						Statistical Significance
	High *(01-04)		Medium (05-07)		Low (08-10)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							***
Male	64	(25.9)	93	(37.7)	90	(36.4)	$X^2=.716$ df=2 <u>NS</u>
Female	43	(29.5)	50	(34.2)	53	(36.3)	
Race							
Black	47	(36.2)	37	(28.5)	46	(35.3)	$X^2=15.160$ df=4 <u>S</u>
Chicano	28	(30.1)	39	(41.9)	26	(28.0)	
White	32	(18.8)	67	(39.4)	71	(41.8)	
Age							
Young (19-29)	56	(29.2)	74	(38.5)	62	(32.3)	$X^2=2.728$ df=2 <u>NS</u>
Old (30-44)	51	(25.4)	69	(34.3)	81	(40.3)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	10	(18.2)	19	(34.5)	26	(47.3)	$X^2=3.354$ df=4 <u>NS</u>
Middle	19	(29.7)	24	(37.5)	21	(32.8)	
Lower	17	(27.0)	22	(34.9)	24	(38.1)	
Prison							
Upper	5	(31.3)	3	(18.7)	8	(50.0)	$X^2=4.799$ df=4 <u>NS</u>
Middle	18	(26.5)	30	(44.1)	20	(29.4)	
Lower	36	(29.0)	45	(36.3)	43	(34.7)	
Combined							
Upper	15	(21.1)	22	(31.0)	34	(47.9)	$X^2=6.018$ df=4 <u>NS</u>
Middle	37	(28.0)	54	(40.9)	41	(31.1)	
Lower	53	(28.4)	67	(35.8)	67	(35.8)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	44	(24.7)	64	(36.0)	70	(39.3)	$X^2=1.406$ df=4 <u>NS</u>
First Offenders	40	(28.8)	52	(37.4)	47	(33.8)	
Recidivists	21	(29.2)	26	(36.1)	25	(34.7)	

\*Numbers indicate the range of rank scores for each degree of seriousness.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*"S"--significant, "NS"--not significant.

TABLE XII

THE PERCEPTION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF CORPORATE  
CRIME BY FIVE SOCIAL FACTORS

Social Factors	Degree of Seriousness: Corporate Crime <sup>a</sup>						Statistical <sup>c</sup> Significance
	b High (15-23)		Medium (24-32)		Low (33-40)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Sex							
Male	82	(33.2)	81	(32.8)	84	(34.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =.194 df=2
Female	51	(34.9)	45	(30.8)	50	(34.3)	
Race							
Black	39	(30.0)	48	(36.9)	43	(33.1)	X <sup>2</sup> =5.174 df=4
Chicano	33	(35.5)	33	(35.5)	27	(29.0)	
White	61	(35.9)	45	(26.5)	64	(37.6)	
Age							
Young (19-29)	75	(39.1)	58	(30.2)	59	(30.7)	X <sup>2</sup> =4.673 df=2
Old (30-44)	58	(28.9)	68	(33.8)	75	(37.3)	
Social Class							
General Pop.							
Upper	17	(30.9)	11	(20.0)	27	(49.1)	X <sup>2</sup> =9.074 df=4
Middle	26	(40.6)	22	(34.4)	16	(25.0)	
Lower	26	(41.3)	19	(30.1)	18	(28.6)	
Prison							
Upper	3	(18.8)	6	(37.5)	7	(43.7)	X <sup>2</sup> =12.497 df=4
Middle	31	(45.6)	16	(23.5)	21	(30.9)	
Lower	29	(23.4)	51	(41.1)	44	(35.5)	
Combined							
Upper	20	(28.2)	17	(23.9)	34	(47.9)	X <sup>2</sup> =14.179 df=4
Middle	57	(43.2)	38	(28.8)	37	(28.0)	
Lower	55	(29.4)	70	(37.4)	62	(33.2)	
Exposure to Prison							
Non-Prisoners	66	(37.1)	52	(29.2)	60	(33.7)	X <sup>2</sup> =2.707 df=4
First Offenders	41	(29.5)	48	(34.5)	50	(36.0)	
Recidivists	23	(31.9)	26	(36.2)	23	(31.9)	

<sup>a</sup>The degrees of seriousness are exactly the reverse for property crime; when corporate crime is "high", property crime is low et cetera.

<sup>b</sup>Numbers indicate the range of cumulative rank scores for each degree of seriousness for the five corporate crimes.

<sup>c</sup>Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

<sup>d</sup>"S"--significant; "NS"--not significant.

TABLE XIII

MEAN RANK SCORES FOR INDIVIDUAL CRIMES BY SOCIAL CLASS AND EXPOSURE TO PRISON

Crimes	Mean Rank Scores																									
	Social Class						Upper						Middle						Lower						Combined	
	General Pop.		Prison		Combined		U	M	L	U	M	L	NP	FO	R	NP	FO	R	NP	FO	R	NP	FO	R*		
(1)																										
Robbery	2.9 (1)	3.9 (1)	4.3 (2)	2.6 (1)	2.9 (1)	2.6 (1)	2.8 (1)	3.4 (1)	3.2 (1)	2.9 (1)	2.9 (1)	3.9 (1)	2.9 (1)	2.8 (1)	4.2 (2)	4.2 (1)	2.7 (1)	2.3 (1)	3.7 (1)	2.9 (1)	2.9 (1)	2.9 (1)	2.4 (1)			
Burglary	4.2 (2)	4.7 (3)	5.2 (5)	4.2 (2)	4.5 (3)	4.2 (2)	4.2 (2)	4.6 (3)	4.5 (2)	4.2 (2)	4.2 (2)	4.7 (3)	4.4 (2)	4.9 (3)	5.2 (5)	4.1 (2)	4.1 (2)	4.3 (2)	4.7 (3)	4.3 (2)	4.3 (2)	4.3 (2)	4.4 (2)			
Worker	5.3 (4)	4.8 (4)	4.1 (1)	5.9 (6)	4.4 (2)	5.4 (3)	5.4 (3)	4.5 (2)	4.9 (3)	5.3 (4)	4.9 (3)	5.6 (5)	5.6 (5)	4.3 (2)	4.1 (1)	5.7 (3)	4.9 (3)	4.9 (3)	4.7 (3)	5.2 (4)	5.2 (4)	5.2 (4)	4.8 (3)			
Mistreatment	4.8 (3)	4.4 (2)	4.8 (3)	5.1 (3)	5.0 (5)	5.5 (4)	5.5 (4)	4.7 (4)	4.7 (3)	5.3 (4)	5.3 (4)	4.8 (3)	4.8 (3)	5.1 (5)	4.8 (3)	5.8 (6)	5.8 (6)	5.0 (4)	4.7 (2)	5.4 (5)	5.4 (5)	5.4 (5)	5.0 (4)			
Defect	5.6 (6)	4.8 (5)	5.5 (6)	5.2 (4)	4.9 (4)	5.9 (5)	5.9 (5)	4.8 (5)	5.5 (6)	4.8 (5)	5.8 (6)	5.6 (6)	4.7 (2)	4.9 (4)	5.6 (6)	5.7 (5)	6.1 (5)	6.1 (5)	5.3 (5)	5.3 (5)	5.3 (5)	5.3 (5)	5.8 (5)			
Concealment	5.4 (5)	5.9 (6)	5.1 (4)	5.4 (5)	6.4 (8)	6.0 (6)	6.0 (6)	6.1 (6)	6.1 (6)	6.1 (6)	5.7 (5)	5.4 (5)	5.1 (4)	6.7 (7)	5.1 (4)	5.7 (5)	6.6 (9)	6.6 (9)	5.5 (5)	5.5 (5)	5.5 (5)	5.9 (6)	6.7 (10)			
Pollution	6.8 (9)	6.1 (7)	5.9 (7)	6.8 (9)	6.3 (7)	6.3 (7)	6.8 (9)	6.2 (8)	6.8 (9)	6.2 (7)	6.1 (7)	6.8 (9)	6.3 (6)	6.1 (6)	6.1 (6)	6.2 (9)	6.2 (9)	6.3 (7)	6.2 (7)	6.2 (7)	6.2 (7)	6.3 (8)	6.3 (7)			
Advertising	6.9 (10)	6.2 (8)	6.3 (8)	6.6 (7)	6.2 (6)	6.2 (8)	6.2 (8)	6.2 (7)	6.9 (10)	6.2 (9)	6.2 (9)	6.9 (10)	6.2 (8)	6.1 (6)	6.4 (9)	5.9 (7)	6.5 (8)	6.5 (8)	6.5 (9)	6.1 (7)	6.1 (7)	6.1 (7)	6.3 (6)			
Insurance	6.1 (7)	6.5 (9)	6.4 (9)	6.7 (8)	6.0 (9)	6.1 (7)	6.2 (7)	6.8 (9)	6.2 (7)	6.2 (7)	6.2 (7)	6.1 (7)	6.5 (9)	6.9 (10)	6.3 (8)	6.0 (8)	6.3 (8)	6.2 (6)	6.3 (8)	6.3 (8)	6.3 (8)	6.4 (9)	6.5 (8)			
Fraud	6.6 (8)	7.9 (10)	7.3 (10)	6.6 (7)	7.1 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.4 (10)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.0 (7)	6.4 (8)	6.4 (8)	7.2 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.8 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.6 (9)			
Check	6.6 (8)	7.9 (10)	7.3 (10)	6.6 (7)	7.1 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.4 (10)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.0 (7)	6.4 (8)	6.4 (8)	7.2 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.8 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.6 (9)			
Forgery	6.6 (8)	7.9 (10)	7.3 (10)	6.6 (7)	7.1 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.4 (10)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.0 (7)	6.4 (8)	6.4 (8)	7.2 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.8 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.6 (9)			
Theft	6.6 (8)	7.9 (10)	7.3 (10)	6.6 (7)	7.1 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.4 (10)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.0 (7)	6.4 (8)	6.4 (8)	7.2 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.8 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.6 (9)			
Over \$50	6.6 (8)	7.9 (10)	7.3 (10)	6.6 (7)	7.1 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.0 (10)	7.4 (10)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.1 (8)	7.0 (7)	6.4 (8)	6.4 (8)	7.2 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.8 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.3 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	7.1 (10)	6.6 (9)			

\*"U"--upper class, "M"--middle class, "L"--lower class, "NP"--non-prisoners, "FO"--first offenders, "R"--recidivists.



TABLE XIV

RANKINGS OF CORPORATE CRIME AND PROPERTY CRIME BY  
SOCIAL CLASS AND EXPOSURE TO PRISON

Social Factors	Rankings										U Score ***	Cum. Rank Scores- Corporate Crime	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Social Class												***	
Upper													
General Pop.	P	P	C	C	P	C	P*	P	C	C	U= 8	NS	C=32 M
Prison	P	P	C	C	P	C	P↔C	P	C	C	U= 9	NS	C=31 M
Combined	P	P	C	P	C	C	P	P	C	C	U= 7	NS	C=33 L
Middle													
General Pop.	P	C	P	C	C	P	C	C	P	P	U=11	NS	C=26 M
Prison	P	C	P	C	C	C	C	P	P	P	U= 9	NS	C=24 M
Combined	P	C	P	C	C	P	C	C	P	P	U=11	NS	C=26 M
Lower													
General Pop.	C	P	C	P	P	C	C	C	P	P	U=10	NS	C=25 M
Prison	P	P	C	C	C	P	P	C	C	P	U=11	NS	C=29 M
Combined	P	P	C	C	P	C	C	P	C	P	U=11	NS	C=29 M
Exposure to Prison													
Non-Prisoners													
Upper	P	P	C	C	P	C	P	P	C	C	U= 8	NS	C=32 M
Middle	P	C	P	C	C	P	C	C	P	P	U=11	NS	C=26 M
Lower	C	P	C	P	P	C	C	P	C	P	U=12	NS	C=26 M
Combined	P	C	P	C	C	P	C	P	C	P	U=12	NS	C=27 M
First Offenders													
Upper	P	C↔P	C	P	C	C	P↔C	P	C	P	U=11	NS	C=28 M
Middle	P	P	C	C	C	C	P	P	C	P	U=12	NS	C=27 M
Lower	P	P	C	P	C	C	C	P	C	P	U=10	NS	C=30 M
Combined	P	P	C	C	C	P	C	C	P	P	U=12	NS	C=27 M
Recidivists													
Upper	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Middle	P	C	P	C	C	C	C	P	P	P	U= 9	NS	C=24 M
Lower	P	P	C	C	C	P	C	C	P	P	U=12	NS	C=27 M
Combined	P	P	C	C	C	C	C	P	P	P	U=10	NS	C=25 M

\*"↔"--mean rank scores are identical.

\*\*Statistical significance is at the .05 level.

\*\*\*C ranked as more serious than P when C is less than 27.5.  
"C"--corporate crime, "P"--property crime, "M"--medium seriousness,  
"L"--low seriousness.

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