

per cent of the fathers had an abnormal personality. The typical disorder of the mother was emotional immaturity and dependence. Much more serious, however, was the discovery that about one-third of the fathers had a hard core personality disturbance, either sociopathic or psychopathic in nature. In other words, these fathers tended to be affectionless, impulsive and extremely aggressive. The association of a mother having a minor type of personality disturbance with a "psychopathic" man led to collusion between the couple to conceal the abuse, thus making it very difficult for authorities to deal with the problem. These are the kinds of cases which may give rise to child deaths.

106. The study found a recidivistic and criminal element in the sample of 134 child abusing parents. Almost one-third of the fathers and 11 per cent of the mothers had an unrelated and non-juvenile criminal record. Within six months of the abuse incident, almost 7 per cent of the fathers and 4 per cent of the mothers had committed additional crimes. The characteristics of abusive parents seemed no different than those of criminals in general. Yet child abuse traditionally has been partitioned off legally, medically and socially, as a different and perhaps less serious offence, from crime in general, thereby impeding its control.³⁸

107. The author of the study was frankly pessimistic about the chances of treating or ameliorating the personality problems of the above types of child abusers which he referred to as the "hard core malignant group". He thought, however, that the almost fifty per cent of abusing mothers who had a significant neurotic illness could be helped. The problem with one-third of these mothers was simply that they themselves had been abused as children and were recreating their own childhood by using the same methods by which they had been brought up — again a sign that violence breeds violence. Overall, he estimated that "two-thirds of the parents were salvageable".³⁹

108. The rapidly increasing amount of literature relating to child abuse displays some disagreement as to the importance of certain factors as, for example, the socio-economic status of parents likely to abuse their children. There is, however, overwhelming agreement that the abused child when it becomes a parent is likely to abuse its own child. The cycle of violence breeding violence is well established.

109. Violence, once established as a way of life, may extend from family violence to criminal behaviour. "Research and literature indicate a direct correlation between child abuse and later adult criminality."⁴⁰ Research studies have shown that a large percentage of juvenile delinquents were abused as children. Furthermore, those who had been abused tended to be more violent than the other delinquents.⁴¹ Studies have shown that virtually "all violent juvenile delinquents have been