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What's Class Got to Do with It? A Further Examination of Power-Control Theory[1]

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In recent issues of this journal, J. Hagan, A. R. Gillis, and J. Simpson elaborate a power-control theory of common delinquency. They propose a positive relationship between neo-Marxist conceptions of class and common forms of delinquency, patterns of variation in gender differences by class, and intervening variables to explain these variations. An examination of class, gender, and delinquency in three U.S. data sets did not reveal the same patterns. A neo-Marxist categorization of the labor force was generally unrelated to common delinquency, and there was no evidence of patterned class-gender variations of the sort reported in their 1985 analysis. Gender differences by race were consistent with their theory, while racial differences were not. Moreover, an attempted reconstruction of data for the full set of household categories reported in the 1987 analysis raises important questions about the nature of class variations and the role of patriarchal imbalance in generating gender differences.

A major consequence of the use of survey techniques in the study of deviance has been a persistent debate about the importance of social stratification in the explanation of crime and delinquency. Over the past several decades, the relationship between social class and criminal behavior has been declared a "myth" by some scholars (e.g., Tittle, Villemez, and Smith 1978), while others have deemed differences by social class to be "substantial" (Braithwaite 1981). Among the various suggestions advanced for resolving the debate have been the use of more precise and offense-specific analysis and of alternative measures of stratification. A

number of studies have incorporated these suggestions into their research designs (Elliott and Ageton 1980; Johnson 1980; Akers et al. 1981; Brownfield 1986), with mixed results concerning the class-delinquency relationship.

One of the most recent attempts to address the relevance of stratification to the explanation of delinquency is power-control theory as elaborated in two articles in this journal by Hagan, Gillis, and Simpson (1985, 1987). Power-control theory has been developed and formulated specifically to deal with the gender difference in delinquency and to reintroduce social class variables into the explanation of delinquency. In the 1985 article, Hagan et al. conceptualized and measured class in terms of the degree to which people have command over others in their occupations, with no differentiation between mother's and father's occupations, while in the 1987 article they focused on both mother's and father's occupations and the balance between them.

With regard to class, gender, and their interaction, Hagan et al. posit that (1) children whose parents are in occupational positions where they command or control other people are more likely to commit common delinquent acts than children whose parents are in subordinate positions, (2) gender differences are more pronounced in the dominant classes than in the subordinate ones, and (3) gender differences are more pronounced in patriarchal or "unbalanced" households than in egalitarian or power-balanced households. The second proposition is derived from Willem Bonger's ([1916] 1969) Marxist theory, while the first and third are original predictions based on arguments about power and freedom from control. Indeed, the first proposition is contrary to Bonger's theory since he posited that class and delinquency were *negatively* related owing to positive relationships between class, surveillance, and control. Power-control theory predicts that occupational dominance will be *positively* related to common delinquency because it is negatively related to parental supervision and perceived risk of punishment and positively related to taste for risk.[2]

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[2] In the 1985 article, criminologists are chided for neglecting classical criminological theory by failing to link class and gender in delinquency research (Hagan et al. 1985, p. 1152). While that contention is correct, it is important to remember that Bonger and other criminologists working within a Marxist framework (Colvin and Pauley 1983; Schwendinger and Schwendinger 1985) predict and find negative correlations between class conceptualized in neo-Marxist terms and delinquency. Hagan et al. suggest that their prediction applies only to "common" delinquency and not to more serious forms. However, their data do not show variations by seriousness of offense, and their index includes motor-vehicle theft, grand theft, and beating or hurting others. These crimes account for most of the offenses reported in any body of official statistics as serious crimes and are the subject of predictions of negative class-delinquency relationships by other criminologists.

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Hagan et al. provide support for the first proposition in their 1985 article. Using standard American and Canadian SES scales, they found the relationships between measures of SES and delinquency to be zero. Using their neo-Marxist categories, they found positive relationships, with the model comparing children of employers with all others proving statistically significant. They provide support for the second proposition through a comparison of regression coefficients in the four neo-Marxist classes. The relationship between gender and delinquency increases with increases in occupational dominance.

The third proposition is supported in the 1987 article, in which both mother's and father's occupations are considered. Gender differences in delinquency are reported to be greatest in households where mothers are homemakers or have occupations where they obey others and fathers have occupations where they command others. Gender differences are smaller in female-headed households and households where occupational command status is balanced.

While Hagan et al. are neither the first theorists to propose positive relationships between delinquency and measures of social class (see Hirschi 1972 for a review) nor the first to report a positive empirical relationship (e.g., see Wiatrowski, Griswold, and Roberts 1981), they are the first to propose a common theoretical framework for predicting class variations, gender variations, gender-class interactions, and gender variations within "household" class categories using data on both mother's and father's occupations. Their work is also original in introducing a specific set of intervening variables to explain macro-level variations. Moreover, while other data analyses have used neo-Marxist conceptions of class (Johnson 1980; Brownfield 1986) or tested control theories of gender differences (Jensen and Eve 1976), Hagan et al.'s data are the first and only available data relevant to a simultaneous focus on neo-Marxist conceptions of class and on gender differences. They are also the first to derive and test hypotheses combining class, gender, and theories about patriarchy in the explanation of delinquency.

THE CURRENT STUDY

Given the likely appeal of power-control theory as a data-based, neo-Marxist perspective and the limited amount of actual research evidence relevant to it, tests of the theory using other data sets are mandatory. This article attempts tests of the first two hypotheses using data from three surveys carried out in the United States between 1964 and 1979: (1) the 1979 Seattle Youth Study (Hindelang, Hirschi and Weiss 1981), (2) a survey carried out by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) in 1974 (Rachal et al. 1975), and (3) the Richmond Youth Study carried out in 1964–

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65 in the San Francisco Bay Area of California (Hirschi 1969). These surveys are based on samples three to 30 times larger than the Toronto sample, and one of them (the RTI survey) is based on a nationally representative sample.[3]

Hagan et al. used an index of self-reported delinquency designed to parallel the one used by Hirschi in the Richmond youth survey and in the Seattle survey. Thus, the items used are very similar in the Toronto, Richmond, and Seattle surveys.[4] We also constructed an index of delinquent behavior for the RTI data based on the unweighted, additive responses ("never," "once or twice," "several times," "often") to the following questions: Have you ever (1) "taken things of little value that did not belong to you?" (2) "damaged public or private property that did not belong to you just for fun?" (3) "beaten up on another kid without much reason?" While this scale does not include the relatively more serious forms of larceny that are included in the Richmond and Seattle data sets, it certainly includes the types of "common" delinquency that power-control theory addresses.

Using the work of Wright (1979) and other neo-Marxist research (Wright et al. 1982) as a guide, we created four social class categories based on information in all three data sets about parental occupation. In the Richmond and Seattle data sets, the working class is composed of those with occupations such as manual laborer, craftsman, and white-collar worker (both skilled and unskilled). Semiautonomous employees are defined as those who have a certain amount of freedom in their own

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[3] The RTI survey is based on a stratified cluster sample of approximately 15,000 students in grades 7–12 from the contiguous 48 states and the District of Columbia. The Richmond Youth Study gathered questionnaire data from a stratified random sample of junior and senior high school students in 11 schools in western Contra Costa County, Calif., yielding data for a total of 4,077 respondents. The Seattle Youth Study was conducted by researchers at the State University of New York at Albany and the University of Washington, principally to investigate methodological issues involving the self-report technique (Hindelang et al. 1981). The Seattle study compiled data on 1,611 adolescents, including a sample of "official nondelinquents" from public schools in Seattle, a sample of youth with police contacts but no juvenile court involvement, and offenders referred to the King County Juvenile Court.

[4] The index used in these two surveys consists of an additive scale based on responses to six items: (1) "Have you ever taken little things (worth less than $2) that did not belong to you?" (2) "Have you ever taken things of some value (between $2 and $50) that did not belong to you?" (3) Have you ever taken things of large value (worth over $50) that did not belong to you?" (4) "Have you ever taken a car for a ride without the owner's permission?" (in the Seattle study it was specified that the car belonged "to someone you didn't know"); (5) "Have you ever banged up something that did not belong to you on purpose?" (6) "Not counting fights you may have had with a brother or sister, have you ever beaten up on anyone or hurt anyone on purpose?"

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work processes, but who do not control the work of others. Under this category we include self-employed craftsmen, entertainers, and professionals. A third category consists of managers and supervisors. In this category we include foremen, white-collar managers, and self-employed farmers. Finally, an employer class includes those parents who are merchants or who are self-employed in a "large business."

For the RTI data, we were able to construct a measure of class with a "surplus" labor-force category similar to that used in the Toronto data. The surplus population ($N = 707$) was defined as those respondents from intact homes whose fathers were unemployed or respondents from broken homes whose mothers were unemployed. In the RTI data, the working class includes clerical workers, craftsmen, and sales, service, and technical workers. The managerial class includes professionals as well as farm managers and administrators, while the employer class consists of owners and proprietors.

It is important to note that, while these categories are derived from the same neo-Marxist framework as the categories in Hagan et al., the two sets are not identical. Hagan et al. based their measures on telephone calls to parents in which parents indicated whether they were working full time, whether they worked for someone else or were self-employed, whether they employed others, and whether they supervised others. Our occupational class categories are based on youths' reports about their parents. Moreover, Hagan et al.'s categories are not based on reported occupational categories but on responses to questions about employment, ownership, and supervision. The categories used here are based on reported occupations, and the categories created are modeled after similar categorizations of occupations by Wright et al. (1982). Thus, this is not an exact replication but a test of the theory using a neo-Marxist categorization of occupations.

FINDINGS

In table 1 we have summarized the means for delinquent offenses by class and gender using the Seattle, RTI, and Richmond data. We conducted one-way analysis of variance tests for each of the subsamples in table 1. Those tests yielded no significant relationships between class and delinquency in six subsamples and significant relationships in two. Among males in the RTI data, class is significantly related to delinquency, but that relationship stems from a high delinquency rate among youths whose fathers or mothers fall in the surplus labor-force category. In one instance (black girls in the Richmond study), class was significantly related to delinquency, with the highest rate in the employer class. Black males

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TABLE 1

MEAN DELINQUENT OFFENSE SCORE BY GENDER AND CLASS IN THREE SURVEYS

Class	Male (N)	Female (N)	Male/Female Ratio
RTI:			
Employer................	4.70 (354)	3.91 (403)	1.20
Manager	4.46 (1,528)	3.83 (1,640)	1.16
Worker	4.67 (3,062)	3.91 (3,424)	1.19
Surplus	4.81 (304)	4.01 (369)	1.20
Seattle:			
Employer................	4.40 (30)	3.69 (13)	1.19
Manager	4.42 (129)	3.50 (42)	1.27
Semi-autonomous.........	4.36 (222)	3.56 (78)	1.22
Working class............	4.33 (637)	3.72 (213)	1.16
Richmond:			
Whites:			
Employer..............	1.31 (59)	.74 (19)	1.77
Manager	1.52 (262)	.68 (114)	2.23
Semi-autonomous.......	1.45 (239)	.55 (105)	2.64
Working class..........	1.57 (730)	.66 (318)	2.38
Blacks:			
Employer..............	2.00 (21)	1.70 (10)	1.18
Manager	1.52 (64)	.96 (50)	1.58
Semi-autonomous.......	1.60 (58)	1.03 (40)	1.55
Working class..........	1.62 (489)	.91 (468)	2.31

from the employer category also had higher rates but did not differ significantly from any other group.[5]

Seven of eight tests fail to replicate the relationship between class and delinquency proposed by Hagan et al. Of 48 group comparisons (six class contrasts within eight subsamples), only two were significant (the surplus-vs.-managers comparison among RTI males and the employer-vs.-working class one among Richmond black girls) and one of those contrasts was contrary to the theory. In short, these three data sets support the most common conclusion in the literature, and that is that there is no

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[5] We computed individual t-tests for all pairs of class categories as well as Scheffe (1959) multiple-range tests for all pairs. The results of individual t-tests could be misleading since the probability of significant differences increases with multiple comparisons. Scheffe pairwise comparisons yielded no significant contrasts between any two groups when multiple comparisons were made. We also conducted regression analyses with class and class-gender interaction terms with the same results. Regardless of the statistical technique used, neither class nor class-gender interactions were significantly related to common delinquency. A log-linear analysis for a delinquent-nondelinquent dichotomy also led to the conclusion that neither class nor a class-gender interaction was necessary for an adequate fit to the observed multiway tables.

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consistent relationship between class and indices of common self-reported delinquency.[6]

Hagan et al. make no predictions about race and delinquency, but their general propositions about the role of power in generating freedom to commit common delinquent acts clearly imply a higher rate of common delinquency for whites than for blacks. White youth, like children of the advantaged classes, should be freer than blacks to break laws with impunity and should be more thoroughly socialized into pecuniary risk taking as well. The data do not support such a prediction in any occupational category. Individual t-tests comparing blacks and whites within categories were all insignificant. When all categories were combined, black males did not differ significantly from white males. Black females reported more delinquency than white females, although the difference is marginally insignificant ($P = .0504$). Racial advantage does not appear to free whites to deviate relative to blacks.[7] Of course, the predictions based on the power-control argument are contrary to most criminological theories, whether dealing with race or with class.

We also examined the sex ratios and slopes for gender-delinquency relationships in class categories in the three data sets. In four samples the gender ratio either varies in a manner contrary to the predictions of Hagan et al. (Richmond blacks and whites) or is nearly constant by class (the RTI sample). Overall, the data do not support Bonger's hypothesis concerning gender differences by class and do not replicate the

[6] The mean number of offenses reported is greater in Hagan et al. than in any of these data sets. However, direct comparisons are not possible since none of these measures is a measure of actual numbers of offenses. Hagan et al. asked about six delinquent offenses with five response categories of "never," "once," "two or three times," "often," and "many times." The RTI data had three offenses with four response categories, and the Seattle and Richmond indices are based on dichotomous yes-no categories. Hence, their scores can achieve larger values. To assess whether an index for a larger variety of common delinquent acts would yield different results, we also used the RTI data to create an index based on petty theft, public disturbances, trespassing, fighting, and vandalism. The resulting means for boys were as follows: surplus: 7.58; workers: 7.17; managers: 6.82; employers: 7.10. For girls the comparable means were 6.25, 6.16, 6.07, and 6.22. With these higher means, there was still no positive relationship between class and delinquency, and the gender difference by class was not as predicted by power-control theory. A drug-use index resulted in the same conclusion.

[7] Hindelang et al. (1981) report that black youth tend to underreport serious offenses and, hence, researchers should be wary of using self-report data to study differences between blacks and whites. In this instance the differential validity of self-report data should work to the advantage of power-control theory. Not only does the theory apply to "common," presumably "non-serious" delinquency, but any tendency of black youth to underreport should increase the chances of white youth's (the advantaged class) having significantly higher rates. Of course, while consistent with power-control logic, the prediction of higher rates for whites is contrary to most previous theory and research.

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Toronto results. However, gender differences do appear greater for whites than blacks, and this finding is consistent with power-control theory. There may be greater differences by gender in freedom and risk taking among whites than among blacks (see Suttles 1968), and white females may be the most protected of the four categories. White families may be more "patriarchal" than black families, which would support the argument in the 1987 article.

A Closer Look at the Toronto Results

Our failure to discern the same patterns reported by Hagan et al. could reflect their unique measure of command status or variations in settings. However, since their claims are more contrary to the bulk of earlier self-report research on class and self-reported delinquency than our results here, it is crucial to look carefully at the reports on the Toronto data. A close inspection of the data presented in the two articles suggests several revisions in their theory and brings some of their propositions into question.

In the 1985 analysis, the null relationships between gradational measures of class as compared with positive relationships for the neo-Marxist measures could be due to cases omitted when the gradational measures were used rather than to the class-based variation Hagan et al. propose. The analysis for neo-Marxist conceptions is based on 458 of 463 cases, while the analyses using gradational measures are based on 411 cases for the American scale and 432 cases for the Canadian scale (Hagan et al. 1985, table 2). If the difference in results is based on the exclusion of certain categories (e.g., female-headed households, the unemployed, etc.), that fact should be reported. Without information on the missing cases, we do not know why a neo-Marxist measure yields a slightly different relationship.

Second, Hagan et al. argue that categorical measures facilitate the search for conditional relationships as compared with gradational measures but do not explore the shape of the class-delinquency relationship within gender categories. The shape of the relationship should have been examined for both gradational and neo-Marxist models. A dichotomized gradational measure could yield the same results as a neo-Marxist dichotomy. Moreover, there could be a stronger nonlinear relationship for gradational than for neo-Marxist measures.

We used the slopes and constants reported elsewhere in the 1985 article (Hagan et al. 1985, tables 3–6) to determine the means for gender-class categories, and they are reported in figure 1. Since we do not have the standard deviations for measures within gender-class categories, we cannot conduct tests of significance. However, the inappropriateness of a
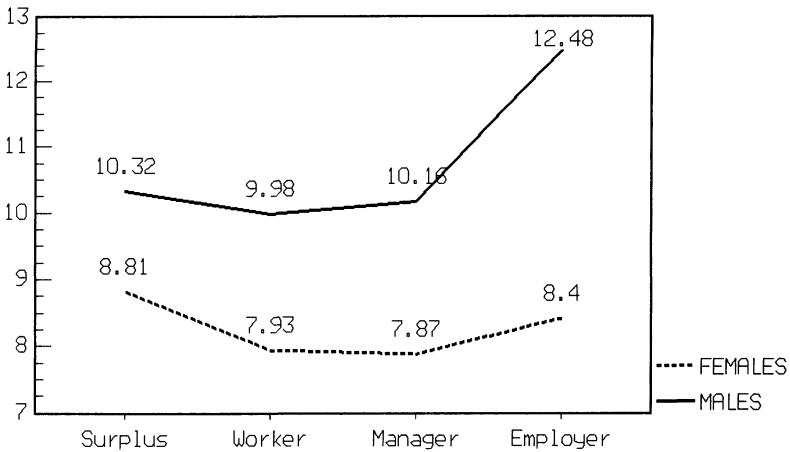
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FIG. 1.—Mean self-reported delinquency by class and gender. (Derived from Hagan et al. 1985.)

simple regression analysis for determining the best class model is obvious. For girls, delinquency is most likely at the top and bottom of the class system, while for boys the employer-other distinction appears more appropriate. The only class contrast reported on separately for boys and girls in Hagan et al.'s analysis is the employer-other contrast, where it is correctly noted that the contrast is greater for boys than girls. However, the high delinquency involvement of girls in the surplus category helped to generate that weak contrast. It should be noted that, while class differences are neither striking nor linear, the gender difference does vary by class in the manner claimed by power-control theory.

The data reported in the appendix to the 1985 article create even more serious problems for predictions of a positive relationship between class and delinquency. One-way analyses of variance of the relationships between class and maternal control, paternal control, taste for risk, and perceived risk of punishment fail to yield a single significant class variation. While there may be significant variations by gender or even by class within gender categories, there were no significant relations overall, and no two class categories differed significantly at the .10 level on any of the intervening variables. Contrary to the predictions of power-control theory, freedom to deviate, taste for risk, and perceived risk of punishment are not structured by class.[8]

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[8] Scheffe multiple-range tests yielded no significant pairwise contrasts for any two categories at either the .05 or .10 level in the sample as a whole. There may be significant contrasts within gender categories, but class by itself does not correlate with the intervening variables in the manner predicted by the theory. No evidence is

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The 1987 analysis differentiates household-class categories on the basis of occupations for both mothers and fathers and differentiates female-headed households. However, distinctions important in the 1985 analysis disappear in the 1987 analysis, and contrasts are presented in some instances but not others. For example, unless there is an error in the number of cases Hagan et al. report as falling in the household-class categories, unemployed fathers have disappeared. The set of categories, including female-headed households, add up to the 458 cases reported in the 1985 analysis, but all fathers are categorized as being in the command or obey classes (Hagan et al. 1987; table 1). The surplus category must be spread throughout these categories. Hagan et al. do report in a footnote (1987, p. 797, n. 4) that the gender difference in 14 intact households with unemployed fathers is consistent with their theory, but we have no idea where the rest of the surplus category are or why they are in categories that specified employment in the 1985 article. Similarly, while we are given a breakdown for the employer category for households where mother and father are both in the command classes, we have no idea where the rest of the employer class are or why a breakdown is acceptable in one instance and not in others. Finally, one category crucial to the theory is excluded altogether—households where the mother's status exceeds the father's. According to Hagan et al., this category is excluded because of the small number of cases (31) and because a larger study is planned (1987, p. 797, n. 3).

Variables important in the 1985 article are confounded in the new categories such that no single interpretation can be given to variations in the gender difference in delinquency by household class. Moreover, the number of cases involved cannot be used as a justification for excluding the mother-dominant category when less than half that number of cases was acceptable for the researchers' breakdown of the upper command class to support their theory and for their footnote about intact households with unemployed fathers.

These disparities and our interest in the actual shape of the class-delinquency relationship led us to attempt a reconstruction of the data for the full set of categories. The gender composition of the included categories can be estimated from the means reported in the 1987 article (Hagan et al. 1987, table 2). Since the overall gender composition (52%) is reported in the 1985 article, we estimate that about 24 of the cases in the excluded category were male and seven were female. This anomaly makes sense because, as Hagan et al. note, males were underrepresented in female-headed households (22 males and 46 females). They were

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presented in Hagan et al. to support power-control theory predictions about intervening variables that are presumed to generate a positive class-delinquency relationship.

slightly underrepresented in the upper command class as well (26 males and 31 females). Much of the support for their theory rests with the upper command class, and female-headed households and males are underrepresented in those categories. That underrepresentation is countered by male overrepresentation in the excluded category and in other power-imbalanced households.[9]

Since we have no information on missing data and the means for self-reported delinquency for all girls and all boys in the sample are based on the 1985 article (Hagan et al. 1985, table 2), we cannot be completely certain about how to reconstruct the data for delinquency in the excluded category.[10] Our estimates, based on the information available, of the means for that category and the means for the other household categories are summarized in figure 2. We have ordered the households in terms of combined status, with female-headed households classified as lowest in terms of dominance in the wider political economy and with wife's status increasing within husband's obey and command classes.[11]

Figure 2 allows us to consider the shape of the class-delinquency relationship for each gender category as well as the difference between females and males. With the exception of the low estimated delinquency for

[9] In the 1987 article there are 427 cases in the five household-class categories and female-headed households combined. Since addition of the 31 cases for the excluded category brings the total to 458 (the number of cases reported in the 1985 article), we assume all cases fall in the seven categories. The underrepresentation of boys in female-headed households is sufficient to generate a significant relationship between class and gender that is contrary to Hagan et al.'s statement that class is not related to gender.

[10] Minor variations in the data in the two articles preclude a single estimate of delinquency by gender in the missing category. However, in order to reproduce the total number of offenses for females, the girls in the missing category would have had to report between two and four offenses on the average. The boys in that category would have had to report between nine and 12 offenses on the average. Even the smallest estimated difference is contrary to power-control theory as stated.

[11] Since the focus in the 1987 article is on power *within* households, little is said about the relevance of household class for power and freedom in general. The logic of the 1985 article implies that female-headed households would generate lower rates of common delinquency than intact households, since youths from such households should have fewer of the resources facilitating successful risk taking. While mothers may be in command of their children relative to fathers in such households, they would rank at the bottom of the class system in terms of command status. Yet both boys and girls have high delinquency rates in such households. These results are contrary to the original formulation of power-control theory when applied to class. It is also far from clear how female-headed households should be ranked in terms of patriarchy. Hagan et al. depict them as comparable to the balanced households because mothers (allegedly) do not have to share control with males. But, if a patriarchal household is one where mothers bear an inordinate responsibility for child rearing, while fathers are free to pursue their own economic and political ends, then female-headed households are the epitome of patriarchal dominance in the social system.
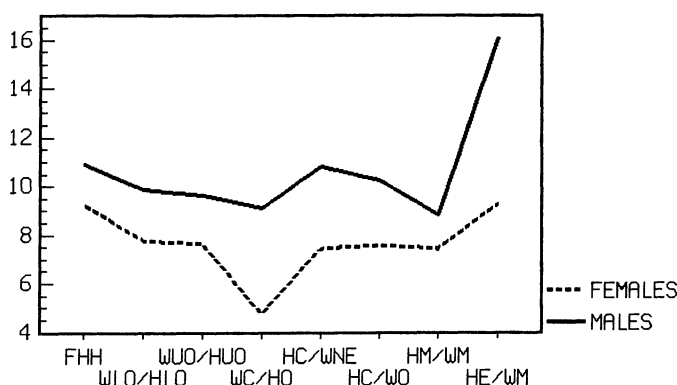
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Fig. 2.—Estimated delinquent offenses by family class category and gender. *FHH,* Female-headed households; *WLO/HLO,* wife and husband lower obey class; *WUO/HUO,* wife and husband upper obey class; *WC/HO,* wife command class, husband obey class; *HC/WNE,* husband command class, wife not employed; *HC/WO,* husband command class, wife obey class; *HM/WM,* husband and wife managers; *HE/WM,* husband employer, wife manager. (Derived from Hagan et al. 1987.)

girls in the excluded category, the relationships are curvilinear for males and females, with delinquency greatest at the two extremes. Moreover, contrary to Hagan et al.'s claim that increases in mother's standing make a difference only in the command classes, they appear to decrease delinquency dramatically for females and slightly for males when fathers are in the obey classes. When fathers are in the command class, increases in mother's standing are associated with increases in delinquency. Of course, since no two household-class categories differed significantly in delinquency, and class was not significantly related to delinquency in a one-way analysis of variance, these variations may be insignificant as well.

If our reconstruction is anywhere close to correct, then the data suggest that the gender difference is as great in the least patriarchal household as in the most patriarchal, when defined in terms of balance in occupational dominance. The gender difference may be greater in unbalanced households than in balanced ones, even when that imbalance is generated by the superior status of the mother. Of course, patriarchy is neither clearly defined nor directly measured, and it is conceivable that households where father's status is inferior to mother's may actually control daughters more than sons.

In sum, the relevance of class distinctions to gender differences in the Toronto data and the degree to which they support power-control theory or arguments about patriarchy hinge on the specification of the relation-

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ships in the missing category of mother-dominant households and the undifferentiated categories of employer and surplus contrasts. The only specifications reported by Hagan et al. are those that support the theory, and they are based on only one-third of the cases in these categories. Results for the other two-thirds could be quite different, and our attempted reconstruction of data for a key missing category suggests that the results may be fairly problematic for power-control theory.

DISCUSSION

The failure to replicate and discern consistent patterns in multiple data sets can stem from variations in measurement and procedures as well as from differences in the importance of the variables shaping behavioral options in different societies and settings. We were not able to discern the type of pattern reported by Hagan et al. in either the class-delinquency relationship or the interaction between gender and class. It may be that Canadian youth are different from youth in the United States or that, had we used exactly the same procedures, we would have obtained the same results. However, the reason we went into their analysis in some detail was to suggest that the results may not be as disparate as they appear. Variables that are supposed to explain class variations in their theory do not vary as predicted by class, and it has not been demonstrated that the neo-Marxist categorization itself generated a positive relationship as compared with gradational measures. The safest conclusion concerning class structure and delinquency is the same one that has been proposed for several decades: class, no matter how defined, contributes little to explaining variation in self-reports of common delinquency (Hirschi 1969; Jensen and Rojek 1980).

The predicted variation in gender differences by patriarchy may or may not exist, depending on the results for missing and undifferentiated categories and the distribution of the cases that interacted with gender in the 1985 article. Without more information on characteristics of cases in household-class categories, we cannot be sure what variations in gender differences mean.

It is crucial to power-control theory to demonstrate more convincingly that power and control are structured at the macro level by class as predicted and that structural variables affect delinquency through variations in supervision and risk. There is nothing original about the mediating variables themselves, since supervision and risk have been included in other models (Hirschi 1969; Johnson 1980; Akers et al. 1979). Indeed, variables central to other theories and relevant to the explanation of both delinquency and gender differences in delinquency are omitted with no justification (e.g., delinquent companions, social and moral bonds). The

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most original claims in Hagan et al.'s theory involve macro-micro links, variations by class, and gender-class interactions, and it is the strength of support for those claims that we are questioning.[12]

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[12] As formulated in the two articles, power-control theory is similar to versions of "rational choice" theory (Piliavin et al. 1986) in that the only explanatory variables are personal utilities and opportunity. In contrast, traditional sociological theories of deviance have incorporated variations in moral and social bonds in one form or another as crucial to the explanation of crime and delinquency. The use of the designation "power" control rather than "social" control highlights this difference. Thus, the predictions that delinquency, freedom, and taste for risk vary positively with class and the omission of certain variables are crucial for distinguishing the theory from previous theories. If omitted variables are necessary for an adequate model, and the included variables do not vary by class (or vary in the opposite direction), then power-control theory is neither original nor correct.

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