made some contribution to the decline, but it is not known for certain which are most significant. However, it is not fair to indict the public schools as the only culprit, or to conclude that improving schools will not alleviate the problem because the home is at fault. Many forces and influences are at work in the life of a child, including a possible 15,000 hours of television and 15,000 hours of schooling. Finally, it is not clear that declining test scores in children necessarily signal lower ability in all of life's tasks. Children will learn, if not in school then in the street, on the playground, and at social get-togethers. Consequently, there are undoubtedly many things that today's children and adolescents can do better than their, perhaps more studious, elders. It is presumptuous, therefore, to assume that declining test scores are incontrovertible evidence of wasted youth or a lost generation.

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Social Milieu and Language

The Language of Children Reared in Poverty. Implications for Evaluation and Intervention. Papers from a conference, Chapel Hill, N.C., May 1980. LYNNE FEAGANS and DALE CLARK FARRAN, Eds. Academic Press, New York, 1982. xvi, 288 pp. $24.50. Educational Psychology.

This is a 1982 book about a mid-1960's question: what part do language differences play in the high correlation between growing up in a poverty environment and failing in school, and what are the most effective interventions to give "poverty children" a better chance? The continuing social importance of these questions has led to considerable research and heated arguments. A British linguist, Michael Stubbs, ends his recent book *Language and Literacy* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980) with a thoughtful discussion of what he sees as four stages in the debate on explanations of reading failure. Stage 1 is the initial proposal of deprivation theory: some children's language is inferior in quality or quantity. In stage 2, that theory becomes taken for granted as fact. Stage 3 is the argument that deprivation is a myth, and "one group of social scientists see themselves as attempting to clear up the confusion caused by another group." In stage 4, the idea that deprivation is a myth itself becomes reified and taken for granted. Stubbs concludes that none of these four stages represents a coherent position and that the only certain recommendation is the importance of increasing teachers' understanding of linguistic and cultural diversity.

With this background, any reader seeing the Feagans and Farran volume will immediately ask, "What's new?" But first a glance at the book as a whole. It comes from a conference held at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at Chapel Hill in 1980. Both editors and two other contributors, Gordon and McGinness, are at the Center, and their longitudinal study of "high-risk black children" provides both the occasion for the conference and some of the empirical findings discussed. Some of the contributors will be familiar names to those who have followed this topic: Blank, Carew, Hart, Shuy (here joined by Staton), and Tough (from England). The rest are newer to these questions: Snow and her Netherlands collaborators de Blauw and Dubber, Hilliard, Massey, Moore, and Ogbu.

One contribution of the book is a reframing of the question. In her chapter in the concluding section Catherine Snow summarizes basic research on language development that has flourished during the past two decades: "Language acquisition is, in an evolutionary sense, a very robust system" (p. 257). She then goes on to ask a more pointed and useful version of the initial question: "Then why do we find large, significant, and consistent social-class differences in children's ability to perform language related tasks such as learning to read, learning to write, accuracy in referential communication, and oral exchange in the classroom?" (pp. 257–258).

The most striking new evidence of language differences comes from Elsie Moore's study (originally reported in a 1980 University of Chicago doctoral dissertation) of test-taking behaviors of an unusual sample of children: 46 black children placed for adoption in 23 black families and 23 white families. All the families were middle-class, and all the mothers were college-educated. (Presumably there was no difference between the groups in the children's age at adoption.) When the average age of the children in each group was 8.6 years, each child was given the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) by a black female tester. Moore's interest is less in the differences in the actual IQ scores than in differences in the children's use of language in the testing situation and the contributions those differences could make to the scores. To analyze the language use, the children's behavior during the test was scored according to the methodology used in a 1968 study by Hertzig *et al.* (*Monogr. Soc. Res. Child Dev.* **33**, no. 1). Briefly, the transracially adopted children made a higher proportion of "work" responses; accompanied their responses with significantly more spontaneous verbal and nonverbal extensions; and when they didn't answer a question were more apt to say "I haven't learned that yet," whereas the traditionally adopted children were more apt to change the topic or ask for help. Moore argues convincingly that a greater frequency of failures to answer will depress a child's IQ score even though such lack of response gives no certain information about what the child can or cannot do. Given the tendency of teacher-child interactions in school to have a testlike quality, Moore's findings can be generalized to differential participation in school lessons. As the chapter by Snow *et al.* argues, different subcultural groups have different ideologies of child-rearing and socialize their children to different patterns of language use.

John Ogbu, a Nigerian-born anthropologist who is one of the several black contributors, offers a more explanatory discussion. He reviews the "deficit" or "failure of socialization" hypothesis; appreciates the "difference" perspective for generating research on distinctive black English dialect and on classroom communicative exchange; and then discusses very persuasively a chain of educational implications of castelike stratification: "inferior education, disillusionment and lack of effort arising from low educational payoffs; incongruence between minority survival strategies and school requirements; and conflict and distrust between the minorities and the schools" (p. 129).

In other chapters useful to newcomers to these issues, Joan Tough reports her infant school research and curriculum development in England; Farran reviews research on mother-child interaction and Gael McGinness reviews intervention programs; Marion Blank describes characteristics of written language that pose particular problems for beginning readers; and Betty Hart has a thoughtful summary of the difficulties in establishing a demand for lexical elaboration in a behaviorist preschool and the difficulties, therefore, in decreasing social class differences in rates of vocabulary growth—"differences that seem to be captured in measures of IQ and reflected in reading comprehension scores" (p. 216).

Overall, the book is a useful progress

report, and one puts it down with some despair. We haven't gotten far in answering Farran's basic research question about "how language is altered or modified given different environmental conditions" (p. 19). And the current economic situation can only aggravate the "stress-inducing life events" that affect parent-child relationships (Snow *et al.*, p. 54) and escalate the effects on school-age youths that Ogbu describes. But such despair must not become grounds for a public policy of doing nothing for children now. (For an analysis of the potential consequences of such a policy see "A Children's Defense Budget: An Analysis of the President's Budget and Children," Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C., 1982.) For example, McGinness reports briefly the important follow-up study by Lazar *et al.* ("The Persistence of Preschool Effects," Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., 1977) of children who attended 14 different experimental preschool programs before 1969 and are now in high school. Although early IQ gains were not maintained, the experimental children had sufficiently lower levels of retention in grade and referral to special education to repay the cost of their preschool experiences.

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Psychology Applied to Law

The Psychology of the Courtroom. NORBERT L. KERR and ROBERT M. BRAY, Eds. Academic Press, New York, 1982. xiv, 370 pp. $29.50.

The Criminal Justice System. A Social-Psychological Analysis. VLADIMIR J. KONEČNI and EBBE B. EBBESEN, Eds. Freeman, San Francisco, 1982. xiv, 418 pp. Cloth, $20; paper, $14. A Series of Books in Psychology.

The British criminal justice system is said to be like the mannered ritual of a Japanese tea ceremony imposed on an assembly line. The American system shares some of the ritual and probably involves greater mass processing. In addition, we have our own native customs. We honor the common sense of ordinary people. Our Bill of Rights curbs governmental power in the name of individual rights. Our lawyers and judges are both excessively skeptical and gullible about the symbol and substance of science and technology. Finally, we have never invested anything close to the resources needed to carry out any coherent theory of criminal justice. We get about what we should expect. As is true at many theaters, one who examines the costumes and sets too closely will be disillusioned, and one who loves the show should hesitate to venture backstage.

The two books under review offer studies of parts of our criminal justice system. Both are collections of essays written, for the most part, by social psychologists. Other behavioral sciences are ignored or dismissed in a few sentences. With a few exceptions, both books see judges and lawyers as, at best, fools who know not what they do. Legal rules are assumed not to explain much of what happens in the system. However, the approaches of the two books are dissimilar: Kerr and Bray represent the best of a research tradition that Konečni and Ebbesen seek to overthrow as speedily as circumstances permit.

The book edited by Kerr and Bray focuses on the courtroom. Seventeen authors contribute ten essays dealing with the adversary system, jury selection, jury decision-making, the reliability of eyewitness testimony, and the psychology of judging. All in all, the message of the book is that there is a great risk of bias and error in the courtroom. Most of the chapters apply psychological findings and theories to courtroom issues or report experiments in which an investigator attempted to simulate features of a trial to subjects acting as witnesses or jurors. The editors note the difficulty of studying real trials and the high cost of creating realistic simulations. They argue that even highly artificial methods can suggest what to look for in an actual process.

The book edited by Konečni and Ebbesen focuses on the criminal justice system rather than the courtroom. Indeed, Konečni and Ebbesen suggest that psychologists have been excessively preoccupied with juries and that, given the rarity of jury trials and the prevalence of plea bargains, juries could be ignored as mere "noise" in the criminal justice system. That system involves a sequence of "decision nodes," and the book considers choices made at these points in the process. For example, there are chapters on decisions to commit a crime, to report one to the police, to arrest, to grant bail, to prosecute, to convict a defendant, to sentence, and to grant parole.

Konečni and Ebbesen advocate what they call archival analysis. In archival analysis one codes the transcript of a hearing and the file containing all the documents available to those involved, say, in the decision about what sentence to impose on a person convicted of a crime. Then one determines how much is explained by which factors. Konečni and Ebbesen contrast the merit of this behaviorist approach with the flaws of other commonly used methods. For example, in their studies of sentencing decisions, traditional methods such as interviews and simulations indicated that sentencing is a complex process, with every case different. Archival analysis, however, showed an extraordinarily strong association between the probation officer's recommendation to the judge and the actual sentence imposed. In effect, the judge announced a decision made by a probation officer. In turn, the recommendations were based on a very few factors. Sentencing hearings were not decision-making occasions but expensive ritualistic performances staged for the benefit of the defense lawyer, the offender, and, perhaps, the public.

Konečni and Ebbesen recognize that their preferred method cannot be applied easily to many decisions involved in the system. Criminals, for example, do not create a file before they decide to rob a bank. When necessary, the editors offer essays based on other research methods, including simulation. However, they attack conventional social psychological studies that "borrow concepts from theories and attempt to test them in situations that simulate a few isolated, impoverished aspects of the legal system."

In the view of Konečni and Ebbesen, judges and lawyers do little more than conduct rituals unrelated to the real operation of the criminal justice system. They could be eliminated, but, failing that, their roles should be played by people with an appreciation of statistics, computers, and scientific method. The editors recommend that "on-line data gathering procedures capable of encoding numerous characteristics of each case . . . be instituted at each significant decision node. There seems no excuse for not transforming the criminal justice system into a sophisticated data-gather-