December 1952

Social Treatment in Probation and Delinquency (Pauline V. Young, 1952)

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Recommended Citation
Richard S. Greenbaum, Social Treatment in Probation and Delinquency (Pauline V. Young, 1952), 5 Fla. L. Rev. 449 (1952).
Available at: https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/flr/vol5/iss4/13
BOOK REVIEWS


Juvenile law is characterized primarily by the wide latitude permitted the court in the disposition of offenders. Because the law deliberately allows the decision in a case to be made on the basis of the judge's personal judgment rather than his interpretation of statutes, an understanding of the cause and treatment of delinquency is essential to anyone involved in any aspect of a juvenile case. The lawyer pleading a case in juvenile court generally pleads neither the law nor the facts but rather the interpretation of the facts in terms of the potential rehabilitation of the child. This book provides considerable insight for the lawyer into the factors involved in such rehabilitation.

Social Treatment in Probation and Delinquency is designed as a complete guide to social case work with respect to the juvenile court. The author discusses in understandable lay language why children become delinquent, possible solutions of the problem of delinquency, how to execute these solutions, and the procedural forms that are generally followed in so doing. She also discusses in detail the administrative and procedural aspects of the juvenile court itself.

Her approach is a familiar one to most lawyers: the case study method. Miss Young is a social case worker and was trained by this method. In teaching others, people tend to use those devices that have proved effective in their own training. This is unfortunate in this instance, for many of the cases appear somewhat pointless and even unrelated to the matter discussed. It would have been better to place them in a separate section thus sparing the reader the necessity of wading through the repetitious calamities that constitute the bulk of the cases.

Aside from the case histories the material is well written, presenting simply and clearly the points the author wants to make.

Dean Pound's two introductions take note of the remarkable progress that has been made in juvenile work over the past half century. The combined contributions of the psychologist, the social worker, the anthropologist, and the sociologist have provided an understanding and insight into the factors involved in delinquency that permit the above-noted elastic construction of the law. The same trend has begun to evidence itself in the treatment of adult criminals. Since almost identical factors are at work in both types of cases, this
book also provides a base from which to approach adult cases.

The interrelation of law and sociology appears in porpoise-like fashion, coming to the surface occasionally in view of all, dimly visible most of the time, and once in a while diving completely out of sight. For the sociologist, laws are stateways, codified mores, and folkways. Knowing the mores and the folkways, then considering the social trends, the competent sociologist can predict the tenor of the laws for the next decade. The theoretical implications are fascinating, and the practical values for those established in the practices of lobbying, corporation law, or legislative work are immense.

Although Miss Young's heart obviously lies with the social worker, her knowledge of the legal aspects of delinquency is broad and incisive, and her chapters on that topic are as good as anything one is likely to run across outside of legal books.

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BOOKS NOTED


This excellent and useful contribution to the working tools of the lawyers of Florida is another major product of the Statutory Revision Department of the Attorney General's Office of the State of Florida. Consisting of an index to all local and special laws enacted by the Florida Legislature from 1845 through 1951, it comprises a current compilation of those numerous and relatively inaccessible acts. So-called population laws are general laws and are therefore not included. The plan utilized continues and extends the index to special and local laws adopted in Volume III, Florida Statutes of 1941. It is based on an alphabetical arrangement of counties and municipalities. Under each of these geographical headings are topical subheadings, again in alphabetical order. Thus, under the heading "Alachua" is a subheading "Charter." Under this subheading are listed, alphabetically, descriptive headings indicating the content of pertinent acts, followed by the year and chapter number of that act.