

Boot Camp:

A Twenty-five Month Review

April, 1990

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Executive Summary

Boot Camp: A Twenty-Five Month Review

This report provides information on the Florida Department of Corrections' Boot Camp program. Findings pertain to the first twenty-five months of the program's operation (October 1987 through October 1989) and represent data drawn from the D.C. computerized database supplemented by written questionnaires and Boot Camp's own inmate records. Among the findings are the following:

1. The typical inmate admitted to Boot Camp was a 19 year old unmarried male who acknowledged using illegal drugs and was convicted on a primary offense of burglary or robbery and sentenced to 3.6 years in prison.
2. As compared with inmates who failed at Boot Camp for disciplinary or motivational reasons, inmates who graduated were slightly older, more likely to have completed high school, somewhat less likely to acknowledge using illegal drugs, and more likely to have been convicted of armed robbery or violent crimes on a first degree felony.
3. Of the 281 Boot Camp graduates, 90% consistently met or exceeded the basic requirements of the program in the areas of military drill, obstacle course, work assignment, dress code, substance abuse training, and counseling (rational-emotive therapy training). The vigorous physical training that inmates received generally improved their fitness.
4. The reincarceration rate of Boot Camp graduates was 25.3%, which compares favorably with the 27.8% for a matched inmate group. Accounting for the superior performance of the Boot Camp graduates was a lower reincarceration rate for technical violations of probation. The graduates have shown no uniform superiority in recommitments to prison for new crimes, though some evidence suggests that the program may have a deterrent impact for some types of offenders but not for others.
5. New felonies committed by Boot Camp graduates were highly time clustered, with 57.5% occurring within the first four months after release from prison and 83.0% occurring within the first eight months. On the average, graduates with new felony commitments maintained "good" post-release behavior for 4.5 months, a figure virtually identical to that of the comparison group.
6. Reincarcerated Boot Camp graduates acknowledged problems with job skills, employment, and substance abuse.

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7. In total incarceration time, graduates of Boot Camp served 19% of their sentences, compared to 32% for a matched inmate group. State prison time alone constituted 13% of the graduates' sentences and 22% of the comparison group's. If graduates of Boot Camp had served 22% of their sentences in state prison, over 39,759 inmate days would have been added to the correctional system's load, at a cost of more than one and a quarter million dollars.

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Introduction

The Basic Training Program, informally known as Boot Camp, was implemented by the Florida Department of Corrections in the fall of 1987. The program was devised as a form of shock incarceration modeled on military training. For a period of 90-120 days, up to 100 youthful male inmates participate in a rigorous daily routine of physical exercise, military drill, training and work assignments. Idle time is virtually eliminated. Inmates receive substance abuse counseling and training in psychological methods that promote responsibility and improve decision-making. The central objective of the Basic Training Program is to deter repeat criminality by fostering productive and responsible life adjustments in a brief though intensive correctional experience representing significant cost savings to the state.

In March, 1989, the Department of Corrections released its first evaluation report on Boot Camp, covering the first thirteen months of the program's operation (October 1987 through October 1988). Now, in this second report, we will review the program's initial twenty-five months, extending the evaluation through the end of October, 1989. Our chief aim is to update the information provided in the first report. Accordingly, we will concentrate on a limited number of issues:

1. A profile of inmates admitted to Boot Camp
2. Different characteristics of inmates who succeed and those who fail in the program
3. Performance achievements of Boot Camp graduates
4. Repeat criminality among Boot Camp graduates
5. The program's effectiveness in reducing prison time

It must be strongly emphasized that this report bases its conclusions on data available as of October 31, 1989. Since Boot Camp is an ongoing program, conclusions will remain open to revision as dictated by current and future developments.*

*The Florida Department of Corrections is currently participating in a multi-state study of shock incarceration sponsored by the National Institute of Justice. Results of this project will supplement the Department's own internal research.

Getting In: Boot Camp Admissions

Between the inception of the Basic Training Program in October, 1987, and the end of October, 1989, 648 inmates were accepted for admission. In this section we will recount the process through which these persons were recruited and then describe some of their demographic and offense characteristics.

Admission to Boot Camp generally proceeds through several steps. At the correctional reception centers, newly arrived inmates are screened for eligibility by classification officers. Names of suitable candidates are submitted to the Youthful Offender Program Office of the Department of Corrections for further screening and approval. For each acceptable candidate, the Department requests permission of the sentencing court to admit the inmate to Boot Camp. While initiative in recommending candidates rests with the Department of Corrections, final authorization belongs to the judge. The full process from screening to approval takes an average of nearly two months.

By formal policy, inmates eligible for admission to Boot Camp must have been sentenced as youthful offenders under section 958.04 of the Florida Statutes or designated by the Department of Corrections as youthful offenders. Such a designation may be accorded first-time inmates, twenty-four or younger upon prison classification, without capital or life felonies and sentenced to an incarceration term of ten years or less. Additional Boot Camp eligibility criteria require that candidates be male, have neither physical nor psychological limitations precluding participation in the program, and voluntarily agree to participate.

Conforming to these eligibility requirements, the 648 inmates admitted to Boot Camp during its initial twenty-five months have a number of other characteristics. A profile of the typical Boot Camp admission would show an inmate who was born in Florida, had not completed high school, had never been married, acknowledged using illegal drugs, was 19 upon entering prison, was convicted on primary offense of burglary or robbery and sentenced to 3.6 years of incarceration. Table 1 provides the full demographic and offense profile of the Boot Camp admissions.

Table 1

Profiles of Inmates Admitted to Boot Camp
Through October 31, 1989
(N=648)

- Average age upon admission to prison was 19

Race:

- 50.5% are black
- 48.3% are white
- 1.2% are other

- 69.4% were born in Florida

- 4.6% claim to be Hispanic*

Most of the inmates:

- had not completed high school
- were single (never married)
- admitted to using illegal drugs

- 27.9% had at least one prior term of felony probation**
- 11.9% had at least one prior term of Community Control**
- 24.7% had violated probation or Community Control

- Were usually committed on the following offenses:
 1. Burglary (33.5%)
 2. Armed robbery (14.5%)
 3. Narcotics, sale or manufacture (10.3%)
 4. Unarmed robbery (7.9%)
 5. Auto theft/motor vehicle crimes (7.6%)

- 21.2% committed first degree felonies
- 48.5% committed second degree felonies

- Were convicted of 3.4 felony counts

- Were sentenced to 3.6 years of incarceration

* This is an ethnic, not a racial, classification.

**These groups may overlap.

Having characterized the inmates who entered Boot Camp, we might ask whether they are typical or atypical of male offenders entering state prison. Table 2 lists demographic and offense statistics for the Boot Camp group alongside the same information for the youthful and adult males admitted to prison between July 1, 1988, and June 30, 1989. Here we will focus specifically on the differences between youthful male and Boot Camp admissions.

Generally, the Boot Camp group was younger, less educated, and more willing to acknowledge using illegal drugs than the youthful male admission cohort. Disproportionately included among Boot Camp admissions were inmates convicted on a first or second degree felony of robbery or burglary. Drug felons, by contrast, were under-represented at Boot Camp, due chiefly to the frequency of their shorter sentences. Sex offenders were (and are) excluded as a matter of informal policy.

Table 2

**Boot Camp Admissions
Compared to Youthful and Adult Male Inmates Admitted
During Fiscal Year 1988-89**

	Boot Camp Admissions (N=648)	Male inmates 24 & Younger (N=13242)	Male inmates 25 & older (N=24142)
Race: Black	50.5%	59.8%	58.7%
White	48.3%	38.8%	39.5%
Other	1.2%	1.4%	1.8%
Marital: Single	94.5%*	89.9%*	56.2%*
Ethnic: Hispanic	4.6%	5.5%	8.2%
Completed high school	15.0%*	26.5%*	46.2%*
Average age	19	21	33
Admits to using illegal drugs	61.1%*	52.0%*	44.3%*
Prior probation	27.9%	77.4%*	89.7%*
Prior violation of probation or Community Control	24.7%	41.4%	35.6%
Primary offense of:			
Murder/manslaughter	2.5%	2.9%	3.6%
Sexual offenses	0%	2.5%	4.7%
Robbery	22.4%	13.9%	7.8%
Violent personal crimes	6.0%	5.7%	5.9%
Burglary	33.5%	24.7%	18.0%
Theft, forgery, fraud	4.6%	6.2%	10.0%
Drugs	14.5%	26.2%	34.7%
Weapons	1.1%	2.9%	2.9%
Other	15.4%	15.0%	12.4%
Felony class:			
Capital/Life	.0%	2.9%	2.5%
First degree	21.2%	14.4%	13.8%
Second degree	48.5%	43.9%	39.7%
Third degree	30.3%	32.7%	44.0%
One or more prior prison terms	.0%	31.0%	44.0%
Mean sentence length (in years)	3.6	3.8**	4.4**
Median sentence length (in years)	4.0	2.5	2.5

*These figures are estimates based on samples.

**These averages exclude inmates sentenced to life in prison or death.

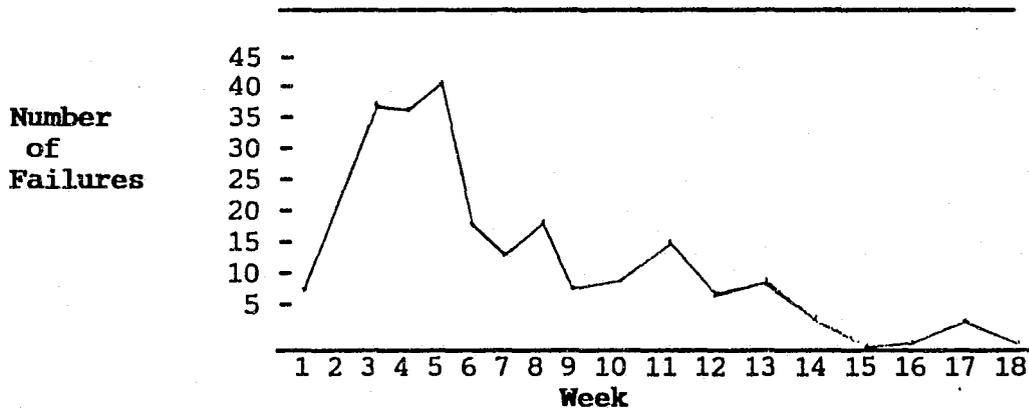
**Hanging On:
Succeeding or Failing at Boot Camp**

Of the 648 inmates who had been admitted to Boot Camp as of October 31, 1989, 53 were still in the program on that date. Three inmates were temporarily out in court, and two others were released early with an expired sentence. All of the others had either graduated or terminated. Graduates numbered 281, or 47.5% of the 592 inmates released from the program. Of the inmates who were terminated, 41 (6.9%) left for medical reasons, 6 (1.0%) for psychological reasons, and the remainder (262, or 44.3%) for either an inability or unwillingness to meet the requirements of the program. It is this group, the genuine program failures, that we will consider in more detail.

An inmate who failed at Boot Camp spent an average of 41 days in the program, compared with 29 days for medical terminations, 12 days for psychological terminations, and 103 days for graduates. More than half of the failures occurred during the fifth week or earlier; by the end of the seventh week, over two-thirds of the failures had occurred. Chart 1 displays the failure count by the week of its occurrence.

Chart 1

Program Failures By Week



In comparing the inmates who failed with those who graduated, we note a number of differences. While both groups entered the program at about the same physical size, successful inmates performed better in initial exercise tests. Table 3 provides the size and exercise data for both groups.

Table 3

Average Initial Physical Measurements
for Graduates and Failures

	<u>Graduates</u> (N=281)	<u>Failures</u> (N=262)
Weight (in pounds)	160.8	158.9
Waist (in inches)	31.9	32.0
Chest (in inches)	37.2	36.9
Heart rate (beats per minute)	73.2	75.6
Time in one mile run (in minutes)	8.1	8.8
Push-ups (in one minute)	47.0	42.1
Sit-ups (in one minute)	37.2	35.3

In addition to physical performance, successful and unsuccessful inmates at Boot Camp differed in a number of other respects. Compared with the program failures, graduates were slightly older, more likely to have completed high school, and less likely to acknowledge use of drugs. Graduates also had a higher offense rate for armed robbery and violent crimes, and a higher conviction rate for first degree felonies. While Hispanics made up only a small portion of the Boot Camp admissions, they were disproportionately represented among the graduates. Table 4 contains the comparative profiles of successful and unsuccessful Boot Camp inmates.

Table 4

Comparative Profiles of Graduates and Failures

	<u>Graduates</u> (N=281)	<u>Failures</u> (N=262)
Race: Black	51.6%	48.9%
White	47.0%	50.0%
Other	1.4%	1.1%
Average age at prison admission	19.2	18.7
Ethnic: Hispanic	5.3%	2.7%
Completed high school*	26.4%	9.1%
Uses illegal drugs*	58.8%	63.2%
Primary offense:		
Burglary	29.9%	37.4%
Unarmed robbery	8.2%	8.4%
Armed robbery	17.8%	10.7%
Drug felony	14.2%	14.5%
Violent personal crimes**	10.8%	5.0%
Average number of counts	3.2	3.6
Felony class:		
First degree	25.0%	16.9%
Second degree	47.0%	49.6%
Third degree	28.0%	33.5%
Prior probation term	27.1%	30.2%
Prior Community Control term	12.1%	10.7%
Prior violation of probation or Community Control	21.7%	26.7%
Average sentence length	3.7	3.5

*These are estimates based on samples

**These include murder, manslaughter, assault, and battery.

**Measuring Up:
Program Achievements of Boot Camp Graduates**

The Boot Camp program comprises a number of distinct facets: Physical training, drill and ceremony, work assignments, and counseling. Inmates are evaluated in each of these areas. To determine the achievements of Boot Camp graduates, we will review their performance measurements and appraisals.

In the course of the program, graduates changed physically in several ways. An average graduate lost nearly five pounds, reduced his waist by over an inch, increased his chest by more than half an inch, and lowered his heart rate by about twelve beats per minute. Graduates also demonstrated improved abilities to run, do push-ups, and do sit-ups. These improvements are specified in Table 5.

**Table 5
Physical Changes in Boot Camp Graduates
(N=281)**

	<u>Average Initial Measurement</u>	<u>Average Final Measurement</u>	<u>Average Change</u>
Weight (in pounds)	160.78	155.64	-4.85
Waist (in inches)	31.87	30.60	-1.23
Chest (in inches)	37.16	37.77	+.62
Heart rate (beats per minute)	73.21	61.11	-12.15
One mile run (in minutes)	8.08	5.98	-2.11
Push-ups (in one minute)	47.02	71.11	+24.27
Sit-ups (in one minute)	37.23	53.70	+16.58

Appraisals in other aspects of the program are necessarily more subjective, with officers employing a rating scale of "below satisfactory," "satisfactory," "above satisfactory," and "outstanding." Generally, appraisals are made during the fourth and eighth weeks of the program. Table 6 lists the average initial score, the average final score, and the average improvement for each evaluated performance area. In all of the areas graduates tended to begin with a slightly better than "satisfactory" rating and improved to one just below "above satisfactory."

Table 6

Improvements in Performance Evaluations
of Boot Camp Graduates
(N=281)

	<u>Average First Score</u>	<u>Average Last Score</u>	<u>Average Improvement</u>
Drill	2.13	2.56	.43
Obstacle course	2.17	2.53	.36
Work	2.15	2.58	.43
Dress code	2.23	2.84	.61
Substance abuse training	2.23	2.81	.58
Rational-emotive therapy training	2.29	2.79	.49

Score Values 1 = Below satisfactory 2 = Satisfactory
 3 = Above satisfactory 4 = Outstanding

Distribution of the evaluations is shown in Table 7. In each of the performance areas we see an improvement between the first and the final appraisal such that over half of the graduates were rated at "above satisfactory" or "outstanding" in the second appraisal. We note also that the strongest areas of inmate performance were substance abuse training, rational-emotive therapy counseling, and conforming to dress requirements. The weakest performance areas were drill and ceremony, work assignments, and running the obstacle course.

What the evaluations tell us is that the overwhelming majority of Boot Camp graduates were judged by the evaluating officers to meet or exceed the basic requirements of the program.

Table 7
Performance Evaluations
for Boot Camp Graduates
(N=281)

	<u>Below</u> <u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Above</u> <u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>
<u>Drill</u>				
4th Week	2.2%	83.7%	13.4%	.7%
8th Week	4.4%	44.1%	42.3%	9.2%
<u>Obstacle Course</u>				
4th Week	3.6%	77.5%	17.0%	1.8%
8th Week	5.5%	43.8%	42.6%	8.1%
<u>Work</u>				
4th Week	2.9%	80.4%	15.6%	1.1%
8th Week	.7%	48.2%	43.4%	7.7%
<u>Dress Code</u>				
4th Week	6.9%	68.8%	18.5%	5.8%
8th Week	2.6%	31.6%	44.9%	21.0%
<u>Substance Abuse Training</u>				
4th Week	1.8%	76.4%	19.2%	2.5%
8th Week	.4%	27.9%	62.5%	9.2%
<u>R.E.T. Training</u>				
4th Week	2.2%	73.2%	18.5%	6.2%
8th Week	.7%	32.1%	55.0%	12.2%

**Relapse:
Prison Rec commitments Among Boot Camp Graduates**

The effectiveness of the Boot Camp program rests upon the extent to which its goals are achieved. One of those goals, the deterrence of repeat criminality, is of particular importance as both a public safety issue and a factor in the program's cost effectiveness. In this section we will consider repeat criminality indirectly by examining the frequency with which Boot Camp graduates are returning to prison. We will also explore some other aspects of reincarceration, including particularly the life circumstances of recommitted Boot Camp graduates.

A. Quantitative Considerations

To begin to assess the deterrent impact of Boot Camp, we will compare reincarceration patterns of Boot Camp graduates and similar inmates who did not participate in the program. Any group differences will provide some indication of the relative impact of the Boot Camp experience versus traditional correctional programs.

To obtain a suitable comparison group, the Department of Corrections' computerized data base was searched to extract records of inmates meeting certain basic criteria:

- 1) Demographic and offense similarity to inmates admitted to Boot Camp.
- 2) Release from prison during the same period of time as the graduates of Boot Camp (late December 1987 through October 31, 1989).
- 3) Placement on felony probation or Community Control immediately following prison release as a condition of their original sentence.

On the basis of these criteria 633 inmates were selected for the comparison group. While this number is more than twice as large as the number of Boot Camp graduates (N=281), comparisons between the groups will employ recommitment rates, thus controlling for the difference in group size. We include no tests of statistical significance since, in the absence of an adequately specified explanatory model, such tests are not particularly informative.* Findings reported here are preliminary, subject to further theoretical and empirical development.

*Determining whether a relationship between variables is nonrandom presupposes an identification of those variables, which is a theoretical matter. To test the significance of a relationship between loosely conceived, "global" concepts is necessarily to risk mistaking a spurious for a non-spurious relationship, or a spurious for a non-spurious non-relationship. Significance tests alone can not decide the issue. In the absence of a theoretical model of the Boot Camp experience, we therefore refrain from the premature and potentially misleading use of such tests.

Table 8 presents the basic recommitment data for Boot Camp graduates and the comparison group. In viewing the offender counts according to the specific reasons for reincarceration, we note the following. The graduates and the comparison inmates show an equal rate of return to prison for commission of new felonies. The graduates are recommitted for new misdemeanors at a rate 1.6% higher than that of the comparison inmates, although in neither group is the rate particularly high. The graduates are recommitted for technical violations of probation at a rate 4.2 percentage points lower than that of the comparison group. On the basis of this last difference, the total recommitment rate for Boot Camp graduates is 2.5 percentage points lower than the rate for similar inmates.

Table 8

Recommitments of Boot Camp Graduates and Comparison Group*

Reason For Recommitment	Boot Camp Graduates (N=281)	Comparison Group (N=633)
New Felony	47 (16.7%)	106 (16.7%)
New Misdemeanor	6 (2.1%)	3 (.5%)
Technical Violation	18 (6.4%)	67 (10.6%)
Total	71 (25.3%)	176 (27.8%)

*Through October 31, 1989

The absence of a group difference in commission of new felonies requires closer examination. An argument might be made that, even within the framework of our matching procedure, exogenous dissimilarities in the composition of the graduate and control groups are masking a difference in felony rates. More specifically, sub-groups with different felony rates are represented in different proportions in the two groups so as to suppress a difference in their aggregated felony rates. To explore this possibility, we must introduce stratifications into our comparison and consider both between-group and within-group differences with respect to these stratifications.

Four factors potentially related to repeat criminality are original sentence length, original primary offense, age upon admission to prison, and race. Tables 9 through 12 provide stratifications for these factors in the felony rate comparison of the Boot Camp graduates and the matched inmate group.

Table 9

New Felonies by Original Sentence Length

Sentence Length	Boot Camp Graduates (N=281)		Comparison Group (N=633)	
	Total N	New Felonies	Total N	New Felonies
		#		%
LE 1 Year	0	0	13	2 (15.4%)
GT 1 Yr/LE 2 Yrs	20	7 (35%)	201	33 (16.4%)
GT 2 Yrs/LE 3 Yrs.	72	11 (15.3%)	131	28 (21.4%)
GT 3 Yrs/LE 4 Yrs.	123	20 (16.3%)	270	38 (14.1%)
GT 4 Yrs/LE 5 Yrs.	43	7 (16.3%)	6	1 (16.7%)
GT 5 Yrs/LE 6 Yrs.	19	2 (10.5%)	6	3 (50.0%)
GT 6 Years	4	0 (0%)	6	1 (16.7%)

Table 10

New Felonies by Original Primary Offense

Original Felony Type	Boot Camp Graduates (N=281)		Comparison Group (N=633)	
	Total N	New Felonies	Total N	New Felonies
		#		%
Murder/Manslaughter	11	1 (9.1%)	25	2 (8.0%)
Violent Personal Crimes	19	4 (21.1%)	40	6 (15.0%)
Armed Robbery	50	7 (14.0%)	141	22 (15.6%)
Unarmed Robbery	23	6 (26.1%)	46	12 (26.1%)
Burglary	84	18 (21.4%)	197	46 (23.4%)
Drug Offenses	40	3 (7.5%)	50	3 (6.0%)
Larceny	12	2 (16.7%)	21	2 (9.5%)
Auto Theft/Vehicle Crimes	19	3 (15.8%)	21	3 (14.3%)
Other	23	3 (13.0%)	92	10 (10.9%)

Table 11

New Felonies by Age at Prison Admission

<u>Age</u>	<u>Boot Camp Graduates</u> (N=281)		<u>Comparison Group</u> (N=633)			
	<u>Total N</u>	<u>New Felonies</u> <u># %</u>		<u>Total N</u>	<u>New Felonies</u> <u># %</u>	
14	0	0	(.0%)	4	1	(25.0%)
15	4	0	(.0%)	14	3	(21.4%)
16	26	4	(15.4%)	81	21	(25.9%)
17	54	7	(13.0%)	182	37	(20.3%)
18	56	12	(21.4%)	179	23	(12.8%)
19	50	13	(26.0%)	77	15	(19.5%)
20	41	4	(9.8%)	63	4	(6.3%)
21	23	3	(13.0%)	26	1	(3.8%)
22	18	3	(16.7%)	4	0	(.0%)
23	5	0	(0%)	3	1	(33.3%)
24	4	1	(25.0%)	0	0	(.0%)

Table 12

New Felonies by Race

<u>Race</u>	<u>Boot Camp Graduates</u> (N=281)		<u>Comparison Group</u> (N=633)			
	<u>Total N</u>	<u>New Felonies</u> <u># %</u>		<u>Total N</u>	<u>New Felonies</u> <u># %</u>	
Black	145	31	(21.4%)	362	64	(17.7%)
White	132	15	(11.4%)	266	40	(15.0%)
Other	4	1	(25.0%)	5	2	(40.0%)

The first question to consider is whether a difference in sub-group distributions within the Boot Camp and comparison groups is responsible for the lack of any difference in the group rates for commission of new felonies. As a statistical control on different sub-group distributions, the aggregated felony rate of the comparison group was recalculated by averaging sub-group rates according to their proportional representation in the graduate group. Table 13 provides the results. We see little change in the weighted felony rate after corrections in the distribution of original primary offense and race, and some change after distribution corrections for sentence length and

age. What this suggests is that different distributions of sentence length and age sub-groups within the Boot Camp and comparison groups are masking a difference in the repeat felony rates of the groups. Yet, given the fact that the average for the weighted felony rates of both factors is little different from the overall unweighted group average, we see one masking effect negate the other. The conclusion to be drawn is that distribution differences in the four factors examined do not as a group account for a lack of difference in felony rates of Boot Camp graduates and the comparison group. Of course, other factors not examined might lead to a different conclusion.

Table 13

**Weighted New Felony Rates by Weighting Factor
For Comparison Group
(N=633)**

<u>Weighting Factor</u>	<u>Recalculated Felony Rate</u>
Sentence Length	19.0%
Original Primary Offense	16.4%
Age at Prison Admission	14.5%
Race	16.7%

The absence of any difference in repeat criminality among Boot Camp graduates and similar inmates is not constant across all sub-groups. For some of the sub-groups the felony rate for Boot Camp graduates is lower than that for the comparison group. These sub-groups most prominently include inmates having sentences between two and three years, inmates who were 16 or 17 upon admission to prison, and inmates who are white. Sub-groups where Boot Camp graduates performed more poorly than the comparison group include inmates with sentences between one year and two years, inmates convicted of violent personal crimes or larceny, inmates older than 17 upon admission to prison, and inmates who are black. Subject to further specification and statistical tests for randomness, these sub-group differences suggest that the Boot Camp program may have a deterrent impact for at least some kinds of offenders. Further research is needed to assess this possibility.

The Boot Camp graduates reincarcerated on new felonies are tending to extend the scope of their criminality beyond the offenses of their original prison commitments. Viewing offenses within the categories of Florida's Sentencing Guidelines, we find that only 31.9% of the repeat felons remain within the Guidelines' categories of their original crimes, while more than two-thirds (68.1%) commit new Guidelines' offenses. This latter group comprises 42.6% with only new offenses and 25.5% with both old and new crimes.

Another issue in the analysis of recommitments is the length of time after release that an inmate refrains from criminal activity. In Table 14 the average number of months of "good" behavior is listed for all recommitted inmates in both the Boot Camp and comparison groups. For inmates recommitted on new felonies, there is little difference between the groups in the average period of time between release and commission of a new offense. Differences emerge for inmates recommitted on new misdemeanors and technical probation revocations. In the former case, Boot Camp graduates maintain "good" behavior nearly three months longer than similarly recommitted inmates in the comparison group, while Boot Camp graduates recommitted on technical violations of probation remain unviolated over two months longer than the comparable inmates. Taken as an aggregate, Boot Camp graduates recommitted to state prison average half a month more of "good" behavior than recommitted inmates in the comparison group.

Table 14

Average Months of "Good" Behavior After Release *

<u>Reason for Recommitment</u>	<u>Boot Camp Graduates</u> (N=281)	<u>Comparison Group</u> (N=633)
New Felony	4.5	4.7
New Misdemeanor	7.9	4.9
Technical Violation	8.5	6.3
Total	5.8	5.3

*Inmates recommitted through October 31, 1989

Further analysis of the "failure time" for recommitted Boot Camp graduates reveals some definite patterns. Table 15 provides the number and rate for each type of failure (new felony, misdemeanor, or technical revocation) according to the post-release month in which the failure occurred. For technical revocations we find an essentially "flat" distribution over a period of eighteen months, implying the absence of any particular critical time within that interval. By contrast, new felonies are highly time clustered, with 57.5% occurring within the first four months after release from prison and 83.0% occurring within the first eight months. Chart 2 shows the general downward slope for commission of new felonies in both the Boot Camp and comparison groups. Clearly, the first eight months after release represent a particularly critical period in the survival prospects of the Boot Camp graduates.

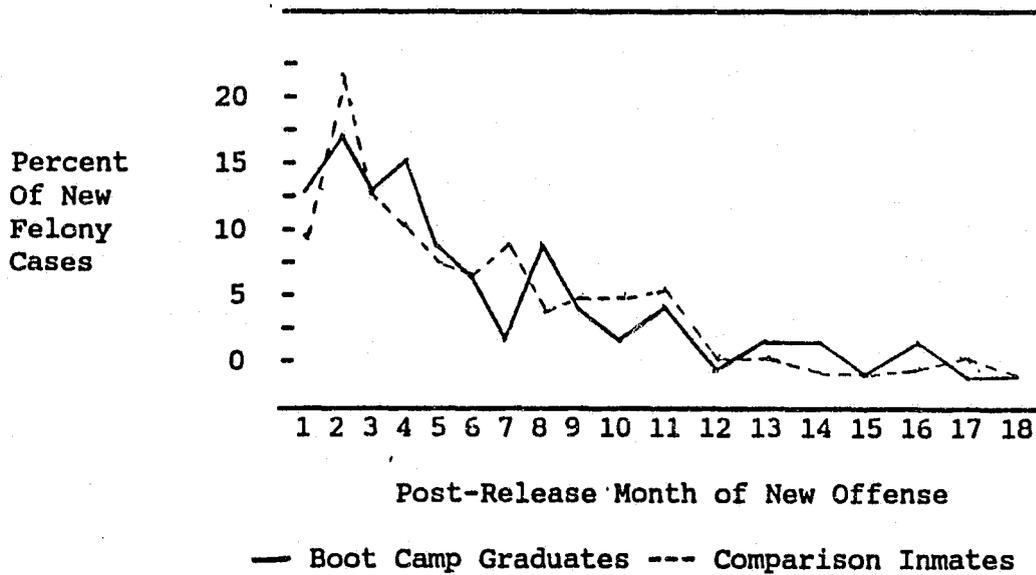
Table 15

Time of Failure or Recommitted Boot Camp Graduates

Month	New Felony (N=47)		New Misdemeanor (N=6)		Technical Revocation (N=18)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	6	(12.8%)	0		0	
2	8	(17.0%)	0		1	(5.6%)
3	6	(12.8%)	0		1	(5.6%)
4	7	(14.9%)	0		1	(5.6%)
5	4	(8.5%)	0		1	(5.6%)
6	3	(6.4%)	1	(16.7%)	3	(16.7%)
7	1	(2.1%)	2	(33.3%)	0	
8	4	(8.5%)	0		1	(5.6%)
9	2	(4.3%)	2	(33.3%)	1	(5.6%)
10	1	(2.1%)	0		2	(11.1%)
11	2	(4.3%)	0		4	(22.2%)
12	0		1	(16.9%)	1	(5.6%)
13	1	(2.1%)	0		0	
14	1	(2.1%)	0		0	
15	0		0		0	
16	1	(2.1%)	0		0	
17	0		0		1	(5.6%)
18	0		0		1	(5.6%)

Chart 2

Failure Curve For Boot Camp Graduates
and Comparison Inmates With New Felonies



B. Life Circumstances of Recommitted Boot Camp Graduates

The behavioral data on reincarceration rates and failure times tell us what is happening, but not why. We still need to make sense of the data by acquiring some insight into the reasons that Boot Camp graduates have returned to prison. For that purpose, a questionnaire was designed and administered to reincarcerated graduates in the fall of 1989. Of the 53 inmates available for completing the survey, 36 (67.9%) responded. The absence of response in 17 cases is due to our lack of success in contacting the inmates rather than their refusal to participate.

The survey concentrated on a core of themes believed to be pertinent to reincarceration: the Boot Camp experience, employment, family, friends, probation, and prison in general. For each of these we will summarize the findings of the questionnaire. Item by item results are provided in Appendix 1.

1) The Boot Camp Experience

Reincarcerated Boot Camp graduates reported a strong positive opinion of Boot Camp. Nearly all of them expressed pride over successfully completing the program. Most believed that Boot Camp had changed their basic attitudes and had helped them develop self-discipline. The respondents generally denied the inapplicability of the Boot Camp experience to life outside prison, agreed that other prisons should be more like Boot Camp, and denied that the program was too short to do much good. Respondents also acknowledged respect for the correctional officers at Boot Camp and denied that the only good thing about the program was its reduction of their prison time. Most of the reincarcerated graduates would prefer Boot Camp to their current correctional institution.

In several areas respondents expressed some critical views. Confirming the continued usefulness of rational-emotive therapy techniques, the graduates advised an expanded emphasis on counseling at Boot Camp. Despite the inclusion of alcohol and drug counseling as a component of the Boot Camp program, a large majority of the recommitted graduates saw a need for further substance abuse treatment. They also wanted job training. Despite these perceived deficiencies in the program content, respondents had not felt at the time of leaving Boot Camp that they would ever return to prison.

2) Employment

Upon leaving Boot Camp, unemployment was a real problem for half of the reincarcerated graduates. While respondents overwhelmingly affirmed a belief in the value of hard work, a majority confessed to lacking the skills required for the jobs they really wanted.

3) Family and Friends

Family problems do not appear to be particularly pressing for the respondents. Most acknowledged family support and denied any

worsening of the family situation after return from Boot Camp. Only a minority of the reincarcerated graduates (27.8%) represent "second generation" inmates.

As for peer contacts, a substantial number of the respondents (47.3%) reported that most of their friends had been in trouble with the law. Still, the majority of reincarcerated graduates denied that it is difficult to stay out of trouble on the streets.

4) Probation

The probation* supervision that Boot Camp graduates faced upon release seems to have left mixed impressions. While a solid majority denied that doing probation was easy, most respondents also denied that their probation officers were too demanding. The reincarcerated graduates were divided in admitting to a difficulty meeting cost of supervision payments, and they were also divided in reacting to the view that probation is just meaningless paperwork, though more of the respondents agreed with that opinion than disagreed. Only a minority of the reincarcerated graduates believed that their probation officers became well acquainted with them. Note again that these respondents were all graduates of Boot Camp who had violated probation and been recommitted to state prison.

5) Prison in General

Incarceration was still considered a significant event by the overwhelming majority of respondents. By the same majority, the respondents retained a belief in the effectiveness of prison programs for promoting personal change.

In weighing the results of the survey, we must bear in mind both the small size of the sample and the usual reliability and validity concerns associated with survey data. The following composite scenario suggests some possible factors associated with the repeat criminality of Boot Camp graduates.

Upon release from Boot Camp, the reincarcerated graduates held a strong positive view of the program, perceiving it as having enhanced their self-discipline and their psychological ability to cope with life. But the graduates also felt a need for further treatment of alcohol and drug abuse problems and for training in job skills. Most of the graduates were simply not satisfied that their skills qualified them for the jobs they really wanted. In the community, half the group experienced unemployment. Many of the graduates held peer associations with persons prone to criminality. Probation does not seem to have left a strong positive impression on the graduates.

*Graduates of Boot Camp are most frequently placed on felony probation; sometimes they are placed on Community Control, a more intensive supervision program.

Accounting: Prison Time Reduction

Among the major goals of Boot Camp is a reduction of the time inmates spend in prison. Such reduction involves at least four different considerations:

1. Do Boot Camp graduates serve shorter terms of incarceration than they would have served if they had not participated in the program?
2. Is the reincarceration rate for Boot Camp graduates the same or lower than the rate for comparable inmates?
3. Do reincarcerated Boot Camp graduates remain out of prison between commitments for equal or longer periods of time than comparable inmates?
4. Do reincarcerated Boot Camp graduates commit crimes of comparable or lesser seriousness than similar inmates, and therefore serve equal or shorter terms of incarceration on their second prison commitments?

In the previous section affirmative answers to the second and third questions were given: Table 8 showed that the overall recommitment rate for Boot Camp graduates was 2.5 percentage points lower than the rate for the comparison group, and Table 14 showed that recommitment Boot Camp graduates generally remained out of prison between commitments longer than comparable inmates. Now, to complete our assessment of Boot Camp's impact on prison time reduction, we must consider the first and fourth questions.

Unfortunately, at present we lack sufficient data to answer the fourth question. Missing is information on time served by reincarcerated Boot Camp graduates and comparable inmates who are still active in their second commitments. Since the awarding of gain time and release credits insures that practically no inmate serves a full judicial sentence, the only determination of incarceration time currently valid is a post-release computation of the length of the actual prison term. Thus, only after recommitment members of our Boot Camp and comparison groups are released from their second commitments will time served data become available. Until then, we inevitably face a certain indeterminacy in our estimations of the impact of Boot Camp on prison time reduction.

In the remainder of this section we will focus on the question of whether Boot Camp shortens the initial prison term of its graduates. Our procedure involves a calculation of the prison time Boot Camp graduates would have served without Boot Camp, an estimation based upon the incarceration time of a group of similar inmates.

The following criteria were used to establish a comparison group:

- 1) Demographic and offense similarity to inmates admitted to Boot Camp
- 2) Release from state prison during the same period of time as the Boot camp graduates (late December 1987 through October 31, 1989)
- 3) Admission to state prison during the operational period of Boot Camp.

Together these criteria drew a comparison group of 980 cases in a computerized database search. Information on time served by these inmates and by the Boot Camp graduates is presented in Table 16.

Table 16

**Average Time Served (in Months) by Boot Camp
Graduates and Comparison Group**

	Boot Camp Graduates (N=281)	Comparison Group (N=980)
County jail time	2.91	3.22
State prison time	5.24	7.06
Total incarceration time	8.15	10.28
Length of sentence	44.97	32.11
Portion served in state prison	.13	.22
Total portion served	.19	.32

The figures show that Boot Camp graduates on the average received sentences roughly a year longer than the inmates in the comparison group and yet served almost two months less in state prison. While the graduates served 19% of their sentences, the other inmates served 32%. The savings specific to state prison is indicated in the fact that state incarceration constituted 13% of the sentences of the Boot Camp graduates and 22% of the comparison inmates' sentences.

We should note that the time Boot Camp graduates spent in state prison was not all Boot Camp time, as Table 17 shows. On the average, graduates were incarcerated in state prison for almost two months prior to admission to the program. Boot Camp time itself, averaging about three and a third months, represents slightly less than two-thirds of the total state prison time. While most graduates were released from prison immediately upon completion of the program, 21 spent additional time in community facilities. This time added nearly a month to the prison terms of these offenders.

Table 17

Average State Prison Time (in Months)
for Boot Camp Graduates
(N=281)

Prison Time	Months
Pre-Boot Camp	1.83
Boot Camp	3.35
Post-Boot Camp	*
Total State Prison Time	5.24

*Occurs in 21 cases. Average time for these cases is .82

As an estimate of the initial prison time saved by Boot Camp, we note that if the program's graduates had spent the same portion of their sentences in state prison that the comparison group spent, approximately 39,759 inmate days would have been added to the state correctional system's load. The lower recommitment rate of Boot Camp graduates and their longer time interval between commitments suggest an additional savings in prison time beyond this initial reduction. Of course, we exclude the question of whether the added inmate load would have affected the awarding of gain time or release credits, a possibility which implies some lessening of the 39,759 day estimate.

Dollar cost benefits of Boot Camp are particularly difficult to determine. At present, no exact per diem inmate costs have been figured for Boot Camp. According to the Youthful Offender Program Office, operational costs of the program do not significantly differ from costs at other correctional institutions. The greater expense associated with a higher staff-inmate ratio is offset by lower costs of medical treatment, support personnel, etc.

As for attaching a dollar figure to the reduction of prison time achieved by Boot Camp, we confront the fact that the additional time the program's graduates would have served without the program cannot be viewed as having a uniform per diem cost. Considerable differences emerge over time, between major institutions, between community facilities and major institutions, and between community facilities themselves. These cost variations are such as to preclude any simple estimation of the dollar benefits of Boot Camp. A conservative estimate, using average per diem costs from fiscal year 1987-88 and allowing 90% of the additional time to be served at major institutions and 10% at community facilities, puts the cost savings of Boot Camp at about one and a quarter million dollars.

**Conclusion:
Prospects, Problems, Policy**

The widespread current interest in shock incarceration stems from its alleged advantages in one or more of four areas:

1. Punishment

The rigorousness of shock programs appears to restore a punitive dimension to incarceration, thereby satisfying popular demand for retributive justice.

2. Rehabilitation

In promoting self-discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and achievement, shock incarceration provides for a type of rehabilitation typically absent from alternative correctional programs.

3. Deterrence

As a result of its punitive and/or rehabilitative aspects, shock incarceration offers a possibility for improving the record of incarceration as a deterrent to criminality.

4. Cost

Given the macro-economics of contemporary corrections, where the cost of maintaining a burgeoning inmate population exceeds available resources, shock incarceration promises to cut expenses by reducing demand on prison facilities.

Information addressing these claims has been provided throughout this report. Now, in summary, we will review that information to see whether Florida's Boot Camp program delivers on the popular expectations of shock incarceration.

The perceived punitive aspect of Boot Camp would presumably refer to its strenuous physical training and its strict military regimen. In these matters the program does differ from other types of incarceration, and so can arguably be regarded as more punitive.

The rehabilitative aspect of Boot Camp is for the most part aimed at fostering self-discipline and improving individual decision-making. Some evidence exists to suggest that the program is effective in these areas, though the evidence is limited to the self-reported views of inmates and correctional officers (see the evaluation report of March 1989) and reincarcerated graduates (see above).

Clearly, more research into the rehabilitative aspect of Boot Camp is needed. On the other hand, the very limits of the rehabilitative intent raise some concern. The program does not comprise basic education, job training, or treatment for drug abuse (beyond basic counseling). Inmates with deficiencies in these areas will therefore leave Boot Camp with the same deficiencies. For some inmates, these unmet needs may well negate any rehabilitative success in other areas. Among the reincarcerated graduates that we surveyed, a majority directly or indirectly acknowledged problems with job training and alcohol/drug abuse. Perhaps release supervision programs can suitably address these needs, as was intended in the design and time frame of Boot Camp.

As a deterrent to repeat criminality, Boot Camp is at least as effective as alternative programs. Some evidence suggests that Boot Camp may have a deterrent impact for some types of offenders but not for others. As a group, though, the only area of superior performance by graduates of the program has been their reincarceration for technical violations of probation. This finding might reflect the self-discipline instilled at Boot Camp, which, in the absence of life skill deficits, would equip graduates to cope with the requirements of probation more effectively than other released inmates. We must continue to monitor reincarceration patterns to see whether this hypothesis has any merit.

The cost of Boot Camp represents perhaps its most successful aspect. We noted that the program is effectively reducing prison time.

Of the alleged advantages of shock incarceration in the areas of punishment, rehabilitation, deterrence, and cost, we see then that Boot Camp is meeting expectations most fully in the first and last of these, and somewhat less fully in the second and third. Can performance in these weaker areas be improved? We offer the following thoughts for policy consideration.

1. There is some question whether the current substance abuse counseling at Boot Camp is effective in meeting the needs of all inmates. Although we lack sufficient data to evaluate the counseling, we believe that the expressed views of recommitted graduates suggest that at least some inmates at Boot Camp need further help with drug problems. Underscoring the importance of addressing this need is the high correlation between criminality and substance abuse. We should consider incorporating within the Boot Camp agenda aspects of the multifaceted treatment program currently being conducted at other Department of Correction's institutions.
2. Current screening of candidates for Boot Camp could benefit from further research to better identify inmates most likely to benefit from the program. Such research might proceed from findings in this report--for example,

by following up on the possibility that younger inmates are more strongly influenced by Boot Camp than some of the older youthful offenders.

Another way to improve utilization of Boot Camp through better candidate selection would involve a change in the formal admission policy. We should have the option to use Boot Camp in conjunction with other forms of incarceration if the special needs of an inmate so warrant. For example, inmates with longer sentences could participate in Boot Camp prior to placement in a community correctional facility. Alternative sentencing options involving Boot Camp should be explored.

3. Whatever variations of shock design may be implemented in the future, we believe that the current Boot Camp program has benefits which outweigh its limits. Yet these limits should not be ignored. In particular we are concerned that the transition faced by graduates of the program from a highly disciplined environment back to the community is too abrupt. To establish some continuity through the transition, the following recommendation is offered.

At Boot Camp a Community Liaison Office would be established. One function of this office would be to provide weekly one-hour group training sessions beginning after an inmate had been in the program at least 30 days. Topics covered in the sessions would include educational and job opportunities available in the community, enrollment procedures in education/vocational training, and job applications procedures. The Liaison Office would also work individually with each inmate who had been at Boot Camp at least 60 days to prepare a twelve month plan of action, incorporating specific job and/or educational projects to be undertaken upon graduation from Boot Camp. The plan of action would form the basis for a contract between the inmate and the Department of Corrections, with specific obligations for each: The inmate would agree to fulfill the plan, and the Department would agree in return to petition the sentencing judge for a termination of the offender's probation at the end of the twelfth month. Failure of the inmate to conform to the contract would constitute a technical violation of probation, with a possible return to prison. Conditions of the contract would be overseen by the offender's probation officer in telephone conversation with the Liaison Office at Boot Camp, which would also maintain (telephone) contact with the offender, monitoring his progress and providing supplementary counseling.

Though many details of this recommendation would have to be worked out, it appears to offer a number of benefits. The additional training and counseling of inmates, culminating in a contract offering specific rewards and punishments, should promote better post-release adjustment.

The idea of continuity in care and supervision is not new; rather, it is a cornerstone of correctional release policy. Officials in New York have recognized the importance of adapting this policy to the special needs of shock graduates by releasing them to a parole program called "After Shock". We believe that Florida's Boot Camp program could be strengthened by an improved follow-up component.

These recommendations arise out of our current understanding of Boot Camp as a correctional tool. Much remains to be learned. Despite some early signs of promise, the full potential of shock incarceration is not yet known.

An ongoing multi-state study by the National Institute of Justice promises to contribute further to our understanding of shock incarceration.

Appendix 1

Results of Survey of Reincarcerated Boot Camp Graduates (N=36)

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I'm proud of the fact that I graduated from Boot Camp	77.8%	16.7%	5.6%		
2. When I left Boot Camp I didn't think I would ever go back to prison.	75.0%	13.9%	8.3%	2.8%	
3. I don't think Boot Camp really changed my basic attitudes.	5.6%	8.3%	5.6%	55.6%	25.0%
4. The Boot Camp program would have been better if more time had been spent on counseling.	36.1%	36.1%	11.1%	16.7%	
5. When something bothers me, I still try to R.E.T. it.	38.9%	44.4%	8.3%	5.6%	2.8%
6. What I learned at Boot Camp just doesn't apply to life outside prison.	5.6%	16.7%	11.1%	47.2%	19.4%
7. Boot Camp needs to offer job training.	38.9%	36.1%	16.7%	8.3%	
8. Boot Camp helped me develop self-discipline.	55.6%	38.9%	2.8%	2.8%	
9. Other prisons ought to be more like Boot Camp.	36.1%	27.8%	19.4%	5.6%	11.1%
10. The Boot Camp program was too short to do much good.	11.1%	2.8%	25.0%	50.0%	11.1%
11. What Boot Camp needs is a treatment program for drug and alcohol abuse.	36.1%	36.1%	13.9%	11.1%	2.8%
12. If I could, I would rather serve my time in Boot Camp than where I am now.	38.9%	16.7%	13.9%	25.0%	5.6%
13. The officers at Boot Camp earned my respect.	52.8%	25.0%	13.9%	5.6%	2.8%

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. The only good thing about Boot Camp was that it shortened my prison sentence.	5.6%	5.6%	16.7%	30.6%	41.7%
15. Although I looked hard, I had trouble finding a job after I got out of Boot Camp.	27.8%	19.4%	5.6%	22.2%	25.0%
16. After leaving Boot Camp and before getting rearrested, I was unemployed most of the time.	25.0%	25.0%		22.2%	27.8%
17. I feel that my skills don't qualify me for the kind of job I really want.	22.2%	36.1%	8.3%	19.4%	13.9%
18. Hard work usually pays off in the long run.	61.1%	36.1%			2.8%
19. My family has always stuck by me.	80.6%	11.1%			8.3%
20. When I came home from Boot Camp, family problems just got worse.	13.9%	8.3%	8.3%	27.8%	41.7%
21. Doing probation was easy.	5.6%	11.1%	16.7%	27.8%	38.9%
22. My probation officer got to know me pretty well.	16.7%	19.4%	10.7%	30.6%	16.7%
23. On probation I had trouble paying the costs of supervision.	16.7%	16.7%	22.2%	27.8%	16.7%
24. My probation officer was too demanding.	8.3%	22.2%	13.9%	33.3%	22.2%
25. Probation is just meaningless paperwork.	19.4%	25.0%	16.7%	27.8%	11.1%
26. It's hard to stay out of trouble on the streets.	2.8%	19.4%	25.0%	27.8%	25.0%
27. Most of my friends have been in trouble with the law.	5.6%	41.7%	11.1%	27.8%	13.9%
28. I was the first person in my family to ever go to prison.	38.9%	27.8%	5.6%	25.0%	2.8%
29. I don't think any prison program will change me.		8.3%	5.6%	41.7%	44.4%
30. Going to prison is no big deal.	5.6%	2.8%	5.6%	13.9%	72.2%