

CP REPORT  
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RECONVICTION OF BORSTAL BOYS WHO RECEIVED  
TREATMENT AT H.M. PRISON, GRENDON

by

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PART I. RECONVICTION RATES

The borstal boys who were released on licence up to the end of 1967 and who had spent part of their sentences in the Boys' Wing at Grendon Prison, have been followed up for 12 months. Those who were released up to the end of February 1967 have also been followed up for 24 months.

Table A

One year follow-up of Grendon boys	
Number of boys	74 *
Number reconvicted within one year	31 (42%)
Number <u>not</u> reconvicted within one year	43

Table B

Two year follow-up of Grendon boys	
Number of boys	60 *
Number reconvicted within two years	38 (63%)
Number <u>not</u> reconvicted within two years	22

\* One Grendon boy was discharged to a mental hospital and it was not possible to find a "twin" for one boy, so for all other further analyses, these two have been omitted from the sample.

A control group was obtained from Borstal After-Care records. Each boy was matched with a "twin", who was as similar as possible, in terms of date of discharge from borstal, the training borstal to which he had been allocated, number of previous convictions, age on conviction, Mannheim-Wilkins prediction score (predicted probability of success) and number of months spent in borstal. However, the "twins" had not generally been referred for psychiatric treatment, so psychiatric disturbance could not be taken into account.

Tables C and D show the number of boys in the Grendon and control groups who were reconvicted within one year and two years of release.

Table C

One year follow-up of Grendon boys and Control Group				
	Number	Reconvicted within one year	Not reconvicted within one year	Percentage reconvicted
Grendon boys	72	29	43	40%
Controls	72	39	33	54%

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Table D

Two year follow-up of Grendon boys and Control Group				
	Number	Reconvicted within two years	Not reconvicted within two years	Percentage reconvicted
Grendon boys	58	36	22	62%
Controls	58	37	21	64%

PART II. MATCHED PAIRS

Each pair of boys has been followed up, the results analysed according to whether each Grendon boy and his "twin" were both reconvicted, both not reconvicted, or one reconvicted while the other was not reconvicted.

Table E

One year follow-up of matched pairs				
		Control		Total
		Reconvicted	Not Reconvicted	
Grendon	Not reconvicted	20 (A)	23	43
	Reconvicted	19	10 (D)	29
	Total	39	33	72

McNemar Test for significance of changes  
 $\chi^2 = 2.7$      $p > 0.1$  (not significant)

(The figures in these tables represent the number of pairs of boys so the total number of boys is doubled).

From Table E it will be seen that 42 Grendon boys did the same as their "twins", 19 being reconvicted and 23 not reconvicted. In 30 cases, the outcome was different. Ten Grendon boys being reconvicted while their "twins" were not reconvicted (cell A) and 20 Grendon boys not reconvicted while their "twins" were reconvicted (cell D). Thus, it could be said that 10 Grendon boys did worse than their controls, whereas 20 did better. The difference between the last two groups (cells A and D) is too small to be statistically significant.

Table F shows that 41 Grendon boys did the same as their "twins", 28 being reconvicted and 13 not reconvicted, of the remainder, 9 did better than their "twins" (A) and 8 did worse (D), in terms of reconviction within 2 years. There is obviously no significant difference between the size of groups A and D.

Table F

Two year follow-up of matched pairs				
		Control		Total
		Reconvicted	Not Reconvicted	
Grendon	Not Reconvicted	9 (A)	13	22
	Reconvicted	28	8 (D)	36
	Total	37	21	58

The reconviction rates were examined separately for the more recidivist boys and the less recidivist boys, using the matched pairs as before.

Table G

One year follow-up of matched pairs of boys with up to three previous convictions				
		Control		Total
		Reconvicted	Not Reconvicted	
Grendon	Not Reconvicted	12 (A)	15	27
	Reconvicted	6	2 (D)	8
	Total	18	17	35

McNemar Test for significance of changes  
 $\chi^2 = 5.8$      $p < 0.02$

From Table G it will be seen that, for boys with up to three previous convictions, there are significantly more pairs in which the Grendon boy was not reconvicted within one year while his twin was reconvicted (A = 12) than there are pairs where the Grendon boy was reconvicted while his twin was not reconvicted (D = 2).

Table H

Two year follow-up of matched pairs of boys with up to three previous convictions				
		Control		Total
		Reconvicted	Not Reconvicted	
Grendon	Not reconvicted	6 (A)	8	14
	Reconvicted	11	4 (D)	15
	Total	17	12	29

Table H shows that by two years after discharge, the difference has disappeared. However, the numbers are very small (only 29 pairs available).

Table J

One year follow-up of matched pairs of boys with four or more previous convictions				
		Control		Total
		Reconvicted	Not Reconvicted	
Grendon	Not reconvicted	7	8	15
	Reconvicted	13	8	21
	Total	20	16	36

Table K

Two year follow-up of matched pairs of boys with four or more previous convictions				
		Control		Total
		Reconvicted	Not Reconvicted	
Grendon	Not reconvicted	2	5	7
	Reconvicted	17	4	21
	Total	19	9	28

From Tables J and K, it will be seen that the Grendon boys with four or more previous convictions do not do any better or worse than their "twins", although the numbers in Table K are unfortunately very small.

Tables E to K suggest that the less recidivist Grendon boys tend to be reconvicted less often than their "twins" during the first year after release, but the difference does not hold on follow-up after two years, and the more recidivist boys do no better than their "twins". The boys were divided into "up to 3" and "4 or more" previous convictions so that the sample fell into two equal parts, but inspection of the actual number of previous convictions of the boys in the cells of Table E suggest that, to maximise the number of Grendon boys who do better than their "twins", while including as few as possible of those who do worse in the "less recidivist" groups, it would be better to make the split a little higher, including boys with up to four previous convictions.

PART III. ANALYSIS OF SUBGROUPS IN THE GRENDON SAMPLE

The Grendon sample is not homogeneous in terms of the type of treatment received by the boys. In particular, the nature of the regime changed during the period under study, so that some boys received treatment before the development of the present 'therapeutic community'. Also some boys came to Grendon for treatment but were returned to their training borstals after a period of time, generally because it was not thought that they were responding to treatment. It might be expected that these different procedures might have resulted in different outcomes on follow-up so the Grendon sample has been divided into sub-groups, as shown on pages 5 - 11.

The boys' wing opened in 1964, and since 1965, there has been a gradual change in the direction of the therapeutic community model. Any date chosen to separate the boys treated under the different systems is bound to be somewhat arbitrary, and the end of 1965 was chosen in consultation with the Principal Officer of the wing.

Table L

Type of treatment	Reconvicted within 12 months	Not reconvicted within 12 months	Total
Discharged in 1964 & 1965 (original treatment)	16	23	39
Discharged in 1966 & 1967 (therapeutic community)	13	19	32
Total	29	32	71

There is obviously no significant difference in reconviction rates for the early and late Grendon boys as a whole, but as it seems to be the less recidivist boys who tend to benefit from treatment at Grendon, it might be predicted that the less recidivist and more recidivist boys would behave differently after treatment under the early and later regimes. The relationship between previous convictions and reconvictions has therefore been analysed separately for the boys treated in 1964-5 and 1966-7.

Table M

Boys discharged in 1964 and 1965	Reconvicted within 12 months	Not reconvicted within 12 months	Total
0-3 previous convictions	6	16	22
4+ previous convictions	10	7	17
Total	16	23	39

( $\chi^2 = 2.72$  p > 0.05 not significant)

Table N

Boys discharged in 1966 and 1967	Reconvicted within 12 months	Not reconvicted within 12 months	Total
0-3 previous convictions	2	11	13
4+ previous convictions	11	8	19
Total	13	19	32

( $\chi^2 = 4.14$  p < 0.05)

Table P

0-3 previous convictions	Reconvicted within 12 months	Not reconvicted within 12 months	Total
Discharged in 1964-65	6	16	22
Discharged in 1966-67	2	11	13
Total	8	27	35

The data in Tables L, M, N and P is very difficult to interpret. On first examination, it looks as though the tendency for less recidivist Grendon boys to do relatively well, may be most pronounced in the later sample. This would lead one to believe that the therapeutic community was perhaps helpful to the less recidivist boys. However, the parallel data for the control group is rather surprising.

Table Q

Controls Discharged in 1964 - 1965	Reconvicted within 12 months	Not reconvicted within 12 months	Total
0-3 previous convictions	15	9	24
4+ previous convictions	7	11	18
Total	22	20	42

( $\chi^2 = 1.45$  Not significant)

Table R

Controls Discharged in 1966 - 1967	Reconvicted within 12 months	Not reconvicted within 12 months	Total
0-3 previous convictions	3	8	11
4+ previous convictions	13	5	18
Total	16	13	29

Table S

Controls 0-3 previous convictions	Reconvicted within 12 months	Not reconvicted within 12 months	Total
Discharged in 1964-1965	15	9	24
Discharged in 1966-67	3	8	11
Total	18	17	35

( $\chi^2 = 1.64$  Not significant)

While none of the relationships is statistically significant, the tendencies in the reconviction data for the control group prove surprising. In the early sample, the less recidivist boys are reconvicted more often than the more recidivist boys, and they do worse in the early sample than in the late sample. It would be hard to work out a rational explanation for such a change in a sample taken from so many different borstals, and I think the figures illustrate the need for extreme caution in interpreting differences in reconviction rate in such very small samples.

PART IV. COMPARISON OF RELEASED AND TRANSFERRED BOYS

Table T

	Released from Grendon	Transferred from Grendon to training borstal	Total
Reconvicted within 12 months	16	13	29
Not reconvicted within 12 months	36	7	43
Total	52	20	72

$(\chi^2 = 5.68 \quad p < 0.02)$

Boys are generally transferred from Grendon before the end of their borstal training either because they persistently request transfer, or because they seem unsuitable for the kind of treatment available, and in some cases, because their presence is believed to be detrimental to the treatment of others. In the early days, the decision was made entirely by the staff, but the opinions of the boys in the community have been increasingly taken into account.

Table T shows that the boys who were released directly from Grendon were reconvicted within one year significantly less than the transferred boys. This could mean either that the Grendon staff and boys have efficiently weeded out a proportion of boys with poor prognosis, or that the full course of treatment at Grendon has been effective in bringing about improved adjustment on release, as reflected in the lower incidence of reconviction. The reconviction data alone cannot tell us which explanation is correct, but the following analyses may throw some light on the question.

It might be thought that the transferred boys might be obviously poorer material either in terms of previous convictions, or in terms of other factors which would be reflected in prediction scores or psychological test scores. The numbers are unfortunately small, but the two groups have been examined as far as the available data would allow to see whether they differ in these respects.

Previous convictions

For the whole sample, half of the boys have up to three previous convictions, while half have more than three. The transferred boys have a very similar distribution of previous convictions, (0-3 = 9, over 4 = 11), so do not differ from the rest of the sample in this respect.

Prediction scores

The distribution of Manheim-Wilkins scores. (predicted probability of success) is very similar for released and transferred boys. The mean scores are also very similar (mean score for

transferred boys = 44.3%, N = 17, mean score for discharged boys = 42.4% N = 39). Thus, the two groups must be regarded as identical in this respect also.

The prediction score may not actually be a very useful measure, as it has not been found to hold up well in some recent researches, so that scores of boys released from Grendon have been examined, to see whether the boys were reconvicted within one year of release obtained substantially lower scores than those not reconvicted. When the scores for the boys discharged from Grendon are examined, there is very little difference between the average scores for boys reconvicted within twelve months, (mean score 40.6, N = 16) and those not reconvicted in twelve months (mean = 43.7, N = 23), so the prediction score might not be expected to show up boys with relatively good or poor prognosis.

Hostility Scores

The only psychological test scores which are available for the sample are those for the Foulds and Caine. Extrapunitive - Intropunitive Scale. (HDHQ). As with the prediction scores, the transferred boys, have been compared with the boys released directly from Grendon, and for the boys released from Grendon, boys reconvicted in twelve months have been compared with those not reconvicted.

Table U

		E.I.S. Mean Scores		
		N	Hostility	Direction
Boys released from Grendon		46	24.9	- 2.8
Boys transferred from Grendon		9	29.3	- 3.3
Released boys	Reconvicted within 12 months	15	26.5	- 3.26
	Not reconvicted within 12 months	31	23.9	- 2.5

It is unfortunate that scores are available for so few of the transferred boys, as it makes serious comparisons impossible. It looks as though the transferred boys may be perhaps more hostile and more extrapunitive, as are those reconvicted within twelve months, but no confidence can be put in data based on such small numbers.

In general, we can say that the transferred boys do not differ from released boys in terms of previous convictions or prediction scores, and psychological test data is not available for enough boys to make comparison possible for personality variables. As far as the evidence goes, there is no reason to believe that the transferred boys had an obviously poorer prognosis, so these analyses tend to support the conclusion that it was the Grendon treatment, rather than skilful selection, which was responsible for the superiority of the reconviction rate for released boys.

## PART V. REFINEMENT OF CONTROL GROUP

While the Grendon boys and control group were well matched in many respects, they differed in at least one major respect, that the Grendon boys were regarded as being in need of psychiatric attention at Grendon, whereas the boys in the control group were not. This project does not attempt to overcome this difficulty, but it is interesting to look at the results when only boys released from Feltham and Wormwood Scrubs are compared with their Grendon counterparts. There is no guarantee that the Feltham and Wormwood Scrubs boys are psychiatrically disturbed to the same extent as the Grendon boys, but they are probably more similar to Grendon boys than are the inmates of other borstals.

Table V

		Control		Total
		Reconvicted	Not Reconvicted	
Grendon	Not reconvicted	6	9	15
	Reconvicted	8	4	12
	Total	14	13	27

The numbers are obviously too small for serious comparison, and only a really big difference would show up with such a small sample. There does not appear to be any difference in the incidence of reconviction in this group of Grendon boys and their controls.

## PART VI. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The reconviction rates for borstal boys treated at Grendon have been compared with those for a matched sample of boys who received training at various other borstals. While the incidence of reconviction is not significantly different for the group as a whole, the less recidivist boys do rather better than their controls at the end of one year, and the difference has disappeared by the time they have been at risk for two years. This tends to support the hypothesis that Grendon treatment brought about improved adjustment on discharge, as reflected in the reconviction rate at one year, but the effect did not last long enough to alter the reconviction rate after two years. The validity of this analysis hinges on the adequacy of the control group, which was well matched on a number of variables often associated with reconviction, but was not matched for psychiatric disturbance. Another encouraging result is that the boys who completed their treatment at Grendon did better in the first year than boys who were transferred back to training borstals. This could be because of skilful selection of boys with poor prognosis, but the transferred boys do not differ from the rest in terms of previous convictions or prediction scores. If Grendon is making a beneficial impact on some of the boys, it may not be because of the therapeutic community regime, as the boys treated in the early days did as well as those treated

later, but it may still be too early to look for results from the therapeutic community in its mature form.

The results are sufficiently encouraging to suggest that it would be worthwhile to extend the project, using more detailed information about boys in the present samples. This data could be obtained from Mr. Potts of Borstal After-Care. Also, it might be economically desirable to systematically select boys with four or fewer previous convictions, and make a careful analysis of the results after a sufficient period of time has elapsed. This might be incorporated in the project comparing the two boys' wings, if both wings were to restrict their intake in this way.

However, it must be emphasised that it would not be wise to base a selection policy on the present results alone, as the sample size is relatively small for this kind of analysis, and reconviction rates based on small samples can be very unreliable.

**END**

7 Miles/more