Characteristics of Burglars, Larcenists, Assaulters and Drug Offenders in Wyoming

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SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF BURGLARS, LARCENISTS, ASSAULTERS AND DRUG OFFENDERS IN WYOMING

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ABSTRACT

A survey of recent offender records was made on separate groups of adult male burglars, larcenists, assaulters and drug offenders. The purpose was to construct profiles of those groups on 14 variables with emphasis on personal history and demographic characteristics, thereby providing a research basis for Crime Specific Planning. The groups were similar in several ways. Generally, they were younger than the male population, mostly white, lower class workers, who were not very well educated and were likely to have been juvenile offenders. The four offender groups were distinguishable from each other in some ways. Drug offenders were the youngest, best educated, had the highest percent single, were mostly moderate drug users, had the least number of serious prior offenses and probably a low level of alcohol use. Burglars had bad family histories, a high percentage unemployed and heavy alcohol use. Assaulters were the oldest, had the highest percent married, and had a high level of alcohol use. Assault victims may frequently have been wives. Larcenists tended more frequently than burglars or drug offenders to be Wyoming residents and had better family histories than burglars. Many larcenies may have been from parked vehicles. The offender record-keeping system was found to need revision due to poor overall quality of the records. A central offender information agency and mandatory standardized reporting procedures might remedy the situation. The research model which compares groups of offenders as used in this study is probably inferior for planning purposes to models which would compare offenders with non-offenders or recidivists with non-recidivists.

INTRODUCTION

Crime is an ancient problem which, despite vast effort and expenditure, still plagues us today. In the United States during recent times analysis of the problem usually has been directed either at the sequential processes of criminal justice systems or at the operation of their components such as police departments and courts (1). Crime rates, however, continue to rise (2).

Recently a new approach to the analysis of crime and to planning crime control programs has been suggested. The Crime Specific Model (1) focuses on offenders and offenses. The first step is analysis of the characteristics of specific offenders and offenses. Information concerning these characteristics then is used as a basis for program planning. Program goals are set in terms of some decrease of the crime rate for the target offense. Such goals should allow fairly direct evaluation of the impact of the progra . Addition of new information, evaluation and revision of the program complete the planning cycle.

Wormeli and Kolodney (1) have shown in a California study that it is, in fact, possible to distinguish some offender groups on the basis of certain offender characteristics. In addition, characteristics of most offense groups remained stable over a nine-year period. It was demonstrated, therefore, that profiles capable of differentiating offense groups could be obtained.

This study provides characteristic profiles of several offender groups whose offenses were committed during a recent time period in the State of Wyoming. It is a preliminary survey based on available probation and prison records. It was sponsored by the Governor's Planning Committee on Criminal Administration to provide information needed for planning crime control programs.

When making comparisons between offender groups, it is necessary that reasonably large numbers of offenders be represented so that any conclusions made will tend to be reliable. Wyoming, with an area of 97,919 square miles and a population of 332,416 (1970 census), does not have large numbers of offenders of any kind compared with more densely populated states. Therefore, burglary, larceny, assault and drug offenses were chosen for study due to the avail-

ability of reasonably large numbers of offenders. Also, there is some merit in evaluating the seriousness of a particular offense by its frequency as well as by the damage caused. It should be noted that Wormeli and Kolodney (1) did not find drug offenders distinguishable from other types of offenders. In addition, burglars tended to appear as if they belonged to other offense groups. This does not mean that it is unreasonable to examine characteristics of drug offenders and of burglars. Differences could appear in Wyoming which do not appear in California. Furthermore, characterization is necessarily based on the variables chosen for research. This study uses a number of variables not appearing in that study, such as family history, residency, place of offense, employment and age at first arrest. These variables could discriminate significantly between drug offenders, burglars and the other offense groups.

Only male offenders were selected for study since for the offenses chosen, as well as for crime in general, males tend to be involved far more often than females (3,4), and since the limited time available for this project did not allow more comprehensive coverage of the offender population.

Variables documented in existing records were chosen for study where it was believed they would explicate the nature of the offense or where they might be involved in the etiology of the offender. Some rationale behind the choice of each variable follows.

Young men are convicted more often than older men; the most likely period falling in the teens and twenties (4). Age at date of offense was quantified to determine if this relationship exists in Wyoming and to see what differences could be found between the offense groups. Age at first arrest is a similar measure which may also have predictive ability since the younger a person is at his first arrest by law enforcement officials, the more likely he may be to become a serious criminal. These age variables are related to some extent since for those offenders having no prior offenses, they will be the same. They could also be the same if the first arrest was recent, prior to the date of offense due to categorization.

Wyoming residency and place of offense are variables of interest mainly in law enforcement planning. Residency was examined to determine what proportions of residents and of transients were involved in the four offenses. Place of offense describes the local surroundings in which the

different offenses occur.

Minority membership is generally thought to be related to crime. However, Green (5) reported that higher arrest rates among Blacks are due not to some intrinsic characteristic of Blacks or to police discrimination but to the wider distribution among Blacks of lower social class characteristics associated with crime. The same may well be the case with other minority groups. Ethnic membership was examined to find what differences might exist between ethnic distributions of the offense groups. It was not intended to prove that criminality results directly from membership in any such group.

Alcoholism and drunkenness have been implicated in crime in a multiplicity of ways ranging from history of alcoholism to actual drunkenness at the time of offense to alcohol as the object of the offense (6). Alcohol use was quantified to determine its comparative degree of involvement in each group of offenders.

Wormeli and Kolodney (1) found narcotic history to be the best discriminator between offender groups. A comparison of offenders who were drug users with offenders who were non-drug users showed that drug users were less often involved in violent crimes than were non-drug users (7). Drug users tended to commit property crimes. Drug use was quantified mainly to determine what differences existed between burglars, larcenists and assaulters. Drug offenders, of course, were expected to show considerable drug use.

Persons who are employed as lower class workers or who are unemployed tend to be convicted more often than those of white collar or professional status (4). Whether this indicates a greater ability to avoid conviction among those in high status occupations or the actual commission of more offenses by low status individuals is a moot question. Employment was studied to find if lower class workers and unemployed were involved most often and to search out differences between offense groups.

Of the males placed on probation in 88 U. S. District Courts in 1964, only 61% had achieved an educational level of grade 9 or higher (4). This suggests that offenders tend to be poorly educated. Education level was studied to explore this relationship as well as differences between the offender groups.

Mental commitments were quantified in an effort to see if psychological or sociological deviancy was more prevalent in any of the offender groups.

Shore (8) has placed considerable emphasis on the development of moral character as a means of avoiding the development of criminal tendencies. He noted that formal schooling in moral behavior is not sufficient to produce such behavior in an individual. There also must be an interpersonal context in which regular opportunities exist for the practice of such behavior. Opportunities should also exist for the development of feelings of self-worth and self-esteem. Poor quality interpersonal relationships are probably an important contributor to crime. Family history and marital history were designed to measure the quality of such relationships experienced by the offender.

It was recognized that offenders actually sentenced may not represent offenders in general very accurately. However, records on those not sentenced were not available. There probably are important differences between offenders who avoid criminal justice processes and those who are actually processed. The results of this study apply to offenders of the sort actually convicted in Wyoming and should have some general applicability over time.

While comparison of offender data with Wyoming census data was not the major purpose of this study, such comparisons could provide useful information and were made where the categorization used matched census categorization.

METHOD

The offenders studied were 486 men lawfully committed to the Wyoming State Penitentiary or placed on probation in Wyoming during the period December, 1969 to June, 1973. Data concerning each subject were obtained from records maintained either at the Wyoming State Penitentiary or at the Wyoming Department of Probation and Parole.

Four offense groups were defined as follows:

Larceny referred to theft not requiring breaking and entering. It included theft of entrusted property (larceny by bailee). It did not include auto theft or shoplifting.

Burglary referred to breaking and entering with intent to steal. Auto theft was not included.

Assault referred to injury or attempted injury perpetrated upon another person. It did not include assault with intent to rape.

Drug offense referred to violation of drug law(s) including possessing, obtaining and delivering controlled substances.

All cases falling in those four offense groups were reviewed, and subjects were selected who (1) were males and 18 years of age or older, (2) had not been sentenced during their lives to incarceration of 30 days or longer for crimes involving more than one of the four offense categories*, and (3) whose records were reasonably complete in the judgment of the researchers. This procedure led to the selection of 117 larcenists, 146 burglars, 45 assaulters and 178 drug offenders. It was necessary to reject 146 cases involving more than one crime category and 23 cases of insufficient information. Most of the selected subjects were probationers.

*Rejection of offenders who had criminal records involving more than one of the offenses studied was necessary in order to compare relatively "pure types" of offenders. The large number rejected (146) indicates that "pure types" are to a large extent a result of the method of selection.

The following percentages of subjects in each offense group were actually incarcerated at the Wyoming State Penitentiary: larceny, 25%; burglary, 41%; assault, 42%; and drug offense, 14%.

Every subject's record was characterized on each of 14 variables except where data was not available. The variables were defined as follows:

Age at date of offense was defined as the subject's age at the time of the offense.

Residency: Subjects who had made their homes in Wyoming for at least one year immediately prior to committing their crimes were considered residents. All others were non-residents.

Ethnic membership: Four basic categories were White, Mexican, Indian or Black. One half-breed subject was characterized as Indian, and one subject from India was characterized as White. All others clearly fit in one of the four basic categories.

Family history was defined as the judgement of the researchers concerning the stability of the subject's family history based on the records. Three categories were used: stable, somewhat unstable and very unstable. For example, where the records indicated that the subject had been reared by both parents in an apparently stable home situation, that would be categorized as stable. Instances of broken or troubled families were considered more or less unstable depending upon the situation.

Education was defined as the highest school grade level completed. The categories used were: 16 or higher; 12 to 15; 9 to 11; 6 to 8; and 5 or lower.

Age at first arrest was defined as the subject's age at the time of his first recorded arrest.

Marital history: Two main categories of marital history were used - never married or married at least once. For those subjects married at least once, a decision was made by the researcher concerning the stability of each subject's marital history. Three categories were used: stable, somewhat unstable and very unstable.

A subject having a good marital relationship at the time of offense was considered stable. A history of marital disruption, divorce, etc., was considered more or less unstable depending upon the situation.

Employment held by each subject during the two year period prior to the occurrence of the crime was characterized as either professional, white collar (office workers, merchants, etc.), blue collar (skilled labor), labor or unemployed. Those subjects in post-high school education or training were characterized as blue collar.

Mental commitments was defined as the number of times a subject had been committed to mental institutions prior to committing the offense of interest in this study. Three categories were used: never, once and twice or more.

Drug use was defined as the extent of the subject's use of controlled substances (not including alcohol) prior to the offense of interest in this study. Three categories were used: none, some (experimentation with marijuana, opiates, hallucinogenics, amphetamines, etc. or regular use of marijuana), excessive (regular use of hallucinogenices, opiates, amphetamines, etc. and/or addiction).

Alcohol use was defined as the extent of the subject's use of alcohol. Three categories were used: none, some and excessive. Occasional social drinkers were assigned to the some category. Alcoholics or habitual drunks were assigned to the excessive category.

Prior minor offenses were defined as the number of recorded arrests prior to the offense of interest in this study as a result of which the subject was not sentenced to incarceration for more than 29 days.

Prior major offenses was defined as the number of recorded lawful convictions of 30 days or longer prior to the offense of interest in this study.

Place of offense was defined as the immediate surroundings of the actual offense, or in the drug offense group, where the drug was discovered by law enforcement officials. Six categories were used:

Private residence - any private living quarters or grounds, not including lodging places.

Business establishment - any place of business such as a store, office or gas station, not including bars.

Bar - any place in which alcohol is dispensed by the drink.

Lodging place - any place where transients stay, such as hotels, motels or inns.

Public area outdoors - streets, parks and other publicly owned land.

Other buildings - churches, museums, nonprofit organizations, etc.

RESULTS

In this section the results are described without discussion. Where missing data on a variable was less than 10% of each group, it was disregarded in the figure and the analysis, except that the number of cases (N) in the figure is less than the total number of subjects as indicated in "Methods."

On each variable comparisons were made between all pairs of offender groups. Statistical tests were used as tools to make decisions about differences between those offender groups in general on the basis of limited samples. In order for a difference to be significant, there had to be a high probability that the difference was not due simply to chance variation. Each significant difference is marked by an asterisk(*). Values of the test statistics and significance levels are listed in Appendix B. A tabular presentation of the results may be found in Appendix A.

Age at date of offense as a function of offense is shown in Figure 1. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary
larceny-assault*
larceny-drugs*
burglary-assault*
burlgary-drug offense*
assault-drug offense*

Burglars and larcenists did not differ. Assaulters were the oldest group, and drug offenders were the youngest.

Residents were separated from the complete data for comparison with 1970 census data for Wyoming. This comparison is not shown in Figure 1, but is shown in tabular form in Appendix A. All groups were significantly younger than the male population:

larceny-census*
burglary-census*
assault-census*
drug offense-census*

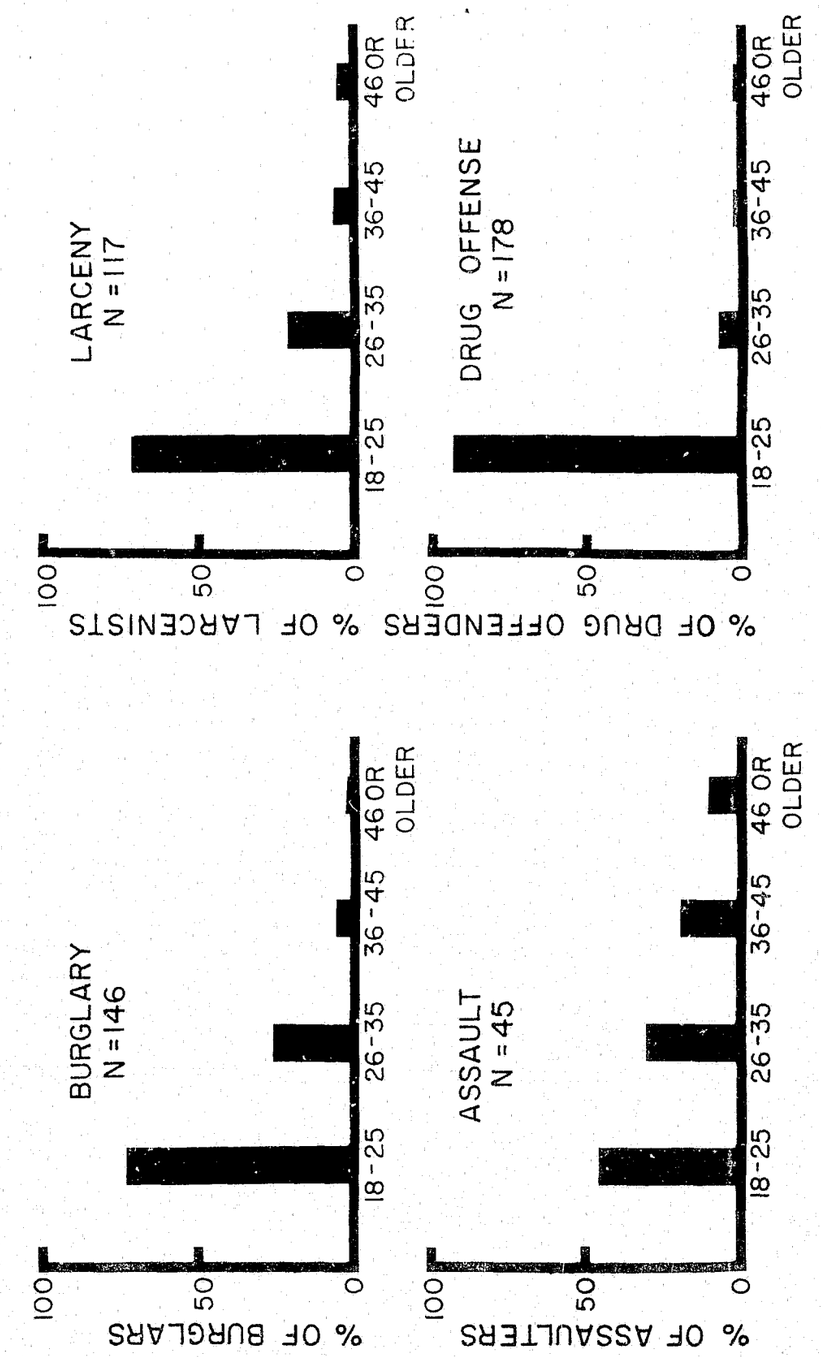

Fig. 1. Age at Date of Offense as a Function of Offense.

Wyoming residency as a function of offense is shown in Figure 2. More than 70% of the offenders in every group were residents. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary*
larceny-assault
larceny-drug offense*
burglary-assault
burglary-drug offense
assault-drug offense

Larceny had a significantly higher proportion of residents than did burglary or drug offense. No other differences were found.

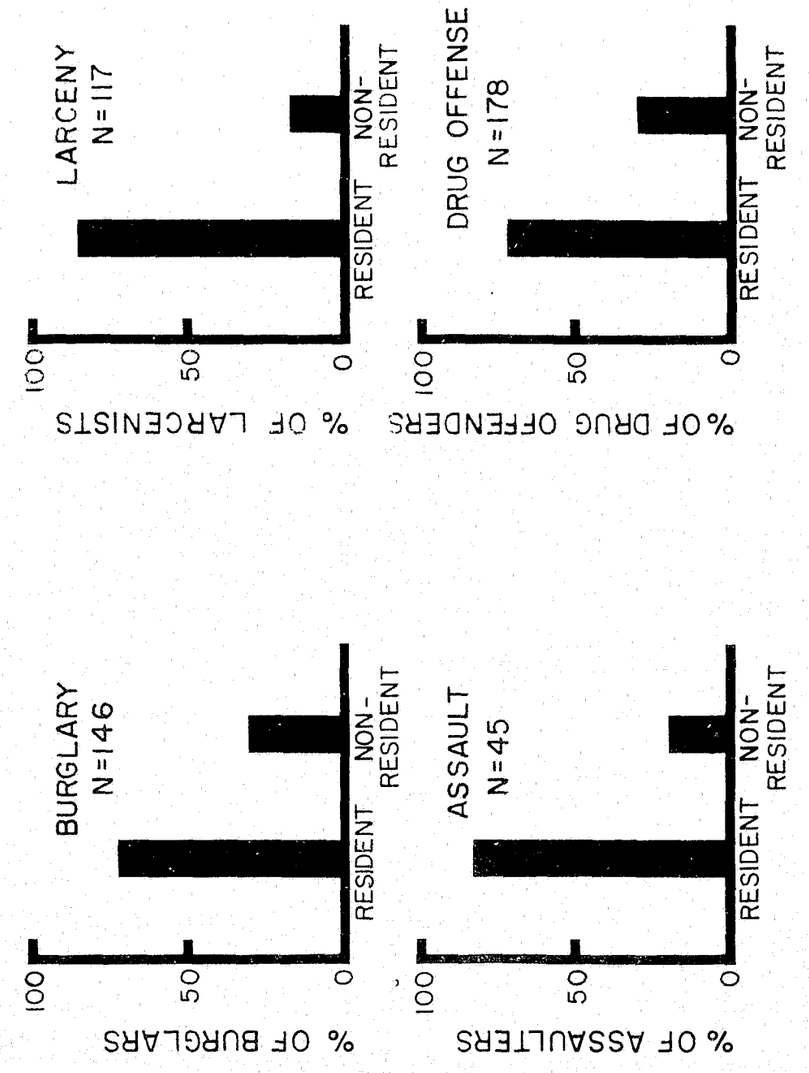

Fig. 2. Wyoming Residency as a Function of Offense.

Ethnic membership as a function of offense is shown in Figure 3. At least 80% or more of the offenders in every group were white. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary*
larceny-assault
larceny-drug offense
burglary-assault
burglary-drug offense*
assault-drug offense

Burglars were more frequently minority members than larcenists or drug offenders. No other differences were significant.

Residents in the age range 18-25 were separated from the data for comparison with 1970 Wyoming census data. This comparison is not shown in Figure 3, but it is shown in Appendix A in tabular form. For this comparison, Mexicans and Indians were grouped together. The following significant and non-significant differences were found:

larceny-census*
burglary-census*
assault-census*
drug offense-census

Drug offenders were not distributed differently from the population. Larceny, burglary and assault had relatively high numbers of minority members represented.

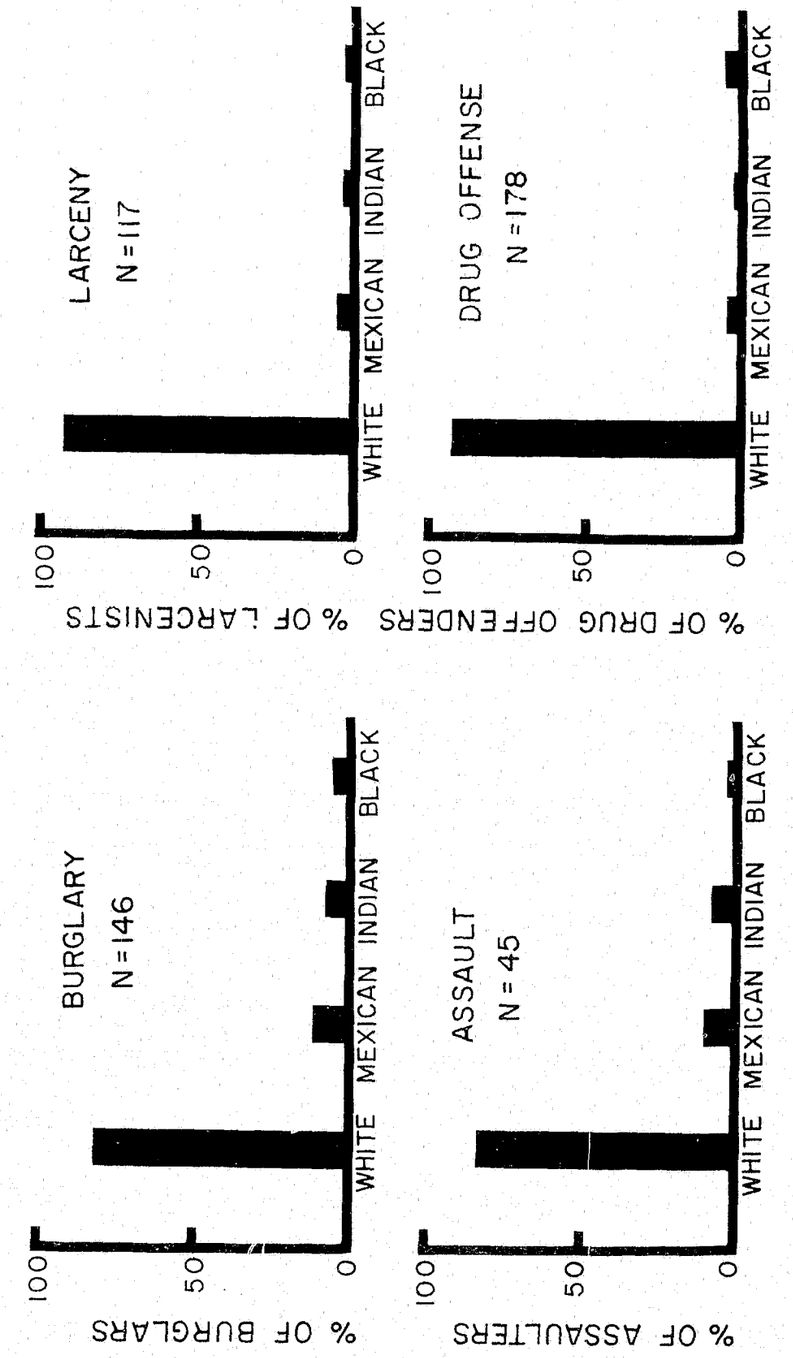

Fig. 3. Ethnic Membership as a Function of Offense.

Family history as a function of offense is shown in Figure 4. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary*
larceny-assault
larceny-drug offense
burglary-assault
burglary-drug offense*
assault-drug offense

Burglars had worse family histories than did larcenists or drug offenders. No other differences were found.

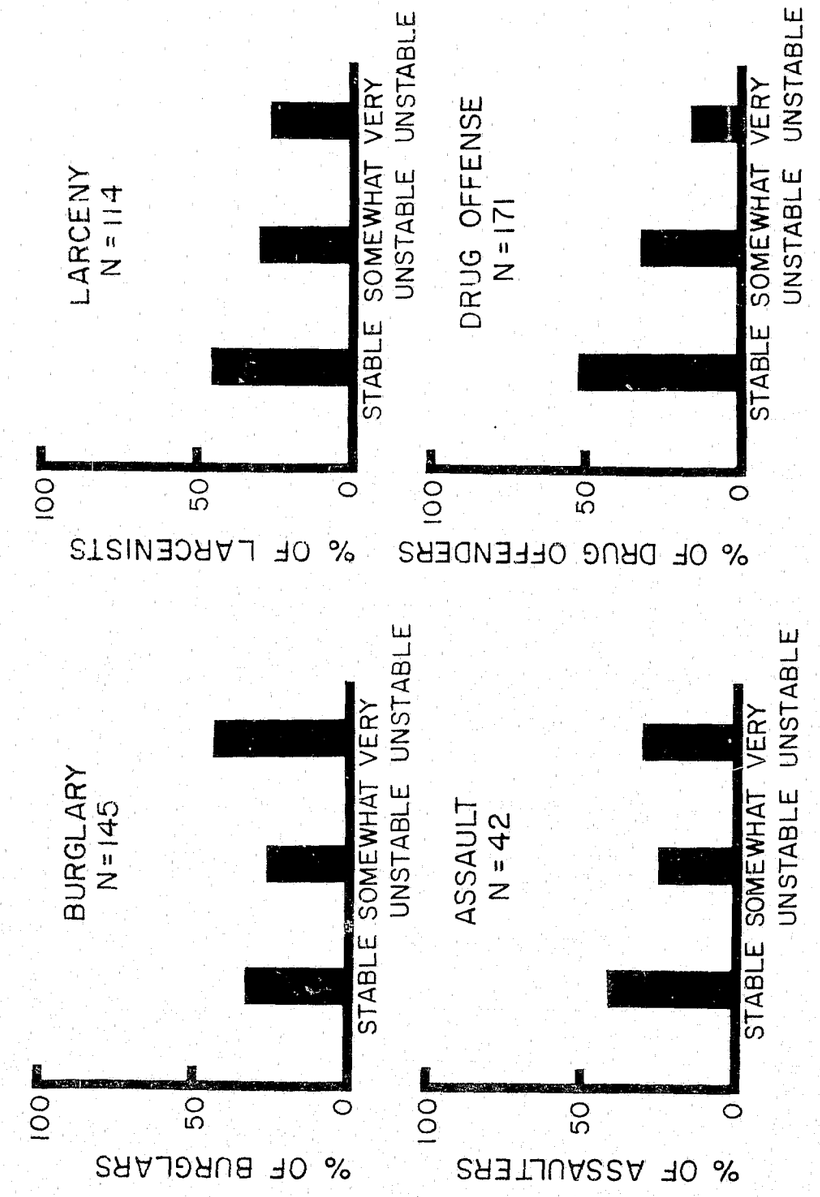

Fig. 4. Family History as a Function of Offense.

Education level as a function of offense is shown in Figure 5. Very few offenders in any group had completed college. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary
larceny-assault
larceny-drug offense*
burglary-assault
burglary-drug offense*
assault-drug offense*

Larcenists, burglars and assaulters did not differ significantly with respect to education. Drug offenders had a higher level of education than any of the other groups with 72% having completed high school.

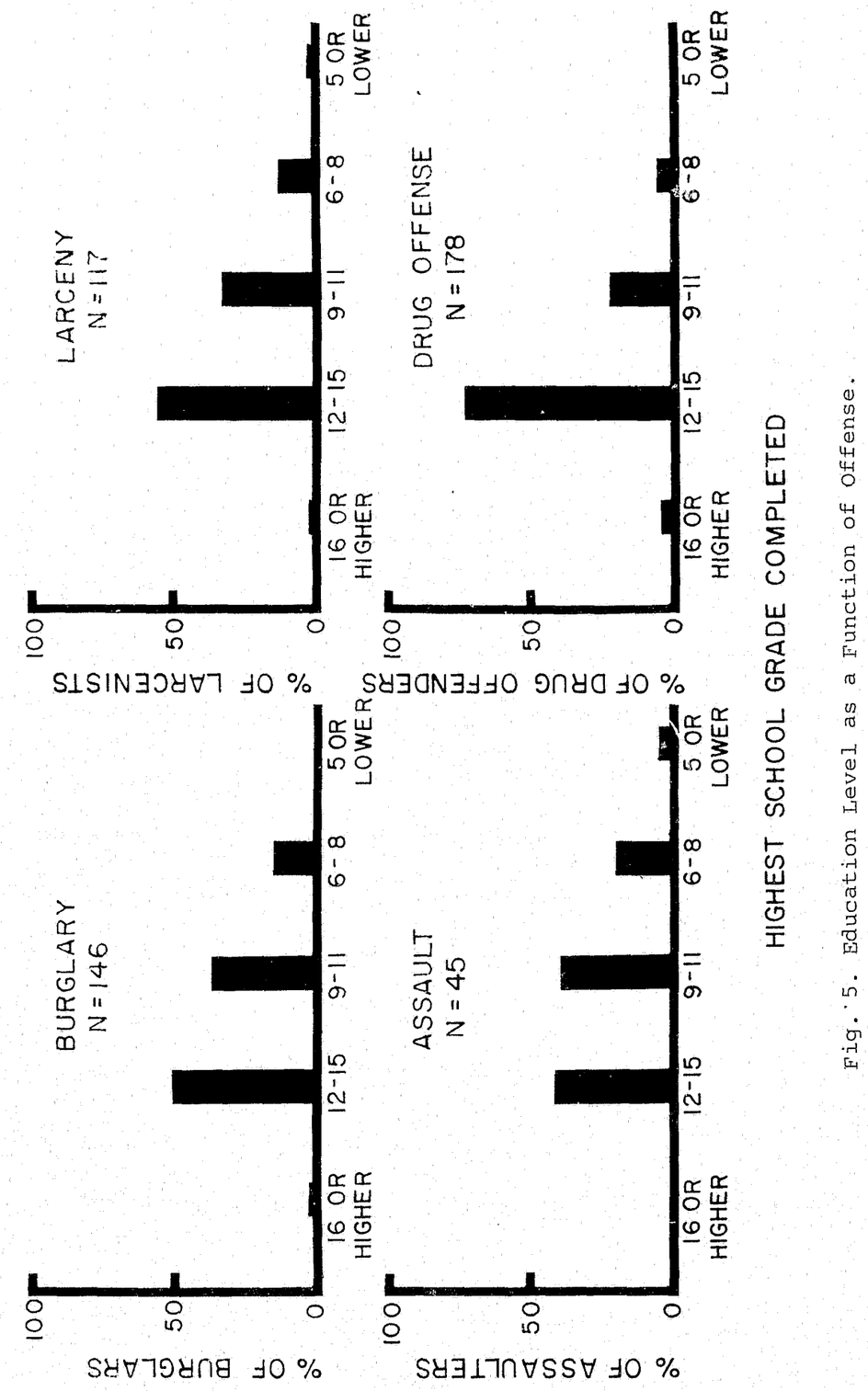

Fig. 5. Education Level as a Function of Offense.

Age at first arrest as a function of offense is shown in Figure 6. Few offenders in these groups began their criminal careers at an age greater than 25. Many started as juveniles. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary*
larceny-assault*
larceny-drug offense*
burglary-assault*
burglary-drug offense
assault-drug offense*

Burglars and drug offenders did not differ significantly. Assault had higher proportions starting at age 17 or younger and at age 26 or older than any other group. Assault had a relatively small proportion starting between the ages of 18-25. Larceny had the highest proportion starting between the ages 18-35 and the lowest proportion starting at 17 or younger.

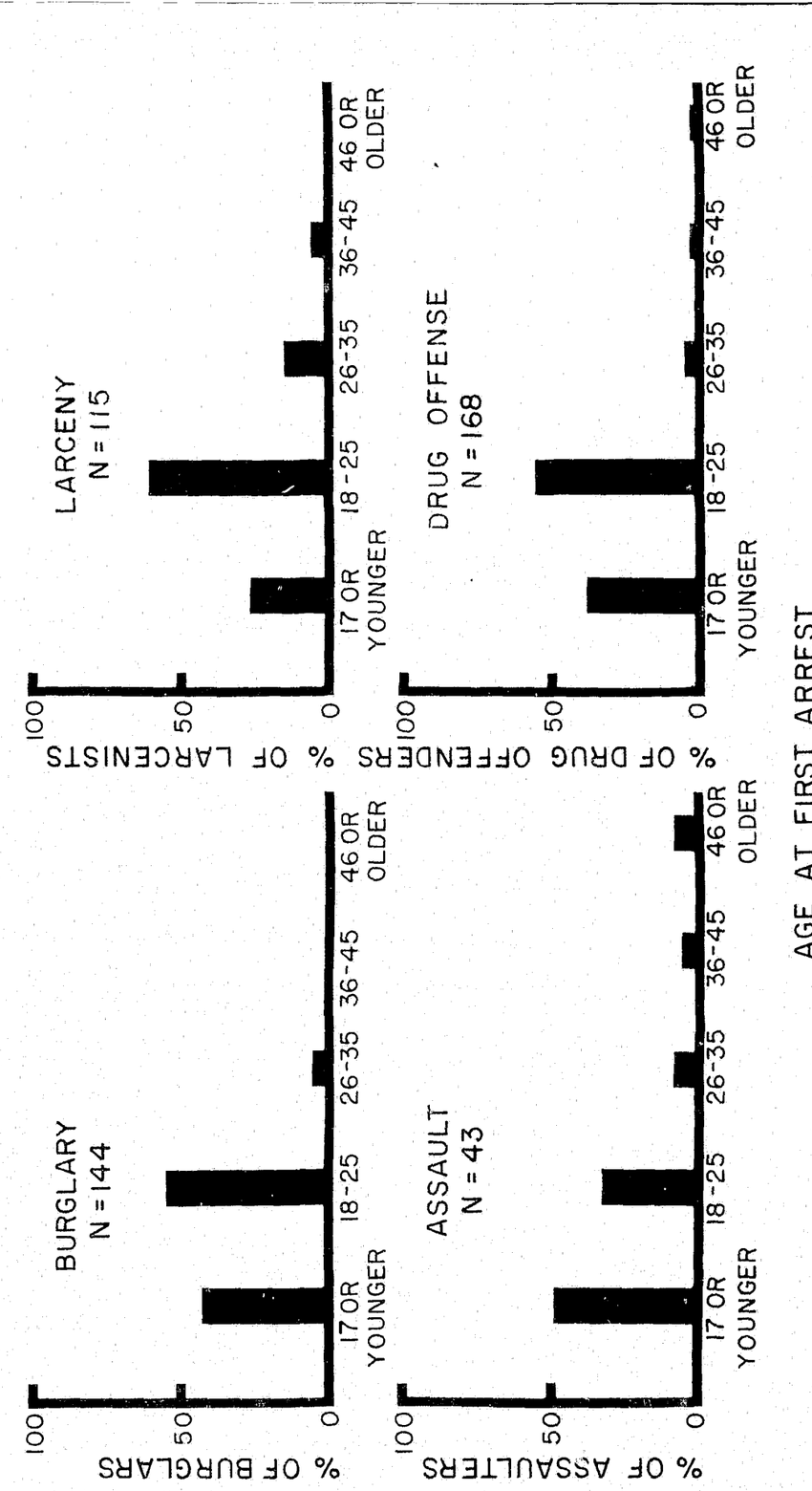

Fig. 6. Age at First Arrest as a Function of Offense.

Marital history as a function of offense is presented in Figure 7. Of the larcenists, burglars and drug offenders, more than 60% in every group had never been married. Of the assaulters only 27% had never been married. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary
larceny-assault*
larceny-drug offense*
burglary-assault*
burglary-drug offense*
assault-drug offense*

Larceny and burglary did not differ significantly. Assault had the highest proportion with a history of marriage, the highest proportion married stable, and the highest proportion married unstable. Drug offense had the highest proportion single.

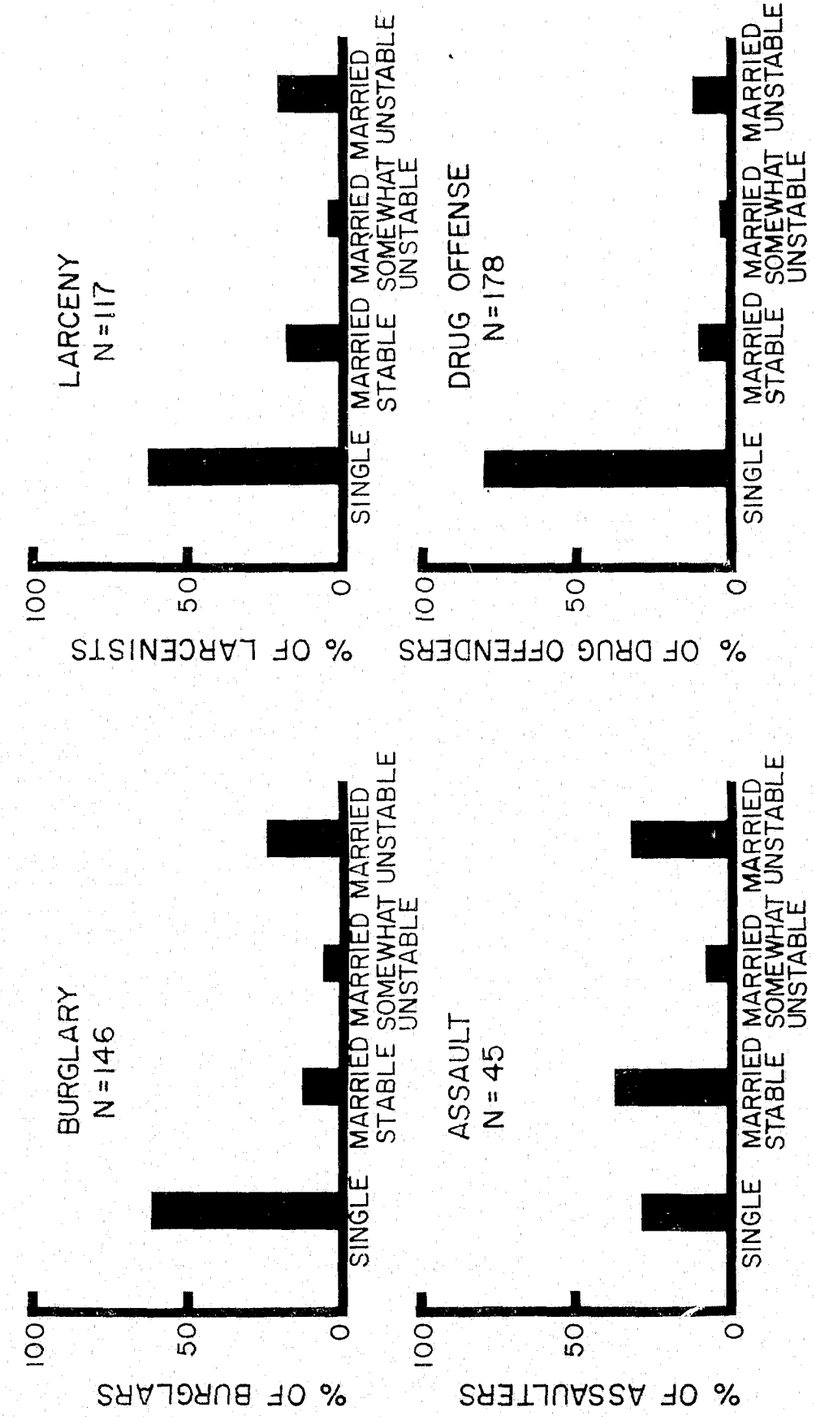

Fig. 7. Marital History as a Function of Offense.

Employment as a function of offense is shown in Figure 8. Very few professionals and white collar workers were involved in any of these offenses. The highest proportion in each group were laborers. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary*
larceny-assault
larceny-drug offense*
burglary-assault
burglary-drug offense*
assault-drug offense

Assault did not differ significantly from any other group. Burglars had poorer employment than larcenists or drug offenders with 27% unemployed. Drug offense had a lower proportion of laborers than burglary or larceny. Drug offense had a higher proportion blue collar than burglary or larceny and more unemployed than larceny.

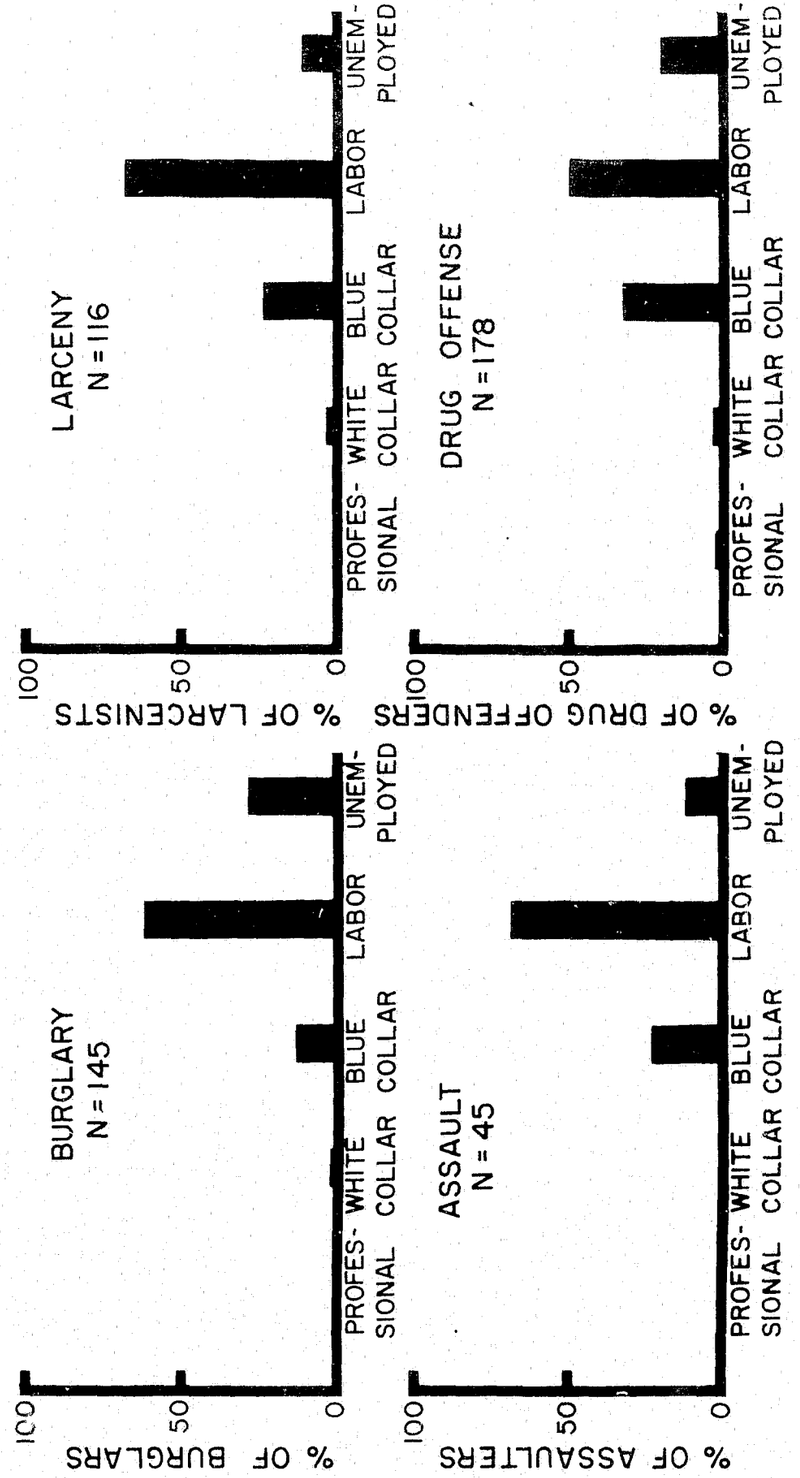

Fig. 8. Employment as a Function of Offense.

Mental commitments as a function of offense is shown in Figure 9. In every group more than 80% had no history of mental commitments. The following pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups was found:

larceny-burglary*
larceny-assault*
larceny-drug offense
burglary-assault
burglary-drug offense
assault-drug offense*

Assault had a higher proportion of mental commitments than larceny or drug offense. Burglary had a higher proportion than larceny. There were no other differences.

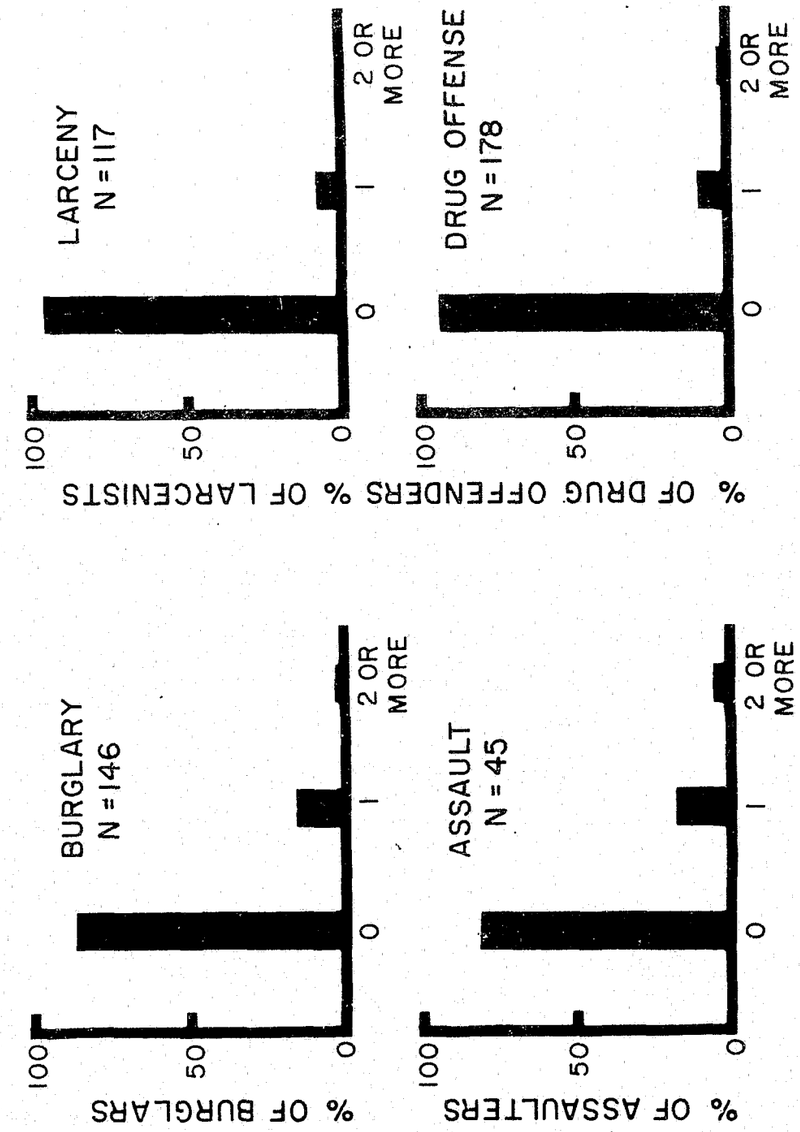

Fig. 9. Mental Commitments as a Function of Offense.

Drug use as a function of offense is shown in Figure 10. Considerable data on this variable were not available in the records as indicated by the "no data" category. Furthermore, the amount of missing data varied from group to group, there being 2% missing under drug offense and 49% missing under larceny. Therefore, any differences found using statistical tests might not be reliable, so tests were not done. It appears that drug offenders do have a relatively high level of drug use, but much of this (71%) falls in the "some" category.

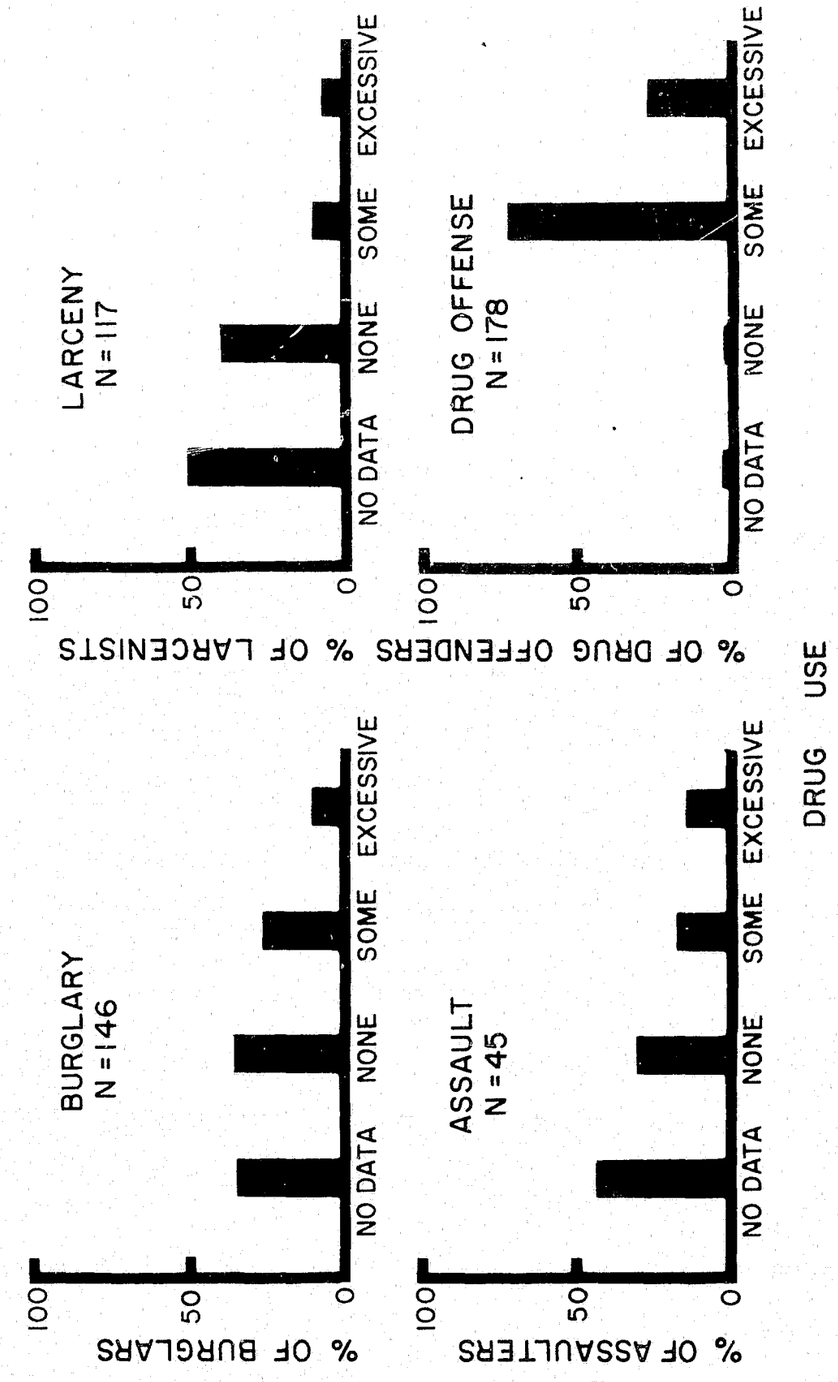

Fig. 10. Drug Use as a Function of Offense.

Alcohol use as a function of offense is shown in Figure 11. As with drug use, there were considerable and variable missing data, so signifance tests were not appropriate. It is noteworthy that there was 50% missing data for drug offenders on alcohol use and only 2% missing data for the same group on drug use. Alcohol use was quite heavy among burglars and assaulters.

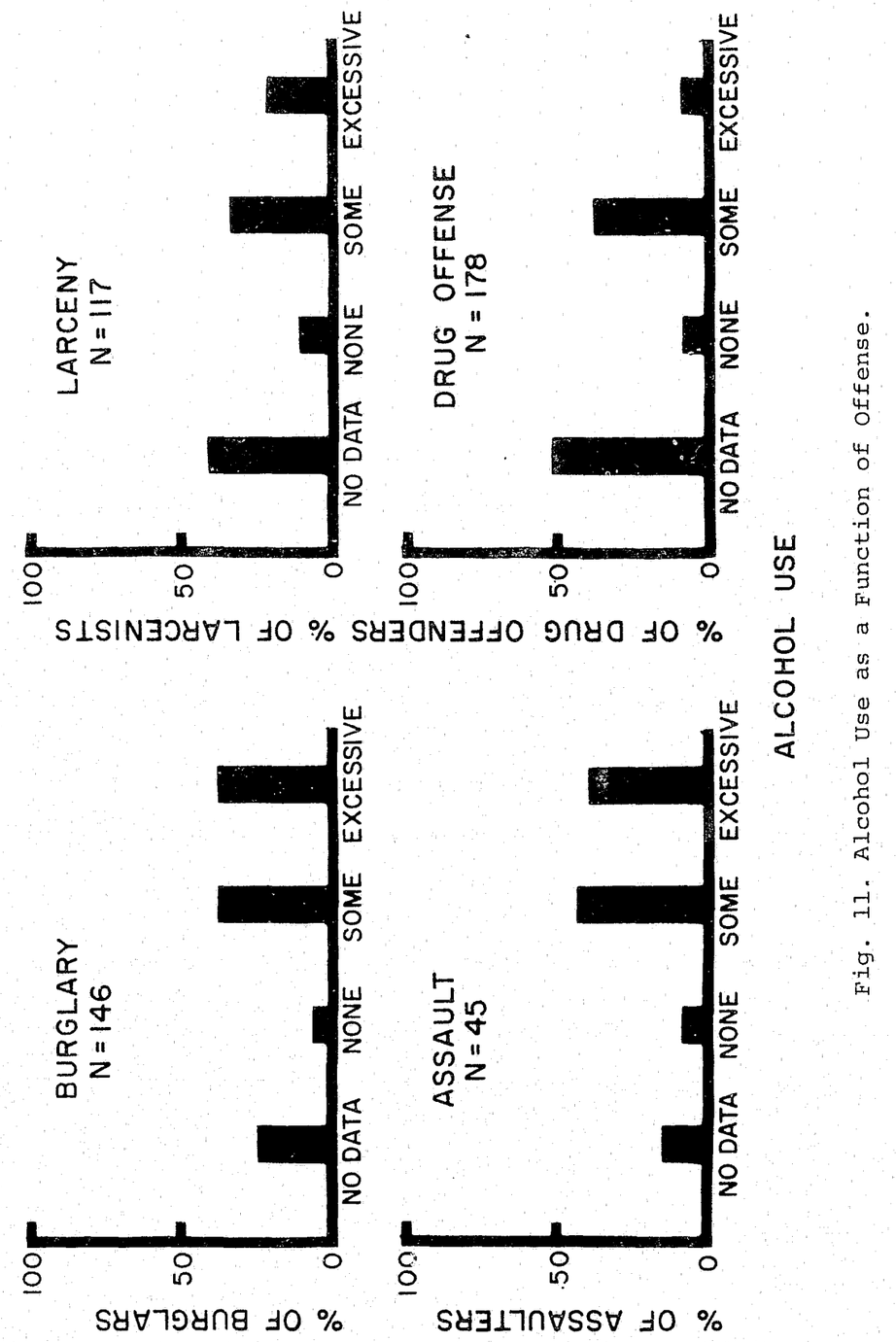

Fig. 11. Alcohol Use as a Function of Offense.

Prior offenses as a function of offense is shown in Figure 12. Minor offenses are shown in the upper part of the figure, and major offenses are shown in the lower part. In this figure the vertical axis scales the average (mean) number of prior offenses. The pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups on mean prior minor offenses was:

larceny-burglary
larceny-assault
larceny-drugs
burglary-assault
burglary-drugs*
assault-drugs*

Assault, burglary and larceny did not differ significantly in mean prior minor offenses. Drug offense had significantly fewer mean prior minor offenses than assault or burglary but was not significantly different from larceny.

The pattern of significant and non-significant differences between groups on mean prior major offenses was:

larceny-burglary
larceny-assault
larceny-drug offense*
burglary-assault
burglary-drug offense*
assault-drug offense*

Burglary, assault and larceny did not differ significantly. Drug offenders had significantly fewer mean prior major offenses than any of the other groups.

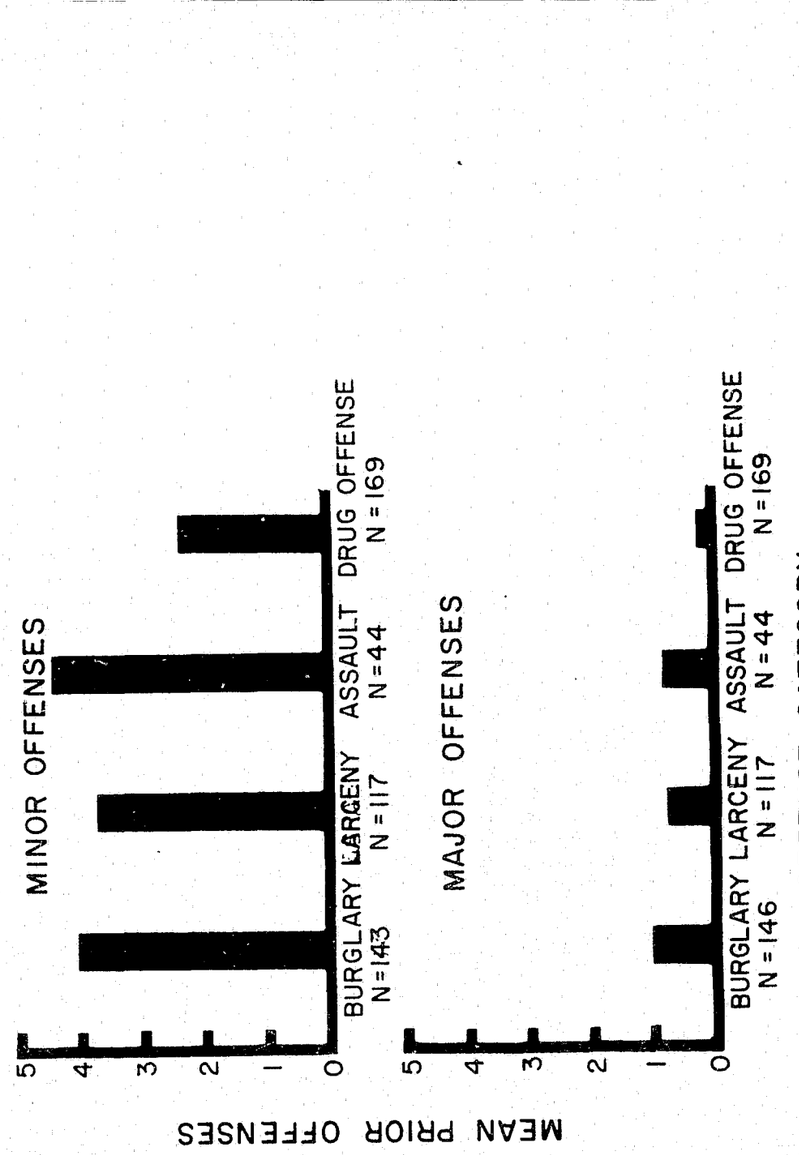

Fig. 12. Prior Offenses as a Function of Offense.

Place of offense as a function of offense is shown in Figure 13. The different offense groups are arranged vertically. No two groups were distributed similarly on this variable:

larceny-burglary*
larceny-assault*
larceny-drug offense*
burglary-assault*
burglary-drug offense*
assault-drug offense*

Most (69%) of the burglaries occurred in business places; some (18%) in private residences. Larcenies occurred in business places (46%), in public areas (22%) and in private residences (20%). Assaults occurred in private residences (33%), bars (31%) and public areas (27%). Drug offenders were arrested with drugs, or the drugs were discovered by law enforcement officials, in public areas (34%) and in private residences (33%). The large amount of missing data (24%) in the drug offense group sheds some doubt on the reliability of the tests done between that and other groups.

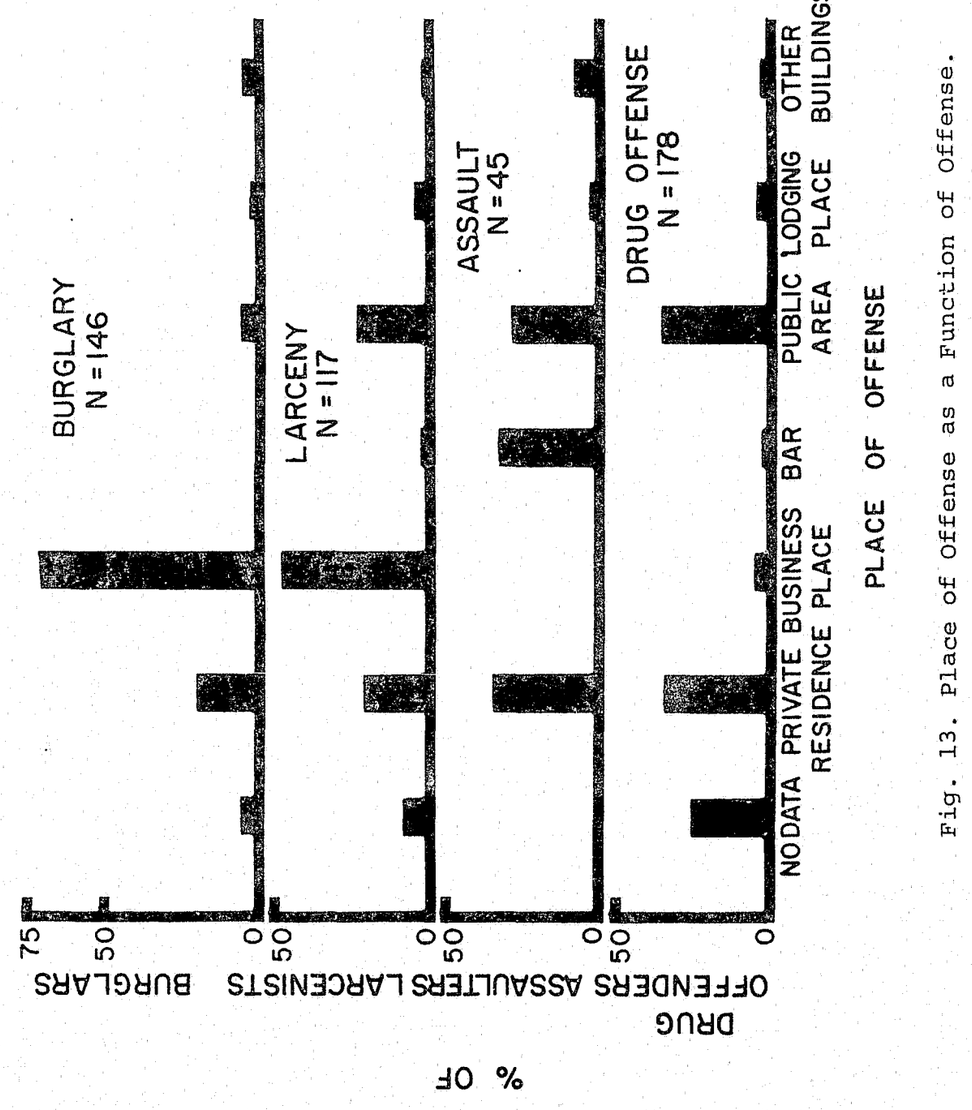

Fig. 13. Place of Offense as a Function of Offense.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

While the intention of this study was to search for differences between offender groups, it turns out that in some respects the groups studied were quite similar. All groups were relatively younger than the population. Most offenders were under 25 years of age. Thus, Wyoming offenders were similar to offenders elsewhere on age (4). Many had been juvenile offenders. Although a higher proportion of minority members than would be expected from census data appeared in all groups except drug offense, by far most offenders in every group were white. High percentages in all groups were residents of Wyoming. Only a small percentage in any group had histories of mental institutionalization. Few were college graduates as was found generally true by Lunden (4). And all groups had highest proportions employed as laborers and blue collar workers or unemployed as found by Lunden (4). Thus, a general characterization of a male burglar, larcenist, assaulter or drug offender in Wyoming would be young, white, resident, non-college educated, no mental history, blue collar, laborer or unemployed, and possibly having a history of juvenile offenses. It is important to realize that the offender groups studied overlapped on all variables to some extent.

Each group was to a greater or less extent characterized by a pattern of differences relative to the other groups or to census figures:

Drug offenders were the most distinct group on the basis of the variables studied. They were the youngest and had the highest proportion of members not having marital histories. They were the only group having an ethnic distribution similar to the Wyoming census. They had better family histories than burglars and, even though the youngest group, they were the best educated. Drug offenders were less frequently laborers than burglars or larcenists, were more frequently in the blue collar category than burglars or larcenists and were more frequently unemployed than larcenists. The high frequency in the blue collar category among drug offenders is probably due to the participation of many drug offenders in post high school training or education and, thus, may not be strictly comparable to the blue collar category in other offense groups where, for the most part, it probably refers to skilled labor. Drug offenders showed more drug use than the other groups. Most, how-

ever, was categorized as "some" (i.e. regular use of marijuana and/or experimentation with "harder" drugs; not addiction, etc.). This finding suggests that most of the drug offenders may have been basically marijuana users. However, they probably did not use alcohol as extensively as the other groups. Drug offenders had fewer mean prior minor offenses than assaulters or burglars and fewer mean prior major offenses than any of the other groups. This may be partly due to age, drug offenders being the youngest group. Since drug use on a massive scale has appeared only recently, it is difficult to tell to what extent age was important in keeping prior offenses low. Drug offenders had been juvenile offenders about as often as the other groups, but those may have been mostly drug offenses.

Research should be done to determine how likely it is that young drug offenders with few prior offenses (especially with no prior major offenses) will later become serious offenders. Research could focus on drug offenders of the middle and late sixties and follow their careers to the present and into the future. The findings of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse (9) were that the possession of marijuana by a user for his own use should not be treated as a criminal offense. Should further research in Wyoming indicate that marijuana users rarely become involved in other major offenses, a revision of the marijuana statutes could conserve resources which may presently be wasted in the detection, apprehension, adjudication and supervision of marijuana users. Revision of the marijuana law of course would have to await a favorable political and social climate.

Burglars were characterized by higher proportions unemployed and having had bad family histories than larcenists or drug offenders. In addition, they had more mental commitments than larcenists and considerable alcohol use. Burglaries occurred almost exclusively in business places. One obvious way to control burglaries might be more extensive use of alarm systems in, and/or more emphasis on police surveillance of, business places. Further research could show that certain kinds of business places are hardest hit, thus suggesting special attention to those places. However, control of burglaries in one kind of place could result in burglaries increasing in other places, and this possibility should be considered in planning.

Assaulters were the oldest as a group and were first arrested more frequently either earlier or later in life than the other groups. Assaulters were more frequently married than the other groups and had high proportions of married stable as well as married unstable. Like burglars they had some tendency to have had a history of mental commitments (more than larcenists or drug offenders), and they had excessive alcohol use. Assaults occurred in private residences, bars and public areas.

Some of the characteristics of assaulters appear consistent if it is assumed that in a major proportion of assaults the victims were wives. This possibility is suggested by the large proportion of assaulters having marital histories. It may be that assaulters were the oldest group because the general age distribution of married males would contain higher frequencies of older men than the distribution of unmarried males. Assaults against wives would tend to occur in private residences, as many assaults do. Assaults against wives could account for the large proportion of assaulters who were married unstable. Presumably, married stable assaulters were venting their frustrations in the other major places where assaults occurred, bars and public areas. Research to describe the victims of assault could clarify this possibility.

Larcenists were more likely to be residents than burglars or drug offenders, and they had a better family history than burglars. Larcenies were committed in business places, public areas and residences. It is suspected that many larcenies were related in some way to vehicles (not auto theft), this almost certainly being the case for those occurring in public areas and possibly to some extent for those occurring at business places and private residences. Research could be done to determine how extensively vehicles were involved. If vehicles were involved extensively, a reasonable larceny control program could advertise publicly the need to secure items left in vehicles.

Some consideration of the records available for research of offenders and offenses in Wyoming is needed. The Wyoming Department of Probation and Parole records and the Wyoming State Penitentiary records contained the best data available from single sources. Even so, that data was variable in completeness and consistency. A number of variables which would have been of considerable interest were either not available at all or so sparsely available that they

could not be studied. Some of those variables were economic history, school performance, IQ scores and clear facts about the offense. Of the variables studied, it was not appropriate to perform statistical tests of differences between the offense groups on alcohol use and drug use because of incomplete data. Doubtless those comparisons could have been quite useful to planners.

The fact that drug offenders showed less missing data than the other groups on drug use and more missing data on alcohol use suggests that those persons who produced the records were perceiving what they expected to find (i.e. they expected that drug users would have used drugs but did not expect them to have used alcohol). Furthermore, of necessity, the records are made by different individuals with different expectations and different ideas concerning what information should be recorded. Confusion also exists concerning what is meant by the categories on the various forms used in reporting. For example, some descriptions of the offense are given in legal terms only. All this reduces the reliability of the information, at least to some extent, on any given variable. Consistency and completeness of data are essential if meaningful and useful research results are to be obtained. Wyoming offender records, at present, are inconsistent and incomplete.

Effective crime control programs, if they are to be instituted, must certainly be based on accurate information concerning offenders and offenses. It is suggested that more consistent and complete offender information could be obtained by setting up a central offender information agency along with mandatory reporting on offenders and offenses by all agencies concerned with criminal justice processes. Reporting would be done using a standardized format and procedure developed by the information agency to provide complete and accurate information on all variables of interest concerning the offender's history, his physical and demographic characteristics, the specific circumstances surrounding his offense and his disposition within the criminal justice system. The information agency would be responsible for maintaining information in a form readily accessible for research as well as for information use by other agencies of the criminal justice system. It might be practical at first to keep such records only on sentenced offenders. However, complete and accurate information on all offenders prior to sentencing would be very useful to the courts in deciding how best to handle individual cases.

The manner in which a research project is conducted depends largely on the kind of questions being asked. For example, one interesting kind of question would be: How do specific kinds of offenders, or how do offenders in general, differ from non-offenders on a variable of interest? In other words, is a particular variable represented among offenders differently than it appears among non-offenders? Answers to questions like that could give considerable understanding of the factors which produce crime if relevant variables are actually investigated (likely candidates for relevant variables must be chosen by considering the best information available at the time a study is begun). In order to research that kind of question, it would be necessary to make a direct statistical comparison between a random sample of the offender group in question and an age and sex matched random sample (control group) from the non-offender population. Thus, for every offender of a particular age and sex, there would be a non-offender in the control group of the same age and sex. Data in such a study should be collected, on both offenders and controls, by the same investigators using a standard procedure to avoid introducing bias at the collection stage (ideally, but probably not practically, those collecting data would not know whether any given subject was or was not an offender). A controlled study of offenders versus non-offenders would be expensive and time consuming, especially in the data collection stage, but the payoff could be great. The questions asked by this study and by Wormeli and Kolodney (1) did not concern differences between offenders and non-offenders, but rather differences between different kinds of offenders. That approach produces interesting results which may be useful in controlling crime, but its answers do not immediately suggest solutions as would direct comparisons of offenders and non-offenders. A hybrid model might compare specific offender groups with non-offenders.

Crime control programs could be more economical and effective if they were directed at specific highly available populations. One such population is that of convicted first-time offenders (juveniles or adults). If we could prevent first-time offenders from becoming recidivists, that alone would effect a considerable decrease in crime rates. The question is: What makes one-time offenders become recidivist offenders? What differences may be found between recidivists and non-recidivists? To research that problem we need to separate one-time offenders who did not recidivate over some reasonable period of time from offenders who

did recidivate and then make comparisons between those groups. Prediction of adjustment among Wyoming probationers using Base Expectancy Scoring (BES) has been shown to be feasible using a similar research method (10). A powerful means of recidivism prediction could employ discriminant analysis methods to identify how well different variables predict recidivism. Suggestions for rehabilitating first-time offenders would thus be made apparent. Furthermore, a detailed evaluative and predictive inventory might be prepared for use in individual cases. This method could provide a basis for the operation of more effective rehabilitation centers.

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APPENDIX A

TABULAR PRESENTATION OF RESULTS:
VARIABLE BY OFFENSE AND CENSUS COMPARISONS

		Age at Date of Offense			
		18-25	26-35	36-45	46 or older
Burglary	#	104	35	6	1
	%	71	24	4	1
Larceny	#	82	24	6	5
	%	70	20	5	4
Assault	#	20	13	8	4
	%	44	29	18	9
Drug Offense	#	164	11	1	2
	%	92	6	1	1

Comparison of 1970 Wyoming census data on age with age at date of offense of resident offenders:

		Age			
		18-25	26-35	36-45	46 or older
Burglary	#	75	24	3	1
	%	73	23	3	1
Larceny	#	69	20	6	3
	%	70	20	6	3
Assault	#	15	12	6	4
	%	41	32	16	11
Drug Offense	#	114	10	0	2
	%	90	8	0	2
Census	#	20,590	19,577	19,330	45,891
	%	20	19	18	44

		Residency	
		Wyoming	Other
Burglary	#	103	43
	%	71	29
Larceny	#	98	19
	%	84	16
Assault	#	37	8
	%	82	18
Drug Offense	#	126	52
	%	71	29

		Ethnic Membership			
		White	Mexican	Indian	Black
Burglary	#	117	14	9	6
	%	80	10	6	4
Larceny	#	108	5	2	2
	%	92	4	2	2
Assault	#	37	4	3	1
	%	82	9	7	2
Drug Offense	#	163	6	2	7
	%	92	3	1	4

Comparison of 1970 Wyoming census data on ethnic membership for males aged 18-25 with ethnic membership of resident offenders aged 18-25:

		Ethnic Membership		
		White	Mexican or Indian	Black
Burglary	#	57	14	4
	%	76	19	5
Larceny	#	62	5	2
	%	90	7	3
Assault	#	12	2	1
	%	80	13	7
Drug Offense	#	109	5	0
	%	96	4	0
Census	#	19,777	486	327
	%	96	2	2

		Family History			
		No data	stable	somewhat unstable	very unstable
Burglary	#	1	46	37	62
	%	1	32	25	42
Larceny	#	3	51	34	29
	%	3	44	29	25
Assault	#	3	18	11	13
	%	7	40	24	29
Drug Offense	#	7	90	55	26
	%	4	51	31	15

		Education Level: Highest School Grade Completed				
		16 or higher	12-15	9-11	6-8	5 or lower
Burglary	#	2	72	52	20	0
	%	1	49	36	14	0
Larceny	#	1	63	38	14	1
	%	1	54	32	12	1
Assault	#	0	18	17	8	2
	%	0	40	38	18	4
Drug Offense	#	5	129	37	7	0
	%	3	72	21	4	0

		Age at First Arrest					
		No data	17 or younger	18-25	26-35	36-45	46 or older
Burglary	#	2	60	78	6	0	0
	%	1	41	53	4	0	0
Larceny	#	2	29	68	15	3	0
	%	2	25	58	13	3	0
Assault	#	2	21	14	3	2	3
	%	4	47	31	7	4	7
Drug Offense	#	10	65	96	5	1	1
	%	6	37	54	3	1	1

		Marital History			
		single	married stable	married somewhat unstable	married unstable
Burglary	#	87	17	8	34
	%	60	12	5	23
Larceny	#	71	20	4	22
	%	61	17	3	19
Assault	#	12	16	3	14
	%	27	36	7	31
Drug Offense	#	139	16	4	19
	%	78	9	2	11

		Employment					
		no data	professional	white collar	blue collar	labor	unemployed
Burglary	#	1	0	2	17	87	39
	%	1	0	1	12	60	27
Larceny	#	1	0	2	26	77	11
	%	1	0	2	22	66	9
Assault	#	0	0	0	10	30	5
	%	0	0	0	22	67	11
Drug Offense	#	0	1	3	55	86	33
	%	0	1	2	31	48	19

		Mental Commitments		
		None	One	Two or More
Burglary	#	124	21	1
	%	85	14	1
Larceny	#	110	7	0
	%	94	6	0
Assault	#	36	7	2
	%	80	16	4
Drug Offense	#	163	14	1
	%	92	8	1

		Drug Use			
		no data	none	some	excessive
Burglary	#	48	49	36	13
	%	33	34	25	9
Larceny	#	57	44	9	7
	%	49	38	8	6
Assault	#	19	13	7	6
	%	42	29	16	13
Drug Offense	#	4	1	127	46
	%	2	1	71	26

		Alcohol Use			
		no data	none	some	excessive
Burglary	#	33	8	52	53
	%	23	5	36	36
Larceny	#	46	10	37	24
	%	39	9	32	20
Assault	#	6	3	19	17
	%	13	7	42	38
Drug Offense	#	89	13	64	12
	%	50	7	36	7

		Prior Offenses	
		Minor Offenses	Major Offenses
Burglary	mean	3.97	0.95
	standard error	0.46	0.16
Larceny	mean	3.66	0.69
	standard error	0.89	0.14
Assault	mean	4.36	0.75
	standard error	0.72	0.25
Drug Offense	mean	2.28	0.14
	standard error	0.26	0.04

		Place of Offense					
		no data	private residence	business place	bar	public area	lodging place	other buildings
Burglary	#	6	27	101	0	6	1	5
	%	4	18	69	0	4	1	3
Larceny	#	8	23	54	1	26	4	1
	%	7	20	46	1	22	3	1
Assault	#	0	15	0	14	12	1	3
	%	0	33	0	31	27	2	7
Drug Offense	#	42	58	6	2	61	6	3
	%	24	33	3	1	34	3	2

APPENDIX B

VALUES OF TEST STATISTICS AND SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS

Age at Date of Offense

larceny-census	chi-squared=174.41 df=3 p <.001
burglary-census	chi-squared=206.58 df=3 p <.001
assault-census	chi-squared=21.36 df=3 p <.001
drug offense-census	chi-squared=404.48 df=3 p <.001
larceny-burglary	chi-squared=4.17 df=3 NS*
larceny-assault	chi-squared=11.66 df=3 p <.01
larceny-drugs	chi-squared=25.50 df=3 p <.001
burglary-assault	chi-squared=21.74 df=3 p <.001
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=26.96 df=3 p <.001
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=61.54 df=3 p <.001

Wyoming Residency

larceny-burglary	chi-squared=5.58 df=1 p <.05
larceny-assault	chi-squared=0.00 df=1 NS
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=5.81 df=1 p <.05
burglary-assault	chi-squared=1.84 df=1 NS
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=0.01 df=1 NS
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=1.84 df=1 NS

Ethnic Membership

larceny-census	chi-squared=7.92 df=2 p <.05
burglary-census	chi-squared=91.80 df=2 p <.001
assault-census	chi-squared=10.45 df=2 p <.01
drug offense-census	chi-squared=3.77 df=2 NS
larceny-burglary	chi-squared=7.98 df=3 p <.05
larceny-assault	chi-squared=5.12 df=3 NS
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=1.48 df=3 NS
burglary-assault	chi-squared=0.04 df=3 NS
burglary-drug offense	cni-squared=12.25 df=3 p <.01
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=7.62 df=3 NS

*Not significant

Family History

larceny-burglary	chi-squared=8.77	df=2	p <.05
larceny-assault	chi-squared=0.51.	df=2	NS
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=4.69	df=2	NS
burglary-assault	chi-squared=2.32	df=2	NS
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=30.55	df=2	p <.001
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=5.59	df=2	NS

Education Level

larceny-burglary	chi-squared=0.42	df=2	NS
larceny-assault	chi-squared=3.61	df=2	NS
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=15.82	df=2	p <.001
burglary-assault	chi-squared=2.41	df=2	NS
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=23.03	df=2	p <.001
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=26.86	df=2	p <.001

Age at First Arrest

larceny-burglary	chi-squared=14.30	df=2	p <.001
larceny-assault	chi-squared=9.62	df=2	p <.01
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=13.86	df=2	p <.001
burglary-assault	chi-squared=12.92	df=2	p <.01
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=0.30	df=2	NS
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=14.61	df=2	p <.001

Marital History

larceny-burglary	chi-squared=2.60	df=3	NS
larceny-assault	chi-squared=15.33	df=3	p <.01
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=10.52	df=3	p <.05
burglary-assault	chi-squared=19.50	df=3	p <.001
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=14.56	df=3	p <.01
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=44.07	df=3	p <.001

Employment

larceny-burglary	chi-squared=14.91	df=2	p <.001
larceny-assault	chi-squared=0.12	df=2	NS
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=9.94	df=2	p <.01
burglary-assault	chi-squared=5.74	df=2	NS
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=17.80	df=2	p <.001
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=4.89	df=2	NS

Mental Commitments

larceny-burglary	chi-squared=5.55	df=1	p <.05
larceny-assault	chi-squared=7.35	df=1	p <.01
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=0.60	df=1	NS
burglary-assault	chi-squared=0.62	df=1	NS
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=3.46	df=1	NS
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=5.14	df=1	p <.05

Prior Minor Offenses*

larceny-burglary	t=0.31	df=176.35	NS
larceny-assault	t=0.61	df=147.38	NS
larceny-drugs	t=1.48	df=135.84	NS
burglary-assault	t=0.42	df=185	NS
burglary-drugs	t=3.19	df=226.68	p <.01
assault-drugs	t=2.72	df=54.66	p <.01

Prior Major Offenses*

larceny-burglary	t=1.21	df=260.87	NS
larceny-assault	t=0.20	df=159	NS
larceny-drug offense	t=3.63	df=136.49	p <.001
burglary-assault	t=0.63	df=188	NS
burglary-drug offense	t=4.92	df=166.28	p <.001
assault-drug offense	t=2.42	df=45.62	p <.05

*In making comparisons on minor and major offenses, Fmax tests were first done to see if the variances were homogenous. Where they were not, independent variance estimates were used for the t-tests.

Place of Offense

larceny-burglary	chi-squared=27.11	df=5	p <.001
larceny-assault	chi-squared=54.48	df=5	p <.001
larceny-drug offense	chi-squared=67.00	df=5	p <.001
burglary-assault	chi-squared=94.53	df=5	p <.001
burglary-drug offense	chi-squared=143.57	df=5	p <.001
assault-drug offense	chi-squared=40.52	df=5	p <.001

THE RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The preceding report was completed by a WICHE intern during the summer of 1973 This intern's project was part of the Resources Development Internship Program administered by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

The purpose of the internship program is to bring organizations involved in community and economic development, environmental problems and the humanities together with institutions of higher education and their students in the West for the benefit of all.

For these organizations, the intern program provides the problem-solving talents of student manpower while making the resources of universities and colleges more available. For institutions of higher education, the program provides relevant field education for their students while building their capacity for problem-solving.

WICHE is an organization in the West uniquely suited for sponsoring such a program. It is an interstate agency formed by the thirteen western states for the specific purpose of relating the resources of higher education to the needs of western citizens. WICHE has been concerned with a broad range of community needs in the West for some time, insofar as they bear directly on the well-being of western peoples and the future of higher education in the West. WICHE feels that the internship program is one method for meeting its obligations within the thirteen western states. In its efforts to achieve these objectives, WICHE appreciates having received the generous support and assistance of the Economic Development Administration, the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, and of innumerable local leaders and community organizations, including the agency that sponsored this intern project.

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in this report
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