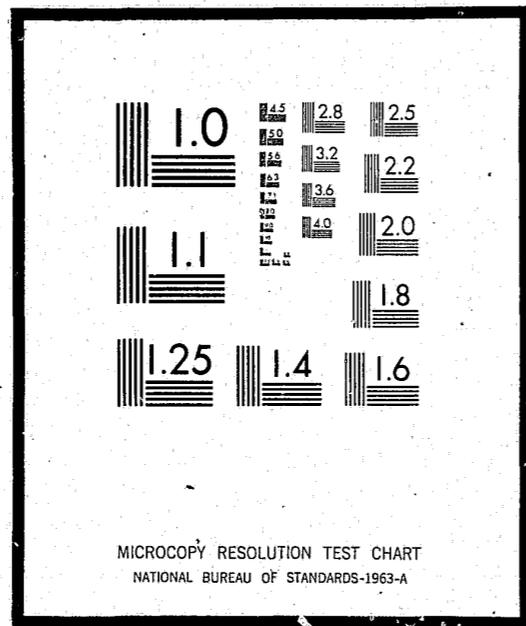


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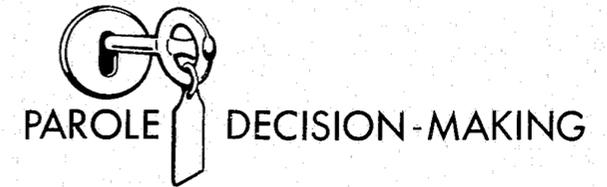
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Personal Characteristics and Parole Outcome

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Social and Rehabilitation Service
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The National Parole Institutes are administered by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, a national nonprofit organization devoted to the prevention and control of crime and delinquency. The Institutes are cosponsored by the Advisory Council on Parole of the National Council; the Association of Paroling Authorities; the Interstate Compact Administrators Association for the Council of State Governments; and the U.S. Board of Parole.

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The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the position and policy of the Department.

FOREWORD

September 1, 1962, marked the beginning of a continuing program of intensive, nationwide institutes for members of parole authorities and top-level parole administrators concerned with the treatment of youthful offenders. The basic aim of the Parole Institutes is to provide an opportunity for a systematic exchange of information and mutual examination of problems among parole officials. Leaders of the Institutes include representatives from the fields of sociology, social work, psychiatry, psychology, and law.

All of the Parole Institute publications have been prepared as resource material to be made available to participants in the Institutes. The Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development is very glad to work with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, and to reproduce several of the Parole Institute publications so that the materials may reach a wider audience. It is hoped that these will assist in the national effort to develop more effective solutions to the continuing task of combating delinquency and youth crime.

It is difficult to designate any one sector of the rehabilitative or correctional process as the most crucial. Yet, it is inescapable that the fruition of all the rehabilitation efforts rests on the linkage between the offender and the community to which he returns. The last step in this process is parole. It is the opportunity to reinforce the positives of the rehabilitation process and to counteract the negatives. It is the strategic position that parole occupies in the correctional process that makes it urgent to refine the system so that it may, in fact, carry out its important function.

This volume is concerned with the relationship of parole outcome to personal characteristics. Dr. Daniel Glaser, Department of Sociology, University of Illinois, prepared this publication, with the assistance of Mr. Vincent O'Leary, Director of the National Parole Institutes.

PART I.—INTRODUCTION

One of the principal roles of a parole board member is that of evaluator. He collects a large variety of information about an offender, and from this he must determine the risks in paroling that individual. What aspects of the case are favorable for parole outcome? What features are unfavorable? What other information is desirable? How can all the pros and cons best be combined into a single overall evaluation of each man?

When discussing the evaluation of a parolee's postrelease prospects, frequent references are made to statistics on the relative "success" or "failure" rates of various types of parolees. Since there are many objectives in parole, there can be numerous standards from which to assess parole "success." However, at this point we shall use somewhat broad criteria of parole outcome.

Parole is applied to persons who have committed crimes serious enough to justify the State's taking measures to confine them. Since parole is a conditional release from this confinement, the primary index of parole "success" used here will be negative, that the parolee's behavior does not provide State action to revoke his parole and again to confine him.

Statistics will be presented on the relationship of various characteristics of parolees to their post-release success. These statistics will be drawn from several different jurisdictions. However, it should be noted that overall parole success rates vary from one State to the next as a result of many characteristics of parole policy. For example, in States which parole only a small proportion of their prisoners, just the best risks may be paroled, so one expects that their violation rates will be lower than those of States which parole nearly all prisoners. Similarly, if the parole period is long or parole supervision is close, one expects that officials will know of more violations than would be reported under the opposite conditions.

In addition, there are many issues involved in the definition of parole violation. One agency might well return more parolees to institutions as violators than another, but because of a vigorous supervision program, proportionately fewer of those returned have committed new crimes. Differences between systems regarding the action taken in the cases of absconders or parolees given jail terms are also examples of variations in policy which can account for significant differences in "violation rates" when, in fact, the rates may be quite similar or even reversed.

Variations, like the above, should be borne in mind in examining the data presented here. Consequently, the statistics presented *cannot be employed to compare accurately overall violation rates between jurisdictions*, but only violation rate trends in different categories of parolees within the jurisdictions cited. For example, we can probe whether the younger parolees have higher violation rates than older ones or whether intelligence is related to parole violations citing data from several systems.

The following is a brief description of the principal sources of statistical data presented. Each is given below the title by which it will be cited:

1. *Wisconsin Parolees*: This information consists of separately tabulated data on 2,255 adult males, 206 adult females, 1,037 juvenile males, and 453 juvenile females who comprise all persons released on parole from Wisconsin's Division of Corrections from January 1, 1952, through December 31, 1954. The violation rate is based on every person whose parole was revoked, or who was again committed to a Wisconsin penal institution or placed on probation following discharge from parole, within 2 years of his release on parole. These tabulations were made available to us by the late John W. Mannering, Chief of the Bureau of Research of the Wisconsin Department of Public Welfare.

2. *New York Adult Parolees*: This information consists of separately tabulated data on 7,636 males and 738 females who comprise all parolees released on original parole by the New York Division of Parole in 1958 and 1959. The violation rate is based on those prisoners in this group who were declared "delinquent" on their parole during 1958, 1959, or 1960. These tabulations are published in the *Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Division of Parole of the Executive Department*, New York Legislative Department, 1962, No. 11, pp. 65-93.

3. *Minnesota Adult Male Parolees*: These data cover 525 men paroled from the Minnesota State Prison during 1957 and 1958. The violation rates are based on the number whose parole was rescinded within 1 year of release. These tabulations are reported in Robert Bergherr, James Brusseau, William McRae, and Richard Samelian, "Parole Success and Failure: A Study of the Influence of Selected Socio-Economic and Personal Factors and Their Effect on Parole Outcome," M.S.W. Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1962. This thesis was made available to us by Dr. Nathan G. Mandel, Director of Research, and Ira Phillips, Librarian, Minnesota Division of Correction.

4. *California Youth Authority Male Parolees*: These data cover 3,046 males released on parole during 1961 from their first admission to a California Youth Authority institution. The violation rate is based on all parole revocations occurring within

15 months of release, including both those returned to the institution, and those who were discharged from parole when under suspension, because they had committed either a parole rule violation or new offense. This tabulation was made available to us by Dr. Keith S. Griffiths, Chief of Research, California Youth Authority.

5. *Federal Adult Male Releasees*: These data cover 1,015 men who comprise a 10-percent systematic sample of all adult males released from Federal prisons on a sentence of over 1 year during 1956. These include men released from prison by expiration of sentence or by mandatory release, as well as parolees. "Failure" rates are based on all men returned to prison, for a new offense or for parole or mandatory release rule violation, as well as those men convicted of a felony-type offense or wanted for parole violation but not reimprisoned, by summer of 1959. This study is reported in Daniel Glaser, *The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963, primarily in chapters 2 and 3.

6. *Illinois Adult Parolees*: These data cover 955 men paroled from the Joliet-Stateville and Menard branches of the Illinois State Penitentiary during 1960. Violation rates are based on warrants issued through July 1, 1962. This study is reported in Illinois Department of Public Safety, Division of the Criminologist, *Bulletin of the Sociologist-Actuary*, No. 3, June 14, 1963.

7. *Illinois Youthful Male Parolees*: These data cover 2,693 men paroled from the Pontiac branch of the Illinois State Penitentiary in 1940-49. It excludes men paroled to the Armed Forces. This is an institution for "young and improvable" male offenders; these men had an average age of 24.1 years at parole. Violation rates are based on warrants issued through 1952. This study is reported fully in Daniel Glaser, "A Reformulation and Testing of Parole Prediction Factors," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1954, and more briefly in articles by the same author appearing in the *American Sociological Review* in 1954 and 1955.

8. *Washington Adult Parolees*: These data cover 1,731 persons who comprise all prisoners paroled from Washington State penal facilities from July 1957 through June 1959. Only 53 were women and data for this group were not tabulated separately. Violation rates are based on all persons whose parole was suspended for absconding, technical violation, or being in custody on a felony charge, between the date of their release and December 31, 1959. This study is reported in Washington State Board of Prison Terms and Paroles, *Adult Parolee Study*, August 1960.

Each table presented includes data from every one of the above studies which had information on the topic covered. However, the only topic on which every one of these studies had some information

was the relationship between type of offense and postrelease violation, summarized in table 4. Whenever there are no cases in a particular category of our tables from one of the studies, this is indicated by a line in the violation rate column; whenever there are some cases, but no violators (usually because there were very few cases), this is indicated by the entry "0%."

PART II.—GROSS PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PAROLE OUTCOME

The first information available on prisoners is that which most immediately identifies them. These are facts which generally can be learned quickly, such as sex, race, age, offense, prior criminal record, intelligence, and body dimensions. Some of these attributes, for example, the offense and criminal record, may actually have intricate variations. However, we shall first consider them as broad categories into which inmates may be classified soon after they reach the prison. This chapter is concerned with the parole prognosis value of this gross information by which prisoners may be divided into the young and the old, the thieves and the murderers, the first offenders and the repeaters, and so forth.

Age

One of the most firmly established pieces of statistical knowledge about criminals is that the older a man is when he is released from prison, the less likely he is to return to crime. By no means should it be inferred that all old prisoners are good risks or all youngsters poor risks. Nevertheless, as table 1 shows, for all parolees taken collectively, the older they are at release the less likely they are to fail on parole.

Table 1 indicates that the parole violation rate predominantly decreases as the age at parole increases, although there is some deviation from perfect consistency in this relationship. Such findings have been reported for many decades, and in numerous jurisdictions, both in the United States and abroad.¹ A related finding is that, as age at release increases, it is increasingly likely that if any further criminality occurs, it will be a misdemeanor rather than a felony.²

The easiest interpretation of this finding is that people become less criminal as they become more mature. Such an interpretation only has much validity if the word "mature" is used primarily in

¹ Thorsten Sellin, "Recidivism and Maturation," *National Probation and Parole Association Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (July 1958), pp. 241-250; Barbara Wooton, *Social Science and Social Pathology*, New York: Macmillan, 1959, chapter 5.

² California Director of Corrections and Adult Authority, *California Male Prisoners Released on Parole 1946-49*, p. 23 and p. 46 (tables 7 and 31). These tables indicate felony and misdemeanor violations separately, for first paroles and for reparoles, by year of birth.

Table 1.—Postrelease Violation Rates in Relation to Age at Release

Wisconsin parolees					
Age at release	Juvenile		Age at release	Adult	
	Males	Females		Males	Females
	Percent	Percent		Percent	Percent
12 to 13.....	78	67	Under 20.....	31	40
14.....	54	53	20 to 24.....	37	26
15.....	58	40	25 to 29.....	41	13
16.....	50	33	30 to 34.....	40	23
17.....	44	40	35 to 39.....	34	29
18 and over.....	41	34	40 to 49.....	20	14
			50 to 59.....	28	50
			60 and over.....	21	
Rates for all cases.....	50	39		36	23
Number of cases.....	1,037	453		2,255	206

New York adult parolees			Federal adult male releasees	
Age at release	Males	Females	Age at release	Failure rate
	Percent	Percent		Percent
20 years or less.....	36	43	18 to 19.....	51
21 to 25.....	33	54	20 to 21.....	46
26 to 30.....	41	48	22 to 23.....	42
31 to 35.....	39	41	24 to 25.....	38
36 to 40.....	38	26	26 to 30.....	36
41 to 45.....	29	22	31 to 35.....	30
46 to 50.....	32		36 to 40.....	28
51 to 55.....	25	17	41 to 49.....	25
55 and over.....	18	9	50 and over.....	29
Rates for all cases.....	37	43		35
Number of cases.....	7,626	738		1,015

Note: The violation rates shown in this table, as in all other tables, are based on the number of "failures on parole" for all reasons. For example, the following are included in these rates: new commitments, serious violations of parole rules such as absconding, and preventive actions on the part of parole authorities such as warrants issued for failure by individuals to abide by stipulated parole conditions.

a nonbiological sense. Criminals generally are at least as well developed physically as the average person of their age. They can only be considered immature by defining normal maturation as change from delinquent youth to noncriminal adulthood.

It will suffice at this point to observe that the age group which has the highest crime rates in most industrialized societies is the vaguely defined one which is in transition between childhood and adulthood. These are the people we call "adolescents." For them to become adults, in the sense that others treat them as adults, requires not just physical maturation, but the acquisition of a self-sufficient position in the adult economic and social world. Prisoners tend to be persons who have failed in the past and may be handicapped

in the future in achieving this transition, although most of them eventually do become self-sufficient in a legitimate adult life.

These data have two important general implications for parole policy in dealing with youthful offenders.

First is the emphasis on change. It is the consensus of both statistical analysis and personal impressions of experienced officials that youth are the least predictable of all prisoners. Although they have high rates of return to crime, this rate diminishes as they mature, and it is hard to predict when their criminal careers may end. They are in a period in which old associates and points of view may suddenly be dropped, and new ones gained. Innumerable cases can be cited where marriage, new employment, or other incidents marked a turning point which was followed by the complete metamorphosis of such offenders. Many individuals with long histories of juvenile crime, including acts of violence and drug addiction, are now leading respectable and law-abiding lives.³

The second implication is that youth are particularly in need of new paths to follow toward a secure and satisfying life. Frequently, they have only had gratification in delinquent pursuits, and have only felt at ease and important in a delinquent social world. Simply to release such a youth unconditionally, to give him "another chance" with no prospect that he will enter a new social and occupational world, is likely to be futile. Placing such a youth where he may have new and satisfying legitimate achievements which contribute to his self-sufficiency, and new types of contacts among his peers, is much preferable to merely "giving him a buck" by parole. A feasible school or work program, or a combination of the two, and a home in which the youth feels "at home," are ideal ingredients for rehabilitating a youthful criminal. While it is easy to state these desirable resources, their procurement is difficult. Frequently, relatives of youth make rash promises for parole placement which they do not intend to keep, or for which neither they nor the youth are adequately prepared. This includes both home and job arrangement.

Even where ideal placement seems to be guaranteed, success is never certain. Invariably, some youth will not perceive a work or school program as feasible for them, in comparison to illegal pursuits with which they are familiar, or about which they have illusions. Similarly, new homes which seem ideal to officials may be distinctly uncomfortable or even frightening to youth from another background who have had little gratifying personal experience in new relationships. For these reasons, testing parole placement in advance of complete release is particularly desirable for youth. Both for staff information and to aid the youth's adjustment, intensive

³ A variety of examples are illustrated by case histories in Daniel Glaser, *The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963, chapter 4.

counseling should be concomitant with the early placement experience. Minimal tests of a prospective parole home may be provided by furloughs from the institution in advance of parole. An optimum program involves transfer of the youth several months before parole to release guidance centers, in the community where parole will occur.

The Criminal Record

The extent to which a person has devoted himself to crime is not easily measured. We only know of the offenses for which he was apprehended, or which he will admit, and he may have been involved in considerable criminality not revealed to us. Nevertheless, that which can be learned about prior criminality often is the most valuable information that a parole board has about a prisoner.

At first inspection of a man's file, we usually learn only the events which appear on the FBI's list of his fingerprint reports. This is sometimes called his "rap sheet." It has a wealth of valuable information, but is often difficult to interpret. One problem in using these records is that a criminal commonly is fingerprinted several times on each major offense, and each fingerprinting leads to a new line on this report. First, the prisoner may be reported by the police who arrested him, then by the sheriff who operated the jail in which the prisoner was confined, then by each prison to which he may have been committed. Each of these separate lines on the FBI sheet should not be confused with those for a new offense. Of course, this problem will not confront a parole board if it receives a casework report which summarizes the criminal record in a simpler and clearer manner than that of the original record.

During the intervals in which he was free, between his major offenses, a prisoner often will have had numerous arrests not resulting in conviction. While a man must legally be presumed innocent of any charge for which he was not convicted, such arrests suggest that the person with whom we are dealing frequented places, had associates, or kept hours which got him into difficulties with the law. These could also interfere with his fulfillment of parole requirements. Minimally, these arrests may suggest that the prisoner's reputation with the police in his home community is not conducive to his parole success there. Even where there is a possibility that this was police harassment due to his earlier behavior, the prospect of its continuing should be taken into account.

Ideally, inquiry and investigation of gaps in the criminal record and of other matters, should begin in the presentence study by the probation officer. Of course, such studies are not always made, or are not reported to the board. Remaining issues should be probed by the prison caseworker, by interview and by correspondence, so that adequate information is available when the parole board member con-

fronts the prisoner. By directing appropriate questions to the caseworkers on gaps or errors in information available at the parole board hearing, the parole board may promote improvements in the material prepared for its case.

There are so many standpoints from which criminal records can be analyzed, that we cannot exhaust all of the possibilities here. Instead we shall focus on three principal types of information for which this record is our primary or our initial source. These are: the *duration* of the prisoner's prior involvement in crime, his *prior experience with government agencies dealing with crime* (police, courts, prisons, etc.), and *the types of offense* he has committed.

Duration of Prior Criminality

The duration of prior criminality can be estimated imperfectly from several types of evidence. For example, offenders can be differentiated according to the age at which they were first arrested, first adjudicated, first committed to a correctional institution, or first reported in any type of difficulty for delinquent activity. Presumably, among offenders of approximately the same age, the earlier they first have any of these experiences, the longer is the span of their prior involvement in crime, and the more likely they are to continue in crime. This is indicated by table 2.

The foregoing conclusion has occasionally been challenged by a theory that all offenders have approximately the same period of delinquency and crime to go through, so that the earlier they start this period, the younger they will be when they conclude it. This is suggested by the finding that many older chronic offenders have no juvenile delinquency or youth crime record.⁴

Nevertheless, the predominance of evidence is against this conclusion. Despite some deviations, the overall generalization indicated by table 2 is that at any age, the longer the span of prior criminality, the more likely it is that it will be extended in the future. Unfortunately, not many cross tabulations of violation rates are available which relate age at release to age of first arrest or other index of first criminality, as does table 2.

The few rather persistent types of crime characteristically starting at a later age than the majority of offenses provide exceptions to the foregoing generalization that early onset means more persistence in crime. These late starting offenses consist of some crimes associated with alcoholism, especially check forgery, and some offenses that also seem to occur as an abnormal adjustment to senility. These include a petty theft and vagrancy combination, and certain sexual indecency offenses. The old and persistent criminals who do not have a criminal record which goes back to juvenile days, or have a long gap between youth and old age offenses, are not sufficiently numerous to contradict

⁴ Wooton, *op. cit.*

Table 2.—Postrelease Failure Rates of Federal Adult Male Prisoners According to Both Age at Release and Indices of Duration of Prior Criminality

[Number of cases is indicated in parentheses]

Index of duration of prior involvement in crime	All cases	Age at release from prison			
		18 to 21	22 to 25	26 to 35	36 and over
Age at first arrest:					
16 and under.....percent..	46 (304)	53 (94)	43 (88)	43 (106)	40 (35)
17 to 20.....percent..	38 (316)	37 (49)	45 (73)	41 (116)	28 (78)
21 and over.....percent..	24 (395)	24 (37)	24 (184)	24 (174)	
Number of prior sentences for felony-like offenses:					
None.....percent..	25 (423)	44 (78)	31 (98)	21 (151)	11 (96)
1.....percent..	37 (221)	52 (31)	46 (37)	34 (105)	25 (48)
2.....percent..	44 (154)	57 (23)	52 (27)	45 (64)	28 (40)
3 or more.....percent..	46 (217)	45 (11)	83 (16)	48 (86)	42 (104)
All cases.....percent..	35 (1,015)	48 (143)	40 (178)	34 (406)	27 (288)

the overall generalization that the younger a person was when his crime began, the more likely he is to persist in it.

The number of prior felony convictions is only a rough indication of the duration of prior criminality. Of course, what we know about a man's criminal record generally is limited to that which was recorded by government agencies which dealt with him. Therefore, the duration past criminality often can be roughly estimated from many types of available records on a person's experience with agents of the law.

Prior Police, Court, and Correctional Experience

Since there are many ways of classifying a criminal's record of previous experience with government agencies, it is often difficult to compare statistical tabulations from different jurisdictions. A variety of ways of classifying the data are illustrated in table 3.

These tabulations indicate, on the whole, that no matter how one counts the volume of previous experience with police, court, or correctional agencies, the overall trend is for the parole failure rate to increase as the magnitude of this prior experience increases. This trend, however, is offset by the influence of age: one or more commitments as a juvenile seems to be more unfavorable as a prognostic sign than the same number of commitments later. In general, the increase in violation rate with increasing number of prior commitments becomes progressively less, or halts completely, after a few

terms of imprisonment, or even of successive felony convictions. However, table 2 indicated quite clearly that this decrease in failure rate simply reflects the crime-diminishing effect of older age at release for those with three or more prior felony convictions. Possibly the reduced rate of return to crime with each successive commitment also reflects some rehabilitative or deterrent influence of imprisonment. It is clear, at any rate, that we cannot conclude with certainty that everyone in any category of prior criminal record will persist in crime indefinitely into the future.

Table 3 (Part One).—Postrelease Violation Rates in Relation to Various Classifications of Prior Contact with Agencies of the Law

California Youth Authority male parolees		New York adult parolees	
Prior contacts	Violation rate	Number of prior arrests	
		Males	Females
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
None.....	24	21	36
1 or 2 contacts for delinquency, no commitment.....	37	27	45
3, 4, or 5 contacts for delinquency, no commitment.....	44	35	50
6 or more contacts for delinquency, no commitment.....	44	35	53
1 or 2 contacts and one commitment.....	49	46	46
3, 4, or 5 contacts and one commitment.....	46		
6 or more contacts and one commitment.....	45		
2 or more prior commitments.....	50		
Violation rate for all cases.....	44	37	43
Number of cases.....	3,046	7,636	738

Washington adult parolees	
Prior felony conviction	Violation rate
	<i>Percent</i>
None.....	23
1.....	33
2.....	40
3 or more.....	50
Rates for all cases.....	38
Number of cases.....	1,731

The Wisconsin data in table 3 show that prison commitments alone may not be as unfavorable for parole prognosis as combinations of prison and lesser commitments. This unfavorable prognosis is in terms of overall violation rate only; it ignores type of violation. Persons habitually in minor difficulty with the law, such as drunks and vagrants, may not be as serious a problem to parole boards as persons less likely to violate, but more likely to commit serious new

Table 3 (Part Two).—Postrelease Violation Rates in Relation to Various Classifications of Prior Contact With Agencies of the Law

Federal adult male releasees		Illinois youthful male parolees	
Most serious prior contact	Violation rate	Most serious prior contact	Violation rate
	Percent		Percent
No prior contact.....	15	No prior contact.....	24
Arrests or fines only.....	25	Arrests or fines only.....	35
Jail and/or probation.....	31	Jail and/or probation.....	40
Training, reform, or industrial school.....	55	Training, reform, or industrial school.....	54
Reformatory or prison.....	43	Reformatory or prison.....	39
Rate for all cases.....	35	Rate for all cases.....	39
Number of cases.....	1,015	Number of cases.....	2,693

Wisconsin parolees				
Type of prior contacts	Juveniles		Adults	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Most serious prior commitments:				
No prior commitment.....	46	40	27	13
Juvenile detention, jail, or probation.....	61	41	42	26
1 prison only.....			45	50
Prison plus lesser commitments.....			59	33
2 prison only.....			36	
2 prison plus lesser commitments.....			53	
3 prison.....			50	
4 or more prison.....			70	
Prior releases on present commitment:				
None.....	43	38	34	23
1.....	53	41	51	25
2 or more.....	52	41	55	40
Rates for all cases.....	50	39	36	23
Number of cases.....	1,037	453	2,255	206

offenses if they do. This observation, of course, brings out the oversimplification we are employing in most of this discussion by not distinguishing different types of violation. Some correction of this deficiency will be made in considering offense as a factor in parole prognosis.

Types of Offense

Still another aspect of the vital information provided to parole boards by the criminal record is the type of offense for which a prisoner is currently committed, or in which he was previously involved. It is appropriate therefore to provide an overall view of the many types of offense, and to compare their significance in predicting continuation of criminality.

The most persistent types of common crime are those in which offenders obtain someone else's money without use of violence. These crimes can be divided into two major categories: illegal service and predatory crimes.

Illegal service crimes consist of economically motivated offenses in which there is no person who clearly considers himself a victim; instead, the persons with whom the criminals deal are his customers. Examples of such crimes are the sale of illicit alcoholic beverages ("moonshine"), narcotics and stolen goods, and the provision of illegal gambling and prostitution services. Only a minute proportion of these offenses lead to arrest and prosecution. Also, conviction on some of these charges, such as gambling and prostitution, seldom leads to imprisonment, so parole boards seldom confront such criminals. Because these criminal services are both more profitable and safer than most other offenses, one can reasonably speculate that they may be the most frequently committed clearly criminal acts, even though this is not confirmed by complaint or arrest statistics.

The crimes usually encountered by parole boards are predatory crimes. As indicated in table 4, on the whole, these offenses usually fall into three main clusters, from the standpoint of violation rates. The offenses usually associated with the highest violation rates involve taking somebody else's property by stealth or by deceit. Notable here are the crimes of theft, burglary, and forgery.

Theft, which older criminal codes usually call "larceny," consists simply of taking somebody else's property. Both in the law and in statistical tabulations, the crime of auto theft usually is treated separately. Auto thieves have the highest rates of parole violation in most jurisdictions, possibly because they generally are the youngest parolees. Their crime usually is committed for the temporary enjoyment of transportation rather than for long-term economic gains. For this reason, in approximately 90 percent of auto thefts the vehicle is recovered intact, even though the thieves usually are not caught. However, in some auto thefts the cars are stripped, and some older auto thieves are in gangs which falsify ownership papers and sell stolen cars.

Other types of theft include shoplifting, removing objects from parked cars, picking pockets, taking goods from places of employment, and many more varieties of "stealing." Most of the separate crimes are small, frequently they are not immediately discovered by the victim, and probably a major portion are never reported to the police. Only a small proportion of theft reported to the police, other than auto theft, is solved by recovery of the stolen goods, or conviction of the offenders. Furthermore, the small value of the property taken in separate offenses frequently results in a convicted person receiving only a minor penalty, so that most of the time they never go to prison or receive only a short sentence. Probably the persistence of these

Table 4 (Part 1).—Postrelease Violation Rates in Relation to Offense

Offense	Wisconsin parolees				New York adult parolees	
	Juveniles ^a		Adults		Males	Females
	Males	Females	Males	Females		
Highest violations:	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Auto theft.....	50	20	47	60		
Other theft.....	51	42	34	25		^c 27
Burglary.....			39	20	42	36
Forgery and fraud.....			48	32	46	5
Intermediate and inconsistent:						
Robbery.....			38	12	37	38
Narcotics.....						
Lowest violations:						
Rape and assault to rape.....			31		19	
Other sex offenses.....	33	37	21	16	24	
Felonious assault.....			31	17	33	29
Homicide.....			16	20	19	28
All others.....	44	41	35	25	38	19
Rates for all cases.....	50	39	36	23	38	36
Number of cases.....	1,037	453	2,255	206	^b 5,929	^b 329

^a Offenses for juveniles were tabulated by Wisconsin officials separately for 3 major offenses—*theft, auto theft, and sex offenses*—plus purely juvenile offenses like *truancy*, plus all combinations of these several categories. The above tabulations are based on all parolees charged with any of these 3 offenses, alone or in combination. The few multiple-major-offense cases are included under each of their offenses.

^b Felonies only; excludes cases tabulated as "misdemeanors" and "youthful adjudications."

^c Auto theft and all other thefts are compiled as 1 offense—*grand larceny*—in New York.

Table 4 (Part 2).—Postrelease Violation Rates in Return to Offense

Offense	Minnesota adult male parolees	California Youth Authority parolees	Federal adult male releasees	Illinois adult male parolees	Illinois youthful male parolees	Washington adult parolees
Highest violations:	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Auto theft.....	58	49	47		50	52
Other theft.....	57	54	38	^c 36	39	40
Burglary.....	41	42		42	48	38
Forgery and fraud.....	54	43	30	55	42	50
Intermediates and inconsistent:						
Robbery.....	47	20	28	42	31	31
Narcotics.....		41	30	14		
Lowest violations:						
Rape and assault to rape.....		41				21
Other sex offenses.....	22	32		^a 14	^a 13	16
Felonious assault.....	41	28	^a 18			36
Homicide.....	21	18		14	20	21
All others.....	38	48	25	44	35	34
Rates for all cases.....	44	44	35	37	39	38
Number of offenses.....	525	3,046	1,015	955	2,093	1,731

^a Includes "rape."

^b Includes "homicide."

^c Includes "auto and stolen property."

^d Includes "assault."

criminals is due in large part to the fact that they cannot readily be given certain or severe penalties.

Burglary consists of breaking and entering for the purpose of committing a felonious act, and it sometimes is designated in the law as "breaking" or "breaking and entering." Usually it is committed in conjunction with larceny at the place entered. However, burglary almost always causes a more severe penalty than larceny alone, so the offenders usually are prosecuted only for burglary. However, some State laws make "burglary and larceny" a single compound offense. A majority of persons arrested for burglary are under 19 years of age, but an appreciable number of the burglars who are encountered in prison populations are older. These often include those for whom burglary has become a profession in which they work closely with dealers in stolen goods ("fences").

Another kind of recurrent economic offense not involving violence is the crime of forgery. Forgers differ from most criminals in the extent to which they commit their crimes alone, and in being relatively older. Petty or naive forgery is notably associated with chronic alcoholism. Perhaps because cashing a fraudulent check requires a certain amount of facility at writing, and an appearance of success, forgers are also distinctive in generally having more education and less often coming from an impoverished home than most prisoners. Other types of fraud, often called "confidence games" or "bunko games," are less often associated with alcoholism than simple check forgery, and are more frequently persistent criminal professions. Embezzlement is a special kind of fraud, frequently involving violation of trust by a prominent and presumably trustworthy citizen, so that he is placed in a government or business position where he handles much money. These offenders generally are good risks as far as prospects for violation are concerned, but their parole poses special public relations problems.

The selling of narcotics has already been mentioned as an illegal service crime. Other narcotic offenses include illegal possession, use, and purchase of narcotic drugs. Evidence on the relative risk of these narcotic offenders, as parolees is inconsistent. There is some indication that they have very high violation rates when they are paroled to neighborhoods where narcotics usage is extensive, but that they have average or below average violation rates elsewhere.

Robbery is different from the economically motivated crimes described earlier, in that robbery involves the use or threat of violence in order to procure someone else's property. Like narcotic offenses, it is associated with diverse violation or recidivism rates in different jurisdictions, but robbers generally seem to have about the average violation rate for their age group. However, they are of concern to parole boards because of the serious injury or death which they may cause. Robbers vary tremendously in character. They include

groups of adolescents in slum areas who "roll" drunks coming from taverns in the late hours of night, naive individuals who make a foolhardy effort to solve economic crises by trying to hold up a large bank (often without a working weapon), and some highly dangerous individuals who have a psychological drive to hurt their victims.

The cluster of offenses associated with the lowest violation rates on parole are crimes which least often serve as vocations. These include homicide and rape. However, the strong public demand for punishment as an expression of revenge against such offenders, plus the extreme importance of preventing recurrence of these crimes, makes parole boards exceptionally cautious in paroling those who commit these offenses.

One of the least favorable crimes, from the standpoint of parole violation probability, is the crime of escape from prison. In some States, notably California, offenders sentenced for this offense have the highest violation rate of any offense category, even higher than auto thieves. However, escapees do not constitute a large proportion of prisoners.

Thus far, this discussion has dealt only with gross violation rates, although it has been noted that the nature of the probable parole violation may be a crucial consideration in parole decisions. The type of violation likely to be committed, if any, is a concern especially in the forefront of a parole board member's thoughts when he considers the type of offense for which a prisoner was last convicted. William L. Jacks, statistician of the Pennsylvania Board of Parole, has made one of the few studies of type of violation in relation to type of offense. This is summarized in table 5.

Table 5 indicates, first, that in Pennsylvania the offenses fell into three main clusters in terms of prospects of committing a new crime on parole, and these three clusters were much like those for overall violation rates shown in table 4. However, larceny and narcotics offenses are ranked somewhat differently in these two compilations. Burglars, forgers, and narcotic drug offenders were most likely to commit the same offenses, while larceny and robbery were an intermediate cluster, followed by felonious assault and sex offenses. Homicides were lowest, only about 1 in 250 committed a homicide on parole after being imprisoned for homicide. The gravity of this offense, of course, still makes any repetition a crucial concern.

A California tabulation of adult male parolees returned to prison for a new offense in 1959, 1960, and 1961 concluded: 26 percent are returned for a more serious offense than that on which they were paroled, 38 percent are returned for an offense of similar seriousness to that on which they were paroled, and 37 percent are returned for a less serious offense. Seriousness was measured by the length of the statutory maximum sentence for the offense in California, except

Table 5.—Type of Offense for Which Committed as a Factor in Type of Offense, if any, Committed on Parole (for Pennsylvania Only)

All parolees, 1946-61 *		
Offense for which imprisoned	Percent committing new crimes on parole	Percent repeating on parole the crime for which imprisoned
Auto larceny ^b		
Larceny.....	22.5	6.4
Burglary.....	23.4	11.1
Forgery.....	22.3	10.2
Robbery.....	19.5	5.1
Narcotics.....	15.9	10.1
Sex offenders.....	8.8	2.9
Assault and battery.....	12.3	3.6
Homicide.....	5.7	0.4
Other offenses.....	10.2	3.1
Rates for all cases.....	18.4	6.8
Number of cases.....	29,346	29,346

* From Pennsylvania Board of Parole, "A Comparison of Releases and Recidivists from June 1, 1946, to May 31, 1961," Harrisburg: The Board, Dec. 20, 1961.

^b Included in Larceny.

that narcotics offenses were classified as more serious than property offenses with higher maximum sentences.⁵

Intelligence

Intelligence tests are almost invariably administered to the inmates of correctional institutions today. They are used to determine the appropriate education, work, and treatment of each prisoner, and the test results also are reported to the parole board. Despite the convenient availability of this information, it has been found to have only a slight relationship to parole outcome. As table 6 shows, in the several jurisdictions for which we have procured statistics, there was little consistent pattern of violation rate according to intelligence. Generally, the most mentally deficient inmates did not do as well on parole as most prisoners, but usually their violation rates were not extremely different from many with above average intelligence scores.

A prisoner's intelligence test score, of course, can reflect his capacity for both legal and illegal types of behavior. It may be significant information for the parole board as an indication of whether an expected parole job is within a parolee's capacity. It may also be the basis for speculation that certain inmates would be particularly

⁵ Administrative Statistics Section, Research Division, *Seriousness of New Offense with Respect to Offense Classification at Time of Parole*, Sacramento: The Department of Corrections, March 1, 1962.

Table 6.—Postrelease Violation Rates in Relation to Intelligence

Minnesota adult male parolees		California Youth Authority male parolees		Illinois youthful male parolees		Washington adult parolees	
Intelligence quotient	Violation rate	Intelligence classification	Violation rate	Intelligence classification	Violation rate	Intelligence classification	Violation rate
	Percent		Percent		Percent		Percent
145 and over.....	33	Very superior.....	0	Very superior.....	16	-----	-----
135 to 144.....	53	Superior.....	43	Superior.....	39	-----	-----
125 to 134.....	42	High average.....	48	High average.....	33	Above average.....	27
115 to 124.....	49	Bright normal.....	37	-----	-----	-----	-----
105 to 114.....	57	Normal.....	40	Average.....	41	Average.....	32
95 to 104.....	42	Dull normal.....	46	Low average.....	39	-----	-----
85 to 94.....	46	Borderline.....	49	Dull.....	38	Below average.....	39
75 to 84.....	49	Moron.....	55	Borderline.....	46	-----	-----
65 to 74.....	51	-----	-----	Mental deficient.....	47	-----	-----
Rates for all cases.....	44	-----	44	-----	39	-----	32
Number of cases.....	525	-----	3,046	-----	2,689	-----	800

dangerous if they returned to crime. However, it is surprising how often crimes reflect emotional behavior not guided by much apparent intelligent thinking, even when the offender has considerable mental capacity.

An additional consideration which parole board members should keep in mind is that intelligence tests are never perfectly accurate, and those given in a prison or other correctional institution are often exceptionally unreliable. Although the test scores theoretically reflect an inherited mental capacity, it is well known that performance on many of these tests is greatly affected by exposure to schooling, by the type of vocabulary which an individual needed in his social environment, by experience in using the type of arithmetic and mathematics included in the test, and, especially, by motivation to perform well. These tests often underrate a prison inmate's intelligence because he is indifferent or hostile to taking the test at the time it is administered, usually when he is new to the prison, and because he has not been involved in school for some time. Frequently, the scores on these tests increase if they are administered again after the inmates have attended a prison school for an extended period. It should also be noted that intelligence scores sometimes are erroneously high in some correctional institutions because of lax control in administering the tests or in recording their results.

Race and Nationality

Although Negroes in the United States have a higher rate of arrest, conviction, and imprisonment for crimes than whites, most tabulations we have encountered find little marked or consistent difference in the

parole violation rates of the two groups. This is indicated in table 7. It is probable that the higher crime rates among Negroes occur largely because Negroes, more often than whites, experience conditions associated with high crime rates in all racial groups. These conditions include low income, high unemployment, low level of education, and residence in slum areas which have long had high crime rates.

These conditions conducive to high crime rates usually are also associated with high parole violation rates. The fact that Negro parole violation rates are not higher than those of whites, therefore, is somewhat puzzling. It may reflect more careful selection of Negroes for parole than of whites, or more frequent institutionalization of unadvanced offenders among Negroes than among whites. There is some evidence that the latter occurs with juvenile delinquents, but evidence as to its occurrence in prison is conflicting.⁶

Table 7.—Postrelease Violation Rates in Relation to Racial or National Descent

Ethnic classification	Wisconsin parolees			
	Juveniles		Adults	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
White.....	49	37	36	21
Negro.....	57	49	35	23
American Indian.....	48	59	37	40
Mexican.....	71	-----	19	-----
Mongoloid.....	-----	-----	-----	-----
Other.....	-----	-----	-----	-----
Rates for all cases.....	50	39	36	23
Number of cases.....	1,037	453	2,255	206

Ethnic classification	Minnesota adult male parolees	California Youth Authority parolees	Washington adult parolees
	Percent	Percent	Percent
White.....	46	41	38
Negro.....	35	49	34
American Indian.....	56	-----	47
Mexican.....	-----	44	-----
Mongoloid.....	-----	-----	-----
Other.....	-----	43	-----
Rates for all cases.....	44	44	38
Number of cases.....	525	3,046	1,731

⁶ Sydney Axelrad, "Negro and White Male Institutionalized Delinquents," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 47, No. 6 (May 1952), pp. 569-574; Henry A. Bullock, "Significance of the Racial Factor in the Length of Prison Sentences," *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (November-December 1961), pp. 411-417.

In the southwest portion of the United States, the largest ethnic minority are persons of Mexican descent. In California, where they are most numerous, they have a parole violation rate about the same as that of whites and Negroes. American Indians generally have an average or somewhat higher than average rate of parole violation.

The differences in crime or parole violation rates for various ethnic groups could readily develop as a consequence of police or parole officers not treating every person in the same fashion for a given type of behavior, regardless of the person's ethnic descent. Statistics to assess whether or not this occurs are not available on a widespread and recent basis. A common impression is that officials tend to overlook infractions committed by minority group members in their own community, and to be unusually severe in dealing with infractions which members of minorities commit elsewhere. This, of course, could be conducive to the habituation of minority group members to criminal behavior, which they might engage in wherever they encounter an opportunity.

Japanese and Chinese are infrequent in correctional institution populations. In California, where they are most numerous, they have a lower violation rate than other parolees. This probably reflects the closeknit community and family support which they receive.

In a few portions of the country, notably New York, persons of Puerto Rican descent are a new and extensive component of the prison population. Experience with them as parolees has been too brief for confident conclusions as to how their violation rates compare with those of other ancestry.

In general, the evidence on race and nationality as a factor in the evaluation of parolees suggests that it is not of much predictive utility in itself. However, an understanding of the different social and cultural worlds from which members of some minorities come, and to which they return, may be useful in understanding their offenses and in evaluating their parole plans.

Sex

Males coming before parole boards in most States outnumber females in a ratio of about 20 to 1. This probably occurs both because females in our society commit felonies less often than males do, and because those females who are convicted of felonies are less likely to receive a sentence of imprisonment than are males. Table 8 suggests that female parolees violate less often than males, but the differences are not always marked.

Body Characteristics

In the 19th century, there was much effort to explain crime as the expression of an inherited characteristic that could be identified by a

Table 8.—Postrelease Violation Rates in Relation to Sex of Parolee

Sex	Wisconsin parolees		New York adult parolees	Washington adult parolees
	Juvenile	Adult		
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Male.....	50	36	37	38
Female.....	39	23	43	25
Rates for all cases.....	47	35	37	38
Number of cases.....	1,490	2,461	8,364	1,731

person's physical appearance. One still frequently hears people say that somebody looks like a criminal, or that someone else looks like he could not possibly be a criminal. However, parole board members often observe a fine appearance in some individuals who have shocking criminal records.

There have been popular experiments to investigate the ability to predict criminality from physical appearance. The most useless efforts involved asking people to judge character from photographs of criminals mixed with photographs of highly-respected noncriminal persons, when all persons portrayed were of about the same age and wore similar apparel. These studies demonstrated almost complete failure of this approach to character judgment.

Years ago, a study found that height and weight had no relationship to parole violation.⁷ Classification of people by their general physical condition has not uncovered clear and consistent findings of marked deviation from average violation rates. Some studies find those in poor health or having a handicap have slightly higher than average violation rates, while others found these individuals slightly more successful on parole than the average.

The most recent extensive research in this field has been that of the Gluecks, which compared the overall body dimensions of delinquents with those of nondelinquents from the same high delinquency neighborhoods. The delinquents were huskier (mesomorphic) in body build than the nondelinquents.⁸ It has not yet been demonstrated that this is not simply the result of the huskier youth in high delinquency areas being more readily accepted in delinquent street gang activity (and perhaps, also, more readily picked up by the police), than the slender (ectomorphic) or paunchy (endomorphie) youth.

⁷ George B. Vold, *Prediction Methods and Parole*, Hanover, N.H.: The Sociological Press, 1931.

⁸ Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, *Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, 1950, chapter 15; *Ibid.*, *Physique and Delinquency*, New York: Harpers, 1956.

SUMMARY

Of the gross characteristics readily available for the classification of prisoners, those most closely related to parole outcome were found to be age and criminal record. On the whole, younger prisoners were shown to have the highest violation rates. However, the extent to which violation rate decreased with age was not uniform for all populations for which this information was available. Some sources of variation in this relationship were discussed.

The criminal record was found to have a wealth of information closely related to parole outcome, but capable of classification in many ways. Of course, an individual's prior criminality is only known from the crimes for which he was apprehended and his offenses recorded, and this record is often incomplete. Nevertheless, lower parole violation rates were consistently found for those with no prior criminal record. However, the violation rate for younger first offenders was much higher than that for older first or second felony offenders. The figures predominantly support a conclusion that the lower a prisoner's age at first arrest, the higher his parole violation rate is likely to be at any subsequent age, but some types of late-starting persistent offenders were noted.

Although persons with little or no prior contact with police, courts, or correctional institutions have a much better record on parole than those who have been in institutions before, the rate of violation does not always increase markedly with each increase in the number of convictions or commitments. This may partially reflect the crime diminution generally occurring with older age at release; the extent to which it can be credited to rehabilitative or deterrent effects of prior imprisonment cannot readily be determined.

Offenses were found to fall into three main clusters as far as parole violation rates are concerned. Those for which the prospect of violation is greatest are crimes involving the taking of someone's property by stealth or deception without the use of force. Notable here are theft, burglary, and forgery. Narcotic offenses and robbery generally were associated with violation rates near the average for all parolees, but they were inconsistent in this respect from one jurisdiction to the next. On the whole, the lowest parole violation rates were associated with crimes of violence, including rape, assault, and homicide.

A Pennsylvania study was cited on the extent to which persons who violate parole by committing a new offense repeat the offense for which they previously were imprisoned. Burglars, forgers, and narcotic users were found most likely to repeat their previous offenses, if they committed a new offense. Sex offenders tabulated collectively were relatively low in rate of repeating the same crime, while those convicted of homicide showed the lowest rate of repeating the same offense while on parole of any category.

Intelligence, race, nationality, sex, and body build were found not to have sufficiently marked or consistent relationships to parole outcome for large numbers of offenders to be very useful in evaluating parolees.

END