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ARIZONA STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
DIVISION OF RESEARCH, PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION

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# I

## INTRODUCTION

Parole Boards across the country have the authority to release inmates from prison before they serve their entire term. The use of this authority has a major impact on both the individual inmates and the prison system. Yet, unlike most criminal justice procedures, the parole decision-making process is often governed by vague regulations. The criterion for release on parole in Arizona, for example, is "If it appears ... that there is a *reasonable probability* that the applicant will live and remain at liberty without violating the law, then the board *may* authorize the release of the applicant upon parole." [emphasis added]<sup>1</sup> This statute places a broad discretionary power in the hands of the Board of Pardons and Paroles, recognizing the uncertainty and risks that are inherent in any attempt to evaluate whether or not an individual inmate is rehabilitated.

In recent years, a number of attempts have been made to increase the objectivity of parole decisions by developing statistical instruments which assist parole board members in determining the degree of risk involved in paroling an inmate with certain characteristics. Most of these research studies have examined the relationship between personal characteristics of offenders and their probability of successful completion of parole. The U.S. Parole Board has incorporated one such instrument into their formal guidelines.<sup>2</sup> Much less attention has been paid to evaluating institutional behavior and parole program as factors affecting the chance of successful completion of parole.<sup>3</sup>

This study examines both demographic data and variables related to parole programs to assist Parole Officers, the Board of Pardons and Paroles and the Youth Hearing Board in evaluating the relative risk rates of the people they work with.

DEFINITIONS                      The inclusion of both adult and juvenile parolees in the same study creates some definitional problems because of the different legal processes for the two groups. Parole decisions (grants and revocations) for adults are made by the quasi-judicial, independent Board of Pardons and Paroles within time frames of time already served prior to parole eligibility and time to be spent under supervision if parole is granted. Limitations are determined by statutes and the sentencing court. Throughout the process, the primary emphasis is on the protection of society.

In determining treatment programs (in institutions or on parole) for juveniles, the statutory emphasis is on providing for the best interest of the child. The responsibility for juvenile parole decisions is delegated with the Department of Corrections through the three-member Youth Hearing Board. The single statutory limit on the Department is that jurisdiction must end by the time the juvenile reaches a specified age. Previously, the age limit was the individual's twenty-first birthday, but due to a change in laws, many of the parolees covered by this study ceased to be under jurisdiction on their eighteenth birthday.

Because of these differences, in times and emphasis, direct comparisons of the number of expirations of sentences, revocations, recommitments, etc. are inappropriate. For this study, parole terminations are classified as *successes by Parole or Youth Hearing Boards determination, successes at sentence termination or non-successes*. Even within this trichotomy, the comparability of adult and juvenile outcomes is limited.

The law provides for *Absolute Discharges* for both adult and juveniles parolees before the expiration of their terms at the discretion of paroling authority. Since this discretion is exercised based on evidence of rehabilitation demonstrated by positive adjustment in the community, these discharges are the *successes by Parole Board or Youth Hearing Board determination* of the parole system. Because there tends to be more time between parole and expiration of term for juveniles (with the more indeterminate form of sentence) than for adults, a larger portion of the juveniles receive early Absolute Discharges.

Those persons who live and remain at liberty through the *expiration* of the Department's jurisdiction are classified as *successes at sentence termination* since they succeeded in meeting the conditions of their parole. This category includes a majority of the adult parolees and a significant number of the juveniles who were committed when the Department's jurisdiction ended on a juvenile's eighteenth birthday.

The *non-success* category includes those parolees who were *returned* to correctional institutions. For the juveniles, it also includes those individuals who were convicted of a crime in adult court resulting in either a prison or adult probation sentence. Although these non-successes have failed to meet the positive expectations of parole, they are not necessarily failures in the sense of having returned to crime. These returnees are nearly equally divided between those who were returned to institutions because of committing a new felony (the true failures) and individuals whose paroles were revoked because of violations of the conditions attached to their release.

#### METHODOLOGY

The subjects for this study were limited to those persons committed to the Arizona Department of Corrections who were terminated from parole in 1974 after serving their entire parole time

under Arizona supervision. No persons who were supervised in other States under the Interstate Compact were included. This limitation is necessary to eliminate the effects of varying policies of paroling authorities and supervising agencies of different jurisdictions. Also, those persons who were discharged by court order (based on appeals of their original commitments) and those who died while on parole were excluded from the study since they do not necessarily reflect either successful or unsuccessful parole adjustments.

These restrictions (principally the exclusion of Interstate cases) eliminated thirty-eight percent of the parole terminations, leaving *baseline populations* of 320 adults and 806 juveniles. Since these baseline groups are limited to a portion of the parole terminations and not the total population at risk, the percent classified as non-successes is much greater than would be obtained using a conventional definition of recidivism.

The objective of this study is to determine the relative success rates of different sub-groups of parolees. The data for adults and juveniles are analyzed separately. In both groups, sub-groups were selected based on both descriptive (sex, ethnic, age, committing offense, sentencing county, and admitted use of narcotics) and parole program (employment, living arrangements, county of residence, special conditions attached to parole, and number of different supervising parole officers) variables.

Each sub-group of parolees (skilled workers, unemployed, etc.) was compared to the baseline group with differences noted in the proportion of successes, conditional successes and non-successes. These differences were tested for statistical significance using the Chi-square test. This method tends to under estimate the significance of observed differences because the sub-groups are not completely independent of the base. This disadvantage is not serious; any



result found to be significant using this method would also be statistically significant if the sub-group were compared to all members of the baseline group who were not in the sub-group. The advantage of a higher degree of comparability of Chi-square scores for different factors gained by using a constant statistical base offsets the disadvantage.

Each sub-group includes only those individuals for whom the selection criteria had been verified. For example, in examining employment factors, only those cases whose employment status had been verified by the parole officer's report are included. No assumptions are made concerning the characteristics of cases without verified information. Therefore, the total number of individuals in sub-groups for a factor may be less than the number in the baseline group.

All of the data used for this study are routinely collected and stored on the Community Services Caseload Management module of the computerized Arizona Correctional Information System. Each item has been audited and recorded by a data clerk from the reports of the Department's field staff. The data used here is available for additional future analysis.

## CHAPTER II

### ADULT PAROLE TERMINATIONS

The analysis of factors which relate to parole success is based on the examination of the 320 local cases terminated from Arizona parole supervision by expiration, absolute discharge or return to prison during 1974. This base population closely reflects the sex and ethnic composition of the total parole population in that it is predominately (95%) male, includes a White majority with significant numbers of Blacks and Mexican-Americans and a smaller number of Indians.

These parolees had completed an average of twenty-five months under parole supervision before their termination. The majority (56.6%) were terminated upon the expiration of their sentences - after successfully completing the conditions of their parole. Another fifteen percent were granted Absolute Discharges by the Board of Pardons and Paroles prior to the normal expiration of their sentences because of demonstrated successful adjustment in the community. Those persons receiving absolute discharges served longer under parole supervision (an average of 33 months) than the groups receiving other types of termination. The amount of time required for a parolee to demonstrate a positive adjustment to the community appears to have the effect of limiting consideration for early discharge to that minority of parolees whose maximum period of parole supervision is more than three years. Therefore, extra caution must be exercised in comparing the distribution of absolute

discharges for factors (such as offense) which are related to length of sentence (since longer sentences are more apt to provide the opportunity to be considered for absolute discharge.

TABLE 1

Adult Baseline Group  
(1974 Parole Terminations)

<u>TYPE OF TERMINATION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Absolute Discharge (success by Board determination)	48	15.0
Expiration (success at sentence termination)	181	56.6
Returned to Institution (non-success)	91	28.4
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	320	100.0

The returnees (non-successes) are equally divided between individuals who were returned to prison because of committing a new felony (parole failures) and parolees who are returned to prison for non-criminal violation of the conditions of their release. The twenty-eight percent return rate shown in Table 1 is not to be confused with the rate of parole violations because the figures in this study are compared to a base population limited to a portion of the terminations instead of the total "at risk" population. If the full parole population during 1974 is used as the base, the parole violation rate is only 5 1/2%.

## DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

The small number of women in the baseline group makes it impossible to firmly establish whether or not sex is significantly related to parole outcomes. However, the nearly identical rates for prison returns for men and women indicates similar likelihood for parole success.

TABLE 2

## Sex of Adult Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
Male	302	14.2	57.3	28.5	0.14
Female	18	27.8	44.4	27.8	2.43
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

Ethnic group comparisons are more complex than other factors. While Indians experienced the lowest rate of prison returns, the small size of the sample precludes attaching any significance to that result. The observed differences between the success rates of the Whites, Mexican-Americans and Indians and the baseline group are all insignificant. The Blacks in this study had a significantly lower success rate than the other groups. This finding should not be construed as supporting claims of discrimination nor of a proclivity of Blacks towards recidivism. A greater portion of the Blacks among the parole population come from the worst socio-economic conditions. An earlier study by the Department<sup>4</sup> indicates that differences between ethnic groups tend to disappear when socio-economic conditions are similar.

TABLE 3  
Ethnic Background - Adult Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
White	168	19.6	59.5	20.8	6.05
Black	76	11.8	42.1	46.1	11.66†
Mexican-Amer.	55	7.3	56.4	36.4	3.42
Indian	13	15.4	76.7	7.7	2.91
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

† Significant at .01 level.

There is a definite relationship between increasing parole success rates and advancing age. The younger parolees are the most apt to be returned to prison, while older parolees are more likely to receive absolute discharges. The relatively stable rate of expirations along with increases in the percent of absolute discharges may be the result of the general tendency for younger (usually first-term) inmates to receive shorter sentences. Shorter sentences make review for an early absolute discharge less likely than the older convicts.

Although younger parolees appear to present a greater risk, the higher prison return rates of even the youngest group (those under 22 at time of parole) does not reach the level required to ascribe statistical significance to the differences. At the other end of the age range, the success rate of parolees over forty is significantly better than the baseline group.

TABLE 4

Age at Time of Parole  
Adults

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
Under 30	175	14.9	52.0	33.1	2.04
30 - 39	64	25.0	50.0	25.0	2.51
40 or Older	46	30.4	50.0	19.6	8.92*
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

\* Significant at .05 level.

OFFENSE            The nature of the offense a parolee is convicted of committing appears to have little relationship to the risk of his returning to prison as a parole violator - with one notable exception. The majority (55.3%) of the robbers in the baseline population were returned to prison before the end of their parole period, while the return rates for all other offense categories varied between eighteen and thirty-three percent.

Earlier research by the Department indicated that forgery and burglary, as well as robbery, accounted for a disproportionate number of recidivists (as indicated by prison admissions who had served prior terms).<sup>5</sup> This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that the current study does not include prison returns occurring after the end of parole supervision nor by persons who leave prison by expiration of sentence. In general, robbers receive much longer sentences than either burglars or forgers,<sup>6</sup> and are therefore subject to parole supervision (and possibility of revocation) for a longer period of time (an average of about two years vs. nine months for forgery and burglary). The

difference in lengths of sentences also means that burglars and forgers have less opportunity for parole prior to the expiration of their sentences. Since parole is granted first to those persons whom the Board of Pardons and Paroles view to be the best risks, marginal and high-risk cases are less apt to receive parole supervision when shorter sentences are involved. Fifty percent of the burglars and forgers, but only twenty-three percent of the robbers released from prison in 1974 were returned to the community without any post-institutional supervision.<sup>7</sup> Their recidivism is not included in a study of parole outcomes.

TABLE 5

Committing Offense  
Adult Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
Robbery	38	13.1	31.6	55.3	13.94†
Homicide	22	31.8	40.9	27.3	5.11
Assault	46	21.7	52.2	26.1	1.64
Burglary	83	8.4	65.1	26.5	3.54
Larceny	33	12.1	69.7	18.2	2.39
Auto Theft	14	7.1	71.4	21.4	1.36
Narcotics	45	17.8	53.3	28.9	0.32
Sex Offenses	12	8.3	58.3	33.3	0.46
Forgery	13	23.1	46.2	30.8	0.84
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

† Significant at .01 level.

Similarly, the pattern of Absolute Discharges earned before the expiration of parole is greatly affected by length of sentence. Those offenses with the shortest average sentences (and least amount of time in which to earn an absolute discharge) have the highest ratio of expirations to absolute discharges - for burglary and auto theft the ratio is more than 7.5 to 1. For homicide, with the longest maximum sentences, this ratio is only 1.3 to 1.

**NARCOTICS USE**      Use of narcotics was measured by a combination of self-admissions (during the prison diagnostic program) and review of official records (for any narcotic law violation). If either of these provided any reference to use of any illegal drugs, the parolee was classified as a known user. Using this broad dichotomy of use vs. non-use, the differences in parole outcome did not reach the level of statistical significance, but definitely point in the direction of a greater risk of parole violation for drug users. It may well be that the most important drug-related indication of parole risk rates is obscured by the inclusion of all illegal drugs (marijuana as well as opiates and hallucinogens) in the single category.

TABLE 6  
Involvement With Illegal Drugs  
Adult Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
No Known Use	144	21.5	56.9	21.5	6.49
Admitted Use or Official Record	164	10.4	53.6	36.0	5.91
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--



RESIDENCE                      There is a definite tendency for higher prison return rates to be associated with the more urbanized areas.

However, since the vast majority of the parolees returned to live in the same county where they were sentenced, it is impossible to determine whether this is the result of residing in the urban areas (Phoenix and Tucson) or is a residual effect of more hard-core offenders having been sentenced in the urban counties to begin with. In every county, the success rates for parolees residing in the area while on parole is nearly identical to the success rates for parolees sentenced in that county.

TABLE 7

County of Commitment and Parole Residence  
Adult Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
Maricopa County (Phoenix)					
Commitment	179	16.2	48.0	35.8	5.89
Parole Reside	191	13.1	52.4	34.5	3.62
Pima County (Tucson)					
Commitment	70	14.3	62.9	22.9	1.26
Parole Reside	66	16.7	57.6	25.7	0.29
Non-Urban Counties					
Commitment	70	12.9	71.4	15.7	6.90
Parole Reside	31	29.0	54.8	16.1	5.73
Parole Residence In County of Commitment	221	15.8	51.1	33.0	29.4
Baseline	320	15.4	56.6	28.4	--

There is a degree of increasing concentration of parolees in the urban centers. Fifty-six percent of the baseline group were committed from Maricopa County (metropolitan Phoenix), but sixty-six percent of the parolees' permanent addresses were in metropolitan Phoenix. Conversely, less than half of the individuals who had been sentenced in the twelve rural counties chose to reside in them while on parole. The only figure on Table 7 which reaches statistical significance is the high rate of Absolute Discharges (certified successes) among those parolees who chose to reside in the non-urban areas. It is possible to speculate that this difference is due to those men who returned to a rural area had maintained the strongest family ties.

A stable and cohesive home life holds a lot of intuitive value as a major factor in parole rehabilitation. There are no available objective measures of the quality of parolees' home life, but some inferences can be drawn from type of living arrangement and area of residence.

Parolees who live with their spouse are the most likely to receive absolute discharges. This situation may reflect an attitude on the part of parole officers and the Board of Pardons and Paroles that a continuing marital relationship is an important indicator of personal stability. However, parolees who live with their spouses have as great a risk of returning to prison as parolees who live by themselves or reside in a rehabilitation facility.

Parolees who reside with a parent or parents are significantly more likely to be returned to prison. This could be explained by postulating a build-up of pressure from extending a dependent relationship or by assuming that those

parolees who choose to live with their parents are less mature, and therefore, less likely to succeed than those who sought more independent quarters.

TABLE 8  
Living Arrangement of Adult Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
With Spouse	61	27.9	50.8	21.3	8.17*
With Parents	68	8.8	48.5	42.6	7.37
With Other Relative	27	11.1	55.6	33.3	0.51
With Unrelated Individual	18	0	50.0	50.0	5.80
By Self	93	18.3	62.4	19.3	3.89
In Rehabilitation Facility	19	10.5	68.4	21.1	1.08
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

\* Significant at .05 level.

EMPLOYMENT            The importance of employment in the rehabilitation process is underscored by the extreme difference in prison return rates for unemployed parolees and parolees with full-time jobs (see Table 9). This difference applies to returns with new felony charges as well as technical violations. The Chi-square value associated with unemployment is much greater than for any other factor which was examined. This indicates that unemployment is the number one danger sign of parole adjustment and would justify a policy of automatically placing out-of-work parolees on maximum casework supervision. These figures also imply that, irrespective of institutional rehabili-

tation efforts, we must expect a lower parole success rate during times of increased unemployment.

TABLE 9  
Employment Level - Adult Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
White Collar or Skilled Occupation	25	48.0	48.0	4.0	23.72†
Semi-skilled or Unskilled	117	22.2	59.0	18.8	7.98*
Total Full-time Employment	142	26.8	57.0	16.2	20.54†
Part time Employment	10	30.0	60.0	10.0	2.71
School/Vocational Training	3	0	100	0	3.83
Unemployed	110	4.5	40.0	55.5	41.72†
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

\* Significant at .05 level.

† Significant at .001 level.

While any full-time employment is an indicator of increased likelihood of parole success (compared to the baseline group), there is a significant difference between the success rates of parolees with white-collar or skilled-vocational jobs and those with semi-skilled or unskilled jobs. The negligible number of skilled employees returning to prison (one out of twenty-five) has obvious implications for the value of institutional vocational programs which prepare inmates for highly skilled work.

The better success rate of skilled and white-collar workers may be attributable to the higher income they receive. Parolees with monthly incomes over \$600 were significantly more likely to receive absolute discharges than parolees with lower income levels (see Table 10). Parolees with monthly incomes of less than \$600 were more apt to be returned to prison than the baseline group, but the rate of success is not proportional to the level of income. Higher income does not imply a higher success rate. Parolees with income above \$900 per month had the same rates of success and prison returns as those making between \$600 and \$900. Also, parolees with marginal incomes (between \$400 and \$600 a month) did no better than parolees with reported incomes of under \$400 a month.

TABLE 10  
Monthly Income From Last Job  
Adult Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
Under \$400	80	16.2	53.8	30.0	0.27
\$400 - \$599	67	13.4	52.2	34.3	1.16
Over \$600	60	33.3	46.7	20.0	15.98*
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

\* Significant at .01 level.

Steady employment in a job is not predictive of parole success unless that job provides an adequate income. It appears that there is an empirical "adequate" income level which is needed to reduce the likelihood of recidivism. The \$600 a month income which was found to define this minimally adequate level corre-

sponds closely to the Census Bureau's figure of \$7386 annual low budget cost of living for an urban family, and is approximately double the official poverty level (\$3788 - established in fall of 1972).

**SPECIAL SUPERVISION  
CONDITIONS**

A grant of parole carries some restrictions on the freedoms of movement and association and on the use of alcohol in addition to the requirement of supervision. In addition to these general conditions of parole, the Board of Pardons and Paroles may order additional, specific parole conditions. There can be stipulations for participating in a drug or alcohol rehabilitation program, psychiatric treatment or other counseling, prohibiting association with specific individuals, travel outside a limited geographic area, or engaging in specified activities. Special requirements are designed to lower either the motivation or temptation to commit criminal acts, but they also add to the number of acts that serve as grounds for return to prison.

There is a tendency (though not a statistically significant one) for higher prison return rates to be associated with the attachment of more special conditions to the grant of parole. However, the violation of a special condition was given as the reason for parole termination in only one case (for failure to enroll in a mandated drug treatment program), so the observed "effect" of these special conditions on the prison return rate is probably a by-product of the selection process. Special conditions may be attached to parole in those cases where the Board of Pardons and Paroles views the risk to be greater.<sup>8</sup>

Two special conditions were found to be significantly related to high rates of prison returns: required participation in an alcohol program and required

participation in a drug abuse program. Parolees subject to other special conditions experienced success rates similar to the baseline population. The significant conditions are precisely those which identify an individual as a member of a special problem group (substance abusers) with a historically higher recidivism rate, so it is doubtful that the imposition of a special condition has any effect *per se* on parole outcome.

TABLE 11  
Special Conditions Attached to Parole  
Adults

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
None	139	16.5	59.7	23.7	1.52
1	147	14.3	53.1	32.6	1.31
2 or More	24	16.7	41.7	41.7	2.48
Participate in Drug Program	35	5.7	42.9	51.4	9.71*
Participate in Alcohol Program	13	0	30.8	69.2	11.11†
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

\* Significant at .05 level.

† Significant at .02 level.

The Board of Pardons and Paroles subjective evaluation of which parolees had a drug problem severe enough to require special rehabilitative programs identifies a sub-group with a much greater rate of prison returns than the total group of known drug users. This finding raises a caution flag for efforts to create statistical instruments as the only method for determining parole

selection. Such instruments should not attempt to eliminate the subjective factors of human evaluation, but may be more usefully viewed as tools to assist that evaluation process.

Another dimension of parole supervision can be explored comparing the outcome of persons supervised by a single parole officer during the entire parole term with those who have been supervised by two or more different officers (caused generally by staff turnover among parole officers or change of parolees residence). If the personal relationship between the parolee and his supervising officer is in reality an important rehabilitation aid, then we would expect to find a greater success rate among those who maintained a continuous relationship with one parole officer then among persons supervised by a number of different officers.

TABLE 12  
Number of Different Parole Officers  
Assigned to an Adult

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
1	139	8.7	65.2	26.1	5.73
2	97	18.6	50.5	30.9	1.67
3 or More	85	21.2	49.4	29.4	2.97
Baseline	320	15.0	56.6	28.4	--

In this study, only trivial variations were found in the rate of prison returns associated with the number of different parole officers who had supervised each individual. On the other hand, early discharges for successful performance are more likely to be granted in cases where there has been a change in super-



vision. Although not statistically significant, this difference may indicate a tendency for parole officers to let their successful cases continue even though they may have met the criteria for a recommendation of absolute discharge, while the cases recently assigned as transfers receive a more thorough evaluation of progress.

### CHAPTER III

#### JUVENILE PAROLE TERMINATIONS

The distinction between institutional confinement and parole placement is not as rigid for juveniles committed to the Department of Corrections as it is for adults. The Department has the discretionary authority to move a juvenile back and forth between treatment in a Departmental facility and community program. This greater flexibility does result in a higher percent of juvenile parolees being returned to institutions than is the case of adults.

Another difference is that juveniles are not confined for defined sentences requiring minimum terms to be served before parole. Actual granting of parole is based entirely on the judgement of the professional Youth Hearing Board based on recommendations of other departmental staff. Partly as a result of both the indeterminant sentences and frequent professional case reviews, the ratio of absolute discharges (for certified success in the community) to discharges by expiration (reaching eighteenth or twenty-first birthday) is much higher for juvenile than adult parolees.

The flexibility of the juvenile corrections system has not resulted in a useless "revolving door" treatment. While the typical institutional treatment period for juveniles is seven-and-a-half months, the successful parolees were maintained under community supervision for an average of over two additional years before discharge. The "non-successes" had been under parole

supervision for an average of seventeen months before receiving a new conviction or being returned as a parole violator.

A total of 858 juveniles were terminated from Arizona parole supervision in 1974. This study does not include the 47 cases who were transferred under the Interstate Compact, the four cases who died while on parole, nor the youth who was discharged by Court Order. These limitations leave a baseline group of 806.

TABLE 13

Juvenile Baseline Group  
(1974 Parole Terminations)

<u>TYPE OF TERMINATION</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Absolute Discharge (success by Board determination)	257	31.9
Expiration (success at expiration of jurisdiction)	106	13.1
Returned to Institution (non-success)	443	55.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	806	100.0%

Forty-five percent of the baseline group are classified as successes, while fifty-five percent are non-successes. The non-success category includes 95 youths who were convicted of new offenses as adults (receiving either prison or probation sentences), 11 who were recommitted by the juvenile courts for a new offense, and 337 whose paroles were revoked by the Youth Hearing Board to provide for additional institutional treatment. If parole failure were measured only in terms of convictions for new offenses, only 13% of the base-

line group (one-fourth of the non-successes) would be classified as failures.

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS      Age is the most significant single predictor of a juvenile's chance of parole success. A youth who is under 16 when he is paroled is twice as likely to be returned to a correctional institution than a youth who is released from an institution at age 17 or 18. There are four reasons for this difference: 1) juveniles who are committed to the Department at a younger age generally come from worse home environments than those youths who do not enter the correctional system until they are older, 2) older youths tend to be more mature and emotionally stable, 3) "incorrigible" behavior ceases to be illegal at age 18, so the older youths are less exposed to the danger of being returned to institutions because of family problems and 4) a wider range of success roles (through employment, military service, and vocational training in addition to academic schooling) are available for the older youths in the community.

TABLE 14

Age at Time of Parole  
Juveniles

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
15 & Under	279	24.7	1.1	74.2	53.98†
16	194	28.4	11.8	59.8	1.81
17	237	37.1	27.8	35.0	58.58†
18 & Older	96	46.9	14.6	38.5	13.15*
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

† Significant at .001 Level

\* Significant at .01 Level

Girls are significantly more successful on parole than boys, in terms of both lower rates of returns to institutions and the ratio between absolute discharges (certified successes) and expirations. The difference cannot be explained by the differences in age and offense patterns. Incurable girls, for example, have a higher parole success rate than incurable boys. There is not sufficient data to ascertain if this difference in success rate is caused by better rehabilitation programs for girls, something in background or nature of the girls which makes them more affected by traditional treatment programs, or by society placing a more punitive stigma on the delinquent boys returning to the community than on the paroled girls.

TABLE 15  
Sex of Juvenile Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
Male	643	26.9	13.5	59.6	7.56
Female	163	51.5	11.7	36.8	29.76†
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

† Significant at .001 Level

The relationship between ethnic background and parole success is relatively weak. Actual differences in the performances of the White, Mexican-Americans and Indians in the baseline group were insignificant. Even though Blacks did have a significantly higher rate of institutional returns, this difference is weaker than the age and sex differences already discussed. Ethnic background is not considered to be a valid predictor of parole success, because the level of differences observed between ethnic groups could easily be accounted for by a combination of other demographic factors.

TABLE 16  
Ethnic Background - Juvenile Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
White	443	34.8	14.0	51.2	2.55
Black	100	21.0	7.0	72.0	11.82*
Mexican-American	228	28.5	13.6	57.9	1.21
Indian	32	50.0	15.6	34.4	5.92
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

\* Significant at .01 level

OFFENSE The two most common committing offenses are associated with the lowest and highest success rates. Juveniles committed for burglary were the least likely to receive absolute discharges and the most likely to be returned to institutions. Yet, juveniles committed for runaway experienced the highest parole success rates. None of the other common offenses differed significantly from the success rate of the total baseline group.

TABLE 17  
Committing Offense - Juvenile Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
Robbery	17	23.5	11.8	64.7	0.69
Assault	41	39.0	9.8	51.2	1.11
Burglary	145	18.6	11.7	69.7	13.89*
Larceny	83	25.3	14.5	60.2	1.66
Auto Theft	66	21.2	10.6	68.2	4.76
Narcotics	71	29.6	19.7	50.7	2.73
Runaway	134	47.0	10.4	42.5	14.10*
Incorrigible	70	31.4	10.0	58.6	0.68
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

\* Significant at .01 Level

Nearly half (47%) of the baseline group has had some involvement with illegal drugs. It appears that use of illegal drugs of one form or another is so widespread that it does not identify a special risk group. There were only trivial differences in the parole performances of juveniles with a record of drug use (either by official police report or self-admission to the Department's staff) and those who had apparently never used drugs.

TABLE 18  
Involvement with Illegal Drugs  
Juvenile Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
No Record	410	34.5	8.9	56.6	5.56
Admitted Use or Official Record	378	30.9	15.1	54.0	1.31
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

It should be noted that the analysis of drug use includes all types of drugs (marijuana as well as pills and opiates) and all degrees of use (from experimental to addiction) in a single category. It is likely that a research study which differentiated drugs by type and degree of use would show significant differences in parole success rates.

RESIDENCE      There have been only small differences in the commitment rates (adjusted for school age population) between Arizona's fourteen counties. In particular, the two urban counties (Maricopa and Pima) have had the same rate of commitments as the twelve rural counties.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, a comparison of parole success rate shows no real differences between the urban

and rural committing counties. However, the members of the baseline group who resided in Maricopa county (metropolitan Phoenix) during their parole period had a significantly lower success rate than the rest of the baseline group.

TABLE 19  
County of Commitment & Parole Residence  
Juvenile Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
Maricopa County					
(Phoenix)					
Commitment	483	31.0	11.2	57.8	2.14
Parole Reside	467	25.9	11.1	63.0	12.00*
Pima County					
(Tucson)					
Commitment	125	36.8	10.4	52.8	1.75
Parole Reside	138	35.5	9.4	55.1	1.99
Non-Urban Counties					
Commitment	197	26.7	16.7	56.6	4.21
Parole Reside	131	29.8	20.6	49.6	6.52
Parole Residence in County of Commitment	638	27.5	8.2	64.3	3.94
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

\* Significant at .01 Level

More study is necessary to determine whether this difference is due to a difference in program supervision or is the result of a heavier concentration of higher risk characteristics (younger age, male unemployed, etc.) among the greater Phoenix caseloads, or more efficiency police methods.



A juvenile's residence (with his parents, in a foster home, or in an independent living situation) is an important part of this parole program. It is also a particularly difficult factor to analyze. Many juveniles live in several different residences in the course of their parole treatment. The statistics in Table 20 refer only to the final residence (at time parole supervision was terminated) for the members of the baseline group.

TABLE 20

## Living Arrangements of Juvenile Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned to Institution %	Chi-Square
Living With					
Natural Parents	193	27.5	18.1	54.4	4.94
Parent/Step-Parent	79	27.8	20.3	51.9	3.63
Single Parent	199	19.6	9.5	70.9	20.45†
Other Relative	55	32.7	12.7	54.5	0.02
Foster Parents	50	10.0	4.0	86.0	19.41†
Rehabilitation Facility	62	14.5	3.2	82.3	18.86†
Spouse	29	93.1	3.4	3.4	50.13†
Other Individual	21	52.4	14.3	33.3	4.58
Self	41	58.5	19.5	21.6	18.58†
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

† Significant at .001 Level

The high success rates of juveniles in independent living situations (living either by themselves or with a spouse) must be partly explained by their older age and by the Youth Hearing Board granting independent living status only to a juvenile who has already displayed some evidence of stability. Similarly, the high rate of institutional returns for foster homes and rehabilitation

facilities is misleading. Juveniles who are paroled to these residential placements are generally transferred to another level of parole supervision (independent living, or home with parents) before they are considered for an absolute discharge. Of sixty juveniles who were terminated from foster home placement between July 1974 and January 1975, 15 returned to their parent(s), 14 were placed on independent living status, 7 were transferred to other parole placements, 2 absconded, 2 were granted absolute discharges, and 22 (37%) were returned to an institution. Thus, the ratio of institutional returns to foster home terminations was lower than the similar ratio for all parole terminations.

Of those parolees living at home, juveniles living with a single parent (mother only or single father) had a significantly higher rate of returns to correctional institutions than others. There was no differentiation between the success rates of juveniles living with both natural parents and those living with a step-parent.

EMPLOYMENT            Employment appears to be the most positive factor in parole success. Returns to institutions are least common among those juvenile parolees who have a job (either full-time or part-time while attending school). The return rate for juveniles attending academic school on a full-time basis is as high as the rate for unemployed drop-outs.

The low success rate of parolees enrolled in traditional school programs should not be surprising. The majority were school failures before they were committed to the Department. Two-thirds are more than two years below the average reading level for their age.<sup>10</sup> Given the educational handicaps and

failure experiences of most juveniles committed to the Department, employment and alternative educational programs should offer a better prospect for parole success than a return to the traditional school setting.

TABLE 21  
Employment Level of Juvenile Parolees

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi-Square
<i>(In-School)</i>					
School, Full-Time	126	25.4	5.6	69.0	11.67*
Vocational Training	39	35.9	7.7	56.4	1.08
School & Part-Time Job	126	57.1	7.1	35.7	4.12
<i>(Out-Of-School)</i>					
Full-Time Job	207	48.8	15.5	35.7	33.34†
Part-Time Job	27	37.0	14.8	48.1	0.51
Unemployed	223	18.4	12.6	69.0	20.83†
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

† Significant at .001 Level

\* Significant at .01 Level

#### SPECIAL SUPERVISION CONDITIONS

The Youth Hearing Board may supplement the standard conditions of parole by specifying special restrictions (prohibiting association with a specific individual, requiring participation in a counseling program, etc.) deemed appropriate for the specific youth. Fifteen percent of the baseline group were subject to such special conditions. These conditions supply specific direction to individual parole programs, but do not appear to have a predictive value for overall parole

success. The success rates of juveniles subject to special conditions and those who are not differ only insignificantly. There were no specific conditions found for the juveniles which identified a special risk group.

TABLE 22  
Special Conditions Attached to Parole  
Granted to Juveniles

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
None	684	32.3	13.6	54.1	0.27
One	100	33.0	7.0	60.0	3.33
2 or More	22	13.6	27.3	59.1	5.74
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

The hypothesis that a juvenile who is transferred from one parole officer to another is less likely to have a successful parole experience than a juvenile who maintains a relationship with a single officer for this entire period of supervision is discredited by the data in this study. The number of different officers supervising a youth during his parole term was found to be unrelated to the probabilities of successful termination.

TABLE 23  
Number of Different Parole Officers  
Assigned to a Given Juvenile

	Cases (N)	Absolute Discharge %	Expiration %	Returned To Institution %	Chi- Square
One	313	28.8	15.7	55.5	2.48
Two	263	37.3	12.5	50.2	3.54
3 or More	230	22.7	13.4	63.9	4.88
Baseline	806	31.9	13.1	55.0	--

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY

The records of both adults and juveniles who were terminated from parole supervision during 1974 by the Arizona State Department of Corrections have been examined in this analysis. The terminations were classified as successes by Board determination (those granted absolute discharges prior to the expiration of the Department's jurisdiction), successes at sentence termination (those who are terminated as expirations after completing the condition of their parole) and non-successes (those who receive a new felony conviction or a return to a correctional institution for any reason). Characteristics of the parolees and their parole programs were determined which are significantly related to the "probability that they will live and remain at liberty without further violation of the law". The success rates for those parolees possessing specific demographic characteristics and those involved in specific types of parole programs were compared to the success rates of the overall group. Because of the great differences in the legal processes involving adults and juveniles, the analysis was done separately for the two groups.

Of those factors that were examined, job, age, marital and ethnic factors were found which have similar predictive value for parole success for both adults and juveniles. A few specific offense categories (robbery for adults, burglary and runaway for juveniles) were also found to have some relationship with parole success. Sex and residence in the metropolitan area were found to be related to the probability of parole success for juveniles but not for adults.

The requirements of participation in a drug or alcohol counseling program as a condition for release were found to identify a high risk group of adults; no similar finding applied to the juveniles.

Table 24

SIGNIFICANT INDICATORS OF PROBABILITY FOR  
SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF PAROLE

	<u>ADULTS</u>	<u>JUVENILES</u>
Higher Probability Of Success	Skilled Job Any Full-time Job Income Above \$600/mo.  Paroled After 40th Birthday Lives With a Spouse	Paroled After 17th Birthday Full-time Job Female Independent Living Situation  Committed for Runaway
	BASELINE	BASELINE
Lower Probability Of Success	Required Participation in Drug/Alcohol Counseling Black  Committed for Robbery  Unemployed	Black Resides in Maricopa County Committed for Burglary Lives With Single Parent Unemployed Paroled Before 16th Birthday

These findings can influence the entire operation of the corrections system. The indicators which have been identified as significant should not require automatic program assignments; rather, they are warnings that these people below the baseline could require more specialized effort to successfully complete rehabilitation efforts. Those who were above the baseline might require a different type of program than those of the other group. The claim could be made that this attempt is de-personalizing rehabilitation. Identification of these factors should have the exact opposite effect, since program

could be tailored to the individual situation.

Along with testing scores, these indicators could be useful in placing people in general or vocational education programs, intensive counseling programs, or special drug and/or alcohol programs while they are in an institution. How the individual fits in these specific areas could be used in the parole determination process to indicate potential ease or difficulty of re-entry into society. Levels of parole supervision could be established based on the person's relationship to the baseline to provide appropriate supervision and assistance to the parolee.

The behavioral characteristics of the people committed to the Department have been created by society, the educational system, the correctional non-system, parental teachings, and peer pressures. Non-conformance in the person may have resulted from actions or inactions by the individual and groups over a considerable length of time. Although exact causes of criminal behavior cannot be agreed on, the relationships that have been identified here point to responsibilities of both the society, in general, and the individual in particular. The Department has little control or influence over ethnic and sex discrimination in society, general economic conditions, place of residence, marriage stability, family harmony, or the age of people at time of commitment or release.

Alternatives to incarceration to remove the stigma of incarceration are controlled by the Legislature and the Courts. On entry to the prison, each person is encouraged to make time serve them, not just serve time. The best of efforts and facilities will not overcome a lack of willingness by the person to use his time served to his advantage. It is possible for the Department of Corrections to aid in vocational training or counseling for psychological

problems, but only the individual can change his own attitudes and ambitions. The difficulties encountered by a convict upon release back into society can only be lessened, not removed, by transitional community treatment centers.

This report has viewed both high and low probabilities of success. Many of the significant factors on both sides of the baseline cannot be influenced by the actions of the entire criminal justice system, much less the Department of Corrections. There are many areas of education, training, and counseling where the Department does have a very strong influence. Both institutional and parole efforts can be a vital link in redirecting a personal life. A view of these indicators should give a deeper insight into the situation of those committed to the Department. Hopefully, this knowledge will be transferred into a stronger understanding that will bring about better programs to improve the likelihood of rehabilitation.



## NOTES

1. Arizona Revised Statutes 31-412.
2. This scale and its use are described by Peter Hoffman and James Beck in "Parole Decision Making: A Salient Factor Score," Journal of Criminal Justice Vol. 2, No. 3, (P. 195-206) Fall 1974.
3. A review of 18 statistical studies of parole outcome published since 1950 found only 5 studies which included analysis of any institutional factors and only one which included the parole program as a variable (Ohlin, Selection for Parole, New York, Russel Sage Foundation, 1951).
4. See page 664 of "Neighborhood Factors Affecting Delinquency Rates," Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Systems, SEARCH Group Incorporated, Sacramento, CA, 1974, Richard Glabraith and William Cooper.
5. Characteristics of Offenders, Arizona State Department of Corrections, Phoenix, Arizona, 1973, page 22.
6. Arizona Correctional Statistics, Arizona State Department of Corrections, Phoenix, Arizona, 1974, page 20.
7. Arizona Correctional Statistics, pp. 6-65.
8. A similar tendency for judges to impose more severe conditions on probation sentences when the offender appears to be a higher failure risk is documented in the Probation in California report of the Special Study Commission on Correctional Facilities and Services, Sacramento, CA, 1957.
9. See Characteristics of Offenders, pp. 48-49 and Table 35 (p. 39).
10. Arizona Correctional Statistics, pp. 57-58.

**END**