



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

Data Resources Program

Continuity and Change in Criminal Offending by California Youth Authority Parolees Released 1965–1984

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ICPSR 3136

User Guide and Codebook



Inter university Consortium for Political and Social Research

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN CRIMINAL OFFENDING BY CALIFORNIA
YOUTH AUTHORITY PAROLEES RELEASED 1965-1984

(ICPSR 3136)

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BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATION

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SUMMARY

This research project used longitudinal data on 524 serious male juvenile offenders released from California Youth Authority (CYA) institutions from 1965-1984 to examine the relationship between changes in local life circumstances (marriage, employment, drug use, alcohol use, street time) and criminal offending. In particular, the project extended previous research on criminal careers by developing and applying an empirical model that accounted for the joint distribution of violent and nonviolent criminal offending by parolees in their late teens to mid-20s, during a newly recognized developmental period of the life course termed "emerging adulthood." The individuals were released from the CYA at various ages from the late teens to early 20s, but were all followed for a seven-year post-parole period. For each individual, the researchers obtained information on counts of criminal arrests as well as information on exposure time. Violent arrests included murder, rape, aggravated assault, robbery, and other person offenses such as extortion and kidnapping. Nonviolent arrests included burglary, receiving stolen property, grand theft, forgery, and grand theft auto. Within each year, individuals were coded as "free" for the number of months that they were not serving time in jail, prison, or CYA detention. Involvement of the following life circumstances was recorded: (1) alcohol use, (2) heroin use, (3) full-time employment, and (4) marriage. A "month-score" indicating how many months the parolee was employed full-time during the course of each of the seven years of observation was also recorded. Offenders were assumed to have maintained the same status unless a change was noted in the California Department of Corrections files. In addition, the researchers developed an index to gauge an offender's stake in conformity by combining the life circumstances of marriage and full-time employment. Variables in the data include year of follow-up, race, age during that year of follow-up, number of months not serving time, stake in conformity index score, and number of arrests for violent offenses, nonviolent offenses, and total offenses. Dummy variables are provided on alcohol use, heroin use, use of mind-altering drugs, use of uppers/downers, dependence on alcohol or heroin, marital status, common-law marriage, and employment.

GENERAL STUDY OVERVIEW

STUDY IDENTIFICATION

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN CRIMINAL OFFENDING BY CALIFORNIA YOUTH
AUTHORITY PAROLEES RELEASED 1965-1984

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KEY WORDS

alcohol, criminal careers, heroin, juvenile offenders

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Theoretical debate over fundamental processes leading to continuity and change in offending behavior continues to generate significant amounts of empirical research on criminal careers. Despite the number of theories offering credible explanations for offending continuity, a fundamental disagreement exists over whether the processes generating offending stability reflect social mechanisms or stable propensities to offend. This research project examined whether levels of criminal activity shift in response to changes in local life circumstances (e.g., marriage, employment, drug use, alcohol use, street time). This project advanced prior research on continuity and change in criminal careers in three ways. First, the project used a prospective longitudinal dataset of serious offenders released from the California Youth Authority (CYA) and followed the offenders over a seven-year post-parole period. This dataset allowed for a systematic assessment of the relationships between changes in local life circumstances and changes in offending behavior. An additional feature of the data was its ability to control for street time and remove the biases associated with incapacitation. Second, the project extended

previously developed nonparametric statistical models by developing a method that allowed the examination of how life circumstances relate to the joint distribution of violent and nonviolent offending, which previous research had not yet examined. Third, the project explored the extent to which the relationship between life circumstances and criminal offending varies during the late teens through the mid-20s, a newly recognized developmental period of the life course termed "emerging adulthood" characterized by change and a process of exploration of possible life directions.

METHODS

STUDY DESIGN

The dataset for this project provides information on 524 male juvenile offenders released from CYA institutions from 1965-1984. These individuals were released from the CYA at various ages around the late teens to early 20s, but were all followed for a seven-year post-parole period. For each individual, the researchers obtained information on counts of criminal arrests as well as information on exposure time. Violent arrests included murder, rape, aggravated assault, robbery, and other person offenses such as extortion and kidnapping. Nonviolent arrests included burglary, receiving stolen property, grand theft, forgery, and grand theft auto. Within each year, individuals were coded as "free" for the number of months that they were not serving time in jail, prison, or CYA detention. Otherwise they were coded as being under some form of correctional supervision. Involvement of the following life circumstances was recorded: (1) alcohol use, (2) heroin use, (3) full-time employment, and (4) marriage. A "month-score" indicating how many months the parolee was employed full-time during the course of each of the seven years of observation was recorded. Local life circumstances were coded in terms of change in status. Offenders were assumed to have maintained the same status unless a change was noted in the California Department of Corrections files. The above four local life circumstances were examined because each has been found to be related to persistence/desistance in criminal offending. In addition, the researchers followed previous research and developed an index to gauge an offender's stake in conformity by combining the life circumstances of marriage and full-time employment. This index allowed for a more direct examination of the impact of collective or cumulative amounts of informal social control on offending behavior.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Data on criminal behavior and exposure times were obtained from the Criminal Identification and Investigation (CII) rap sheets of the California Youth Authority. Data on life circumstances were collected from CYA case files.

RESPONSE RATES

Not applicable.

DATE(S) OF DATA COLLECTION

1999

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF VARIABLES

Variables include year of follow-up (Year 1 to Year 7), race (nonwhite/white), age during that year of follow-up, number of months not serving time, stake in conformity index score, and number of arrests for violent offenses, nonviolent offenses, and total offenses. A "month-score" is provided for employment. Dummy variables are provided on alcohol use, heroin use, use of mind-altering drugs, use of uppers/downers, dependence on alcohol or heroin, marital status, common-law marriage, and employment.

PRESENCE OF COMMON SCALES

None

UNIT OF OBSERVATION

Individuals by year.

EXTENT OF PROCESSING

Data were reformatted by ICPSR. ICPSR also performed checks for undocumented codes, produced a codebook, and generated SAS and SPSS data definition statements for this collection.

EXTENT OF COLLECTION

The collection contains one data file, a user guide and codebook in a PDF file, and SAS and SPSS data definition statements.

DATA COLLECTION NOTES

The user guide and codebook are provided by ICPSR as a Portable Document Format (PDF) file. The PDF file format was developed by Adobe Systems Incorporated and can be accessed using PDF reader software, such as the Adobe Acrobat Reader. Information on how to obtain a copy of the Acrobat Reader is provided on the ICPSR Web site.

FILE SPECIFICATIONS

PART NUMBER: 1
FILE STRUCTURE: rectangular
CASE COUNT: 3,668
VARIABLE COUNT: 20
RECORD LENGTH: 28
RECORDS PER CASE: 1

RELATED PUBLICATION

Piquero, Alex R., Robert Brame, Paul Mazerolle, and Rudy Haapanen. "Crime in Emerging Adulthood: Continuity and Change in Criminal Offending" (Final Report). NCJ 186735. United States Department of Justice. National Institute of Justice, 2000.

Piquero, Alex R., Robert Brame, Paul Mazerolle, and Rudy Haapanen. "Crime in Emerging Adulthood." CRIMINOLOGY, forthcoming.

FINAL REPORTS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) was established in 1972 by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), of the U.S. Department of Justice, to provide research findings to criminal justice professionals and researchers. NCJRS operates specialized clearinghouses that are staffed by information specialists who supply a range of reference, referral, and distribution services. Final reports and other publications describing research conducted on a variety of criminal justice topics are available. Publications can be obtained from NCJRS at NIJ/NCJRS, Box 6000, Rockville, MD, 20849-6000, 800-851-3420 or 301-519-5500. TTY Service for the Hearing Impaired is 877-712-9279 (toll-free) or 301-947-8374 (local). The URL for the NCJRS homepage is:

<http://www.ncjrs.org>

DATA RESOURCES PROGRAM ON THE INTERNET

The National Institute of Justice Data Resources Program (DRP) makes datasets from NIJ-funded research and evaluation projects available to the research community and sponsors research and training activities devoted to secondary data analysis. Datasets are archived by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan.

The NACJD maintains a World Wide Web site with instructions for transferring files and sending messages. Criminal justice data funded by the Department of Justice are available via the Internet at this site at no charge to the user. NACJD may be contacted at NACJD/ICPSR, P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI, 48106-1248, 800-999-0960 or 734-998-9825. The URL for the NACJD homepage is:

<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD>

CODEBOOK FOR ICPSR 3136

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN CRIMINAL OFFENDING BY CALIFORNIA YOUTH
AUTHORITY PAROLEES RELEASED 1965-1984

NAME	VARIABLE LABEL	BEG COL	END COL	FMT
ID	PRESTON=10,000+SEQNUM <SORTED ON YA#>	1	5	F5
T	YEAR OF FOLLOW-UP	6	6	F1
	1 Year 1			
	2 Year 2			
	3 Year 3			
	4 Year 4			
	5 Year 5			
	6 Year 6			
	7 Year 7			
AGEZ	AGE DURING THAT YEAR OF FOLLOW-UP	7	8	F2
RACE	RACE	9	9	F1
	0 Nonwhite			
	1 White			
NVIOLZ	NUMBER ARRESTS FOR NON-VIOLENT OFFENSES	10	11	F2
VIOLZ	NUMBER OF ARRESTS FOR VIOLENT OFFENSES	12	12	F1
TOTALZ	NUMBER ARRESTS: VIOL + NON-VIOL OFFENSES	13	14	F2
STREETZ	NUMBER OF MONTHS NOT SERVING TIME	15	16	F2
	0 Incarcerated all 12 months			
BOOZEZ	ALCOHOL USE	17	17	F1
	0 No alcohol use			
	1 Alcohol use			
HEROINZ	HEROIN USE	18	18	F1
	0 No heroin use			
	1 Heroin use			
UPDWNSZ	USE OF UPPERS/DOWNERS	19	19	F1
	0 No use			
	1 Use of uppers/downers			

NAME	VARIABLE LABEL	BEG COL	END COL	FMT
MINDRGZ	USE OF MIND-ALTERING DRUGS	20	20	F1
	0 No use			
	1 Use			
DEPZ	DEPENDENT ON ALCOHOL OR HEROIN	21	21	F1
	0 Not dependent			
	1 Dependent			
FULLZ	FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT	22	22	F1
	0 Not employed full-time			
	1 Employed full-time			
EMPZ	EMPLOYED - MONTH SCORE	23	23	F1
UNEMPZ	UNEMPLOYED DURING FOLLOW-UP PERIOD	24	24	F1
	0 Not unemployed			
	1 Unemployed			
WIFEZ	MARRIED	25	25	F1
	0 Not married			
	1 Married			
SGLZ	SINGLE (NOT MARRIED)	26	26	F1
	0 Not single			
	1 Single			
COMLAWZ	COMMON-LAW MARRIAGE	27	27	F1
	0 No common-law marriage			
	1 Common-law marriage			
STAKEZ	STAKE IN CONFORMITY	28	28	F1
	0 Neither married nor employed			
	1 Either married or employed			
	2 Both married and employed			