

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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District of Columbia -
A COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE

IN THE COMMUNITY: YOUTH

CENTER vs COMMUNITY

TREATMENT CENTER RELEASEES

by

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HIGHLIGHTS

This study reports the community performance of 406 youthful offenders released from the Youth Center in 1967-1968. Youths released directly from the institution, and youths released through the Community Treatment Center were studied comparatively. For analytical purposes the releasees were grouped into cohorts, each cohort having been released in a different six-month period. The community performance of each cohort was then checked by searching the card files at the D.C. Jail, the central booking facility for the District of Columbia, to determine how many of the youths had been arrested following release, and the disposition of any charges filed against them.

The data indicated the following:

- 1) An estimated 54% of all Youth Center releasees will be recommitted within three years after release for either parole violation, or to serve sentences of 30 days or more.
- 2) About 20% of all Youth Center releasees will be re-committed within three years after release for commission of a felony.

3) Youths released directly from the Youth Center succeed at essentially the same rate as youths released through the CTC. The former have an estimated failure rate three years after release of 40%, as compared to 42% for the latter.

4) Youths released through the CTC were significantly lower in age at first arrest and had higher numbers of institutional disciplinary reports; therefore, they were presumed to present a higher risk of post-release failure.

5) With minor exceptions, community performances of different cohorts do not differ greatly. The April 1968 disturbance may have had some effect in raising the failure rates of those CTC releasees who entered the tense, post-disturbance community.

INTRODUCTION

It is the purpose of this study to report the post-release performance of those Youth Center residents who were released in the years 1967, 1968, and the first half of 1969. The Youth Center is an institution that serves a population of male offenders aged 18-26 whom the courts have adjudged as having high rehabilitative potential. Virtually all of the youths had been sentenced under the provisions of the Youth Corrections Act, and all were serving their first term as adults for conviction of a felony. The institution is explicitly rehabilitative in its goals and program, and each inmate is enrolled in some training or treatment program at some point in his term. During the period of this study the Youth Center's daily population averaged 340 youths, which is within its optimum capacity.

In keeping with the provisions of the Youth Corrections Act, all youths released for the first time after commitment to the Youth Center were released on parole. For the groups studied, the average time served prior to first release was approximately 20 months. Nearly half were transferred to the Community Treatment Center prior to release.

This is a converted residence, located in the inner city, where they lived for periods of four to eight weeks. It is the function of the CTC to provide a semi-structured, supportive environment for new releasees during the difficult period of initial adjustment to the community. The Center seeks to place its residents in both work and social roles, as well as to provide counseling directed at solving problems encountered in the community.

When opened in 1965, the CTC was jointly administered by the Federal Bureau of Prisons and the United Planning Organization. Operation of the Center was passed to the Department in June of 1967, and its population became solely releasees from the Youth Center instead of the previous mixture of Federal and Youth Center releasees. The Center thus became the final step in the Youth Center's treatment process, a phase routinely prescribed for those cases who were judged as being without significant community resources, or who were regarded as particularly susceptible to the stress of freedom. This meant that the CTC served those youth center releasees who were regarded as most likely to encounter difficulty on parole. Since 48% of the subjects of this study were released through the CTC, it is likely that some in

this "high risk" group differed only slightly in risk from those "low risk" youths paroled directly from the institution. As will be seen later, however, the CTC population differed significantly from the Youth Center direct releasees on some "unfavorable" characteristics.

METHOD

The method used in this study, "cohort analysis", has been utilized in previous District of Columbia Department of Corrections research projects. This method divides the total number of releasees into smaller groups released within a specific time period. Performance in the community is then observed over time. Five of these smaller groups, or cohorts, were studied in this report. As indicated below, the follow-up period was from the time of release until December 31, 1969.

Table 1: Months in Community, by Cohort Number and Release Dates

	<u>Released</u>		<u>Months in Community</u>
Cohort 1			
Cohort 1	CTC	January - June 1967	36 to 31
Cohort 2			
Cohort 2	CTC	July - December 1967	30 to 25

	<u>Released</u>		<u>Months in Community</u>
Cohort 3			
Cohort 3	CTC	January - June 1968	24 to 19
Cohort 4			
Cohort 4	CTC	July - December 1968	18 to 13
Cohort 5			
Cohort 5	CTC	January - June 1969	12 to 7

The advantage of this method is obvious in that it depicts the performance of each group over the time span of exposure to the community. One can thus view each sub-group's rate of success or failure per unit of time.

PROCEDURE

A list of all releasees from the Youth Center during the periods 1967 - 1968, and the first half of 1969, was obtained and divided into the cohorts listed above. Eliminated from the list were those few adults released from the Youth Center, where they had served as cadre, those youths released to detainers, and those transferred from the Youth Center prior to parole. The remaining subjects were thus youths who had completed the Youth Center program.

The post-release record of each youth was followed by examining the records of the D.C. Jail,

which is the central booking station for the District, to determine if he had been arrested subsequent to release, and the disposition of any charges lodged against him.

The criteria of failure was:

- a) a re-commitment of 30 days or more, or
- b) re-commitment for violation of conditions of release.

The FBI number of each youth was also obtained and referred to that agency for follow-up. FBI data serve as a source of information about the arrest history of those youths arrested in jurisdictions other than D.C. However, the FBI follow-up was not available at the time this study was written. The problem of accounting for out-of-jurisdiction arrests will be discussed in a later section of this report.

In an effort to evaluate the effect of the CTC, the performance of youths released through that facility was compared with that of the direct releasees. In order to determine if the CTC population of this study differed significantly from those directly released, demographic data widely accepted as predictive of high or low risk of failure was collected for both groups. The specific indicators examined were: 1) age at first arrest; 2) age at first commitment; 3) previous commitment as a juvenile;

4) previous failure on parole or probation; 5) percent of cohort with histories of addiction, mental disorder, or other handicaps; 6) number of institutional disciplinary reports; 7) number of youths with so few beneficial interpersonal ties in the community that they ultimately lived alone upon release from the Youth Center or CTC.

A comparison of the two groups within each cohort was made on each indicator in order to establish whether one group presented a higher risk of failure than the other. It was expected that the CTC cases would be the higher risk group since their transfer to that facility was predicated on "need", as determined by the Youth Center Staff members who worked most closely with them.

FINDINGS

The findings will first be reported by individual cohorts, and then by the total cohorts for both the CTC and the direct release groups. As stated previously, the criteria of "failure" is recommitment as a parole violator, or for a period of 30 days or more. In each of the figures that follow, the first six months is the time period in

which the cohort was released. Only two of the demographic indicators, age at first arrest and number of institutional disciplinary reports, are reported, since no significant differences between the two groups in any of the cohorts were found for the other five indicators.

COHORT 1

This Cohort was exposed to the community for a period of 31 to 36 months. Figure 1 shows that the Direct Releasees had reached a failure rate of 37% as compared to 64% for their CTC counterparts.

The question of whether the CTC group actually presented a higher risk of failure than the Direct Releasees was explored by comparing the two groups on the two demographic indices: the CTC group had been first arrested at an earlier age, and they had incurred more disciplinary reports while at the Youth Center.

Table 2: Age at First Arrest and Number of Institutional Disciplinary Reports: Cohort 1

	<u>N</u>	<u>age at 1st arrest</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>No. of disci- plinary reports</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
CTC	34	13.53	3.25	.01	4.57	2.60	.05
DR	32	16.00			2.21		

One could speculate that the CTC group's higher incidence of disciplinary reports was the result of having served longer terms before release. This possibility cannot be discounted, but if the CTC group did in fact serve longer, it presumably did so because its members were adjudged as higher risks in need of longer periods of institutional treatment.

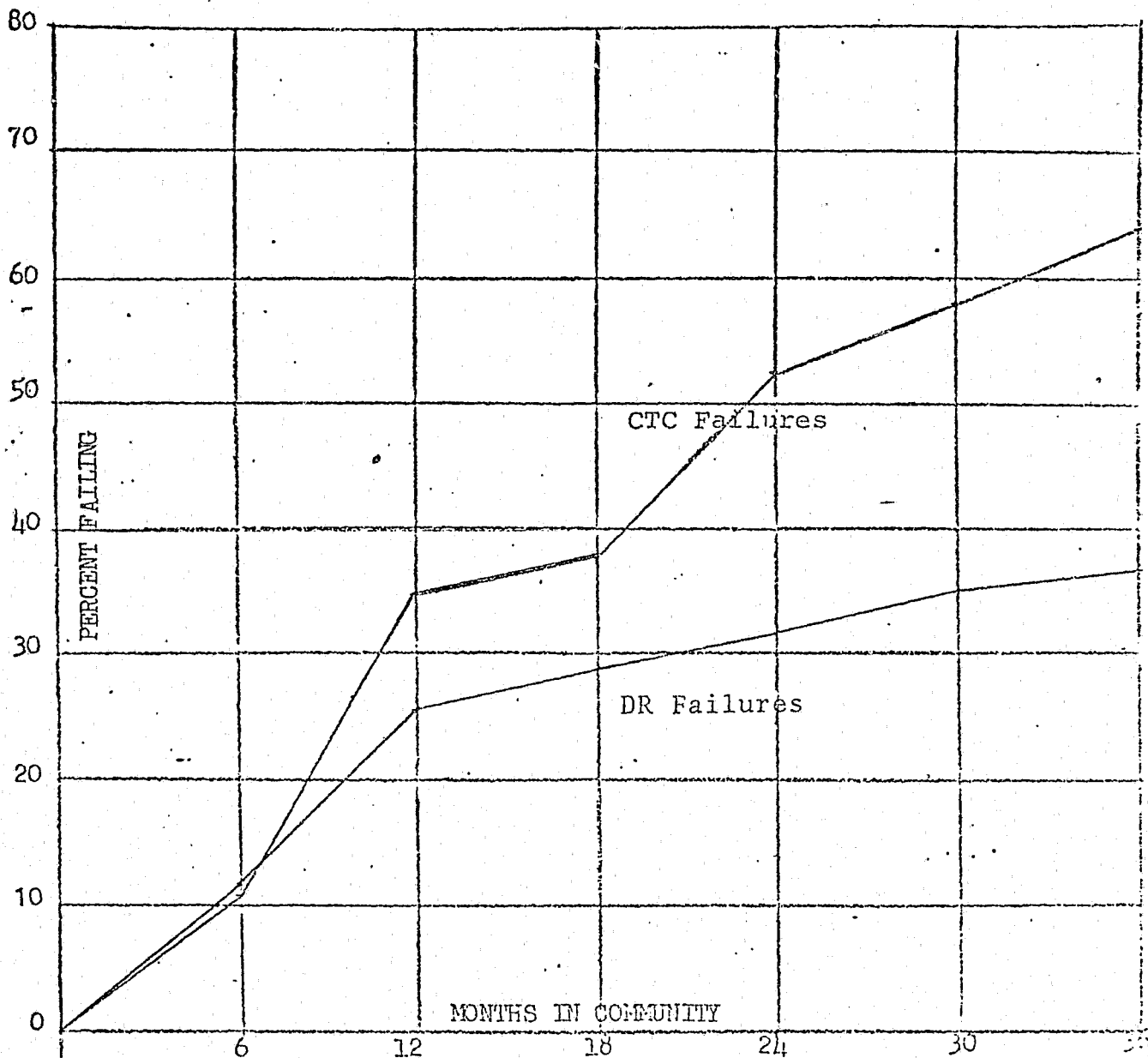
It is probable that one of the criteria in evaluating readiness for parole is the inmate's disciplinary record, with those youths who have more disciplinary reports being held longer. Furthermore, the CTC group incurred twice as many disciplinary reports as the Direct Releases, but they did not serve twice as much time.

Thus the CTC group is presumably more committed to delinquent careers, having either begun their careers earlier or at least having been acknowledged or "labeled" by the fact of arrest at an earlier age. Furthermore, the CTC group demonstrated more difficulty in adjusting to authority within the institution, a difficulty that may have been aggravated when they entered the less structured CTC environment.

It was during the 12th and 18th month period after the release of this cohort that the April 1968 disturbance occurred in the District. The CTC group's performance curve, which had leveled off in their

17th & 18th months of freedom, climbed higher in the months following the disturbance. This is not true of the performance of the Direct Releasees following the disturbance. The first explanation to come to mind is that the CTC group was composed of youths who were more susceptible to the stresses of an unsettled community, but this is conjecture rather than established fact. It appears that the question cannot be answered on the basis of current data.

Chart 1: Rate of Failure
Cohort 1



Cohort 1 (Released Jan. - June 1967)

<u>CTC</u>	<u>DR</u>
Curve N = 34	Curve N = 34
Success = 12	Success = 21
Failure = 22	Failure = 13
Unknown = 1	Unknown = 3 (.08)
<u>Total N = 43</u>	<u>Total N = 37</u>

* Failure is defined as arrested and sentenced to 30 days or more confinement or returned to the institution for parole violation.

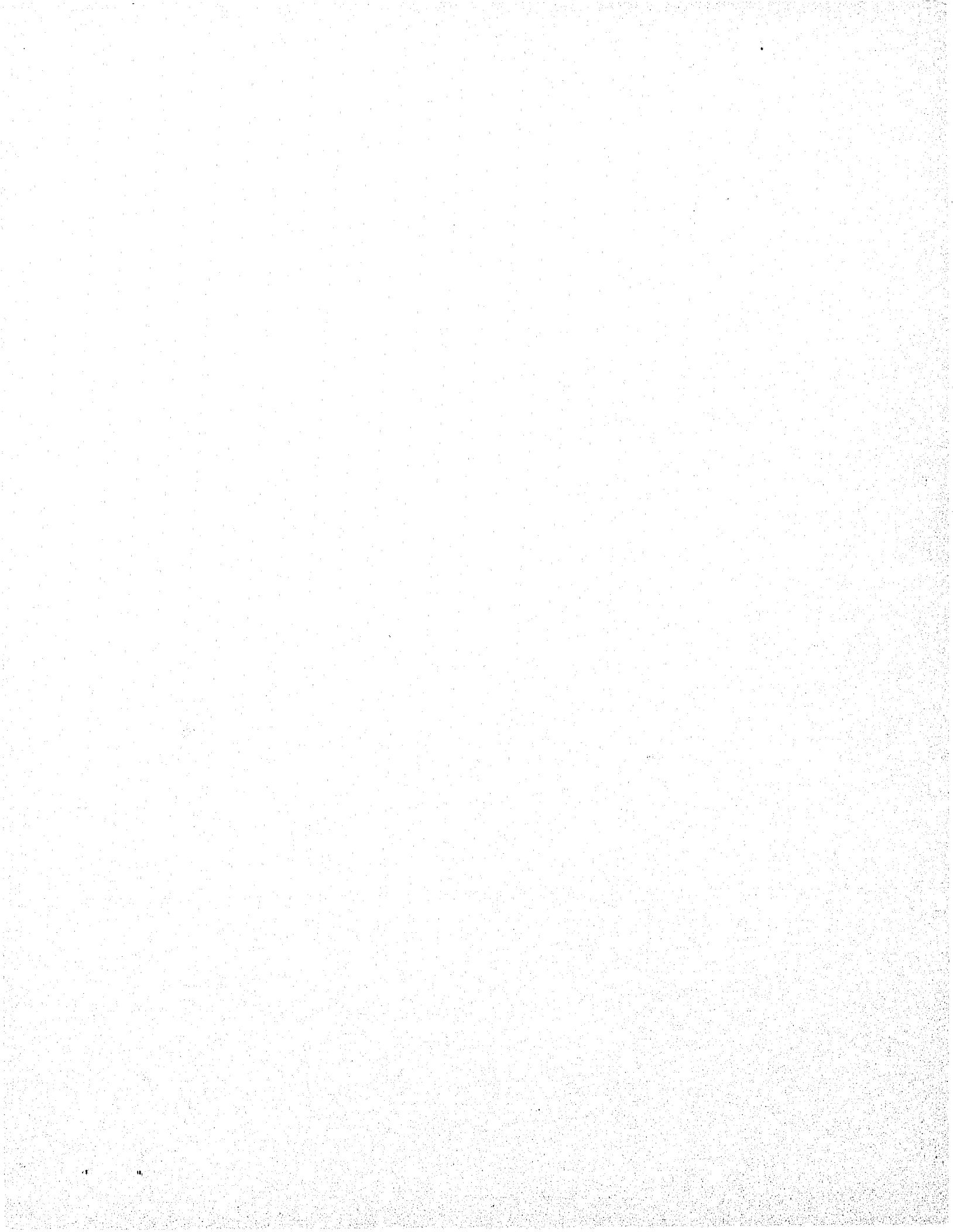


Table 3: Percent of Failure from Parole: CTC

	Cohort 1 N=35	Cohort 2 N=21	Cohort 3 N=48	Cohort 4 N=45	Cohort 5 N=41
6 months	11.76	9.52	5.55	14.28	12.90
12 months	35.28	19.04	30.55	31.42	35.48
18 months	38.22	36.08	44.43	39.99	
24 months	52.92	47.60	55.54		
30 months	58.80	47.60			
36 months	64.68				

Table 4: Percent of Failure from Parole: YC Direct Release

	Cohort 1 N=34	Cohort 2 N=38	Cohort 3 N=45	Cohort 4 N=55	Cohort 5 N=45
6 months	11.43	10.53	2.22	5.45	0.00
12 months	25.72	36.85	15.55	19.99	22.22
18 months	28.58	57.90	28.88	29.08	
24 months	31.44	68.42	37.76		
30 months	34.30	71.05			
36 months	37.16				

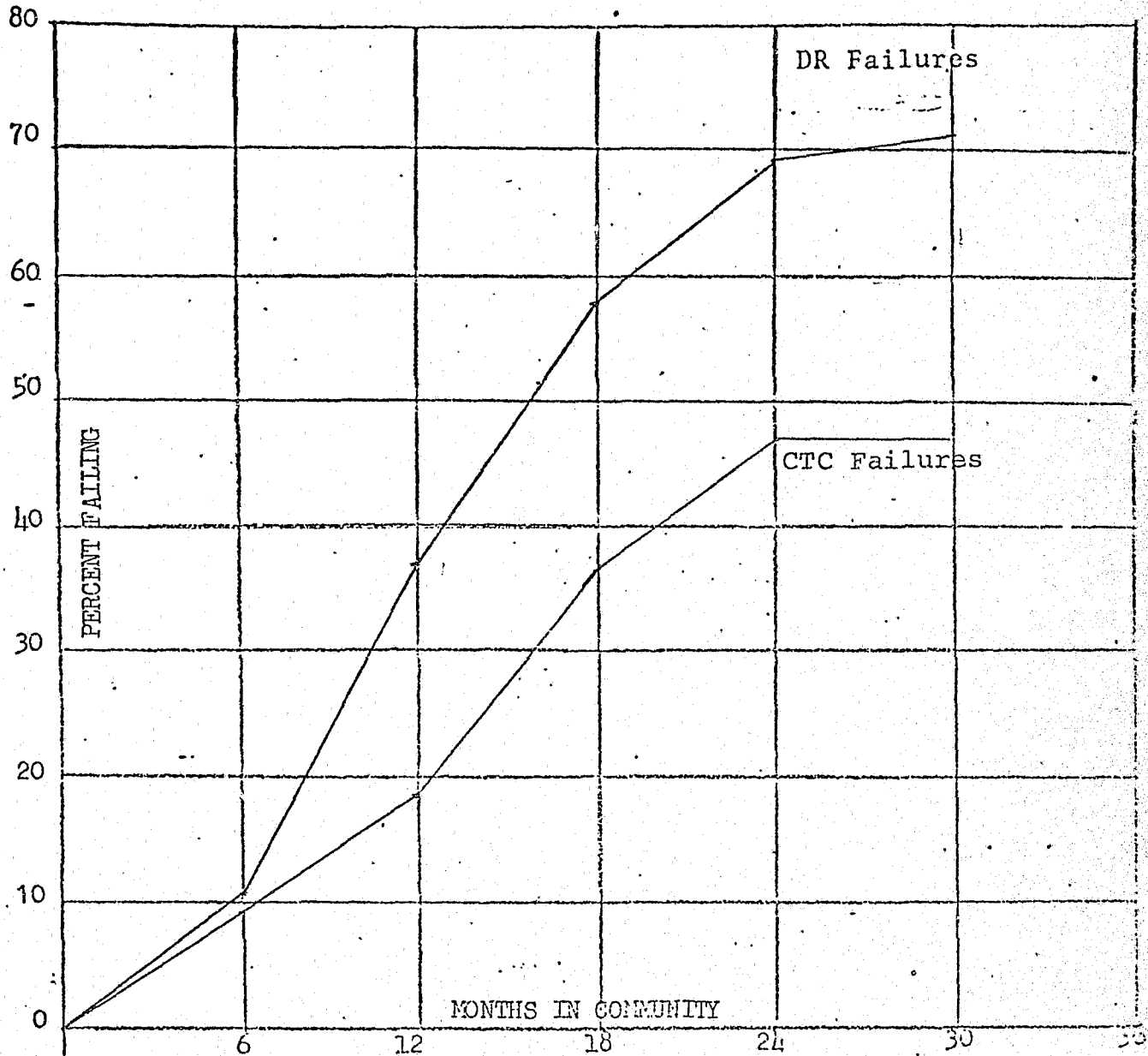
COHORT 2

The performance of the two groups in Cohort 2 is the reverse of Cohort 1: Direct Releasees have the higher rate of failure after 30 months in the community. The success rate for Cohort 2 youths who completed the CTC program was 20 percentage points higher than that of Direct Releasees. This is the only Cohort of the five studied in which the success of a CTC group exceeded that of a Direct Release group.

An examination of the demographic data for Cohort 2 was inconclusive. The two groups did not differ significantly in age at first arrest, and the data was not adequate to test the differences in mean number of disciplinary reports. Therefore, there is no apparent explanation why the CTC group in this Cohort out-performed the Direct Releases, and neither group can be demonstrated to be a higher risk than the other.

The April disturbance occurred during the 7th to 12th months of exposure of this Cohort in the community, at which time both groups were in the midst of the accelerated rate of failures that is "normal" during the second half-year of release. It is thus not possible to assess the effects of the disturbance on their post-release performance.

Chart 2: Rate of Failure
Cohort 2



Cohort 2 (Released July - Dec. 1967)

CTC
Curve N = 21
Success = 11
Failure = 10
Unknown = 0

Total N = 30

DR
Curve N = 38
Success = 11
Failure = 27
Unknown = 3

Total N = 41

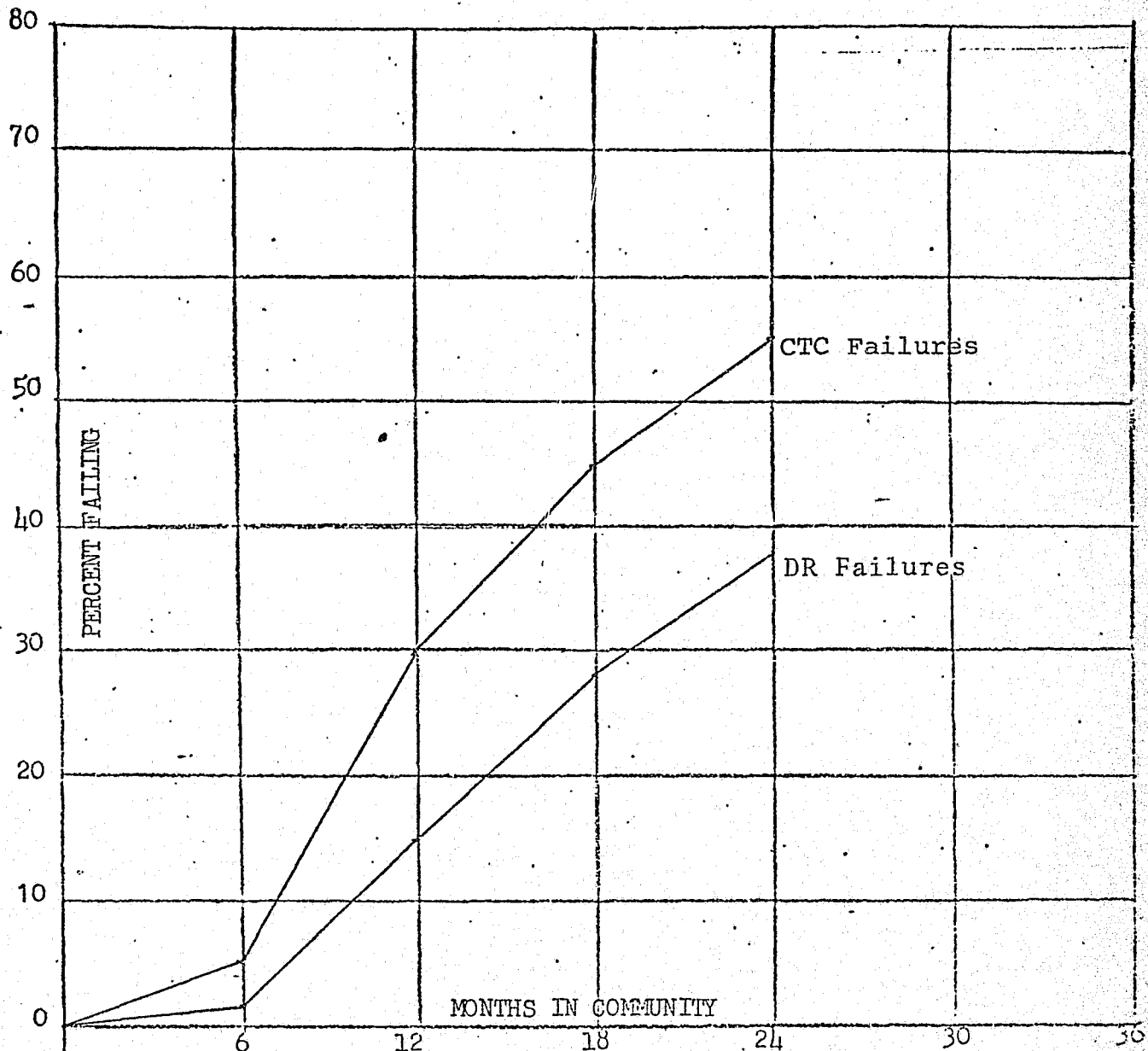
COHORT 3

The trend of Cohort 1 is re-established in Cohort 3, with the CTC releasees again failing at rates substantially higher than the Direct Releasees. Fifty-five percent of the CTC group had failed at the end of 24 months in the community. For the Direct Releasees the last observed failure rate was 38%, 17% points lower.

A comparison of the demographic data shows that the CTC group incurred their first arrest at an earlier age, 13.66 years as compared to 14.76 for the Direct Releasees. This difference is not statistically significant. The CTC group also incurred more institutional disciplinary reports than did the Direct Releasees, averaging 4.78 reports as compared to 3.78 for the latter, but again this difference is not significant.

The April disturbance took place during the six month period of release for this Cohort. Yet the performance curve for each group within the Cohort approximates those of the other Cohorts. Thus the disturbance had no readily observable affect on the post-release adjustment of this Cohort.

Chart 3: Rate of Failure
Cohort 3



Cohort 3 (Released Jan. - June 1968)

CTC
Curve N = 48
Success = 15
Failure = 20
Unknown = 2
Total N = 50

DR
Curve N = 45
Success = 28
Failure = 17
Unknown = 4
Total N = 49

COHORT 4

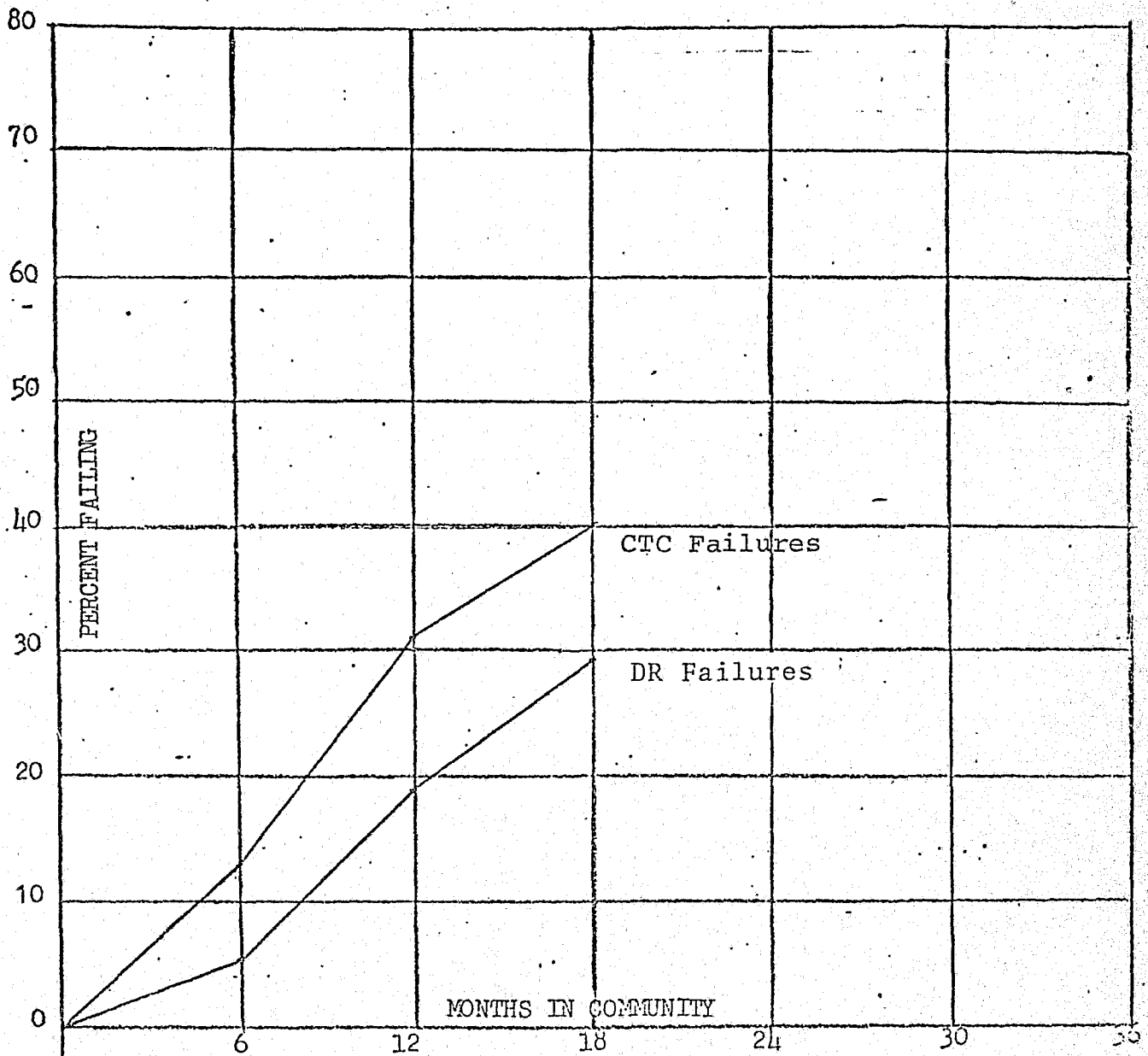
In this Cohort the CTC group again fails at a higher rate than the Direct Releasees. The magnitude of the differences in the rates of the two groups shrinks some, but this is not a significant change. Cohort 4 was exposed to the community for only 12 months, so the ultimate failure rate will be considerably higher.

Demographically, there were no significant differences between the two groups on either age at first arrest, or number of institutional disciplinary reports. This Cohort entered the community in the months immediately after the April 1968 disturbance. While the community was still unsettled, the post-release performance curves for the Cohort are quite similar to those of the preceding Cohorts, and the immediate effect of the disturbance appears to be negligible.

COHORT 5

Many in Cohort 5 had been in the community for only 6 months at the time of follow-up. For this reason it is included only to demonstrate how its early post-release performance compares with

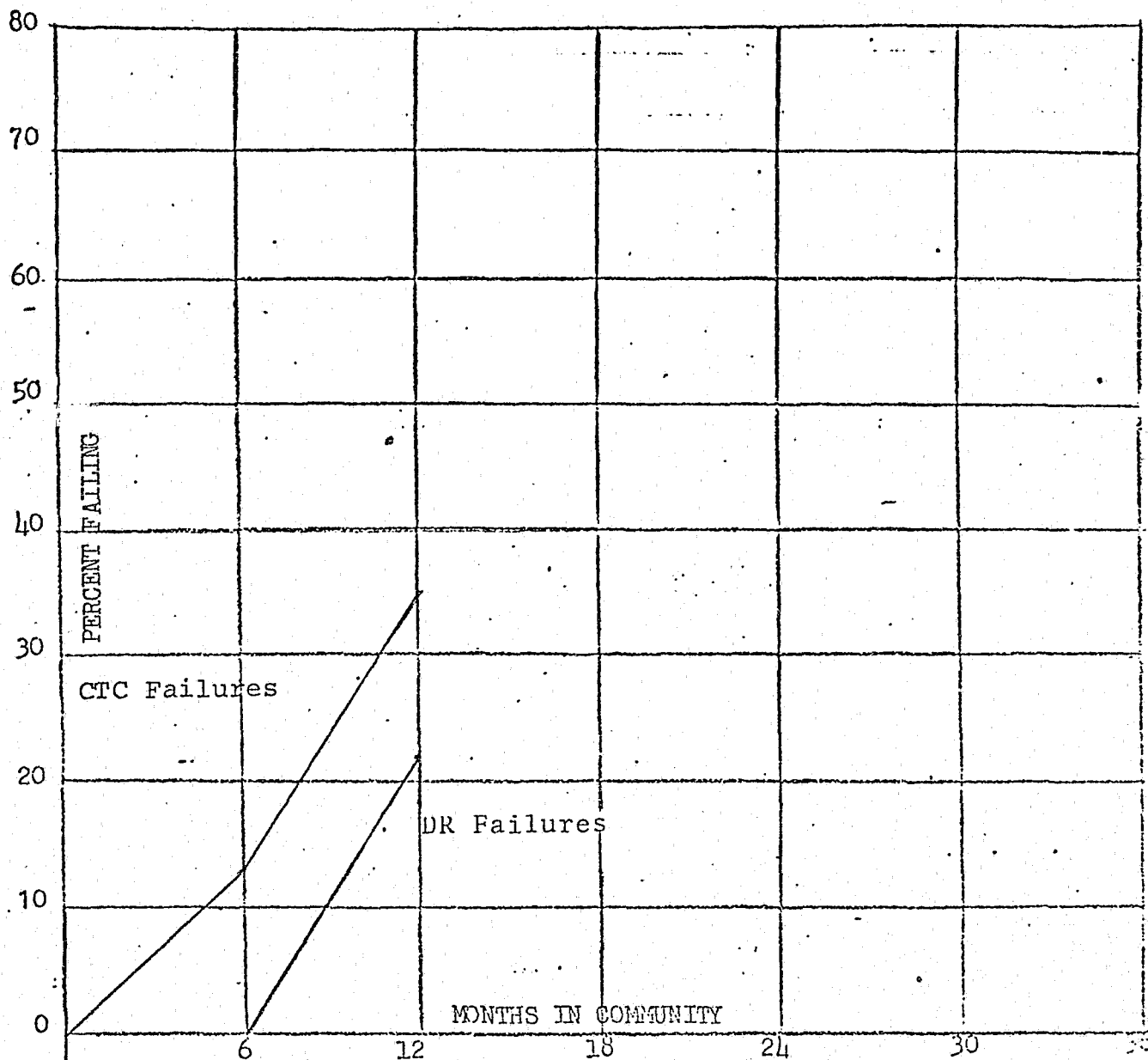
Chart 4: Rate of Failure
Cohort 4



Cohort 4 (Released July - Dec. 1968)

<u>CTC</u>		<u>DR</u>	
Curve	N = 45	Curve	N = 55
Success	= 15	Success	= 39
Failure	= 20	Failure	
Unknown	= 1		
Total	N = 46	Total	N = 55

Chart 5: Rate of Failure
Cohort 5



Cohort 5 (Released Jan. - Jun 1969)

<u>CTC</u>		<u>DR</u>	
Curve	N = 41	Curve	N = 45
Success	= 19	Success	= 35
Failure	= 11	Failure	= 10
Total	N = 41	Total	N = 47

the previous Cohorts.

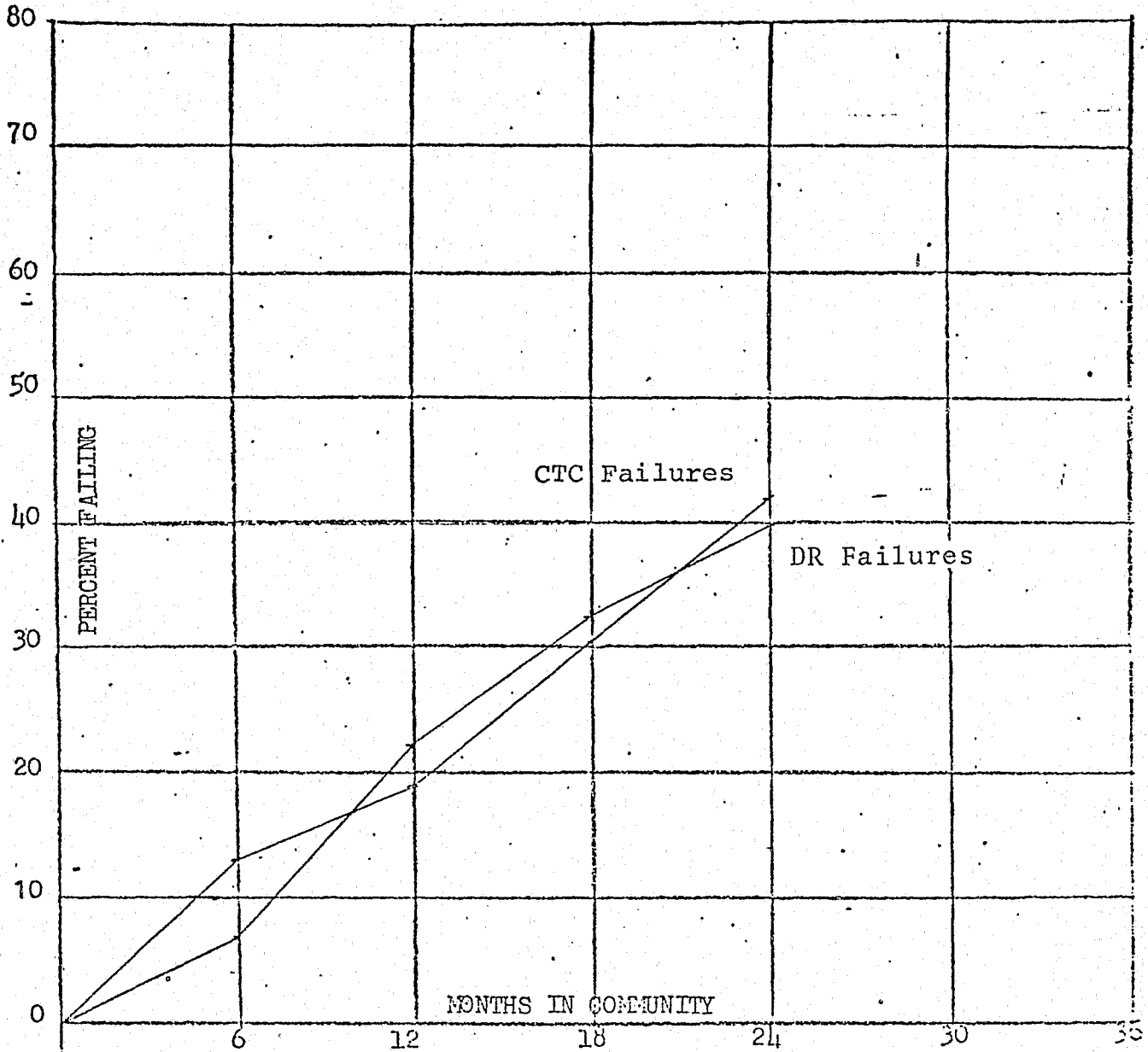
What is noteworthy about Cohort 5 is that none of the Direct Releasees failed in the six months period in which they were released, although approximately one-fifth of that group failed in the succeeding six months. Although this is unusual, the overall performance rates of both groups do not differ greatly from those of the other Cohorts. The two groups within this Cohort did not differ significantly on any of the demographic indices.

TOTAL COHORT

Figure 6 depicts the overall performance of Cohorts 1 - 4 combined. Cohort 5 was not included in this analysis since many of its members had not been exposed to the community for a full year. The purpose of combining four cohorts, all of whom have been in the community for different lengths of time, is to determine the overall performance of the 1967 - 1968 releasees at the time of follow-up. The reader is reminded of the "Glaser Rule"¹, which states that 90% of those releasees who ultimately fail will do so within 36 months after release. Since only

¹ Glaser, Danial, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System, Indianapolis: Bobbs - Merrill, 1964 p.22

Chart 6: Rate of Failure
Cohorts 1-4

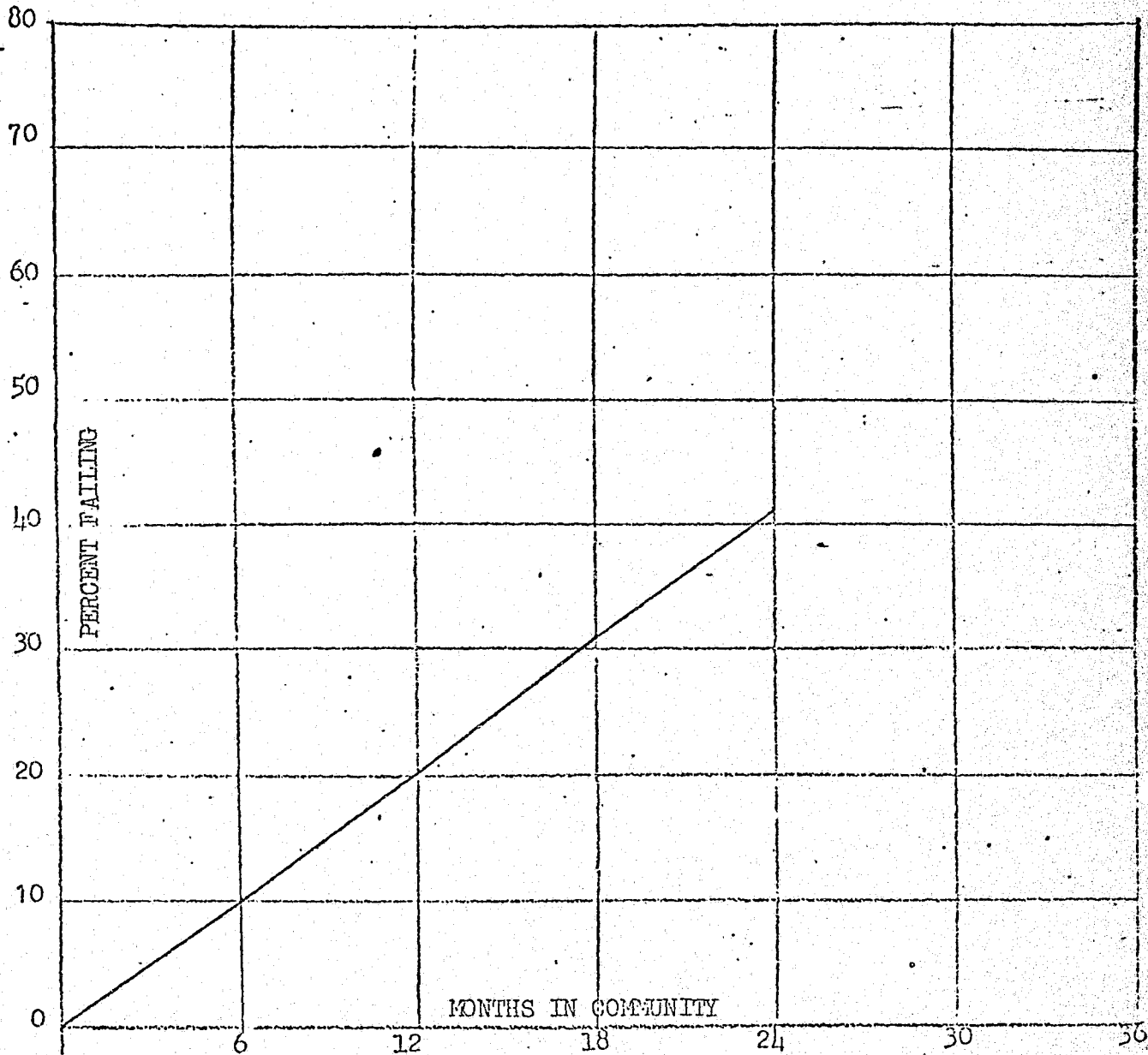


Cohorts 1-4 (Jan. 1967 - Dec. 1968)

CTC
N=169

DR
N=182

Chart : Rate of Failure
Cohorts 1-4 CTC & YC



Cohorts 1-4 CTC & YC
(Jan. 1967 - Dec. 1968)
n=351

Cohort 1 had been in the community for 36 months, the "final" rate of the Total Cohort can be expected to climb higher as the other three Cohorts continue in the community.

The last observed rates of failure for the two groups in the Total Cohort are 40% of Direct Releasees, and 42% for the CTC group. When the two groups are compared demographically, the CTC youths are significantly lower in age at first arrest, and incurred a significantly higher number of institutional disciplinary reports.

Table 6: Age at First Arrest and Number of Institutional Disciplinary Reports: Total Cohort

	<u>N</u>	<u>age at 1st arrest</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>No. of disciplinary reports</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
CTC	121	13.68	3.41	.01	4.87	2.68	.01
DR	145	15.07			3.23		.01

Community Performance of Combined Cohorts
by Type of Failure

Another way of assessing post-release performance is to combine the curves of both the CTC group and the Direct Releasees, as shown in Figure 7. After

combining Cohorts 1 through 4, there is an overall failure rate of 41% for all releases over an exposure time of 12 to 36 months.

A more detailed picture of these results can be gained by breaking the failures into three categories: failure by reason of technical violation of the conditions of parole; failure by reason of recommitment for more than 30 days but less than one year (misdemeanor); recommitment for a term of more than one year (felony). This data is presented in Table 7. A similar breakdown for the combined CTC group and Direct Releasees of Cohort 1 is included to provide the reader with the final percentages of the Cohort that has completed 36 months in the community. The final percentages for the combined Cohorts 1 - 4 are expected to approximate those of Cohort 1.

Table 7: Type of Failure: Combined Cohorts

<u>Type of Failure</u>	<u>Combined Cohorts 1 - 4</u>	
	<u>Cohort 1 Only</u>	<u>% of all Releasees Cohort 1-4 (N=265)</u>
Violation of conditions of parole	21%	17%
Misdemeanor	4%	7%
Felony	19%	17%
		<u>41%</u>

In this instance, the total number of releasees from the Youth Center was 351, of whom 145 were known post-release failures. The known number of failures 145 youths, was augmented by .30 or 44 youths, to adjust for probable out-of-District arrests. One-third of these 44 youths, which represents 15 individuals, can be expected to be released by dismissal of charges, sentences of less than 30 days, or imposition of fines, all dispositions that do not meet this study's definition of failure. Thus the rate of known failures must be adjusted upward by .20, representing 30 youths. When these estimated failures are added to the known failures, the final estimated number of failures totals 189 youths out of the 351. This is an estimated failure rate of 54%.

CONCLUSION

The data presented warrants the following conclusions:

1) The estimated overall failure rate for Youth Center releasees of 1967 and 1968, both Direct Releasees and CTC transfers, was 54%. It is conjectured

² See Dr. Stuart Adams, Wanda S. Heaton, John Spevacek, Post-Release Performance of 432 Reformatory Releasees District of Columbia Department of Corrections Research Report No. 11, February, 1960.

that this figure may be inflated due to the effects of the April 1968 disturbance on the community.

This high failure rate includes all youths recommitted for terms of 30 days or more, or returned for technical violations of parole.

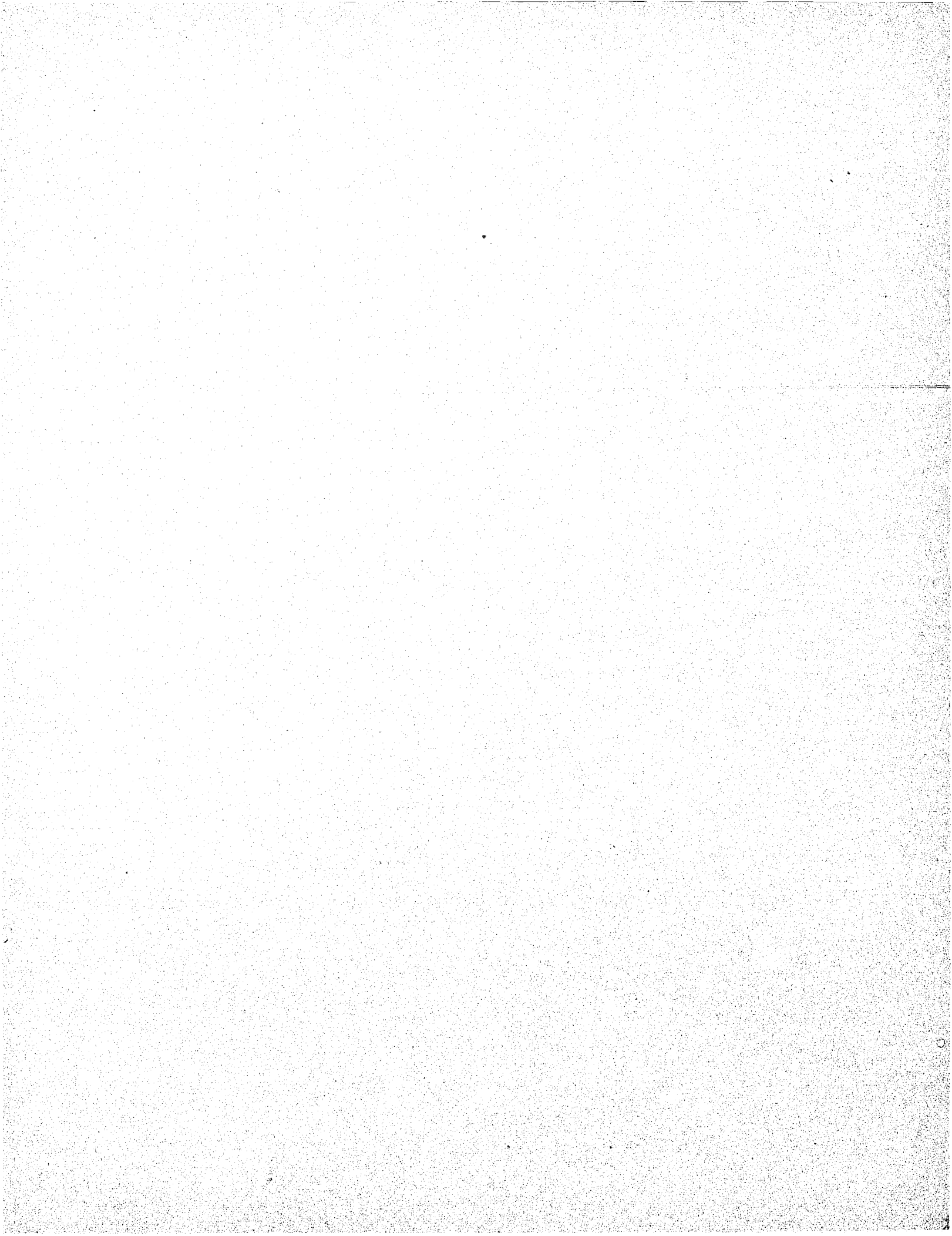
2) The percent of Youth Center releasees who had been convicted of felonies at the time of follow-up was 19%, but it is reasonable to assume this figure will increase when all Cohorts reach 36 months of community exposure. Nevertheless, an estimate that approximately 20% of the Youth Center releasees will be convicted within three years of new felonies appears reasonable.

3) Youths released directly from the Youth Center succeed at essentially the same rate as youths released through the CTC.

4) The CTC group presented a higher risk of post-institutional failure, having engaged in known delinquency over longer time spans, and having demonstrated greater difficulty in adjusting to authority.

The fact that the CTC group has a failure rate only two percentage points higher than the Direct Releasees may indicate that the CTC has a positive effect on a high risk population. This possibility cannot be stated categorically since the available

demographic data is insufficient to determine how much the CTC group was more likely to fail than the Direct Releasees.



END