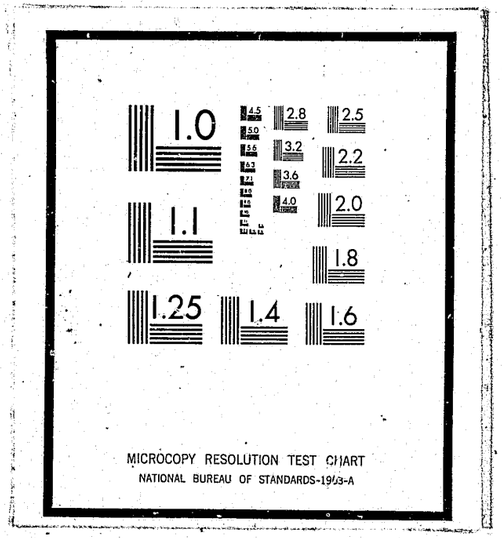




RESEARCH REPORT NO. 52

# ESCAPE FROM CUSTODY

Norman Holt



RESEARCH DIVISION • DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS • STATE OF CALIFORNIA •

May 1974

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Research Division
California Department of Corrections
Sacramento, California

May 1974

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# CHAPTER I
# THE ESCAPE PROBLEM

Seldom are applied researchers in a position to appreciate the political context in which their work is produced. Even less frequently are they encouraged to write about it. Agencies are not particularly fond of squandering their limited research capabilities on trivial concerns or simply satisfying someone's intellectual curiosity. The California Department of Corrections is generally recognized as one of the most experienced, if not the most sophisticated, producers and users of correctional research. Large scale projects are undertaken to answer pressing problems, sometimes of an internal policy nature but often involving the Department's relationships to the external administrative environment, particularly with organizations which have some control over budgets and basic agency policy. More often these control agencies actively participate in defining programs, policies, or situations as "pressing problems". The problem of escapes represents one such example.

The California Department of Corrections' concern over escapes is long standing and not without good reason. Thousands of state prisoners enjoy the amenities of minimum custody housing. At one time the Department operated 37 conservation camps. Minimum custody means more escapes. The traditional escape rate from such facilities in California had been about five percent. The periodic increase of interest in escapes was usually associated with some spectacular crime committed by an escapee.

During the 1960's a routine data system on escapees was set up, and annual statistics produced. In addition, several brief studies were undertaken. By 1969 a considerable amount of raw data had accumulated, especially on escapes from conservation camps. A proposal was made to the Departmental Research Advisory Committee to pull this material together and integrate it into the existing literature. After some deliberation the Committee discouraged the proposal. The Committee felt that while the camp escape rate (6.49 percent) was slightly higher than the previous two years it was well within tolerable limits and that other programs and policies had greater research priority.

The following summer the Department came under heavy attack for its policies concerning the Temporary Community Release (TCR) and Work Furlough Programs. The criticism broadened from escapes while on TCR to include first absconders from work furlough, then escapes from the California Institution for Men, and finally escapes from all facilities. The growing chorus was joined by several legislators and newspapers. One local Ontario newspaper kept a running account of escapes accompanied by a series of critical editorials and feature stories. Escapes had increased during 1971, but not dramatically. The camp rate stood at 7.97 percent (Table 1). The problem at the California Institution for Men was actually somewhat more serious than it appears in Table 1. Drastic changes were made in May of 1972 following a rash of escapes during the first five months; these changes kept the institution rate for the full year from equaling the camp escape rate.

From about November of 1971 through 1972 considerable political pressure was brought to bear from a variety of sources. The Secretary of the Human Relations Agency, to whom the Director of Corrections reports, got directly involved.

The Department of Corrections was to reduce escapes or else. One possible solution given serious consideration at this time was the closing of some or all of the minimum custody facilities. Around April 1972 the Superintendent of the California Institution for Men was told to either reduce escapes or close the institution. This was a realistic alternative, for two years of aggressive programs and policies directed at population reduction had left the Department with several thousand empty cells, more than enough to accomodate all the inmates in minimum custody housing. The closing of several medium custody institutions was being planned.

Table 1

Annual Rate* of Escapes from California Department of Corrections 1969 through 1972, by Type of Facility

| Type of Facility | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| California Institution for Men | 1.28 | 3.18 | 3.81 | 4.30 |
| California Institution for Women | 0.41 | 0.89 | 4.67 | 2.99 |
| California Rehabilitation Center (addicts under civil commitment) | 0.31 | 0.71 | 0.81 | 2.14 |
| All Conservation Camps | 6.49 | 5.08 | 7.97 | 13.76 |
| All Mens Institutions Combined | 0.47 | 0.66 | 0.95 | 1.52 |

*Rate per 100 average daily population.
Source: Administrative Statistics, Research Division, "Escapes From Department of Corrections 1960-1972", and "Number of Escapes from Institutions and Camps, 1949-1971", staff reports, February 1972 and February 1973.

Out of this background the current escape study emerged. A task force was appointed in July 1972 to coordinate the research efforts. This time prior approval from the Departmental Research Advisory Committee was not required for the study. The time for the study had come. The second half of 1972 was spent designing the study and collecting the data. The decision was made to use the data as they became available to help solve some of the immediate escape problems; this had the effect of delaying the final report. The goal of the project was to develop the material in such a way that it could be readily incorporated into the ongoing programming and classification procedures. The reader is left to decide the extent to which this was feasible.

## Method

The original sample consisted of all inmates who escaped from the custody of the California Department of Corrections from January 1, 1971, through June 30, 1972. These included escapes from Work Furlough, Temporary Community Release, and the institutions for narcotic addicts under civil commitment as well as escapes from correctional institutions (including the California Institution for Women) and conservation camps. A control group of equal size was selected



by taking the inmate immediately above the escapee in the prison identification number sequence who was at the facility from which the escape occurred, as of June 30, 1972. The identification numbers are assigned in the order of arrival in the prison system, and this procedure served somewhat to equalize time in prison. Each escapee was thus matched with a non-escapee at the same facility who was committed at about the same time. Through these procedures a combined total of 1,696 escapees and non-escapees was selected.

Information was collected on a two-part data form. The first 15 items focused on background characteristics at the time of commitment and were taken from data files kept on offenders by the Administrative Statistics Section of the CDC Research Division. The second part consisted of 13 items centering on events since the inmate was received. This information is kept in the inmate's central file which moves with the inmate to his current institution of residence.

The first 15 items on each inmate in the study were completed, and the institutions where the inmates were currently held were located. The partially completed forms were then grouped by location of central files. Each group of forms was then assigned to a member of the central office classification staff for completion. The staff found, however, that by the time they arrived at the location indicated many of the files, along with the inmates, had been transferred. In addition, some of the forms were completed improperly and had to be redone. In either case, a new search of records was made, and a more current location indicated. It was decided that three such attempts at completing the forms would be made after which the case would be dropped.

This procedure yielded a total usable sample size of 1,494 escapees and controls from the 1,696 names (88 percent of the total) originally selected. Forty-six cases were discarded because the forms contained obvious errors. Another 25 cases proved to be duplicates, where the inmate had escaped twice during the study period. In such cases only data on the first escape were included. Thirty-one cases were eliminated which were from miscellaneous ethnic groups. This was done because race was a major focus of the study, and it was felt that these 31 cases would unduly complicate the presentation of the data. The remaining 102 cases were lost when the files could not be located on the third attempt.

The focus of the study was on adult male escapees. Absconders from furlough and women escapees were erroneously included in the original 1,696 names selected. Only the first half of the data form was completed on these cases (78 women and 202 furloughees). It was felt, however, that study of both of these groups was warranted on the basis of the fact that no other literature was available on their escape behavior.

## CHAPTER II
## BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS AND ESCAPES FROM MINIMUM CUSTODY

The analysis of data presented in this chapter turned out to be more complex than expected. As the study developed, several concerns surfaced which required that the data be handled in a more complicated manner.

The data discussed in this section represent inmates from three conservation systems and a large minimum security institution. This selection of programs poses two major problems. First, the different facilities are scattered from the Oregon to the Mexican border. Some are located on major transportation routes and others are miles from a major highway.

Second, during the period covered by this study three different types of classification systems or programming were in effect among the programs surveyed. The central and southern conservation systems received their population either as new commitments from one of the two reception-guidance centers or as transfers from medium security institutions where the inmate had already served part of his sentence. The northern conservation center, during this period, also served as the processing facility for parole violators and relied on this group for most of its camp population. The minimum institution, while also containing selected long term inmates, was used primarily as a pre-release center for those being paroled to Southern California. The average stay at that institution was about seven months. Thus, three rather different sets of criteria were being used for the assignment of inmates to the programs focused on in this study.

It was originally felt that these populations could be combined for purposes of analysis, but differences in inmate profiles emerged which placed limits on the extent to which this could be done. The data, therefore, are analyzed separately, where the differences in profile might be misleading.

The second area of concern which developed was the high degree of intercorrelation among background variables. A simple shopping list of predictive variables was definitely not in order, as so many appeared to be simply correlated with some third variable. To complicate the picture the two variables most strongly related to escaping (race and escape history) were items around which many of the others clustered. It was imperative, therefore, that these two variables be held constant when considering other factors. For this reason race and escape history are discussed first and at some length and followed by a consideration of other variables dealt with by means of a partial correlation approach.

### Race

One of the most consistent findings of escape studies is the relatively low escape rate of inmates from minority groups, especially Blacks. In an early study in Louisiana (Loving, Stockwell, and Dobbins, 1959) explained that data were only collected on White inmates because so few Blacks had escaped in that state. Morgan (1967), attempting to replicate the above study in South Carolina, restricted his study group to Whites. This was presumably done for the same



reason, although no mention is made of the comparative escape rates of Blacks and Whites. Levine (1962) reports that 91 percent of the escapees from the Illinois State Training School for Boys were White, while they constituted only 55 percent of the school's population. A recent study of adult felon escapes in the state of Washington (Smith, 1971) found Whites to represent 85 percent of the escapes compared to 58 percent of the prison population. Conversely Blacks constitute 30 percent of the inmates but only five percent of those escaping. Loving, et al. (1959), refer in their study to a Federal Bureau of Prisons report indicating that less than one percent of the escapees in 1953 and two percent in 1954 were Black while they constituted 27 percent of the federal prison population.

Several authors simply ignore the issue. Lubeck and Empey (1968), for example, while applying the most sophisticated analytical techniques to the investigation of the problem of escapes thus far, do not deal with the matter of race. Although no study has found non-Whites to escape more frequently, Morrow (1969) reports no significant difference in escape rates of psychiatric patients of different races. Morrow's results are difficult to evaluate, however, as no distribution is given of the ethnic groups in the population, and the small sample size (40 escapees) creates problems in testing for statistical significance.

In an extensive study of escapes during 1959 and 1960 from California conservation camps (Shain, Bennett, Knickelbein, and Ryan, 1961), 86 percent were found to be White, while Whites represented 57 percent of the adult felons in the control group. By contrast, Blacks made up 31 percent of the non-escapees but contributed only four percent of the escapes. Mexican-Americans were about equally represented in both groups with ten percent of the escapees and 11 percent of the control group. During 1968 and 1969 escapes from the camps located in Southern California consisted of 71 percent White, ten percent Black, and 19 percent Mexican-American. During the period January 1971 through June 1972, the total group escaping from the California Department of Corrections' facilities was composed of 72 percent White, ten percent Black, 17 percent Mexican-American, and one percent Other inmates (California Department of Corrections, 1972). The ethnic distribution of the Department's population at the time was 52 percent White, 30 percent Black, 17 percent Mexican-American, and one percent Other.

Hacker (1967), studying escapes from the California Institution for Men from May 1965 through April 1967, reported 85 percent of the escapees were White, while 57 percent of the institution's population were of this ethnicity. Thirty percent of the population but only two percent of those who escaped were Black, and Mexican-Americans were again proportionally represented with 12 percent of the population and 13 percent of the escapes.

Thus, the weight of the evidence indicates that Whites represent a considerably greater escape risk than Blacks, with Mexican-Americans (data are only available from California studies on this group) escaping with roughly the same frequency as they are found in the institutional population. Variations in these differences in escape rates are evident, however. The longitudinal data from California also suggest that the differences are getting smaller. In comparison to a low of four percent Black escapes from camp in 1959 and 1960, the figure for the first six months of 1972 was 13 percent. While the current rate is still only

about one-third of their proportion of the camp population, it represents a three-fold increase in the past ten years.

A number of hypotheses have been advanced to explain the difference between Whites and Blacks in escaping behavior. The low rate of Black escapes in Louisiana (Loving, et al., 1959) was felt to be due, at least in part, to their lack of geographic mobility, long residence in that state, and strong family ties in that area. Levine (1962) points out, however, that low rates also exist in Illinois, where these characteristics are not typical of the Black population. Levine's point applies equally to California where the Black population is not distinguished from the White population by stronger family ties or longer residence in the state.

A second hypothesis suggested is that the low socio-economic position of Blacks in our society makes the level of material deprivation of prison life much less for Blacks than Whites, thus tending to minimize the pains of incarceration. This is expressed in the popular notion that many inmates (and especially members of minority groups in progressive correctional systems) never had it so good. Thus, for deprived minorities little motivation exists for escaping. There are at least two problems with this argument. Mexican-Americans occupy a similarly low economic position in California, yet escape proportionally to their numbers. It is also difficult to explain in terms of this hypothesis why the rate of Black escapes in California, where inmates have a high material existence, appears to be greater than in southern states.

A third hypothesis argues that the geographic location of correctional facilities, in remote areas and away from concentrations of inner city minority groups, has made avoiding apprehension very difficult for Black inmates. The low rate of Black escapes would thus reflect the reality of easy detection in largely White areas. Related to this possible explanation is the unwelcome feeling Blacks have traditionally had when alone in unfamiliar White neighborhoods.

Data in the current study offer some evidence on this issue. To test the "geographic" hypothesis the information in Table 2 was organized around five different locations. Escapes from conservation camps are grouped into those in Northern, Central, and Southern California. Also examined separately are absconders from Work Furlough Programs and escapes from the California Institution for Men at Chino.

There appears to be no consistent relationship between geography and Mexican-American escapes, although camps in Southern California had an unusually high rate. Mexican-Americans constituted 30 percent of the escapes from these facilities compared to 17 percent of the control group. For the other facilities, the rate was representative. Blacks show a steady trend of increasing escapes as the location is closer to Black populations. From a low of four percent and five percent in northern and central camps, the rate jumps to 11 percent in Southern California camps, where several camps and work projects are in the vicinities of San Bernardino, San Diego, and Los Angeles. Ten minutes from a large Black population in Pomona, 21 percent of the escapees from the California Institution for Men were Black. Work Furlough Programs would seem to be relevant to this hypothesis, since they are



Table 2

Ethnic Distribution of Escapees and Control Group, by Location of the Escape

| Location of the Escape | Escapees | | Control | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Northern California Camps | | | | |
| White | 57 | 78 | 46 | 48 |
| Mexican-American | 13 | 18 | 16 | 17 |
| Black | 3 | 4 | 33 | 35 |
| Total | 73 | 100 | 95 | 100 |
| Central California Camps | | | | |
| White | 47 | 84 | 37 | 49 |
| Mexican-American | 6 | 11 | 14 | 18 |
| Black | 3 | 5 | 25 | 33 |
| Total | 56 | 100 | 76 | 100 |
| Southern California Camps | | | | |
| White | 31 | 59 | 36 | 51 |
| Mexican-American | 16 | 30 | 12 | 17 |
| Black | 6 | 11 | 23 | 32 |
| Total | 53 | 100 | 71 | 100 |
| California Institution for Men | | | | |
| White | 55 | 66 | 44 | 52 |
| Mexican-American | 11 | 13 | 10 | 12 |
| Black | 17 | 21 | 31 | 36 |
| Total | 83 | 100 | 85 | 100 |
| Total, Camps and California Institution for Men | | | | |
| White | 190 | 72 | 163 | 50 |
| Mexican-American | 46 | 17 | 52 | 16 |
| Black | 29 | 11 | 112 | 34 |
| Total | 265 | 100 | 327 | 100 |
| Work Furlough | | | | |
| White | 42 | 65 | - | 63 |
| Mexican-American | 9 | 14 | - | 11 |
| Black | 14 | 21 | - | 26 |
| Total | 65 | 100 | - | 100* |

*The figures represent the ethnic distribution of all work furloughees as of December 1971.

designed for those inmates paroling to the area and are purposely balanced to reflect the ethnic distribution of the region. With 26 percent of work furloughees being Black, 20 percent of the absconders from that program in our sample were of this ethnicity.

Geography, then, would seem to offer a partial explanation of the low rate of Black escapes but not a complete one. In no comparison did the rate equal the proportion in the correctional population. It can further be argued that failure to return to a work furlough facility is a different type of behavior from actually escaping from custody. Additional explanations must be sought. Investigations might be done with profit in two areas, classification procedures and interpersonal differences.

Smith (1971) has suggested that the low Black escape rate in Washington may be related to fewer being given the minimum security opportunity. Blacks make up 18 percent of the population at the Washington State Penitentiary but only nine percent in the honor camps. In California, however, the camp population parallels the institution population. This equal distribution is maintained by an aggressive policy relating to the assignment of ethnic groups to the various programs. Since Blacks generally represent a lower escape risk than Whites, the results of this determination to equalize populations could be the less critical screening of White candidates for minimum custody programs.

Escape History

There is a curious lack of attention in the literature on escapes to the most obvious variable, escape history. In discussing absconders from English training schools, Gunasekara (1963) analyzes chronic absconders in terms of other factors but provides no data on escape history. Smith (1971) hints at a possible reason for this inattention. After noting that 12 percent of the escapees in Washington had prior escapes from that jurisdiction compared to three percent of the controls he goes on to explain that "Data for escape records from other states, jails, and juvenile institutions were not complete (p. 26)." Reasonably complete data on escape history are available in California and have been a focus of study.

The Shain report (1961) found that 38 percent of the escapees from camp in 1959 and 1960 had a history of escape compared to 14 percent of the control group who didn't escape. For the California Department of Corrections as a whole 25 percent of the adult male inmates had a record of prior escape as of December 31, 1972. Of the escapees during 1971 and through June of 1972, 44 percent had a history of prior escape. Data from the California Institution for Men on the 1965 through 1967 escape group (Hacker, 1967) list 27 percent of the escapees as having escape histories compared to eight percent of the institutional population.

In order to throw light on the effects of prior escape history independent of race and location, Table 3 presents data for the various ethnic group and place of escape combinations. The relationship between prior escapes and current escapes is seen to hold up over all comparisons except for Blacks. This is due to the small number of Blacks in the study who either had an escape history or escaped during this time period. Of the 14 Blacks in the study with escape histories, four (less than one-third) are found in the escape group.

Table 3

Prior Escape History of Escapees and Control Group, by Location and Race (in percentages)

| Location, Escape History | White | | Mexican-American | | Black | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Northern California Camps | | | | | | | | |
| No Prior Escape | 60% | 78% | 31% | 75% | (3) | 88% | 56% | 81% |
| Some Prior Escape | 40 | 22 | 69 | 25 | - | 12 | 44 | 19 |
| Total Number | (57) | (46) | (13) | (16) | (3) | (33) | (73) | (95) |
| Central California Camps | | | | | | | | |
| No Prior Escape | 64% | 78% | (4) | 79% | (3) | 92% | 66% | 83% |
| Some Prior Escape | 36 | 22 | (2) | 21 | - | 8 | 34 | 17 |
| Total Number | (47) | (37) | (6) | (14) | (3) | (25) | (56) | (76) |
| Southern California Camps | | | | | | | | |
| No Prior Escape | 58% | 78% | 63% | 75% | (4) | 91% | 60% | 82% |
| Some Prior Escape | 42 | 22 | 37 | 25 | (2) | 9 | 40 | 18 |
| Total Number | (31) | (36) | (16) | (12) | (6) | (23) | (53) | (71) |
| California Institution for Men | | | | | | | | |
| No Prior Escape | 60% | 86% | 45% | 80% | 88% | 94% | 64% | 88% |
| Some Prior Escape | 40 | 14 | 55 | 20 | 12 | 6 | 36 | 12 |
| Total Number | (55) | (44) | (11) | (10) | (17) | (31) | (83) | (85) |
| Total | | | | | | | | |
| No Prior Escape | 61% | 80% | 50% | 77% | 86% | 91% | 62% | 83% |
| Some Prior Escape | 39 | 20 | 50 | 23 | 14 | 9 | 38 | 17 |
| Total Number | (190) | (163) | (46) | (52) | (29) | (112) | (265) | (327) |

Overall 38 percent of the escapees had escape histories compared to 17 percent of the control group. Half of the Mexican-Americans who escaped had a prior escape. In most comparisons escapees were more likely to have an escape record by about 20 percent. The northern camps had the highest percentage of escapees with escape records (42 percent). The differences between facilities are not great enough, however, to suggest regional differences in the relationship of escape history.

The importance of a prior history of escape dictates a more thorough analysis of this factor. Past escape behavior may also be viewed in terms of frequency, time, and situation. In Table 4 the number of prior escapes is examined. A major problem with the camp population can be seen in the high proportion with multiple escapes in their background. Of the 182 camp escapees in this study 15 percent had two or more previous escapes. Of the 30 camp men in the study with multiple escapes 23 were in the current escape group. The greater risk of multiple prior escapes is less evident in the institution data, however. This suggests that the importance of previous escape experience may be greater in remote areas where escaping could be more involved, if not more difficult. This suggestion is also supported by the slightly higher percentage of institutional escapees with no escape history. The relationship could also be an expression of the age difference between the camp and institution population.

Table 4

Number of Prior Escapes for Escapees and Control Group, by Location (in percentages)

| Number of Prior Escapes | Conservation Camps | | California Institution for Men | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| None | 60% | 81% | 64% | 88% | 61% | 83% |
| One | 25 | 16 | 25 | 7 | 25 | 14 |
| Two or More | 15 | 3 | 11 | 5 | 14 | 3 |
| Total Number | (182) | (242) | (83) | (95) | (265) | (327) |

The type of prior escape is the second important factor. An escapee from a medium custody prison certainly differs from a juvenile walkaway. It is commonly argued that prior juvenile escapes should be considered less important, since they are often more easily accomplished, punished less severely, and likely to have happened years before. In Table 5, the data indicate that adult escape histories were somewhat more typical than juvenile. However, among the camp population juvenile escape histories were as important as adult escapes. While 33 of the camp escapees had juvenile excapes, this was true for 17 of the controls. The relative importance of juvenile escapes is difficult to evaluate for the institutional population, since only 13 men had such records.

No dramatic differences are evident in the type of facility from which the previous escape occurred (Table 5). Hospitals, jails, and institutions are



about equally represented with no type of facility which can be clearly ignored. Although the numbers are small, it is interesting that the camp escapees were not distinguished by prior escapes from state camps.

Table 5

Type of Facility of Prior Escape for Escapees and Control Group, by Location

| Type of Facility | CONSERVATION CAMPS | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Adult Escapes | | Juvenile Escapes | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Hospital | 5 | 3 | - | - | 5 | 3 |
| County Camp | 5 | 2 | 2 | - | 7 | 2 |
| State Camp | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Jail, Juvenile Hall | 9 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 16 | 7 |
| Institution | 6 | 2 | 12 | 3 | 18 | 5 |
| Any Attempted | 2 | 2 | - | - | 2 | 2 |
| Other | 3 | 5 | 1 | - | 4 | 5 |
| No Information | 7 | 5 | 9 | 10 | 16 | 15 |
| Total | 39 | 26 | 33 | 17 | 72 | 43 |
| | CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN | | | | | |
| | Adult Escapes | | Juvenile Escapes | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Hospital | 3 | 1 | - | - | 3 | 1 |
| County Camp | 2 | - | 1 | - | 3 | - |
| State Camp | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | - |
| Jail, Juvenile Hall | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 4 |
| Institution | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Any Attempted | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | - |
| No Information | 2 | - | 3 | - | 5 | - |
| Total | 23 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 30 | 10 |

The amount of time since the last escape is another important matter. It is usually felt that the longer the time since the prior escape the less important it is for classification purposes. Often the rule of thumb is five to ten years. In Table 6, the amount of time elapsing from the prior subjects' last escape is grouped into five year periods. The data are presented this way for convenience, but in arraying the figures there were no natural groupings which clearly distinguished controls from escapees. The major difference between escapees and controls appears to occur with prior escapes occurring over 15 years before. For the total study group, 39 percent of the controls had escapes that distant in the past compared to only 13 percent of the escapees. Since the age of the inmate and the years since last escape are obviously related

(it would be difficult for someone in their twenties to have escaped 15 years ago), part of this difference is probably due to the chronological age factor. This factor may account for the less dramatic difference seen in the camp population with its narrow range of ages. There are only slight advantages for the control group in terms of time elapsing since last escape until the sixteenth year.

Table 6

Number of Years Since Last Escape of Escapees and Control Group, by Location (in percentages)

| Years Since Last Escape | Conservation Camps | | California Institution for Men | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| 0 - 5 Years | 20% | 21% | 31% | - | 23% | 17% |
| 6 - 10 Years | 43 | 26 | 31 | 30% | 40 | 27 |
| 11 - 15 Years | 23 | 16 | 27 | 20 | 24 | 17 |
| 16 or More Years | 14 | 37 | 11 | 50 | 13 | 39 |
| Total Number | (65) | (38) | (26) | (10) | (91) | (48) |
| Median Years | 9 | 11.5 | 8 | 18 | 9 | 12 |

No information was available on seven escapees and five controls from the conservation camps and four escapees from the California Institution for Men.

It was originally thought that the escapees most distant in time would tend to be of the juvenile type, but this was not the case. The data revealed that those with juvenile escape histories tended to be younger inmates thus negating the usefulness of this distinction. Regardless of why it is, the higher rate for those with escapes within the last 15 years might be worth bearing in mind for classification purposes.

Age

Those studies which have examined the relationship of age to escaping find escapees generally to be a younger group of inmates. The average age of escapees in the Louisiana study by Loving, et al. (1959), was 29.3 compared to 32.3 for non-escapees. Morgan (1967) found significantly more escapes in South Carolina to be under 25 years of age. In Morrow's study (1969), 70 percent of the psychiatric patients who escaped were under 25 years of age compared to only 41 percent of the control group.

The age difference in California does not appear as great. This may be due in part to the small proportion of the prison population under 25 years of age, about 20 percent. Using the age of 30 as the dividing line, Hacker (1967) found that 67 percent of the California Institution for Men escapees in 1965 through April 1967 were below this age compared to 56 percent of the general population. In the 1959 and 1960 (Shain, et al., 1961) camp



escape group 42 percent were under 30 with only 20 percent of the controls in this age group. Ten years later 52 percent of the escapees from camp were under 30 compared to 45 percent of the resident camp population (California Department of Corrections, 1972).

The analysis of age as a factor in escapes was performed separately in this study for the conservation camps and the institution. The reason for this is the greater age spread at the institution, which also contains a senior citizens unit. The results are presented in Table 7 with race and escape history held constant. The age of 32 was selected as the dividing line, because it approximates the median age of inmates in the Department.

In all comparisons a younger age appears to make an independent contribution to escape behavior. The difference in the camp group was less, as would be expected, because of the narrower age range. While 28 percent of camp escapees were over 32 years of age, 41 percent of the control group was over this mark. Age seems more predictive where there is a prior escape history, with 68 percent of the escapees in this category being under 33 years old. In contrast, age seems to have little value for predicting White camp escapes where no prior escape was recorded. Only a five percent difference exists between escapes and controls in this group. Again with Blacks, there are too few escapes to reveal any relationship.

Greater differences can be noted in the institution sample. The older inmates were 30 percent more likely to be found in the non-escape group with substantial differences in each category. Unlike the situation for camps, the age difference also appears to pertain to Whites without prior escapes. Seventy-one percent of the control group with no prior escapes were over 32 years of age compared to 45 percent of the escapees. The reason age seems more important for the institution subjects is probably because of the greater number of inmates in the older age group.

The age data were arrayed to see if there was an age level at which escapes dramatically decreased. There was not; the decline in the escape rate was gradual over many years with no clear cutting point.

Criminal Background

Another common finding is that escapees tend to have more extensive criminal backgrounds. In the case of juvenile runaways, Gunasekara (1963) found 75 percent of the persistent absconders from British training schools were also "persistent thieves" compared to 52 percent of the non-absconders. With runaways in Illinois (Levine, 1962) 54 percent were "returnees" compared to 40 percent of the non-absconding delinquents. Lubeck and Empey (1968), in studying juvenile absconders from two California schools, constructed several complex indices. They report:

> "When the ten best predictor variables for each program are re-grouped into their four original content categories--personality characteristics, peer influence, offense history, and background factors-- the offense scales, as a group, appear to have the highest explanatory value. They account for 41 percent of all explained variance for the total institution and 50 percent for the mediatory institution. This

Table 7

Age of Escapees and Control Group, by Location, Race and Prior Escape History
(in percentages)

| Age | ALL CONSERVATION CAMPS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | White | | | | Mexican-American | | | | Black | | | | Total | | | |
| | No Prior Escapes | | Some Prior Escapes | | No Prior Escapes | | Some Prior Escapes | | No Prior Escapes | | Some Prior Escapes | | No Prior Escapes | | Some Prior Escapes | |
| | E* | C* | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C |
| Under 32 Yrs. | 73% | 68% | 64% | 39% | 72% | 53% | 76% | 60% | 90% | 56% | (2) | (5) | 75% | 61% | 68% | 48% |
| 32 Yrs. & Over | 27 | 32 | 36 | 61 | 28 | 47 | 24 | 40 | 10 | 44 | - | (3) | 25 | 39 | 32 | 52 |
| Total Number | (82) | (93) | (53) | (26) | (18) | (32) | (17) | (10) | (10) | (73) | (2) | (8) | (110) | (198) | (72) | (44) |
| | CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | White | | | | Mexican-American | | | | Black | | | | Total | | | |
| | No Prior Escapes | | Some Prior Escapes | | No Prior Escapes | | Some Prior Escapes | | No Prior Escapes | | Some Prior Escapes | | No Prior Escapes | | Some Prior Escapes | |
| | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C | E | C |
| Under 32 Yrs. | 48% | 26% | 59% | - | (4) | (2) | (5) | (1) | 60% | 34% | - | - | 55% | 29% | 60% | 10% |
| 32 Yrs. & Over | 52 | 74 | 41 | (6) | (1) | (6) | (1) | (1) | 40 | 66 | (2) | (2) | 45 | 71 | 40 | 90 |
| Total Number | (33) | (38) | (22) | (6) | (5) | (8) | (6) | (2) | (15) | (29) | (2) | (2) | (53) | (75) | (30) | (10) |

*E = Escapes, C = Controls

finding is significant in light of the fact that these measures of past offense behavior, rather than measures of personality, peer influences, or background, are the most powerful explanatory factors."

Loving, et al. (1959), found White adult escapees in Louisiana to be characterized by two clusters of variables referred to as "Transient Criminality" and "Early Criminal History". In replicating the study in South Carolina, however, Morgan (1967) did not find type of offense or prior commitment to the state penitentiary to be statistically significant in distinguishing escapees from a control group. However, criminal background was again significant in the Washington study (Smith, 1971). Both type of offense and type of admission were significant at the .001 level, using a chi square test. Parole violators and readmissions made up 46 percent of the escapes and 30 percent of the controls, while property offenders constituted 79 percent of the escapees but only 58 percent of the controls. Similar results were obtained by Morrow (1969) in studying psychiatric patients. Four previous felonies were recorded for 39 percent of the escapees, but this was true of only 16 percent of the other patients. The most distinguishing feature of the escapees was their admission as a transfer from an adult correctional facility rather than through one of the numerous other ways into the hospital. Among escapees from California Conservation Camps in 1959 and 1960 (Shain, et al., 1961), 47 percent were parole violators compared to 30 percent of the control group. Apart from parole violations, 72 percent of the escapees and 58 percent of the controls had served at least one prior prison term. It is usually assumed that crimes against persons are more situational and spontaneous and thus do not suggest the same level of commitment to a criminal life style as property crimes. In the same study 94 percent of the escapees were sentenced for property crimes (including robbery) compared to 68 percent of the non-escapees.

Efforts to isolate the particular commitment offense having the highest escape rate in California have not been very successful. Results usually alternate between robbery and burglary. Forgery is sometimes high, sometimes low. The difficulty in finding "the" offense reflects the high degree of intercorrelation of offense with other variables. Auto theft, once thought to be highly related to escape, is also characteristic of the youthful age group. Burglary is now intertwined with narcotic addiction, forgery with alcoholism, and robbery with race. Therefore, the grosser category of property crimes was used in this analysis as an indicator of criminality.

In Table 8 it can be seen that in all but one comparison property crimes are found disproportionately in the escape group. Among those with no prior escapes, 72 percent of the camp escapees were committed for property crimes compared to 57 percent of the controls. In the institutional sample of inmates with no escape history, 56 percent of the controls were sentenced for property crimes, and 83 percent of the escapees were in this category.

Another indicator of criminality is the type of term being served relative to parole. Presumably those returned as parole violators would be more criminally oriented than those serving out their original term. The relationship between type of admission and escaping, as seen in Table 9, is not very strong.

Table 8

Offense Type of Escapees and Control Group, by Location and Escape History (in percentages)

| Offense Type | CONSERVATION CAMPS | | | | CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Property Crimes | 72% | 57% | 72% | 59% | 83% | 56% | 60% | 80% |
| All Other | 28 | 43 | 28 | 41 | 17 | 44 | 40 | 20 |
| Total Number | (110) | (198) | (72) | (44) | (53) | (75) | (30) | (10) |

Table 9

Type of Admission of Escapees and Control Group, by Location, Escape History and Age (in percentages)

| Type of Admission | CONSERVATION CAMPS | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No Escape History | | | | Some Escape History | | | |
| | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Original Term | 68% | 81% | 46% | 64% | 55% | 62% | 39% | 61% |
| Technical Parole Violator | 7 | 10 | 4 | 13 | 14 | 5 | 17 | 9 |
| New Felony Parole Violator | 25 | 9 | 50 | 18 | 31 | 33 | 44 | 30 |
| Total Number | (82) | (121) | (28) | (77) | (49) | (21) | (23) | (23) |
| | CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN | | | | | | | |
| | No Escape History | | | | Some Escape History | | | |
| | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Original Term | 66% | 100% | 63% | 70% | 78% | - | 50% | (4) |
| Technical Parole Violator | 17 | - | 12 | 19 | 11 | - | 25 | - |
| New Felony Parole Violator | 17 | - | 25 | 11 | 11 | (1) | 25 | (5) |
| Total Number | (29) | (22) | (24) | (53) | (18) | (1) | (12) | (9) |



Those serving their original terms appear to have a lower rate in the camp population, with differences of seven percent to 22 percent across age groups. The most noticeable feature in the camp population is the high escape rate of parole violators with new felony convictions and no prior escape record. Half of the escapees in this category who were over 32 years of age had new convictions compared to 18 percent of the controls. One-fourth of the young escapees with no escape history had new felony convictions.

Technical parole violators had a low rate if no escape history was evident, but this was reversed when some prior escape had occurred. Technical violators in the institutional setting, however, did as poorly as violators with new felony convictions. In addition, the better performace of original commitments is not present for those in the institution with a prior escape history.

The most adequate measure of prior criminal involvement utilized in the current study is probably prior incarcerations. This variable was divided into "no prior sentences served", "served a jail or juvenile term only", and "served one or more prior prison terms". The results are presented in Table 10 with location, age, and escape history held constant. In all comparisons where there are enough cases to examine, more serious records of prior incarceration are associated with higher escape rates. The lowest rates are recorded for those who have never served a prior sentence, with those serving only a jail or juvenile term being second. In each comparison, the percentage of those who had served a prior prison term in the escape group was significantly greater than the percentage in the control group.

In the institution population with no prior escape history, 86 percent of the younger non-escape group had served no more than a jail or juvenile term while this was true of only 58 percent of the escape group. The lowest rate appears to be those camp men with no prior terms served.

Table 10

Type of Prior Incarceration of Escapees and Control Group, by Escape History and Age (in percentages)

| Type of Prior Incarceration | CONSERVATION CAMPS | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No Escape History | | | | Some Escape History | | | |
| | 32 Years of Less | | 33 Years or More | | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| None | 4% | 14% | 3% | 14% | - | 5% | - | 4% |
| Jail or Juvenile | 54 | 70 | 11 | 33 | 55% | 57 | 4% | 9 |
| Prior Prison | 41 | 16 | 86 | 53 | 45 | 38 | 96 | 87 |
| No Information | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Number | (82) | (121) | (28) | (77) | (49) | (21) | (23) | (23) |
| | CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN | | | | | | | |
| | No Escape History | | | | Some Escape History | | | |
| | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| None | 3% | 9% | 8% | 9% | - | - | - | - |
| Jail or Juvenile | 55 | 77 | 21 | 26 | 56% | - | 17% | (1) |
| Prior Prison | 35 | 14 | 71 | 59 | 44 | (1) | 83 | (8) |
| No Information | 7 | - | - | 6 | - | - | - | - |
| Total Number | (29) | (22) | (24) | (53) | (18) | (1) | (12) | (9) |

## Summary and Conclusions

The literature on escapes gives consideration to several factors not analyzed in this study. Some, such as farm versus non-farm occupations or urban versus rural background (Loving, et al., 1959) did not seem relevant to the California system. Pursuing others appeared to be of dubious value. Morrow (1969), for example, found first born sons to escape more often. Intelligence level also has been systematically studied in relation to escaping. Cochran (1948) found escapees to have inferior intelligence. Morrow (1969), Levine (1962), and Loving, et al. (1959) found no significant relationship, while Morgan (1967) and Shain, et al. (1961) found escapees to be above average in intelligence. Since none of these studies systematically controlled for other important variables, it is likely that these ambiguous findings result from correlations with other variables. Similar problems exist in determining the relationship between alcohol or drug usage and escaping.

In this study the method selected for holding certain variables constant was through partialing tables, this because of some rather complicated methodological problems. Given the sample size and the strength of the four variables considered, additional divisions of the data would make further analysis impossible under this procedure. With these four variables firmly established, however, a different method (control through base rates) was employed in later chapters, and other items are analyzed through the use of this method.

Consistent with prior studies, race was found to have a strong relationship to escape behavior. Blacks escaped about one-third as often as they appear in the population, Mexican-Americans about the same as their percentage in the population, while Whites were about one and one-half times as likely to escape as their numbers in the general population would indicate. The Black escape rate increased considerably, however, in facilities located in Southern California, and an unusually high rate of Mexican-American escapes was experienced from conservation camps in that region.

A more consistent relationship was found between previous escapes and current escape behavior. Inmates with an escape history were twice as likely to be found among the escapees as their percentage in the population would indicate. This was true for all facilities. The risk was further increased if more than one prior escape had been recorded. The low rate of Black escapes from camp, however, compromises the usefulness of escape history for classifying that group. Even with escape histories they were less of a risk than the other two groups. No relationship was evident between the type of prior escape and the current escape. The type of facility or whether it was a juvenile or adult escape didn't appear to make any difference. A prior escape was less important if it occurred 15 years or more earlier, but this time variable was highly related to age, another important factor.

Escapees were more often in the younger age group. There was no magic age, however, at which escapes no longer occurred. The decline was gradual. Escapees tended to have more extensive criminal backgrounds than non-escapees. This was true when age, location, and escape history were held constant. More escapees were found to be property offenders, to have served prior prison terms, and/or to have been returned to prison for parole violation. The lowest escape risks were those who had served no prior sentences, including jail or Juvenile.



# CHAPTER III
# BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS AND INSTITUTIONAL ESCAPES

Escapes from medium custody institutions represent a somewhat different problem. Movement is more closely controlled even for inmates classified as minimum security, and the lower rates attest to the increased difficulty of escaping. A surprisingly large number of inmates at secure institutions are classified as minimum custody. As of December 1971, 32 percent had minimum security assignments. The great bulk of the escapes come from this group rather than from inmates penetrating the secure institutional perimeters. Most occur from work details outside the gun towers. The purpose of this chapter is to compare systematically the characteristics of escapees from medium custody facilities with those of escapees from minimum security settings.

## Race

Almost identical results were obtained in comparing escape rates of various races from institutions and minimum custody facilities (Table 11). Whites again represent one and one-half times as many escapes as controls, Mexican-Americans are equally represented, and Black escapes occur about one-third as often as they appear in the population. Whites constituted 76 percent of the escapes from institutions and 49 percent of the control group. The comparable figures for minimum custody facilities are 72 percent and 50 percent.

Table 11

Ethnic Distribution of Institutional Escapees and Control Group

| Race | Number | | Percentage | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| White | 176 | 186 | 76 | 49 |
| Mexican-American | 29 | 77 | 13 | 20 |
| Black | 25 | 119 | 11 | 31 |
| Total | 230 | 382 | 100 | 100 |

## Escape History

Table 12 shows the relationship of escape history independent of race. For each ethnic group those with prior escapes have a higher escape rate by about 20 percent. As would be expected, a higher proportion of the institutional population had escape histories. Seventy-five percent of the institution control group had no escape history compared to 83 percent of the control group for minimum security facilities. Because of the greater numbers with escape

history, more institution escapees are in this category. Half the escapees had an escape history, while this was true of more than half of the White and Mexican-American escapes. Again, there are few Blacks with escape histories and fewer with current escapes.

Table 12

Escape History of Institutional Escapees and Control Group, by Race (in percentages)

| Escape History | White | | Mexican-American | | Black | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| No Prior Escape | 46% | 71% | 52% | 66% | 64% | 87% | 49% | 75% |
| Some Prior Escapes | 54 | 29 | 48 | 34 | 36 | 13 | 51 | 25 |
| Total Number | (176) | (186) | (29) | (77) | (25) | (119) | (230) | (382) |

The escape risk of those with escape histories is approximately twice as great as of those without; but, unlike the camp escapee group, multiple prior escapes don't appear to appreciably increase this risk. Those with one, two, and three or more escapes constitute about twice as great a percentage of the escape group as the controls (Table 13).

Table 13

Number of Prior Escapes for Institutional Escapees and Control Group (in percentages)

| Number of Prior Escapes | Escapees | Controls | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| None | 48% | 75% | 65% |
| One | 31 | 15 | 21 |
| Two | 11 | 6 | 8 |
| Three or More | 10 | 4 | 6 |
| Total Number | (230) | (382) | (612) |

Escape histories of institutional inmates tend to be of more recent origin. The escape group also had more escape histories less than six years in age, with the control group having more escapes in the 11 to 15 year category (Table 14).



Table 14

Number of Years Since Last Escape of Institutional Escapees and Control Group (in percentages)

| Years Since Last Escape | Escapees | Controls | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 - 5 Years | 47% | 35% | 42% |
| 6 - 10 Years | 22 | 21 | 21 |
| 11 - 15 Years | 5 | 13 | 8 |
| 16+ Years | 20 | 19 | 20 |
| No Information | 6 | 12 | 9 |
| Total Number | (118) | (96) | (214) |

Again, the type of facility from which the prior escape occurred seemed to make little difference. In contrast to the case with the camp subjects, fewer of the escapes were of the juvenile type, and they appear less important (Table 15).

Table 15

Type of Facility of Prior Escape for Institutional Escapees and Control Group

| Type of Facility | Adult Escapes | | Juvenile Escapes | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Hospital | 5 | 5 | - | - | 5 | 5 |
| County Camp | 5 | 8 | - | 1 | 5 | 9 |
| State Camp | 14 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 17 | 5 |
| Jail or Juvenile Hall | 21 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 23 | 16 |
| Institution | 38 | 21 | 5 | 11 | 43 | 32 |
| Any Attempted | 5 | 2 | 2 | - | 7 | 2 |
| Other | 4 | 3 | - | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| No Information | 9 | 14 | 5 | 9 | 14 | 23 |
| Total Number | (101) | (70) | (17) | (26) | (118) | (96) |

Table 16

Age of Institutional Escapees and Control Group,
by Race and Prior Escape History (in percentages)

| Age | ALL RACES | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Under 32 Years | 59% | 57% | 56% | 58% | 57% | 57% |
| 33 Years & Over | 41 | 43 | 44 | 42 | 43 | 43 |
| Total Number | (112) | (286) | (118) | (96) | (230) | (382) |
| | WHITE ONLY | | | | | |
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Under 32 Years | 58% | 50% | 59% | 52% | 59% | 51% |
| 33 Years & Over | 42 | 50 | 41 | 48 | 41 | 49 |
| Total Number | (81) | (132) | (95) | (54) | (176) | (186) |
| | MEXICAN-AMERICAN ONLY | | | | | |
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Under 32 Years | 67% | 59% | 57% | 69% | 62% | 62% |
| 33 Years & Over | 33 | 41 | 43 | 31 | 38 | 38 |
| Total Number | (15) | (51) | (14) | (26) | (29) | (77) |
| | BLACK ONLY | | | | | |
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Under 32 Years | 56% | 64% | (2) | 63% | 44% | 64% |
| 33 Years & Over | 44 | 36 | (7) | 37 | 56 | 36 |
| Total Number | (16) | (103) | (9) | (16) | (25) | (119) |



Age

In contrast to the situation with the camp sample, age does not discriminate between institutional escapees and the control group (Table 16). Those under 33 years of age made up 57 percent of the escapees and 57 percent of the controls. There are some variations within ethnic groups which are nullified when they are combined.

Criminal Background

A higher percentage of institutional escapees were convicted of property crimes (Table 17). This was true of 76 percent of the escapees but only 51 percent of the controls. This was also true of each racial group. For example, 14 of the 16 Black escapees were committed for property offenses. This relationship is somewhat stronger than in the sample of camp escapes.

Table 17

Offense Type of Institutional Escapees and Control Group,
by Escape History (in percentages)

| Type of Offense | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Property Crime | 73% | 47% | 78% | 61% | 76% | 51% |
| All Other | 27 | 53 | 22 | 39 | 24 | 49 |
| Total Number | (112) | (286) | (118) | (96) | (230) | (382) |

Inmates serving their original term have a lower escape rate than parole violators (Table 18). This relationship is present across age groups and when an escape history is recorded, although it is very weak among older inmates with prior escapes. As with the camp sample, the strongest relationship appears among older inmates with no prior escapes. Half of those who escaped in this category had been returned to prison with a new felony conviction, compared to 26 percent of the non-escapees. Among the younger inmates, those serving their original term were 15 percent less likely to be found among the escapees. When all categories are combined, parole violators with new felonies are 27 percent of the escapees and 19 percent of the controls, technical violators make up 20 percent of the escapees and 11 percent of the controls, and original commitments constitute 53 percent of the escapees but 70 percent of the control group.

The third measure of criminal background is history of prior incarceration. In the control group, ten percent had had no previous incarceration compared to four percent of the escapees. One or more prior prison terms was served by 55 percent of the escapees and 40 percent of the non-escapees. The relationship

Table 18

Type of Admission of Institutional Escapees and Control Group, by Escape History and Age (in percentages)

| Type of Admission | No Escape History | | | | Some Escape History | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapes | Controls |
| Original Term | 68% | 83% | 30% | 56% | 67% | 82% | 39% | 43% |
| Technical Parole Violator | 21 | 7 | 20 | 18 | 15 | 4 | 23 | 17 |
| New Felony Parole Violator | 11 | 10 | 50 | 26 | 18 | 14 | 38 | 40 |
| Total Number | (66) | (162) | (46) | (124) | (66) | (56) | (52) | (40) |

appears much weaker, however, when escape history and age are taken into consideration (Table 19). The major difference is found among older inmates with no escape history. Forty-six percent of the non-escapees had served no more than a jail term compared to 15 percent of the older men with no escape histories who escaped. The figures for the same group in the camp men are almost identical.

Table 19

Type of Prior Incarceration of Institutional Escapees and Control Group, by Escape History and Age (in percentages)

| Type of Prior Incarceration | No Escape History | | | | Some Escape History | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| None | 10% | 12% | 2% | 13% | - | - | - | 2% |
| Jail or Juvenile | 67 | 70 | 13 | 33 | 62% | 59% | 8% | 13 |
| Prior Prison | 23 | 18 | 85 | 54 | 38 | 41 | 92 | 85 |
| Total Number | (66) | (162) | (46) | (124) | (66) | (56) | (52) | (40) |

## Summary and Conclusions

The background characteristics that are significantly descriptive of institutional escapees are surprisingly similar to those of escapees from minimum security facilities. Race is an equally strong predictor in both settings, with Blacks representing only 11 percent of the escapes from each type.



Escape history is slightly more strongly related to escaping from an institution, and prior escapes were of a more recent nature in the institutional sample. Unlike the case with the camp sample, multiple prior escapes don't significantly increase the power of prediction. Again there is no type of facility from which a prior escape occurred which can be readily discounted, although the great majority of prior escapes were from an adult facility.

Age was strongly related to escaping from the California Institution for Men, moderately in the camp sample, and not related to escaping from a medium custody institution. The reason for this seems to be that the strength of the other variables was such as to nullify any advantage for the older group.

Property offenders are found disproportionately among the escapees from all settings, as are parole violators. This relationship weakens, however, when a history of escaping is present. The general relationship with prior sentences served is not evident in the institution sample, but the low escape rate of older men with no escape histories who have served little time is present.

## CHAPTER IV
## INSTITUTIONAL CAREERS AND ESCAPE BEHAVIOR

The concern up to this point has been with basic inmate characteristics as they relate to escape behavior. No attention has been paid to where the inmate is in terms of his prison career. Common-sense suggests, however, that the length of the term being served and how much is left to serve should make a considerable difference in terms of the risk of escaping.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine various aspects of the sentences being served in terms of the escape risk associated with them in relation to background factors. Before analyzing institutional careers, however, it is necessary to consolidate the information on background characteristics into another form.

The previous chapters suggest that race, escape history, offense type and age are the four items most consistently and strongly related to escape behavior. These four items were considered in all 24 possible combinations, and the relative number of escapes and controls noted for each. These data were then used to estimate an escape rate per 100 inmates with each combination of factors. Since the control group was not a proportionate sample, the number of inmates in this group was first multiplied by a term to increase their number to the proper amount. For example, the escape rate from conservation during the study period was about ten percent and thus proportionate sampling would have produced approximately 1,740 controls for the 182 escapees. The control sample of 242 was therefore divided by 13.9 percent to produce the desired number. The adjusted control size was added to the escape group and the total divided into the number of escapes to derive a probable percentage of escapes.

Institutional escapes represent an additional problem. The basic rate is misleading because almost all escapes occur from minimum custody while only 20 percent of the population is assigned to minimum custody. To compensate for this, the rate was based only on the number of men in minimum custody. Still the institutional escape rates were only about half as high as the camp rates. Table 20, below, shows the median projected rate for the escape and control groups by their location prior to being transferred to their present facility.

Table 20

Median Projected Escape Rates of Escapees and Control Group, by Type of Facility and Type of Transfer

| Type of Transfer | California Institution for Men | | | Conservation Camps | | | Institutions | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escape | Control | Total | Escape | Control | Total | Escape | Control | Total |
| Direct from Reception Center | 14 | 10 | 10 | 15 | 5 | 9 | - | - | - |
| Other Transfer | 14 | 4 | 10 | 15 | 9 | 15 | - | - | - |
| Total Median | 14 | 4 | 10 | 15 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 4 |
| Total Number | (83) | (95) | (168) | (182) | (242) | (424) | (92) | (233) | (325) |



The raw scores were arrayed and divided into four levels (Table 21). The cutting points were selected from what appeared to be natural divisions in the array. This procedure produced different intervals for each type of facility. The four escape risk levels are labeled "Low, Medium Low, Medium High, and High".

Table 21

Intervals Used to Define Levels of Escape Risk for Each Type of Facility

| Level of Escape Risk | Conservation Camps | California Institution for Men | All Other Institutions |
|---|---|---|---|
| Low | 0 - 3 | 0 - 2 | 0 - 1 |
| Medium Low | 4 - 7 | 3 - 5 | 2 - 3 |
| Medium High | 8 - 15 | 6 - 10 | 4 - 6 |
| High | 16+ | 11+ | 7+ |

Table 22 shows the percentage distribution of escapees and control by risk levels. Risk levels grouped in this way appear to discriminate enough to warrent their use as a "Base Expectancy" type of control for analyzing other variables.

Table 22

Escapees and Controls, by Level of Escape Risk and Type of Facility (in percentages)

| Level of Escape Risk | California Institution for Men | | Conservation Camps | | Institutions | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Low | 7% | 43% | 6% | 34% | 5% | 33% |
| Medium Low | 7 | 15 | 14 | 24 | 9 | 18 |
| Medium High | 30 | 27 | 46 | 33 | 27 | 27 |
| High | 56 | 15 | 34 | 9 | 59 | 22 |
| Total Number | (83) | (85) | (182) | (242) | (92) | (233) |

## Conservation Program: Type of Transfer and Escape Behavior

Inmates get into the conservation camp system by two routes. About half go directly to the system from a Reception-Guidance Center soon after they are received by the Department. Other inmates are transferred from correctional institutions. Such transfers generally occur upon the recommendation of institution staff after some portion of the term has been served and various other criteria have been fulfilled.

Since many of the items used in developing the risk levels are also used in custody classification it is not surprising to find a tendency for those sent directly to camp to be over-represented in the low risk group, while 60 percent of the high risk group had spent time in an institution before camp placement (Table 23). This is also reflected in Table 20 where the direct placement group has a projected escape rate of nine percent compared to 15 percent for those coming from another institution.

Table 23

Number and Percentage of Conservation Inmates in Each Escape Risk Group, by Type of Transfer

| Type of Transfer | Low Risk | | Medium Low | | Medium High | | High Risk | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Direct from Reception Center | 62 | 68% | 52 | 63% | 89 | 58% | 34 | 40% | 237 | 57% |
| Indirect from Other Institutions | 29 | 32 | 31 | 37 | 67 | 42 | 50 | 60 | 177 | 43 |
| Total | 91 | 100% | 83 | 100% | 156 | 100% | 84 | 100% | 414 | 100% |

When the escapees and control group are compared by type of transfer (direct or indirect), those received directly from a reception center have a slight advantage (Table 24). Fifty-nine percent of this group were among the non-escapees compared to 54 percent of those from other institutions. Considerable differences can be seen between risk levels, however. The two lower risk groups had fewer escapes by about 13 percent when they went directly to conservation camp, while the higher risk groups did better if they went first to an institution by approximately the same amount.



Table 24

Escapees and Control Group, by Level of Escape Risk and Type of Transfer (in percentages)

| Group | Low Risk | | Medium Low | | Medium High | | High Risk | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect |
| Escape | 8% | 21% | 25% | 39% | 58% | 45% | 82% | 66% | 41% | 46% |
| Control | 92 | 79 | 75 | 61 | 42 | 55 | 18 | 34 | 59 | 54 |
| Total Percent | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Total Number | (62) | (29) | (52) | (31) | (89) | (67) | (34) | (50) | (237) | (177) |

## Conservation Program: Time to Serve and Escape Behavior

Several studies have reported relationships between the length of the prison term and escaping. In a study of escapes from the Massachusetts Prison Colony between 1928 and 1948, Cochrane (1958 mentions sentences with a maximum of over four years as being a factor. Escapees from Louisiana (Loving, et al., 1959) were reported more likely to be serving sentences of six and one-half years or longer rather than shorter terms. Morgan (1967) found significantly more inmates escaping among those who had served less than half their sentences than among those who had served more than half. He also notes, however, that significantly more inmates escaped who were serving sentences of five years or less than those serving longer sentences. In the California study of camp inmates (Shain, et al., 1961), escapees averaged 17 months in custody before the escape. The average escapee had only been in the camp setting for two months so that about 15 of the 17 months were spent elsewhere, probably in medium custody. During that period the average California prison term was 30 months, so that the average camp escapee had probably served about half of his expected term.

In order to investigate the influence of these factors each inmate was assigned an estimate of the number of months he could expect to serve based on the median time served for the same offense by those inmates released during the study period. The data were then analyzed by type of transfer.

Indirect transfers were expected to serve longer sentences by an average of seven months (46 months compared to 39 months). There is no significant difference, however, between length of sentences expected for escapees compared to the control group. Among the direct transfers the escapee group was expected to serve a median sentence of 39 months compared to 37 months for the controls. For those coming from other institutions, the median for both groups was estimated at 46 months. The escapees from the direct transfer group were expected to serve slightly longer terms with the major exception of the high risk group, where the control group averaged an estimated ten months longer. This does not appear true for the indirect transfer group (Table 25).

Table 25

Median Months Expected to Serve for Escapees and Control Group, by Level of Escape Risk and Type of Transfer

| Group | Low Risk | | Medium Low | | Medium High | | High Risk | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect |
| Escapees | 48 | 47 | 48 | 48 | 42 | 46 | 36 | 46 | 39 | 46 |
| Controls | 46 | 46 | 39 | 47 | 37 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 37 | 46 |
| Total | 46 | 46 | 39 | 47 | 37 | 46 | 41 | 46 | 39 | 46 |

The indirect transfers had served varying periods of time in other institutions. It might be that the high risk group, although not serving shorter terms, were transfers to camp later in their sentence. This possibility was examined by first computing the percent of term served by dividing months expected to serve into months served before transfer to conservation. The results are presented in Table 26.

Contrary to what might be expected, the lower risk groups had served as much of the expected sentence before transfer as the high risk groups. With the exception of the highest risk group, the control subjects had served about two-thirds of their expected term before transfer, while the escapees had served only about half. Among the medium high risk group the escapees averaged 40 percent of their expected terms in other institutions, while the control group had served 70 percent before transfer. In other words, given average terms of 46 months the escapees had served less than 23 months before transfer, and the non-escapees had served about 34 months before camp placement. As in the previous table, the high risk group reversed this trend with escapees having served three-fourths of their term before transfer.

Table 26

Median Percentage of Expected Term Served Prior to Transfer to Conservation for Escapees and Controls, by Level of Escape Risk

| Group | Percentage of Expected Term Served | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Low Risk | Medium Low | Medium High | High Risk | Total Percent | Total Number |
| Escapees | 57% | 41% | 40% | 77% | 46% | 81 |
| Controls | 72 | 67 | 70 | 61 | 71 | 96 |
| Total | 70% | 52% | 48% | 67% | 59% | 177 |



Conservation Program: Parole Dates and Escape Behavior

The affect of having a parole date on escape behavior is difficult to evaluate with the current data, because the members of the control group were selected at the end of the study period and were therefore much more likely to have had their terms fixed than the escapees. Because of this the analysis focused only on escapees.

As of December 1971, 26 percent of all male felons in the Department had parole dates. It seems reasonable to assume that considerably more of the minimum custody inmates had parole dates, since it was the policy during this study period to expose those with release dates to a minimum custody setting. Of all escapees from conservation, only 17 percent had parole dates, which is probably about one-half the percentage of the conservation population. Few (ten percent) of the direct transfers who escaped had dates, and most of these were still over a year away when the escape occurred (Table 27). The median parole date for this group was 15.5 months from the time of the escape. Only three were scheduled for parole within nine months.

The camp escapees who came from other institutions were somewhat different. The average parole date was seven months from the escape, and 23 percent had parole dates. Fewer probably had dates than the population average, but the difference is not dramatic as with the direct transfers. Fourteen escapees had dates of nine months or less. When divided into risk levels, two interesting things stand out. Over a third of the indirect transfer high risk level escapees had parole dates with an average of only five months to go before they escaped. In contrast, only one of the ten low risk level escapees had a parole date, and it was 15 months away from the escape.

Table 27

Camp Escapees with Parole Dates, by Level of Escape Risk and Type of Transfer (in percentages)

| Type of Transfer | Low Risk | Medium Low | Medium High | High | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Direct from eception Center | (0) | 23% | 6% | 14% | 10% |
| Indirect from Institution | (1) | 17 | 13 | 35 | 23 |

California Institution for Men: Type of Transfer and Escape Behavior

During the time covered by this study the California Institution for Men was used for both longer term program cases and as a prerelease center for inmates from other institutions who were paroling to Southern California. The usual procedure for the prerelease group was for the sending institution to initiate the transfer about five to nine months from the parole date. The purpose of

this was to facilitate release planning and to allow time for resource development. Inmates who were able to get together an optimum plan early were eligible to be released up to 60 days prior to their original date of parole. The longer term program cases consisted of lesser offenders received directly from the reception center and inmates who became eligible for minimum custody by serving part of their sentence in a medium custody institution. Most of the population during this period was coming from other institutions, with approximately one-third of these being short-term prerelease cases.

Both the direct and indirect transfers (Table 20) had a projected escape rate of ten percent, with those from both groups who escaped having a rate of 14 percent. The median projection for the direct transfer who didn't escape, however, was ten percent compared to only four percent for the indirect transfer control group. Table 28, below, shows that direct transfers to CIM were not drawn more heavily from the lower risk group as was the case for conservation camps. All risk levels have about the same proportion of indirect transfers.

Table 28

Number and Percentage of California Institution for Men Inmates in Each Risk Group, by Type of Transfer

| Type of Transfer | Low Risk | | Medium Low | | Medium High | | High Risk | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Direct from Reception Center | 6 | 14% | 2 | 11% | 12 | 25% | 9 | 15% | 29 | 17% |
| Indirect from Other Institution | 36 | 86 | 16 | 89 | 36 | 75 | 50 | 85 | 138 | 83 |
| Total | 42 | 100% | 18 | 100% | 48 | 100% | 59 | 100% | 167 | 100% |

There was little difference in time expected to serve by type of transfer. Those received directly were serving expected terms of 36 months compared to 37 months for inmates who went to another institution first. There were no major differences between risk levels in time expected to serve.

As with the camp sample, direct transfers were less likely to be found among the escapees (Table 29). While 51 percent of the indirect transfers were in the escape group, this was true of only 41 percent of those coming directly from a reception center. Almost half the escapees were in the highest risk level group and received from other institutions.



Table 29

Number of Escapees and Control Group from California Institution for Men by Level of Escape Risk and Transfer Type

| Group | Low Risk | | Medium Low | | Medium High | | High Risk | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect | Direct | Indirect |
| Escapees | 2 | 4 | - | 6 | 4 | 21 | 6 | 40 | 12 | 71 |
| Controls | 4 | 32 | 2 | 10 | 8 | 15 | 3 | 10 | 17 | 67 |
| Total | 6 | 36 | 2 | 16 | 12 | 36 | 9 | 50 | 29 | 138 |

Time served prior to transfer also shows a pattern similar to that of the conservation data, with the escapees having served less of their expected term. Escapees served half the time normally expected for their offenses prior to transfer while the control group had served over 80 percent (Table 30).

Table 30

Median Percentage of Expected Time Served before Transfer to California Institution for Men for Escapees and Control Group, by Level of Escape Risk

| Group | Low Risk | Medium Low | Medium High | High Risk | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Escapees | 50% | 57% | 44% | 50% | 50% |
| Controls | 99 | 76 | 70 | 88 | 89 |
| Total | 98% | 67% | 70% | 70% | 74% |
| Total Number | (35) | (16) | (36) | (48) | |

California Institution for Men: Parole Dates and Escape Behavior

None of the direct transfers who escaped had a parole date, and only one escapee who came from another institution received his date after the transfer. On the other hand 35 percent of the indirect transfers who escaped had parole dates. These averaged seven months from the time of transfer. Seventeen of these 25 parole dates were within ninemonths (Table 31).

Table 31

Number of Escapees from California Institution for Men Who Had Parole Dates, by Level of Escape Risk and Type of Transfer

| Type of Transfer | Low Risk | Medium Low | Medium High | High Risk | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Direct from Reception Center | - | - | - | - | - |
| Indirect from Other Institutions | - | 1 | 4 | 21 | 26 |
| No Information | 1 | - | 3 | - | 4 |
| Total | 1 | 1 | 7 | 21 | 30 |

An interesting picture emerges when the relationship between escaping and parole dates is considered within risk levels. Half of the high risk level escapees from other institutions had parole dates, and the median time to parole was only five months. Less than 30 percent of all indirect transfers, however, were transferred specifically for prerelease, with these cases being equally distributed between escapees and non-escapees. The escapees were more likely to be transferred from San Quentin, Soledad Central, and the Palm Hall Adjustment Center at CIM. When the data are analyzed by risk level, however, it appears that the number of escapees in the transfers from these facilities was a function of the large number of high risk cases among them. For example, eight of the 13 escapees transferred from San Quentin were at that level. In other words, there doesn't appear to be anything special about the sending institutions themselves except that some transferred higher risk inmates.

Higher Custody Institutions: Parole Dates and Escape Behavior

These institutions represent a different type of career from the standpoint of the inmate. Inmates are received from similar types of facilities, directly from reception centers, or as problem cases from lesser custody situations. The institutional careers of inmates in them are primarily within custody levels at the same or similar type of facility. The concern here, therefore, is limited to parole dates.

Thirty-one percent of the escapees from these institutions had parole dates, which is probably about the same percentage as all those with minimum custody assignments at the institutions. The median parole date was five months away when the escape occurred. None of the 13 escapees from the low and medium-low risk levels had a parole date, while 20 of the 53 escapees from the highest risk level had dates as did eight of the 25 escapees from the medium high level.



Summary and Conclusions

The most significant point in the data presented in this chapter is the overriding importance of basic characteristics as correlates and predictors of escape behavior compared to variations in institutional careers. The length of the sentence inmates could expect to serve did not distinguish escapees from the control group but was related to whether or not the inmate was placed in minimum custody directly.

This decision set the inmate's career into motion. The representatives of the two low risk groups who went directly into conservation performed better than their counterparts who served part of their sentence in an institution. The opposite was true of the high risk groups. Once placed in another institution, the low risk groups were required to serve as much time before transfer as the high risk groups. In addition the probability of escaping was only affected with a sizable term investment before transfer. The data suggest that over half the expected term would have to be served elsewhere to lower significantly the basic escape risk. Although few in number, direct placements into the California Institution for Men also had a lower escape rate.

Parole dates as deterrents to escaping were significant primarily for those with less than average escape potential anyway. With these groups, it appears that relatively minor obstacles may further reduce escape potential. The highest risk group did not seem appreciably deterred even though their dates were much shorter than those of the lower risk groups.

# CHAPTER V
# MALE ABSCONDERS FROM WORK FURLOUGH PROGRAMS

Work Furlough Programs are created as an act of faith. Despite the wide acclaim given to them (see for example, the President's Commission Task Force Report on Corrections, 1964) and aggressive efforts at expanding them, no adequate evaluation of Work Furlough Programs exists. The growing body of literature concentrates on describing their development and operation (Busher, 1972). Furlough programs are usually justified on the basis of the work ethic and as humane alternatives to complete incarceration. Fox (1971) summarized the point well:

> "Interestingly enough scientific evidence of 'cost-effectiveness', or significant reductions in recidivism, is never cited in support of proposals to introduce work-release plans. The reason is simply that evidence of this nature is not available.....The raison d'etre of these temporary release (furlough) schemes is not to be found in confident expectations of significant personal change in the offender; it rests rather in a mixture of humanitarian and economic values that affirm simply that some freedom is better than no freedom and that money earned is better than money spent."

Figures on earnings are sometimes available but adequate information on program costs is not, so that it is not even possible to make crude evaluations of Work Furlough Programs on the basis of comparisons of costs with earnings (see for example, California Department of Corrections, 1973).

This chapter will concern itself with the characteristics of absconders from Work Furlough Programs in relation to the type of programs from which they leave.

Most states make provisions for work and training furloughs for felon prisoners (Griggs and McCune, 1972). Few of these programs are as extensive as California's. During the fiscal year 1970-71, when the programs were at their peak 1,685 inmates committed to state prison participated in Work Furlough Programs. Of these, 144 (nine percent) failed to return to custody and were considered to have escaped. During the following fiscal year, 1,506 state prisoners terminated their Work Furlough Programs, 167 (11 percent) by absconding. The program cost of work furlough absconders, thus, was considerable.

The sample for this part of the study consists of 173 furlough absconders and 127 controls. No control group was selected for community and county based Work Furlough Programs, since the files are not kept at the local work furlough facility but at the furloughee's last institution. During the study period there were no eligibility criteria for work furlough which would automatically exclude inmates because of some background characteristic. In contrast, categorical exclusions appear to be a fairly common practice in some states (Anderson, 1964). Applicants were required to have a parole date, be paroling to the area, and have job resources. Concern was shown about inmates with records of violent crimes and sex crimes involving children. Attention was also paid to long-term heroin addiction, although drug users were not definitely excluded.



Thus, there is little reason to assume that the profiles of furloughees would differ significantly from one facility to another.

Whites were again over-represented among furlough absconders with 69 percent of the escapes but only 45 percent of the control group (Table 32). Blacks appear more likely to abscond from work furlough than to escape from custody, although they are still under-represented. Thirty percent of the control group was Black compared to 18 percent of the absconders, but only seven percent of the institutional escapes were from this group. A prior history of escaping was also a factor in absconding but was not nearly as important as in the case of institutional escapes. Forty-one percent of the work furlough absconders had a previous escape compared to 27 percent of the control group (Table 33). This 14 percent difference compared to a 29 percent difference in the institution sample. As might be expected, the relationship between these two variables and absconding is much closer to that for the institutional escapes when the Work Furlough Program is based on the institution grounds.

Given any prior escape, additional information on the escape didn't appreciably increase the importance of this factor. Little relationship is evident in number of prior escapes (Table 34), years since the escape (Table 35), or type of facility from which the escape occurred (Table 36).

Work furlough absconders, like camp escapees, tended to have more extensive criminal backgrounds. Eighty-three percent were committed for property crimes compared to 56 percent of the control group (Table 37). Parole violators also had a slightly higher escape rate than those serving an original term (Table 38). The lowest rates of absconding appear to occur with older men who have served no prior terms. Among the older group with no escape history only two percent of the absconders had served no prior terms while this was true of 22 percent of the control group (Table 39).

The older age group had no overall advantage, however. In fact, work furloughees were the only group studied in which those under 33 years of age appear to have a lower escape rate. Of the absconders 53 percent were under 33 years of age compared to 65 percent of the control group (Table 40).

Thus far relationships have been observed between race, prior escapes, criminal background, and absconding from furlough, although the first two factors were generally weaker than found in the other samples.

Many furlough administrators feel that the failure to return is often associated with the furloughee's interest in indulging in personal vices in violation of house rules. Wine, women, and dope are usually cited as the culprits. The furloughee decides to go by his girlfriend's house on the way back, gets involved, misses his check in time, panics, and takes off. The drug user meets a friend, gets a taste, becomes fearful a urine test will be taken upon his return and goes into hiding instead. The alcoholic has a special condition that he not drink. He stops by a few bars on the way back, knows he will lose his parole date if detected, and decides not to return.

Table 32

Ethnic Distribution of Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group, by Type of Program (in percentages)

| Race | ALL PROGRAMS COMBINED | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | | Percentage | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| White | 120 | 57 | 69% | 45% |
| Mexican-American | 22 | 32 | 13 | 25 |
| Black | 31 | 38 | 18 | 30 |
| Total | (173) | (127) | 100% | 100% |
| | INSTITUTIONAL WORK FURLOUGH | | | |
| | Number | | Percentage | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| White | 83 | 57 | 73% | 45% |
| Mexican-American | 13 | 32 | 12 | 25 |
| Black | 17 | 38 | 15 | 30 |
| Total | (113) | (127) | 100% | 100% |
| | COUNTY WORK FURLOUGH | | | |
| | Number | | Percentage | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| White | 28 | * | 63% | |
| Mexican-American | 6 | | 14 | |
| Black | 10 | | 23 | |
| Total | (44) | | 100% | |
| | COMMUNITY CENTER WORK FURLOUGH | | | |
| | Number | | Percentage | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| White | 9 | * | 56% | |
| Mexican-American | 3 | | 19 | |
| Black | 4 | | 25 | |
| Total | (16) | | 100% | |

*No control group was available for county and community programs.

Table 33

Escape History of Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group, by Race and Type of Program (in percentages)

| Escape History | ALL PROGRAMS COMBINED | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | White | | Mexican-American | | Black | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| No Prior Escape | 55% | 72% | 73% | 69% | 65% | 79% | 59% | 73% |
| Some Prior Escape | 45 | 28 | 27 | 31 | 35 | 21 | 41 | 27 |
| Total Number | (120) | (57) | (22) | (32) | (31) | (38) | (173) | (127) |
| | INSTITUTIONAL WORK FURLOUGH | | | | | | | |
| | White | | Mexican-American | | Black | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| No Prior Escape | 52% | 72% | 62% | 69% | 59% | 79% | 54% | 73% |
| Some Prior Escape | 48 | 28 | 38 | 31 | 41 | 21 | 46 | 27 |
| Total Number | (83) | (57) | (13) | (32) | (17) | (38) | (113) | (127) |
| | COUNTY WORK FURLOUGH | | | | | | | |
| | White | | Mexican-American | | Black | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| No Prior Escape | 50% | * | (6) | * | 70% | * | 61% | * |
| Some Prior Escape | 50 | | - | | 30 | | 39 | |
| Total Number | (28) | | (6) | | (10) | | (44) | |
| | COMMUNITY CENTER WORK FURLOUGH | | | | | | | |
| | White | | Mexican-American | | Black | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| No Prior Escape | (9) | * | (2) | * | (3) | * | 88% | * |
| Some Prior Escape | - | | (1) | | (1) | | 12 | |
| Total Number | (9) | | (3) | | (4) | | (16) | |

*No control group was available for county and community center programs.

Table 34

Number of Prior Escapes for All Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group (in percentages)

| Number of Prior Escapes | Escapees | Controls | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| None | 59% | 73% | 65% |
| One | 25 | 17 | 22 |
| Two | 10 | 7 | 9 |
| Three or More | 6 | 3 | 4 |
| Total Number | (173) | (127) | (300) |

Table 35

Number of Years Since Prior Escape for All Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group (in percentages)

| Years Since Last Escape | Escapees | Controls | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 - 5 Years | 52% | 41% | 49% |
| 6 - 10 Years | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| 11 - 15 Years | 7 | 12 | 8 |
| 16+ Years | 17 | 15 | 16 |
| No Information | 4 | 12 | 7 |
| Total Number | (71) | (34) | (105) |

Table 36

Type of Prior Escape for All Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group

| Type of Facility | Adult Escapes | | Juvenile Escapes | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Hospital | 3 | 3 | - | - | 3 | 3 |
| County Camp | 5 | 2 | - | - | 5 | 2 |
| State Camp | 13 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 14 | 4 |
| Jail or Juvenile Hall | 9 | 7 | - | 1 | 9 | 8 |
| Institution | 20 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 23 | 10 |
| Any Attempted | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | 4 | 1 |
| Other | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 2 |
| No Information | 6 | - | 4 | 4 | 10 | 4 |
| Total Number | (61) | (24) | (10) | (10) | (71) | (34) |



Table 37

Offense Type of All Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group, by Escape History (in percentages)

| Type of Offense | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Property Crime | 79% | 52% | 87% | 68% | 83% | 56% |
| All Other | 21 | 48 | 13 | 32 | 17 | 44 |
| Total Number | (102) | (93) | (71) | (34) | (173) | (127) |

Table 38

Type of Admission of All Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group, by Escape History and Age (in percentages)

| Type of Admission | NO ESCAPE HISTORY | | | | SOME ESCAPE HISTORY | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Original Term | 75% | 82% | 45% | 56% | 62% | 76% | 38% | 38% |
| Technical Parole Violator | 14 | 6 | 15 | 13 | 19 | 5 | 24 | 8 |
| New Felony Parole Violator | 11 | 12 | 40 | 31 | 19 | 19 | 38 | 54 |
| Total Number | (55) | (61) | (47) | (32) | (37) | (21) | (34) | (13) |



Table 39

Prior Incarcerations of All Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group, by Escape History and Age (in percentages)

| Type of Prior Incarceration | NO ESCAPE HISTORY | | | | SOME ESCAPE HISTORY | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | | 32 Years or Less | | 33 Years or More | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| None | 4% | 11% | 2% | 22% | - | - | - | - |
| Jail or Juvenile | 71 | 71 | 15 | 31 | 54% | 62% | 9% | 8% |
| Prior Prison | 25 | 18 | 83 | 47 | 46 | 38 | 91 | 92 |
| Total Number | (55) | (61) | (47) | (32) | (37) | (21) | (34) | (13) |

Table 40

Age of All Work Furlough Program Absconders and Control Group, by Race and Prior Escape History (in percentages)

| Age | ALL RACES | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Under 32 Years | 54% | 66% | 52% | 62% | 53% | 65% |
| 33 Years & Over | 46 | 34 | 48 | 38 | 47 | 35 |
| Total Number | (102) | (93) | (71) | (34) | (173) | (127) |
| | WHITE ONLY | | | | | |
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Under 32 Years | 53% | 68% | 50% | 50% | 52% | 63% |
| 33 Years & Over | 47 | 32 | 50 | 50 | 48 | 37 |
| Total Number | (66) | (41) | (54) | (16) | (120) | (57) |
| | MEXICAN-AMERICAN ONLY | | | | | |
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Under 32 Years | 56% | 64% | (5) | 70% | 64% | 66% |
| 33 Years & Over | 44 | 36 | (1) | 30 | 36 | 34 |
| Total Number | (16) | (22) | (6) | (10) | (22) | (32) |
| | BLACK ONLY | | | | | |
| | No Escape History | | Some Escape History | | Total | |
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Controls |
| Under 32 Years | 55% | 63% | 45% | (6) | 52% | 66% |
| 33 Years & Over | 45 | 37 | 55 | (2) | 48 | 34 |
| Total Number | (20) | (30) | (11) | (8) | (31) | (38) |

Some information bearing on this hypothesis is contained in Table 41. Overall, there would appear to be no strong relationship between alcohol or drug use and absconding. About the same percentage of absconders were not drug users as was true of the control group. Slightly more absconders used alcohol to excess. Absconders from community-based furlough programs appear to be different from the others, however. There were very few absconders from this type of program, but they had a high incidence of drug and alcohol abuse. Thirty-eight percent were heroin users, and 63 percent drank excessively. Of the 16 absconders, only three were not chronic abusers.

The most interesting feature of the data relating to absconding from furlough is the difference in rates by type of facility. Although the institution-based programs have many times more absconders, they contain only about twice as many furloughees. This seems unusual because, unlike inmates, furloughees have roughly equal opportunities for absconding. In effect, each furloughee has resources and about a 12 hour head start.

An overview of state furlough programs in fiscal year 1971-72 is presented in Table 42. The most surprising figure is that only four percent of the furloughees in community-based programs absconded compared to 12 percent and 15 percent from institutional and county-based programs, respectively. The same is true of programs for women, although the differences are not so dramatic. The program based in the women's institution had 17 percent absconding compared to nine percent from Central City Community Center.

The San Mateo County Program, with a seven percent escape rate, is somewhat exceptional. Furloughees occupy a separate modern facility and have very high earnings. In San Francisco, where the program is housed at the old county jail, the 20 percent rate of absconding attests to the price paid for using inadequate facilities. The Central City Community Center has the lowest rate (three percent) and is also the best situated. The program occupies a small hotel in the middle of Los Angeles, with both jobs and family members close by. The hotel features individual rooms, adequate space for leisure time and good dining accomodations.

Apart from the differences in physical structure, there are important variations in program operations which probably relate to the differences in escape rates. Important differences are evidenced in the amount of freedom permitted during non-working hours, degree of program assistance, and response to individual problems.

The data in Table 42 also show similar variations in other program outcomes. In general these paralleled the different escape rates. Furloughees in community-based programs were much more likely to successfully complete the program and less likely to be returned to institutional custody. Of all the furloughees involved in institution-based programs during this period 26 percent (202 of the 778 cases departing) were returned to custody and removed from the program. Over a third of the participants at Soledad were removed from the program, while another nine percent removed themselves by absconding. Less than half (48 percent) of the women involved in the program based at the California Institution for Women succeded in paroling from work furlough. Work furloughees from the San Francisco County Jail made an equally poor showing with 45 percent of the participants being returned to state custody or absconding.

Table 41

Alcohol and Drug Use of Work Furlough Absconders and Control Group (in percentages)

| Drug Use | Institution-Based Furlough | | County-Based Furlough | Community-Based Furlough | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Escapees | Escapees | Controls |
| None | 57% | 50% | 52% | 56% | 56% | 50% |
| Heroin | 21 | 25 | 18 | 38 | 22 | 25 |
| Other | 22 | 25 | 30 | 6 | 22 | 25 |
| Total Number | (113) | (127) | (44) | (16) | (173) | (127) |

| Alcohol Use | Institution-Based Furlough | | County-Based Furlough | Community-Based Furlough | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Escapees | Controls | Escapees | Escapees | Escapees | Controls |
| None or No Information | 18% | 18% | 7% | - | 13% | 18% |
| Occasional Use | 31 | 43 | 52 | 37% | 37 | 43 |
| Excessive Use | 51 | 39 | 41 | 63 | 50 | 39 |
| Total Number | (113) | (127) | (44) | (16) | (173) | (127) |

Table 42

Outcome on California Work Furlough Programs for State Prisoners, by Type of Program (fiscal year 1971-72)

| Type of Program | Total Number Furloughees Departing | Number Furloughees Paroled | Number Failed and Returned to Institution | Number Escaped | Number Transferred to Other Programs | Percent Who Escaped | Percent Who Either Failed or Escaped | Average Earnings for Those Departing |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community-Based Work Furlough | | | | | | | | |
| Central City Community Center | 150 | 127 | 17 | 5 | 1 | 3% | 15% | $635.70 |
| Crittenden Center | 175 | 127 | 37 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 26 | 774.75 |
| Total | 325 | 254 | 54 | 14 | 3 | 4% | 21% | $710.58 |
| Institution-Based Work Furlough | | | | | | | | |
| CIM (Don Lugo) | 251 | 157 | 53* | 29 | 12 | 11% | 32% | -- |
| Deuel Vocational Institution (Tracy) | 159 | 94 | 45 | 20 | -- | 13 | 39 | $773.44 |
| San Quentin | 257 | 150 | 65 | 37 | 5 | 14 | 40 | 549.75 |
| California Training Facility (Soledad) | 111 | 60 | 39 | 10 | 2 | 9 | 44 | 431.53 |
| Total | 778 | 461 | 202 | 96 | 19 | 12% | 38% | $592.29 |
| County Jail Work Furlough (State Felons) | | | | | | | | |
| San Mateo | 74 | 53 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 7% | 23% | $1,299.01 |
| Riverside | 20 | 12 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 20 | 30 | 427.55 |
| Humboldt | 11 | 6 | 5 | -- | -- | -- | 45 | 557.45 |
| San Francisco | 155 | 79 | 38 | 31 | 7 | 20 | 45 | 366.60 |
| Total | 260 | 150 | 57 | 40 | 13 | 15% | 37% | $644.75 |
| Women's Work Furlough | | | | | | | | |
| Central City Community Center | 63 | 49 | 8 | 6 | -- | 9% | 22% | $507.90 |
| Vinewood | 38 | 28 | 6 | 4 | -- | 10 | 26 | -- |
| California Institution for Women | 42 | 20 | 15 | 7 | -- | 17 | 52 | 202.21 |
| Total | 143 | 97 | 29 | 17 | -- | 12% | 32% | $385.63 |

*Amount of earnings not available for CIM. Vinewood is primarily a halfway house for female addicts with only a few women having outside employment.

Summary and Conclusions

Those characteristics associated with escape from camps and institutions were generally found to be associated with absconding from Work Furlough Programs. Extensive criminal background, property offenses, history of escape, and being White were again more typical of escapees than the control group. The major exception was age. The younger group did not appear more likely to abscond.

The association between these factors and absconding, however, was generally weaker than in the other samples and was extremely weak or non-existent when the program was community-based. The number of Black absconders, for example, was much greater from community-based furlough than from programs located on the institution grounds. In addition, past alcohol and drug abuse was an important item in community-based absconding but of little significance for institutional programs. This probably relates to the ease of access to drugs and alcohol in the community-based programs and the general level of supervision.

The importance of background characteristics, however, was very minor compared to variations among programs. It should be kept in mind that the rate of absconding from work furlough generally is much higher than the escape rates from other types of facilities. The most significant point brought out in these data is that the escape rates vary systematically by type of Work Furlough Program. By far the best predictor of absconding is the program the furloughee is involved in rather than his individual characteristics. The rates of the programs varied from three percent to 20 percent. From the San Quentin program alone 37 men (14 percent) absconded in one year while 31 (20 percent) left from the San Francisco jail. Equally important, the types of programs having high rates of absconding had even higher rates of program failures resulting in a return to an institution. The failure rates of eight programs (out of 13 surveyed) were 30 percent or more.

## CHAPTER VI
## CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN ESCAPEES AND ABSCONDERS

The California Department of Corrections, like most jurisdictions, has only one institution for women. The institution is a medium security facility with no industries or shops outside the secure perimeter. Nor are there extensive grounds to maintain outside the fence, which are typical of men's institutions. Thus, while the full range of custody classifications are present, the actual opportunity to escape without climbing the double fence is limited. Gun towers are lacking, however, and until recently the outside perimeter patrols had no firearms.

Historically, the escape rate of women from this situation has been much lower than would be expected from a male population serving similar sentences. From 1949 to 1967 the average year recorded three escapes. An unusually high number of 15 escapes was noted for 1953. An upward trend was noted in 1968, however, when the number jumped to 14 compared to four in 1967. The following year 34 women escaped with another 31 escaping in 1970. The 1971 rate of 4.90 per 100 population (42 escapes) was a record.

To compound the problem, at least one of the escapees drew considerable public notice at a time when the institution was already uncomfortably receiving considerable attention as a result of having in its population the women from the Charles Manson family and concern that they might also breach the institution's security. The escapee in question, along with her male furloughee accomplice, was convicted in the senseless murder of an Orange County school teacher. This crime was the incident precipitating the strong public demands for an investigation of furlough programs in general. The escape occurred soon after her conviction while the community was still up in arms over the original crime.

This series of events led to a considerable increase in the perimeter security including armed male correctional officers on outside posts. This resulted in a dramatic decrease in escapes in the year following this study. The data on women escapees presented here, therefore, represent a very unusual period which was without precedent and which may not happen again. It may, however, provide some ideas for the classification staff or to some other jurisdiction wishing to develop a general institution for women without armed security posts.

The data on women escapees were actually collected by mistake. More exactly, the possibility of women appearing in the data as escapees was simply not accounted for in the research design. Half the questions on the data form were not applicable to the women's institution. The presence of the 81 women escapees and absconders became known when the background characteristics were collected and the institution of escape was identified. Being rather quick to figure things, the author postulated that there was a high probability that escapees from an all female institution were in fact not male felons. Only a few characteristics were collected, with the comparison being between the institution population and escapees (Table 43).



Table 43

Characteristics of Women Escapees and Absconders Compared to California Institution for Women Population (in percentages)

| Characteristics | Escape from Institution | Absconded from Furlough* | Total CIW |
|---|---|---|---|
| Race | | | |
| White | 68% | 68% | 56% |
| Mexican-American | 14 | 13 | 12 |
| Black | 18 | 19 | 30 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 98% |
| Prior Escape | | | |
| None | 66% | 68% | 83% |
| Some | 34 | 32 | 17 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Age | | | |
| Under 32 | 68% | 49% | |
| 33 and Over | 32 | 51 | |
| Total | 100% | 100% | |
| Offense Type | | | |
| Property | 55% | 59% | 35% |
| All Other | 45 | 41 | 65 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Admission Type | | | |
| Original | 48% | 38% | 77% |
| Parole Violator | 52 | 62 | 23 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Prior Terms | | | |
| No Prison | 68% | 59% | 82% |
| Some Prison | 32 | 41 | 18 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Drug Use | | | |
| None | 34% | 32% | |
| Heroin | 48 | 54 | |
| Other | 18 | 14 | |
| Total | 100% | 100% | |

*Temporary (3 day) Community Furloughs to arrange for parole plans or for an emergency.

The characteristics of women escapees are surprisingly similar to those of men. Again, the Black ethnic group is under-represented, although the difference is not so large as in most of the data on the males. Whites composed 56 percent of the institutional population and 68 percent of the escapes. One-third of the women escapees and absconders had a prior escape, while this was true of 17 percent of the population. Extensive criminal backgrounds, measured by parole violations, prior terms and property offenses, discriminated between women who escaped and the population. Parole violators and those who had served a prior prison term were about twice as likely to be in the escape group. While only 35 percent of the institutional population were serving time for property crimes, 55 percent of the escapees and 59 percent of the absconders were so convicted. Although comparable data are not available on the age distribution of women inmates, the institutional escapees would appear to be younger than expected. This conclusion seems warranted by the fact that the average woman inmate is older than her male counterpart, while the proportion of women escapees under 32 years of age is greater than in the male sample. Absconders from temporary furloughs, however, appear somewhat older which is parallel to the findings on male work furloughees.



# CHAPTER VII
# NOTES ON ESCAPE BEHAVIOR AND DECISION-MAKING IN THE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

The previous analysis has demonstrated that there are probably only a few characteristics worth considering when estimating escape risks. For the sake of keeping this report down to a reasonable length, items which were analyzed and found insignificant were not reported in detail. These include marital status, amount of correspondence, drug and alcohol use, and specific commitment offenses. The elimination of these items should simplify the classification process.

Classification for the purpose of assigning levels of custody has two foci--escape risks and behavioral problems. The problem is that the two are not directly related. The inmates who may be difficult to manage in an institutional context are not more likely to be found among those who escape. The earlier study of camp escapees (Shain, et al, 1961) found the institutional adjustment of 87 percent of the escapees rated as "Excellent" or "Good", while 98 percent were given work ratings of "satisfactory" or above. In addition, 35 percent of the escapees had been assigned to a camp on a prior incarceration without escaping. Management problems, however, are often misclassified as escape risks. The Department of Corrections has two types of living arrangements and two types of perimeter control resulting in four combinations: (1) single cell housing and armed perimeters, (2) single cell housing without armed perimeters, (3) dormitory housing with armed perimeters, and (4) dormitory housing without armed perimeters.

The important point is that more efficient classification results when behavioral problems and risk of escape are considered separately. Cells are for those who pose a threat to themselves or others. Armed perimeters are for those likely to escape. The use of cells for those who are only escape risks is probably a misuse of resources. An optimum use of resources would seem to suggest a correctional institution for high escape risk--low problem inmates in which the perimeters were very secure but with minimum supervision and accomodations inside the fences. Conversely, the question which should be asked with respect to management problems is to what extent sleeping in a cell rather than a dormitory will solve the problems.

A major difficulty in attempting to predict any unusual behavior is the high rate of cases that will be identified as likely to show the behavior who do not actually do so (called false positives). In the case of escapes the best that can be done is to be correct about one-fourth of the time. In other words, four inmates will be predicted to escape in order to be right about one. The others would not escape, and thus three people have been misclassified for the sake of identifying one. The problem, of course, is that which of the four will be the future escapee cannot be identified. Most administrators would probably be willing to pay a three for one price, but what happens is that often the price is much higher.

Serious policy questions are raised by this difficulty which can only be answered by weighing the relative cost of misclassifications (using higher

custody than necessary) and the cost of escapes. Each system must decide its own level of escape tolerance. In situations where the only difference between a minimum and medium custody program is the presence of double fences the cost of misclassification would be low, and a policy could be established accordingly. In other situations, such as furlough programs where restrictive criteria would probably eliminate those who could profit the most, a different decision might be in order.

A goal of no escapes for a complex correctional system is unrealistic. The only way to have no escapes is to have no prisoners. The only way to limit the number of escapes markedly is to limit markedly the number of prisoners with minimum custody assignments, a price few systems can afford to pay. Aside from these extremes, however, rational policies can be developed to make optimal use of resources. It should be possible to project a probable escape level for inmates with various combinations of characteristics in various situations.

It is much easier for classification committees to identify and deal with management problems than escape potential. Behavior problems can be visualized as a continuum from none to extreme with movement in one or the other direction. Thus, by comparing behavior over time decisions can be made for less or more custody, less or more programming. There are no degrees of escaping, however. It either happens or it does not. Apart from a prior escape from custody, institutional behavior is irrelevant. On the basis of the findings of this study, one can conclude that there is nothing the inmate has done in the institution or even could do that would indicate his escape potential, other than a previous escape.

Once classification staff know an inmate's race, escape history, type of offense, age and criminal background they probably know about all that is worth knowing in terms of escape potential. Additional information is more likely than not to confuse the issue. Nor does there appear to be any value in going into these items in detail. The best decisions appear to be those which consider all types of prior escapes as equal and give all property crimes (including robbery) equal weight. Age, likewise, has to be used in a general way since there is no specific year at which escapes decrease. Here rough categories of below or above 32 years will suffice. Criminal background is more difficult to use and should be the last item considered. It is related to escape in an irregular fashion.

Its usefulness is limited because of the high escape rates of the younger inmates who have served time only as juveniles. They are not old enough to have accumulated prior prison terms or parole violations and, therefore, appear to have little in the way of a criminal background. If the exception of this group is kept in mind, information about the prior prison experience can refine the prediction of escape risk. The basic distinction is between an older group, the members of which have not served prison time as adults, and those cases who have been returned as parole violators or served a prior prison term. A lower rate for older men who have served only jail or juvenile time is projected on the basis of this distinction. The rates of escaping were consistently low for those with no jail, juvenile, or prison time served, although these cases were few in number, low rates would be projected for them also.



There is very little identifiable in the inmates' current institutionalization which would affect the prediction of escape potential. The length of sentence he is expected to serve is of minimal importance compared to other factors. Similarly, the amount of time served prior to a minimum custody placement is probably of little value. The problem is that the amount of "term investment" required to significantly affect the escape potential is so large (over half the term) that little time is left for programming. Compounding the difficulty is the fact that "term investment" primarily deters the low risk groups who are not the concern anyway. Little deterrence to escaping from even a very substantial "term investment" was observed for high risk groups. None was found in the conservation system, while the high risk inmates who had not escaped while at the California Institution for Men served over 80 percent of their terms before transfer. In fact, the low risk groups who went directly into the conservation system had a lower percentage of escapes than their counterparts who first spent time in a medium custody institution.

While the idea of "term investment" is probably of little practical value in predicting escapes, it undoubtedly is important to staff perceptions of a case and makes assignment to minimum custody more palatable. When the inmate is committed to the Department his file contains very little documentation of observed behavior, a condition which often makes staff nervous about assignment to minimum custody situations. After a year's accumulation of work grades and reports, however, the same inmate could be accepted for minimum custody without question. The draw-back to this, however, is that it assumes that the behavior cited in the reports reflects the characteristics of the inmate at reception without considering the possible effects of a medium custody environment. It is possible that the inmate who compiled a poor institutional record in medium custody might have behaved differently if assigned directly to minimum custody.

Long parole dates (more than 12 months) are probably a thing of the past in California. In any case, the granting of them probably had a minimal deterring influence on high risk escapees. Even short parole dates are no guarantee against this group's escaping. Parole dates do lower the risk of those less likely to escape, but their rates are already within tolerable limits. Almost any obstacle or reward seems to reduce effectively the likelihood of this lower group escaping.

Escapees with parole dates typically received the date prior to transfer to the minimum custody setting from which they escaped. There were very few cases of regular minimum custody inmates escaping after receiving a date. There is considerable variation in the way background factors relate to escaping in different situations. In general, the less difficult escaping becomes the less important these factors are. They appear weakest in community based Work Furlough Programs.

Institutions have an advantage over minimum custody facilities. Most escapes from camp occur in the evening hours or on weekends. During these high risk hours most institutional inmates with minimum custody assignments are returned to secure housing behind the fences. This probably accounts for the fact that the escape rate of institutional inmates in minimum custody assignments is only about half as high as the rate from minimum custody facilities.

During the study period the escape rate from minimum custody facilities was approximately ten percent. The institutional escape rate was estimated to be about five percent for those with minimum custody assignments. Based on these estimates, rates were computed for all combinations of the four basic characteristics and for three types of facilities. These rates are meant to provide decision-makers with the odds that various types of inmates will escape when placed in minimum custody. The purpose is to provide staff with a quantitative tool for evaluating their decisions. Through the use of this tool, the decision maker is allowed to weigh institutional and program needs against the projected escape probability. For example, an institution has a need for a skilled worker with minimum custody. There are two candidates, both White. One is a young inmate with an escape history convicted of robbery. The other is young, has no escape history, and was also convicted of robbery. The projected rates indicate that the best decision is the second man (7-10 percent rate); a 21-25 percent probability is projected for the first man. It should also be possible by surveying the population with minimum custody assignments to project the number of escapes that would normally be expected.

It should be kept in mind that these projected rates are based on data from a period with an extremely high number of escapes. The relative rates for different inmates are not expected to change dramatically but the exact rates should. In other words, if the total rate for camps were to drop to five percent (from ten percent) then all the projections should also be reduced by half.

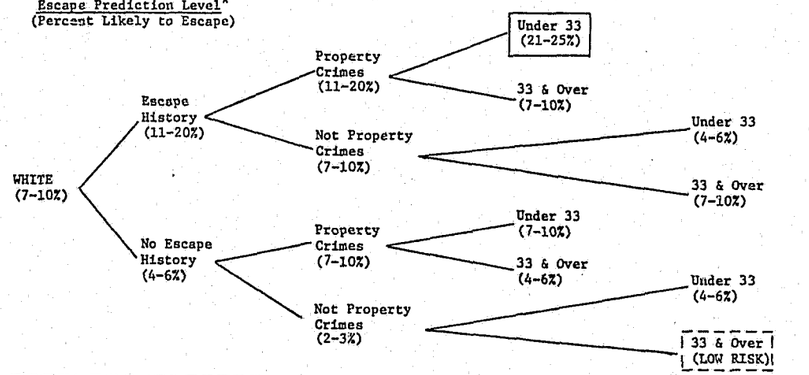
The prediction charts on the next three pages, Figures I, II, and III, are meant to be used as a screening device for custody classification. To use the charts with a given case, staff should first list the four necessary items of information. Then, beginning with the type of facility being considered, locate the section for the inmate's race and follow the diagram down to the specific combination of factors to determine the probable rate of escape for cases of that type. The rates, which are expressed in ranges of percentages, represent the number of escapes that might be expected if 100 inmates with those characteristics were given minimum custody at that type of facility. The ranges specified correspond to the percentage limits of the sub-group in which the particular inmates fall. For example, in Figure III pertaining to the Conservation Program, the expected rate of escape for Chicanos with no escape history, crimes other than property, and under 33 years of age is shown as 8-15 percent, which is the range for the high-medium risk sub-group. Approximately 25 percent of the inmates fall in each of the sub-groups (i.e. low, low-medium, high-medium, and high). This means, for instance, that an inmate in the lowest escape group (low) is less likely to escape than three-fourths of the inmates in the particular institutional category. Similarly, if an inmate has the combination of characteristics that places him in the high-medium group, he is more likely to escape than half the inmates in that institutional category.

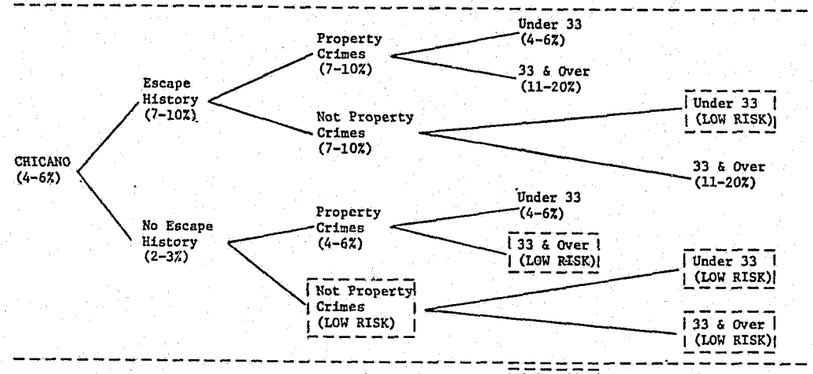
In the prediction charts for the Conservation Program and CIM, the types of cases that fall in the low risk sub-group are labeled "LOW RISK" and enclosed in boxes, and the high risk cases are also labeled and enclosed. The cases are enclosed in boxes only if all of the sub-divisions following are in the same risk category. For example, Blacks in the chart for All Institutions (Figure I) have a predicted escape rate of 0-1 percent. However, the label "Black" is not enclosed, since some of the sub-divisions down the line are high or high-medium risk. In this same chart the types of cases that fall into both the low and low-medium sub-groups and that meet the condition of sameness down the line are labeled "LOW RISK" and enclosed in boxes. This was done because the predicted percentage of escapes for the low medium sub-group in All Institutions is 2-3 percent; this is so low that it seemed unreasonable not to give the label of low risk to those cases falling into the low-medium sub-group also.

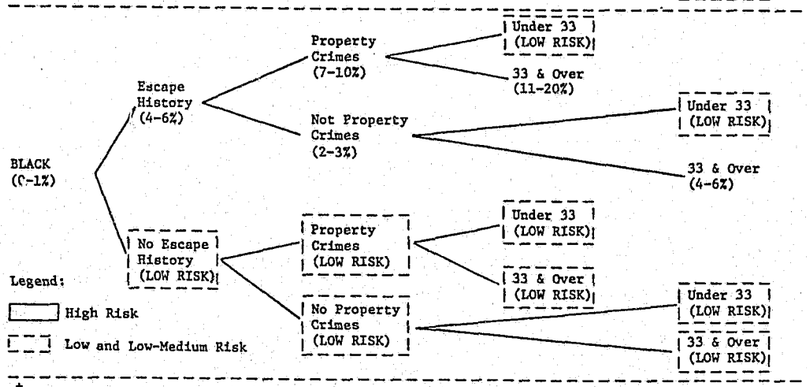
In Figures I and II, the high risk sub-groups are further divided because of the wide percentage range in the high risk category. Since the high risk range for All Insitutions is from 7-25 percent, that sub-group is divided into three segments, 7-10 percent, 11-20 percent, and 21-25 percent. The high risk range for CIM is from 11-25 percent and is divided in the chart into two segments, 11-20 percent and 21-25 percent.

ALL INSTITUTIONS
Escape Prediction Level*
(Percent Likely to Escape)

FIGURE I



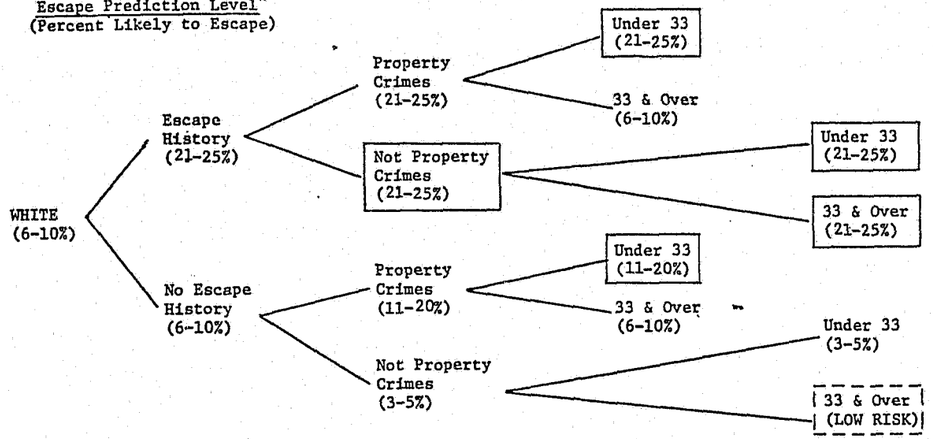



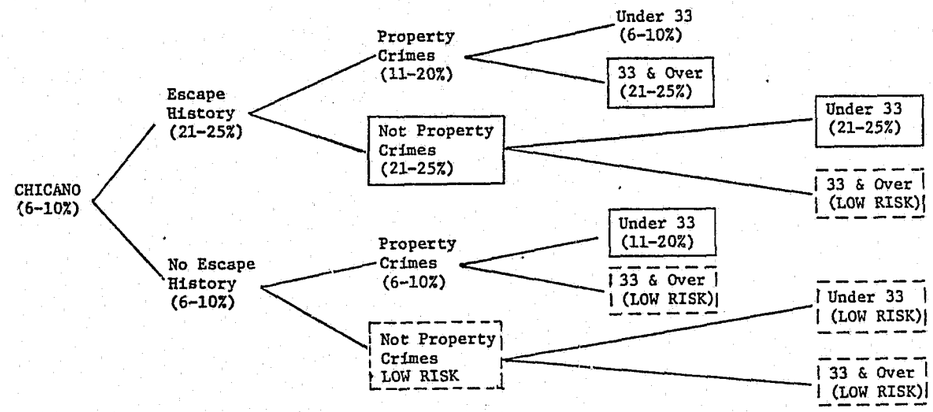

* Percentage figures indicate probable number of escapes per 100 inmates. Average rate is 5. Low Risk (0-1%); Low-Medium Risk (2-3%); High-Medium Risk (4-6%); High Risk (7%+). High Risk group is divided in the chart into three sub-groups, 7-10%, 11-20%, 21-25%. In this chart, the Low and Low-Medium Risk cases are combined in one category and labeled "LOW RISK" in the boxes.

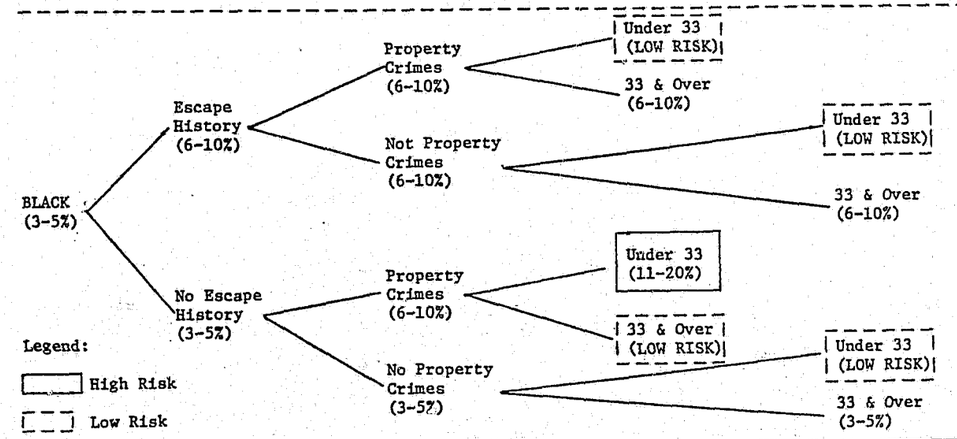


CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN
Escape Prediction Level*
(Percent Likely to Escape)

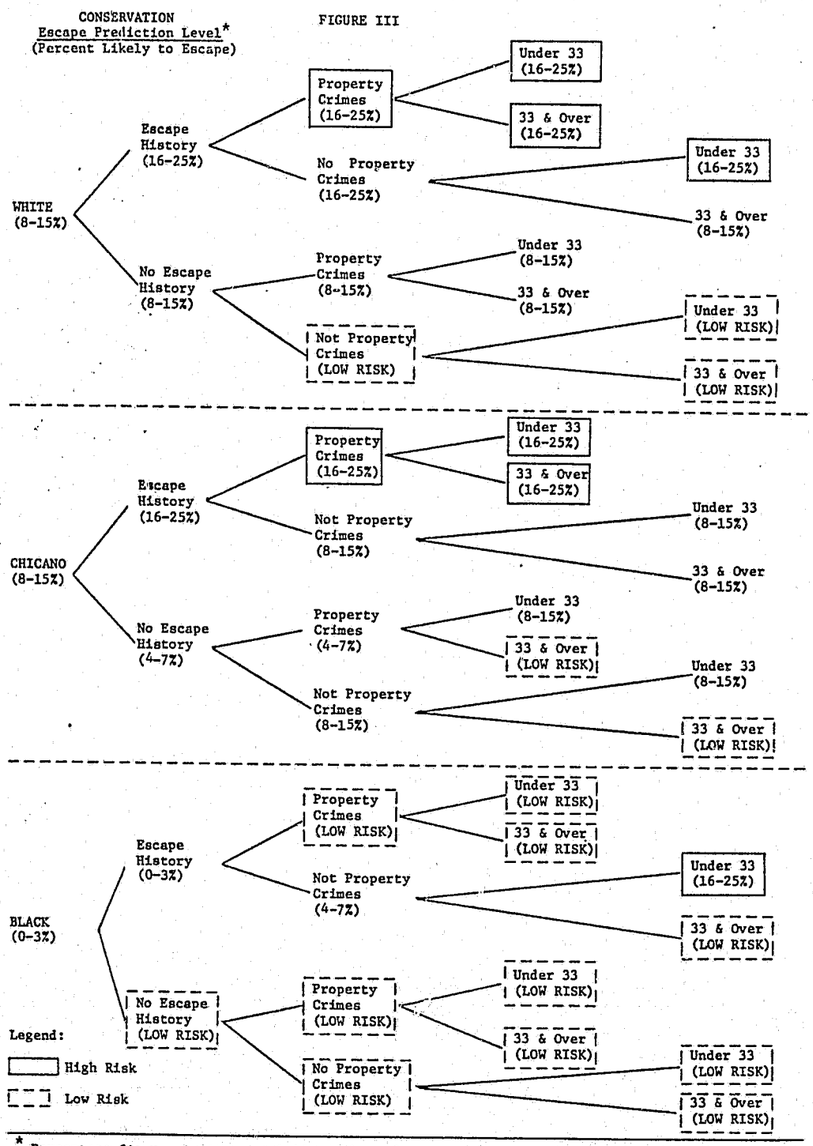
FIGURE II




* Percentage figures indicate probable number of escapes per 100 inmates. Average rate is 10. Low Risk (0-2%); Low-Medium Risk (3-5%); High-Medium Risk (6-10%); High Risk (11%+). High Risk group is divided in the chart into two sub-groups 11-20% and 21-25%.




* Percentage figures indicate probable number of escapes per 100 inmates. Average rate is 10. Low Risk (0-3%); Low-Medium Risk (4-7%); High-Medium Risk (8-15%); High Risk (16%+).



# CHAPTER VIII
# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

With the rate of escape more than doubling within a four-year period (escapes from camp went from 6.49 per 100 average daily population for 1969 to 13.72 for 1972, while the institution escape rate went from 0.47 to 1.52 over the same period), a need was recognized for a detailed analysis of factors associated with escapes and recommendations as to how classification could be improved to lower escape rates.

## Method

This study involved a sample of all inmates who had escaped from the custody of the California Department of Corrections from January 1, 1971, through June 30, 1972. This sample, consisting of both men and women, included escapes from work furlough, and temporary community release, as well as escapes from institutions serving felons and civilly-committed narcotic addicts and from conservation camps. Each escapee was matched with a non-escapee at the same facility who was committed at about the same time. Through these procedures, a combined total of 1,696 escapees and non-escapees was selected. Data collecting procedures yielded a total usable sample of 1,494 escapees and controls from the 1,696 names (88 percent of the total) originally selected. The primary focus of the study was on adult male escapees.

## Results

Escapes from Minimum Custody (Conservation Camps):

1. The most consistent relationship was found between previous escapes and current escape behavior. Inmates with any escape history were twice as likely to be found among the escapees as their percentage in the population would indicate. This was true for all facilities. The risk further increased when more than one prior escape had been recorded. No relationship was evident in the type, whether juvenile or adult, of prior escape and the current escape. A prior escape was less important if it occurred 15 years or more earlier, but this variable is highly related to another important factor, that of age.

2. Blacks escaped about one-third as often as they appear in the population, Mexican-Americans about the same as their percentage in the population, while Whites were about one and one-half times as likely to escape as their numbers in the general population would indicate. The Black escape rate increased considerably, however, in facilities located in Southern California; and an unusually high rate of Mexican-American escapes was experienced from conservation camps in the South. These findings are consistent with prior studies, both in this state and elsewhere.

3. Escapees were more often in the younger age group. There was no magic age, however, at which escapes no longer occurred. The decline was gradual.

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1. The background characteristics of institutional escapees are surprisingly similar to those of escapees from minimum security facilities.

2. Race is again a strong, strong predictor. Blacks make up only 11.0 percent of those escaping from institutions.

3. Prior escape history is also related to escaping from an institution, and prior escapes of a more recent nature appear to be important.

4. Age was strongly related to escaping from the California Institution for Men, it was moderately related in the camp sample, and was not related to escaping from a medium custody institution. The reason for this seems to be that the strength of the other variables was such as to nullify any advantage for the older group.

5. Property offenders were found disproportionately among the escapees in all groups, as were parole violators. This relationship weakened, however, when a history of escaping was present.

6. There is a low escape rate for older men with no escape history who had served little time.

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1. Basic characteristics are of overriding importance for escape behavior compared to variations in institutional careers.

2. The length of the sentence inmates could expect to serve did not distinguish escapees from the control group but was related to whether or not the inmate was placed in minimum custody directly.

3. For lower risk groups, those who went directly into conservation camps performed better than their counterparts who served part of their sentence in an institution. The opposite was true of the high risk groups.

4. Once placed in another institution, the low risk groups were required to serve as much time before transfer as the high risk groups.

5. The probability of escaping was only affected by a sizable term investment before transfer. The data suggest that over half the expected term would have to be served elsewhere to lower significantly the basic escape risk.

6. Parole dates as a deterrent to escaping were significant primarily for those with less than average escape potential anyway. With these groups, it appears that relatively minor obstacles may further reduce escape potential.



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1. Those characteristics associated with escape from camps and institutions were generally found to be associated with absconding from Work Furlough Programs. Extensive criminal background, property offenses, history of escape, and being White were again more typical of escapees than the control group.

2. The age factor related quite differently to escapes from this setting. The younger group did not appear more likely to abscond.

3. The association between all factors and absconding was generally weaker than in the other samples and was extremely weak or non-existent when the program was community based.

4. The number of Black absconders was much greater from community based furlough than from programs located on the institution grounds.

5. Past alcohol and drug abuse was an important item in community based absconding but of little significance for institutional programs. This may relate to the ease of access to these substances in the community.

6. The importance of background characteristics was minor compared to variations among programs. The best predictor of absconding is not individual characteristics but rather the particular program in which the furloughee is involved.

Women Escapees and Absconders:

1. The characteristics of women escapees are very similar to those of men.

2. The Black ethnic group is under-represented, although the difference is not as large as in most of the data on the males. Whites composed 56 percent of the institutional population and 68 percent of the escapees.

3. One-third of the women escapees and absconders had a prior escape, while this was true of 17 percent of the population.

4. Extensive criminal backgrounds, measured by parole violations, prior terms and property offenses, discriminated between women who escaped and the population. Parole violators and those who had served a prior prison term were about twice as likely to be in the escape group.

5. While only 35 percent of the institutional population was serving time for property crimes, 55 percent of the escapees and 59 percent of the absconders were convicted of those crimes.

6. Age would also appear to be a factor in that institutional escapees are younger than expected. Absconders from temporary furloughs, however, appear somewhat older, which is parallel to the findings on male work furloughees.

Conclusions

It is much easier for classification committees to identify management problems than escape potential. Behavior problems can be visualized as a continuum from none to extreme, with movement in one or other directions. Thus, by comparing behavior over time, decisions are made for less or more custody, less or more programming. There are no degrees of escaping, however; it happens or it doesn't. Apart from a prior escape from custody, institutional behavior is irrelevant. On the basis of this study, there is nothing the inmate has done in the institution or even could do to demonstrate his escape potential one way or the other.

Once classification staff know an inmate's race, escape history, type of offense, age, and criminal background, they probably know about all that is worth knowing in terms of escape potential. The best decisions appear to result when prior escapes of all types are considered as equal, and all property crimes (including robbery) are given equal weight. Age, likewise, has to be used in a general way since there is no specific year at which escapes decrease. Here rough categories of below or above 32 years will suffice.

The length of sentence the inmate is expected to serve is of minimal importance compared to other factors. Similarly, the amount of time served prior to a minimum custody placement is probably of little value. One problem is the fact that "term investment" primarily deters the low risk groups who are not the problem anyway. Little deterrence was observed for high risk groups.

Long parole dates probably had a minimal effect in deterring high risk escapees. Even short parole dates are no guarantee against this group's escaping. Parole dates do lower the risk of those less likely to escape but their rates are already within tolerable limits. Almost any obstacle or reward seems to reduce effectively the chances of this lower group's escaping.

During the study period, the escape rate from minimum custody facilities was approximately ten percent. The institutional escape rate was estimated to be about five percent for those with minimum custody assignments. Based on these estimates, rates were computed for all combinations of the four basic characteristics and for three types of facilities. These rates are meant to provide the odds that various types of inmates will escape when placed in minimum custody. The purpose is to provide staff with a quantitative tool for evaluating their decisions. The decision maker is allowed to weigh institutional and program needs against the projected escape probability. For example, an institution has need for a skilled worker with minimum custody. There are two candidates, both White. One is an older inmate with an escape history, convicted of assault. The other is young, has no escape history but was convicted of robbery. The projected rates indicate that the best decision is the older man (six percent rate) even though he has a prior escape (ten percent is projected for the second man). It should also be possible by surveying the population with minimum custody assignment to project the number of escapes that would normally be expected.



It should be kept in mind that these projected rates are based on data from a period with an extremely high number of escapes. The relative rates for different inmates are not expected to change dramatically but the exact rates should. In other words, if the total rate for camps was to drop to five percent (from ten percent), then all the projections should also be reduced by half.

The projection charts are meant to be used as a custody screening device in classification. Staff should first list the four necessary items of information. Then, beginning with the type of facility being considered, locate the section for the inmate's race, and follow the diagram through the specific combination of factors. The rates, of course, suggest the number of escapes that might be expected if 100 inmates with those characteristics were given minimum custody at that type of facility.

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# A D M I N I S T R A T I V E

# A B S T R A C T

A Synopsis of Research Report No. 52

## ESCAPE FROM CUSTODY

Norman Holt

Research Division
California Department of Corrections
Sacramento, California

May 1974

# ESCAPE FROM CUSTODY

With the rate of escape more than doubling within a four-year period (escapes from camp went from 6.49 per 100 average daily population for 1969 to 13.72 for 1972, while the institution escape rate went from 0.47 to 1.52 over the same period), a need was recognized for a detailed analysis of factors associated with escapes and recommendations as to how classification could be improved to lower escape rates.

## Method

This study involved a sample of all inmates who had escaped from the custody of the California Department of Corrections from January 1, 1971, through June 30, 1972. This sample, consisting of both men and women, included escapes from work furlough, and temporary community release, as well as escapes from institutions serving felons and civilly-committed narcotic addicts and from conservation camps. Each escapee was matched with a non-escapee at the same facility who was committed at about the same time. Through these procedures, a combined total of 1,695 escapees and non-escapees was selected. Data collecting procedures yielded a total usable sample of 1,494 escapees and controls from the 1,696 names (88 percent of the total) originally selected. The primary focus of the study was on adult male escapees.

## Results

Escapes from Minimum Custody (Conservation Camps):

1. The most consistent relationship was found between previous escapes and current escape behavior. Inmates with any escape history were twice as likely to be found among the escapees as their percentage in the population would indicate. This was true for all facilities. The risk further increased when more than one prior escape had been recorded. No relationship was evident in the type, whether juvenile or adult, of prior escape and the current escape. A prior escape was less important if it occurred 15 years or more earlier, but this variable is highly related to another important factor, that of age.

2. Blacks escaped about one-third as often as they appear in the population, Mexican-Americans about the same as their percentage in the population, while Whites were about one and one-half times as likely to escape as their numbers in the general population would indicate. The Black escape rate increased considerably, however, in facilities located in Southern California; and an unusually high rate of Mexican-American escapes was experienced from conservation camps in the South. These findings are consistent with prior studies, both in this state and elsewhere.

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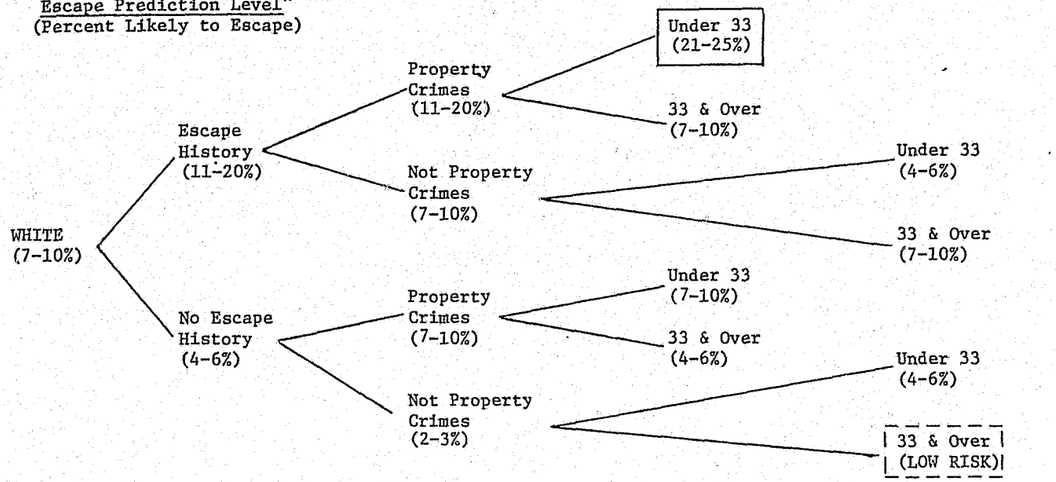
ALL INSTITUTIONS
Escape Prediction Level*
(Percent Likely to Escape)

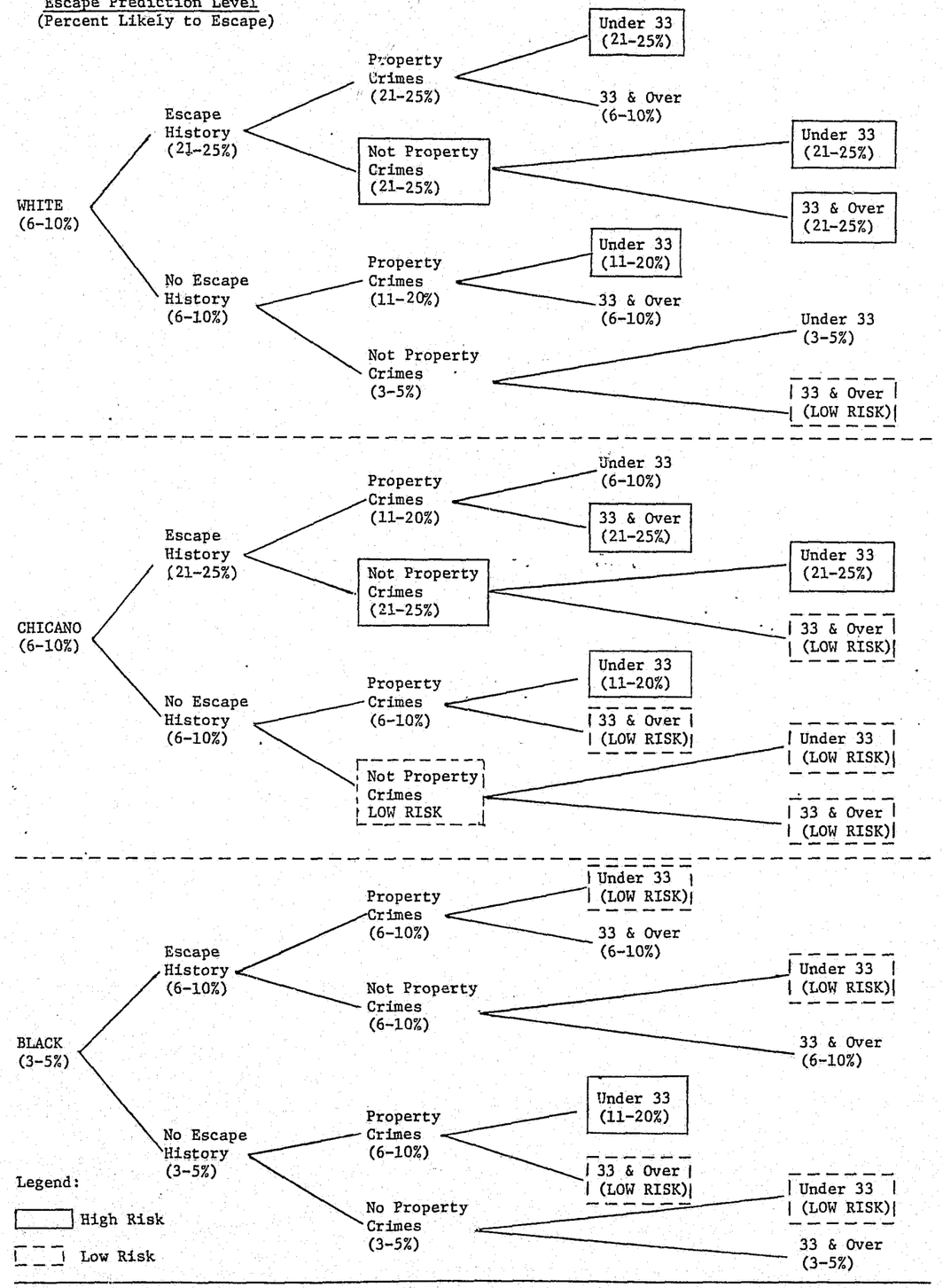
FIGURE I




* Percentage figures indicate probable number of escapes per 100 inmates. Average rate is 5. Low Risk (0-1%); Low-Medium Risk (2-3%); High-Medium Risk (4-6%); High Risk (7%+). High Risk group is divided in the chart into three sub-groups, 7-10%, 11-20%, 21-25%. In this chart, the Low and Low-Medium Risk cases are combined in one category and labeled "LOW RISK" in the boxes.

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR MEN
Escape Prediction Level*
(Percent Likely to Escape)

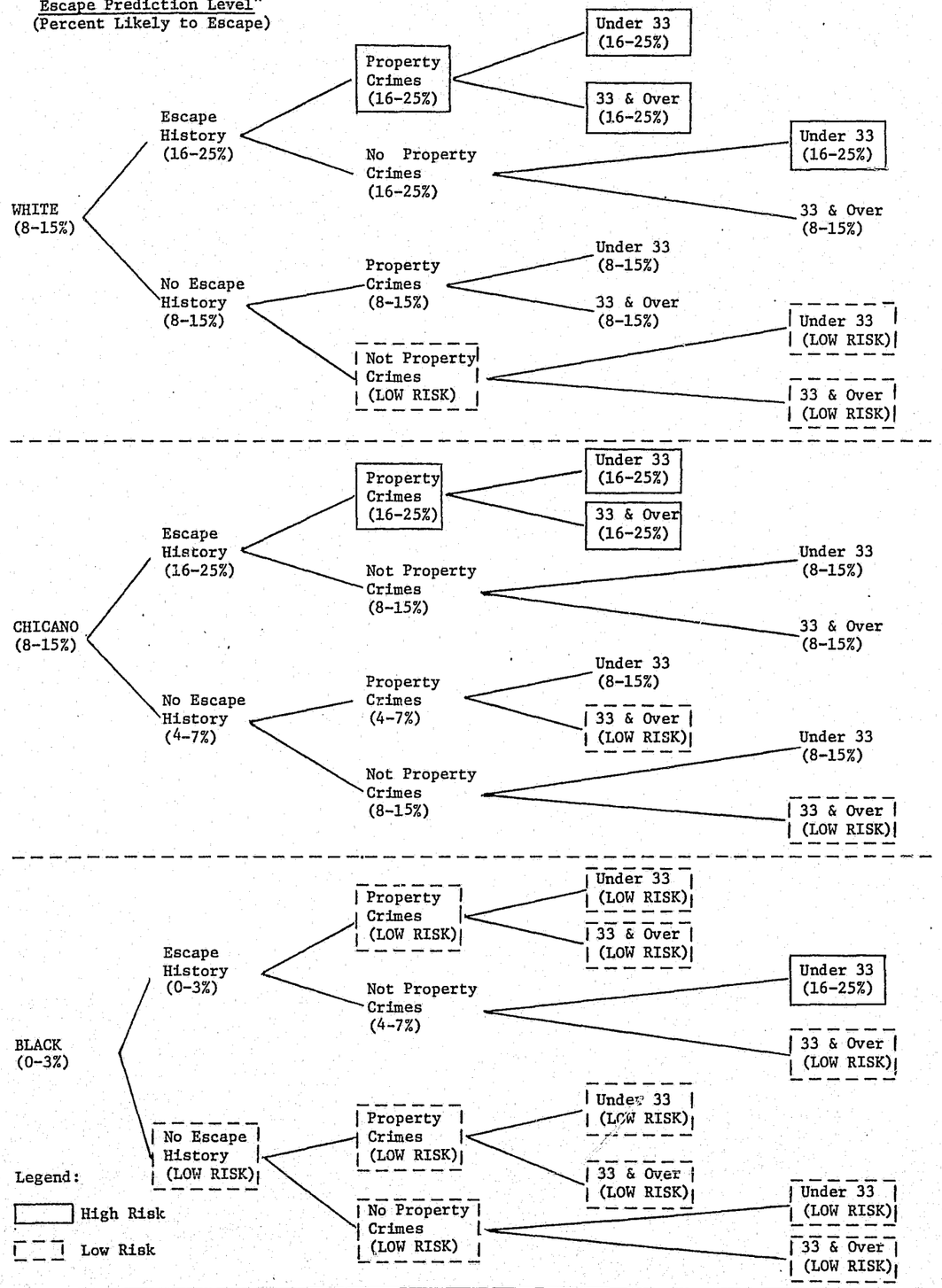
FIGURE II




* Percentage figures indicate probable number of escapes per 100 inmates. Average rate is 10. Low Risk (0-2%); Low-Medium Risk (3-5%); High-Medium Risk (6-10%); High Risk (11%+). High Risk group is divided in the chart into two sub-groups 11-20% and 21-25%.

CONSERVATION
Escape Prediction Level*
(Percent Likely to Escape)

FIGURE III




* Percentage figures indicate probable number of escapes per 100 inmates. Average rate is 10. Low Risk (0-3%); Low-Medium Risk (4-7%); High-Medium Risk (8-15%); High Risk (16%+).

END