

HEROIN USE AND CRIMINALITY:
Survey of Inmates of State Correctional Facilities, January 1974

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Fall 1976

(This document is included in DRUG USE AND CRIME: Report of the Panel
on Drug Use and Criminal Behavior, prepared for the National Institute
on Drug Abuse, September 1976)

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HEROIN USE AND CRIMINALITY: SURVEY OF INMATES OF STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES, JANUARY 1974

William I. Barton

In January 1974 the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), assisted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, interviewed 10,400 inmates of state correctional facilities. Results from this survey are applicable to 191,400 inmates--the estimated population of all such facilities at the time of the survey.

SUMMARY

Findings show that 61 percent of the inmates stated they had at one time used drugs such as heroin, methadone, cocaine, marihuana, amphetamines, or barbiturates without a doctor's prescription and outside of a treatment program.* The percentages of inmates who had ever used these drugs were: heroin (30%), methadone (9%), cocaine (28%), marihuana (56%), amphetamines (29%), barbiturates (28%), and other drugs (16%).

Of all drugs, most attention centers on heroin in terms of a relationship to criminality. Among inmates presently convicted for robbery, 38 percent had a history of heroin use, compared to only 15 percent of inmates who were presently convicted of a violent offense. The percentage of inmates presently convicted of burglary who had a history of heroin use was not significantly larger than the percentage of other inmates with a history of heroin use.

Among inmates with a history of heroin use, around 25 percent were presently convicted for robbery. This is a statistically larger proportion than that for other inmates. Only 14 percent of inmates with a history of heroin use were presently convicted of a violent crime compared to over 35 percent of other inmates.

Some 14 percent of the inmates were using heroin daily at the time of an offense which resulted in imprisonment. There was a significantly larger proportion of inmates presently convicted of robbery who stated they were using heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present incarceration than there was for inmates presently convicted of a violent crime who stated this. Around

*This paper presents some findings from two larger studies. The first is Drug Histories of Prisoners: Survey of Inmates of State Correctional Facilities (completed March 16, 1976). The second is Drug Histories, and Criminality of Inmates of State Correctional Facilities (in preparation).

1 in 3 inmates presently convicted for a drug offense reported using heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present incarceration.

Around 13 percent of the inmates stated they were under the influence of heroin at the time of any of the offenses causing current imprisonment. The types of offenses for inmates who stated they were under the influence of heroin were about the same as those for inmates who stated they had been using heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses which resulted in their imprisonment.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this survey was to gather detailed information on the characteristics of inmates of state correctional facilities. A facility was defined as a "functionally distinct group of adult (or youthful offender) inmates not included in the 1971 survey of local jails; which was operational on January 31, 1974; was capable of providing a unique inmate count; and possessed an address."* In all, 710 facilities comprised the universe from which 190 were selected, using scientific sampling procedures. From this sample, 10,400 inmates were selected for personal interview through scientific sampling methods. Thus, about 1 of every 18 inmates under the jurisdiction of state correctional facilities was selected.

Data gathered on the interview questionnaire included (1) demographic characteristics, (2) incarceration history, (3) present conviction and circumstances surrounding it, (4) labor force participation and income (prior to arrest), and (5) drug and alcohol use. Data were gathered by female Bureau of the Census interviewers. The interviews were conducted in the institutions in a one-to-one situation, within sight but not within hearing of guards. Of the 10,400 inmates selected, 86 percent were actually interviewed. For an additional 12 percent of the inmates selected, information was abstracted from prison records. For less than 1 percent, neither the inmate nor the record was available or accessible.

All sample data were inflated to represent the estimated 191,400 inmates in state correctional facilities--the entire population which falls within the scope of the survey--by means of an involved estimation procedure. A further description of the methodology is in a paper by Ken Brimmer and Louis Williams (3).

SURVEY POPULATION

Of the inmates in state correctional facilities, 98 percent (an estimated 187,500) had been sentenced. The remainder was awaiting trial or release on bail, being held for other authorities, committed for study and observation prior to sentencing, and so forth. Males constituted 97 percent of the population. Around one-half of

*A facility is defined as an address at which state adult correctional inmates reside. The address need not be defined by the state as a correctional facility.

the inmates were white; 47 percent were black. Median age for all inmates was about 27; about three-fourths were between 18-34 years of age. The inmate population had a median of 10 years of schooling completed--lower than the 1972 median of 12 years for the male noninstitutional population. Some 68 percent of the inmates stated they were employed most of the month prior to the arrest for their present offense(s). Close to one-half of the inmates who stated they were unemployed, were not looking for work, and did not want work. (This is 14 percent of the total inmate population.)

Three criminal offenses predominated among sentenced inmates: homicide, burglary, and robbery. These offenses accounted for about three-fifths of the convictions that led to imprisonment. Inmates sentenced for robbery were the most numerous--some 23 percent of all sentenced inmates. Table 1 shows the distribution of inmates by most serious present offense. *Most serious present offense*, for the purpose of this survey, is the most serious offense causing the most recent entry of an inmate into the jurisdiction of the convicting state's correctional system by imprisonment. An inmate may be serving time for convictions since that entry, but new convictions do not derive from *present offenses* for the purposes of this survey. Thus, a present offense cannot include a parole violation. In noninterview cases, present offenses are taken from those recorded on the inmate's prison record. In a few cases where the inmate reported being convicted for one type of offense but where the prison record and the interview responses indicated no conviction for prior sentences for this type of offense, the inmate record was used to determine *present offense*.

Whenever offense data are discussed in this paper, the reference is to *present offense*. Rather than use the term *most serious present offense resulting in incarceration*, the term *present conviction* or *for which presently convicted* is used with an equivalent connotation.

The offense classification shown in Table 1 is a seriousness ranking developed by LEAA and the Bureau of the Census. It differs from that used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in their Uniform Crime Reports (UCR's) in some major respects. Even though an inmate may have committed more than one offense which resulted in present imprisonment, the inmate was classified according to only the most serious present offense. Thus, an inmate with robbery and burglary offenses would be classified according to robbery. Similarly, an inmate who was convicted for the sale of heroin, robbery, and aggravated assault would be classified by "drug offense."

The probability design of this sample makes possible the calculation of sampling errors. The standard error is a measure of the sampling variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that the estimate from the sample differs from the value for the entire population by less than the standard error. The chances are about 95 out of 100 that the difference is less than twice the standard error and about 99 out of 100 that the difference is less than three times the standard error.

TABLE 1. INMATES BY MOST SERIOUS PRESENT OFFENSE: ALL INMATES OF STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Offense	Number	Percent
Homicide	33,900	18
Kidnapping	2,200	1
Sexual assaults	9,700	5
Drug offenses	18,700	10
Robbery	42,300	22
Assault	9,000	5
Burglary	33,900	18
Larceny	12,300	6
Auto theft	3,200	2
Forgery, fraud, embezzlement	8,200	4
Weapons	1,900	1
Arson	1,000	1
Stolen property	2,000	1
Other sex offenses	2,100	1
Other	7,100	4
Not reported	<u>3,900</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	191,400	100

In this paper, comparisons are made between proportions. When the term "statistically significant" is used in this paper, it means that there is at least a 95 percent probability that the difference between two proportions represents a true difference rather than one which results from the sample design of the survey. Normally, the term "significance level" means that there is a significant difference between two proportions if there was a 5 percent or less probability of the difference being due to chance (or, rephrased, 95 out of 100 chances that the difference is a true difference). In this paper, however, the level of confidence refers to either 95 out of 100 chances or 99 out of 100 chances that the difference represents a true difference.

SURVEY RESULTS

Findings show that 61 percent of the inmates stated they had used heroin, methadone, cocaine, marihuana, amphetamines, barbiturates, or other drugs without a doctor's prescription and outside of a treatment program at some point in their lives. The percentages of inmates who had ever used these drugs were: heroin (30%), methadone

TABLE 2. EXTENT OF USE, BY DRUG: ALL INMATES OF STATE
CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Drug Use	Total Percent	Never Used	Ever Used	Extent of Use		
				Infrequently	Regularly	Daily
Heroin	100%	70	30	7	3	21
Methadone	100%	91	9	5	1	3
Cocaine	100%	72	28	17	5	6
Amphetamines	100%	71	29	14	4	11
Barbiturates	100%	72	28	16	4	8
Marihuana	100%	44	56	22	11	24
Other drugs/ illicit use	100%	84	16	10	3	4

(9%), cocaine (28%), marihuana (56%), amphetamines (29%), barbiturates (28%), and other drugs (16%).

Table 2 shows daily or almost daily heroin use by one-fifth of the inmates; marihuana was used that frequently by one-quarter of the inmates. Although not shown, among inmates who have ever used heroin, 7 out of 10 inmates had used it daily or almost daily at sometime. This is in contrast to marihuana, for which roughly the same proportion had used it infrequently as had used it daily or almost daily.

Heroin is the drug given the most attention in terms of a relationship to criminality. Thus, even though the study dealt with many drugs, the remainder of this paper deals only with heroin. There are two basic questions which this paper attempts to answer: *What proportion of offenses was committed by inmates with a history of heroin use? Do inmates who have used heroin commit different types of offenses than other inmates?*

Using a modified summary of offenses, Table 3 shows that 38 percent of the inmates presently convicted for robbery had a history of heroin use. About one-quarter of those presently convicted for robbery had used it daily. Only 15 percent of the inmates presently convicted of violent offenses had a history of heroin use.† While

†The percentage of inmates presently convicted for robbery with a history of heroin use was significantly higher (38%) than the average percentage for the total population minus inmates convicted of robbery (28%).*** The percentage of inmates presently convicted for a violent crime with a history of heroin use (15%) was significantly lower than the percentage for the total population minus inmates convicted of a violent crime (38%).***

NOTE: In this paper, *** means statistically significant at 99% level of confidence.

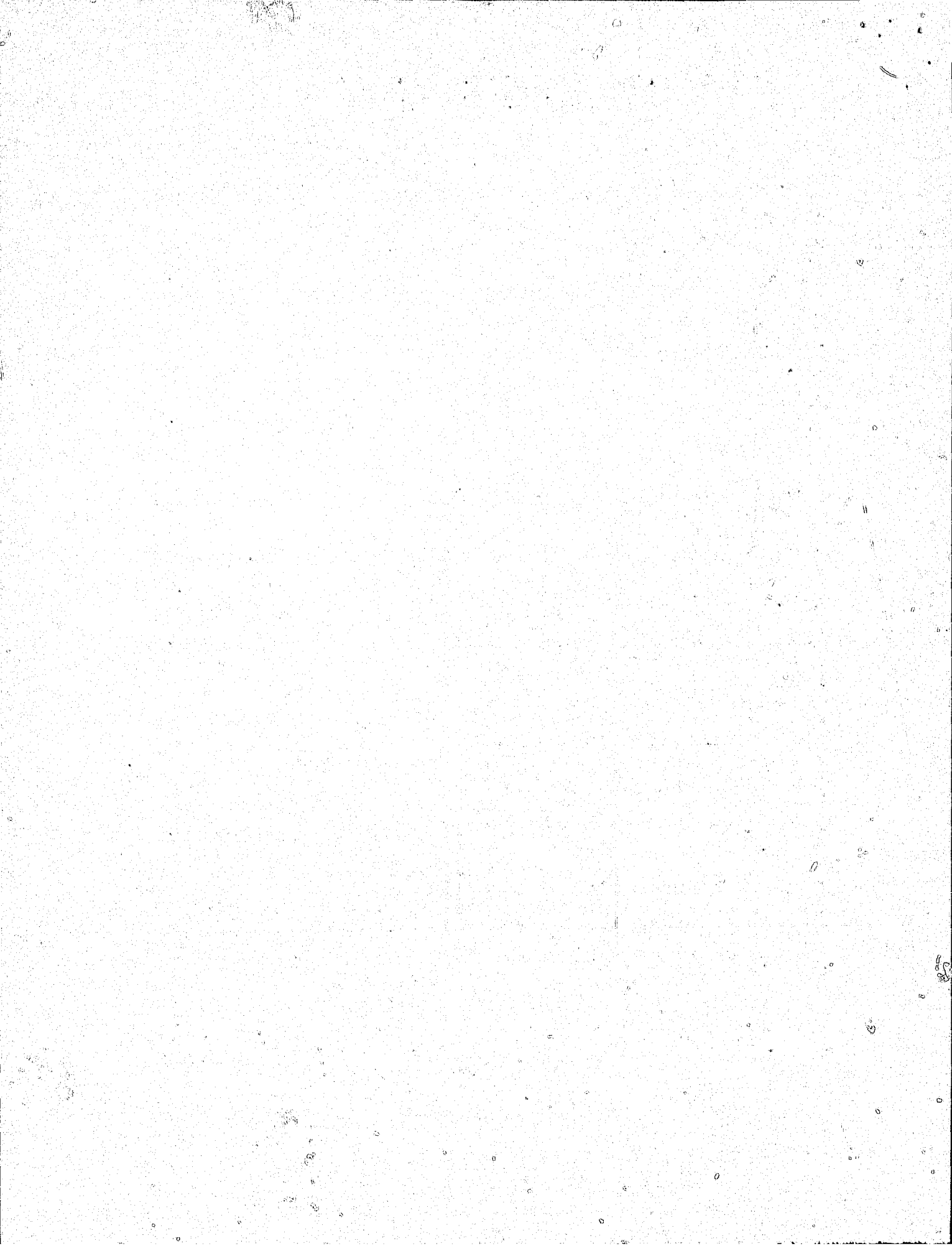


TABLE 3. EXTENT OF USE, BY DRUG (HEROIN), ACCORDING TO MOST SERIOUS PRESENT OFFENSE
 RESULTING IN INCARCERATION: ALL INMATES OF STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Most Serious Present Offense	Total		No Heroin Use			Heroin Use			
			Total	No Use of Drugs	Used Other Drugs	Extent of Use			
	Number	Percent*				Total	Infreq.	Regular	Daily
Violent	54,800	100%	85	54	30	15	5	2	8
Robbery	42,300	100%	62	31	31	38	8	4	26
Burglary	33,900	100%	68	36	32	32	7	3	22
Property	26,600	100%	74	43	32	26	5	2	19
Drug offenses	28,700	100%	35	7	27	65	10	4	51
Other	11,100	100%	82	54	28	18	5	1	12
Not reported**	3,900	100%	47	24	23	51	4	2	46
Total	191,400	100%	69	39	31	30	7	3	21

*Percentages in this and other tables are based on a total which includes "unknowns," usually minimal numbers; percentages, therefore, may not total 100.

**About 1,800 of the 3,900 in the "not reported" category were in the California prison system; under California law, civilly committed addicts are not considered to be criminally sentenced.

the percentage of inmates convicted of burglary had a history of heroin use (32%) was slightly higher than the overall percentage for the inmate population minus inmates convicted of burglary (30%), this difference was not statistically significant. Among inmates presently convicted of drug offenses, some 65 percent had a history of heroin use; 50 percent had used heroin daily at some point in their lives.

Of note in Table 3 is the column "no use of drugs." This refers to inmates who stated they had never used any of the drugs specified without a doctor's prescription or outside of a treatment program. While 39 percent of the total inmate population were in this category, 54 percent of inmates convicted of violent offenses stated they had never used drugs. This is in contrast to 31 percent of the inmates presently convicted of robbery who stated they never had used drugs.

Do inmates with a history of heroin use commit different types of offenses than inmates without such a history? Table 4 shows that over one-fourth of the inmates with a history of heroin use were presently convicted for robbery compared to 20 percent of the inmates without a history of heroin use.*** Only 14 percent of the inmates with a history of heroin use were presently convicted of a violent crime compared to 35 percent of other inmates.*** Some 19 percent of inmates with a history of heroin use were presently convicted of burglary, compared to 17 percent of inmates without such a history. (This was not statistically significant.) It is important to note that 21 percent of the inmates with a history of heroin use were presently convicted of a drug offense compared to only 5 percent of the inmates without a history of heroin use.

In some respects, extent of use of heroin had little, if any, bearing on the proportions of inmates presently convicted for certain types of offenses (burglary, property, "other" offenses). There are differences in other types of offenses depending on the extent of heroin use (the differences may not be statistically significant primarily due to small cell sizes). For example, inmates with a history of infrequent heroin use have a higher proportion of present convictions for violent crimes (23%) and a lower proportion for drug offenses (15%) than inmates with a history of daily heroin use (violent crimes, 11%; drug offenses, 24%). Compared to inmates with a history of daily heroin use, inmates with a history of regular heroin use (once a week or more, but not daily) have a higher proportion of present convictions for violent crimes and robbery, but a lower proportion for drug offenses. These data suggest that, as the extent of heroin use increases, there is a greater propensity for being arrested for and convicted of certain types of offenses. The data also suggest that as one progresses from regular use of heroin to daily use, there is a decrease in the propensity for being convicted of robbery and an increase in the propensity for being convicted of a drug offense. Further, the data support the idea that as extent of heroin use increases, there is less likelihood of being convicted of a violent crime.

Inmates who have ever used drugs other than heroin occupy a middle ground between inmates with no drug use and those with heroin use in terms of the proportions convicted for certain types of offenses (Table 4). For example, the proportion of inmates who have ever used other drugs and are presently convicted for a violent crime is lower than the proportion among inmates with no drug use but higher than that for inmates with a history of heroin use.*** On the other hand, among inmates who have ever used drugs other than heroin, the proportion convicted of robbery or a drug offense was higher than the proportions among inmates with no use of drugs. Neither proportion was as high as that among inmates with a history of heroin use.

Inmates were asked about daily heroin use at the time of any of the offenses resulting in imprisonment. Table 5 shows that 14 percent (around 64 percent of the inmates who had ever used heroin daily) were using heroin daily at the time of an offense resulting in present imprisonment. Findings from this table are in the same direction as those from Table 3. There was a significantly larger proportion of inmates presently convicted of robbery who stated they were using heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present incarceration (18%) than inmates presently convicted of a violent crime who stated this (5%).*** Around 1 out of 3 inmates presently convicted for a drug offense stated this.

The proportional breakdown of offense types among inmates who had used heroin daily at the time of any of the offense(s) resulting in present incarceration was similar to the breakdown for those who had ever used heroin daily. Any history of daily heroin use seemed to be related to types of offenses more so than when heroin was used daily (e.g., at the time of any of these offenses). Table 6 shows some slight but nonstatistically significant differences for certain types of offenses between inmates who had used heroin daily but not at this time, and inmates who were using heroin daily at this time. Around 1 in 4 inmates among both groups of inmates, however, were presently convicted for a drug offense.

The proportion of inmates with no drug use who were presently convicted of a violent crime (40%) was significantly larger than the proportion among inmates who had used heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present incarceration (10%) or for the proportion who had ever used heroin daily, but not at this time (13%).*** Counterrwise, the proportion of inmates with no drug use who were presently convicted of robbery (17%) was significantly smaller than among inmates who were using heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present incarceration (28%).*** Among inmates who had ever used heroin daily, but not at this time, there was a larger proportion of inmates presently convicted of robbery (24%) than among inmates who had no drug use (17%).

Table 6 other comparison groups: inmates who had used heroin, but not daily, combined with inmates who had ever used other drugs. These groups apparently occupied a middle ground between inmates with no drug use and inmates who had used heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present incarceration, at least for certain types of offenses. While 40 percent of inmates with no drug

TABLE 4. MOST SERIOUS PRESENT OFFENSE RESULTING IN INCARCERATION, ACCORDING TO EXTENT OF USE, BY DRUG (HEROIN): ALL INMATES OF STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Most Serious Present Offense	Total	No Heroin Use		Heroin Use				
		Total	No Use of Drugs	Used Other Drugs	Extent of Use			
					Total	Infreq.	Regular	Daily
Violent	29	35	40	29	14	23	20	11
Robbery	22	20	17	23	27	27	34	27
Burglary	18	17	16	19	19	20	18	18
Property	14	15	15	14	12	10	11	12
Drug offenses	10	5	2	9	21	15	13	24
Other	6	7	8	5	3	4	2	3
Not reported	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	4
Total								
Number	191,400	132,900	74,500	58,400	58,100	12,700	4,900	40,500
Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

TABLE 5. DAILY HEROIN USE AT THE TIME OF ANY OF THE OFFENSE(S) RESULTING IN PRESENT INCARCERATION, ACCORDING TO MOST SERIOUS PRESENT OFFENSE: ALL INMATES OF STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Most Serious Present Offense	Total		No Daily Heroin Use At This Time					Used Heroin Daily At This Time
			Total	No Drug Use	Heroin and Other Drug Use		Used Heroin Daily, Not Daily, and Other Drug Users	
					Sub-Total	Used Heroin Daily, Not at This Time		
Violent	54,800	100%	95	54	41	4	38	5
Robbery	42,300	100%	82	31	52	8	44	18
Burglary	33,900	100%	86	36	50	8	42	14
Property	26,600	100%	89	43	46	8	38	11
Drug offenses	18,700	100%	67	7	60	18	41	33
Other	11,100	100%	93	54	40	6	34	6
Not reported	3,900	100%	57	24	34	5	28	40
Total	191,400	100%	86	39	47	8	40	14

use were presently convicted for a violent crime, 27 percent of this control group were presently convicted of a violent crime. Only 10 percent of inmates who were using heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present incarceration were convicted of a violent crime. Other offenses where this control group seemed to occupy a middle ground were robbery, property offenses, and drug offenses.

Inmates were asked if they were under the influence of heroin at the time of any of the offense(s) causing present imprisonment. Some 13 percent said they were. This is slightly different than asking about daily heroin use at the time of any of the offense(s) resulting in present incarceration. Some 7 percent of the inmates who stated they were under the influence of heroin stated they had never used heroin daily, or almost daily. Rather, they had used heroin infrequently or regularly (once a week or more, but not daily). Nonetheless, as Table 7 shows, for each type of offense the proportions stating they were under the influence of heroin were about the same as the proportions stating they had used heroin daily, or almost daily, at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present incarceration. The proportion of inmates presently convicted of robbery who stated they were under the influence of heroin (17%) was significantly higher than the proportion of inmates presently convicted of a violent crime who stated they were under influence of heroin (4%).*** As before, 1 in 3 of the inmates who were presently convicted on a drug offense stated they were under the influence of heroin at the time of any of the offense(s) causing present imprisonment.

Table 8 shows that the distribution of inmates who stated they were under the influence of heroin by the type of offense resulting in conviction was about the same as the distribution of inmates who stated they were using heroin daily at that time.

DISCUSSION

No previous survey of the prison population was on a scale as broad as this. All inmates of state correctional facilities were represented. In comparing drug use by prisoners, the appropriate comparison population is an institutionalized state prison population (or, if it existed, a former nationwide survey of prisoners of state correctional institutions). This population represents those arrested, prosecuted, convicted, and institutionalized in a state corrections institution. They may not be representative of the criminal population at-large or of those who avoid imprisonment in a state corrections institution.

Comparison of results from this study with those from other studies is difficult. Other studies have derived data from a variety of sources such as diagnostic evaluation reports, presentence reports, institutional criminal case files (manual or computerized), probation reports, inmate population surveys, and court files. Some of the data appear fairly reliable, while others appear weak and thus influence the accuracy of findings.

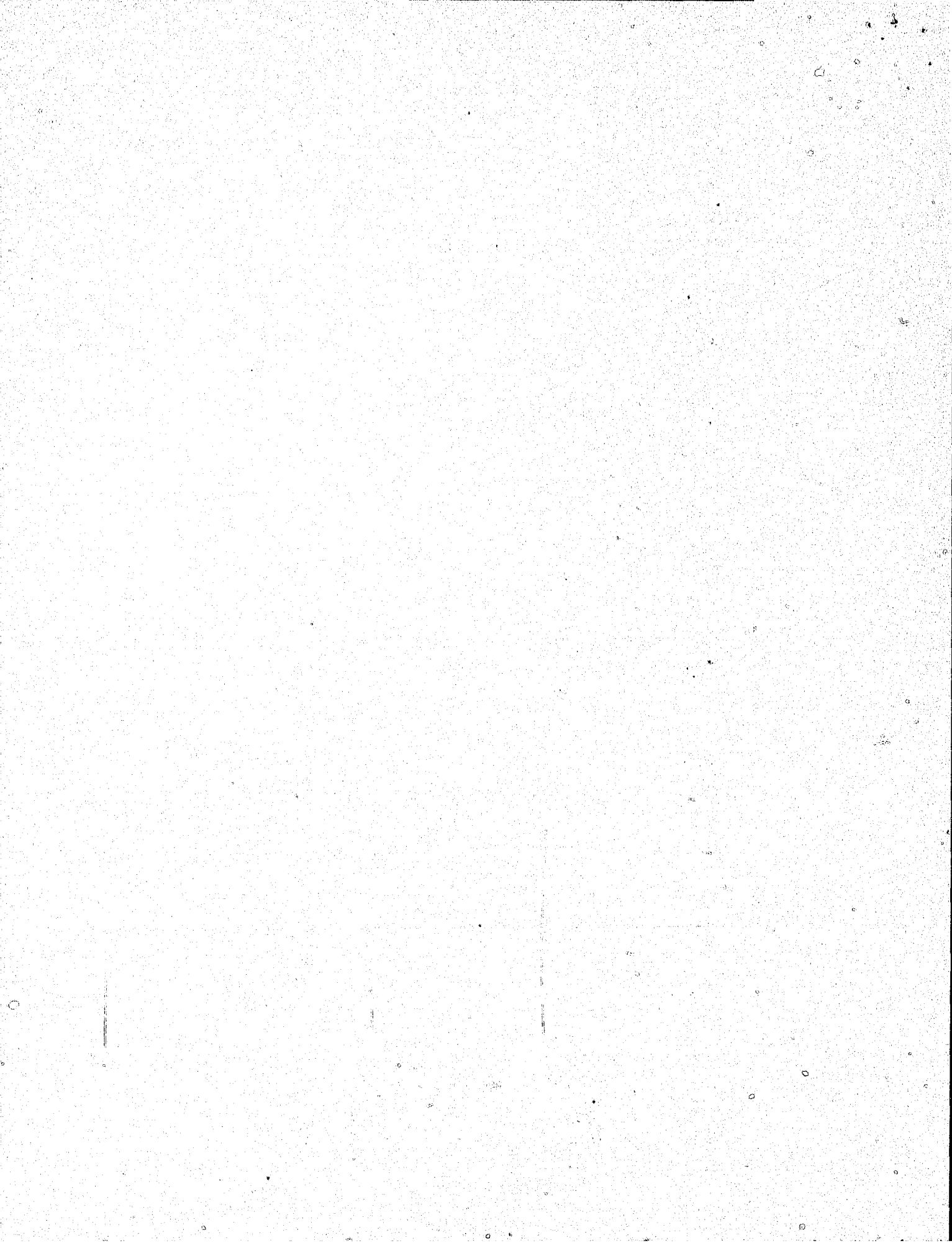


TABLE 7: UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF HEROIN AT THE TIME OF ANY OF THE OFFENSE(S) CAUSING PRESENT INCARCERATION, ACCORDING TO MOST SERIOUS PRESENT OFFENSE: ALL INMATES OF STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Most Serious Present Offense	Total		Not Under Influence of Heroin			Under Influence of Heroin at This Time
	Number	Percent	Total	No Drug Use	Used Drugs	
Violent	54,800	100%	96	54	41	4
Robbery	42,300	100%	83	31	52	17
Burglary	33,900	100%	87	36	51	13
Property	26,600	100%	89	43	46	11
Drug offenses	18,700	100%	68	7	61	32
Other	11,100	100%	94	54	41	6
Not reported	3,900	100%	61	24	38	39
Total	191,400	100%	87	39	48	13

TABLE 8. MOST SERIOUS PRESENT OFFENSE, ACCORDING TO WHETHER UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF HEROIN AT THE TIME OF ANY OF THE OFFENSE(S) CAUSING PRESENT INCARCERATION: ALL INMATES OF STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Most Serious Present Offense	Total	Not Under Influence of Heroin		Under the Influence of Heroin at This Time	
		Total	No Drug Use		Used Drugs
Violent	29	32	40	25	10
Robbery	22	21	17	24	29
Burglary	18	18	16	19	18
Property	14	14	15	13	12
Drug offenses	10	8	2	12	24
Other	6	6	8	5	2
Not reported	2	1	1	2	6
Total					
Number	191,400	166,200	74,500	91,700	25,200
Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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The basic data findings in this paper are:

- 61 percent of the inmates had used drugs illicitly.
- 30 percent had tried heroin; 21 percent had used heroin daily, or almost daily.
- 56 percent had tried marihuana; 24 percent had used marihuana daily, or almost daily.
- 14 percent were using heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present imprisonment.
- 13 percent were under the influence of heroin at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present imprisonment.

Two studies of inmates under custody in 1974 show 56 percent of the male population had a record of dangerous drug usage (11) and 48 percent of those in correctional institutions had a drug problem (8). The estimate of 61 percent found in the present survey is higher than that found in either the New York or the Massachusetts study.

Estimates of heroin use among inmates range from 16 percent in Arizona (2) to 36 percent in Massachusetts (9). The present survey found about 30 percent had tried heroin. This is within the range found in the state studies. The estimate of 21 percent of inmates with daily, or almost daily, heroin use approximates the 25 percent estimate for the District of Columbia (4). In the state studies, use of heroin was rarely differentiated; thus, one cannot compare the data in the survey study with a number of state studies.

The estimate from the survey of state correctional facilities for the percentage of inmates who had tried marihuana (56%) approximated the finding reported about Colorado State Reformatory inmates in 1972 (53%) but was a good deal higher than estimates in other state studies. State studies may have gathered information from case files. Information on heroin use is much more likely to be recorded than information on use of other drugs, including marihuana.

No state corrections studies were found which inquired about whether or not inmates were under the influence of heroin at the time of any of the offenses resulting in incarceration.

An important part of the research in this paper refers to offenses committed specifically those which caused the present imprisonment. This paper attempts to adapt basic questions to the population at hand and to primarily one drug (heroin). *What proportion of offenses is committed by drug users? Do offenses committed by drug users differ from those committed by nondrug-users?* Different types of control groups were used for comparison with heroin users.†

In addition to the problems of comparing drug histories in this paper to findings from other research, there are problems in comparing

†The use of appropriate control population is an important methodological consideration. The use of different controls has resulted in different study conclusions. The categorization scheme used may determine the kind of data gathered to answer questions on the relationship between drug use and criminality:

the proportions and types of offenses. Not only are there differences in the methodology used to ascertain drug use and extent of use, but there are differences in the methods by which criminality is ascertained. In the studies reviewed, there are differences in the way a person is classified by a single offense. Different populations are used: for example, the population on probation, the arrested population, or the convicted population. Determining the association between drug use and criminality is highly dependent upon the research methods used and the definitions involved in forming categorization, including the manner in which an individual is classified according to a crime.

In 1972, Senator Edmund S. Muskie stated that more than half of urban crime in the United States was directly related to drug addiction (10). In the same year, the American Bar Association stated that "informal estimates attribute 33 percent to 50 percent of the hold-ups, burglaries, muggings, and thefts committed in the Nation's 34 major urban centers to heroin addicts (1)." An opinion sampling of law enforcement personnel (e.g., police chief, narcotics squad officers, federal narcotics agents) in 1972, found it was believed that 41 percent of prostitution/vice, 38 percent of burglaries, 35 percent of stolen property offenses, 34 percent of larcenies, and 32 percent of robberies were results of drug use (13). Those interviewed believed the percentages of all the offenses caused by drugs would increase in the next 2 years. These are not rash estimates.

Many studies have concluded that drug addiction is related to crime and that sizable proportions of certain offenses are committed by drug addicts. Of the drugs assumed to be related to crime, heroin is the primary drug of concern. Most heroin addicts at one point or another, will turn to crime to support their habits. The types of crimes committed depend on the personalities, skills, and experiences of the addicts in a community.

The data in this paper show that around one-fifth of the inmates had used heroin daily, or almost daily, at some point in their lives; 14 percent were using it daily at the time of an offense resulting in present imprisonment. The most serious present offenses were robbery and drug offenses (slightly more drug offenses were non-possession than possession/use). About one-half of the inmates who had ever used heroin daily, or almost daily, or who were using it daily at the time of an offense resulting in present incarceration were incarcerated for robbery or drug offenses. There was a slightly larger proportion of inmates who had ever used heroin presently convicted of burglary than nondrug-users, but the difference was not statistically significant. The difference for robbery, however, was statistically significant. Robbery may bring a more immediate cash return than burglary. It requires little or no planning and only one tool (a weapon). No fence is needed. Any number of victims is available. More robberies than burglaries, though, are cleared by arrest. This may be a part of the reason why among inmates who had ever used heroin daily, there were 47 percent more present convictions for robbery than for burglary.

The full extent of offenses committed by heroin addicts is not known. Inciardi and Chambers have reported that a substantial amount of unreported crime is committed by addicts; they suggest that only 1 of every 120 crimes is cleared by arrest (6). Multiple charges and convictions are not covered in this paper. It is unknown how many crimes these inmates committed. It is probable that the inmates involved in daily heroin use committed many more offenses proportionally than other inmates. Thus, even though only 18 percent of robberies, 14 percent of burglaries, and 11 percent of other property offenses were committed by inmates who had been using heroin daily at the time of any of the offenses resulting in present imprisonment, this in *no way* means that narcotic addicts committed these proportions of crimes in the community. It may be true that by treating the inmates with a history of narcotic use (no matter what proportion of the inmate population), significant decreases in the crime rate will occur.

Findings on the relationship between drug use and criminality are influenced by the manner in which certain criminal acts are classified into broad categories such as *crimes against property* or *crimes against the person*. Some studies have found that statistically significant differences arise or disappear depending on whether robbery is classified as a property crime or a personal crime.† Some have suggested that burglary could well be considered a crime against the person as well as a crime against property, since there appears to be an increasing number of cases where a burglar is encountered by other persons.

In this paper, robbery has been broken out separately from violent crime, and burglary from property crime. The inclusion of robbery and burglary in the larger categories results in a significantly smaller proportion of inmates presently convicted of a violent crime who had ever used heroin (25%) than the proportion for the total inmate population minus the inmates presently convicted of a violent crime (36%).*** Previous findings showed a significantly larger proportion of inmates presently convicted of robbery who had ever used heroin and a significantly smaller proportion of inmates presently convicted of a violent crime (minus robbery) who had ever used heroin. Thus, even though inmates presently convicted for robbery accounted for 44 percent of those convicted of violent crime, findings for inmates presently convicted of robbery were submerged when this offense was included in the broader category.

There was no significant difference in the proportion of inmates presently convicted of a property offense who had ever used heroin (29%), compared to the proportion for the total inmate population minus the inmates convicted of property offenses (31%)--a finding supported by previous research.

†Broad categories such as crime against the person and property crime obscure the effects of one or more of their component parts. Classified as a crime against the person, robbery constitutes a substantial proportion of such crimes. Classified with the high-incidence crimes of burglary and larceny-theft as a property crime, robbery may constitute a considerably lower proportion of such crimes.

Adjustment in the categories of types of offenses resulted in a significantly smaller proportion of inmates who had ever used heroin presently convicted of a violent crime (42%) than the proportion of inmates who had never used heroin (55%).*** Findings about the proportion of inmates ever having used heroin who were presently convicted of robbery were again submerged when the broader categorization was used.

There was no significant difference between the proportion of inmates ever having used heroin and the proportion of inmates who had never used heroin who were presently convicted of a property offense.

Attempting to draw broad-based findings (e.g., less of an association between violent crime and use of heroin than with property crime) can cause important research findings for subparts of the whole to be overlooked. This shows the roles that categorization and definition can play in influencing findings.

This paper has shown that around 1 in 5 inmates who had ever used heroin were presently convicted of a drug offense (1 in 4 inmates who had ever used it daily). This is a substantially larger proportion than the proportion of inmates who had used other drugs and were convicted of a drug offense (9%) or inmates who stated they had no use of drugs and yet were presently convicted of a drug offense (2%). *If these inmates who had ever used heroin had not been presently convicted for a drug offense, what would be their proportional representation among other types of offenses?* Table 9 examines this hypothetical question. This table shows that if inmates were not presently convicted for a drug offense, 6 out of 10 inmates who had ever used heroin would be presently convicted for either robbery or burglary compared to 4 out of 10 inmates with no heroin use. The finding--that among inmates who had ever used heroin, there was a significantly smaller proportion convicted of a violent crime and a significantly larger proportion presently convicted of robbery, compared to inmates with no heroin use--is not new. Of interest is the fact that this data adjustment gives a significantly larger proportion of inmates who had ever used heroin presently convicted of burglary, compared to inmates with no heroin use.***

The fact that sizable proportions of those who had ever used heroin and those who had ever used it daily were presently serving time for a violation of drug laws meant that proportionally fewer were serving time for other types of offenses; the proportional reduction in burglary was significant. This is not to say that all individuals with a history of heroin use who were presently convicted of violations of drug laws would otherwise be prosecuted and convicted for these other types of crimes. A number of research studies have found that there is a proportion of the heroin coping community who support their habits either primarily through the heroin distribution system or by legitimate work (5, 7, 12). These data do contend that enforced drug laws act as deterrents to the abuse of dangerous substances and to other crimes.

TABLE 9. MOST SERIOUS PRESENT OFFENSE RESULTING IN INCARCERATION (DRUG OFFENSES ELIMINATED),
 ACCORDING TO EXTENT OF USE, BY DRUG (HEROIN): INMATES OF STATE CORRECTIONAL
 FACILITIES PRESENTLY CONVICTED ON NON-DRUG OFFENSES

Most Serious Present Offense	Total	No Heroin Use		Heroin Use				
		Total	No Drug Use	Other Drugs Used	Total	Extent of Use		
					Infreq.	Regular	Daily	
Violent	32	37	41	31	18	27	23	15
Robbery	24	21	18	25	35	32	39	35
Burglary	20	18	17	20	24	23	20	24
Property	15	16	16	16	15	12	13	16
Other	6	7	8	6	4	5	3	4
Not reported	2	1	1	2	4	1	1	6
Total								
Number	172,600	126,400	73,100	53,300	45,900	10,800	4,300	30,900
Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

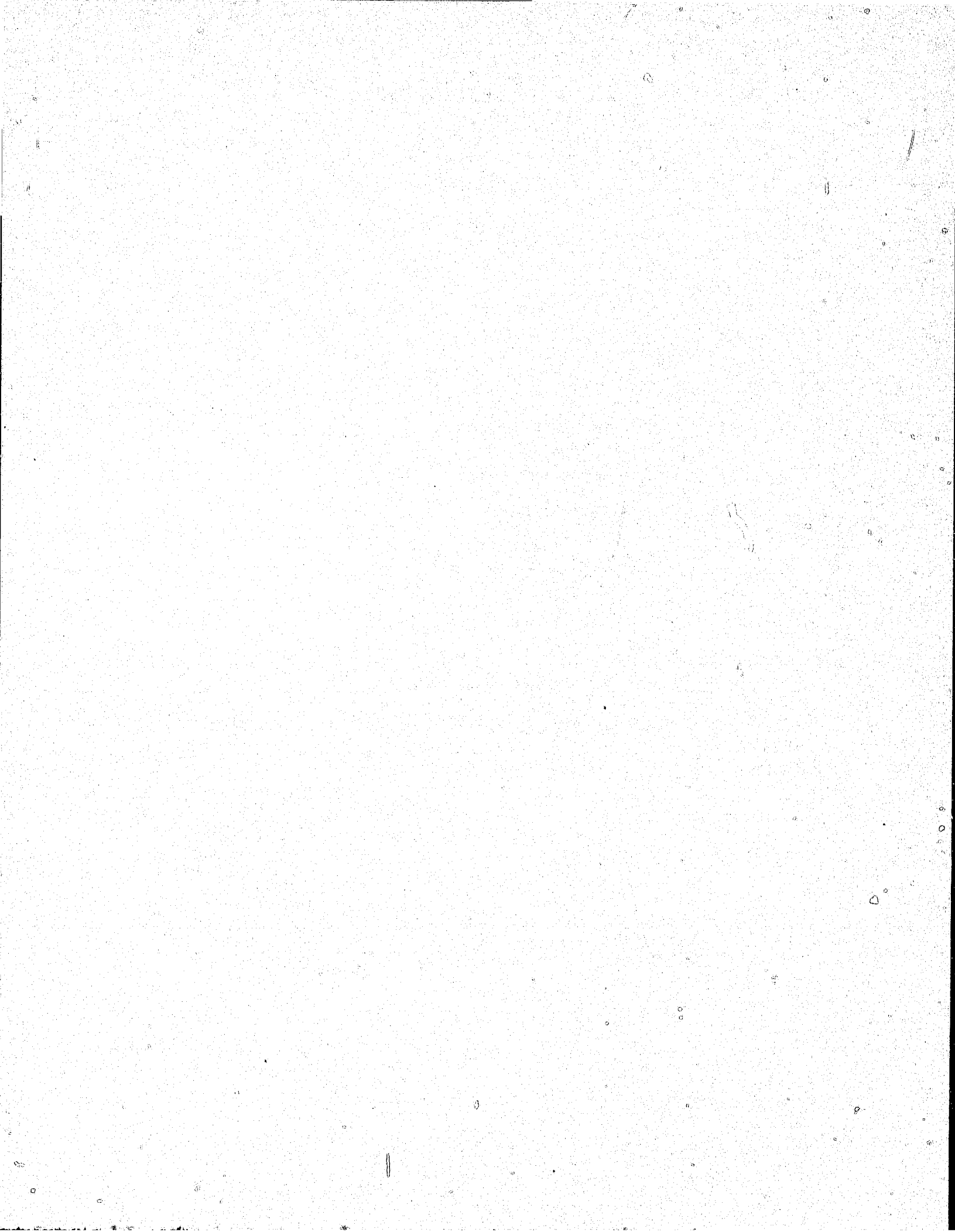
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It matters not whether the drug offenses for which these inmates were convicted represented original charges or the results of plea bargaining. The point is that the laws were evoked to get these heroin users off the streets. These study results can be used to emphasize the need for law enforcement authorities to continually focus their attention on the heroin-using community if serious crime such as robbery is to be reduced.

For those heroin-using individuals involved in illegal activity who will not voluntarily enter a treatment program and terminate their criminal careers, the alternative is to arrest and/or prosecute them on any charge that will stick, including drug possession/use. Once arrested, such individuals can either be diverted to a treatment program pre- or posttrial. For individuals not eligible for diversion or those in communities without diversion programs, drug treatment programs in correctional institutions must be established and strengthened. Nine out of 10 inmates stay in a local jail or other detention facility while awaiting implementation of some phase of the adjudication process. The median amount of time in this type of detention is about 5 months; jails, therefore, would be good locations for drug abuse treatment.

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