PILOT STUDY ON INDIVIDUAL OFFENDERS:

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DATA

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Introduction

This report describes a pilot study made by the Center on the feasibility of collecting complete data on individual offenders' economic alternatives and social histories. Such a data set, with a comprehensive representation of individual offenders' characteristics and decisions, would make possible the analysis of such issues as the question of deterrence, the effect of legal opportunities on criminal activity, and the effect of contact with the criminal justice system on earnings. We also believed that by using data on individuals many of the statistical problems common to empirical work based on aggregate data might be avoided.

Concentrating on records collected by the California criminal justice system, we tried to construct these comprehensive individual histories. Analyzing the forms used by various state agencies for collecting information about individuals, we aimed to design a data collection program that would yield the complete data base. The next sections give, in turn: (1) an overview of the logistics of the data collection, (2) details of sample selection and dealings with state agencies, (3) data collections from county agencies, (4) acquisition of Social Security data, (5) integration and comparison of information gathered from different agencies, (6) confidentiality requirements encountered, (7) a summary of the data, and finally (8) concluding comments on the quality of data likely to be generated in a full scale program.

I. Overview of the Data Collection

Four government agencies provided the data used to construct the 92 offender profiles that constituted our pilot study. We acquired the criminal histories and demographic information from the records of the Bureau of Criminal Statistics (BCS) and/or those of the California Department of Corrections (CDC). The individual's economic and work histories came from the records of both the County of Los Angeles Probation Department (LAPD) and the Social Security Administration (SSA). All the persons described by both the BCS and CDC statistics have been arrested for a felony or felonies in the State of California. The condition that differentiates the two samples is that an offender must have been incarcerated in a California state prison to have his records on file with the CDC, while it is only necessary that he have been arrested for a felony to have a record on file with the BCS. Thus, combining the CDC and BCS records of the individual offenders' criminal activities and demographic information seemed to offer the variety of histories needed to ascertain how contact with the criminal justice system affects legal and illegal activities.

The effect of incarceration on a person's job opportunities cannot be analyzed without a reliable record of his legal earnings. To obtain these records, we requisitioned the files of both the LAPD and the SSA. Local probation department files contain detailed work histories that are used in determining an appropriate sentence after an offender is convicted. For each offender, a presentence report is prepared for the judge's use in considering a sentence. Files are therefore kept even for offenders who do not receive probation. We extracted from these files much of the work history and wage information we used in building our offender profiles, and we supplemented this information with data provided by the

SSA. The SSA maintains, for each social security number, earnings figures by individual in a large variety of occupations for each year, starting with 1951.

In the sections that follow, our interactions with each of the four government agencies (CDC, BCS, LAPD and SSA) are described in detail. The last section lists the safeguards that we used at the Crime Center to protect the anonymity of all offenders included in our studies. We hope that the detailed nature of the subsequent sections will provide direction to researchers who intend to use this data or who are interested in acquiring a data base of comparable specifications.

II. Acquisition of CDC and BCS Data

We accessed both the CDC and the BCS data for the construction of our individual offender profiles through the Research Department of the CDC. The BCS keeps "rap sheets" (see Appendix 1) that list the basic details of each felony arrest in the State of California. The information relating to each arrest included the date, charge, and location of arrest, the arresting enforcement agency, and, for most of the entries, the disposition of the courts on each arrest. The CDC uses the BCS rap sheets to augment its criminal and personal histories of offenders incarcerated in California State Prisons. The CDC, therefore, has access to all BCS records, and so by dealing directly with the CDC we needed only their permission to examine both sets of files. The CDC has well-defined guidelines that researchers must follow to gather data. All requests for access to their records must be approved by two committees at the Department of Corrections: the Departmental Research Advisory Council and the Director's Executive Committee. We requested a sample of data on offenders constructed in the following manner:

A. Cross Section of Criminals Active in the Los Angeles Area

1. A random sample, drawn from BCS files, of 1000 offenders who had been convicted of property offenses in Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Ventura, or Riverside County between 1968 and 1975

2. CDC summary files for offenders who had served time in California State Prisons

B. Cross Section of Criminals Active and Incarcerated in California

1. A random sample of 1000 offenders from CDC files about one-half of whom (including current inmates) had been released from prison in 1970. The rest were then-current (1975) inmates for whom no distinctions were made concerning prior releases.

From criminal histories of these 2000 individuals we drew the 92 descriptions of offenders that are included in our pilot study. Besides meeting the foregoing stipulations, the 92 offenders had also all been arrested for a felony or felonies in Los Angeles County, a condition we imposed in order to match CDC and BCS data with LAPD data. The records of 68 offenders contained CDC files, and those of the other 24 contained only the BCS rap sheets.

The primary data sources on the 92 individuals were kept at the CDC and BCS offices in Sacramento, and as independent researchers we could not view the files without first satisfying extensive confidentiality requirements that stem from the CDC's obligation to keep private the offenders' names and other identifying data. Although the necessary clearance, which is the same as that granted to classified employees of the CDC, is available to independent researchers, we expedited our research by having the profile data collected by someone who was employed by both the Crime Center and the CDC.

To develop the research questions we proposed, however, we also needed earnings records and work histories as well as the criminal activity data. We went to the County of Los Angeles Probation Department and the SSA for this information.

III. Acquisition of Probation Data

Most of the work histories described in our data base came from the LAPD records. As part of each presentence report, local probation department officers compile a detailed work history of each individual convicted of a felony. In deciding on a sentence, the judge considers the nature of the offender's past legal work activities and the income earned. A history of conscientious, constructive work, for example, may qualify the individual for a lighter sentence. The detailed information necessary for the presentence report led us to suspect that the probation records would be complete enough for the application of econometric techniques to analyze offender behavior. Thus we matched up the criminal and demographic histories of the 92 individuals to their LAPD records.

We found several advantages to dealing with the LAPD instead of with other California counties. The LAPD's cooperative working arrangements with CDC made it easier to match the two different government agencies' data. Also, the records of individual offenders kept by the LAPD tend to be fairly comprehensive compared to those kept by other California County Probation Departments. Moreover, Los Angeles County provides a good representation of legal and illegal market conditions.

The probation records were not the only source of accounts of the labor market activities pursued by the individuals in our data base. Although the LAPD

information was the main ingredient in forming the offender profiles, we felt that SSA records of legal earnings would augment the work histories held by the probation departments.

IV. Acquisition of SSA Data

The SSA obtains its earnings data from report forms submitted by employers and self-employed persons. Although the earnings records do not represent all employment, the SSA estimates that about 90 percent of persons in paid employment are covered by its program. The major types of noncovered workers are: (a) most Federal Civilian employees, (b) members of the armed forces (before 1957), (c) employees of state and local governments who have not been covered by a Federal-State agreement, (d) certain employees of exempt nonprofit organizations, (e) farm and domestic wage earners with very low incomes, and (f) self-employed physicians (before 1966). Because of the apparent mobility and lack of continuity of employment of some of the individuals in our offender profiles, we suspected that a number would fall into category (e) and would therefore not be covered. We also surmised, however, that a good number of the individuals in our sample would be employed in categories for which the SSA professes to have excellent coverage. Hence the SSA income accounts seemed likely to be useful in analyzing the labor market activities of the 92 offenders. Therefore, subject to SSA constraints, we obtained the earnings data.

The confidentiality requirements of the SSA allow an individual's economic data to be disclosed only when it is released simultaneously with at least four other persons' data. The SSA also stipulates that the persons in each such group must be characterized by information provided by the researcher and must have earnings distributed over more than one reporting interval (quarter). To meet

these requirements, we divided the 92 offenders among 15 groups by using the following dichotomous classifications: (1) born in 1940 or after, (2) completed 11th grade or better, (3) 3 or more felony incarcerations, and (4) IQ of 95 or higher. Each group contained at least five members.

Cells with the classifications we selected were not only designed to meet SSA standards for the release of group information; they also related directly to our analysis of the legal labor activities of the offenders described in our data base. Again, the four traits were IQ, age, amount of education, and number of incarcerations. The IQ score of an individual is generally regarded as a useful indicator of his worth in the labor market. The education variable is a measure of the effects of efforts to increase the productivity of an individual through investment in human capital; and age, or perhaps more appropriately, vintage, is related to education. Knowing when an offender was educated is useful since education relative to one's cohort as well as one's absolute attainment determines one's attractiveness in the job market. Furthermore, we wanted to determine to what extent incarceration caused loss of human capital; that is, we wanted to appraise an inmate's loss of on-the-job training and of other opportunities that an active member of the work force has. Hence we chose the number of incarcerations as a characteristic upon which to divide the sample. In sum, we chose the variables used to form our groups to be as useful as possible in econometric examination of offender behavior while still meeting the five-to-category constraint.

V. Profile Construction

All relevant historical information from the original files was transcribed onto questionnaires (see Appendix II). This information was subsequently coded in "card" format, with each section of the questionnaire providing data for a specific card that described a similar area of a subject's profile (see Codebook). We displayed the coded data by means of one time-line for each profile. The time-line format made it easier to cross check information from different sources as well as to summarize the data. The sections below describe this process more fully.

A. Structure of the Questionnaire

The information contained in the questionnaire is grouped into seven general categories: "Personal Characteristics," "Family History," "Offense," "Incarceration," "Probation/Parole," "Employment Status," and "Location." It was possible for specific bits of information to appear in files of several or all of the four agencies. When this occurred, descriptions of events gathered from different sources were all entered in the appropriate sections.

The "Personal Characteristics" and "Family History" sections of the questionnaire contained the individual's birth date, military status, intelligence and academic achievement estimates, and other personal data, as well as the arrest records of his family members and his parents' economic situation. The information contained in these two sections of the questionnaire generally came from either the CDC or the LAPD and provided the data for the number "1" card.

The "Offense," "Incarceration," and "Probation/Parole" sections were created to describe in detail the criminal histories of the offenders. The "Offense" section included all the particulars relating to an individual's arrest, as well

as the circumstances -- such as his employment, drug use and family situation -- surrounding the criminal act for which he was arrested. The information in this section was used to complete the "2" cards. In the "Incarceration" section, the source of data for "5" cards, is contained all information pertaining to an offender's rehabilitative activities and prison status (for example, security level of custody, discipline infractions) while he was an inmate in a California State prison. We relied on both CDC and BCS records to complete the "Offence" and "Incarceration" sections. When CDC records of Los Angeles County felonies were sparse or inaccessible, the "Offense" section was completed with information from the probation presentence reports. If an offender was on probation or parole as a result of an offense, his vocational and/or academic training participation, medical records, drug use, economic situation and other demographic details were included in the "Probation/Parole" section of the questionnaire. Naturally, all probation material emanated from LAPD records, and parole statistics came from the CDC's cumulative case summaries. The "Probation/Parole" sections were sources of information for the number "3" and "4" cards, respectively.

Finally, the "Employment" and "Location Status" sections of the questionnaire were created to fully describe the labor market activities of each offender. The "Employment Status" section contains a detailed account of employment and wage data for the individual. This information was transcribed in coded form onto number "6" cards. The "Location Status" section was constructed to document the locale of an offender's work activities and to show residential movements and changes of an offender's living situation. It was the source of information for card "7." All the information included in both the employment and location sec-

tions was provided by the CDC and the LAPD. Finally, card "8" was compiled, listing all felony arrest entries present in the BCS/CDC rap sheet.

B. Rap Sheet Problems

In coding the data for the profiles, we encountered a troublesome feature in the BCS/CDC rap sheets. For dispositional data, the rap sheet sometimes just lists the sentence received by an offender. Convicted offenders, however, are often incarcerated for less time than their full sentence, and the parole or release date of an offender is frequently not recorded. Thus, we often found cases in which an individual who seemed to be serving time for one crime was committing another criminal act on the outside. An example of this kind of situation is shown in Figure 1. The rap sheet indicates that this offender was sentenced to

Figure 1

CRIMINAL RECORD - SUMMARY

Date	Charge	Arresting Agency	Disposition
10-21-68	470 PC (felony)	SO Modesto	3 yrs. probation & 6 mos. co.
12-30-68	Bad checks	PD Manteca	90 day placement in CRC for Dx - discharged 4/69

six months for forgery on October 21, 1968. The rap sheet also shows that he was sentenced for passing bad checks on December 30, 1968 -- about two months later. It is possible that the two entries were for the same offense, and the prisoner was transferred to the California Rehabilitation Center (CRC) in December 1968. It is also possible, however, that there were two separate

arrests and that the individual was paroled or released early for the first offense. Regardless of our conclusion as the origin of the two entries, we had to determine when and whether an individual was incarcerated and if so, exactly when the convict was released, in order to calculate the length of incarceration.

Another illustration of our rap sheet problem is shown on the same BCS Criminal Record Summary. Figure II shows that on August 5, 1970, the offender received two sentences of six months to 14 years and six months to five years for two felonies. There is an entry for two years later, however, showing that the

Figure 2

[illegible]-5-70	poss. deadly weap., poss. narcotics paraphen.	Modesto SO	6 mos - 14 yrs. 1 [illegible] 5 yrs. CC
[illegible]-21-72	crime against child, sex perversion, ADW	Madera SO	dismissed - lack of pros.

same individual was arrested for sex crimes and assault with a deadly weapon. With no further dispositional data, such as a parole or release date, the precise calculation of the length of incarceration for the 1970 offense depends on finding complete location data for the time period in question.

The ambiguities in this situation were numerous but not totally unmanageable. To resolve rap sheet problems of this sort, we first cross-checked personal data from the CDC and LAPD, searching for an account of the offender's time with the aid of employment histories and location information. If CDC and probation information did not reveal an offender's specific location during the time in question, our estimates of length of incarceration could only be imprecise.

In examining uncertain or ambiguous entires, we inspected the number and types of counts prevalent in the earlier offense. If one or more counts were listed in the first arrest description, then two conditions had to hold for two entires to be considered one arrest and/or one incarceration account: (1) one of the counts in the later rap sheet had to be identical to a count in the previous entry, and (2) the second rap sheet entry had to follow the prior report by no more than a few months, and be within the time period covered by the previously indicated sentence. Otherwise, we conjectured that the rap sheet entries represented separate incarcerations. Our system is based on the fact that similar rap sheet entries may represent an inmate's movement to another penal institution. Furthermore, offenders are sometimes convicted for one of several counts, incarcerated, and then later brought to trial on the other counts. We checked for inmate transfers by examining the names and states of the agencies in the "Arresting Agency" column of the rap sheet. If the second department name listed dealt with correction activities, and if condition (2) held, we assumed that the second entry represented an inmate transfer. Using these data derivation guidelines, we resolved all rap sheet perplexities in a consistent manner. After applying our system, we considered the example cited in Figure 1 to be one 6-month incarceration. We surmised that this individual was placed in the CRC as part of his October 1968 sentence. In dealing with incarcerations of uncertain length, such as the one in the 1970 entry, the offender's criminal record and the nature of the current offense determined out assignment. So, the entry highlighted in Figure 2 was assumed to represent 18 months' incarceration for the August 1970 offense. Hence, while BCS/CDC rap sheets were often very ambiguous, we could produce criminal histories.

C. Formatting the Data

After we completed the questionnaires and resolved the rap sheet problems, we found that we needed a way to visualize and examine the extensive data, and also we wanted to facilitate the data processing that would be necessary in formulating our analysis. Furthermore, we were concerned about the consistency and accuracy of a data base acquired from three separate sources, and we wanted to make sure that there were no contradictions in the government agencies' statistical reports that would disrupt our analysis. We wrote a computer program that provided a format for the coded questionnaire data (see Codebook) and made it possible to check the consistency of the data.

The program we designed, named DATA-CHECK (see Appendix III), presented an offender's entire profile in one well-organized table. The table was laid out as a vertical time line with seven columns. All the data from an offender's profile were listed in the appropriate columns. We designated the columns, from left to right on the table, "Criminal Activity," "Punishment," "Personal Traits," "Location," "Expenditures," "Income/Assets," and "Employment/Work History."

In the "Criminal Activity" and "Punishment" columns, we listed the arrest and dispositional information for each criminal incident included in a questionnaire. The "Punishment" column also included parole and custody status specifications. Under "Personal Traits," we described the nature of an offender's drug abuse and any permanently disabling physical handicaps. The "Location" column contained data taken directly from the "Location" section of the questionnaire, and the "Expenditures" column combined information from many sections in order to tabulate an offender's outlays. Some of these expenses were explicit costs, such as rent, and others were costs inferred from factors such as number of de-

pendents and marital status. The "Income/Assets" and "Employment/Work History" columns are self-explanatory.

The information reported by the CDC, BCS and LAPD often overlapped in specific areas. DATA-CHECK was designed to list each agency's version of an event. Thus there often were many entries in the same column supposedly describing the same event. To verify the consistency of the agencies' reporting, we just checked for the parity of the listed versions of an event. In fact we discovered several inconsistencies in the data. We were able to resolve some of the conflicts in the records, but many others were, unfortunately, very troublesome.

D. Contradictions in the Data

Uniform reports of an event by three separate agencies -- the CDC, BCS and LAPD -- would virtually insure a statistic's verity. We often encountered trivial errors or errors made in reporting that were easily corrected. In some cases, though, we found that the combined reports made the precise version of an event quite uncertain. Many of the contradictions were related to a profiles individual's economic status. Figure 3 shows an example of contradictory assets fig-

06/18/65	06/18/65
RENT = $ 70	WAGE RATE UNKNOWN
MARITAL: SEPARATED	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
0 DEPENDENTS	NO ASSETS
RENT = $ 70	WAGE RATE UNKNOWN
MARITAL: SEPARATED	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
0 DEPENDENTS	NO ASSETS
RENT UNKNOWN	ASSETS $1700
MARITAL: SINGLE	
0 DEPENDENTS	

Figure 3

ures. The CDC reports that this offender had no assets on June 18, 1965, while the Parole Board statistics (contained in CDC files) shown directly below those of the CDC, indicate that this individual had $1700. Large discrepancies of this sort often made it impossible for us to ascertain an individual's "Income/ Asset" position. The offender's marital status is also listed differently by the CDC and the LAPD. The CDC shows that the offender is separated, implying expenditures related to support payments, while Parole Lists him as single, which would imply much different expenses and resources. Another illustration of conflicting descriptions of family status is shown in Figure IV. The CDC and BCS state that on June 14, 1968 this individual was single with no dependents. The LAPD, however, indicates simultaneously that the individual was

Figure 4

	06/14/68	06/14/68
CDC/BCS →		
	NOT PAYING RENT	WAGE RATE UNKNOWN
	MARITAL: SINGLE	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
	0 DEPENDENTS	ASSETS CAR ONLY
	NOT PAYING RENT	WAGE RATE UNKNOWN
	MARITAL: SINGLE	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
	0 DEPENDENTS	ASSETS CAR ONLY
	NOT PAYING RENT	WAGE RATE UNKNOWN
	MARITAL: SINGLE	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
	0 DEPENDENTS	ASSETS CAR ONLY
	NOT PAYING RENT	WAGE RATE UNKNOWN
	MARITAL: SINGLE	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
	0 DEPENDENTS	ASSETS CAR ONLY
LAPD →	NOT PAYING RENT	ASSETS CAR ONLY
	MARITAL: MARRIED	
	2 DEPENDENTS	

married with two dependents. The resulting problems in computing an offender's socioeconomic situation are obvious.

Other conflicting reports present similar problems. For example, rent statistics were also muddled. Figure 5 shows that, according to the CDC, this of-

Figure 5

	12/31/64	12/31/64
CDC →	RENT = $ 215	WAGES $ 3.50/HR
	MARITAL: MARRIED	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
	6 DEPENDENTS	ASSETS $ 290.50
	RENT = $ 215	WAGES $ 3.50/HR
	MARITAL: MARRIED	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
	6 DEPENDENTS	ASSETS $ 290.50
	RENT = $ 215	WAGES $ 3.50/HR
	MARITAL: MARRIED	NO OUTSIDE INCOME
LAPD →	6 DEPENDENTS	ASSETS $ 290.50
	RENT = $ 118	ASSETS CAR ONLY
	MARITAL: MARRIED	
	6 DEPENDENTS	

fender was paying a monthly rent of $215 as of December 15, 1964. The LAPD, on the other hand, indicates that this individual paid only $118 rent. Another example of the disparate rent figures is presented in Figure 6. According to the

Figure 6

	12/25/68
CDC →	RENT = $ 40
	MARITAL: SEPARATED
	0 DEPENDENTS
LAPD →	RENT = $ 80
	MARITAL: SEPARATED
	0 DEPENDENTS

CDC, this individual's rent on December 12, 1968, was $40; the LPAD reports that it was $80. Given several such errors in financial reporting, we could not make use of a good portion of the expenditure data.

We also compiled medical statistics on the individuals involved in our study. To check for conflicts in reports from various sources, we listed these data under the "Personal Traits" column of our time line. We found contradictions here, as we had in other areas of the data base. An example is shown in Figure 7, where the CDC indicates that on November 9, 1962, this offender was physically handicapped, not alcoholic and was using schedule I or II drugs. Meanwhile, although the LAPD agrees that the individual was not alcoholic, they relate he had no physical handicaps and committed no (other) chemical abuse. Thus, the two agencies' reports differ in their classifications of the offender's physical status and drug use. The CDC, Parole Board and LAPD were our only sources of offender's medical reports, and

Figure 7

11/09/68	11/09/68	
COMMITTED NEW OFFENSE	PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED	← CDC
	NOT ALCOHOLIC	
	SCHEDULE I OR II DRUGS	
	NO PHYSICAL HANDICAPS	← LAPD
	NOT ALCOHOLIC	
	NO OTHER CHEMICAL ABUSE	

when they conflicted, we were unable to correct them. There are other examples. In Figure 8, we see that the CDC classifies another individual as physically handicapped, while the LAPD contends he has no physical handicaps. These health statistics were important to our study, but the amount of internally inconsistent data makes the prospect of accessing this information not promising.

Figure 8

09/04/72	09/04/72	
COMMITTED NEW OFFENSE	PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED	← CDC
	NOT ALCHOHOLIC	
	NO OTHER CHEMICAL ABUSE	
	NO PHYSICAL HANDICAPS	← PROB
	NOT ALCOHOLIC	
	NO OTHER CHEMICAL ABUSE	

We constructed the 92 offender profiles using our time line as a visualization and diagnostic tool for the data. We were able to resolve many of the inconstencies in the data, such as those contained in the rap sheets, but other contradictions, which were simply conflicts in the versions of events reported by the CDC (and Parole Board), BCS and LAPC, were often irreconcilable. Consistency checks on the SSA earnings records were impossible because of its group format of reporting. Despite the problems generated by the discordant descriptions, we did, nevertheless, clean up and correct much of the data by using DATA-CHECK, thereupon completing the assemblage of offender profiles.

VI. Safeguards of Confidentiality

Throughout the data collection process executed by the staff of the Crime Center, we completely guarded the anonymity of all offenders described in our data base. We never contacted these individuals; all data came from government records. More importantly, the names and/or addresses of individuals included in this study will never be published. General Condition No. 15 of our grant explains our obligation:

> No research data or statistical data which is identifiable to any specific person and which has been furnished to the grantee by any agency or person in conjunction with work performed under this grant shall be used or disclosed for any purpose other than the research project for which it was obtained . . . .

In fact, we hold no records of names, social security numbers or any other information that identifies any of the offenders. Any data that might identify an offender is held at the CDC in Sacramento.

In extracting the data, our research assistant substituted our own ID numbers for all official identification. The list correlating the official identification and our ID numbers is also held at the CDC. We do not have access to this list. In forming a location variable, we instructed our research assistant to replace the addresses of described individuals with the census tract numbers, precluding the possibility of identifying an offender by tracing his movements or finding his residence.

VII. A Note on the Contents of the Data

The data we collected in order to construct the 92 offender profiles covered many facets of each individual's life history. The following sections present some tabulations of the data and assess the completeness of the information in four major areas: (A) Intelligence factors, (B) Crimes, (C) Incarcerations, and (D) Earnings data.

A. Intelligence Factors

The individuals described in our data base had limited formal education. The offenders' median number of grades completed was ten, while the median for a similar age distribution of the U.S. population was 12.86. A frequency distribution of the described individuals' academic achievements is shown in Table I.A. An alternative measure of an individual's academic level of competence is his

Table I.A.

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF OFFENDER DEGREES					
DEGREE	None	High School	College	A.A.	G.E.D.
NUMBER OF OFFENDERS	56	23	0	1	11

tested "grade equivalency." This is estimated from an examination administered by the CDC, and we included their results in our data base. According to the CDC, the average offender in our study possesses the academic capabilities of an eighth grade student. The offenders born before 1940 received lower scores, with an average 7.43 grade equivalency; while those born during or after 1940 had an average score of 8.34.

The most common measure of intellectual capability -- the Intelligence Quotient -- is also included in our profiles. No IQ data were recorded for 26 percent of the offenders; 91 percent of this group were born before 1940. Among individuals for whom IQ figures are available, the average IQ was 97.09. For older offenders, the mean was 96.5; for younger ones, 97.3. Because of the large number of unknown IQ scores for the older group, the significance of these mean IQ figures is difficult to discern.

Table 1, a frequency distribution of IQ scores for all age groups, indicates that 27 of the offenders described in our pilot study had IQs over 100. This group comprises 45 percent for those for whom IQs were recorded, as shown in Table II.

Table I

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF IQS

IQ	0-74	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	96-100	101-105	106-110	111-115	116-120	121-125	Unknown
NUMBER OF OFFENDERS	4	1	3	10	12	10	11	7	5	3	1	24

RELATIVE FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF IQS

IQ	0-80	81-90	91-100	101-110	111-120	121-130	Unknown
RELATIVE FREQUENCY (PERCENT)	5.4	14.3	24.2	19.8	8.8	1.1	26

45%

Table II

B. Data on Crimes

We coded onto number "2" cards (see Codebook) all information held by the CDC (some of it originally from LAPD) concerning the location, wage rate, rent or assets of a profiled offender at the time of his arrest for a felony. All of these items were available for 45 out of 365 CDC detailed crimes, or 12.38 percent. One hundred sixty-four (44.8%) of the "2" cards contained wage information and 119 (32.5%) of the cards showed asset statistics. While the census tract number of an offender's residence was reported on 276 (75.5%) of the "2" cards, rent figures were available for only 81 (22.1%) of the detailed offenses. For a complete distribution of "2" card crime data, see Appendix IV.

All arrest entries found in BCS/CDC rap sheets were coded onto number "8" cards, from which we derived the frequency of crimes against property (burglary, forgery, etc.) and those against persons (assault, murder, etc.) committed by the offenders described in our data base. There are entries for 657 property crimes, or 36 percent of all offenses, and 352 nonproperty crimes, or 20 percent of the total sum. The remaining 44 percent of rap sheet arrest entries were for misdemeanors. The first felony arrests for 68 percent of the involved offenders were for property crimes, while 35 percent started their felony records with nonproperty offenses. The relative frequency for the type of first felony arrests sums to over 100 percent because property and nonproperty offenses are sometimes committed simultaneously. The fact that the mean frequency of property charges for individuals starting with a property crime is 64 percent, while for those starting with a nonproperty crime it is 28 percent, suggests a possible relationship between an offender's first property crime arrest and his later choice to commit criminal acts of the same type. See Appendix V for further descriptions

of criminal history data.

C. Incarcerations

The average individual depicted in our pilot study experienced multiple incarcerations, the mean number of imprisonments for a felony being 3.1. Only three offenders, 3.3% of the sample, were never incarcerated. A distribution of number of incarcerations per offender is shown in Table III.

Table III

FREQUENCY OF INCARCERATIONS PER OFFENDER

NUMBER OF INCARCERATIONS PER OFFENDER	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
FREQUENCY	3	16	21	18	7	8	4	9	2	2	2

From 1951 to 1975 (a period used to place incarcerations within the span of documented SSA earnings data) the profiled individuals spent an average of 4.58 years in jail or prison, or 20 percent of the relevant interval. Some of the individuals, however, were less than eighteen years old during some part of this period. If we do not count those years for those individuals, we find that the offenders have been incarcerated for an average of 28 percent of their adult lives since 1951.

D. Earnings Data

We acquired earnings records from the CDC, LAPD, and the SSA. Only 31 of the 92 profiles contain wage information derived from either the CDC or the LAPD. Sixteen of these profiles contain a sequence in which wage information both before and after arrest is available. Of those 16 profiles, 8 drew all their wage

information from the LAPD files, and 7 drew upon both the probation files and the case summary records of the CDC files only.

Because the SSA only began recording individuals' earnings by year in 1951 (and by quarter in 1953) we have chosen the years 1951 to 1972 as our base period. To calculate the number of quarters during which the involved offenders were able to participate in the work force, we subtracted from the pool all quarters between 1951 and 1975 when the members of a group were either incarcerated or less than 18 years old. Since the SSA releases income data only for groups composed of five or more individuals; our presentation therefore follows this format.

The SSA data shows, overall, reported earnings for 55 percent of the quarters during which the profiled individuals were neither incarcerated nor under 18 years of age. For these quarters, the offenders earned an average quarterly real income of $538.58, adjusted to a 1957 base by means of a Consumer Price Index. More detailed information on the relative frequency of covered quarters and the mean rates of quarterly earnings is contained in Table IV. Because the sample was divided into SSA groups on the basis of such characteristics as age, education, number of incarcerations and IQ, we were able to look for relationships between these characteristics and an offender's earnings.

We held constant the value of the other three dichotomous variables to peruse the effect of a specific parameter's value on offender earnings. We see that all but one of the groups of offenders with corresponding IQs greater than or equal to 95 have higher quarterly earnings than their lower scoring counterparts. Scrutinizing the effect of number of incarcerations on earnings, we see that nearly all of the groups with offenders having less than three incarcerations attained higher covered quarterly earnings than their more often-imprisoned cohorts. The

Table IV

EARNINGS AND COVERAGE DISTRIBUTION BY SSA GROUP

Group*	Quarters Incarcerated 1951-1975	Quarters < 18 Yrs. After 1951	Total # Quarters	# Covered Quarters	Mean Frequency of Covered Qtrs.	Mean Earnings Per Covered Quarter
0000	29	0	460	300	67.5%	$761.21
0010	214	0	460	138	61.0	422.50
0001	82	0	460	254	66.0	801.79
0011	265	64	644	162	52.6	486.56
0101	15	28	368	140	46.2	512.53
0110	66	0	184	59	51.3	389.17
0111	144	0	552	164	43.2	871.69
1000	53	328	552	88	57.0	431.84
1001	0	368	552	92	92.4	569.53
1010	42	232	368	78	82.9	303.87
1011	122	172	368	44	69.7	480.76
1100	74	356	644	169	77.6	737.37
1110	62	208	368	42	48.6	349.99
1111	55	116	368	80	50.0	609.06
1101	47	280	460	107	79.6	348.83

*Value of binary digit changed from "0" to "1" if (1st digit) born in 1940 or after; (2nd digit) completed 11th grade or better; (3rd digit) 3 or more felony incarcerations; (4th digit) IQ of 95 or higher.

education variable showed a mixed relation to an offender's earnings, and implied that the education of the profiled offenders did not markedly increase their legal earning power. Finally, the age parameter pointed to the natural acquisition of human capital by the offenders as they grew older. Each pair of groups with similar values for the IQ, education, and number of incarcerations parameters showed higher mean earnings for the cell describing the older age group. For more detailed information on the earnings per covered quarter for all combinations of parameters, see Table IV.

Summary

This pilot study was conducted to determine if information of sufficient quality and quantity to support empirical work could be obtained on individuals' criminal and life histories compiled from California state criminal justice sources. It was determined relatively early in this endeavor that the individuals' economic activities were at best poorly rendered in the criminal justice records. Alternative sources of this information, such as the Social Security Administration, were explored and assessed. The confidentiality requirements of the SSA greatly limit the usefulness of this information by making it available only on groups of individuals. These conditions partially vitiate the advantages of dealing with observations on individuals.

The criminal justice system representatives we contacted were quite cooperative, and the records their organizations were, in theory, required to keep appeared comprehensive. The actual coverage, however, was sparse, and occasionally the records of different sources were contradictory. These deficiencies forced us to conclude that the full scale implementation of this data collection program would only generate a data base that would be both expensive and inadequate for our purposes. It might be possible to generate the desired data base by combining official records with self reports, but, considerations of the reliability of such a liaison aside, the logistics of such an effort were beyond the scope of our research program.

In a companion technical report we attempt to use data from this pilot study to shed light on some of the interactions between individuals and the criminal justice system. The limited nature of the analysis undertaken in that report is due largely to the quality of data generated by the pilot study rather than the quantity.