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A STUDY OF 1975 and 1976

REGULAR PAROLEES:

CHARACTERISTICS AND PAROLE SUCCESS

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This study is designed to present a great deal of factual information about persons released through regular parole procedures. There are three aspects to the study. First the study describes what parolees are like, both in terms of personal and criminal characteristics. Second, this study explores rather extensively how parolees perform while on parole. Finally, this study will suggest those variables which are most closely associated with parole success or failure.

The design of the study is fairly simple. A twenty percent sample of all regular parolees released during 1975 and 1976 was selected for the study. To guarantee a distribution from each of the several types of parole release, every fifth release was taken from each type of case, that is, every fifth person paroled at first hearing was selected for the study, then every fifth person paroled at a continued hearing, and so on. For the two year period, 1,490 persons were selected for the study, a very large sample which should produce very reliable statistics. Persons were taken from all institutions and from the categories of shock parole release, first hearing, continued hearing, and special review.

Parole release is also possible through successful completion of the furlough program. Data was available on all furlough to parole releasees for this two year period. Information is included on that whole population, not a 20 percent sample, in this study to complete the picture of all parolees.

The information below is presented in three parts. The first part describes parolees. Information is first presented on personal characteristics: sex, ethnicity, county of commitment, age at admission and release, marital and employment status at arrest, and claimed highest grade completed. Then follows criminal history characteristics: nature of crime of commitment, prior felony convictions, prior imprisonments, juvenile criminal history, prior supervision violations, history of drug abuse and alcohol abuse.

The second section of the report describes how the parolees in the study did on parole for both one year and by the completion of parole. The material in these first two sections is almost exclusively descriptive in nature.

The third section attempts to answer the question "What variables are most closely associated with success or failure on parole?" This information can be used by the Parole Board in a prescriptive manner if they choose. It will suggest those variables which would most effectively separate those likely to succeed on parole from those most likely to fail.

It should be noted that, in general, variables related to parole success and failure are already intuitively known and used by Board members. Further, in making parole decisions appropriateness of punishment is probably more important to the Board than is a rather crude prediction of who might or might not succeed on parole. This priority seems appropriate. Nonetheless, an empirical evaluation of these variables may still be of some use to the Board and others in the agency.

General Comments

Each of the first 16 tables is broken down by type of parole release. The five categories used are shock parole release, first hearing release, continued hearing release, special review release, and release through furlough to parole procedures. The first four of the five groups represent a 20 percent sample of persons released through that type of hearing during 1975-6, while the figures for furlough to parole represent 100 percent of persons in that category. This manner of presentation is selected because, for most variables, there are noticeable differences between the five groups. The differences suggest clear, but informal, Board policies which should be outlined.

Rather than hinting time after time at the general pattern that will emerge through the tables below, the presentation can be shortened if general comments are made first.

Then tables which support, or vary from, that general pattern will be noted during the discussion.

In general, the Board has manifested a clear sorting process whereby the better the parole risk, the earlier that person is likely to be released. This is most clear with regard to criminal history variables. There are no clear patterns with personal variables, except where those personal variables correlate with criminal history variables. The merit of this pattern is demonstrated in Tables 18-21, where recidivism rates clearly vary by the type of release received. (It should be noted that the prior statement assumes that longer periods of incarceration are not the primary cause of recidivism.)

A comment on the data and tables is appropriate at this time. In Tables 1-5 there are 1,490 parolees and 340 furloughees for each table. In Table 6 and in some subsequent tables, there are fewer persons in both categories. This reflects the fact that not all information was available for every variable and every person. Where information is not available in regard to particular person and variable, that person is not included in developing the table. Thus for Table 6, for example, at the time of arrest, employment status for 51 parolees and for 19 successful furloughees was unknown.

Description of the Parole Population -- Personal Characteristics

Table 1 represents a distribution by sex for parolees in 1975-6. Overall, just over five percent of the parolee population was female, and a slightly higher proportion of successful furloughees. Examining the statistics of sex and release by type of hearing, clearly women were more likely to be released at early hearings than were males. This seems to be related to the less severe prior criminal histories that is typical of the female inmate.

TABLE 1

Nature of Parole Release and Sex for 1490 Parolees and for All 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Sex of Offenders	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Male	155	657	558	39	1409	318
%	91.7	93.2	96.9	97.5	94.6	93.5
Female	14	48	18	1	81	22
%	8.3	6.8	3.1	2.5	5.4	6.5
TOTAL	169	705	576	40	1490	340

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

In Table 2 we see that 45.7 percent of regular parolees in 1975-6 were black, while a larger proportion of successful furloughees were black. As with sex, there are clear racial differentiations between the groups, with black less likely to be released at early hearings than at later hearings. The explanation for this pattern is related to Table 3.

TOTAL 2

Nature of Parole Release and Ethnic Background for 1490 Parolees and for All 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Ethnic Background	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
White %	115 68.0	392 55.7	267 46.4	19 47.5	793 53.2	156 45.9
Black %	53 31.4	303 42.9	305 52.8	21 52.5	681 45.7	182 53.5
Spanish-Surnamed %	1 0.6	10 1.4	5 0.9	-- --	16 1.1	2 0.6
TOTAL	169	705	576	40	1490	340

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

In Table 3 we see that 58.1 percent of the parole release population for 1975-6 is from the largest urban counties in Ohio. However, only 43.8 percent of the shock parole releasees and 56.9 percent of the first hearing releasees are from the six largest counties, a pattern similar to black percentages. A deeper exploration of the data indicates that the basis for both patterns relates to sentencing policies in the various counties of the state. Rural counties, mostly white in ethnic composition, tend to sentence offenders to the institution for felonies and records which would receive probation in the largest urban counties, counties which have much higher black populations. Thus blacks, mostly from urban settings, arrive at prison with more extensive criminal histories, on the average, than whites. These more extended criminal histories appear to be the basis of discrimination, not ethnic background or county per se.

TABLE 3

Nature of Parole Release and Some Counties of Commitment
for 1490 Parolees and for All 340 Persons Released Furlough
to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Type County	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Six Largest ** Urban Counties %	74 43.8	401 56.9	362 62.8	29 72.5	866 58.1	195 57.3
Other 82 Counties %	95 54.2	304 33.1	214 37.2	11 27.5	624 41.9	145 42.7
TOTAL	169	705	576	40	1490	340

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

** Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Montgomery and Summit Counties.

The average age at admission to prison for the current offense, shown in Table 4, is about 26.5 years for all regular releasees, while the furlough age is about the same. Median age at admittance is 23.8 and 24.2 years for the two groups respectively. With the exception of the shock parolee group, each of whom is committed to an Ohio prison for the first time, there really is little variation between the commitment ages of the other groups.

TABLE 4 Nature of Parole Release and Age at Admission to the Institution for 1488 Parolees and for All 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Age at Admission (in years)	Nature of Parole Release					
	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Mean	23.5	26.7	27.1	26.2	26.5	25.9
Median	21.8	24.0	24.1	24.6	23.8	24.2

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Age at release from prison figures (Table 5) reflect the impact of the age on entry to prison and the length of time spent in prison. Thus, while all ages except for the shock parolees were about the same at entry into prison, at release the ages differ by the length of time spent in prison. Median age figures show the pattern most clearly.

Just under a third of the regular parolees were employed full-time at the point of arrest (Table 6). There are two variations. One group, the special review parolees, had an employment rate below the rest. This may reflect a lower degree of social adjustment, or may simply be an atypical result of the small size of the group. The other variation is more interesting. Among the persons released to parole from furlough, almost half had a full-time job at time of arrest, suggesting that this group was better adjusted to society than the rest of the parole population.

TABLE 5

Nature of Parole Release and Age of Release from the Institution for 1488 Parolees and for All 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Age at Release (in years)	Nature of Parole Release					
	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Mean	24.3	28.4	29.7	28.9	28.5	27.7
Median	22.6	25.9	26.2	27.9	25.9	25.9

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

TABLE 6

Nature of Parole Release and Employment Status at Arrest for 1439 Parolees and for all 321 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Employment Status at Arrest	Nature of Parole Release					
	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Full-Time %	54 32.9	225 33.4	184 32.8	9 23.1	472 32.8	151 47.0
Part-Time %	6 3.7	18 2.7	21 3.7	28 71.8	45 3.1	7 2.2
Unemployed %	98 59.8	424 62.8	350 62.4	-- --	900 62.5	160 49.8
Student %	-- --	6 0.9	4 0.7	2 5.1	17 1.2	3 0.9
Disabled %	1 0.6	2 0.3	2 0.4	-- --	5 0.3	-- --
TOTAL	164	675	561	39	1439	321

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Table 7 describes the marital background of the parole population. Slightly over half the regular parole population has never been married and about a quarter were married at the time of arrest. Slightly fewer of the furlough to parole population were single and slightly more were married.

TABLE 7

Nature of Parole Release and Marital Status at Arrest for 1489 Parolees and for all 339 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Marital Status at Arrest	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Single %	98 58.0	357 50.6	318 55.3	18 45.0	791 53.1	156 46.0
Married %	41 24.3	183 26.0	129 22.4	13 32.5	366 24.6	104 30.7
Divorced %	19 11.2	90 12.8	64 11.1	4 10.0	177 11.9	48 14.2
Widowed %	1 0.6	11 1.6	10 1.7	-- --	22 1.5	5 1.5
Separated %	9 5.3	36 5.1	27 4.7	4 10.0	76 5.1	18 5.3
Common-Law %	1 0.6	28 4.0	27 4.7	1 2.5	57 3.8	8 2.4
TOTAL	169	705	575	40	1489	339

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

In regard to education (Table 8), the typical parolee has 10 years of education. There is very little variation between parole categories.

TABLE 8 Nature of Parole Release and Claimed Highest Grade Completed for 1484 Parolees and for all 339 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976.*

Nature of Parole Release

Claimed Highest Grade Completed	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Less than 8 %	9 5.4	57 8.1	51 8.9	3 7.5	120 8.1	14 4.1
8 %	25 14.9	106 15.1	91 15.9	5 12.5	227 15.3	39 11.5
9 %	28 16.7	147 20.9	97 16.9	5 12.5	227 18.7	49 14.4
10 %	41 24.4	133 18.9	126 22.0	5 12.5	305 20.6	61 17.9
11 %	28 16.7	92 13.1	88 15.3	10 25.0	218 14.8	51 15.0
12 %	33 19.6	150 21.4	107 18.6	8 20.0	298 20.1	109 32.2
More than 12 %	4 2.4	17 2.4	14 2.4	4 10.0	39 2.6	17 5.0
TOTAL	168	702	574	40	1484	339
Median	10	10	10	11	10	11
Mean	10.0	9.8	9.7	10.3	9.8	10.2

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Description of the Parole Population -- Criminal Histories

Tables 9 and 10 describe the commitment offense of the parole population under study. Table 9 categorizes the crime by the degree of felony and Table 10 divides the crimes into those of violent or property character. By degree of felony, 46.3 percent of the regular parolee population during 1975-6 had only a fourth degree felony. Second most frequent were those sentenced to a second degree felony as their most serious commitment offense, 19.2 percent of the group, followed closely by those with a first degree offense, 19.0 percent. The successful furlougee population contained a disproportionate number of first degree felonies, with a corresponding reduction of those with no more than a fourth degree felony conviction offense. It appears there is no clear relationship between felony level and the type of hearing for release.

However, when the character of the crime (Table 10) is examined instead of the felony level, a relationship between severity of offense and type of release is clear and striking. While only a quarter of the shock parolees have a violent crime of commitment, the proportion increases steadily until the special review category, where 45 percent of the cases were committed for a violent crime. Forty percent of the successful furlougees had violent crimes, higher than all but the special review group of regular parolees. Clearly the Board lays great stress on whether the crime of commitment was violent in nature.

Table 11 summarizes the relationship between type of release and prior adult felony record. There is a clear increase from shock parole to special review in the proportion of persons with prior felonies and in the average number of felonies. The mean number of prior felonies increases from .155 to .793. The mean for the furlough to parole population is midway between the value for shock parolees and those released at first hearing.

TABLE 9

Nature of Parole Release and Degree of Most Serious Commitment Offense for 1490 Parolees and for all 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Degree of Most Serious Commitment Offense	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Murder %	--	17 2.4	5 0.9	1 2.5	23 1.5	13 3.8
First %	24 14.2	128 18.2	118 20.5	12 30.0	283 19.0	94 27.6
Second %	47 27.8	116 16.5	114 19.8	9 22.5	286 19.2	69 20.3
Third %	6 3.6	28 4.0	29 5.0	2 5.0	65 4.4	5 1.5
Fourth %	74 43.8	337 47.8	268 46.5	11 27.5	690 46.3	119 35.0
Drugs %	15 8.9	69 9.8	37 6.4	5 12.5	126 8.5	34 10.0
Other %	3 1.8	10 1.4	5 0.9	-- --	18 1.2	6 1.8
TOTAL	169	705	576	40	1490	340

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

TABLE 10

Nature of Parole Release and Nature of Commitment Offense for 1490 Parolees and for all 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Violent or Property Commitment Offense?	Nature of Parole Release					
	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Violent %	44 26.0	214 30.4	193 33.5	18 .45.0	469 31.5	139 40.9
Property %	125 74.0	491 69.8	383 66.5	22 55.0	1021 68.5	201 59.1
TOTAL	169	705	576	40	1490	340

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releases and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

TABLE 11

Nature of Parole Release and Number of Prior Adult Felony Convictions for 1487 Parolees and for all 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Number of Prior Adult Felony Convictions	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
None	146	400	306	24	876	228
%	86.9	56.7	53.3	60.0	58.9	67.1
1	19	203	160	7	390	85
%	11.3	28.8	27.9	17.5	26.2	25.0
2	2	67	60	7	136	21
%	1.2	9.5	10.5	17.5	9.1	6.2
3	1	20	27	1	49	5
%	0.6	2.8	4.7	2.5	3.3	1.5
4	--	6	13	1	20	1
%	--	0.9	2.3	2.5	1.3	0.3
5 or more	--	9	8	--	17	--
%	--	1.2	1.3	--	1.2	--
TOTAL	168	705	574	40	1487	340
Mean	.155	.670	.700	.793	.660	.429

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

A related variable is number of prior adult felony incarcerations (Table 12). Here, as is required by statute, none of the shock parolees had a prior Ohio incarceration. Three had been incarcerated in other states. The mean number of prior incarcerations for shock parolees was .030, while the mean for first, continued, and special review groups were .496, .614, and .600 respectively. For successful furloughees the mean number of prior incarcerations was .218. Seven of ten regular parolees and eight of ten successful furloughees had never been in prison before the instant commitment.

Another variable for which great variation can be noted is the existence of a juvenile criminal history in the offender's record. While that record is sometimes not known, of those records that are available, the existence of such a juvenile criminal history is closely linked with a longer stay in prison. (This information was unknown for 319 regular parolees and for 93 furlough to parole releasees.) Only 61.5 percent of the shock parolees had a juvenile criminal history, while 85.3 percent of the special review releasees had a juvenile criminal history. For the furlough to parole population, 70.9 percent were known to have juvenile records, approximately midway between the shock parolees and those released at first hearing, the two best groups of regular parolees.

Table 14 summarizes the offenders by whether they had ever violated probation or parole. Because of the legal requirements of eligibility for shock parole, shock parolees rarely have prior felony records. Thus, as this study indicates, shock parolees rarely have prior supervision violations. Beyond that, persons released at first hearing are somewhat less likely to have violations than the other two groups of parolees. Successful furloughees have the same proportion of those with prior violations as those released at first hearing. Overall, almost two-fifths the parolee population has previously been declared a parole or probation violator.

TABLE 12

Nature of Parole Release and Number of Prior Adult Incarcerations for 1488 Parolees and for all 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976.*

Nature of Parole Release

Number of Prior Adult Incarcerations	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
None	165	492	374	26	1058	273
%	98.2	69.8	65.0	65.0	71.1	80.3
1	2	134	119	7	262	62
%	1.2	19.0	20.7	17.5	17.6	18.2
2	--	50	42	6	98	4
%	--	7.1	7.3	15.0	6.6	1.2
3	1	15	19	1	36	--
%	0.6	2.1	3.3	2.5	2.4	--
4	--	5	13	--	18	1
%	--	0.7	2.3	--	1.2	0.3
5 or more	--	9	8	--	17	--
%	--	1.3	1.4	--	1.2	--
TOTAL	168	705	575	40	1488	340
Mean	.030	.496	.614	.600	.492	.218

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

TABLE 13

Nature of Parole Release and Juvenile Criminal Activity for 1171 Parolees and for all 247 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Juvenile Criminal Record	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Record Noted %	80 61.5	408 76.4	386 81.6	29 85.3	903 77.1	175 70.9
Investigation Specifies No Record %	50 38.5	126 23.6	87 18.4	5 14.7	268 22.9	72 29.1
TOTAL	130	534	473	34	1171	247

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

TABLE 14

Nature of Parole Release and Record of Supervision Violations for
1488 Parolees and for 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole
1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Ever been Probation/ Parole Violator?	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Yes %	30 17.9	257 36.4	281 48.9	18 45.0	586 39.4	124 36.5
No or None Recorded %	138 82.1	448 63.6	294 51.0	22 55.0	902 60.6	216 63.5
TOTAL	168	705	575	40	1488	340

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Table 15 and Table 16 deal with drug and alcohol abuse and the nature of parole release. There does not appear to be as clear a relationship between substance abuse and parole board policies as was the case with other variables. As concerns drug abuse, special review cases, furlough to parole cases, and shock parole cases have the highest proportions of drug abusers in descending order. Overall, about two-fifths of parolees have drug abuse backgrounds.

TABLE 15

Nature of Parole Release and Record of Drug Abuse for 1488 Parolees and for all 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Prior Drug Abuse?	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Yes %	69 41.1	277 39.3	208 36.2	22 55.0	576 38.7	157 46.2
No or None Known %	99 58.9	428 60.7	367 63.8	18 45.0	912 61.3	183 53.8
TOTAL	168	705	575	40	1488	340

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Table 16 represents the relationship between a history of alcohol abuse and parole release policy. Here there is a slightly more obvious relationship between time spent in prison and alcohol abuse. Those with alcoholic pasts seem less likely to secure an early release. Overall, about one-third of regular parolees have a recorded alcohol abuse history. Slightly fewer of the persons released furlough to parole had a similar history.

TABLE 16

Nature of Parole Release and Record of Alcohol Abuse for 1488 Parolees and for all 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Prior Alcohol Abuse	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Yes	41	243	212	11	507	106
%	24.4	34.5	36.9	27.5	34.1	31.2
No or None Known	127	462	363	29	981	234
%	75.6	65.5	63.1	72.5	65.9	68.8
TOTAL	168	705	575	40	1488	340

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Summary and Analysis of Descriptive Variables

As expected, the data indicates that the Parole Board focuses on certain pieces of information about each inmate in making decisions to parole. Key variables on which the Board seems to vary its decisions are, first, the nature of the event, whether violent or not, second, juvenile criminality, third, prior supervision violations, and fourth, prior felonies and imprisonments. Three variables -- sex, ethnic background, county of commitment -- also show variations in Board decisions. However, these three variables are significantly associated with the variables listed above; the correlation with key criminal history variables seems to explain most of the variation in regard to the three demographic variables.

Other variables investigated seem to have no or less relationship with Board decisions to continue imprisonment or parole. These variables include age at admission, employment and marital status at the time of the crime, and claimed highest grade of education completed. Other variables in the study which have no or only a slight relationship to parole decisions are the felony degree of the instant offense and whether the individual has a drug use history. Use of alcohol has a slightly greater, although not strong, association with parole decisions.

In analysis then, it appears clear that a sorting process takes place in Parole Board decision-making. While, of course, there are exceptions to the pattern, in general those persons with the worst criminal histories appear likely to be denied at early opportunities for parole. As a result, those persons who are released after a longer time in prison (or after more hearings) usually have worse criminal histories than those released earlier in the process or after less time in prison.

Since poor criminal histories are related to a likelihood of parole failure, then it can be expected that those groups of persons paroled after only a short time in prison will do better on parole than those who are denied at early hearings, and thus spend longer periods in prison. The information below addresses that issue.

Time in Prison

While it is obvious that persons who are shock paroled generally spend less time in prison than those receiving release at first hearing (and similarly for release at first, continued, and special review hearings), there has been no indication of the extent of the variations. Table 17 indicates the degree of variation. Shock parolees are paroled after an average of .89 years, those released at first hearing after 1.72 years, and those at continued hearings after 2.95 years; those released through special review were paroled after 2.68 years. The average for all regular parolees was 2.13 years. Medians in all categories are lower, but the pattern is the same. For those released furlough to parole, both the average and median were similar to the figures for those paroled at first hearing. Given this table and the data in Tables 1-16 above, it can be demonstrated that in general there is a correlation between time served in prison and the number and extent of negative criminal indicators in an inmate's record.

TABLE 17 Nature of Parole Release and Time Served for 1490 Parolees and for all 340 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Prison Time Served (in years)	Nature of Parole Release					
	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Mean	.89	1.72	2.95	2.68	2.13	1.78
Median	.58	1.17	1.92	2.00	1.42	1.25

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Performance on Parole

We examine below four measures of behavior for parolees as indicators of performance. The first and probably the most important is a measure of what occurs during the first year of parole. It is important because the length of time measured is the same for each individual and because the focus of the measure is on a return to criminal activity. A second similar measure considers criminal activity, but uses final release or return to prison as completion of the interval of study. Thus the same scale of crime is used, but a longer period of time is used, one of irregular length. Two less broad measures are also examined, the first a measure of those declared at-large or noted in parole reports as "whereabouts unknown". The second measure is the length of time till commission of a new felony for those convicted of such a crime while on parole

Table 18 displays the status of the parole population after one year on parole. Examining the totals for the 20 percent sample from 1975-6 regular parolees, 53.1 percent had no record of any further criminal activity. A total of 14.9 percent had been returned to prison, ten percent for new felonies and 3.9 percent for technical violations. Six and one half percent were declared at-large and 6.2 percent were awaiting trial.

The furlough population from the two years has a better record than do regular parolees. Many more, 71.1 percent, had no recorded criminal activity. Only 10.8 percent had been returned to prison. While 6.3 percent were awaiting trial, only 1.2 percent were at-large.

The results confirm that the sorting process which the Parole Board decision procedures represent has a reasonable basis. Clearly those who are denied at earlier hearings and retained in the institution until later hearings do less well than those released early. Examining the category for "never arrested", there is a steady, although small, drop as one looks first at shock releases, then first hearing releases, and so on. Examining the total for the two categories representing returns to prison, the rate for shock parolees is 10.8 percent, the rate for first hearing releases is 14.3 percent, the rate for those released at continued hearings is 20.0 percent, and the rate for those released at special review is 16.5 percent. The proportion of those at-large follows the same pattern. There is no pattern among the groups in regard to cases awaiting trial.

TABLE 18 Nature of Parole Release and Parole Performance at the End of One Year for 1485 Parolees and for All 336 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Parole Performance Through the First Year	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
No Arrests %	100 59.5	376 53.5	21 52.5	292 50.9	789 53.1	239 71.1
Arrested, Not Convicted %	17 10.1	55 7.8	3 7.5	40 7.0	116 7.8	13 3.9
Convicted, New Misdemeanor %	14 8.3	59 8.4	4 10.0	52 9.1	129 8.7	19 5.7
New Felony, Not Returned %	3 1.8	11 1.6	-- --	8 1.4	22 1.5	2 0.6
New Felony, Returned %	9 5.4	63 9.0	4 10.0	72 12.5	148 10.0	21 6.3
Technical Violator Returned %	9 5.4	37 5.3	4 10.0	23 4.0	73 4.9	15 4.5
Parole Violator-at-Large %	6 3.6	47 6.7	3 7.5	40 7.0	96 6.5	4 1.2
Arrested, Case Pending %	8 4.8	49 7.0	1 2.5	34 5.9	92 6.2	21 6.3
Other %	2 1.2	6 0.9	-- --	13 2.3	21 1.4	2 0.6
TOTAL	168	703	40	574	1485	336

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Table 19 represents criminal activity during the complete parole. The percentages are computed only on the basis of those who did complete parole, either successfully or with failure. Examining the totals for the whole regular parole sample, we see that just over one half had no criminal involvement. Slightly over a quarter, 27.0 percent, were returned to prison, 19.1 percent for a new felony and 7.9 percent for a technical violation. As should be expected, persons who are at-large or have a case pending have not completed parole (Two persons did have an expiration of sentence while a case was pending.).

Furlougees again did better than the regular parole sample. A total of 71.7 percent had no criminal activity recorded, and only 17.0 percent were returned. Of these, 9.6 percent were for a new felony and 7.4 percent were for technical violations.

When the results are examined by type of release, the general pattern seen in the one year follow-up is even more obvious. Those released at earlier hearings do better on parole than those released at later hearings. The trend is only slight in the "no arrests" category, but quite strong in the two categories of return to prison: shock parole -- 20.5 percent, first hearing -- 26.3 percent, continued hearing -- 29.4 percent, special review -- 31.6 percent. Those released at continued or special review hearings are about one and a half times as likely to return to prison by the end of parole as are shock parolees.

The two remaining tables cover only particular items in regard to parole. Table 20 summarizes the number of persons who were declared "at-large" during parole or had a parole officer report noting that the parolee's whereabouts were unknown. Of the regular parolees, 16.4 percent absconded sometime during parole (using the loose definition above). Only 10.4 percent of the furlough to parole people had done so. After the successful furlougees, shock parolees did the best in this regard, with only 12.2 percent listed as absconders. With each level of hearing there is a slight increase in the number of absconders.

TABLE 19

Nature of Parole Release and Parole Performance at End of Parole for 1369 Parolees and for All 311 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Nature of Parole Release

Parole Performance at End of Parole

	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
No Arrests %	97 60.2	346 54.1	277 52.2	21 55.3	741 54.1	223 71.7
Arrested, Not Convicted %	12 7.5	42 6.6	36 6.8	2 5.3	92 6.7	12 3.9
Convicted, New Misdemeanor %	14 8.7	64 10.0	42 7.9	3 7.9	123 9.0	20 6.4
New Felony, Not Returned %	2 1.2	11 1.7	5 0.9	-- --	18 1.3	1 0.3
New Felony, Returned %	21 13.0	111 17.4	123 23.2	6 15.8	261 19.1	30 9.6
Technical Violator, Returned %	12 7.5	57 8.9	33 6.2	6 15.8	108 7.9	23 7.4
Parole Violator-at-Large %	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --
Arrested, Case Pending %	-- --	2 0.3	-- --	-- --	2 0.1	-- --
Other %	3 1.9	6 0.9	15 2.8	-- --	24 1.8	2 0.6
TOTAL	161	639	531	38	1369	311

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releasees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included, nor are persons not yet completed with parole.

TABLE 20

Nature of Parole Release and Record of Absconding During Parole for 1414 Parolees and for all 315 Persons Released Furlough to Parole During 1975-1976*

Was Parolee Ever listed as "whereabouts unknown" or declared "at large"	Nature of Parole Release					
	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Yes %	20 12.2	111 16.8	94 17.1	7 17.1	232 16.4	34 10.8
No, or None Known %	144 87.8	549 83.2	457 82.9	32 82.1	1182 83.6	281 89.2
TOTAL	164	660	551	39	1414	315

* This represents a 20% sample of all regular parole releases and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Table 21 refers only to persons convicted of a new felony while on parole. The hypothesis is that the longer a parolee goes without committing a crime, the better the adjustment. This table summarizes the length of time till the new crime was committed. Overall, the regular parolees averaged three quarters of a year before the crime. Shock parolees averaged .89 years, first hearing releasees .77 years, continued hearing releasees .71 years, and special review releasees only .57 years. Furlough to parole releasees averaged .70 years.

The pattern using median times till failure is approximately the same. Shock parolees had a .67 year median and the median decreases until .50 years for special review cases. Median values differ from mean values in regard to the furlough to parole population, which has the longest median time till failure, slightly longer than the shock parolees and first hearing releasees.

TABLE 21 Nature of Parole Release and Time Till New Felony for 256 Regular Parole Failures and for 29 Persons Failing Parole after Successfully Completing Furlough, for those Paroled During 1975-1976*

Time Served Till Final Release (in years)	Nature of Parole Release					
	Shock	First	Continued	Special Review	Total Regular	Furlough to Parole
Mean	.89	.77	.71	.57	.75	.70
Median	.67	.67	.58	.50	.58	.72

* This represents the failures in a 20% sample of all regular parolees and all persons paroled from furlough status. Furlough failures are not included.

Summary and Comments

This report has two purposes. The first is simply to describe the parole population in some depth, allowing the reader to consider how we might be able to work with this group. The second purpose is to show the extensive sorting process that the Parole Board carries out, selecting for parole offenders with the lowest likelihood of a return to crime at earliest hearings and those with a moderate likelihood of a return to crime shortly thereafter. In general those with a high likelihood of failure are released to late hearings.

Those patterns have been amply supported, both in terms of characteristics and in terms of parole outcome. In terms of several criminal history characteristics, persons released at early hearings, shock and first hearings for example, have much better criminal histories than those released at later hearings. Personal characteristics do not seem to be related to release at the several hearing levels, except where those characteristics are related to criminal history.

In terms of outcome, several measures indicate that those released at early hearings do much better than those released at later hearings. This is expected since, as we saw above, hearings are associated with particular levels of criminal histories.

The analysis is complete except for a third part which will be added within the next month. In this third section the Administration and Research Section will suggest what criminal or personal characteristics might reasonably be emphasized in considering parole release at the several levels of regular parole. This additional section may assist the Board (or, more realistically, confirm present intuitive judgements) in selecting those factors which should be scrutinized most closely in making parole decisions.

END