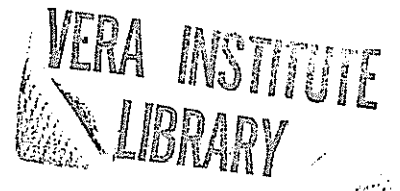


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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUTH CRIME AND EMPLOYMENT  
----an assessment of impact

by

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October 1981

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUTH CRIME AND EMPLOYMENT  
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This report examines the significance of unemployment to youth crime. While not concentrating on the empirical basis of the relationship, the report presents and assesses the often divergent perspectives and resulting programs and policies dealing with the complex problems of youth unemployment and youth crime. The primary objective of the report is to assess the major issues, problems, and needs of youth with regard to employment and societal efforts to deal with escalating rates of both youth crime and youth unemployment. Programmatic strategies of government and the private sector are presented and discussed against the backdrop of multiple perspectives and a limited state of knowledge in order to better orient the reader toward an appreciation of the complexities of the relationship between youth criminal behavior and unemployment in general, and specifically in relation to developing programs and strategies which would assist in reversing the spiraling rates of youth unemployment and crime.<sup>1</sup>

The Unemployment-Crime Relationship

One of the major impediments to research on the relationship of unemployment to youth crime is the difficulty in obtaining an adequate representation of youth crime. A predominant cause of this inadequacy is due to the wide disparity in the

<sup>1</sup>For the purposes of this report, the youth offender is defined in the age range of 16 through 19 years.

use of the label, since definitions of youth crime (including juvenile delinquency) and their application vary widely. In spite of this methodological limitation, a number of researchers have attempted to examine the relationship of youth crime and unemployment. The following is a summary of research and findings in this area:

\*Using time series arrest data for Boston, Cincinnati, and Chicago, Belton Fleisher found that the evidence suggests a rather important relationship between unemployment and delinquency, which is only slightly more so for older youths. Fleisher estimates from the combined data that a 1 percent increase in the unemployment rate is associated, on the average, with an approximate .15 percent increase in the rate of delinquency arrest data (Fleisher, p.83).

\*In an international study of the relationship of unemployment to crime and delinquency, Marcia Guttentag found juvenile crime to be related to industrialization and economic affluence, with noted exceptions in Switzerland, Canada, and Belgium. Accordingly, she states that, "When we turn to the evidence of the relationship between juvenile crime and male unemployment rates, the picture is unclear; studies lead to contradictory conclusions." She particularly points to the multiple sources of error in the statistics, the fact that many behaviors which are considered delinquency in the U.S. would not be crimes if committed by adults, such as truancy, running away, or, in the case of girls, precocious sexual behavior. (This double standard for youth is not found in most European countries.) Guttentag's review finds that "there is a considerable amount of data which appears to substantiate each divergent view" as to whether "high delinquency rates result from the limited opportunities, the frustration and despair of poverty, or...follow in the wake of industrialization, economic well-being and high employment" (Guttentag, pp.106-107).

\*Guttentag cites the study by Bogen using Los Angeles Juvenile Court statistics from 1925 to 1941 in which he found a decline in boys' delinquency rates which coincided with a decline in business activity (Bogen).

- \*A study by Porterfield using cross sectional data found an immense relationship between economic well-being and the juvenile crime rate. In the final analysis of the data, however, the conclusion was that social disorganization--not economic well being--was the crucial variable in the juvenile crime rate (Porterfield).
- \*A related study is that of Lander in Baltimore who hypothesized that the delinquency rate was not a matter of the economics of an area, but rather was a function of its anomie character. Using 1940 census tract data, Lander's hypothesis was confirmed: Delinquency was fundamentally related only to anomie and not to the socioeconomic conditions of the area. A study by Bordua in 1959 is reported by Guttentag to have reached a similar conclusion (Lander; Bordua).
- \*A recent study by Phillips, Voey, and Maxwell concluded that "economic opportunity is a key factor in generating youthful crime and that, properly weighted, participation rates may be a better measure of economic opportunity than simply unemployment rates." They found that in distinguishing between youth in the labor force and those not, the "latter group appears the most criminal." (Causal relationships are difficult to infer from these findings. Could one as well say that those who commit crimes also do not work or look for work as frequently as those who do not commit crimes?) (Phillips, Voey, and Maxwell).
- \*Using 1960 census tract data for Detroit (a cross sectional study) Larry Singell finds no statistically significant relationships between unemployment and juvenile delinquency ("contacts" with the Youth Bureau of the Detroit Police Department) after controlling for differences among tracts in socioeconomic class.
- \*Singell also analyzes time series data for Detroit from 1950 to 1961, using police contacts and employment service estimates of city unemployment. While Singell estimates that a cut of 1 percent in the rate of unemployment would lead to a drop in delinquency rates of from one-fourth to one-sixth of 1 percent, the estimates are based on correlations which yielded  $r^2$  in one case of only 4 percent and the other only 8 percent, which is a slight shared variance (Singell).

\*Danser and Laub in a recent study of juvenile criminal behavior and its relation to economic conditions using offending data from the National Crime Survey for the 1973 to 1978 period interpreted their data as not having demonstrated an important relationship between the economic conditions (unemployment, Consumer Price Index, and Gross National Product) and overall rates of offending (Danser and Laub).

\*Orsagh reached a similar conclusion to the above study in concluding that "unemployment may affect the crime rate; but even if it does, its general effect is too slight to be measured. Therefore, the proper inference is that the effect of unemployment on crime rates is minimal at best (Orsagh).

These studies indicate that unemployment, either after controlling for socioeconomic class and anomie, bore no relationship, or that youth crime moved opposite to unemployment, advancing in good times and receding in bad. Some found youth criminal behavior rising with increased unemployment, although the degree of correlation was reported to be quite weak. None of the studies have a reliable measure of youth criminal behavior, and most seem based on arrests or "police contacts." Where relationships are demonstrated, none are terribly convincing in terms of the degree of association between youth crime and some index of opportunity. Some are straight statistical exercises and some attempt theoretical explanations. Practically all wish they had better data (for example, the Singell study preferred youth unemployment data but it was not available for Detroit; the "police contacts" data is recognized as weak, and Singell states that "anywhere from 10 to 50 percent of those contacts may not lead to legal action").

The problems with utilizing these studies for policy development are many (Tropp, pp.24-27). Consider the following interpretation problems of data on the delinquency and employment relationship:

\*The "collinearity" problem--in many cases it is likely that delinquency and unemployment are both effects of a third factor or accumulation of numerous factors, rather than one being cause and the other effect.

\*The similarity problem--unemployment may be an effect as well as a cause of delinquency. Both factors may simultaneously determine one another.

\*The subject nature of the effects of unemployment--the impact of unemployment on youth behavior will vary as to the interpretation given the unemployment by the youth. For some youths, being unemployed and out of school may have a dramatic impact on their self image and levels of frustration. For other youth, the period of unemployment may be perceived as temporary and natural.

\*Aggregate unemployment data may mask differences among individuals--it is dangerous to try to draw conclusions or determine strategies for individuals from aggregate data. Vast differences between unemployed youth are often hidden by summary data or data which reports only selected variables.

\*Unemployment rates may be an artifact of reporting systems--large number of unemployed youth are not actually in the labor force, therefore not identified as "unemployed" by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Levitan, pp.22-23). In addition, youth crime rates are also effected by police and court actions.

Therefore, unemployment and youth crime studies have not been able to provide reliable and useable data for policy-makers. As stated by Tropp, "The bottom line seems to be that on balance, the evidence does not support the conclusion that unemployment is either robustly correlated with, or a major cause of, either property crime or violent crime, by either juveniles or adults, either at the point of first offense or

after release from incarceration" (Tropp, p.27). The best that can be said at this time is that although youth criminal behavior and unemployment may not be causally related or correlated, unemployment is among the many factors which, in combination, increase the likelihood of delinquency. It may not in many cases be a sufficient factor leading directly to criminal behavior. On the other hand, providing a meaningful opportunity for employment may resolve problems which either singularly or in combination lead to youth crime.

#### Theoretical Linkage Between Youth Crime and Unemployment

In spite of the lack of any empirical evidence supporting the linkage between unemployment and youth crime, theoretical support for the proposition linking increased job opportunity to reduced crime is found within both sociology and economics. While the general features of this support are similar, among sociologists greater emphasis is placed on future career opportunities as contrasted to present payoffs (Piliavin and Gartner).

Activities encompassed by the label "youth employment" may address a range of possible variables in crime causation as shown below:

\*Youth crime may result from economic necessity. Employment can provide economic resources which preclude the need to resort to economically motivated crimes.

\*Youth crime may result from unoccupied free time. Employment can fill youths' time with nondelinquent activities as an alternative to delinquent activities.

\*Youth crime may result when youth are precluded from roles which they perceive as useful or worthwhile. Employment can provide an opportunity to be involved in legitimate roles or activities which youth perceive as personally gratifying in that they are sufficiently valuable or important to justify the time and effort they require, and allow youth to perceive themselves as either useful, successful, or competent.

\*Youth crime may result when youth are inadequately attached or bonded to conforming members of society. Employment can increase interaction, attachments and involvement between youth and nondelinquent others as well as the influence which nondelinquent others have on potentially delinquent youth.

\*Youth crime may result when youth lack the skills necessary to live in society. Employment can provide such skills.

\*Youth crime may result when young people perceive they lack power or control over factors in their environments which affect them. Employment can provide an opportunity for youth to influence their environments.

#### Employment Status of Youth Offenders

Statistical data on the employment status of youth offenders is becoming more available. Some highlights of the data will be discussed. One study compares the employment status of youth (adjudicated delinquents) admitted to the California Youth Authority. Data from this study indicated that persons committed to the Youth Authority for the first time in 1977 were less likely to be employed than were youth in general. Only 19.4 percent of those committed were working at the time of the commission of the offense which lead them to the Youth Authority, and 44.2 percent were unemployed. This compares to 37.4 percent working and 19.4 percent unemployed in the general population of youth between the



age of 16 to 19. An even smaller percentage of juveniles processed by the juvenile courts in Nebraska and Tennessee were employed than was the case in California (Smith, Black, Campbell, and Rooney).

Unfortunately, very few longitudinal studies trace the relationship between delinquency and employment and relate these aspects of life to schooling, which is often seen as a key part of the solution to delinquency and unemployment. One longitudinal study that does address these issues is the Marion County (Oregon) Youth Study begun in 1964 and completed in 1978 (Oregon, Marion County). This study followed youth for 14 years and maintained records on a very large percentage of these youth over the 14 year period. This study examined different routes youth took from adolescence through their third decade of life. At the beginning of the study when students were sophmores, they were classified according to various characteristics. One discrimination made was in delinquency status. Three groups of youth were identified: (a) those who never had been involved with juvenile authorities; (b) those who were not seriously involved in delinquent behavior (status offenses and minor youth crimes); and (c) serious delinquents (persons with more than one offense, at least one of which was a serious crime against persons or property). Five hundred forty-two (542) juveniles were followed for the 14 year period (239 nondelinquents, 258 non-serious delinquents, and 45 serious delinquents). It was

found that delinquent and nondelinquent juveniles typically followed different routes during the years in which they completed high school and established themselves in the work world. The typical pattern of the serious delinquent was to leave school (without necessarily graduating), go to work, enter military service early (the Viet Nam war was in its period of escalation), or re-establish himself in the work world. There were two divergent variations on this pattern. Almost 10 percent of the serious delinquents returned to school in their mid-twenties. In addition, slightly more than 10 percent were neither going to school, working, or serving in the military services (a good portion of these were imprisoned). Youth who had not been delinquent had a much different pattern in their post high school years. The typical nondelinquent either went immediately to college or went into the military and then returned to the work world. As they neared the age of 30, almost three-fourths of the nondelinquents were established in work, compared to slightly more than of the serious delinquents. For the final interview, 29 percent of the serious delinquents were not available, as compared to slightly more than 15 percent of the nondelinquents. The non-serious delinquent typical pattern was mixed somewhat, resembling the nondelinquent and serious delinquent regarding college, work, and military choices. The differences between the groups could not have been accounted for by chance.

The kinds of work experience of serious delinquents differed from the nondelinquent. Ten years after the study, the delinquent was much more likely to be unemployed than the nondelinquent or the non-serious delinquent. The delinquent was less likely to be an executive, professional or administrator than was the non-serious delinquent or the non-delinquent. Conversely, the serious delinquent, after 10 years, was more likely to be an unskilled laborer or a machine operator than was the nondelinquent or non-serious delinquent.

In this study, delinquency is not only found to be related to future employment, but also to future involvements with crime. Only 13.3 percent of persons with serious delinquency backgrounds committed no adult crime compared to 46.3 percent of the non-serious delinquents and 71.6 percent of the nondelinquents.

It appears reasonable to conclude that youth offenders constitute one of the most marginal elements of the youth employment pool. According to Conyers:

\*They are unstable employee prospects; once employed they have difficulty conforming to an employer's standards.

\* Employment for many juveniles has minimal economic advantage, since most are provided for under categorical aid programs (i. e., Aid to Families with Dependent Children): as delinquents their support may be assured under many delinquency programs designed to provide for their care and continuation in school or vocational training, halfway houses, foster homes, etc.

\*Employment does not preclude the juvenile from continuing delinquent conduct.

\*Poor employment experience compounds the social alienation of the juvenile involved making future satisfactory employment less likely to result (Conyers, p.677).

### Youth Employment Initiatives On a Broad Scale

Public Sector Involvement--Federal policy has mandated a number of public sector programs designed to cope with the employment needs of disadvantaged youth. These include the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Project (YIEPP), the Youth Employment and Training Program (YETP), the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), the Youth Community Conservation and Improvement Project (YCCIP), the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC), and the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC). The objectives of these programs include provision of meaningful work, training in marketable skills, and the development of good work habits and job finding skills. To the extent that public sector programs meet these objectives they should hold promise for delinquency prevention and rehabilitation. A thorough assessment of the relative success of each program in this regard is impossible because these programs have not been assessed for their impact on youth crime. However, some general comments can be made.

The intent of the 1977 legislation establishing the Youth Employment and Training Demonstration Programs is clearly stated:

"It is explicitly not the purpose of this part to provide make work opportunities for unemployed youth; instead, it is the purpose to provide youth, and particularly economically disadvantaged youth, with opportunities to learn and earn that will lead to meaningful employment or self employment opportunities after they have completed the program."

However, the actual implementation of these programs appears likely to have attained income maintenance goals more likely to effect youth crime. Apparent problems include:

- \*Competing regulations and guidelines which as currently implemented do not maximize (a) meaningful work experience for youth; (b) adequate skills training for participants; (c) adequate support services to ensure that enrollees' work experiences enhance commitments to conventional lines of action; and (d) adequate attention to issues of career planning and long term employment prospects for enrollees.
- \*Inability of public and private non-for-profit organizations to provide enough meaningful work opportunities for the large numbers of youth to be served.
- \*Enrollment quotas which may add youth who are unprepared for work roles to the work force and lead to poor work experiences which may increase, rather than decrease, youth crime.
- \*Duplication and overlap of programs resulting in possible enrollee confusion and cynicism and increased administrative and accounting expenditures by local programs.
- \*Lack of attention to youth crime prevention/rehabilitation effects of programs in evaluation, research and knowledge development efforts (Hawkins, Lishner, and Wall).

Private Sector Involvement--In recent years, the potential of the private sector for youth employment has been increasingly explored for numerous reasons:

- \*Most jobs are in the private sector, thus, private sector work experiences may offer greater opportunities for long term employment than public sector placements.

- \*Involving the private sector can minimize government bureaucracy and costs at a time when taxpayers are unhappy about expanding government programs.
- \*Private sector jobs may avoid the stigma associated with public sector employment programs.
- \*Private sector job development can broaden the range of conventional jobs and ties available to youth. Additionally, private sector jobs are more likely to avoid segregation of disadvantaged youths from peers and society and allow both disadvantaged and delinquent youth to associate with conventional peers and adults.
- \*Private sector involvement is a way to engage private business in helping to solve the problems of unemployment and, ultimately, the problem of youth crime.

Until 1977 private sector involvement was largely limited to pre-employment and job readiness training programs, on-the-job training, and vocational exploration in the private arena. However, the provisions of the Youth Employment and Training Demonstration Act of 1977 placed a new emphasis on involvement. The legislation allowed broad subsidization of enrollee work experience in the private sector in the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects and provided for the development of demonstration projects relevant to private sector participation. Subsequently, CETA Title VII, the Private Sector Initiative Program, a \$400 million effort to provide private sector employment to the economically disadvantaged was launched.

Several programs which are currently focusing on private sector employment for low-income youth are discussed here to indicate the range of initiatives in this area:

1. Corporation for Public/Private Ventures is a non-profit intermediary organization engaged in planning, guidance and testing of youth employment strategies and approaches to increase private sector opportunities for youth. CPPV attempts to merge private and public sectors to address unemployment by supporting efforts to (a) restructure private sector entry level jobs to provide access, job development, placement, follow-up, counseling, and related education; (b) use local business intermediary units to reduce costs to firms and eliminate red tape involved when private sector businesses deal directly with government agencies; (c) create small youth business ventures combining modest subsidy with training and employment; and (d) direct incentives to employers to hire disadvantaged youth.

2. Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Project--local program agents participating in YJEDP are allowed to partially or wholly subsidize private sector work experiences of enrollees at the prevailing entry level wage.

3. Urban Youth Action Incorporation is a self help organization created in 1966 to help young people work constructively toward solving community problems by facilitating entry into unsubsidized on-site occupational training and training in private for-profit enterprises.

4. Project 70001 is a national consortium of 55 chapters in 21 states focused on providing services to unemployed

high school dropouts by using the participation of business people on its board and staff to encourage local corporations and national/regional chains to generate job openings for youth.

While private sector involvement in youth employment may hold potential for youth crime prevention and rehabilitation, a number of limitations must be noted:

- \*The difficulty in making it advantageous to private businesses to hire delinquent or pre-delinquent youth with limited skills. (The problem of creaming is particularly serious in private sector efforts).
- \*Limitations on the total number of youth the private sector can actually employ.
- \*Problems in motivating youth to retain entry level jobs available in the private sector long enough to move into more satisfying career ladder positions.
- \*Business skepticism regarding public employment programs and bureaucratic reporting and accounting requirements in public programs.
- \*Lack of attention to youth crime effects of private sector youth employment programs in evaluation, research, and knowledge development efforts (Hawkins, Lishner, and Wall).

#### Results of Employment and Training Programs

It is not possible to summarize adequately the substance and results of the numerous and varied employment and training that have been aimed at individuals who have been involved in delinquent or criminal behavior. Some of these programs involve vocational training, others entail job placement, still others provide jobs.

A summary evaluation of the effectiveness of employment



and training programs for youth offenders is hampered by the presence of multiple, often conflicting and frequently vaguely defined goals; by the complexity of the research task and the inadequacy or inapplicability of available research methodology; and by the common tendency to inaugurate and to continue or discontinue programs on the basis of their congruence with a current wave of popular intent, and the presence or absence of charismatic leadership, rather than on a basis of empirical measurement of outcome. Thus, formal, data based evaluations are rare and often produce equivocal results. However, from the relatively few evaluative efforts to date, some generalizations can be suggested: Overall, the results of these efforts have not been positive.

Romig reviewed twelve studies involving over 3300 youths in vocational training and work programs. He concluded that vocational training, work programs, and job placement are not effective in and of themselves to rehabilitate juvenile delinquents. Teaching job advancement skills, providing support learning skills, providing educational programs that culminate in G.E.D. or diploma, furnishing follow-up help, and involving the youths in systematic career decision-making were recommended as means to decrease delinquent behavior (Romig, pp.43-56).

Project Develop was a two year program in New York that

provided a variety of supportive services along with job placement to a select group of young parolees. While an early evaluation of the Project found some evidence of reduced recidivism and fewer parole violations, a latter review suggested such results washed out when more accurate control group comparisons are made (Jaggart, 1972).

Beginning with the assumption that ex-offenders' employment problems may be due in part to unacceptable job behavior, Operation Pathfinder attempted to improve employment experiences of parolees by placing them in jobs where supervisors were trained in social reinforcement techniques. Comparison of experimentals with controls (who had been placed in jobs, but received no special supervisor reinforcement) showed that special attention by supervisors did relate to improved employment rates and job tenure (Cook).

Project Wildcat offered supported work employment to a group of ex-drug addicts in New York City and then followed a sample of them and a randomly selected control for three years. Results during the first two years after enrollment indicated that experimentals were employed for a longer period of time, earned more money, returned to crime at a lower rate, and stabilized their lifestyles more often through the establishment of social relationships and living arrangements. However, many of the earlier positive program effects on earnings and welfare dependence diminished

steadily over the program's three years, and there were no significant impacts on drug and alcohol use even in the early stages of Wildcat. Regarding criminal activity, the early reduction in arrests experienced by experimentals had reversed by the end of the program; during the third year, experimentals were significantly more likely to be employed than controls, but were also more likely to be arrested, suggesting a complex relationship between employment and criminal activity (Vera Institute of Justice).

The National Supported Work Demonstration was designed to pick up and elaborate on the positive aspects of Wildcat, such as thorough program monitoring, a strong emphasis on employment socialization through graduated stress and peer support, and substantial job activities. The NSW was a multi-site program designed to test the effects of a structured work experience on four groups of individuals with severe employment disabilities, one of which were young school dropouts, many with criminal records. Participants in the program could earn entry level wages, as well as bonuses for good performance and attendance; at the end of a fixed period of time they were required to leave the program, whether or not they had obtained a regular job. Supported work was primarily distinguished from other employment and training programs by its emphasis on three programmatic techniques designed to make participants comfortable with the world of

work: peer group support, graduated stress, and close supervision. By supplying 12 to 18 months of stable employment and income to these individuals, and by gradually increasing performance and productivity standards on the job, supported work offered many participants their first real opportunity to develop two assets that would have assisted them in entering the regular labor market: good work habits and a history of stable employment.

The experimental nature of the demonstration project (a random control design was utilized) allowed for a direct examination of in-program employment rate of young dropouts substantially. The program's effect on employment remained positive and statistically significant over the entire 12 month in-program period. However, beyond the 12 month in-program period, there were no statistically significant differences in employment, hours worked per month, or earnings per month between youth in the experimental group and youth in the control group. The demonstration's effect on drug use was generally insignificant, even during the program period. Nor did statistically significant effects on criminal activity emerge over the 18 month period after program entry. However, a crime reducing impact did show when researchers examined a subsample's experiences 27 months after the start of the program. Based on these data, one could conclude that Supported Work had a statistically

significant effect in reducing arrests and incarcerations. The size of the reductions ranged from 25 to 33 percent. Yet, the analysis of effects on crime is difficult, in large part because of the problems of collecting reliable data on criminal behavior, but also because the study relied on self reported criminal activity (Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation).

Project R.E.A.L. was a two year employment and training program which provide intensive case management, individualized in-house educational assistance, and job development, preparation and placement to youth offenders with two or more criminal arrests. Although an earlier evaluation of the project found some evidence of reduced recidivism and successful employment placement, a latter review indicated that success was more an artifact of statistical record-keeping and weak research methodology. The reduction of criminal activity was easily explained by historical events that operated during the period of the program, by maturation which is that delinquency is largely a developmental phenomenon, increasing in the early phases of adolescence and falling off thereafter, and/or by the regression artifact which indicates an natural drop from an abnormally high state of affairs. Furthermore, a review of the rate of employment placement indicated that only 10-14 percent of the enrollees were placed in unsubsidized jobs, most of which temporary in nature. Discrepancies were easily explained

by 'weak' statistical and management record-keeping (Pabon).

Project New Pride is based in a private non-profit organization and receives client referrals only from the juvenile court. The project targets the "hard-core" delinquent as defined by prior arrests and the severity of the offenses. The program is comprehensive, providing medical and psychological diagnosis, educational assistance (educational testing, remedial work, counseling and guidance), personal counseling, cultural education, recreation, client advocacy, and employment services consisting of counseling, training, and job placement.

Performance of the program was most significant in the reduced rate of rearrest of the New Pride clients compared to the prior baseline experience of the juvenile probation service with like cases. Data on employment performance was not impressive, and was less so for the second year client as compared to the first year clients. That 70 percent were placed in full or part time employment may be significant; however, 44 percent held such employment for 60 days or less, while only 35 percent held their jobs for more than 65 days (27 percent were never employed). (U.S. Department of Justice, 1977).

#### Concluding Remarks

This report examines the significance of unemployment to youth crime. A summary review of research and findings as to the relationship of youth crime and unemployment

indicates no clear causal or correlative relationship. The best that can be said is that, while youth crime and unemployment may not be causally related or correlated, unemployment is among the many factors which, in combination, increase the likelihood of delinquency or youth crime. Furthermore, in spite of the lack of any empirical data supporting the linkage, theoretical support for the proposition linking increased job opportunities to reduced criminal behavior is found within both sociology and economics. It appears reasonable to argue that youth offenders represent one of the most marginal elements of the youth employment pool, and prime candidates for youth employment and training programs.

Numerous and varied employment and training programs have been aimed at individuals who have been involved in delinquent or criminal behavior. Some of these programs involve vocational training, others provide job counseling and placement, and still others provide work experiences. Assessment of program effectiveness has proven historically elusive. Definitive research or evaluation findings result from carefully controlled studies that attend to several critical design considerations: specification of theory and assumption, appropriate treatment and measurement that operationalize theory, research design and sampling that minimize spurious effects or confounding variables, and

analytic methods of sufficient power and sensitivity to measure incremental as well as major effects. Numerous "evaluations or evaluations" have cited weak methodology, inappropriate measures, poor analytic approach, or biased interpretation of data as causes for skepticism about claims of program effectiveness. This lack of definitive data on program effectiveness appears to be the state-of-the-art whether one reviews employment and training programs for youth offenders or such programs for disadvantaged youth in general. Borus, in his study of a number of program evaluations states that "There is surprising little evidence on the relative merits of different types of training programs. Much of what is available is, in the opinion of this author, fallacious" (Borus, p.31).

Whatever extent youth employment is related to delinquency, and to whatever extent adjudicated offenders have a high and prolonged rate of unemployment, the "solution," in many cases, may not be the immediate provision of actual employment or even training for employment. The real need may be to continue in school supplemented by participation in the secondary labor market.

The continue in school approach has two major target areas:

\*Improve the schools: The secondary school systems, particularly those in the ghetto areas of large urban areas, may need to extensively be overhauled if not replaced with a more effective administration and teaching curriculum to meet the current educational



vocational needs of underprivileged children. It is a reasonable national objective to keep all children in school and out of the job marketplace until they achieve sufficient maturity and educational achievement to compete in the labor market. Arthur Pearl and Frank Reissman describe a need and methodology for preparing disadvantaged youth to compete adequately for the technical jobs of the post industrial age (Pearl and Reissman).

\*Help the parents: It is primarily an economic need that compels many juveniles to leave school. Whether their family structure consists of one or two parents, very often the school dropout has one or both parents unemployed; often siblings are unemployed or marginally employed. In these cases, the school dropout may be coping with his or her immediate reality: the need for money. In such circumstances, the best social policy would be to facilitate the employment of the parents, thereby eliminating much of the need for employment of the youth.

The transition from school to work is not as easy process for any young person. The labor market experiences immediately after leaving school may have important impacts on the long range success of young people. While most youth encounter obstacles to entering employment after leaving school, disadvantaged youth are more likely to be seriously affected. A commonly recognized set of problems encountered by disadvantaged youth during this process include: a lack of basic education and vocational skills for jobs currently in demand; inadequate employment history; the perception by employers of a lack of proper work attitudes and motivation; an absence of clear cut career plans and goals; and little knowledge of how to look for jobs.

As such, any "solution" must include the availability

of opportunities in the secondary labor market. This market is made up of the occasional jobs that youth in school need: part time work before or after school and on weekends. Some of these jobs have dried up as a result of increases in the minimum wage laws (Williams, p.10), and others have been taken by older persons from the increasingly larger pool of unemployed. At the same time, some of these jobs have become unprofitable to the small businessman, apartment house owner, and such, who must absorb the effects of inflation by eschewing some of the services they were formerly able to purchase at the nominal costs of casual, teenager labor. Governmental efforts to offer financial incentives to such employers could assist with this problem.

The potential positive impact of such a school-work approach is suggested by early results of the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects, the nation's first guaranteed jobs program. The program enrolled economically disadvantaged youths, aged 16 to 19, provided that they attend or would enroll full time in either a high school or GED program, and offered them a part time job at the minimum wage during the school year and a full time job over the summer. Once admitted into the program, a participant had to maintain satisfactory school and work attendance and had to adhere to performance standards on the job.

Early results appear to show quite clearly that the program had a considerable positive effect on the education

and employment rates of disadvantaged youths. School enrollment rates for the most "hard core" group, those who were neither in school nor employed prior to the program, rose 70.7 percent due to the program. Employment-wise, 48.3 percent of the youths were employed at least part of the time, in contrast to estimates that only 25.4 percent would have been employed if the program did not exist. The largest program effect appears to be for those youth not employed prior to the program (Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation).

There are numerous perspectives on youth unemployment and youth crime, each with their underlying assumptions, theory, and limited empirical evidence. In spite of their similarities or differences, it appears quite evident that singular efforts to combat youth unemployment or crime will be largely futile. The problems of unemployment and crime are complex, requiring massive efforts to deal with related underlying social problems; however, it appears evident that although empirical research cannot clearly define the relationship between youth crime and unemployment, efforts to deal with one problem must include the other. Effective strategies and programs which deal with crime or unemployment must also consider major social, cultural, and political developments. Considering the complexity of these social problems, remedies or interventions would probably be

effective for only a segment of the total youth population. Therefore, innovations and experiments should be tried along with analytic evaluations to provide information regarding what works, for whom, under what circumstances, and why or why not.

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