

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
A HISTORY OF NARCOTIC ARRESTS AND  
INSTITUTIONAL BEHAVIOR

Massachusetts Department of Correction

John A. Gavin  
Commissioner

Researcher:

Lygere Panagopoulos  
Research Analyst  
Division of Legal Medicine

July, 1968

Data collection for this  
study was done by Edward  
Callahan and Michael Kelly

Acting Social Science Research Specialist

Francis J. Carney

## INTRODUCTION

The goal of this study is to examine the present policy of not transferring to Norfolk any inmate with a history of narcotic arrests. This policy is apparently based on the assumption that this type of inmate is likely to get involved in disciplinary problems, particularly those concerning drugs. The aim of this study is to test this assumption by comparing a sample of Walpole inmates with a history of narcotic arrests to a Walpole sample without Narcotic arrests and to a Norfolk sample. A major focus of the study will be on institutional behavior.

## METHOD

The Sample. Three samples were used in this study. The Drug group included all those released from Walpole in 1960 who had a record of narcotic arrests (N=27). The Walpole Non-Drug group (N=39) and the Norfolk group (N=37) were random samples selected from all inmates released in 1960 who had no record of narcotic arrests.

Data Collection. Data for this study were collected entirely from the records of the inmates. The variables analyzed fell under three general categories:

(A) Background Factors, (B) Criminal History, and (C) Institutional Data.

Appendix A gives a breakdown of the factors under each category.

## FINDINGS

A. Background Factors: Under "Background Factors" the Walpole Drug group was not significantly different from the Walpole Non-Drug group or the Norfolk group on Marital Status (A, 3), Service Discharge (A, 4), Occupational Status (Hamburger Code) (A, 6), or Stability of Employment (A, 7). It is interesting to note that significant differences between the Walpole Drug group and the other two samples were found on Age at Commitment (A, 1), Race (A, 2), and Education (A, 5). The Walpole Drug group was older, had a higher proportion of Negroes, and had a higher level of education than both other samples.

B. Criminal History: Under "Criminal History" the Walpole Drug group and the Walpole Non-Drug group were similar on Age at First Arrest (B, 1), Number of Prior Arrests (B, 3), Prior Felonies vs. Person (B, 5), vs. Sex (B, 6), vs. Property (B, 7), Number of State of Federal Incarcerations (B, 8), and Number of H. of C. Incarcerations (B, 9). In comparing the Walpole Drug and Walpole Non-Drug groups on Number of Prior Arrests for Drunkenness it was found that the Walpole Drug group had significantly fewer arrests. As indicated in Table B, 4, only 14.8% of the Walpole Drug group, compared to 41.0% of the Walpole Non-Drug group, had prior drunkenness arrests. It was also found that there was a significant difference in regard to Number of Juvenile Incarcerations between the two Walpole groups. Table B, 10 indicates that only 22.2% of the Walpole Drug group, compared to 48.7% of the Walpole Non-Drug group, had prior drunkenness arrests. The Walpole Drug and Norfolk groups were similar on all variables under "Criminal History" except number of prior arrests for drunkenness. The Norfolk group had significantly more (37.8%) arrests than the Walpole Drug group (14.8%).

C. Institutional Data: Particularly relevant to the policy of excluding from transfer consideration those who have histories of narcotic arrests is the issue of institutional behavior. One factor that was used to measure this dimension was number of disciplinary reports. A significantly lower proportion of the Walpole Drug group (18.5%) had 1 or more disciplinary reports as compared to the Walpole Non-Drug group (59.0%). The Walpole Drug group did not differ from the Norfolk group on this factor.

Since the Walpole Drug group did not differ significantly from the Walpole Non-Drug group or Norfolk on actual length of incarceration (C, 11), the difference in number of disciplinary reports (Walpole Drug group vs. Walpole Non-Drug group), as well as the similarity in number of disciplinary reports (Walpole Drug group vs. Norfolk group), is not confounded by significant differences in the length of time incarcerated.

The data on types of disciplinary reports are interesting (C, 7). None of the infractions of the Walpole Drug group were for aggressive or destructive behavior. In comparison, the disciplinary reports for this kind of behavior represented 17.6% of the Walpole Non-Drug group and 40.0% of the Norfolk group. Further, the Walpole Drug group had no infractions for contraband-drug or being under the influence, while 14.7% of the Walpole Non-Drug and 10.0% of the Norfolk infractions were in these categories. As Table C, 7 indicates, the Disciplinary reports of the Walpole Drug group were either for disobedience or contraband-non-drug. With respect to the outcome of the disciplinary reports, only 1 (3.7%) of the Walpole Drug group spent time in isolation compared to 11 (28.2%) of the Walpole Non-Drug group and 3 (8.1%) of the Norfolk group.

The three samples were very similar on work ratings (C, 3). However, in the Officer's Reports the Walpole Drug group was rated somewhat lower than the Walpole Non-Drug group and both were rated much lower than the Norfolk group (C, 5).

#### DISCUSSION

One generalization emerging from this report is that those with a history of narcotic arrests are involved in significantly fewer and less serious disciplinary problems than those with no history of narcotic arrests at Walpole. In comparing Walpole Drug and Norfolk groups it was found that there was no difference in number of

disciplinary reports. However, the Walpole Drug group tended to be involved in less serious infractions, i.e. none of this group was involved in assaultive or destructive behavior, while 40.0% of the infractions of the Norfolk group were for this type of behavior. The evidence revealed in this study does not support the policy of not transferring inmates with a history of narcotic arrests to Norfolk. A history of narcotic arrests is not an indication that an inmate will be involved in disciplinary reports. On the contrary, he is less likely to be a disciplinary problem within the institution than the general Walpole population. Similarly no relationship was found between a history of narcotic arrests and involvement in drugs within the institution. The study did not uncover any reason why a history of narcotic arrests per se should preclude the possibility of transfer to Norfolk.

Appendix A

STATISTICAL DATA FOR DRUG STUDY

	<u>WALPOLE DRUG</u>	<u>WALPOLE NON-DRUG</u>	<u>NORFOLK</u>
<u>A. BACKGROUND FACTORS</u>			
<u>1. Age at Commitment</u>			
Under 25 years	3 (11.1%)	14 (35.9%)	15 (40.6%)
25 or older	24 (88.9%)	25 (64.1%)	22 (59.4%)
Walpole drug--Walpole non-drug		Walpole drug--Norfolk	
$\chi^2$		$\chi^2$	
$X = 5.13$ .02 < p < .05		$X = 6.69$ .001 < p < .01	
<u>2. Race</u>			
White	3 (11.1%)	28 (71.8%)	31 (83.8%)
Negro	22 (81.5%)	10 (25.6%)	6 (16.2%)
Chinese	2 ( 7.4%)	1 ( 2.6%)	0 (00.0%)
Walpole drug--Walpole non-drug		Walpole drug--Norfolk	
$\chi^2$		$\chi^2$	
$X = 23.57$ p < .001		$X = 32.75$ p < .001	
<u>3. Marital Status</u>			
Married	15 (55.6%)	17 (43.6%)	12 (32.4%)
Single	8 (29.6%)	15 (38.5%)	22 (59.5%)
Divorced or Separated	4 (14.8%)	7 (17.9%)	3 ( 8.1%)
<u>4. Service Discharge</u>			
Service	17 (63.0%)	19 (48.7%)	15 (40.6%)
No service	10 (37.0%)	20 (51.3%)	22 (59.4%)
<u>Type of discharge for those in service</u>			
Honorable	12 (70.6%)	11 (57.9%)	7 (46.7%)
*Dishonorable	5 (29.4%)	8 (42.1%)	6 (40.0%)
Medical	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)	2 (13.3%)
<u>5. Education (Last grade completed)</u>			
7th grade or less	5 (18.5%)	18 (46.2%)	18 (48.6%)
8 or 9	16 (59.3%)	10 (25.6%)	10 (27.0%)
10 or more	6 (22.2%)	11 (28.2%)	9 (24.3%)
Walpole drug--Walpole non-drug		Walpole drug--Norfolk	
$\chi^2$		$\chi^2$	
$X = 8.29$ .01 < p < .02		$X = 7.96$ .01 < p < .02	

\*Includes Dishonorable, undesirable, and other than honorable

WALPOLE DRUGWALPOLE NON-DRUGNORFOLK6. Occupational Status (Hamburger Code)

Upper-upper	1 ( 3.7%)	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)
Upper-middle	1 ( 3.7%)	1 ( 2.6%)	0 (00.0%)
Lower-middle	1 ( 3.7%)	0 (00.0%)	4 (10.8%)
Upper-lower	21 (77.8%)	26 (66.7%)	24 (64.9%)
Lower-lower	2 ( 7.4%)	12 (30.8%)	8 (21.6%)
Impossible to classify	1 ( 3.7%)	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)
Unemployed	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)	1 ( 2.7%)

7. Stability of Employment

Regular	4 (14.8%)	3 ( 7.7%)	8 (21.6%)
Irregular	7 (25.9%)	3 ( 7.7%)	10 (27.0%)
Casual	16 (59.3%)	33 (84.6%)	19 (51.4%)

B. CRIMINAL HISTORY1. Age at first arrest

12 or younger	6 (22.2%)	11 (28.2%)	9 (24.3%)
13 to 20 years	12 (44.4%)	18 (46.2%)	15 (40.6%)
20 or older	9 (33.3%)	10 (25.6%)	13 (35.1%)

2. Age at first arrest for drunkenness

15 to 19 years	3 (11.1%)	2 ( 5.2%)	6 (16.2%)
20 to 24 years	0 (00.0%)	8 (20.5%)	3 ( 8.1%)
25 or older	1 ( 3.7%)	6 (15.4%)	5 (13.5%)
None	23 (85.2%)	23 (59.0%)	23 (62.2%)

3. Number of prior arrests

None	9 (00.0%)	1 ( 2.6%)	1 ( 2.6%)
1 to 9	13 (48.1%)	19 (48.7%)	20 (54.0%)
10 to 19	12 (44.4%)	16 (41.0%)	11 (29.7%)
20 or more	2 ( 7.4%)	3 ( 7.7%)	5 (13.5%)

4. Number of prior arrests for drunkenness

None	23 (85.2%)	23 (59.0%)	23 (62.2%)
1 or more	4 (14.8%)	16 (41.0%)	14 (37.8%)

Walpole drug--Walpole non-drug

 $X = 5.19 \quad .02 < p < .05$ 

Walpole drug--Norfolk

 $X = 4.09 \quad .02 < p < .05$ 5. Felonies vs. person

None	18 (66.6%)	24 (61.5%)	26 (70.3%)
1 or more	9 (33.3%)	15 (38.5%)	11 (29.7%)

WALPOLE DRUGWALPOLE NON-DRUGNORFOLK6. Felonies vs. sex

None	19 (70.4%)	30 (76.9%)	26 (70.3%)
1 or more	8 (29.6%)	9 (23.1%)	11 (29.7%)

7. Felonies vs. property

None	4 (14.8%)	9 (23.1%)	9 (24.3%)
1 or more	23 (85.2%)	30 (76.9%)	28 (75.7%)

8. Number of State or Federal incarcerations

None	12 (44.4%)	21 (53.8%)	20 (54.0%)
1 or more	15 (55.5%)	18 (46.2%)	17 (45.9%)

9. Number of H. of C. incarcerations

None	9 (33.3%)	14 (35.9%)	16 (43.2%)
1 or more	18 (66.6%)	25 (64.1%)	21 (56.7%)

10. Number of Juvenile Incarcerations

None	21 (77.8%)	20 (51.2%)	28 (75.7%)
1 or more	6 (22.2%)	19 (48.7%)	9 (24.3%)

Walpole drug--Walpole non-drug

2

$$X = 4.76 \quad .02 < p < .05$$

C. INSTITUTIONAL DATA1. Present offense

Offense against person	1 ( 3.7%)	11 (28.2%)	8 (21.6%)
Offense against sex	0 (00.0%)	9 (23.1%)	8 (21.6%)
Offense against property	0 (00.0%)	19 (48.7%)	19 (51.4%)
Narcotics arrest	26 (96.3%)	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)
Other	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)	2 ( 5.4%)

2. Minimum Sentence

2½ - 3 years	19 (70.4%)	19 (48.7%)	11 (29.7%)
4 or more	8 (29.6%)	20 (51.3%)	26 (70.3%)

Walpole drug--Norfolk

2

$$X = 10.35 \quad .001 < p < .01$$



	<u>WALPOLE DRUG</u>	<u>WALPOLE NON-DRUG</u>	<u>NORFOLK</u>
<u>3. Institutional work rating</u>			
Below average	1 ( 3.7%)	1 ( 2.6%)	0 (00.0%)
Average	12 (44.4%)	16 (41.0%)	14 (37.8%)
Above average	10 (37.0%)	18 (46.2%)	21 (56.7%)
No information	4 (14.8%)	4 (10.1%)	2 ( 5.4%)
<u>4. Education</u>			
Yes	3 (11.1%)	10 (25.6%)	11 (29.7%)
No	24 (88.9%)	24 (61.5%)	26 (70.3%)
No information	0 (00.0%)	5 (12.8%)	0 (00.0%)
<u>5. Officer's report</u>			
Positive	13 (48.1%)	21 (53.8%)	36 (97.3%)
Negative	5 (18.5%)	1 ( 2.6%)	1 ( 2.7%)
Mixed	0 (00.0%)	5 (12.8%)	0 (00.0%)
No information	9 (33.3%)	12 (30.8%)	0 (00.0%)
<u>6. Number of Disciplinary reports</u>			
None	22 (81.5%)	16 (41.0%)	30 (81.1%)
1 or more	5 (18.5%)	23 (59.0%)	7 (18.9%)
Walpole drug--Walpole non-drug			
2			
$\chi^2 = 10.69 \quad .001 < p < .01$			
<u>7. Types of Disciplinary reports</u>			
Physical Agression	0 (00.0%)	5 (14.7%)	2 (20.0%)
Destruction of property	0 (00.0%)	1 ( 2.9%)	2 (20.0%)
Disobedience or profanity	3 (60.0%)	14 (41.2%)	4 (40.0%)
Homosexual behavior	0 (00.0%)	2 ( 5.9%)	0 (00.0%)
Contraband--non-drug	2 (40.0%)	7 (20.6%)	1 (10.0%)
Contraband--drug	0 (00.0%)	1 ( 2.9%)	0 (00.0%)
Under influence-pills	0 (00.0%)	2 ( 5.9%)	0 (00.0%)
Under influence-alcohol	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)	1 (10.0%)
Under influence-thinner	0 (00.0%)	2 ( 5.9%)	0 (00.0%)
<u>8. Number of days in isolation</u>			
None	26 (96.3%)	28 (71.8%)	34 (91.9%)
1 or more	1 ( 3.7%)	11 (28.2%)	3 ( 8.1%)
Walpole drug--Walpole non-drug			
$\chi^2 = 6.44 \quad .01 < p < .02$			
<u>9. Transferred to Bridgewater</u>			
Yes	0 (00.0%)	2 ( 5.2%)	9 (00.0%)
No	27 (100.0%)	37 (94.9%)	37 (100.0%)
<u>10. Number of days in detention</u>			
0 days	25 (92.6%)	34 (87.2%)	36 (97.3%)
1 or more days	2 (7.4%)	5 (12.8%)	1 ( 2.7%)

WALPOLE DRUGWALPOLE NON-DRUGNORFOLK11. Length of incarceration

Less than 2 years

14 (51.9%)

16 (41.0%)

23 (62.2%)

2-3

9 (33.3%)

13 (33.3%)

7 (18.9%)

3-4

1 (3.7%)

6 (15.4%)

7 (18.9%)

4 or more

3 (11.1%)

4 (10.2%)

0 (00.0%)