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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Kent Ryan Kerley entitled "Race, criminal embeddedness, and the American Dream." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Sociology.

Michael L. Benson, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Neal Shover, Donald W. Hastings, Greer Litton Fox

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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Dr. Michael L. Benson, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Neal Shover

Dr. Neal Shover

Donald W. Hastings

Dr. Donald W. Hastings

Greer Litton Fox

Dr. Greer Litton Fox

Accepted for the Council:

George
Interim Vice Provost and
Dean of the Graduate School

RACE, CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS, AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

A Dissertation Presented
for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Kent Ryan Kerley

May 2001

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents Garry and Irene,

my sister Krista,

and my best friend Lori.

You always told me how good I was even though I never believed you.
Your generous personal support made by professional development easy.

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Cary Springer provided much-needed statistical assistance. I am envious of your mastery of statistics and SPSS. Thanks to Mike Keene for allowing me to take his technical writing class twice and for giving me the structure and feedback I needed to finish in a timely manner. Your "tricks of the trade" stick in mind nearly every time I write.

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trajectory as me. We seemed to experience all the major events in graduate school at the same time and it helped to have someone to complain about things with. I think our "friendly competition" helped us achieve more than we might have done on our own. Maybe some day you can step out of my shadow.

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ABSTRACT

The most dominant cultural theme in the United States, one that impacts political, social, and personal aspects of individual lives, is the American Dream. In the race toward the American Dream, individuals' starting positions significantly influence where they finish. Stratification researchers have consistently found that race, social class, and family background have an impact on the economic, educational, and social statuses that individuals reach in adulthood. In addition to background factors, many major life events that individuals experience serve to limit or enhance their ability to achieve various economic and social goals.

One major life event that is infrequently studied is contact with the criminal justice system. In his recent work on "criminal embeddedness" Hagan (1993) argues that contact with the criminal justice system has a "snowballing" effect in that each additional arrest, conviction, and year spent in prison decreases life chances. The formal sanctioning of individuals by the state serves to trap or enmesh individuals in the criminal justice system. Criminologists employing a life-course approach are coming to view criminal embeddedness as a major life event that may affect adult positions in society.

Using data from a study of 4,445 males convicted in federal courts, I examine the adult consequences of criminal embeddedness. Specifically, I study the effects of age of onset, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, early arrest, and early incarceration on adult financial well-being, occupational stability,

and community involvement, while controlling for individual background variables, educational attainment, and age.

Overall, results provide strong support for Hagan's concept of criminal embeddedness. Contact with the criminal justice system appears to have a strong, deleterious effect on individuals' financial well-being and occupational stability when using continuous and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness. For community involvement, I find that the measures of criminal embeddedness are less important as predictors.

Results also demonstrate that race, educational attainment, and age are significant predictors of financial well-being. Blacks appear to face a sizable disadvantage compared to whites in their quest for financial and occupational stability. Regardless of race, younger, less educated individuals have significantly lower levels of financial well-being, job stability, and community involvement than older and more educated individuals.

Despite the vast monetary resources involved, America's imprisonment binge has had only minimal effects on crime and victimization rates. Most studies show that the unprecedented growth of the criminal justice enterprise has done little to deter individuals from committing future criminal acts. In this study, I focus on the effects of criminal embeddedness on non-criminal adult outcomes. I find that contact with the criminal justice system has a consistent depressing effect on the adult lives of individuals, especially their opportunities for financial well-being and occupational stability.

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CHAPTER 1

IN PURSUIT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

The American Dream is a dream of a social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position. It is a dream of being able to grow to fullest development as man and woman, unhampered by the barriers which had slowly been erected in older civilizations, unrepressed by social orders which had developed for the benefit of classes rather than for the simple human being of any and every class.

James Truslow Adams 1931:404-405 in *Epic of America*.

It is quite impossible to live in the United States and not be bombarded by images of materialism and economic achievement. That this reality has had both positive and negative consequences should be no surprise. The dream has inspired heroic individual success stories, but it also has expressed itself in nightmares and human misery.

Cernkovich, Giordano, and Rudolph 2000:131.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past three decades, the United States' criminal justice system has undergone a massive period of expansion. The U.S. now imprisons more of its citizens per capita than any other nation. Using current rates of incarceration, the Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that about 5 percent of all newborn children will spend at least some time in prison during their lives (BJS 1997). For males, about 9 percent will be imprisoned at least once. The likelihood of incarceration is even more dramatic for people of color. Approximately 30 percent of all black males will have at least one period of incarceration during their lives (BJS 1997). The criminal justice system has become a massive, money-making industry and a decline in its growth does not appear likely in the near future. Currently, many states devote more resources to the criminal justice

system than to any other area of spending (Austin and Irwin 2001). Over the past decade, many private companies have attempted to profit by building prisons to administer state-imposed sentences on individuals.

Despite the vast resources devoted to criminal justice agencies, the imprisonment binge, by most accounts, has not had the expected payoff (Austin and Irwin 2001; Currie 1998; Fleteau 1996). Crime rates have only recently started to decline, and most researchers conclude that an older population, new policing strategies, and many family and community-level variables are better explanations for the reductions in crime rates than incarceration. Overall, the research indicates little deterrent effect of punishment on future crimes as recidivism rates remain high (Austin and Irwin 2001; Christie 1993; Currie 1998; Fleteau 1996; Messner and Rosenfeld 2000; Reiman 1998).

The focus of punishment among criminal justice officials, legislators, and most in the general public is with the effects of criminal justice contact on the likelihood of future criminal acts. This approach overlooks the effects of criminal justice contact on non-criminal aspects of adult lives. Besides the issue of whether individuals commit additional crimes later in life, we must consider how experiences with the criminal justice system shape their financial and social lives. In this dissertation, I examine how being embedded in the criminal justice system affects several non-criminal adult outcomes. Specifically, I study the effects of age at first arrest, number of prior arrests, and total length of time incarcerated on adult financial well-being, occupational stability and community involvement, while controlling for the background factors of social class, race, and family

background. I also investigate the related issues of: whether the timing of first arrest and first incarceration are important above and beyond raw numbers of arrests and incarcerations, whether the effects of criminal embeddedness are indelible or decay with age, and whether the effects of criminal embeddedness are similar for whites versus blacks.

This project brings together insights from the criminological and stratification literatures. In the broadest sense, I am concerned with factors that predict adult positions in the stratification hierarchy. One way of placing this project into a larger context is by thinking of the cultural elements that support our stratification system. Our stratification system is based on widely held cultural beliefs specified in the American Dream. The American Dream is both a philosophy of achievement and a prescribed set of economic and social goals. In the following sections, I detail the history, content, consequences, support, and achievement of the American Dream and then summarize how being embedded in the criminal justice system affects achievement of the American Dream. I then discuss the life-course perspective, including how it guides the framing of research questions and data analysis in this project, and conclude with a brief summary of each chapter.

THE AMERICAN DREAM

The most dominant cultural theme in the United States, one that impacts political, social, and personal aspects of individual lives, is the American Dream. Although the term was introduced in 1931 by historian James Truslow Adams in

Epic of America, the philosophy of the American Dream predates usage of the term (Adams 1931). The philosophy is endemic to our capitalistic economic system and is taught to us throughout our lives. Children growing up in the U.S. are quickly taught to embrace the ideas of individualism and materialism and to work toward achieving the American Dream. Children are taught that they can achieve anything in life as long as they "put their minds to it." They learn that achieving the American Dream should be their highest goal in life. As generations socialize their children into accepting the goals and ideology of the American Dream, it becomes our cultural ethos. It is both a set of goals and a world-view. In some ways, the American Dream provides an identity because it is uniquely American (Weiss 1969; Wright 1996).

The American Dream is based on two overarching principles. The first is materialism. Other cultures emphasize materialism and achievement, but many argue that the American version is more extreme. Our hyper-capitalistic system encourages us to be solely focused on financial achievement, status, and success (Derber 1996; Messner and Rosenfeld 2000; Sims 1997). Our lives are structured around material success. When others ask how we are doing, we often speak of our achievements. We detail the amount of money we make, the number of cars we own, or the size of our stock portfolios and houses. We want others to know how much of the American Dream we have realized. The American Dream encourages us to think of life as an athletic race. We all start at the same position and must work hard to do well in the race. This analogy

permeates our thinking and leads us constantly to compete with others and ourselves.

The second principle of the American Dream is individualism. We are taught that the successes and failures we experience in life reflect our personal choices, motivation, and determination. Politicians, teachers, entertainers, and professional athletes tell us that if we want something badly we can achieve it. "Nothing is impossible" is the mantra. We should set high economic goals and work hard to accomplish them. If we fail to accomplish our goals, it must be because of bad decisions or perhaps a lack of motivation. Conversely, if we achieve our goals, we are told that it is because we have extraordinary drive and talent. How we perform in the race toward the American Dream is based on something within us. To blame society for our failures because of limited opportunities, unfair economic policies, or discrimination would be to minimize "personal responsibility." If we really want to achieve a goal, we will overcome any hindrance.

History of the Dream

It is ironic that the term American Dream was introduced into the lexicon in 1931, in the midst of the Great Depression. Despite horrendous societal conditions, including unemployment as high as 25 percent, individuals initially blamed themselves for their unemployment and not the government or economic system (Hearn 1977). The term American Dream was quickly accepted and became a common slogan in radio and newspaper advertisements (Messner and

Rosenfeld 2000). It is remarkable that the philosophy of the American Dream was an integrating force when we consider the terrible economic conditions at the time the term was introduced. Hearn (1977:201) summarizes this apparent paradox by noting that "the myth of success had penetrated American culture much too completely for a single crisis, even one as harrowing as the Great Depression, to deal it the death blow."

The philosophy of the American Dream survived the Great Depression because it was not a new one. The philosophy existed long before the term was introduced. In fact, its origins can be traced to the Protestant Reformation of the 1600s (Rothman 1999). Protestant religion emphasized individualism, including the idea that individuals are ultimately responsible for their own economic and social lives. These Puritan ideas were the centerpiece of the colonial value system of early settlers in the U.S. and laid the foundation for what would become known as the American Dream.

The settlement of the United States in 1776 also reflected an emphasis on individualism and achievement. After all, what better example of individual motivation and achievement exists than a small collection of English citizens defying monarchical rule to begin a new and more democratic society? If this band of former English subjects could leave and start a prosperous nation, then all individuals could achieve their goals in the new society. The birth of the new nation reinforced the ideas of individualism and economic success. Rothman

(1999:57) summarizes this connection by noting that:

The American ideology of individualism was encouraged and reinforced by an abundance of open land on the western frontier. The frontier was much more than a distant geographic boundary; it was a symbol of unlimited opportunity. The image of plentiful land on the western frontier nourished a convenient mythology for the nation. There was no reason for anyone to fail, because there was always the vast untapped land to the west, with prosperity in forestry, farming, or fishing awaiting the strong and talented willing to seize the opportunity.

Finally, the economic shift toward industrialization gave additional support to the idea that anyone could achieve monetary success. Industrialization created the possibility of entrepreneurship. Individuals could now travel to urban areas and find more lucrative forms of work. The accomplishments of ordinary people such as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Henry Ford, and Thomas Edison became nationally known. These "rags-to-riches" stories demonstrated that anyone, regardless of background, could become wealthy in the new economy. Economic opportunities were thought to be limitless, so failure to achieve could only be a result of weak drive or motivation.

The rhetoric of the American Dream was so widespread during industrialization that even a few sociologists embraced it. For example, Herbert Spencer, William Graham Sumner, Kingsley Davis, and Wilbert Moore are well known for their views on materialism and individualism. Spencer and Sumner used Charles Darwin's work on evolutionary biology in *Origin of the Species* to

conceive of society as a "jungle" where only the strong would survive. In fact, it was Spencer who coined the term "survival of the fittest." Spencer and Sumner argued that the small number of successful people in society was the product of natural selection. The new economy was thought to distinguish hard-working and talented members of society from lazy and inept members (Rothman 1999). Spencer and Sumner opposed any form of public welfare benefits, alleging that welfare penalized the most talented in society to reward the least talented.

Since industrialization, the U.S. has undergone many periods of economic growth and decline, and has experienced many social upheavals. Nevertheless, the American Dream remains widespread. In fact, the ideology was strengthened by President Reagan's renewed focus on the unbridled pursuit of profit in the 1980s. Many researchers argue that Americans' commitment to the American Dream is now stronger than ever (Cernkovich et al. 2000; Derber 1996; Hochschild 1995; Messner and Rosenfeld 2000; Rothman 1999).

Specifying the Dream

Historically, the content of the American Dream is consistent, differing only in the items available to individuals in a given time period. The dream includes both financial and non-financial elements. The material elements include a steady, prestigious job with a high income. This income permits individuals to accrue many items of wealth. Home ownership, automobile ownership, stocks, bonds, and real estate are assets that should follow income. In the best-case

scenario, individuals would also own luxury items such as expensive jewelry, boats, and summer homes. Achieving these financial goals is thought to give people a personal sense of accomplishment and respect from those in the community for their "hard work." Although not technically a financial outcome, the American Dream includes achievement of a college degree. Education is important to the dream because it is the stepping-stone to economic success. Without education individuals would not have the ability to start at high positions in companies and would not be able to advance. Thus, education provides eventual access to income and wealth.

The American Dream also includes non-financial elements. Many of these goals relate to family life such as marriage, marital stability; children, and strong relationships with other family members such as parents, siblings, and grandparents. Stable family life is thought to go hand-in-hand with stable economic life. Other aspects of the dream involve individuals' positions and involvement in their local communities. Membership and time spent in community civic and charitable organizations, as well as church membership, church attendance, and involvement in religious activities and organizations are believed by many to be aspects of the American Dream. According to the dream, these activities give people a sense of community – a feeling of belonging to the community (Etzioni 1993).

Of the aspects of the American Dream discussed above, the economic statuses and activities are considered most salient. The main focus of the dream is economic success, and non-instrumental activities are afforded secondary

status. Consider the example of educational attainment. Education is generally not regarded as a good in and of itself, but as a means to an end. Education is necessary to accrue income and wealth, but is thought to have little utility otherwise. After all, why would individuals spend four or more years in college if it did not significantly increase their chances of obtaining prestigious, high-paying jobs? Spending time and money for an education that only made the person more intellectual or "enlightened" would be misguided. Other non-financial goals are similarly devalued in the pursuit of income and wealth. Even the importance of family life is diminished compared to the importance of economic success. Rates of childhood poverty, divorce rates, and the preponderance of single-parent families may provide an indication of how spouses, intimates, and children suffer when individuals devote most of their resources to work and the pursuit of income and status (Derber 1996; Messner and Rosenfeld 2000).

Consequences of the Dream

There are both positive and negative consequences of embracing the American Dream. There are countless success stories of individuals who worked toward economic achievement and made important contributions to society in medicine, law, natural sciences, literature, and other fields. It seems reasonable to argue that the accomplishments of many great Americans would not have occurred without the inspiration provided by the quest for the American Dream. For example, would Ford have designed the automobile or Edison invented the light bulb and phonograph without the strong cultural emphasis on achievement?

The dream gives individuals something to strive for, something that prevents them from becoming complacent or lethargic.

Pursuit of the American Dream also has many negative consequences. For every Henry Ford, there are hundred of thousands of individuals who struggle to survive economically. The physical and psychological pressures to achieve material success, along with the inevitable failures that follow, shatter countless lives (MacLeod 1995; Wilson 1987). In a society consumed with economic success, those who do not achieve the American Dream are typically considered second-class citizens. Economic failure thus creates negative reactions from others and feelings of shame and depression.

The focus on material success has also led many to de-emphasize family and other non-monetary aspects of their lives. The race to achieve material success often requires individuals to neglect other dimensions of their lives. Although he touted the philosophy of the American Dream as reasonable, even Adams (1931) had serious reservations whether the dream was tenable for any but the already elite in American society. Adams argued that there was a disjuncture between the goals of the American Dream and the legitimate means to achieve them. Adams (1931:406) asserts that in the quest to achieve the American Dream:

We [Americans] came to insist upon business and money-making and material improvement as good in themselves . . . we came to consider an unthinking optimism; we refused to look on the seamy and sordid realities of any situation in which we found ourselves; we regarded criticism as

obstructive and dangerous for our new communities; we came to think manners undemocratic, and a cultivated mind a hindrance to success, a sign of inefficient effeminacy; size and statistics of material development came to be more important in our eyes than quality and spiritual values; in the ever-shifting advance of the frontier we came to lose sight of the past in hopes of the future; we forgot to live, in the struggle to 'make a living'; our education tended to become utilitarian or aimless; and many unfortunate traits only too notable today were developed.

Adams' (1931) critique of the American Dream is even more sobering when we consider that it was made in the 1930s. By most estimates, inequalities in the U.S. are more extreme now than ever, and belief in the American Dream is more widespread as well (Hochschild 1995; Messner and Rosenfeld 2000; Rothman 1999).

An unrelenting societal focus on individualism and achievement sparked the intellectual movement known as communitarianism. According to Etzioni (1993), the cultural emphasis on individualism creates a society that is obsessed with rights, but shuns responsibilities. In the pursuit of profit, many individuals forsake their families, friends, and communities. Etzioni (1993) argues that this "loss of community" has many damaging consequences. Without social bonds to family and community, individuals will eventually feel isolated, wondering what the payoff of economic success is when they have no significant people in their lives to share it with.

For criminologists, one of the more interesting negative consequences of pursuit of the American Dream is crime. Messner and Rosenfeld's (2000) recent institutional anomie theory is the most in-depth and cogent discussion of the link between crime and the American Dream. They argue that in a society driven by the pursuit of material success, high rates of crime are to be expected. When individuals are taught to pursue economic goals without a proper elaboration of the legitimate means to achieve them, crime is a natural outgrowth. Messner and Rosenfeld argue that the unbridled pursuit of economic success dominates non-financial institutions such as family, schools, and government. These institutions then fail to properly socialize individuals and unwittingly contribute to crime as a way to reach many material goals. Thus, crime is not a result of individual pathology or moral failure, but a result of the basic values and organization of our society – a society that is singularly focused on the American Dream (Messner and Rosenfeld 2000; Sims 1997).

Other researchers find similar connections between crime and the American Dream. In her study of Chicano youth gangs in Chicago, Horowitz (1983) found that youths' belief in the legitimacy of the American Dream and the possibility of achieving it were at the root of their membership in gangs and accompanying criminal activity. Horowitz argues that gang membership and crime represented attempts by the young boys to pursue economic success in an organized, though illegal, manner (Horowitz 1983). Similarly, in their study of African American organized crime groups, Schatzberg and Kelly (1996) found that organized crime was mainly a product of members' desire to realize the

American Dream. Organized crime groups provided an alternative path to economic success for individuals faced with structural barriers. Members believed that the only way to survive economically was to join criminal groups (Schatzberg and Kelly 1996).

The link between crime and the American Dream can also be observed in other countries. In their study of crime and stratification in the United States, East Germany, and West Germany, Hagan et al. (1998) found that a strong culture of competition influenced the amount of crime in the U.S. and West Germany. They argue that the "globalization of the American Dream" produces unique problems with crime for any country whose residents espouse the philosophy (Hagan et al. 1998). Although my research (the effects of criminal embeddedness on achievement of the American Dream) takes an opposite approach, the previous research on crime and the American Dream provides a context for understanding the relationship between crime and stratification.

Believing in the Dream

One of the more remarkable aspects of the American Dream is that it influences the overwhelming majority of individuals, even individuals who are most victimized by it. National surveys consistently show that even the most downtrodden believe that the economic system is fair. They also believe that the cultural focus on individualism and achievement are appropriate (Hochschild 1995). After all, proponents of the American Dream will ask, what is the alternative to the American Dream? Should we not set high goals? Is there not

an intrinsic value in setting high goals for ourselves, even if we do not always achieve them?

Two recent studies shed important light on this topic. In her review of research on economic attitudes by race, Hochschild (1995) found that poor African Americans believe in the American Dream as much as they did thirty years ago, even though their economic levels continue to worsen. African Americans continue to believe that hard work and education will allow them to do well in the economy. Faced with racial discrimination and lack of opportunities, they hold fast to the American Dream (Hochschild 1995). She explains this apparent paradox by arguing that the incongruity between dream and reality persists because the internal contradictions of the American Dream actually make it easier rather than harder for poor African Americans to believe in it (Hochschild 1995:218). The philosophy is blind to poor economic situations and racial discrimination as reasons for economic failure. Absent structural barriers, the philosophy is embraced as something to hope for. It represents society as it should be.

Hochschild 1995

In their study of nearly 1,000 black and white youths in poor and suburban areas in Toledo, Ohio, Cernkovich et al. (2000) found that commitment to the American Dream is greater among blacks than whites. They also found major differences in expectations of achieving the American Dream. Although they believed in the philosophy more than whites, black youths recognized the strong possibility of failure due to structural barriers such as discrimination. White youths, on the other hand, had less commitment to the dream but expected to

achieve most of their goals. White youths were more likely to feel frustrated and angered when they did not achieve their goals because they did not anticipate failure. Black youths, having a more realistic view of success and failure, were more likely to take failure in stride given their low expectations (Cernkovich et al. 2000). These two studies are important because they highlight how the philosophy of the American Dream is so widespread that even disadvantaged groups espouse it, sometimes even more than already advantaged groups. Even in the face of evidence showing differences in opportunities, we are still taught to attribute success and failure to the individual. For the millions who fail in the game of economic success we are taught that this failure reflects some flaw within the individual, and the solution must lie within the individual.

Realizing the Dream

Realistically, social scientists recognize that the American Dream is just a dream, perhaps an illusion (Derber 1996; MacLeod 1995). Although the rhetoric of the dream is widespread, very few individuals actually achieve the economic goals prescribed by its philosophy. Very few people win in the race toward the American Dream. Additionally, we know from decades of stratification research that factors such as race, social class, and family background affect individuals' ability to achieve the American Dream (Grusky 1994; Rothman 1999; Sernau 2001). The ubiquity of the rhetoric of the American Dream is coupled by a scarcity of access to the dream.

Current data on income and wealth in the U.S. provide a way of evaluating realization of the American Dream. According to 1998 U.S. Bureau of the Census data, the richest 20 percent of Americans controls 48 percent of all income and 80 percent of all wealth. The richest 20 percent has an average annual income of about \$134,000. At the same time, the poorest 60 percent of Americans struggles to survive with only 30 percent of all income and 5 percent of all wealth. The poorest 20 percent of Americans are officially in poverty, making less than \$12,000 per year. The real winners in the race are the top 5 percent of the population. This elite 5 percent controls 20 percent of all income and 40 percent of all wealth.

These patterns in income and wealth distribution have been in place for several decades, and inequalities continue to become even more extreme (Messner and Rosenfeld 2000; Rothman 1999; Wolff 1995). Indeed, a small percentage of the U.S. population has controlled large amounts of income and wealth since the 1800s, and this hold has intensified over time. Looking at data over the past three decades, in 1973, the richest 5 percent controlled 16 percent of all income. This figure is now up to 20 percent. Likewise, the richest 20 percent controlled 41 percent of all income in 1973, and the percentage is now up to 48 percent. During this same time span, average income and wealth remained the same or declined for all Americans except the richest 20 percent (U.S. Census 1998; Chasin 1997:16; Sernau 2001; Wolff 1995).

These data indicate that few Americans actually perform well in the race toward the American Dream. In fact, the data indicate that only 20 percent of the

population even competes. It appears that the remaining 80 percent is stuck at the starting blocks. Despite these massive inequalities, the majority of citizens still believe in the American Dream. Proponents of the dream look at the data on inequalities and still argue that life is a race. They assert that all citizens are in the race and that everyone still has a chance to compete. This creates a quandary as we reason why Americans would believe so strongly in the American Dream when the empirical evidence suggests that economic success is unlikely for all but the already elite.

Messner and Rosenfeld (2000:10) have a unique perspective on the internal contradictions of the American Dream. They argue that:

despite the universalistic component of the American Dream, the basic logic of this cultural ethos actually presupposes high levels of inequality. A competitive allocation of monetary rewards requires both winners and losers; and "winning" and "losing" have meaning only when rewards are distributed unequally.

If the American Dream is a race toward income and wealth, it follows that there will be winners and losers. In fact, there will only be a tiny number of winners and a multitude of losers. After all, not everyone can win but everyone can compete. That is supposedly what capitalism is all about. It is a "winner take all" system.

Usefulness of the American Dream for this Study

The previous discussion of the American Dream provides a context for thinking about where individuals eventually locate in the stratification system. My aim in this research is not to answer precisely the question of who achieves the American Dream and under what conditions they do so. There are myriad factors that predict location in the stratification hierarchy. Many of these factors interact with one another or serve as mediating factors, thus creating complicated causal models. In this study, I focus on the effects of selected stratification and criminological variables on adult outcomes that comprise the American Dream. Specifically, I explore how well individual background factors and embeddedness in the criminal justice system predict adult statuses and achievements. In addition, I investigate whether the adverse effects of contact with the criminal justice system decay with age.

THE LIFE-COURSE PERSPECTIVE

Throughout this research, I use concepts and terminology drawn from the life-course perspective. Because I am studying developmental sequences and pathways in individual lives, the conceptual apparatus of the life-course perspective appears to be ideal for this study. The life-course perspective provides a context for understanding paths toward adult outcomes, and how background factors and major life events influence the process. It provides a way of framing the issues and exploring the relationships among background factors, criminal embeddedness, and adult outcomes.

The life-course perspective is a broad multidisciplinary intellectual movement. It encompasses ideas and empirical observations from a variety of disciplines including history, demography, biology, developmental psychology, and sociology. As an emerging paradigm, it is not an explicit theory, but rather a new way of studying human lives and development (Elder 1995, 1996). In sociology, the life-course approach may be traced to the 1920s and the work of University of Chicago researchers such as W.I. Thomas, Ernest Burgess, and Robert Park. For example, in *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, Thomas and Znaniecki (1927:17) advocated longitudinal studies of individual lives and urged researchers to investigate "many types of individuals with regard to their experiences and various past periods of life in different situations" and to "follow groups of individuals into the future, getting a continuous record of experiences as they occur." However, not until the 1980s did the life-course perspective become widespread in criminology.

Currently, the most influential sociological elaboration of the life-course perspective comes from the work of Glen Elder (1995, 1996). Elder defines the life course as "the interdependence of age-graded trajectories, such as work and family, that are subject to changing conditions in the larger world, and to short-term transitions, ranging from birth to school entry to retirement" (1996:35). Two major organizing concepts in his work are "trajectories" and "transitions." Trajectories are long-term trends such as work, marriage, education, and family. Within these general trajectories, specific transitions or short-term trends are embedded. For example, within the trajectory of work, a person may experience

a short-term transition to a new job, to unemployment, or to a higher or lower-paying job.

Elder notes that although most individuals follow many of the same trajectories and experience similar transitions, the timing of these events is critical to individual development. A transition to unemployment may affect a young person with a college degree much differently than an older, uneducated person. Likewise, the loss of a spouse has varying effects on individuals depending on when in the life course it takes place (Elder 1985, 1995, 1996).

Thus, Elder argues that the timing of events, not simply their occurrence, shapes individual development.

Elder also suggests that to understand individual development, we must account for the interdependence of life trajectories – viewing life as a series of “multiple, interdependent pathways from birth to death” (1978:22). He argues that individual lives and society are “interlocking” in that life patterns are shaped by societal institutions and are “interdependent” in that the timing of certain events (e.g., marriage) may affect other events later in life (e.g., having children) (Elder 1985, 1995, 1996; Elder and Hareven 1993; Elder and O’Rand 1997). Transitions may redirect or modify life trajectories and serve as “turning points” for many aspects of individuals’ lives (e.g., an early pregnancy may delay entrance to college; getting married may lead to desistance from crime) (Elder 1995, 1996). In short, Elder’s life-course work highlights the importance of starting points and major life events for individual development. He also shows how the timing and interdependence of life events have consequences for

multiple life domains. The issues of timing of events and interdependence of trajectories are keys to the study of how background factors and criminal embeddedness affect legitimate adult outcomes.

PLAN OF THE RESEARCH

In Chapter 2, I begin by reviewing the extensive stratification literature on factors that predict eventual location in the stratification system. Because of the nature of the data used in this study, I confine my review to the background factors of race, social class, and family background. The review indicates that these variables have strong, consistent effects on adult outcomes. Specifically, non-whites, those in poverty, and those from disadvantaged family backgrounds are significantly less likely to achieve financial goals than others. Next, I review the literature on major life events that influence individuals' adult statuses. The literature demonstrates that life events such as sexual, physical, or emotional abuse, changes in family living arrangements, family migration, divorce, and childbearing typically have negative effects on adult outcomes.

In Chapter 3, I turn to the heart of this research. With the use of insights from Hagan (1993), I argue that one major life event that receives little empirical attention as affecting adult outcomes is embeddedness in the criminal justice system. Criminal embeddedness includes criminal associations, criminality, arrests, convictions, and incarceration in the criminal justice system. Although research in this area is just beginning to expand, the majority indicates that being embedded in the criminal justice system negatively impacts individuals' income,

wealth, occupational prestige, and educational attainment. My key question is whether embeddedness in the criminal justice system has deleterious effects on a broad range of financial and non-financial adult outcomes net of the effects of race, social class, and family disadvantage.

Also in Chapter 3, I raise the issue of whether the effects of criminal embeddedness are indelible or if they decay with age. This issue has been subjected only to limited empirical scrutiny. The focus is whether the deleterious effects of criminal embeddedness decay with age and time free from incarceration. It is important to determine if there are short-term effects of embeddedness, but an investigation of long-term effects may prove even more theoretically and practically valuable. In short, I investigate whether it is possible to recover from criminal embeddedness and still achieve financial and social aspects of the American Dream.

In Chapter 4, I detail the data and methodology used in this study. The data are derived from a sample of 4,445 males convicted in federal courts. Data on offenders in the sample were gathered from pre-sentence investigation (PSI) reports from their most recent conviction. The PSIs can be treated as retrospective life histories for offenders. The offenders are diverse in terms of age, race, social class, educational attainment, family background, and contact with the criminal justice system.

Chapters 5 through 7 detail results of the analysis, arranged by three separate adult outcomes. Using hierarchical ordinary least-squares (OLS) and logistic regression, I test the effects of age of onset, number of prior arrests, and

total length of time incarcerated on financial well-being, occupational stability, and community involvement, while controlling for the background factors of race, social class, and family disadvantage. In the second half of each chapter, I incorporate age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness and then perform separate analysis of all models by race. In Chapter 8, I conclude with a discussion of the theoretical and policy implications of the results.

CHAPTER 2

EXPLAINING ADULT OUTCOMES: THE ROLE OF BACKGROUND FACTORS AND MAJOR LIFE EVENTS

Sociologists, especially those specializing in stratification, have long recognized that the social context into which individuals are born has a significant impact on where they eventually locate in the stratification hierarchy. Social context, along with major life events, influences achievement of the financial and non-financial aspects of the American Dream. Researchers as far back as Max Weber recognized that background factors affect individuals' "life chances." Weber defined life chances as the "typical chances for a supply of goods, external living conditions, and personal life experiences" (1946:180). Weber was concerned with the quest for adult quality of life and how social class position enhances or limits opportunities to achieve this quality of life. He argued that social disadvantage limits not only the objective aspects of quality of life, including income, wealth, and occupational prestige, but also other desirable adult outcomes such as strong family and marital relations, community involvement, and physical and mental health (Weber 1946; 1947). Since the time of Weber, empirical research in many fields demonstrates how background factors and major life events can have lasting effects on statuses in adulthood (Grusky 1994; Rothman 1999; Sernau 2001).

Many adult outcomes are discussed in the literature including income, wealth, occupational prestige, occupational stability, educational attainment,

marital stability, community position, physical and mental health, and alcohol and drug use. The main question researchers ask takes this generic form: to what degree do background factors and major life events predict adult positions in the stratification system? If we conceptualize the transitions from childhood to adolescence to adulthood as a race toward the American Dream, we become aware of the importance of individuals' starting positions. Factors such as social class, race, and family background create starting points closer to or more distant from the finish line. In short, where people begin the race toward adult status influences where they will finish. My review of the adult outcomes literature will focus on social class, race, and family disadvantage.

SOCIAL CLASS, RACE, AND FAMILY DISADVANTAGE

A large body of research by sociologists and economists is devoted to the study of adult outcomes, social mobility, life chances, and status attainment. Regardless of the term used, the focus is on how structural elements predict individuals' eventual positions in the stratification hierarchy. A consistent finding is that social class, race, and family disadvantage have significant effects on adult attainment (Baron 1994; Davis 1982; Granovetter 1981; Grusky 1994; Jencks and Mayer 1990b; King and Knapp 1978; Lynch 1996; MacLeod 1995; Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt 1999; Reich and Gordon 1977; Rothman 1999; Thompson 1997; Wilson 1987; Wright 1985). However, the relationship is complex. Blacks, the poor, and those from disadvantaged family situations typically encounter both direct and indirect barriers to adult achievement. Direct

barriers include substandard education, limited educational and occupational opportunities, and educational and occupational discrimination. Indirect barriers include factors such as social psychological problems and lack of exposure to legitimate role models.

Direct Barriers

The bulk of the stratification literature indicates that social class, race, and family disadvantage interact with one another and their effects on adult outcomes are mediated by educational attainment (Baron 1994; Davis 1982; Granovetter 1981; King and Knapp 1978; MacLeod 1995; Reich and Gordon 1977; Wilson 1980, 1987). In their classic explication of the stratification process, Blau and Duncan (1967) found that the interaction of class, race, and poor family background (measured by father's race, educational attainment, income level, and occupational prestige) had a strong deleterious effect on children's educational attainment. This lack of education was then a significant predictor of low occupational prestige for children. Blau and Duncan (1967) argue that these background factors create a "vicious cycle" that limits educational opportunities and adult attainment, thus confining the already disadvantaged to low positions in the stratification hierarchy once they become adults.

Jencks et al. (1972) found that class position, poor family background, and race led to poor elementary and secondary schooling, and then to limited opportunities for higher education. These educational deficiencies made it difficult for individuals to achieve high incomes and occupational prestige. Based

on their analysis of Johns Hopkins Retrospective Life History Survey data, King and Knapp (1978) found that blacks were more likely to be initially economically disadvantaged than whites. This disadvantage decreased opportunities for higher education and the lack of education severely limited lifetime earnings.

Another approach that has received some support in the literature is that background factors limit adult outcomes through the structure of the work industry (Piore 1970; Newman 1999). According to dual labor market theory, the work industry is generally divided into two main sectors. The primary sector is comprised of mostly white-collar jobs that require medium- to high-level skills and is characterized by safe working conditions, high wages, good benefits, employment stability, job security, and opportunities for advancement. Secondary sector jobs, by contrast, are blue-collar jobs that require low- to middle-level skills and have poor working conditions, low wages, limited benefits, harsh discipline, and limited organizational mobility. The argument is that race, social class, and family background serve to lock non-whites, the poor, and those with poor family backgrounds into secondary sector jobs that leave them isolated from the primary sector (Bonacich 1972; Piore 1970; Sorensen and Tuma 1981).

Newman (1999) notes that ensnarement in secondary sector work becomes even more extreme because of the disappearance of manufacturing jobs from most urban areas. Although technically in the secondary sector, jobs in automobile plants, steel mills, and other factories did allow for decent wages and served as a buffer against a lack of education. However, as the U.S. economy moves even farther away from manufacturing work and businesses leave urban

areas because of the prospects of cheap labor abroad following the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the plight of the inner-city poor and blacks becomes even worse (Newman 1999).

The occupational isolation that accompanies secondary sector work thus prevents disadvantaged individuals from achieving high occupational prestige and income in adulthood. Even when those in poverty work full-time hours, they remain impoverished and isolated in the secondary sector (Newman 1999). Additionally, because of structural barriers, the disadvantaged find it difficult to obtain higher education, the one thing that might allow them to move beyond secondary sector work (Bonacich 1972; Doeringer and Piore 1971; Newman 1999; Piore; 1970).

One of the best-known elaborations of the interaction between race and class is from William Julius Wilson (1980, 1987). Based on his ethnographic research in poor, inner-city Chicago neighborhoods, Wilson argues that following the civil rights movement of the 1960s, race has become less significant in its leveling effect on the educational and occupational attainment of blacks. Economic policies that were once race-based have given way to ones that are class-based. The long-term effect is that disadvantages experienced by blacks created a large black underclass – a group mired in poverty and social disadvantage. Major improvements in black-white relations and more extensive legal protections did little to help the black underclass that had been created. The process of escaping from this underclass situation is a difficult and arduous

one. Wilson (1980, 1987) argues that being in the black underclass limits educational opportunities, which then limits occupational prestige and income.

Massey and Denton (1993) argue that in addition to creating a disadvantaged black underclass, racially discriminatory practices led to hyper-segregation in housing and schooling. Despite seminal court cases such as *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954 and the civil rights movement of the 1960s, schools and residential areas, especially metropolitan areas, remain largely segregated. Those in the black underclass are segregated in substandard housing, and their segregated schools receive limited resources. The hyper-segregation creates a cycle of disadvantage because the housing and schooling is so poor that those in the black underclass have trouble gaining higher education and thus have difficulty gaining adult occupational status and prestige (Massey and Denton 1993; Jencks and Mayer 1990a, 1990b).

Similarly, Hagan (1994, 1997a) argues that the economic process of "capital disinvestment" in inner-city areas, where the poor and minorities often reside, leads to residential segregation, racial inequality, and the concentration of poverty. Efforts of "recapitalization" by individuals lead to participation in "ethnic vice industries" and the formation of "deviance service centers" in disadvantaged communities (Hagan 1994; 1997b). These activities become necessary for individuals in disadvantaged communities to survive.

Indirect Barriers

In *Ain't No Makin' It*, MacLeod (1995) argues that lower social class positions and race, in addition to creating barriers to education and then to adult income and occupational prestige, often lead to feelings of hopelessness and despair. Based on his ethnographic study of two groups of black teenagers in a severely disadvantaged inner-city area of the Northeast, he found that racial minority status and poverty created a cynicism among the teenagers about their opportunities to succeed in adulthood. Besides the obvious structural barriers, the subjects related feelings of hopelessness, depression, and fatalism about their adult lives. The conservative mantra of "equality of opportunity" meant little to these teenagers. Social psychological barriers interacted with structural barriers to limit educational aspirations, opportunities, and attainment, thus keeping the boys trapped in the underclass (MacLeod 1995).

Wilson (1987) makes a similar argument in *The Truly Disadvantaged*. He contends that objective educational and career barriers often lead to subjective barriers such as feelings of fatalism and gloom. Likewise, West (1994) argues that the cycle of disadvantage experienced by poor, black youths leads to what he calls "black nihilism." This is the feeling that because of structural barriers to education and income, it is nearly pointless to pursue legitimate adult outcomes.

Another problem faced by many blacks and the poor is the lack of exposure to legitimate role models. Using data from a sample of black families in Chicago as part of the Youth Achievement and the Structure of Inner City Communities study, Rankin and Quane (2000) found that residents in the poorest

neighborhoods were significantly less likely than others to have friends and associates who had stable employment and a college education and were more likely to have friends on public assistance. Rankin and Quane (2000) argue that poverty creates a "double disadvantage" that affects life chances. First, is the direct problem of individual poverty and the disadvantage that it brings. Second, people who live in impoverished neighborhoods typically lack exposure to appropriate role models and connected persons within the community and therefore lack opportunities to build social capital. Individuals in impoverished neighborhoods rarely have contact with others who can provide them with the knowledge and social connections necessary to help them improve their life chances (Elliott et al. 1996; Newman 1999; Rankin and Quane 2000).

The second layer of disadvantage from poverty is what Wilson (1987) refers to as social isolation. He defines social isolation as "the lack of contact or of sustained interaction with individuals and institutions that represent mainstream society" (Wilson 1987:60). Wilson notes that extreme poverty, accompanied by limited contacts to the legitimate world, leads to social isolation and limited chances for adult status. In these impoverished situations, some individuals will pursue destructive and often illegitimate adaptive strategies. Hagan (1994) argues that individuals in concentrated poverty often create "deviance service centers" for illegal drugs and other criminal activities in an effort to survive economically. Wilson (1987:60-61) summarizes the problem of

social isolation and its negative consequences by noting that:

the residents of highly concentrated poverty neighborhoods in the inner city today not only infrequently interact with those individuals or families who have had a stable work history and have had little involvement with welfare or public assistance, they also seldom have sustained contact with friends or relatives in the more stable areas of the city or in the suburbs. . . Moreover, since the jobs that are available to the inner-city poor are the very ones that alienate even persons with long and stable work histories, the combination of unattractive jobs and lack of community norms to reinforce work increases the likelihood that individuals will turn to either underground illegal activity or idleness or both.

Finally, recent research indicates that among Black Americans, skin color has a negative effect on adult outcomes. Using a panel of African American males born in the 1920s and followed until death, Hill (2000) found that blacks with lighter skin tones and finer hair, commonly referred to as mulattos, had significantly better adult occupational status, occupational stability, and income than blacks with darker skin. Hill (2000) argues that not only is there the disadvantage that comes with being black, but even among blacks, those with darker skin fare worse than blacks with lighter skin. He argues that blacks face another layer of discrimination as employers often look for blacks with light skin that closely approximate European standards of beauty. Thus, Hill (2000) finds that not only are there structural barriers that blacks face in the quest for adult status, but also skin color, even within race, has a negative effect.

Overall, the research reveals that the background factors social class, race, and family disadvantage interact to influence eventual adult statuses and attainment. These variables create both direct and indirect barriers to adult achievement. In addition to the direct barriers that limit their educational and occupational opportunities, poor blacks often face feelings of hopelessness, a lack of exposure to legitimate role models, and additional discrimination based on dark skin color. This disadvantage is compounded by recent findings that the possibility of upward mobility continues to decrease over time (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Rytina 2000) and that educational attainment today is less an indicator of rank and less an important intervening mechanism between background factors and adult outcomes (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Ishida et al. 1995; Rytina 2000).

MAJOR LIFE EVENTS

Like individual background factors, many major life events affect adult positions in society. A major life event is one that directs or re-directs an individual's path toward adult achievement. It is an event that enhances or retards development and progression to adulthood. From the life-course perspective, it is a transition that affects one or more individual trajectories (Elder 1995, 1996). As Elder (1995, 1996) argues, many life events shape individual development and the timing of these events is also critical to development. Additionally, because of the interconnectedness of trajectories, a transition in one trajectory often impacts other trajectories.

Research from many fields indicates that major life events, especially when they occur early in the life course, impact legitimate adult outcomes (for a review, see George 1993). One of the most studied life events is childhood and adolescent physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. The consistent finding is that early abuse tends to have a significant negative effect on a wide range of adult outcomes (Fleming et al. 1999; Fox and Gilbert 1994; Mullen et al. 1996; Romans et al. 1995). The majority of research in this area focuses on female subjects. Fox and Gilbert (1994) found that high incidence of childhood physical abuse and incest predicted high levels of depression, low self-esteem, and likelihood of being in abusive or coercive relationships for females in adulthood. Fleming et al. (1999) and Mullen et al. (1996) both found that childhood sexual abuse was a strong predictor of females' adult sexual functioning problems, sexual withdrawal, alcohol abuse, low self-esteem, marital breakdown, and domestic violence victimization. This relationship held true even when controlling for individual background factors, adult educational attainment, and adult income (Fleming et al. 1999; Mullen et al. 1996). Romans et al. (1995) found that childhood sexual abuse was a strong predictor of acts of adult self-harm such as suicide attempts, self-mutilation, and self-torture.

In their analysis of data from the National Health and Social Survey, Browning and Laumann (1997) found a different long-term effect of child sexual abuse. They suggest that sexual contact with adults in childhood provides an inappropriate model of sexual behavior and makes the victimized children more likely to engage in sexual activity in adolescence and adulthood. Childhood

sexual contact also made individuals more likely to engage in excessive and risky sexual behaviors. This pattern was consistent for males and females in the sample (Browning and Laumann 1997).

Other major life events that impact adult outcomes involve changes in living arrangements and places of residence. Aquilino (1996) and Haurin (1992) studied the long-term effects of changes in children's living arrangements due to divorce, separation, or other changes to family structure. Both researchers found that changes in living arrangements and family structure had negative effects on several adult outcomes for males and females. Specifically, children who experienced these events were less likely to finish high school, enroll in college, leave home, and enter the workforce at culturally accepted times. The children were also more likely to later experience an early pregnancy (females only) and marital disruption, and to abuse drugs and alcohol (Aquilino 1996; Haurin 1992).

Hawkins (1997) found that disruptions in living arrangements and family rituals as a result of an alcoholic parent led to many adult problems for children. Specifically, she found that changing places of residence and performing fewer family rituals such as shopping and going to restaurants, sporting events, movies, and church were significant predictors of high levels of depression, anxiety, antisocial behavior, and substance abuse in adulthood. Hagan, Macmillan, and Wheaton (1996) investigated the effects of family migration using data from a panel study of residents in a Toronto suburb that began in 1976. They found that the simple act of moving to another city had significant negative effects on children's later likelihood of high school completion, college

graduation, occupational status, and amount of social capital. However, they found that the negative effects of moving are less pronounced when an involved father and a supportive mother are present (Hagan et al. 1996).

Research also addresses the effects of divorce on adult outcomes. Most of the research investigates the financial careers of females following divorce. At least in the short term, divorce tends to have a depressing effect on the subsequent wages and occupational status of females (Peterson 1987; Weitzman 1985). In fact, Weitzman (1985:337) argues that in the first few years following its occurrence, "divorce is a financial catastrophe for most women."

Finally, childbearing is a life event that has received much empirical attention. Typically, the research focuses on the long-term effects of childbearing on mothers. One consistent finding in the literature is that childbearing tends to have a significant negative effect on the adult wages of females. Wages of females with children tend to be considerably less than those of males and those of females without children (Fuchs 1988; Furstenberg 1976; Goldin 1990; Hill 1979; Waldfogel 1997). Based on her analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, Waldfogel (1997) found that childbearing had consistently negative effects on women's adult wages, even when controlling for a wide range of individual background factors, educational attainment, type of work, and amount of time worked. Taniguchi (1999) found an overall depressing effect on wages of childbearing, but argues that the timing of childbearing is crucial for women's career development. Specifically, she found that women who had children as teenagers and before marriage had significantly lower

wages and occupational status than women who had children later in life and women who never had children. She argues that when women have children at a young age as their work trajectory is just beginning, they face a long-term wage penalty. Women who have children young and subsequently enter or re-enter the workforce must then start over in the process of building social capital and devoting time and energy to a career (Taniguchi 1999; Stier and Tienda 1997; Furstenberg 1976).

Although the majority of the research examines only the effects of childbearing on mothers, there is research suggesting problems for fathers as well (for a review, see Marisglio 1995). One important finding is that the overall physical health and well-being of new fathers decline significantly for one to two years after a child's birth (Ferketich and Mercer 1989; Miller and Sollie 1980). Although these life events represent only a sample of many that have short-term and long-term impacts, they demonstrate the consistent finding that many major life events have significant effects on adult outcomes (George 1993).

This review of the adult outcomes and life events literatures is certainly not exhaustive. To be sure, there are other background factors (e.g., gender, nationality) that affect life chances. Likewise, individuals experience other transitions in their lives that affect later positions in adulthood. I limited my review of the two literatures for two main reasons. First, the data used in this study do not allow for an investigation of background factors other than social class, race, and family disadvantage. Second, I am investigating the adult consequences of only one major life event: criminal embeddedness. Thus, my

review simply provides a context for thinking about short-term and long-term effects of major life events on adult outcomes. In the next chapter, I review the literature on the main focus of this study: criminal embeddedness and its effects on adult outcomes.

CHAPTER 3

EXPLAINING ADULT OUTCOMES:

THE ROLE OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

Although a large number of prior studies confirm that unemployment leads to crime in the aggregate, the reverse is likely true at the individual level... The criminal justice system embeds youthful behaviors in concentrated contexts and trajectories that are increasingly isolated from legitimate employment prospects. Hagan 1993:486-487.

THE CONCEPT OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

One major life event that has received little attention for its potential impact on adult outcomes is crime and contact with the criminal justice system. Hagan's (1993) recent work on "criminal embeddedness" is the most thoughtful attempt to link the stratification and criminological literatures. Hagan's concept of criminal embeddedness is derived from Granovetter's (1985) concept of "social embeddedness." Granovetter argues that when adolescents make early employment contacts and enter occupational networks, they significantly increase their chances of getting good jobs in adulthood. The idea is that gaining entrée into business networks as a teenager has lasting positive effects into adulthood (Granovetter 1985, 1992). He notes that:

early winners are seen as high-potential people who can do no wrong, and who are given additional opportunities and challenges while those who do not win the early competition are given little or no chance to prove themselves again. By the end of the third year of employment, an

employee's eventual career chances have been fundamentally affected (Granovetter 1992:251).

Hagan (1993) extends Granovetter's (1985, 1992) work and argues that when adolescents become embedded in the criminal justice system through arrests and incarcerations, their chances of getting good jobs in adulthood are significantly diminished. Just as individuals become embedded in legitimate occupational networks that buttress later adult outcomes, individuals become embedded in the criminal justice system which then has deleterious effects on adult outcomes.

The concept of criminal embeddedness includes both individual behaviors and reactions by the criminal justice system. Hagan notes that association with delinquent peers and commission of delinquent and criminal acts pushes youths into criminal lifestyles that move them farther away from the world of legitimate work. Once delinquent and criminal behaviors are detected by the criminal justice system, the negative effects of the criminal lifestyle greatly intensify. Arrests, convictions, and periods of incarceration represent the official response components of criminal embeddedness. Hagan argues that early contact with the criminal justice system has a "snowballing" effect in that each additional arrest, conviction, and year spent in prison decreases life chances. Thus, the commission of criminal acts over time and the formal sanctioning of individuals by the state serves to trap or enmesh individuals in the criminal justice system. Hagan (1993:469) argues that "early crime contacts may be especially damaging . . . [and] successive criminal acts and contacts may further embed youths in

criminal networks that are isolated from the personalized networks of job seeking.” In this study, I examine only the response component of criminal embeddedness: contact with the criminal justice system.

Hagan’s (1993) concept of criminal embeddedness provides an important context for thinking about crime and stratification. Criminologists are just beginning to see this as a theoretically fertile area of research. Instead, they typically use crime and contact with the criminal justice system to predict continued crime and criminal justice contact. Not surprisingly, empirical research demonstrates that adolescent delinquency, early age of onset, and adolescent incarceration are good predictors of arrest and incarceration in adulthood (Farrington 1994; Loeber and Le Blanc 1990, 1999; Sampson and Laub 1993).

With the recent shift toward studying crime from a life-course perspective comes the realization that criminal embeddedness may have injurious effects on adult positions in society. Criminal embeddedness is a major life event that has short-term and long-term consequences for a range of adult outcomes. Hagan and Palloni (1988) suggest that viewing crimes as social events in the life course allows them to be studied in a broader context and helps to explicate how crime may impact both criminal and non-criminal life trajectories. In this chapter, I review empirical and ethnographic research on the relationship between criminal embeddedness and adult outcomes. Following this review, I consider the methodological shortcomings of these studies.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

One of the first studies of the relationship between criminal justice contact and adult outcomes was conducted by Thornberry and Christenson (1984). Using a 10 percent sample of Wolfgang's (1972) Philadelphia cohort, they tested the effect of number of arrests per year since high school on adult unemployment at age 25. Thornberry and Christenson (1984) found that unemployment had significant instantaneous effects on crime, and crime then had significant effects on unemployment, primarily in a lagged manner showing the most effect in the mid-20s. This model was significant overall, but was a better explanation for the unemployment of less advantaged groups (delinquents, blacks, and those with blue-collar parents) than for more advantaged groups (non-delinquents, whites, and those with white-collar parents).

Hagan (1991) studied adult occupational attainment in a Toronto suburb using two waves of panel data collected between 1976 and 1989. He found that middle-class youths tend to become members of "party" subcultures in which delinquent activities such as drinking, gambling, and sexual intercourse take place, but membership in the subculture does not limit the youths from assuming adult social roles and does not significantly hinder life-course trajectories to work and education. Working class youths, by contrast, tend to become members of "delinquent" subcultures in which the same delinquent activities take place as in the party subculture. Membership in the delinquent subculture, however, tends

to have deleterious effects on the life course, including "negative effects on trajectories of early adult occupational attainment" (Hagan 1991:579).

In a follow-up study with data through 1995, Hagan (1997b) investigated the effects of self-reported number of minor crimes, delinquent acts, and police contacts on adult occupational prestige and unemployment. He found that teen delinquency had a significant negative effect on occupational prestige and significantly increased the likelihood of being laid off as an adult. Expressed as a developmental model, self-reported delinquency led to police contacts, which led to dropping out of school, which then led to unemployment.

In *Mean Streets*, Hagan and McCarthy (1998) present one of the most in-depth studies of crime and its effects on adult outcomes. In this study, Hagan and McCarthy used self-administered surveys, police records, and school records of a sample of youths in Toronto social service agencies in 1987-88, along with a sample of youths in Toronto schools in the same years. They supplemented these data with an additional panel study of homeless youths living in Toronto and Vancouver in 1992. Using a wide range of minor and petty offenses as well as more serious property and violent offenses, Hagan and McCarthy studied the effects of crime on steady employment.

They found that homeless youths tend to become embedded in criminal networks and build "criminal capital." This criminal capital limited opportunities for work in adulthood. The majority of homeless youths were unemployed going into adulthood and continued their involvement in street crime, thus suggesting stability of the criminal trajectory. However, those youths able to find steady

employment reported significantly lower levels of street crime than their unemployed peers. Overall, the longer the length of steady employment for the street youths, the lower the subsequent participation in street crime (Hagan and McCarthy 1998).

Hagan (1993) also used data from the Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development to study the effects of delinquency and crime on adult outcomes (West and Farrington 1973; 1977). He found that teen delinquency and crime at ages 16-17 were significant predictors of adult unemployment at ages 18-19 and 21-22. Teen delinquency and crime at ages 18-19 were also significant predictors of adult unemployment at ages 21 and 22.

In *Crime and the Making*, Sampson and Laub (1993) conducted a secondary analysis of the well-known Glueck data to investigate the effects of adolescent crime and delinquency on adult crime. They briefly address, however, the potential of contact with the criminal justice system to affect legitimate adult outcomes. Sampson and Laub (1993) used a composite measure of official delinquency derived from self, parent, and teacher reports of subjects' delinquency to predict graduation from high school, economic dependence, divorce, job stability, attachment to spouse, and commitment to occupational attainment measured at ages 17-25 and 25-32.

They found that those subjects who were officially defined as delinquents and who had high levels of delinquency, temper tantrums, and official arrests in adolescence were significantly more likely as adults to drop out of school, be on government assistance, be divorced, and have low job stability, attachment to

spouse, and occupational attainment. The development of adult social bonds in the form of job stability, attachment to spouse, and occupational commitment reduced the deleterious effects of teen delinquency on adult outcomes, regardless of previous level of delinquency (Sampson and Laub 1993).

After supplementing the Gluecks' data with follow-up interviews through age 47, Sampson and Laub (1996) again investigated the relationship between crime and adult outcomes, but with an emphasis on military service as a mediating factor. They used a similar delinquency variable as in their 1993 study to investigate the adult outcomes of occupational attainment at ages 32 and 47, economic status at age 32, average weekly income at age 32, value and size of home at age 47, and educational attainment at age 47. Overall, military service was found to serve as a "turning point" in subjects' lives, regardless of previous offending levels. Results indicate that overseas duty, in-service schooling, and GI Bill training, especially when done in early adulthood, enhanced adult occupational status, job stability, and economic well-being regardless of previous levels of offending and other background variables. Thus, military service may serve as a protective factor that limits the negative effects of teen delinquency on legitimate adult outcomes.

Using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, Tanner, Davies, and O'Grady (1999) examined the effects of self-reported delinquency in adolescence on adult educational and occupational attainment between ages 25 and 30. Specifically, they used the delinquency variables skipping school, drug use, property damage acts, violent acts, and contact with the criminal justice

system to predict highest grade completed, high school diploma, college degree, occupational status, and unemployment. Findings suggest that all five measures of delinquency and crime had consistently negative effects on educational and occupational outcomes, especially for males, even when controlling for background factors such as socio-economic status and cognitive skills (Tanner et al. 1999).

Waldfoegel (1993) conducted a study of criminal justice contact and its potential effects on employment and income based on federal offender data derived from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts' Federal Probation and Parole Sentencing and Supervision Information Systems records. Waldfoegel examined all male offenders who were convicted in 1984 and released from probationary supervision by the end of 1987. To rule out the possibility of previous contact with the criminal justice system as a contributing factor to unstable employment and low income, he chose only those offenders with no previous records. Waldfoegel found that first-time conviction significantly decreased the odds of occupational stability and significantly decreased average monthly income. He also found that the effects of conviction were even stronger if the offender had been sentenced to prison, committed fraud, or had a job that involved trust. Waldfoegel's (1993) interpretation of the findings is consistent with Hagan's criminal embeddedness argument. He asserts that contact with the criminal justice system has a stigmatizing effect on offenders, thus reducing their opportunities for steady jobs and stable incomes (Waldfoegel 1993).

Monk-Turner (1989) used data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experiences to study the effects of delinquency on adult statuses. She found that school delinquency had a significantly negative effect on adult educational attainment while holding background variables constant. High school delinquency did not have a significant negative effect on adult occupational status while holding background variables (including educational attainment) constant. Monk-Turner concluded that, overall, high school delinquency depresses educational attainment. However, if a delinquent is able to acquire additional schooling, the negative impact of high school delinquency is diminished. This suggests that years of schooling may be a buffer against the deleterious effects of teen delinquency on adult occupational status.

Other studies of the relationship between criminal embeddedness and adult outcomes produce different results and conclusions. One important study is the Young Adult Follow-Up Study conducted by Jessor, Donovan, and Costa (1991). This study followed a panel of youths beginning in 1969. Jessor et al. used five scales to measure deviant and criminal behaviors. These included problem drinking, marijuana use, other illicit drug use, general deviant behavior, and cigarette smoking. Jessor et al.'s adult outcome measures were numerous, including job prestige, annual income, job satisfaction, educational attainment, political participation, number of close friends, social support of friends, satisfaction with friends, family satisfaction, self-esteem, number of negative life experiences, and alienation. They found that problem behaviors in youth and adolescence were significant predictors of problem behavior in adulthood, but did

not have significant negative effects on any of their measures of adult outcomes (Jessor et al. 1991).

Freeman (1992) re-analyzed data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, Boston Youth Survey, and Survey of Inner City Youths in Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia to determine the effects of incarceration on employment (see also Freeman 1995, Fagan and Freeman 1999). Freeman found that individuals with at least one incarceration worked an average of 25 to 30 percent less per year than individuals with no incarcerations. Even individuals who only received a sentence of probation worked an average of 10 to 15 percent less than individuals with no probation sentences. Using a dichotomous measure of employment, Freeman (1992) found that having been in prison or on probation significantly decreased the probability of being employed. Although Freeman's (1992) results are consistent with Hagan's notion of criminal embeddedness, he argues instead that the results reflect a spurious relationship between conviction and employment. He argues that the relationship is likely due to the influence of a third variable, a latent unobserved trait, which causes both the criminal justice contact and the unemployment (see also Freeman 1992; 1995).

Nagin and Waldfogel (1995) reach several interesting, and some paradoxical, conclusions about the relationship between criminal embeddedness and adult outcomes. In their re-analysis of Farrington and West's (1973) Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development, Nagin and Waldfogel found that conviction significantly decreases the likelihood of job stability. However, among

individuals in their late teens and early twenties, conviction actually increases annual income. Nagin and Waldfogel argue that conviction led to higher annual incomes among young males because of the nature of the labor market. They assert that when individuals are convicted, especially if they serve time in prison, when released they typically become confined to the secondary labor market where jobs are mostly blue collar, semi-skilled, and have little opportunity for promotion. However, because many of the secondary labor market jobs have an initial starting pay far above minimum wage, young offenders will experience a short-term increase in their wages. In the long run, of course, their wages will lag far behind those of non-offenders and individuals in the primary labor market (Nagin and Waldfogel 1995).

In Bushway's (1996) re-analysis of data from the National Youth Survey, he found that arrests, regardless of the seriousness of the offense, had consistent negative effects on job stability and earnings. He found that within three years of arrest, offenders worked an average of seven less weeks per year and earned an average of \$4,456 (36.4 percent) less per year than individuals who had never been arrested. Bushway also found the same paradoxical relationship between age and earnings found in Nagin and Waldfogel (1995). Specifically, he found that in the short-term, individuals under age twenty-two with arrests had slightly higher wages than individuals without arrests. Bushway asserts that this finding reflects the tendency for arrests to relegate young males to the secondary labor market where wages are relatively high initially, but are

unlikely to increase much over time. This interpretation is consistent with that of Nagin and Waldfogel (1995).

In two separate studies of the relationship between criminal justice contact and labor market outcomes, Grogger (1992, 1995) used data from the California Justice Department's Adult Criminal Justice Statistical System and from California's unemployment insurance records. Individuals in both data files were matched by social security number, and the criminal justice and employment data were merged for each individual. Grogger also re-analyzed data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. Similar results arose from the analysis of both datasets. In his 1992 analysis, Grogger finds that official arrests and self-report criminality have significant depressing effects on job stability and income. He also finds that contact with the criminal justice system helps to explain black/white earnings differences in that the justice system adds a second layer of disadvantage for blacks. This interpretation is consistent with Hagan's criminal embeddedness argument.

In a subsequent study, however, Grogger (1995) appears to do a theoretical about-face. In this analysis, he found that individuals with at least one arrest had average annual earnings 15 percent higher than individuals with no arrest record. However, Grogger found that this negative effect of arrest is short-term and, in totality, is fairly small. He argues that the most important difference in earnings for individuals is unobserved heterogeneity. He asserts that unobserved heterogeneity causes both arrests and low income, rather than arrests actually causing low incomes.

Finally, Needles (1996) conducted a study with an approach similar to that of the present study. She used data from the Transitional Aid Research Project, which is a panel study of prison releasees in Georgia and Texas in the mid-1970s and a control group of citizens without criminal histories living in the same states at the same time. Data from the department of correction and department of labor in both states were used to track the relationship between incarceration and financial outcomes. Needles found that even nine years after the prison stints that made them eligible for the study, former prisoners had significantly lower annual incomes and less likelihood of job stability than members of the control group. Even after controlling for additional time incarcerated and adjusting income to fit number of months not in prison, Needles found that prison releasees made an average of \$6,800 less per year than individuals in the control group. However, Needles found that once time free from the criminal justice system is controlled, additional time in prison for the former prisoners did not have an additional negative effect on earnings. What this seems to suggest is that ensnarement in the criminal justice system has a strong deleterious effect on future earnings, but that there is a threshold where after a certain point, the effects decay. In other words, individuals may "bottom out" after multiple arrests and incarcerations. Once their income levels have already been devastated by criminal justice contact, an additional prison stint may not have continued negative effects on income.

ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

In addition to the empirical studies reviewed above, three recent ethnographic studies explore the relationship between criminal embeddedness and adult outcomes. Perhaps the best explication of how contact with the criminal justice embeds youths, especially disadvantaged youths, in criminal contexts that isolate them from legitimate work is Sullivan's (1989) ethnography *Getting Paid*. Sullivan studied youths in three ethnically distinct New York City neighborhoods. One neighborhood was inhabited mostly by whites, one by blacks, and one by Hispanics. In all three neighborhoods, youths became involved in crime early in their teenage years before they had access to legitimate employment. Although their initial trajectories in crime were similar, delinquent youths from the white neighborhood soon diverged from their counterparts in the black and Hispanic neighborhoods. The white youths tended to desist from crime and move into legitimate employment as they neared the end of their teenage years. Black and Hispanic youths, however, tended to persist in their criminal behavior and soon became embedded in criminal lifestyles (Sullivan 1989).

The reasons why the white and minority youths followed different trajectories involve patterns in residential segregation, the structure of the labor market, and racial preferences in the criminal justice system. According to Sullivan (1989), white youths lived in a neighborhood where parents and other adults helped them become embedded in legitimate employment networks by establishing contacts with employers and other "well-connected" adults in the

neighborhood. Youths in the black and Hispanic neighborhoods, however, typically had parents who were unemployed or employed at low-paying jobs with little opportunities for advancement. Unfortunately, these jobs did not allow them access to better paying positions and thus the parents were not able to link their children to legitimate job networks. In addition, because of race-based residential segregation, the neighborhoods in which the minority youths lived were physically isolated from the main centers of employment in the metropolitan area. Taken together, the "social ties between residents and local employers reinforced physical proximity to produce a much greater supply of youth jobs" for the white youths than for the minority youths (Sullivan 1989:104).

Besides better access to jobs, the white youths enjoyed other advantages that helped reduce the negative consequences of their involvement in crime and delinquency. Because of their parents' influence on the criminal justice system, encounters that white youths had with police resulted in less severe formal sanctions than those involving minority youths. For minority youths, arrests were more likely to lead to formal court appearances and to confinement. The more severe formal sanctions that the minority youths received stigmatized them and further isolated them from legitimate occupations (Sullivan 1989).

Anderson (1990) observed similar processes in his study of youths in a Philadelphia ghetto community. Anderson notes that the local drug economy served as an employment agency for many youths as early as age twelve. As children grew up in these disadvantaged neighborhoods and were part of neighborhood gangs, they quickly learned that their opportunities for legitimate

work in adulthood were remote at best. Then, as they got into trouble with police for minor crimes, the contact with the criminal justice system made the possibility of legitimate work even more unlikely (Anderson 1990).

In his ethnographic study of a Puerto Rican gang called the Diamonds, Padilla (1992) found a consistent relationship between class, crime and adult outcomes. Padilla (1992:101-102) notes that "these young men began turning to the gang in search of employment opportunities, believing that available conventional work would not sufficiently provide the kinds of material goods they wished to secure." Membership in the Diamonds, criminal activity, and subsequent arrests all further isolated the youths from conventional job networks and made conventional employment extremely difficult.

These three ethnographies suggest a process at work in disadvantaged communities in which some youths become embedded in crime early in life (Hagan 1993). These disadvantaged youths develop criminal skills and make friends and contacts with other similarly inclined individuals. Over time, because of their criminal activities they eventually compile extensive official criminal records and bad reputations in the legitimate community. As they spend more time and energy in the world of drugs and crime, they accordingly have less time to spend in legitimate pursuits such as school and the entry level jobs that provide social contacts and employment experiences. Schooling, contacts, and a good work history are crucial prerequisites for making the transition to adult employment. Youths who become criminally embedded are likely to lack all of these prerequisites. Hence, they have little chance of ever finding much success

in legitimate occupations. As Hagan (1993) notes, although it appears in the aggregate that unemployment leads to crime, what appears to happen at the individual level is that youths become involved in crime even before they have access to work. Criminal activity and the criminal justice contact that almost inevitably follows make it difficult for youths, especially poor and minority youths, to recover from criminal embeddedness and make successful transitions to adulthood. Thus, as with the empirical literature, ethnographic research points to a consistent relationship between early contact with the criminal justice system and difficult transitions to adult employment and other adult statuses.

LIMITATIONS OF THE EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Although the research reviewed in this chapter provides important insights, there are several limitations. Because the present study is data-driven, I will limit my criticisms of prior research to those studies that are empirical in nature. For the most part, the limitations are rooted in data collection procedures and variables used in the studies. Based on my review of the previous studies and with an eye toward the present study, there are four important issues to consider in research that addresses the effects of criminal embeddedness on adult outcomes. First, the type of sample used in the study must be considered. Samples of high-risk populations and normal populations present unique problems. High-risk samples typically capture individuals with a variety of experiences with the criminal justice system including arrests, convictions, and periods of incarceration. These samples, however, tend to lack variation in

background variables such as age, race, and social class thus making it difficult to study the effects of embeddedness on adult outcomes when individuals in the sample are similar in terms of demographic characteristics. Normal population samples, although often preferable to high-risk samples, also have limitations. They typically have significant variation in demographic characteristics, but lack individuals with extensive offending and arrest records. This makes it difficult to study what effect embeddedness has on adult outcomes when so few individuals are actually ensnared.

Second, the duration period of the study and the number of follow-up interviews are of critical importance. If individuals are only followed until age eighteen or early adulthood, it is difficult to discuss adult outcomes because subjects have not had enough time to reach various financial and non-financial outcomes. Even if respondents are followed until their mid-twenties, it may be possible to observe short-term effects of embeddedness, but not long-term effects.

Third, it is important to consider which adult outcome variables are used in the study. To get a full picture of how being trapped in the criminal justice system affects adult lives, it is necessary to investigate a wide range of outcomes including educational and financial outcomes, as well as more subjective non-financial outcomes.

Fourth, it is important that studies include measures of age, time incarcerated, and time free from incarceration. Despite many advantages, cohort studies suffer from the problem that time and age do not vary for individuals

being studied. To truly study the effects of time and age on the long-term impact of embeddedness on adult outcomes, time and age must vary for the subjects. It is important to consider the amount of time individuals spend incarcerated, as well as the amount of time that they have free from incarceration. Accounting for time free allows for the possibility of recovery from the ill effects of embeddedness that may come with age and the time needed to forge adult social bonds.

In this section, I consider how the studies reviewed in this chapter fare on these four data considerations. Thornberry and Christenson (1984) used a 10 percent sample of data from the Philadelphia cohort study (Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin 1972). The sample included all boys born in Philadelphia in 1945 (N = 9,945). Although it only contains males, this sample is closest to a normal population sample. Initially, subjects were only studied until age 18, when there were hardly any adult outcomes to speak of. Interviews were later conducted at age 25 and official police data were collected until subjects were age 30. In their study, Thornberry and Christenson (1984) only focused on the effects of criminal justice contact on adult employment, and although there was a significant relationship, we cannot determine if embeddedness had effects on other adult outcomes. Thornberry and Christenson (1984) do not account for time free from incarceration and its potential to mitigate the effects of embeddedness on adult outcomes.

In Hagan's (1991) initial study, he used a sample of 390 youths in Toronto social service agencies, along with a sample of 563 students in Toronto public

schools. The first is a high-risk sample while the second is more middle-class. The study began in 1976 when respondents were between the ages of 13 and 18 and follow-up interviews were conducted until 1989 when panelists were between ages 26 and 31. In a later study, Hagan (1997) used data on these subjects collected through 1995 when subjects were between ages 32 and 37. This time interval allows respondents to reach various adult statuses. However, Hagan and McCarthy's (1998) panel study of homeless youths in Toronto and Vancouver that began in 1992 was, by definition, an extremely high-risk sample. And, this study only lasted for one year. In studies from all three data sources, Hagan (1991; 1997) used a limited number of adult outcome measures such as occupational attainment, occupational stability, and unemployment. There is no discussion of age and time free as factors that might lead to a decay of the effects of criminal embeddedness on adult outcomes.

Both Hagan (1993) and Nagin and Waldfogel (1995) used data from the Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development (West and Farrington 1973; 1977). The data consisted of a high-risk sample of 411 London males from working-class and lower-class backgrounds who were age 8 in 1961-62. Hagan (1993) used self-reported delinquency at ages 16-17 and convictions at 19 to predict unemployment at ages 21-22. The study was limited only to unemployment at ages 21 and 22; no other adult outcomes were included. Similarly, Nagin and Waldfogel (1995) used self-report criminality and conviction before age 19 to predict job stability and income at ages 21 and 22. Nagin and Waldfogel incorporated three measures not used in Hagan's (1993) analysis. These

measures were average weekly income, longest time on any job and number of jobs ever held. The short amount of time between arrest and adult unemployment does not allow subjects enough time to reach adult outcomes. Neither analysis controlled for age or time free from the criminal justice system to determine if it is possible to recover from the effects of criminal justice contact.

Sampson and Laub (1993) used data from Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck's well-known Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency study. This dataset included a matched sample of 500 delinquent boys, approximately age 10, committed to two different correctional facilities in Boston, Massachusetts in 1939, and a sample of 500 non-delinquent boys drawn from Boston public schools at the same time. All subjects were matched on demographic characteristics such as age, race, social class, and intelligence. Follow-up interviews were initially conducted until 1969, but were later completed through 1974 when subjects were about age 45. Both samples were high-risk, especially the sample of boys in correctional facilities. Sampson and Laub (1993) studied the effects of official delinquency on a wide range of adult outcomes measured at ages 17-25 and 25-32 such as graduation from high school, economic dependence, divorce, job stability, attachment to spouse, and commitment to occupational attainment.

In a follow-up study, Sampson and Laub (1996) studied the effects of incarceration on occupational attainment, economic status, average weekly income, value and size of home, and educational attainment at age 32 and again at age 47. Thus, individuals were followed well into adulthood, and Sampson and Laub investigated a wide range of adult outcomes. Because the subjects

were matched on demographic characteristics, it is impossible to determine what effects variables like race, age, and social class had on the likelihood of imprisonment and the subsequent effects on adult outcomes because there was no variation. Also, the researchers did not include a measure of time free from incarceration to explore the possibility of recovery from criminal justice contact.

Tanner et al. (1999), Freeman (1992, 1995), and Grogger (1992, 1995) all used data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. The sample consisted of 6,111 youths who were between the ages of 14 and 22 in 1979. Follow-up surveys were conducted until 1992. The sample was designed to be nationally representative of youths and young adults. For their study, Tanner and his colleagues selected only those individuals who were in school and ages 14-17 in 1979 and used data on these subjects from the 1992 follow-up when they were between ages 25 and 30. This dataset allowed Tanner et al. to explore several adult outcomes including highest grade completed by 1992, high school diploma by 1992, college degree by 1992, occupational status in 1992, and unemployment in 1990.

Freeman (1992, 1995) used all youths in the NLSY sample from the original panel in 1979 through the 1988 follow-up interviews. Freeman analyzed the relationship between conviction and only two adult outcomes: number of weeks worked per year and a dichotomous measure of employment (see also Fagan and Freeman 1999). In Grogger's (1992) analysis of the NLSY data, he selected all males age 16 and over from the initial interviews in 1980 who were in school and who had not served in the military. He used self-report criminality

and official arrests before 1980 to predict employment during the 1984 follow-up interview. The employment outcome variable was a measure of number of weeks worked in the past year that Grogger collapsed into a dichotomous measure of stable or unstable employment. In his follow-up research, Grogger (1995) used the same dichotomous measure of employment and added average weekly income.

Of the three studies, Tanner et al.'s (1999) analysis is most in-depth as they use the greatest number and range of adult outcome variables and were able to incorporate the most recent follow-up interviews conducted in 1992. The subjects had only reached their early twenties in the Freeman and Grogger studies, thus making it more difficult to determine whether the subjects had progressed far enough into adulthood to determine the impact of criminal justice contact on their adult statuses. Additionally, none of the researchers controlled for age or the amount of time free from incarceration in their models.

Monk-Turner (1989) used data from the nationally representative National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experiences that began in 1966. Data were collected on the subjects until 1980. Monk-Turner (1989) selected all white, male, full-time workers in the 1978 follow-up of the young male portion of the survey to study the effects of delinquency on adult statuses (N=1,924). The males in the subset selected by Monk-Turner were between the ages of 30 and 34 in 1978. Specifically, Monk-Turner studied the effects of official delinquency on only two adult outcomes - educational attainment and employment stability. To allow for the possibility of recovery from the effects of delinquency, she did

control for age. This control led to her finding that official delinquency has a deleterious effect on occupational stability, but if individuals have enough time to attain a college degree, the effects are mitigated.

Jessor et al. (1991) used data from the Young Adult Follow-Up Study. This study began in 1969 with two different nationally representative samples. One was a sample of children in grades 7-9, and the other a sample of first-year college students. Follow-up interviews were conducted until 1981 when subjects in the youth sample were ages 25-27 and those from the college sample were about age 30. These samples are more middle-class and respondents were followed at least until their mid-twenties. Of all the studies reviewed, Jessor et al. investigated the largest number of adult outcomes, including financial and non-financial outcomes. These outcomes were job prestige, annual income, job satisfaction, educational attainment, political participation, number of close friends, social support of friends, satisfaction with friends, family satisfaction, self-esteem, number of negative life experiences, and alienation. Jessor et al. did not include controls for age or time free, but unlike the other studies reviewed, they did not find direct effects of criminal justice contact on adult outcomes.

Bushway (1996) used the National Youth Survey, which is a national probability sample of 1,725 youths ages 11-17 in 1976. A total of nine follow-ups were conducted approximately every two years until 1993. Bushway's analysis was based on males in the sample in 1980 for which data were available through the 1986 follow-up interviews. Overall, it appears that subjects in the sample had reached adulthood and were given six years to determine if arrests and

convictions had significant effects on adult outcomes. However, Bushway used arrests and convictions in 1980 to predict only two adult outcome measures: number of weeks worked and annual income. Bushway (1996) did not include measures of age or time free from incarceration.

Needles (1996) used a unique dataset of street-level offenders in Georgia and Texas. Data were derived from the Transitional Aid Research Project, a panel study of prison releasees in Georgia and Texas in the mid-1970s and a control group of citizens without criminal histories living in the same states at the same time. Data from the department of correction and department of labor in Georgia and Texas were gathered from 1976 to 1993. This dataset has an important strength that few of the other studies have in that it includes an offender sample and a control group of non-offenders. The offenders were of varying ages and backgrounds because they were a sample of prisoners from Georgia and Texas and not a specially selected panel of offenders with similar demographic characteristics. With follow-up interviews through 1993, offenders and non-offenders appear to have had time to reach various adult outcomes and for the effect of criminal justice contact to be determined. The only significant limitation of Needles' (1996) study is that she only analyzed two adult outcome variables. These were a dichotomous measure of job stability and annual income.

Finally, the dataset that most closely approximates the one used in the present study was constructed by Waldfogel (1993). The data were gathered on federal offenders from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts' Federal

Probation and Parole Sentencing and Supervision Information Systems records. Waldfogel examined all first-time male offenders convicted in 1984 who were released from probationary supervision by the end of 1987. Because he used only federal offenders in his dataset, the sample is not high-risk as in other studies and is closer to the demographic characteristics of the population. However, Waldfogel only allowed for a three-year period between conviction and measurement of the outcome variables and only used two outcome variables – average monthly income and a dichotomous measure of occupational stability. Finally, he did not control for age or the amount of time free from incarceration in his analysis (Waldfogel 1993).

Overall, these studies provide important information about the relationship between criminal embeddedness and adult outcomes but suffer from one or more data limitations. It is questionable whether studies that are based on high-risk or normal population samples, have short duration periods, use limited numbers of adult outcomes, and lack controls for time free or age can give us a full picture. In the next chapter, I review the data and methods used in this study and discuss how they improve upon those used in previous studies.

THE INDELIBILITY OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

The previous literature shows that being embedded in the criminal justice system, especially when it occurs early in the life course, tends to have negative effects on many adult outcomes. One question that remains largely unanswered, however, is whether this effect is long-term or decays with time. The previous

research, for the most part, only considers the short-term effects of embeddedness. The important question is whether the effects continue over time. Does an early arrest or incarceration continue to haunt individuals throughout their lives, or do most people reach a point where the effects decay? Once people become embedded in the criminal justice system, is the "cumulative disadvantage" unceasing (Moffitt 1993; Sampson and Laub 1993)? Hagan (1993:469) suggests that the effects of criminal embeddedness should build over time. This appears to be a reasonable contention *prima facie*, but unfortunately, it has not been addressed empirically.

Two related research questions are instructive. First, research on the effects of divorce on females shows a strong short-term penalty on wages (Weitzman 1985). However, research over the life span shows that working divorced females have a significant wage advantage over working married females (Peterson 1987). The argument is that divorced females earn more than married females because they are not penalized for having family constraints. Peterson (1987) suggests that employers typically prefer single females and divorced females, especially if they have been divorced for several years and are not likely to remarry, because they feel more secure that they will not leave the occupation due to a spouse or child. Thus, although divorced females initially have smaller wages than married females, the penalty decays with age and the effects of divorce actually become positive over time.

Second, research on premarital childbearing shows that women who have a child before marriage tend to have significantly lower incomes and occupational

prestige than mothers who have children after marriage. However, in the few studies that examined long-term impacts, the finding is that by the time they reach their middle to late thirties, mothers with an early pregnancy tend to have roughly the same amount of income and occupational prestige as more "traditional" mothers (Aidala and Brunswick 1999; Taniguchi 1999).

The important theoretical point is that there are many cases in which an event has short-term negative effects, but with the passage of time and the opportunity to build adult social bonds, individuals can catch up to their peers. Thus, in this study, I examine the effects of criminal embeddedness on a wide range of adult outcomes and investigate whether the effects are long-term or if they decay with time free from the criminal justice system.

CHAPTER 4

DATA AND METHODS

USING LONGITUDINAL DATA

Researchers in many fields are becoming aware of the limitations of static, cross-sectional research designs and the necessity of dynamic, longitudinal studies of individuals over the life course. Longitudinal research is necessary to describe developmental patterns and to establish the direction and magnitude of relationships between variables (Farrington 1979; Menard 1991). Criminologists did not begin to focus on the life course and longitudinal data until the 1980s, later than in related fields such as sociology, demography, child and family studies, developmental psychology, and history (South and Messner 2000; Thornberry 1997). The rise in the life-course approach and the use of longitudinal data may be attributed to greater availability of funding, the evolution of family development as a theoretical framework, the use of cohort analysis in demography and aging, improvements in life-span developmental psychology, more sophisticated methods in collection and analysis of longitudinal data, and the rise of time allocation research in family studies (Elder 1978; 1995; 1996).

As funding becomes available, more longitudinal studies are being conducted. Some of the early studies include the National Longitudinal Study and the Michigan Panel Study of Income Dynamics. More recently, Udry and Elder's National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health promises to be one of the most comprehensive long-term follow-up studies of individual development

over many life domains. This study began in 1994 with a sample of nearly 10,000 children in grades seven and twelve. Follow-up interviews were conducted in 1995 and 1996, and the next follow-up began in the fall of 2000. Subjects are now between the ages of 18 and 24. In criminology, the National Institute of Justice's three-site study of adolescent development and crime in Denver, Colorado, Rochester, New York, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania may provide important insights into the trajectories of offenders and non-offenders.

Under the rubric of longitudinal data collection, researchers use both prospective and retrospective panel designs. In prospective studies, a cohort or panel of individuals, usually at a young age, is identified and studied over a period of time. The duration of the study may be as short as one year or as long as forty to fifty years. This method is unparalleled in its ability to uncover developmental sequences in individual lives and factors that produce various adult outcomes (Menard 1991). However, there is the limitation that because individuals in the study are similar in terms of age and other demographic characteristics, it may be difficult to study how age affects the relationship between major life events and later adult outcomes.

Another common method of longitudinal data collection is the retrospective or event history method. Researchers in many fields, including criminology, are using retrospective data collection techniques to measure intra-individual changes over time (Allen and Pickett 1987; Axinn, Pearce, and Ghimire 1999; Freedman et al. 1988; Horney, Osgood, and Marshall 1995; Parry, Thomson, and Fowkes 1999). Examples of these techniques include life

histories, life calendars, and life grids. These techniques allow researchers to gather interview data on the timing and sequencing of major criminal and life events in individual lives without following them as a panel over time. In a retrospective study, data are collected at one point in time from a sample of individuals, but interviews pertain to long periods of time in individuals' lives. This method is more cost-effective than a prospective study, and if done carefully, yields data of comparable quality (Axinn, Pearce, and Ghimire 1999). In most retrospective studies, researchers are interested in the relationships among several aspects of subjects' lives. For example, researchers may be interested in patterns of interpersonal relationships, work experiences, or criminal offending.

To aid in recall, researchers create life calendars or life grids that arrange information by what Axinn et al. (1999) call "landmarks." Landmarks are "noteworthy events that respondents may use as anchors to place the occurrence of life events in time" (Axinn et al. 1999:249). These landmarks include recurring annual events such as birthdays and holidays, as well as other events such as starting and finishing school, starting and ending employment, getting married or divorced, and being imprisoned or released. The strength of using landmarks is that they help subjects to effectively organize memories by relating them in time to important events (Allen and Pickett 1987; Axinn, Pearce, and Ghimire 1999; Freedman et al. 1991; Horney et al. 1995; Parry et al. 1999).

As with prospective panel designs, there are limitations of retrospective studies. When respondents are asked to recall large amounts of information that

trace back many years, it is possible that errors in memory will occur. Subjects may forget the occurrence or the exact timing of an event or may confuse an event with one that occurred close to the same time. When respondents are asked about traumatic events such as those involving death or injury, they may have blocked many of the events from their memories or the memories might be distorted.

There is also the problem of retrospective bias (Babbie 2000; Menard 1991). This is the tendency for subjects to remember too few or too many occurrences of a particular event because of eventual outcomes in adulthood. For example, a person with a long criminal history who spends significant periods of life in prison may overestimate the number of criminal acts committed because he or she has been labeled a "career criminal." Likewise, a generally law-abiding person with no arrest or imprisonment record may recall fewer instances of criminal activity than what actually occurred.

Finally, there are situations in which subjects will simply misrepresent events that occurred in their lives. Subjects may provide false information because of concerns about social desirability, feelings of personal embarrassment, or an intent to sabotage the research project. However, this criticism could be leveled against all research techniques involving human subjects. Researchers generally consider inaccurate information an unavoidable element of the research process because they usually lack the time or resources to verify information obtained from subjects (Babbie 2000; Menard 1991).

Although these limitations, especially the latter, cannot be overcome, retrospective data collection techniques have become more rigorous and systematic over the past decade. Researchers have developed more elaborate and consistent strategies to assist respondents in organizing and accurately recalling a wide range of information (Axinn et al. 1999; Freedman et al. 1988; Menard 1991; Parry et al. 1999). Thus, in doing longitudinal research there are many strengths and weaknesses of both prospective and retrospective designs. To fully investigate the relationship between background factors, criminal embeddedness, and adult outcomes, it appears that a retrospective life history would provide the best source of data.

SAMPLE

In this dissertation, I use data on 4,445 males convicted in federal courts derived from the study *Sentencing in Eight United States District Courts, 1973-1978*, originally conducted by Brian Forst and William Rhodes.¹ Forst and Rhodes selected a sample of pre-sentence investigation reports (PSIs) for offenders sentenced in eight federal district courts between 1973 and 1978. The eight districts, located in New Jersey, Eastern New York, Connecticut, Northern

¹ The original intent of Forst and Rhodes was to study sentencing differences between white-collar and common federal offenders. The data were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR #8622). Neither the original collectors of the data nor ICPSR assume any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented in this study.

Ohio, Middle Florida, Western Oklahoma, Northern New Mexico, and Northern California, were selected to represent variation in regional location and size. Offenders in the sample were convicted for one of ten different types of federal crimes between 1973 and 1978. The most recent conviction, hereafter referred to as the selection offense, qualified offenders for inclusion in the sample. Six of the offenses, often classified as white-collar crimes, were bank embezzlement, bribery, false claims and statements, income tax violations, mail fraud, and postal embezzlement. The remaining four were common crimes that included bank robbery, homicide, narcotics offenses, and postal forgery. Specifically, the most recent 120 PSI reports per offense from each of the five largest districts and the most recent 40 PSI reports per offense from the three smaller districts were selected for the sample.

Pre-sentence investigation reports are a rich data source to which researchers typically do not have access (for one other exception, see Weisburd et al. 1991). PSIs are prepared by probation officers to give judges a well-rounded picture of convicted defendants. For each offender, data are available on early life variables, such as family background and school performance, and adult outcomes, such as income, assets, education, occupational stability, marital status, physical and mental health status, and residential stability. The data collected on the criminal histories of offenders are of special importance to this study. The PSIs contained detailed information on up to twenty previous criminal justice contacts including juvenile arrests. The year, type of offense, disposition of the case, and sentence for each previous arrest were recorded.

The PSIs collected by Forst and Rhodes may be treated as retrospective life histories. The strength of using PSIs as a data source is that they were created from interviews with offenders and from official criminal and public records. Unlike in traditional retrospective life history studies, probation officers have the legal authority to compel defendants to provide accurate information. Probation officers also have access to the official records of defendants including their educational, work, financial, and offending histories. Thus, the timing of previous arrests, convictions, periods of incarceration, marriage, employment, and other events, even if incorrectly recalled by defendants, was verified for accuracy with official records. And, because this information must be shared with defense counsel, the information is expected to be as accurate as possible. Overall, the rich information contained in the PSIs of the 4,445 males in the sample allows for a unique investigation of the relationship between background factors, criminal embeddedness, and adult outcomes.

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

There are three dependent variables in this study that represent adult outcomes emphasized in the American Dream. The first dependent variable is an economic aspect of the American Dream that is called financial well-being. It is a composite measure of four separate variables meant to capture individuals' income and wealth. This variable does not fully measure socio-economic status (SES), but captures aspects of SES related to income and assets. The financial well-being variables are defendants' average monthly income, total assets, home

ownership, and car ownership. Average monthly income during the past year before incarceration was measured as a six-category interval scale with categories \$0, \$1-200, \$201-400, \$401-600, \$601-1,000, and more than \$1,000. Total amount of defendants' assets was also measured with a six-category scale. The values were \$0, \$1-500, \$501-1000, \$1001-5,000, \$5,001-10,000, and more than \$10,000. These dollar values may seem small by contemporary standards, but represented the common distribution in the 1970s when the data were collected. These dollar values would be about 2.5 times higher today (American Institute for Economic Research 1999). Both home and car ownership were measured as dichotomous variables (0 = No, 1 = Yes). Because the four variables are measured with different scales, factor analysis was performed to determine if a common factor emerged (see Table 3).² I used a maximum likelihood solution with varimax rotation and list-wise deletion for missing values. Results indicated that all four variables strongly loaded on one factor. I then used the SPSS procedure to save the values of the common factor as a new variable to be used as a dependent variable in ordinary least-squares regression models (SPSS Base Manual 1999). This new variable is referred to as financial well-being.

The second dependent variable is occupational stability, another economic outcome associated with the American Dream. It is consistent with the American Dream's focus on individualism and self-sufficiency. Occupational stability refers to the tendency to maintain steady employment. In the present

² All tables appear in the Appendix.

economy, however, most individuals will change jobs at least once during their careers; many will make several changes in employment. Thus, occupational stability is not simply the ability for individuals to keep one job for a long period of time, but the ability to remain employed regardless of how many times they change jobs. In addition, having a stable job is typically a prerequisite for establishing financial well-being. In this study, occupational stability is measured with a single item that asked for the defendant's employment history over the past two years. Response categories were steady employment or student, regular employment or student with some periods of unemployment, half employment and half unemployment, regular unemployment with some periods of employment, and steady unemployment. The first two and latter three categories were collapsed to create a dichotomous measure of occupational stability (0 = Instability, 1 = Stability).

The third area of adult outcomes is community involvement. Community involvement is a non-financial aspect of the American Dream. It is the degree to which individuals are involved and integrated in their local communities. Weisburd et al. (1991, 2001) refer to this concept as conventionality. As discussed in the previous chapter, nearly all of the research on the effects of criminal justice contact uses only financial adult outcomes (South and Messner 2000). The use of community involvement as an adult outcome allows for a determination of whether criminal embeddedness has similar effects on financial versus non-financial adult outcomes. The three measures of community involvement are church attendance, involvement in church and religious

activities, and involvement in social and community groups. Church attendance was measured with an ordinal-level scale with categories of none or almost none, attends irregularly, or attends regularly. Involvement in church and religious activities and involvement in social and community groups were measured with simple dichotomous variables (0 = No, 1 = Yes). Because the three variables were measured with different scales, I conducted a factor analysis on the variables to determine if a common factor emerged (see Table 16). This analysis showed that all three variables strongly loaded on one factor. As with the financial well-being measures, the common factor was saved as a variable to be used in later OLS regression analyses.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The independent variables for this study are arranged by the four conceptual categories of individual background, criminal embeddedness, educational attainment, and age. The background variables include family disadvantage and race. Three variables are used to measure family disadvantage: poverty, neglect or abuse, and criminal record of family members. For poverty, a dichotomous measure was used that asked if the defendant's parents or guardians had difficulty providing the necessities of life (0 = No, 1 = Yes). The neglect/abuse variable asked if the defendant was an abused, neglected, or abandoned child (0 = No, 1 = Yes). The final variable asked for the criminal record of the family members with whom the defendant was raised. Response categories were 0 family members with a criminal record, 1 family

member with a criminal record, and 2 or more family members with a criminal record. The final two categories were then collapsed to create a simple indicator of family criminality (0 = No criminal family members, 1 = 1 or more criminal family members).

Race was measured with one seven-category nominal scale with categories white, black, American Indian, Chinese, Japanese, other, and corporation. All defendants identified as corporations were eliminated and the seven categories were collapsed into a dichotomous measure of white and non-white. I eliminated the small number of non-whites who were not black (0 = White, 1 = Black) because of the lack of theory on the criminal justice experiences and adult outcomes of racial minority groups other than blacks, and to allow for a direct comparison between whites and blacks.

Second, there are three separate measures of criminal embeddedness. These are defendants' age at first arrest (age of onset), total number of prior arrests, and total length of time sentenced for all previous offenses. These three variables reflect defendants' overall contact with the criminal justice system and the degree to which they are embedded in the system.

Third, educational attainment is measured with a four-category interval scale. The categories are less than high school, high school degree or equivalent, some college, and bachelors degree or higher. Educational attainment is included in the models because it represents a pro-social life event that may affect eventual outcomes and is important as a control variable.

Fourth, I include defendants' current age at the time of the selection offense. As noted in Chapter 3, prior research in this area typically does not account for age or, because of cohort data, has little variation in age. Age is important to include in the models to test whether it is possible to recover from the effects of criminal embeddedness.

Age-Graded Independent Variables

Elder (1995, 1996) argues that the timing of life events is important for individual development. In criminology, there is evidence to suggest that the timing of crime-related life events conditions their effects on many adult outcomes. Macmillan's (2000) recent study of the relationship between the timing of violent victimization and adult income is instructive for my study. Macmillan grouped subjects from the National Youth Survey into five age categories of 0-17, 18-19, 20-24, 25-29, and 30 and older. Dummy variables were created for each age category to indicate whether a violent victimization occurred in that age range. He found that individuals victimized in the 0-17 and 18-19 age categories had significantly lower incomes later in life. For individuals victimized in the other age categories, violent victimization had no effect on future income. Macmillan's (2000) study demonstrates how being a victim of a violent crime can have different effects on individuals depending on when in the life course the victimization occurs. He argues that individuals under age 19 who are just beginning, or have not yet begun, the transition to adulthood are affected

more adversely by a violent victimization than individuals who are older and have had more time to become established financially and socially (Macmillan 2000).

To specifically account for the timing of criminal embeddedness in this study, I created age-graded measures of first arrest and first incarceration. The first variable is called early arrest and is a dichotomous measure of the timing of first arrest. I created this variable by taking the continuous measure of age of onset used in the previous analyses and grouping offenders into two different categories. Offenders with at least one previous arrest whose first arrest occurred before age 24 were coded as 1, while offenders whose first arrest occurred after age 24 and individuals with no previous arrests were coded as 0. Early arrest thus is a dummy variable for whether the first arrest occurred early in life.

I created a measure of early incarceration in the same manner. The age at first incarceration was calculated for all offenders and then offenders were grouped into two different categories. I assigned a value of 1 to individuals who had at least one previous incarceration and who had their first incarceration before age 24, and a value of 0 to individuals who had one or more incarcerations but were age 24 or older at the time of the first incarceration. Individuals who had never been incarcerated also received a value of 0. Thus, this variable is coded so that it indicates whether or not subjects were incarcerated early in life.

Three issues concerning the creation of the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness deserve further discussion. First, the age of 24 was

chosen as a cutoff because it is commonly considered to fall at the end of the age-crime curve (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990) and because it is near the average age when individuals finish college, obtain full-time employment, get married, and settle into adult roles (Macmillan 2000).

Second, a distinction is made between individuals with previous arrests and incarcerations and individuals who were not arrested and incarcerated until the selection offense because of concerns about temporal order. The adult outcome variables in the data were measured at the time offenders were sentenced for the selection offense. For individuals who had never been arrested or incarcerated before, contact with the criminal justice system would not affect their adult outcomes. Additionally, I believe that it is appropriate to lump together individuals who were arrested or incarcerated later in life with individuals who had no previous arrests or incarcerations because the purpose of the age-graded variables is to determine whether a first arrest or first incarceration early in life has a negative effect on adult outcomes. The comparison for each dummy variable is between individuals who had an event happen to them (an arrest or incarceration before age 24) versus individuals who did not. Thus, individuals who did not have arrests or incarcerations prior to the selection offense were given a value of 0 for the early arrest and early incarceration variables.

Third, I should note that there are additional ways of capturing the timing of criminal embeddedness. I tried several approaches before settling on the one reported here. Two of the alternative approaches are described below. In one

iteration, I created one variable that indicated whether individuals had any previous arrests (yes = 1) and one that indicated whether there were any previous incarcerations (yes = 1). Next, I created one dummy variable for whether the first arrest took place before age 24 (yes = 1) and one for whether the first incarceration took place before age 24 (yes = 1). Finally, I created one dummy variable for whether the first arrest took place after age 24 (yes = 1) and one for whether the first incarceration took place after age 24 (yes = 1). In a sample regression analysis, I excluded the indicators of ever being arrested and ever being incarcerated so that they could be used as reference categories for the indicators of early arrest, late arrest, early incarceration, and late incarceration. The results of this analysis were nearly identical to the results reported in Chapters 5 through 7 where I use only one indicator for timing of first arrest and one indicator for timing of first incarceration. Additionally, there were problems with multicollinearity when all four age-graded measures were used in the same model.

In another iteration, I created several dummy variables to represent criminal embeddedness during different age categories as in Macmillan's (2000) study. I grouped offenders into age categories of 0-17, 18-24, 25-44, and 45 and older and then created indicator variables for each category. Two problems emerged when I used this approach in a sample regression model. First, because my data lack a true reference group of individuals who have never been arrested or incarcerated, the OLS coefficients for the dummy indicators of timing of first arrest and timing of first incarceration are difficult to interpret. This is

because each category is compared to an average of the three remaining categories. For example, the coefficient for individuals ages 18-24 at the time of their first arrest is compared to an average of the 0-17, 25-44, and 45 and older categories. The coefficient thus would not accurately answer the question of whether a first arrest in early adulthood has a negative effect on adult outcomes. Second, serious problems with multicollinearity occurred when I used all four age-graded measures of first arrest in the same model. When I added the four age-graded measures of first incarceration to the same model, the multicollinearity problems were exacerbated. In the end, I determined that the most parsimonious, yet still statistically appropriate, method was to use only two age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness: one dummy variable for whether the first arrest took place before age 24 and one dummy variable for whether the first incarceration took place before age 24.

ORDER OF THE ANALYSIS

For each of the three dependent variables, hierarchical ordinary least-squares (OLS) regression or hierarchical logistic regression is used to test a four-step model. In the first block, the four background variables of race, poverty, neglect/abuse, and criminal family members are entered. The three measures of criminal embeddedness are entered in the next block, followed by educational attainment in the third block. The fourth block adds the age of offenders at the time of the selection offense. Thus, the final model includes individual background, criminal embeddedness, educational attainment, and age to predict

an adult outcome. This procedure is used to determine how the measures of criminal embeddedness affect adult outcomes controlling for individual background, educational attainment, and age.

After the initial test of the model for each of the three adult outcomes, I perform separate analyses by race. As described in Chapter 2, there is extensive evidence to suggest that blacks encounter unique barriers to success in the adult stratification system. Black offenders, especially poor black offenders, typically face greater odds of being convicted, incarcerated, and given longer sentences than white offenders. Some researchers suggest that poor blacks have more difficulties than whites adapting back to society when released from prison (Albonetti 1997; Irwin 1985; Sampson and Lauritsen 1997; Steffensmeier, Ulmer, and Kramer 1998). Thus, it is possible that the effects of background factors and criminal embeddedness on adult outcomes may be different for blacks than for whites. In fact, in his original study of criminal embeddedness, Hagan (1993) notes that one of the limitations of his study is that the Cambridge dataset only included whites, and thus he could not compare the effects of criminal embeddedness on whites versus blacks.

Next, consistent with the life-course perspective, I run a model for all offenders that incorporates both age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. This additional analysis will allow me to determine the importance of the timing of first arrest and first incarceration on adult outcomes. Finally, I run the same model with age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness separately for whites and for blacks.

SUMMARY OF DATASET AND ITS USEFULNESS FOR THIS STUDY

Overall, many unique features make this dataset appropriate for a study of the effects of background factors and criminal embeddedness on a wide range of adult outcomes. The sample is neither a high-risk nor a normal population sample. As noted in the previous chapter, both types of samples present problems. The Forst and Rhodes sample has none of the problems endemic to high-risk or normal population samples. Individuals in the sample have a wide array of offending experiences and contact with the criminal justice system. Many individuals are first-time offenders while others have four or more arrests. Some individuals have as many as twenty previous arrests. The ages at which these arrests and periods of incarceration occur vary widely.

The sample is also diverse in terms of age, family background, race, and educational attainment. The breakdown of these demographics are much closer to the normal population than those in the high-risk samples that dominate the life-course literature on crime. The PSIs provide a wealth of information on individuals from birth to the time of the selection offense that made them eligible for the sample. Each PSI can be treated as a retrospective life history of an offender. Because probation officers have the legal authority to compel truthful answers and can check official records to verify all information, the data are less susceptible to the errors that usually accompany retrospective life histories. Although there are limitations of the Forst and Rhodes dataset that will be pointed out later, it provides a unique avenue for exploring the relationships

among race, family disadvantage, criminal embeddedness, and a wide range of adult outcomes. In Chapters 5 through 7, I turn to the results of the analysis, arranged by three separate adult outcomes.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS: FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE SAMPLE

Descriptive statistics for the independent variables in this study are presented in Table 1. There are a total of 4,445 offenders in the sample. About 70 percent of the offenders are white and 30 percent are black. Although this racial distribution may seem unusual for a prison sample, recall that the offenders were convicted in federal courts. For the family disadvantage variables, significant differences are observed by race. Approximately 16 percent of whites reported being poor as children while almost 28 percent of blacks reported being poor. For abuse and neglect, about 10 percent of whites reported being abused or neglected compared to 16 percent for blacks. Only about 9 percent of whites had one or more criminal family members while nearly 21 percent of blacks had criminal family members. For educational attainment, about 33 percent of whites had some college experience, while only 15 percent of blacks had college experience. About 33 percent of whites failed to complete high school, while the majority of blacks (55 percent) did not complete high school.

Major differences emerge by race for the three measures of criminal embeddedness. Whites had an average age of first arrest of 31, while for blacks the average age at first arrest was 22. On average, blacks had over twice as many previous arrests compared to whites. Likewise, blacks had nearly three times as much time spent in prison as whites. Whereas, whites had spent an

average of only eight months in prison, blacks had an average of nearly two years of incarceration. The current age of offenders is significantly different for whites and blacks. At the time of the selection offense, whites were an average of about 38 years old. The average age for blacks was 31.

In Table 2, I report the type of offense committed by individuals that made them eligible for inclusion in the original sample (i.e. the selection offense). The table reports the percentages for each type of offense for all offenders and by race. Overall, the most commonly committed offenses are robbery (17 percent), narcotics offenses (13 percent), and forgery (12 percent). For whites, the most common offenses are narcotics offenses (11 percent), income tax violations (10 percent) and mail fraud (7 percent). For blacks, the most common crimes are robbery (9 percent), forgery (6 percent), and homicide (4 percent).

Before running the models that appear in this and the following two chapters, I created interaction terms for all the variables included in the analysis. Results indicated that the higher-order interactions were not significantly related to financial well-being, occupational stability, or community involvement. I also ran collinearity diagnostics for all of the models to determine if there were problems with multicollinearity among the independent variables. As I discussed in the previous chapter, there were multicollinearity problems when I used four different dummy variables for the timing of first arrest and first incarceration. The variance inflation factor (VIF), condition index, and tolerance level were all much higher than commonly accepted levels and thus the validity of regression coefficients would be questionable. To address these issues, I used only one

dummy variable for the timing of first arrest and one for the timing of first incarceration and subsequently did not have any problems with multicollinearity.

ANALYSIS WITH CONTINUOUS MEASURES OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

Results of the factor analysis used to create the financial well-being variable are presented in Table 3. Table 4 presents results of the hierarchical OLS regression procedure on financial well-being for all offenders. This first model includes only race and the three measures of family disadvantage. Of these, race, neglect/abuse, and criminal family members are all significant predictors. Specifically, blacks have significantly lower financial well-being than whites and those individuals who were abused or neglected and who had one or more criminal family members had significantly less financial well-being than those who did not. In the second model, the three measures of criminal embeddedness are included. The addition of these variables more than doubles the R^2 from .141 to .329. Age of onset, number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated are all significant predictors of financial well-being in the expected directions. Individuals with an early age of onset are significantly less likely to be financially stable than those who had a first arrest later in life. Likewise, offenders with higher numbers of arrests and large amounts of time spent incarcerated have significantly less well-being than others. The addition of the criminal embeddedness variables changes the effects of the background factors. Race remains highly significant, although the effect is decreased somewhat.

However, neglect/abuse and criminal family members are reduced to non-significance with the addition of the embeddedness measures. These results suggest that the effects of background variables on financial well-being are mediated by criminal embeddedness.

In the third model, educational attainment is added. Education is a pro-social life event that typically has positive effects on financial positions in adulthood. As expected, educational attainment is positively related to financial well-being as high levels of education significantly predict high levels of well-being. With the addition of educational attainment, the measures of criminal embeddedness remain nearly the same. Age of onset and total time incarcerated remain highly significant in the same directions as in the previous models; number of prior arrests becomes slightly less significant (beta = $-.045$ versus $-.059$). Adding educational attainment did not change the effects of the background factors. Only race remains a significant predictor of financial well-being.

In the final model, age is included to control for maturation and to test whether the effects of embeddedness decay with age. This model explains about 37 percent of the variance in financial well-being, and of all the variables included, age has the strongest effect. Specifically, there is a positive, linear relationship between age and well-being. The addition of age does not affect the background factors as only race remains significant. Likewise, educational attainment remains significant. The most interesting results concern the

measures of criminal embeddedness. Controlling for age greatly reduces the size of the effect of age of onset, although the variable remains highly significant.

Conversely, the addition of age greatly increases the size of the effects of number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated. This is an interesting finding. It appears that once age is controlled, the timing of offenders' first arrest becomes less important than how entrenched they are in the criminal justice system through multiple arrests and time incarcerated. This finding regarding age suggests that the effects of an early age of onset may decay over time, and thus individuals may recover somewhat from an early first arrest so long as they do not become deeply embedded in the system through multiple arrests and multiple years spent in prison. However, results suggest that the effects of previous arrests and time incarcerated do not decay over time but, in fact, are actually more important once age is controlled.

Given the strength of race in the previous model with all offenders, it is important to investigate whether the models of financial well-being are the same for whites as for blacks. In Table 5, results of the hierarchical OLS regression on financial well-being for whites are presented. In the first model, those who were neglected or abused and those with criminal family members both had significantly lower financial well-being. The measure of poverty was not significant.

In the second model, all three measures of criminal embeddedness are highly significant in the expected directions. The addition of the embeddedness variables decreases the effect of neglect/abuse to marginal significance

(beta = $-.051$ versus $-.155$) and takes away the effect of criminal family members.

In the third model, educational attainment is positively related to financial well-being and the effects of all the other variables remain the same. In the final model, age has a significant positive relationship with well-being. The effects of educational attainment do not change with the control for age, and the effects of neglect/abuse disappear. The most important change is with the measures of criminal embeddedness. With the addition of age, age of onset goes from being the strongest predictor in the third model to being non-significant in the final model. At the same time, controlling for age increases the overall effects of number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated. This indicates that with age comes the possibility of financial recovery from the effects of an early age of onset so long as individuals do not have subsequent arrests and periods of incarceration. The effects of multiple arrests and time incarcerated do not decay with age. In fact, they are strengthened once age is controlled.

In the same analysis for blacks, a similar pattern emerges (see Table 6). In the first model, only neglect/abuse is significant. Interestingly, in the second model, the only significant measure of criminal embeddedness is age of onset. Black offenders with an early age of onset have significantly lower financial well-being than those whose first arrest occurs later in life. Neither number of prior arrests nor length of time incarcerated significantly predict financial well-being. The addition of the embeddedness variables takes away the effect of being abused or neglected.

In the third model, educational attainment and age of onset are both highly significant, while the effects of all the other variables remain unchanged. When age is controlled in the final model, several interesting things occur. Having criminal family members becomes significant. However, the effect is relatively small and the variable was close to significance in the previous models. This may indicate that exposure to the criminal lifestyle of family members decreases children's chances of a legitimate lifestyle in adulthood. Educational attainment remains positively related to financial well-being. As in the analysis for whites, the effects of age of onset disappear once age is controlled. Age of onset is the most robust predictor in the third model, but is not significant in the final model. At the same time, number of prior arrests and time incarcerated become highly significant in the final model.

Summary of Analysis with Continuous

Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

Overall, the patterns by race are very similar. The measure of poverty was not a significant predictor of financial well-being for whites or blacks. Educational attainment and age are both positively related to financial well-being for whites and blacks. Being neglected or abused appears to have more of an effect on financial well-being for whites than blacks, although the variable is not significant in the final model for either group. Having criminal family members is significant in the final model for blacks but is only significant in the first model for whites.

The overall effects of the measures of criminal embeddedness are also similar by race. Without controlling for age, age of onset is a strong predictor of financial well-being for whites and blacks. Regardless of race, a first arrest early in life significantly decreases the overall level of financial well-being. However, number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated for blacks are not significant until age is included in the final model. This lack of effect of arrests and incarceration may be consistent with the idea of race serving as a "master status" for blacks (Miller 1996; Wilson 1987; West 1994). Recall that race was a robust predictor of financial well-being in the models with all offenders (see Table 4). Thus, it could be that the effects of race on financial well-being for blacks are so strong that multiple arrests and incarcerations add little as explanatory factors until age is accounted for in the final model.

Once age is controlled in the final model, the same pattern for the effects of criminal embeddedness on financial well-being becomes evident for whites and blacks. Specifically, in the quest for financial well-being among whites and blacks, there is the possibility of a recovery from an early start in crime as time passes. Recovery from an early first arrest is not an automatic process, but a possibility. Additionally, the effects of multiple arrests and time spent in prison do not decay with age. In fact, the effects of these measures of embeddedness intensify and become more significant with age. Thus, there is the possibility of resiliency after a first arrest, but only if there is not subsequent entrenchment in the criminal justice system through additional arrests and periods of incarceration.

To illustrate, imagine two males age 40 who are identical on all background factors and educational attainment, and who have the same number of prior arrests and the same length of time incarcerated. For these two individuals, the age at first arrest would not be an important predictor of their overall financial well-being. Whether they were arrested early or later in life would not have a significant effect on their financial standing. Conversely, if two individuals were identical on age, background variables, educational attainment, total time incarcerated, and had the same age of onset, the number of prior arrests of each individual would have a significant impact on their financial well-being. Specifically, the individual with the greater number of previous arrests would have significantly lower financial well-being than the individual with fewer arrests. The same relationship would be in place if two individuals were identical on all variables except for total time incarcerated. All else being equal, the individual with more time incarcerated would be much worse off financially than the individual with less time incarcerated.

Thus, for whites and blacks, results suggest the possibility of a financial recovery from an early age of onset as age increases. Unfortunately, the data only allow me to speculate on what happens over time that reduces the injurious effects of an early first arrest. One explanation is that, with age, individuals are able to augment both human capital and social capital. The most obvious improvement in human capital would be the acquisition of a formal college degree. Monk-Turner (1989) found that a college degree tends to serve as a buffer against the negative effects on income of criminal justice contact.

Sampson and Laub (1996) found that entering the military often minimizes the effects of early trouble with the criminal justice system and may lead to desistance from crime.

Increases in social capital may come in the form of obtaining a good job, establishing legitimate work connections, entering or rekindling a strong marriage, or restoring strong relationships with parents and other family members. Sampson and Laub (1993) found that attachment to spouse and attachment to work were two of the strongest predictors of adult desistance from crime and the return to a conventional lifestyle (see also Shover 1985). The idea is that the creation or restoration of social bonds may reduce the effects of previous arrests and periods of incarceration and help individuals restore some sense of financial well-being (Sampson and Laub 1993).

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that although they seem to respond similarly on the measures of criminal embeddedness, blacks and whites are much different in terms of overall financial well-being. The average financial well-being score is .238 for whites and -.507 for blacks. Recall that these values are standardized from a factor analysis, and thus are not meaningful as dollar amounts. What is important is the size of the difference between the values for whites versus blacks. A simple *t* test reveals that the financial well-being averages by race are significantly different at $p < .001$. Thus, for blacks, race alone has a strong, harmful effect on their financial well-being as they fare much worse than whites.

ANALYSIS WITH AGE-GRADED MEASURES OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

Consistent with the life-course approach, it is also important to take into account the timing of events and how they affect other aspects of development. As noted in the previous chapter, I created two age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness. The first is a dummy variable for whether the first arrest occurred before age 24 (yes = 1). The second is a dummy variable for whether the first incarceration occurred before age 24 (yes = 1). As in the previous analyses, I use OLS regression to explore multiple relationships and to determine how adding key variables affects the explanatory power of the model.

In Table 7, I present results of the regression models on financial well-being for all offenders using both age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. In the first model, I include all of the individual background variables, educational attainment, age, and only the continuous measures of criminal embeddedness: age of onset, number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated. This model is the same as the final model presented in Table 4 and is included for a comparison with the second model. Race, educational attainment, and age are all highly significant in the expected directions. Specifically, blacks have significantly lower well-being than whites; individuals who are younger and less educated have significantly lower well-being than older and more educated individuals. All three measures of criminal embeddedness are also highly significant. Individuals with an early age of onset, higher numbers of prior arrests, and longer periods of incarceration have

significantly lower financial well-being than individuals who were older at the time of their first arrest, individuals with few prior arrests, and individuals with little time spent incarcerated. Number of prior arrests has the largest overall effect.

In the second model, I include the background variables, educational attainment, age, and only the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness: early arrest and early incarceration. As in the first model, race, educational attainment, and age are all highly significant in the expected directions. Both of the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are strong predictors of well-being. Individuals whose first arrest was before age 24 and individuals whose first incarceration was before age 24 have significantly lower financial well-being than individuals who were first arrested and incarcerated later in life.

From the first two models, it is evident that criminal embeddedness has a strong, detrimental effect on financial well-being both when using raw numbers for age of onset, previous arrests, and time incarcerated and when using age-graded measures that account for the timing of first arrest and first incarceration. However, it is worth considering whether the effects of the different criminal embeddedness measures change when they are all used in the same model. In the third and fourth models, I use all of the background variables, educational attainment, age, and the continuous measures of embeddedness, while adding the age-graded measures of embeddedness one at a time. This is done to determine whether the age-graded variables have unique effects on financial well-being, even when controlling for all of the background variables, plus

number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated.³ In the third model, race, educational attainment, and age all remain significant in the expected directions. Likewise, number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated both have strong negative effects on well-being. The indicator of early first arrest is highly significant as well. Individuals whose first arrest occurred before age 24 have significantly lower well-being than individuals whose first arrest occurred after age 24. This model explains nearly 38 percent of the variance in financial well-being.

In the final model, I add the age-graded measure of incarceration. Race, educational attainment, age, number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated remain highly significant. For the age-graded measures of embeddedness, early arrest remains highly significant while the indicator of early incarceration has a negative coefficient, but is not statistically significant. Thus, in the full model with four measures of criminal embeddedness, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, and early arrest all have strong, negative effects on financial well-being, while early incarceration is not significantly related to financial well-being.

I should caution the reader, however, that this finding does not necessarily mean that the timing of first incarceration is unimportant. The early incarceration variable was highly significant in model 2 with all of the controls and the early arrest variable. I also performed one additional analysis (results not presented in

³ In the third and fourth models, I dropped the continuous age of onset measure because of its similarity with the age-graded measure of early arrest and because collinearity diagnostics indicated that the two variables were highly collinear.

tabular form) that was the same as the final model in Table 7, except that I dropped the early arrest variable. In this model, early incarceration was still not statistically significant, but the size of its effect increased from -.014 to -.033. This issue will be raised again near the end of the chapter.

As in the analysis with only continuous measures of criminal embeddedness for all offenders, race had a large effect on financial well-being. Thus, it is important to conduct separate analyses by race. In Tables 8 and 9, respectively, I present results of financial well-being models for whites and for blacks with age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. The results by race are nearly identical, only differing in the size of effects for certain variables. Thus, I discuss them simultaneously.

In the first model for whites and blacks, the background variables, educational attainment, age, and the three continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are included. Of these, educational attainment, age, number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated are all significant predictors of financial well-being. For whites and blacks, those with higher levels of education and those who are older tend to be significantly better off financially than young, less educated individuals. Likewise, whites and blacks with higher numbers of prior arrests and longer times incarcerated have significantly less financial well-being than individuals who are less entrenched in the criminal justice system (for blacks, number of prior arrests is sig. at $p < .05$).

The second model is the same except that the continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are dropped and the age-graded measures are included.

In this model, educational attainment and age both have positive coefficients and remain highly significant for blacks and whites. Both of the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are highly significant. Whites and blacks whose first arrest occurs before age 24 have significantly lower financial well-being than individuals whose first arrest occurs after age 24. Likewise, whites and blacks whose first incarceration occurs before age 24 have significantly lower financial well-being than individuals whose first incarceration occurs after age 24.

The third model includes the background variables, educational attainment, age, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, and early arrest. The fourth model includes the same variables plus the indicator of early incarceration. These models allow me to determine whether the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness add unique explanatory power even when controlling for the two continuous measures of embeddedness.

In the third model, educational attainment and age remain highly significant and both continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are significant as well (for blacks, number of prior arrests is sig. at $p < .05$). The indicator of early arrest does make a unique contribution to the model and has a strong, negative relationship with financial well-being.

In the final model, educational attainment, age, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, and early arrest remain significant in the same directions. For whites and blacks, the indicator of early incarceration has a negative coefficient but is not statistically significant. Thus, identical patterns emerged for

whites and blacks in the sample. Used alone, both the continuous and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness significantly reduce financial well-being. When both types of variables are used in the same model, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, and early arrest are all highly significant, but early incarceration is not.

Summary of Analysis with Age-Graded

Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

The models of financial well-being using age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness produce several interesting findings. Because the findings are identical for whites and blacks, my discussion will pertain to the entire sample. The use of age-graded versus continuous measures of criminal embeddedness does not change the effects of the background variables. In the models for all offenders (see Table 7), race, educational attainment, and age were all highly significant when using both age-graded and continuous measures of embeddedness. Likewise, poverty, neglect/abuse, and criminal family members were not significant in any of the models.

When used alone, both the continuous and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness significantly impact financial well-being (Table 7, models 1 and 2). The results provide strong support for Hagan's (1993) concept of criminal embeddedness. They show that contact with the criminal justice system, however operationalized, has a strong, negative effect on financial well-being. Continuous measures of criminal embeddedness including age of onset, total

number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness including early arrest and early incarceration revealed the same injurious effects of contact with the criminal justice system on the financial lives of individuals.

The finding that is more difficult to interpret relates to the measure of early incarceration. As seen in the final model of Table 7, when continuous and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are included in the same model, both continuous measures (number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated) are significant while only one of the age-graded measures (early arrest) is significant. The question is why there is no effect of early incarceration in the final model. I can offer three possible explanations. First, a large percentage of offenders in the sample had never been incarcerated and for those who had previous incarcerations, their sentences were typically short. This is especially true for offenders who were incarcerated for white-collar crimes. Although blacks in the sample had spent more time incarcerated than whites, the average time incarcerated was still just under two years. The only exception is homicide offenders who spent long periods of time in prison. Perhaps the effects of incarceration accumulate and may not show up for individuals who have spent only small amounts of time in prison.

Second, the timing of first arrest may be such a strong predictor that the timing of first incarceration does not have a unique effect on financial well-being, especially when controlling for number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated. The finding that timing of first arrest is a better predictor of non-

criminal adult outcomes than timing of first incarceration is not without precedent in the literature. Both Bushway (1996) and Nagin and Waldfogel (1995) found that arrests have more significant effects on income and job stability than incarceration. They argue that early entry into the criminal justice system through an arrest has such a strong, stigmatizing effect on individuals that an incarceration attached to that first arrest has little additional impact. In a related vein, many researchers find that age of onset is the most powerful predictor of future criminal acts and incarceration, regardless of whether the first arrest leads to incarceration (Farrington 1979, 1986; Loeber and Le Blanc 1990; Sampson and Laub 1993).

Third, it may be that the similarity between the timing of first arrest and timing of first incarceration variables creates problems with collinearity. Results from the collinearity diagnostics revealed that the condition index, VIF, and tolerance level were not in the dangerous range for these two variables, but did indicate moderate problems with multicollinearity. Thus, because the timing of first arrest and timing of first incarceration are the same for a sizable percentage of the sample, it may be that the strength of first arrest takes away some potential explanatory power of first incarceration. As noted earlier, when I dropped the early arrest variable and used only the measure of early incarceration, early incarceration was still not statistically significant, but the size of its effect greatly increased. My results may demonstrate how powerful first contact with the criminal justice system is considering that a large percentage of

offenders were not incarcerated following their first arrest, yet the timing of first arrest had the largest effect of all the measures of criminal embeddedness.

Decaying Effects of Criminal Embeddedness. Finally, it is important to think about the question of whether the effects of criminal embeddedness decay with age. In the first set of results using only continuous measures of criminal embeddedness (see Tables 4-6), I found that the effect of age of onset is greatly reduced once age is controlled. This result suggested at least the possibility of recovery from an early first arrest so long as the person did not become more deeply embedded through additional arrests and multiple or long prison stints. Results from the analysis with age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness appear to clarify the relationship between age of onset and financial well-being. My interpretation is that the possibility of recovery from a first arrest applies only to individuals who are over age 24 at the time of their first arrest. I come to this conclusion because in the model with all background factors (including age) and three other measures of criminal embeddedness, the indicator variable for whether the first arrest took place before age 24 is highly significant (see Table 7, model 4). Individuals whose first arrest took place before age 24 had significantly lower financial status than individuals whose first arrest took place after age 24.

Individuals with an early arrest appear to face a sizable financial penalty that does not dissipate with age. Using only the continuous measure of age of onset hides the age-graded effect of first arrest and appears to imply a possible financial recovery for all offenders. However, results using the age-graded

measure of first arrest indicate that a financial recovery from a first arrest is only possible for individuals whose first arrest occurs after age 24.

The strong linear relationship between age and financial well-being also helps to explain my findings. As individuals age, they typically accrue resources and have opportunities to build both human and social capital. Individuals who are first arrested after age 24 have at least six years of adulthood to gain resources and to become established financially and socially. For people whose first arrest is before age 24, especially those arrested before age 18, there is simply not sufficient time for them to become embedded in legitimate work and social networks and to prevent a first arrest from proving disastrous to their financial well-being.

For the other measures of criminal embeddedness: number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated, I found that their negative effects on financial well-being do not decay with age. In fact, they remain consistent predictors of well-being and in some cases, the size of their effects increase once age and other variables are included in the model.

Results from this chapter indicate that, overall, the amount and timing of criminal embeddedness are both important predictors of the overall financial well-being of individuals in the sample. Although I find some possibility of financial recovery for individuals not arrested until after age 24, the results strongly support Hagan's (1993) concept of criminal embeddedness. Contact with the criminal justice system, especially when it occurs early in life, is a major life event that has a strong, deleterious effect on individuals' financial well-being.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS: OCCUPATIONAL STABILITY

ANALYSIS WITH CONTINUOUS MEASURES OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

In this chapter I examine a second financial dimension of the American Dream: occupational stability. Occupational stability is a dichotomous measure indicating whether individuals had been steadily employed for the past two years before the selection offense. It does not measure whether they stayed at the same job for two or more years but whether they were continuously employed over the past two years. Because the measure is dichotomous (stability = 1), I use logistic regression in all of the analyses.

In Table 10, I present results of hierarchical logistic regression on occupational stability for all offenders with only continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. In the first model, only the four background variables of race, poverty, neglect/abuse, and criminal family members are included. All four of the individual background factors significantly decrease the log odds of occupational stability. Of these, race has the strongest negative effect with blacks being significantly less likely to have continuous employment than whites. Individuals who were poor, neglected or abused, and had one or more criminal family members as children have significantly reduced odds of occupational stability compared to individuals who were more affluent, free from neglect and abuse, and not exposed to criminal family members as children.

In the second model, I add the three continuous measures of criminal embeddedness: age of onset, number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated. The addition of these variables has only a small effect on the background factors. Race continues to exert the strongest influence and poverty remains highly significant as well. The measure of neglect/abuse remains significant, but the size of its effect is reduced ($b = -.406$ versus $-.335$). All three measures of criminal embeddedness are significant. Offenders who have an early age of onset have significantly decreased odds of attaining occupational stability compared to those whose first arrest comes later in life. Likewise, individuals with higher numbers of arrests and longer periods of incarceration face significantly decreased odds of job stability, although total time incarcerated has a slightly smaller effect than prior arrests ($b = -.047$ for time incarcerated versus $b = -.106$ for prior arrests).

Educational attainment is added in the third model. Higher levels of educational attainment significantly increase the odds of occupational stability. In fact, individuals with the highest level of education are nearly one and a half times more likely to have stable jobs than those in the other education categories. With the control for educational attainment, race and having criminal family members remain highly significant, but the effect of poverty is reduced, ($b = -.335$ versus $-.235$) and the measure of neglect/abuse is no longer significant. The addition of educational attainment does not change the effects of the measures of criminal embeddedness. Age of onset, number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated remain strong predictors of occupational stability.

When age is added in the fourth model, several interesting things occur. First, age itself is significantly related to occupational stability. Not surprisingly, younger individuals have significantly decreased odds of having stable employment. With the addition of age, race, poverty, and having criminal family members are all highly significant in the expected directions and neglect/abuse remains unrelated to job stability. Age of onset is highly significant in the third model but is reduced to non-significance in the final model. The size of the effects of number of previous arrests and total time incarcerated are greatly increased and both significantly reduce the odds of job stability.

These results suggest that once age is controlled, there is some possibility of recovery from an early age of onset so long as individuals do not accrue additional arrests and spend additional time in prison. All other factors being equal, the age at which an individual is first arrested does not significantly reduce the odds of steady employment later in life. However, the effects of having multiple arrests and time spent in prison do not appear to decay with age. In fact, their effects are magnified once age is controlled.

Results from this analysis also demonstrate how powerful race is as a predictor of occupational stability. Race is the strongest variable in all four models as blacks have significantly reduced odds of stable employment compared to whites. To determine whether the variables in the model have different effects for whites versus blacks, I next estimate separate models by race.

Results of the logistic regression on occupational stability for whites are presented in Table 11. In the first model, all three background variables are highly significant. Individuals who were in poverty, were neglected or abused, and had criminal family members as children have substantially decreased odds of occupational stability.

In the second model, the three continuous measure of criminal embeddedness are added. With the addition of these measures, poverty and having criminal family members remain highly significant, while neglect/abuse fades to non-significance. Age of onset and number of prior arrests are both significant predictors of occupational stability. Individuals whose first arrest comes early in life and those with higher numbers of prior arrests have significantly reduced odds of job stability compared to individuals whose first arrest comes later in life and those with a small number of prior arrests. Individuals with longer periods of incarceration also face significantly decreased odds of job stability, although the size of its effect is not as large as that of the other measures of embeddedness.

Higher levels of educational attainment substantially increase the odds of occupational stability when added in the third model. The effects of all other variables in the model remain the same. Poverty, having criminal family members, age of onset, and number of prior arrests are all highly significant. Total time incarcerated is marginally significant and neglect/abuse is not significant.

In the final model, the addition of age changes the effects of multiple variables. Age is a significant predictor of job stability. Younger individuals have significantly decreased odds of job stability compared to older individuals. For the background variables, poverty remains highly significant, neglect/abuse remains unrelated to job stability, and the size of the effect of having criminal family members is reduced to marginal significance ($b = -.422$ versus $-.339$). As in the final model for all offenders, the addition of age reduces the effect of age of onset for whites. In fact, age of onset is no longer significant in the final model. The size of the effects of the two other measures of criminal embeddedness are larger in the final model than in the third model. Individuals with higher numbers of prior arrests and time incarcerated have significantly reduced odds of occupational stability. Finally, educational attainment remains a strong predictor as individuals with the highest level of education have significantly increased odds of job stability compared to individuals in the other education categories.

In Table 12, results of the same analysis for blacks are presented. When the individual background factors are entered in the first model, neglect/abuse and having criminal family members significantly decrease the odds of occupational stability, while poverty is not significant.

In the second model where the measures of criminal embeddedness are added, poverty remains non-significant, neglect/abuse fades to non-significance, and the effect of having criminal family members is reduced to marginal significance. Age of onset and number of prior arrests are both highly significant in the expected directions, but total time incarcerated is not significant.

Educational attainment is a strong predictor of job stability in the third model and does not change the effects of the other variables. In the final model, age is added. Age has a significant positive relationship with occupational stability as younger individuals have significantly decreased odds of stable employment. Having criminal family members is no longer significant, while poverty and neglect/abuse remain unrelated to job stability. Educational attainment remains highly significant as blacks with higher levels of educational attainment significantly increase their odds of job stability.

The effects of the measures of criminal embeddedness change with the addition of age. Age of onset is reduced to non-significance in the final model, while the effects of prior arrests and time incarcerated both increase in importance. Number of prior arrests remains highly significant and the size of its overall effect is greatly increased. Total time incarcerated, although not significant in the second and third models, becomes marginally significant ($b = -.031$ versus $-.076$) once age is controlled. This finding indicates a possible decaying effect of age at first arrest on later occupational stability. However, the effects of total number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated increase once age is controlled, thus indicating a powerful effect of these measures of criminal embeddedness.

**Summary of Analysis with Continuous
Measures of Criminal Embeddedness**

Overall, the models of occupational stability for whites and blacks have many similarities. Of the individual background measures, neglect/abuse is significant in the first model for whites and blacks but is unrelated to job stability in the three remaining models. Having criminal family members appears to be an important predictor of job stability for whites and blacks. This variable is significant in all four models for whites and in the first three models for blacks (sig. only at $p < .10$ in the final model for blacks). It appears that childhood exposure to criminal family members has a detrimental effect on adult occupational stability. This finding is consistent with lifestyle and learning theories that suggest that criminal lifestyles may have injurious effects on the peers and children of offenders (Walters 1990; Akers 1985). Because the criminal lifestyle is often incompatible with full-time employment, children of offenders may fail to learn the value of employment and instead see it as ephemeral and as something done only to "get by" in tough situations. The inconsistency in employment that tends to accompany a criminal lifestyle may be modeled by children when they become adults, and subsequently harm their chances for stable employment (Walters 1990; Akers 1985). The major difference between whites and blacks regarding the individual background factors is with the measure of poverty. For whites, individuals reared in poor households have significantly decreased odds of attaining stable employment in

adulthood. For blacks, however, poverty is not significant in any of the models. This difference in the effect of poverty by race may be related to the impact of race on occupational stability. It is well established in the stratification literature that race and social class often interact to affect economic adult outcomes (Baron 1994; Granovetter 1981; MacLeod 1995; Wilson 1987). It may be that race has such a strong and consistent effect on occupational stability for blacks (see Table 10) that poverty does not add any additional explanatory power. The converse may also be true. Because race actually increases the chances of occupational stability for whites, poverty is more likely to show up as a significant predictor. Additionally, as I discuss in the final chapter, poverty is a simple dichotomous measure of whether the offenders' parents had trouble providing the necessities of life. This measure does not truly capture social class or SES, and only provides a glimpse of individuals' social location.

Educational attainment and age are positively related to occupational stability for whites and blacks. Regardless of race, individuals who are younger and have less education have significantly reduced odds of attaining stable employment.

The overall effects of the measures of criminal embeddedness are nearly identical by race. Without controlling for age, age of onset is a strong predictor of occupational stability for whites and blacks. Regardless of race, a first arrest early in life significantly decreases the odds of occupational stability. However, total time incarcerated for blacks is not significant until age is included in the final model. As noted in the previous chapter, this lack of effect of incarceration may

be consistent with the idea of race serving as a master status for blacks (Wilson 1987; West 1994). Race was a robust predictor in the models with all offenders (see Table 10), and so it could be that the effect of race on occupational stability for blacks is so strong that total time incarcerated contributes little explanatory power until age is controlled in the final model.

Once age is controlled in the final model (see model 4, Tables 11 and 12) the same pattern for the effects of criminal embeddedness on occupational stability becomes evident for whites and blacks. Age of onset fades to non-significance in the final model and the size of the effects of number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated are greatly increased. This finding suggests at least the possibility that individuals can recover from an early start in crime and achieve occupational stability as time passes. Consider two individuals who are identical on all variables, including age, except that one had a first arrest at age 19 and one had a first arrest at age 33. My results appear to indicate that age of onset would not be a significant predictor of either individual's chances of later securing stable employment.

The negative effects of multiple arrests and time spent in prison, however, do not decay with age. In fact, these measures of criminal embeddedness become more significant with age. There is the possibility of resiliency after a first arrest, but only if there is not subsequent entrenchment in the criminal justice system through additional arrests and periods of incarceration.

As noted in the previous chapter, the data only allow me to speculate as to what happens over time that contributes to recovery from an early first arrest.

The explanation I offer is that, with age, individuals are able to augment human and social capital. Human capital may be increased through a college degree and social capital may be enhanced by finding a non-criminal spouse or partner, finding a good job, and strengthening relationships with non-criminal family members and friends (Monk-Turner 1989; Sampson and Laub 1993). Obtaining a college degree and creating or restoring social bonds may reduce the harmful effects of a first arrest and help individuals develop a stable employment record.

Finally, I should note that even though a similar pattern is detected by race, blacks and whites are significantly different on the measure of occupational stability. About 70 percent of whites in the sample have stable employment, while only about 40 percent of blacks have stable employment. A simple crosstabulation reveals that the difference in occupational stability by race is highly significant (Chi-square sig. at $p < .001$). Race alone has a strong, depressing effect on blacks' ability to obtain stable employment.

ANALYSIS WITH AGE-GRADED MEASURES OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

In this second half of the chapter, I consider whether the timing of criminal embeddedness, above and beyond the amount of criminal embeddedness, is important for predicting occupational stability. Recall from Chapter 5 that I created two age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness. The first is a dummy variable for whether the first arrest occurred before age 24 (yes = 1). The second is a dummy variable for whether the first incarceration occurred

before age 24 (yes = 1). Because the measure of occupational stability is dichotomous, I use logistic regression in all analyses.

In Table 13, I present results of the regression models on occupational stability for all offenders using both age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. In the first model, I include all of the individual background variables, educational attainment, age, and only the continuous measures of criminal embeddedness: age of onset, number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated. Three of the four individual background factors are highly significant. Blacks and offenders who were in poverty and had criminal family members as children have significantly decreased odds of job stability compared to whites and individuals from more affluent and non-criminal homes. The measure of neglect/abuse, however, is not related to occupational stability. Educational attainment and age are both highly significant as younger and less educated individuals have substantially reduced odds of achieving a stable employment record. Two of the three measures of criminal embeddedness are also significant predictors of job stability. Individuals with higher numbers of prior arrests and longer periods of incarceration have significantly reduced odds of occupational stability compared to individuals with few prior arrests and little time spent incarcerated. However, the continuous measure of age of onset does not affect the odds of job stability.

In the second model, I include the background variables, educational attainment, age, and only the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness: early arrest and early incarceration. All four individual background measures are

significant in this model. Race and having criminal family members remain highly significant, poverty becomes slightly less significant ($b = -.292$ versus $-.251$), and neglect/abuse becomes marginally significant ($b = -.171$ versus $-.310$).

Educational attainment and age remain strong predictors as in the first model. Both of the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are also strong predictors of job stability. Individuals whose first arrest was before age 24 and individuals whose first incarceration was before age 24 have significantly reduced odds of stable employment compared to individuals who were first arrested and incarcerated later in life.

From the first two models, it is evident that criminal embeddedness has a negative effect on occupational stability both when using raw numbers for previous arrests and time incarcerated and when using age-graded measures that account for the timing of first arrest and first incarceration. The only exception is that in the first model, the continuous measure of age of onset is not significant.

It is worth considering whether the effects of the different criminal embeddedness measures change when they are all used in the same model. In the third and fourth models, I use all of the background variables, educational attainment, age, and the continuous measures of embeddedness, while adding the age-graded measures of embeddedness one at a time. This is done to determine whether the age-graded variables have unique effects on occupational

stability, even when controlling for all of the background variables, plus number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated.⁴

In the third model, the effects of the background measures change only slightly. The size of the effect of poverty increases ($b = -.251$ to $-.289$) and the measure of neglect/abuse fades to non-significance. As in the second model, race and having criminal family members remain highly significant. Educational attainment and age continue to predict occupational stability as well. Number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated continue to significantly decrease the odds of occupational stability. The indicator of early first arrest is highly significant as well. Individuals whose first arrest occurred before age 24 have significantly decreased odds of job stability compared to individuals whose first arrest occurs after age 24.

In the final model, I add the age-graded measure of incarceration. Race, criminal family members, educational attainment, and age remain highly significant. The size of the effect of poverty is decreased somewhat ($b = -.289$ versus $-.263$) and the measure of neglect/abuse remains non-significant. Both continuous measures of criminal embeddedness remain significant, although the effect of total time incarcerated is slightly reduced ($b = -.070$ versus $-.046$). For the age-graded measures of embeddedness, early arrest and early incarceration are both significant. Specifically, individuals whose first arrest and first

⁴ In the third and fourth models, I dropped the continuous age of onset measure because of its similarity with the age-graded measure of early arrest and because collinearity diagnostics indicated that the two variables were highly collinear.

incarceration occurred before age 24 have significantly decreased odds of job stability compared to individuals whose first arrest and incarceration occurs after age 24.

Thus, in the full model with four different measures of criminal embeddedness, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, early arrest, and early incarceration all have strong, negative effects on occupational stability.

As in the analysis with only continuous measures of criminal embeddedness for all offenders, race had a large effect. Thus, it is important to conduct separate analyses of occupational stability by race. In Tables 14 and 15, respectively, I present logistic regression results for whites and blacks with age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. Because the results by race are very similar, I discuss them simultaneously.

In the first model for whites and blacks, the background variables, educational attainment, age, and the three continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are included. For the individual background measures, neglect/abuse is not significant for either race. However, the measures of poverty and criminal family members are significant for whites, but not for blacks. Educational attainment and age are highly significant. For whites and blacks, those with lower levels of education and those who are younger have significantly decreased odds of job stability versus older, more educated individuals. Likewise, whites and blacks with higher numbers of prior arrests and longer times incarcerated have significantly less occupational stability than individuals who are less entrenched in the criminal justice system (for blacks,

total time incarcerated is sig. at $p < .05$). The continuous measure of age of onset, however, is not significant for either race.

The second model is the same except that the continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are dropped and the age-graded measures are included. In this model, poverty and having criminal family members remain highly significant for whites, but not for blacks, while neglect/abuse remains unrelated to job stability for both. Educational attainment and age both have positive coefficients and remain highly significant for blacks and whites. Both of the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are highly significant. Whites and blacks whose first arrest occurs before age 24 have significantly lower occupational stability than individuals whose first arrest occurs after age 24. Likewise, whites and blacks whose first incarceration occurs before age 24 have significantly lower occupational stability than individuals whose first incarceration occurs after age 24.

The third model includes the background variables, educational attainment, age, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, and early arrest. In this model, whites who were in poverty and had one or more criminal family members as children have significantly reduced odds of a stable employment record. The same is not true for blacks. The measure of neglect/abuse is not significant for either race. Educational attainment and age remain highly significant, and both continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are significant as well (for blacks, total time incarcerated is sig. at $p < .05$). The indicator of early arrest does make a unique contribution to the model and has a

significant negative relationship with occupational stability (sig. at $p < .05$ for whites and blacks).

The fourth model includes the same variables plus the indicator of early incarceration. The effects of the individual background variables do not change for blacks or whites. Educational attainment, age, and number of prior arrests remain significant for both in the same directions. However, for whites and blacks, the continuous measure of total time incarcerated fades to non-significance. Both of the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness, however, are significant predictors of occupational stability. Specifically, for whites and blacks, individuals whose first arrest and first incarceration occurred before age 24 have significantly decreased odds of job stability compared to individuals whose first arrest and incarceration occurred after age 24.

Thus, nearly identical patterns emerge for whites and blacks in the sample. The only notable difference is that poverty and having criminal family members significantly reduce the chances of a stable employment record for whites, but not for blacks. When used alone, both the continuous and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness significantly reduce occupational stability. When both types of variables are used in the same model, total time incarcerated is no longer significant, but number of prior arrests, early arrest, and early incarceration are all important predictors of job stability.

Summary of Analysis with Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

The models of occupational stability using age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness produce several interesting results. Because the results are identical for whites and blacks, my discussion will pertain to the entire sample. First, the use of age-graded versus continuous measures of criminal embeddedness does not change the effects of the individual background variables. In all four models with the full sample (see Table 13), race, poverty, and having criminal family members were all significant predictors of job stability. By contrast, the measure of childhood neglect or abuse was not significant in any of the models.

The separate analysis by race appears to illuminate how the background variables affect occupational stability. Whites who were reared in poor environments and had one or more criminal family members face substantially reduced chances of later establishing a stable employment record. Blacks, on the other hand, are not significantly affected by poverty or exposure to criminal family members. The measures of poverty and criminal family members are so important for whites that they show up as significant for all offenders in the full model (see Table 13). However, it is only for whites that individual background variables make a difference in chances of stable employment.

This finding deserves further discussion. Why would childhood exposure to poverty and criminal family members have a detrimental effect on adult occupational stability for whites, but not for blacks? My interpretation is that the

difference in the effect of poverty and criminal family members by race may be related to the impact of race on occupational stability. It is well established in the stratification literature that race and social class have unique and combined effects on economic adult outcomes (Baron 1994; Granovetter 1981; MacLeod 1995; Wilson 1987). It may be that race has such a strong and consistent effect on occupational stability for blacks (see Table 13) that the measures of poverty and criminal family members do not contribute unique explanatory power. The converse may also be true. Because race actually increases the chances of occupational stability for whites, poverty may be more likely to affect their chances of stable employment.

To test this idea, I estimated a model for all offenders that was the same as the final model in Table 13, except that I dropped race (results not presented in tabular form). In this model, the effects of poverty and criminal family members substantially increase compared to the model that includes race. This result lends support to my contention that race has such a strong effect on blacks' chances of occupational stability that the measures of poverty and criminal family members do not add additional explanatory power.

Second, educational attainment and age were both highly significant in the full models and in the separate models by race. Younger individuals and those with lower levels of education face substantially reduced odds of gaining stable employment versus older and more educated individuals. This relationship held regardless of whether age-graded or continuous measures (or both) of criminal embeddedness were included in the models.

Third, results provide strong support for Hagan's (1993) concept of criminal embeddedness. When used alone, both the continuous and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness significantly affect occupational stability (Table 13, models 1 and 2). When used in the same model, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, early arrest, and early incarceration all have significant negative effects on occupational stability (Table 13, model 4). Early arrest and early incarceration, the two age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness, have the largest effects. Thus, results demonstrate that contact with the criminal justice system, however operationalized, has a strong, deleterious effect on occupational stability. Continuous measures of criminal embeddedness including total number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness including early arrest and early incarceration revealed the same injurious effects of contact with the criminal justice system on the employment prospects of individuals in the sample.

Decaying Effects of Criminal Embeddedness. Finally, it is important to think about the question of whether the effects of criminal embeddedness decay with age. In the first set of results using only continuous measures of criminal embeddedness (see Tables 10-12), I found that the effect of age of onset is greatly reduced once age is controlled. This result suggested at least the possibility of recovery from an early first arrest so long as the person did not become more deeply embedded in the criminal justice system through additional arrests and incarcerations.

Results from the analysis with age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness appear to clarify the relationship between age of onset and occupational stability. In the model with all background factors (including age) and three other measures of criminal embeddedness, the dummy variable for whether the first arrest took place before age 24 is highly significant (see Table 13, model 4). Individuals whose first arrest took place before age 24 had significantly reduced odds of occupational stability compared to individuals whose first arrest took place after age 24. As was the case with financial well-being, it appears that the possibility of recovery from a first arrest applies only to individuals who are over age 24 at the time of their first arrest. Of course, recovery from a first arrest is not an automatic process, but individuals over age 24 who likely have had at least six years of adulthood to find steady employment have some chance of keeping or regaining steady employment following an arrest.

Of the five different measures of criminal embeddedness, it is only the continuous measure of age of onset that indicates some possibility of recovery for offenders. Number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, early arrest, and early incarceration all have consistent, negative effects on occupational stability for all offenders. The effects of these four measures of criminal embeddedness do not appear to decay with age.

Results from this chapter indicate that, overall, the amount and timing of criminal embeddedness are both important predictors of the overall occupational stability of individuals in the sample. Although I find some possibility of financial

recovery for individuals not arrested until after age 24, the results strongly support Hagan's (1993) concept of criminal embeddedness. Contact with the criminal justice system, especially when it occurs early in life, is a major life event that has a damaging effect on individuals' chances of stable employment.

CHAPTER 7

RESULTS: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

ANALYSIS WITH CONTINUOUS MEASURES OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

In this final results chapter, I study the effects of criminal embeddedness on a non-financial dimension of the American Dream: community involvement. As discussed in the first chapter, although financial aspects tend to take priority over non-financial aspects, there are still many parts of the American Dream not tied to economic status. The adult outcome that I focus on here is the involvement of individuals in their local communities. Community involvement has long been topic of interest among sociologists. Rates of participation in community organizations and activities have been linked to many variables including community cohesion, community organization, community norms, adult crime, juvenile delinquency, fear of crime, school dropout rates, poverty, and trust in government (Bellair 1997; Bursik and Webb 1982; Kerley and Benson 2000; Rose and Clear 1998; Sampson 1995; Welsh, Greene, and Jenkins 1999).

Concerns about the proliferation of individualism and capitalist economic philosophy, and the corresponding "loss of community" it causes sparked an intellectual movement known as communitarianism (Etzioni 1993). Researchers such as Etzioni (1993, 1996) and Bellah et al. (1991, 1996) suggest that involvement in community organizations and activities provides individuals with a sense of connectedness to their communities. Community involvement promotes

camaraderie with neighbors and other community members. Thus, although most individuals value financial aspects of the American Dream over non-financial aspects, community involvement is still an important adult outcome and it is reasonable to believe that contact with the criminal justice system may affect levels of community involvement (South and Messner 2000; Weisburd et al. 1991, 2001).

Recall from Chapter 4 that the measure of community involvement is a standardized factor based on measures of involvement in three different types of community activities. The measures are church attendance, involvement in church and religious activities, and involvement in social and community groups. These three variables strongly loaded on a common factor in factor analysis. The common factor was saved as a new variable and is used in all OLS regression analyses in this chapter (see Table 16).

Table 17 presents results of the hierarchical OLS regression analysis on community involvement for all offenders. The first model includes only race and the three measures of family disadvantage. Of these, race, neglect/abuse, and criminal family members are all significant predictors. Specifically, blacks have significantly lower community involvement than whites and individuals who were abused or neglected and had one or more criminal family members as children had significantly less community involvement than individuals from more affluent, non-criminal homes.

In the second model, the three measures of criminal embeddedness are added. The addition of these variables increases the explanatory power of the

model from 4 to 16 percent. The criminal embeddedness variables also change the effects of the background factors. Interestingly, for the first time in any of the analyses, race is not significant. In fact, it is the weakest predictor of community involvement in the model. Poverty remains unrelated to community involvement, while neglect/abuse and having criminal family members are reduced to non-significance. Age of onset and number of prior arrests are both significant predictors of community involvement in the expected directions. Individuals with an early age of onset are significantly less likely to be involved in their local communities than those who have a first arrest later in life. Likewise, offenders with higher numbers of arrests have significantly less community involvement than individuals who are less embedded in the criminal justice system. However, total time incarcerated is not a significant predictor of community involvement.

Educational attainment is added in the third model. As expected, educational attainment is positively related to community involvement. Individuals with lower levels of education are significantly less involved in their communities than more educated individuals. The addition of educational attainment does not change the influence of the individual background factors. Race, poverty, neglect/abuse, and criminal family members remain unrelated to community involvement. Age of onset remains highly significant in the same direction and total time incarcerated remains non-significant. However, the addition of educational attainment significantly reduces the effect of number of prior arrests.

In the final model, age is included to control for maturation and to test whether the effects of criminal embeddedness decay with age. Age is significant in the final model. The addition of age does not change the effects of the background factors or educational attainment. All four individual background variables remain non-significant and educational attainment remains highly significant. The most interesting results pertain to the measures of criminal embeddedness. Controlling for age greatly reduces the size of the effect of age of onset, although the variable remains highly significant. Conversely, the addition of age greatly increases the size of the effect of number of prior arrests. Total time incarcerated remains unrelated to community involvement. This final model explains 17 percent of the variance in community involvement.

Although there is not an effect of race in the full model, I estimate separate models by race to maintain uniformity in all of the results chapters. Because the results for whites and blacks are nearly identical, I discuss them at the same time. In Tables 18 and 19, results of the hierarchical OLS regression on community involvement for whites and blacks are presented. In the first model, poverty and neglect/abuse are not related to community involvement for whites or blacks. Having criminal family members is a strong predictor of community involvement. Whites and blacks with criminal family members have significantly less community involvement than individuals from non-criminal homes.

In the second model, the three background factors are not significant. Poverty and neglect/abuse remain unrelated to community involvement, while criminal family members fades to non-significance. Age of onset is highly

significant for whites and blacks. Individuals with an early age of onset are significantly less involved in their local communities than individuals who have a first arrest later in life. Total time incarcerated is not a significant predictor of community involvement for whites or blacks. Number of prior arrests is significant for white offenders, but not for black offenders. Whites with higher numbers of prior arrests are much less involved in their communities than those with fewer arrests.

In the third model, educational attainment is significantly related to community involvement. Whites and blacks with lower levels of educational attainment have smaller community involvement scores than more educated individuals. The effects of all other variables in the model remain nearly the same. The only exception is that the size of the effect of number of prior arrests for whites is reduced (beta = $-.058$ versus $-.080$).

In the final model, age is significant for blacks but not for whites. Younger black offenders are significantly less involved in their local communities than older blacks, but age is not related to community involvement for whites. Educational attainment remains highly significant and the three individual background factors remain non-significant for whites and blacks. The most important change is with the measures of criminal embeddedness. With the addition of age, the size of the effect of age of onset is reduced for blacks and whites, although the variable remains significant for whites. The effect of number of prior arrests increases slightly for whites and remains highly significant. This

same variable continues to be non-significant for blacks. Finally, total time incarcerated is not significant for either race.

Summary of Analysis with Continuous

Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

Results of the models of community involvement with continuous measures of criminal embeddedness differ from those for financial well-being and occupational stability in three important ways. First, there is not a significant relationship between race and community involvement. Only in the first model, where the individual background factors are entered alone, is there an effect of race on community involvement. When controlling for criminal embeddedness, educational attainment, and age, whites are no more likely to be involved in their local communities than blacks. Recall that in the two previous chapters, race typically was the strongest predictor of financial well-being and job stability. In the separate models by race, the only major difference was that higher numbers of previous arrests reduced community involvement for whites, but not for blacks.

The lack of an effect for race is interesting considering that whites and blacks are much different in terms of overall community involvement. The average community involvement score is 8.501 for whites and -.204 for blacks. Recall that these values of community involvement are standardized from a factor analysis and thus do not represent actual numeric values of participation. A *t* test reveals that the averages by race are significantly different at $p < .001$. However, even though blacks and whites differ with regard to how involved in

their communities they are, when I control for criminal embeddedness, educational attainment, and age, race itself is not a predictor of community involvement. What appears to happen is that the measures of criminal embeddedness mediate the effects of race on community involvement. In some ways, this finding should not be surprising considering that the connection between race and financial adult outcomes is better established in the literature than the connection between race and non-financial adult outcomes (Baron 1994; Grusky 1994; Jencks and Mayer 1990a; Rothman 1999; Sernau 2001; Thompson 1997; Wilson 1987). This issue will be discussed in more detail in the final chapter.

Second, age is not as important a predictor of community involvement as it was for financial well-being and occupational stability. In the final model with all offenders (see model 4, Table 17), age is only marginally significant. Separate analyses by race indicate that age is not significant for whites, but is for blacks. It is only for blacks that I observe a strong linear relationship between age and community involvement. All else being equal, older whites are no more likely than younger whites to be involved in their local communities through church attendance, religious organizations, and social/community organizations. On the other hand, while controlling for all other variables in the model, older blacks are more likely than younger blacks to be involved in their communities.

Third, the behavior of the measures of criminal embeddedness differs in the models of community involvement compared to the models for financial well-being and occupational stability. The size of the effect of age of onset is reduced

once age is added in the final model, but the reduction is not as large as in the models of financial well-being and occupational stability. The effect of number of prior arrests increases slightly from the third to the fourth model. The most striking finding is that total time incarcerated is not significant in any of the models.

Although these results differ from those in the previous chapters, there is a somewhat similar pattern. Age at first arrest becomes less important with age while number of prior arrests becomes more important. There is the possibility that individuals can recover from an early first arrest and still be involved in their local communities. This recovery, however, appears less likely for community involvement than for financial well-being and occupational stability. The effect of number of prior arrests, however, does not decay with age, but becomes stronger.

ANALYSIS WITH AGE-GRADED MEASURES OF CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

In Table 20, I present results of the regression models of community involvement for all offenders using both age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. In the first model, I include race, poverty, neglect/abuse, criminal family members, educational attainment, age, and only the continuous measures of criminal embeddedness: age of onset, number of prior arrests, and total time incarcerated. This first model is identical to the final model presented in Table 17. The individual background factors, including race,

are not predictive of community involvement. Educational attainment and age are both significant in the expected directions. Individuals who are younger and less educated have significantly less community involvement than older and more educated individuals. However, the size of the effect of age is much smaller than the effect of educational attainment (beta = .084 versus .135). Only two of the measures of criminal embeddedness are highly significant. Individuals with an early age of onset and higher numbers of prior arrests have significantly lower community involvement than individuals who were older at the time of their first arrest and individuals with few prior arrests. Total time incarcerated is not significantly related to community involvement.

In the second model, I include the background variables, educational attainment, age, and only the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness: early arrest and early incarceration. The effects of the individual background variables are the same as in the first model as they all remain non-significant. Educational attainment and age remain highly significant. Both of the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are strong predictors of community involvement. Individuals whose first arrest was before age 24 and individuals whose first incarceration was before age 24 have significantly lower community involvement scores than individuals who were first arrested and incarcerated later in life. The effect of early incarceration is slightly lower than the effect of early arrest.

From the first two models, it is evident that criminal embeddedness, except in the case of total time incarcerated, has a strong deleterious effect on

community involvement both when using raw numbers to measure age of onset and previous arrests, and when using age-graded measures that account for the timing of first arrest and first incarceration. However, it is worth considering whether the effects of the different criminal embeddedness measures change when they are all used in the same model. In the third and fourth models, I use all of the background variables, educational attainment, age, and the continuous measures of embeddedness, while adding the age-graded measures of embeddedness one at a time. This is done to determine whether the age-graded variables have unique effects on community involvement, even when controlling for all of the background variables, plus number of prior arrests and total time incarcerated.⁵

In the third model, all individual background factors remain non-significant. Educational attainment and age continue to be highly significant in the expected direction. The continuous measure of number of prior arrests is highly significant, but the measure of total time incarcerated is not. The indicator of early first arrest is highly significant. Individuals whose first arrest occurred before age 24 are significantly less involved in their local communities than individuals whose first arrest occurs after age 24.

In the final model, I add the age-graded measure of incarceration. Educational attainment, age, and number of prior arrests remain highly

⁵ In the third and fourth models, I dropped the continuous age of onset measure because of its similarity with the age-graded measure of early arrest and because collinearity diagnostics indicated that the two variables were highly collinear.

significant, while total time incarcerated remains non-significant. For the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness, early arrest remains highly significant while the indicator of early incarceration has a negative coefficient, but is not statistically significant. Thus, in the full model with four measures of criminal embeddedness, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, and early arrest all have strong, negative effects on community involvement, while early incarceration is not significantly related to community involvement. This model explains about 16 percent of the variance in community involvement.

As in the analysis with only continuous measures of criminal embeddedness for all offenders, race did not have an effect on community involvement. Nevertheless, I conduct separate analyses by race to determine whether the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness have differential effects by race.

In Table 21, I present results of community involvement models for whites with age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. In the first model, individual background variables, educational attainment, age, and the three continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are included. Of these, only educational attainment, age, age of onset, and number of prior arrests are significant predictors of community involvement. Younger whites with lower levels of education, a first arrest at a young age, and higher numbers of prior arrests are significantly less involved in their local communities than older whites who are more educated, have a first arrest later in life, and have few, if any, previous arrests.

The second model is the same except that the continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are dropped and the age-graded measures are included. In this model, the background factors remain non-significant, while educational attainment and age are highly significant. Both of the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are highly significant. Whites whose first arrest occurs before age 24 have significantly lower community involvement than individuals whose first arrest occurs after age 24. Likewise, whites whose first incarceration occurs before age 24 have significantly lower community involvement than individuals whose first incarceration occurs after age 24.

The third model includes the background variables, educational attainment, age, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, and early arrest. The fourth model includes the same variables plus the indicator of early incarceration. These models allow me to determine whether the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness add unique explanatory power even when controlling for the two continuous measures of embeddedness. In the third model, educational attainment and age remain highly significant, but only the continuous measure of prior arrests is significant. As in the first model, total time incarcerated is not related to community involvement. The indicator of early arrest does make a unique contribution to the model and has a strong, negative relationship with community involvement.

In the final model, educational attainment, age, number of prior arrests, and early arrest remain significant in the expected directions. Total time incarcerated remains non-significant and the indicator of early incarceration has

a negative coefficient, but is not statistically significant. These results for only white offenders indicate that continuous and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are not as robust in predicting community involvement as they were for predicting financial well-being and occupational stability. When both types of measures are included in the same model, only the continuous measure of prior arrests and the age-graded measure of early arrest are significant. This final model explains about 15 percent of the variance in community involvement for whites.

In Table 22, I present results of community involvement models for blacks using age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness. In the first model, neither the individual background variables nor the continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are significant predictors of community involvement. The only significant predictors are educational attainment and age.

In the second model, the continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are dropped and the two age-graded measures are added. In this model, the indicator of early arrest and the indicator of early incarceration are not significant. The individual background variables are not significant either. As in the first model, the only significant variables are educational attainment and age.

Model three contains the individual background variables, educational attainment, age, number of prior arrests, total time incarcerated, and early arrest. Educational attainment and age remain strong predictors of community involvement in the same direction. The only measure of criminal embeddedness

related to community involvement is number of prior arrests, and this variable is only marginally significant.

In the final model, educational attainment and age remain highly significant. Number of prior arrests becomes highly significant (beta = $-.107$ versus $-.093$), while total time incarcerated remains non-significant. Neither age-graded measure of criminal embeddedness predicts community involvement. This final model explains about 10 percent of the variance in community involvement for blacks.

Summary of Analysis with Age-Graded

Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

The models of community involvement for all offenders using age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness produce several interesting findings. First, regardless of whether age-graded or continuous measures (or both) of criminal embeddedness are used, the effects of the individual background variables are the same. Race, poverty, neglect/abuse, and having criminal family members are not significant predictors of community involvement in any of the models.

Second, educational attainment and age are both significant predictors of community involvement regardless of the type of criminal embeddedness measure used. Younger individuals and those with lower levels of education are significantly less likely to be involved in their local communities than older and more educated individuals when controlling for age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness.

Third, the effects of the different measures of criminal embeddedness should be discussed. Overall, age-graded and continuous measures of criminal embeddedness are less robust predictors of community involvement than they were for financial well-being and occupational stability. Number of prior arrests is a strong predictor of community involvement in all of the models. However, total time incarcerated is not significant in any of the models, including the separate models by race. Of the age-graded measures of embeddedness, only early arrest appears to impact community involvement. Individuals who are first arrested before age 24 have much lower community involvement scores than individuals first arrested after age 24. Being incarcerated before age 24, however, is not related to the level of community involvement.

In the separate analyses by race presented in Tables 21 and 22, the only disparate result for whites versus blacks relates to the measures of criminal embeddedness. For whites and blacks, higher numbers of prior arrests substantially reduce community involvement, but total time incarcerated is not related to community involvement. However, the age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are significant for whites, but not for blacks. When using only age-graded measures, whites who have a first arrest or first incarceration before age 24 are significantly less involved in their local communities than whites who are first arrested and incarcerated after age 24. The exception is that in the final model for whites that includes age-graded and continuous measures (model 4, Table 21), early incarceration is no longer significant. For blacks, the

timing of first arrest and first incarceration does not predict community involvement in any of the models.

Two issues arise from these results that warrant further discussion. The first issue is why total time incarcerated and early incarceration are not significant predictors of community involvement in the full model (see Table 20) or in either model by race (see Tables 21 and 22). As argued in the two previous chapters, I think there are three possible explanations. First, a large percentage of offenders in the sample have never been incarcerated. For those who had previous incarcerations, their sentences were typically short except in the case of homicide offenders. The average amount of time incarcerated for the full sample was just over one year. It could be that the effects of incarceration intensify over time and may not show up for individuals who have spent only small amounts of time in prison, regardless of when in the life course the incarceration occurred.

Second, the strength of number of prior arrests may take away from the effects of time incarcerated as the two variables fight for explanatory power in the regression model. Likewise, the timing of first arrest may be such a strong predictor that the timing of first incarceration does not have a unique effect on community involvement. The measures of arrest may simply be more robust predictors of community involvement than the measures of incarceration. And, as noted previously, the finding that number of prior arrests and timing of first arrest are better predictors of non-criminal adult outcomes than total time incarcerated and timing of first incarceration is consistent with other previous studies (Bushway 1996; Nagin and Waldfogel 1995).

The third explanation is similar to the second except that it is based on statistical, and not theoretical, concerns. The similarity between the timing of first arrest and timing of first incarceration variables may create problems with multicollinearity. Results from the collinearity diagnostics revealed that the condition index, VIF, and tolerance level were not in the unacceptable range for these two variables, but did indicate moderate problems with multicollinearity. Thus, because the timing of first arrest and timing of first incarceration are the same for a sizable percentage of the sample, it may be that the strength of first arrest takes away some potential explanatory power of first incarceration. However, unlike in the models for financial well-being and occupational stability, when I dropped the early arrest variable and used only the measure of early incarceration, early incarceration was still not statistically significant and the size of its effect was greatly reduced.

I believe that the first two explanations hold greater merit than the final explanation. My inclination is that total time incarcerated and early incarceration are not significant in the models of community involvement either because offenders in the sample have experienced only moderate amounts of incarceration, or because the measures of incarceration are simply less important predictors compared to the measures of arrest.

The second major issue to arise from the analysis is that the timing of criminal embeddedness appears to be more important for whites than for blacks. For both whites and blacks, criminal embeddedness is not as good a predictor of community involvement as it is for financial well-being and occupational stability.

However, the continuous measure of age of onset and both age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are not significant for blacks in any of the models. In the first model with all offenders, race is significant and when looking at the overall distribution, it is evident that blacks are much less involved in their local communities than whites. If blacks are less involved in their communities, and only number of prior arrests has any effect on this involvement, perhaps it makes sense that the timing of first arrest and timing of first incarceration would not be important. Thus, given that criminal embeddedness has little effect on blacks' level of community involvement, when the embeddedness occurs may not be of much significance either.

Decaying Effects of Criminal Embeddedness. It is also important to think about the question of whether the effects of criminal embeddedness decay with age. The overall finding that the measures of criminal embeddedness are less important for community involvement than for financial well-being and occupational stability should temper this discussion. In the first set of results using only continuous measures of criminal embeddedness (see Tables 17-19), I found that the effect of age of onset is greatly reduced once age is controlled. This result suggested at least the possibility of recovery from an early first arrest so long as the person did not become more deeply embedded in the criminal justice system through additional arrests.

Results from the analysis with age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness appear to clarify the relationship between age of onset and community involvement. My interpretation is that the possibility of recovery from

a first arrest applies only to individuals who are over age 24 at the time of their first arrest. I come to this conclusion because in the model with all background factors (including age) and three other measures of criminal embeddedness, the indicator variable for whether the first arrest took place before age 24 is highly significant (see Table 20, model 4). Individuals whose first arrest took place before age 24 had significantly less community involvement than individuals whose first arrest took place after age 24.

Individuals with an early first arrest do not appear likely to become involved in community activities as they age. Using only the continuous measure of age of onset hides the age-graded effect of first arrest and appears to imply a possible increase in community involvement for all offenders. However, results using the age-graded measure of first arrest indicate that a recovery from a first arrest is only possible for individuals whose first arrest occurs after age 24.

The strong linear relationship between age and community involvement also helps to explain my findings. As individuals age, they typically accrue resources and have opportunities to build both human and social capital. Community involvement is a unique adult outcome to study in that it represents a form of social capital, rather than a final product such as financial well-being and occupational stability. Individuals who are first arrested after age 24 have had at least six years of adulthood to become involved in community activities. For people whose first arrest is before age 24, especially those arrested before age 18, there is simply not sufficient time for them to become involved in community activities and to prevent a first arrest from further reducing their levels of

community involvement. Add to this the fact that community participation rates are notoriously low anyway, it seems to follow that trouble with the criminal justice system early in life would make an individual even less likely to become involved in his or her local community (Bellah et al. 1991, 1996; Etzioni 1993, 1996; Rosenbaum 1987, 1988).

Finally, for number of prior arrests, I find that its negative effect on community involvement does not decay with age. In fact, it remains a consistent predictor of community involvement in all of the models and the size of its effect increases once age and other variables are included in the model. Total time incarcerated, however, is not a significant predictor of community involvement, and thus the issue of whether the effect of time spent in prison decays with age is moot.

FINAL COMMENTS ON COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In this final results chapter, I have ventured into largely uncharted territory. There is a growing body of literature suggesting that contact with the criminal justice system has deleterious effects on many financial adult outcomes such as income, wealth, occupational prestige, and occupational stability. However, of all the studies reviewed in Chapter 3, only Jessor et al. (1991) include measures of non-financial adult outcomes. In their study, they found that self-report criminality and official arrests were not significant predictors of adult outcomes such as political participation, number of close friends, social support of friends, satisfaction with friends, and family satisfaction (Jessor et al. 1991).

In contrast, I find some evidence that criminal embeddedness reduces individuals' level of community involvement. Specifically, number of prior arrests and first arrest before age 24 have consistent, negative effects on community involvement. However, total time incarcerated and early incarceration do not appear to be related to community involvement. Because I have little theory and previous research to serve as a guide, my results should be read with caution.

Overall, it appears that the continuous and age-graded measures of criminal embeddedness are much better predictors of financial well-being and occupational stability than community involvement. I can think of at least three reasons why this might be the case. First, my measure of community involvement may not be adequate for gauging overall community participation. Recall that the measures of community involvement were church attendance, involvement in religious activities, and involvement in community social activities. Even though all three variables strongly loaded on a common factor in factor analysis, it may be that they represent separate theoretical constructs and cannot be explained by the same factors. For example, variables that are known to predict church attendance may differ from variables that predict involvement in religious activities (Hastings and Ploch 1994, 1995, 1998).

Second, there may be a problem with model specification. The most robust model of community involvement with all offenders explains only 17 percent of the variance in the dependent variable. For financial well-being, the best model predicted 37 percent of the variance, and for occupational stability, the figure is 25 percent. It appears that there are other factors not included in my

models that are better explanations for community involvement (Hastings and Ploch 1994, 1995, 1998).

Third, it may be that there is not a strong theoretical connection between criminal embeddedness and community involvement. As noted above, the results of this chapter are speculative in that research on the topic is limited. There is a strong connection between criminal embeddedness and financial adult outcomes. However, this same relationship may not hold, or at least not hold to the same extent, for criminal embeddedness and non-financial adult outcomes. It may be that community involvement is more of an "equal opportunity" adult outcome than the financial adult outcomes. If individuals are motivated to become involved in religious and social activities in their local communities, they will encounter few gatekeepers who will attempt to restrict their involvement because of previous arrests or incarcerations. However, individuals will encounter many gatekeepers in the quest for financial well-being and occupational stability, and being embedded in the criminal justice system will have a strong, detrimental effect on achieving those goals.

Finally, we know from several recent national surveys that Americans tend to value financial aspects of the American Dream (e.g., income, wealth, job stability) over non-financial aspects (e.g., community involvement, marital satisfaction, family satisfaction) (Hochschild 1995). Correspondingly, my results indicate that contact with the criminal justice system hurts people in the place that they care the most about: the pocketbook.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS: CHASING THE AMERICAN DREAM WHILE RUNNING FROM THE AMERICAN NIGHTMARE

Like all habitual patterns of social action, the structures of modern punishment have created a sense of their own inevitability and of the necessary rightness of the status quo.

Garland 1990:3.

Criminal justice processing, in and of itself (arrest, jailing, convicting, imprisonment), is an alienating and socially destabilizing exercise that usually creates more problems than it solves.

Miller 1996:xii.

THE AMERICAN DREAM

The American Dream is a dominant cultural theme in the United States. The dream is unique in that it is both a philosophy of achievement and a set of goals. It is based on the principles of individualism and materialism. As I discussed in the first chapter, Americans overwhelmingly believe in the dream and believe that it can be achieved. A quick look at employment and earnings data, however, indicates that only a small percentage of Americans even come close to achieving it.

How much of the American Dream individuals are able to realize and where they end up in the stratification hierarchy are topics of enduring concern for sociologists. The quest for the American Dream is a long, tenuous, and complicated process. Previous research consistently demonstrates that background variables such as race, social class, and family background impact financial and non-financial adult outcomes. In this study, I did not attempt to determine what variables best predict where individuals locate in the stratification

system. I did, however, study how selected stratification and criminological variables predict adult financial well-being, occupational stability, and community involvement. Before summarizing my findings, I discuss the growth of America's criminal justice system. The tremendous rise in incarceration rates over the past thirty years occurred at the same time that individuals' wages began to stagnate and they began to realize less and less of the American Dream. Our criminal justice system might be considered the American Nightmare (Austin and Irwin 2001; Christie 1993).

AMERICA'S IMPRISONMENT BINGE

Over the past three decades, the United States has witnessed an unprecedented growth in its criminal justice system. Since 1980, the prison population has expanded from 329,821 to 1,302,019. This is an increase of almost 300 percent. The U.S. now has the largest imprisonment rate in the entire world (Austin and Irwin 2001). Even though these numbers are staggering, they do not tell the whole story. In addition to those in prison, nearly 600,000 individuals are in state jails, 3.5 million are on probation, and 700,000 are on parole. All together, over 7 million Americans are under some type of correctional supervision. Thus, 1 of every 33 adults is currently embedded in the criminal justice system. This figure was only 1 of every 91 adults in 1980 (Austin and Irwin 2001).

The statistics on incarceration are just as frightening when we look forward and examine projections for the coming decade. In 1997, the Bureau of

Justice Statistics released a report in which they calculated the lifetime likelihood of incarceration for all individuals and for key demographic subgroups (BJS 1997). The researchers estimated that about 5 percent of all newborn children will spend at least some time in prison during their lives (BJS 1997). About 9 percent of all males and 30 percent of all black males will be imprisoned at least once (BJS 1997). In the four years since the BJS report, the likelihood of incarceration for black males grew to 33 percent (Austin and Irwin 2001).

Punishment has become a major social institution and part of the American cultural ethos (Garland 1990). Many researchers note how the criminal justice system has developed into a large moneymaking industry over the past three decades (Austin and Irwin 2001; Christie 1993; Currie 1998; Fleteau 1996). As Currie (1998:7) argues, "crime control itself has become a big business, especially in some states, where the explosion of prison populations in recent years has created a large and politically potent constituency of those whose jobs and status depend on yet further expansion." Annual spending on prisons rose from \$9.1 billion in 1982 to about \$40 billion in 1995. The cost of operating the entire criminal justice system was over \$112 billion in 1995. The criminal justice system is the fastest-growing area of spending in almost all fifty states. The states of California and New York invest more in corrections than in education (Austin and Irwin 2001).

Drawing from President Eisenhower's concept of the military industrial complex, Fleteau (1996) argues that the United States has created a "prison industrial complex" that includes all three branches of government, all three

components of the criminal justice system, and major corporations. He argues that the prison industrial complex "is driven by the moral and civic imperative of 'fighting crime,' with a seemingly sacrosanct and unlimited war chest" (Fleateau 1996:3). Christie (1993) argues that the American crime control industry has a unique status compared to other industries. He observes that:

compared to most other industries, the crime control industry is in a most privileged position. There is no lack of raw-material, crime seems to be in endless supply. Endless also are the demands for the service, as well as the willingness to pay for what is seen as security. And the usual industrial questions of contamination do not appear. On the contrary, this is an industry seen as cleaning up, removing unwanted elements from the social system (Christie 1993:11).

The question now is whether the massive investment in the criminal justice system is paying off. Has the imprisonment binge accomplished the goals of reducing crime and victimization rates, making people feel safer, and compelling offenders to commit fewer crimes after being punished? The simple answer is: not really. Recidivism studies over the past two decades indicate little deterrent effect of punishment on the likelihood of future offending. The idea of prisons having a "revolving door" is an empirical reality (Austin and Irwin 2001; Currie 1998; Miller 1996). Just as any good business does, the criminal justice industry has done all it can to make sure that it has "repeat customers."

To be fair, the massive increase in incarceration has had some effect on crime and victimization rates, especially since 1993. However, the results of

massive incarceration are not commensurate with the monetary investment (Austin and Irwin 2001; Currie 1998; Reiman 1998). Currie (1998) notes that in the mid-1970s, many criminologists calculated that if the prison population were to double, reported robberies would likely be reduced by about 18 percent. When we evaluate this prediction today, the results are troubling. The prison population not only doubled over the past twenty years, it quadrupled. If there were an 18 percent decline in the robbery rate every time the prison population doubled since 1976, we would expect the robbery rate to have fallen from 199 per 100,000 in 1976 to 110 per 100,000 in 1995. However, the robbery rate actually rose during this period to 221 per 100,000. This figure is twice the predicted rate of robbery following massive state and federal expenditures on incarceration (Currie 1998). With results like these, the criminal justice industry is a stock that most prudent investors would have dropped from their portfolios long ago.

Reiman (1998:150) argues that the American criminal justice system seems to operate by what he calls a "pyrrhic defeat theory." He notes that even though the system has failed miserably in its attempt to substantially reduce crime and victimization rates, criminal justice agents, elite politicians, and elite corporate individuals continue to receive huge benefits from the war on crime and likely consider it a rousing success.

One of the main criticisms leveled against the American prison system is that it generally fails to effectively re-socialize inmates and to prepare them for release back to society. Instead, what often occurs is that prisons make inmates

dependent on the prison institution, and thus individuals find it difficult to adapt back to the "free world" (Austin and Irwin 2001; Currie 1998). In *The Jail*, Irwin (1985) describes how prisons do an effective job of teaching offenders how to co-exist with "the rabble" in prison, but do an abysmal job of preparing them for life outside the prison context.

Many argue that prisons have also done a poor job of rehabilitating prisoners who have psychological and physiological problems. With incapacitation as the prevailing punishment philosophy, individuals with learning disabilities, drug and alcohol addictions, diseases, and other problems have little chance of recovering and "making it" back in society (Austin and Irwin 2001). American penal philosophy is short-sighted in that we warehouse people in prisons until they learn how to function in society. Sadly, our prisons do very little to prepare offenders for a successful transition back to society. They do a much better job of preparing them for more time in prison (Austin and Irwin 2001; Christie 1993; Currie 1998; Fleteau 1996; Reiman 1998).

What lawmakers and criminal justice agents fail to consider is how contact with the criminal justice system affects future non-criminal behaviors and statuses. Our criminal justice policies are myopic in that they are only concerned with the short-term consequences of punishment. Our system focuses on the crime trajectory of individual lives and how punishment might affect this trajectory. We fail to consider how contact with the criminal justice system may affect other individual trajectories including work, school, family, and community. It is as if we are "buying ourselves some time" by taking people off the streets

without thinking about what might happen to them in the future. After thirty years of this approach, we are beginning to see how devastating criminal embeddedness can be to the lives of the millions of Americans caught up in the imprisonment binge (Hagan 1993; Austin and Irwin 2001; Currie 1998).

The way we punish and the frequency of our punishment says a lot about the kind of nation that we are (Garland 1990). We may have the most highly evolved economic system, largest military, and largest weapons system in the world, but we are imprisoning more of our own citizens per capita than any other nation in the world. This may call into question just how "civilized" we really are (Austin and Irwin 2001; Christie 1993; Garland 1990).

To summarize, there is extensive evidence to suggest that America's ongoing incarceration experiment has generally failed to deter offenders from committing additional crimes once they are released. My contribution to the literature is the examination of how contact with the criminal justice system affects non-criminal aspects of adult lives. I am interested in what Hagan and Dinovitzer (1999:121) refer to as the "collateral consequences of imprisonment." Specifically, I study the effects of criminal embeddedness on adult financial well-being, occupational stability, and community involvement.

INDIVIDUAL BACKGROUND VARIABLES

Four individual background measures were used in this study: race, poverty, neglect/abuse, and criminal family members. Of these, race had the strongest and most consistent effect on adult outcomes. Although not significant

in the models for community involvement, race was one of the strongest predictors of financial well-being and occupational stability. Specifically, blacks face significantly reduced chances of financial and occupational stability compared to whites, even when controlling for all of the other variables in the models.

The strong effect of race is consistent with a large body of stratification literature suggesting that blacks encounter significant barriers to economic success (Hagan 1994, 1997a; Hill 2000; MacLeod 1995; Massey and Denton 1993; Rankin and Quane 2000; Wilson 1980, 1987). In fact, race is such a powerful and stigmatizing factor for blacks that the three other measures of individual background were significant in some models for whites, but not for blacks. My results also lend support to the idea of race serving as a master status for blacks that affects a wide range of adult outcomes (Hagan 1994, 1997a; Hill 2000; Wilson 1987).

The other three individual background measures, however, did not have consistent effects on the adult outcomes. The only exceptions are that poverty and having criminal family members significantly decrease the chances of occupational stability for whites, but not for blacks. Overall, neglect/abuse is not a significant predictor for any of the adult outcomes. As I note later in this chapter, the measures of poverty and neglect/abuse are not ideal, and thus their lack of significant effects on the adult outcomes may not necessarily mean that they are unimportant.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND AGE

Overall, my focus in this study was on factors that constrain or limit realization of the American Dream. However, I included two variables that typically enhance adult outcomes. Acquiring a formal degree is probably the best way to improve an individual's human capital. Educational attainment is predictive of a wide range of adult outcomes and is also frequently identified as a protective factor in criminological studies. In my analysis, educational attainment has a strong, positive relationship with all three adult outcomes.

Age is also a variable that is associated with increases in economic and social status. Previous research indicates a strong, linear relationship between age and income, and between age and other adult outcomes. The results of my study are no different. I find that age is a strong predictor of financial well-being, occupational stability, and community involvement.

CRIMINAL EMBEDDEDNESS

The main concern of this study is with the measures of criminal embeddedness and how they affect the three adult outcomes. Overall, I find support for Hagan's (1993) concept of criminal embeddedness. Being embedded in the criminal justice system appears to have a detrimental effect on the economic and social lives of individuals in the sample. Of the three continuous measures of embeddedness, number of prior arrests appears to have the most consistent effect on the adult outcomes. Age of onset is a strong predictor of financial well-being and community involvement, but is less important

for occupational stability. Total time incarcerated is a strong predictor for financial well-being and occupational stability, but not for community involvement.

To account for the timing of criminal embeddedness, I created two age-graded measures: first arrest before age 24 and first incarceration before age 24. The early arrest variable was the best predictor of the two. Individuals whose first arrest occurred before age 24 had significantly lower financial well-being scores, reduced odds of occupational stability, and lower community involvement scores than individuals first arrested after age 24. The indicator of early incarceration is important for predicting occupational stability and is somewhat important for financial well-being, but is not related to community involvement. What appears to happen in the model for financial well-being is that the effect of early arrest is so strong that early incarceration does not add additional explanatory power.

A secondary issue in this study was whether the effects of criminal embeddedness are indelible or whether they decay with age. When using only continuous measures of criminal embeddedness, I found that the effect of age of onset on all three adult outcomes is reduced once age is added to the model. This finding indicated some possibility of recovery from an early age of onset for all offenders. However, results from the analysis with age-graded measures of embeddedness appear to clarify this finding. I found that it is only for those individuals whose first arrest occurs after age 24 that there may be a decay in the negative effects of that first arrest. This is the only finding that could be construed as "good news" for those trapped in the criminal justice system. The

effects of the other measures of criminal embeddedness do not decay with age, and in some cases, the effects become even stronger once age is controlled.

Results from this study indicate that, overall, the amount and timing of criminal embeddedness are both important predictors of adult outcomes. Although I find some possibility of recovery for individuals not arrested until after age 24, the results support Hagan's (1993) concept of criminal embeddedness. Contact with the criminal justice system, especially when it occurs early in life, is a major life event that has a strong, deleterious effect on individuals' financial well-being, occupational stability, and community involvement.

LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA

Although I believe that the Forst and Rhodes dataset is an improvement over those used in studies of this type, it is not without limitations. First, there are limitations with the sample. The sample is closer to the normal population than those in most studies of criminal justice contact, but it is still an offender-based sample and thus the results are not generalizable to the general population. The sample is, however, representative of all male federal offenders.

The sample is also limited in that it does not include females. I can only speculate how female federal offenders might be affected by being embedded in the criminal justice system. As Chesney-Lind and Shelden (1998) argue, separate theories are often needed to account for male and female crime and to explain gender differences in contact with the criminal justice system.

The age of the dataset should be considered as a possible limitation. The data were collected in the middle to late 1970s. It is unclear whether results from my analysis would change if they were performed on a more contemporary dataset. I should note that the age of the Forst and Rhodes data compares favorably with data used in nearly all of the studies reviewed in Chapter 3. For example, data collection in West and Farrington's Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development began in the early 1960s, Wolfgang's Philadelphia cohort study began in 1945, and the Gluecks' original study was conducted between 1939 and 1965.

Second, the measures of poverty and neglect/abuse are limited, which might help to explain why, overall, they had little effect on the adult outcomes. The variables were simple dichotomous measures of whether the offenders' family had trouble providing the necessities of life and whether they were neglected or abused as children. A simple yes or no question for poverty and neglect does not fully capture the constructs and provides only a cursory measure. Poverty could more adequately be measured with variables such as household income, parental occupation, and parental education. To adequately measure neglect and abuse, separate measures that capture the frequency and intensity of the neglect and the abuse are needed. There appears to be growing interest among criminologists in early childhood abuse and neglect as predictors of a wide range of criminal and non-criminal adult outcomes. Due to the limitations of the neglect/abuse measure in the Forst and Rhodes dataset, I hesitate to suggest that its lack of overall effect should be read as evidence that

these variables are unimportant. Other studies with better measures of neglect and abuse will have to resolve this issue.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

My hope is that this research will lead to additional research with two different goals in mind. First, studies of the effects of criminal justice contact with more contemporary samples that approximate the normal population are needed. As noted in Chapter 3, nearly all of the research is based on older, high-risk samples that lack diversity on key demographic variables. More studies with data similar to the one used in this study are necessary to determine how the effects of contact with the criminal justice system vary by demographic characteristics such as age, race, social class, and educational attainment. For example, even though I find support for Hagan's concept of criminal embeddedness, individuals in my sample are much less affected by the criminal justice system than individuals in the high-risk Boston, Philadelphia, and London cohorts. Only additional research will resolve this issue.

Second, in this study, I focused solely on the effects of criminal embeddedness on the lives of offenders. However, the suffering experienced by ex-offenders when they have difficulties finding stable, well-paying jobs is shared by offenders' families. Future research should address not only the effects of criminal embeddedness on individuals' economic and social lives, but also the effects on their spouses and children (Hagan and Dinovitzer 1998; Miller 1996; Sandifer and Kurth 2001). As Hagan and Dinovitzer (1998:134) point out,

"incarceration impinges not only on their [offenders] families' finances – their removal also results in the loss of a working male from that community and may produce a concomitant rise in community instability." To address these issues, a costly long-term study of a panel of individuals and their families would be required. Fortunately, as greater funding becomes available for longitudinal studies in sociology and related fields, this type of study is increasingly feasible.

FINAL COMMENTS

Contact with the criminal justice system is a major life event that appears to preclude achievement of the American Dream. It restricts individual development by reducing opportunities for financial well-being and occupational stability. For those who are ensnared in the system early in life, the effects are often indelible. Consequently, my results highlight another area where the imprisonment binge has failed. Rather than preparing offenders for productive lives upon release, state-sponsored punishment often has the collateral consequence of shattering the economic and social lives of those it purports to "correct." I close with a quote from Elliott Currie (1998:10) that summarizes the effects of the punishment experiment on the lives of Americans:

over the past twenty-five years we have tried, with increasing desperation, to use our criminal justice system to hold together the social fabric with one hand while with our other hand, we are busily ripping it apart. The

prison has become our first line of defense against the consequences of social policies that have brought increasing deprivation and demoralization to growing numbers of children, families, and communities.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Summary Statistics for Independent Variables

<u>Independent Variables</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Race</u>		
Whites	3123	70.2
Blacks	1324	29.8
<u>Family Disadvantage</u>		
Poverty	767	19.2
Whites	454	15.8
Blacks	313	27.8
Abuse/Neglect	489	11.6
Whites	301	10.1
Blacks	188	15.5
Criminal Family Members	565	12.7
Whites	290	9.3
Blacks	275	20.8
<u>Educational Attainment</u>		
Less than high school	1842	41.5
High school degree or equivalent	1356	30.5
Some college	742	16.7
Bachelors degree or higher	499	11.2
<u>Age of Onset</u>	4409	28.62
Whites	3100	31.49
Blacks	1309	21.83
<u>Number of Prior Arrests</u>	4442	3.97
Whites	3120	3.00
Blacks	1322	6.27
<u>Total Time Incarcerated</u>	4425	1.01
Whites	3112	0.70
Blacks	1313	1.77
<u>Age</u>	4429	36.13
Whites	3118	38.10
Blacks	1311	31.14

Table 2. Offense Type for the Selection Offense

Type of Offense	N	Mean or Percent
<u>Bank Embezzlement</u>	259	5.80
Whites	225	5.06
Blacks	34	0.74
<u>Bribery</u>	430	9.70
Whites	396	8.91
Blacks	34	0.79
<u>False Claims</u>	383	8.60
Whites	258	5.80
Blacks	125	2.80
<u>Forgery</u>	546	12.30
Whites	299	6.73
Blacks	247	5.57
<u>Homicide</u>	270	6.10
Whites	73	1.64
Blacks	197	4.46
<u>Income Tax</u>	473	10.60
Whites	436	9.81
Blacks	37	0.79
<u>Mail Fraud</u>	381	8.60
Whites	325	7.31
Blacks	56	1.29
<u>Narcotics</u>	574	12.90
Whites	466	10.48
Blacks	108	2.42
<u>Postal Embezzlement</u>	127	2.90
Whites	83	1.87
Blacks	44	1.03
<u>Robbery</u>	758	17.10
Whites	367	8.26
Blacks	391	8.84
<u>Misc.</u>	244	5.40
Whites	200	4.50
Blacks	44	0.90

Table 3. Factor Analysis for Financial Well-Being Dependent Variable

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Factor Loading* (Factor 1)
Average Monthly Income	4.17	3.18	.313
Total Assets	1.66	2.07	.795
Car Ownership	.59	.49	.660
Home Ownership	.32	.47	.753

*All 4 variables loaded on a common factor
Goodness-of-fit Test sig. at $p < .001$
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity sig. at $p < .001$

Table 4. OLS Regression on Financial Well-Being for All Offenders

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Race	-.310**	-.181**	-.176**	-.152**
Poverty	-.016	-.007	.006	-.003
Neglect/Abuse	-.131**	-.033	-.033	-.022
Criminal Family	-.085**	-.010	-.005	.014
Age of Onset	-----	.424**	.406**	.089**
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.059**	-.045*	-.140**
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.052**	-.051**	-.095**
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.089**	.115**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.339**
Adj. R square	.141	.329	.336	.371

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 5. OLS Regression on Financial Well-Being for Whites

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Poverty	-.007	-.001	.013	-.005
Neglect/Abuse	-.155**	-.051*	-.052*	-.038
Criminal Family	-.116**	-.030	-.024	-.006
Age of Onset	-----	.418**	.403**	.060
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.087**	-.071**	-.176**
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.066**	-.065**	-.099**
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.084**	.110**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.363**
Adj. R square	.041	.262	.268	.307

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 6. OLS Regression on Financial Well-Being for Blacks

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Poverty	-.049	-.024	-.012	-.004
Neglect/Abuse	-.100*	.005	.007	.014
Criminal Family	-.037	.041	.046	-.070*
Age of Onset	-----	.429**	.407**	.085
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.004	.009	-.106*
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.039	-.039	-.124**
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.102**	.126**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.367**
Adj. R square	.015	.187	.195	.244

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 7. OLS Regression on Financial Well-Being for All Offenders Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Race	-.152**	-.169**	-.150**	-.150**
Poverty	-.003	-.001	-.001	-.001
Neglect/Abuse	-.022	-.036	-.018	-.018
Criminal Family	-.014	-.007	-.016	-.016
Age of Onset	.089**	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.140**	-----	-.125**	-.121**
Total Time Incarcerated	-.095**	-----	-.095**	-.091**
Educ. Attainment	.115**	.118**	.104**	.104**
Age	.339**	.294**	.341**	.340**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.182**	-.130**	-.127**
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.101**	-----	-.014
Adj. R square	.368	.357	.375	.375

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 8. OLS Regression on Financial Well-Being for Whites Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Poverty	-.005	-.001	-.004	-.003
Neglect/Abuse	-.038	-.038	-.033	-.033
Criminal Family	-.006	-.020	-.004	-.004
Age of Onset	.060	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.176**	-----	-.152**	-.150**
Total Time Incarcerated	-.099**	-----	-.096**	-.094**
Educ. Attainment	.110**	.117**	.097**	.097**
Age	.363**	.303**	.350**	.349**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.189**	-.124**	-.123**
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.112**	-----	-.007
Adj. R square	.307	.290	.314	.314

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 9. OLS Regression on Financial Well-Being for Blacks Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Poverty	-.004	-.009	-.002	-.001
Neglect/Abuse	-.014	-.014	-.012	-.015
Criminal Family	-.050	-.056	-.059	-.061
Age of Onset	.085	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.106*	-----	-.103*	-.094*
Total Time Incarcerated	-.124**	-----	-.128**	-.118**
Educ. Attainment	.126**	.131**	.121**	.121**
Age	.367**	.303**	.372**	.367**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.147**	-.103*	-.097*
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1) ⁷	-----	-.115**	-----	-.035
Adj. R square	.244	.230	.248	.248

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 10. Logistic Regression on Occupational Stability for All Offenders

	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B
Race	-1.073**	-.595**	-.552**	-.462**
Poverty	-.406**	-.335**	-.235*	-.292**
Neglect/Abuse	-.853**	-.265*	-.248	-.171
Criminal Family	-.883**	-.482**	-.427**	-.348**
Age of Onset	-----	.041**	.036**	-.003
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.106**	-.096**	-.134**
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.047*	-.047*	-.077**
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.321**	.364**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.047**
Cox and Snell R square	.113	.228	.238	.251

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 11. Logistic Regression on Occupational Stability for Whites

	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B
Poverty	-.497**	-.485**	-.369**	-.463**
Neglect/Abuse	-.831**	-.212	-.201	-.113
Criminal Family	-.970**	-.496**	-.422**	-.339*
Age of Onset	-----	.033**	.029**	-.006
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.128**	-.117**	-.157**
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.054*	-.052*	-.077**
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.308**	.349**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.043**
Cox and Snell R square	.048	.175	.186	.198

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 12. Logistic Regression on Occupational Stability for Blacks

	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B
Poverty	-.250	-.075	-.003	-.003
Neglect/Abuse	-.888**	-.375	-.348	-.291
Criminal Family	-.757**	-.409*	-.385*	-.308
Age of Onset	-----	.073**	.067**	.011
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.067**	-.061**	-.103**
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.029	-.031	-.076*
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.324**	.366**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.062**
Cox and Snell R square	.054	.182	.192	.215

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 13. Logistic Regression on Occupational Stability for All Offenders Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B
Race	-.462**	-.584**	-.457**	-.446**
Poverty	-.292**	-.251*	-.289**	-.263*
Neglect/Abuse	-.171	-.310*	-.156	-.136
Criminal Family	-.348**	-.408**	-.338**	-.326**
Age of Onset	.003	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.134**	-----	-.118**	-.109**
Total Time Incarcerated	-.077**	-----	-.070**	-.046*
Educ. Attainment	.364**	.384**	.335**	.332**
Age	.047**	.019**	.037**	.035**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.739**	-.349**	-.282**
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.982**	-----	-.423**
Cox and Snell R square	.251	.231	.253	.256

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 14. Logistic Regression on Occupational Stability for Whites Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B
Poverty	-.463**	-.371**	-.454**	-.428**
Neglect/Abuse	-.113	-.263	-.096	-.081
Criminal Family	-.339*	-.444**	-.330*	-.323*
Age of Onset	.006	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.157**	-----	-.137**	-.130**
Total Time Incarcerated	-.077**	-----	-.070**	-.049
Educ. Attainment	.349**	.368**	.320**	.316**
Age	.043**	.016**	.032**	.031**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.731**	-.290*	-.252*
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-1.044**	-----	-.380*
Cox and Snell R square	.198	.170	.199	.201

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 15. Logistic Regression on Occupational Stability for Blacks Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B
Poverty	-.003	-.027	-.007	-.020
Neglect/Abuse	-.291	-.425	-.289	-.264
Criminal Family	-.308	-.343	-.309	-.290
Age of Onset	.011	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.103**	-----	-.098**	-.090**
Total Time Incarcerated	-.076*	-----	-.075*	-.051
Educ. Attainment	.366**	.417**	.354**	.353**
Age	.062**	.029**	.058**	.055**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.764**	-.359*	-.349*
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.879**	-----	-.409*
Cox and Snell R square	.215	.191	.217	.221

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 16. Factor Analysis for Community Involvement Dependent Variable

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Factor Loading* (Factor 1)
Church Attendance	.81	.77	.519
Involvement in Religious Activities	.75	.26	.717
Involvement in Community Activities	.13	.34	.429

*All 3 variables loaded on a common factor
Goodness-of-fit Test sig. at $p < .001$
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity sig. at $p < .001$

Table 17. OLS Regression on Community Involvement for All Offenders

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Race	-.105**	-.001	-.010	-.015
Poverty	-.025	-.019	-.001	-.003
Neglect/Abuse	-.078**	-.007	-.006	-.004
Criminal Family	-.086**	-.018	-.010	-.006
Age of Onset	-----	.350**	.324**	.265**
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.059**	-.038	-.057**
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.009	-.009	-.017
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.131**	.135**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.064*
Adj. R square	.033	.155	.169	.170

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 18. OLS Regression on Community Involvement for Whites

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Poverty	-.020	-.020	-.001	-.004
Neglect/Abuse	-.027	-.006	-.006	-.005
Criminal Family	-.097**	-.021	-.012	-.010
Age of Onset	-----	.342**	.320**	.276**
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.080**	-.058*	-.072**
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.009	-.008	-.012
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.123**	.126**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.047
Adj. R square	.019	.157	.170	.171

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 19. OLS Regression on Community Involvement for Blacks

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Poverty	-.042	-.021	-.005	-.007
Neglect/Abuse	-.062	-.014	-.010	-.003
Criminal Family	-.075*	-.020	-.014	-.003
Age of Onset	-----	.255**	.225**	.098
# of Prior Arrests	-----	-.023	-.005	-.058
Total Time Incarcerated	-----	-.010	-.012	-.044
Educ. Attainment	-----	-----	.143**	.151**
Age	-----	-----	-----	.149**
Adj. R square	.012	.075	.092	.107

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 20. OLS Regression on Community Involvement for All Offenders Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Race	-.015	-.002	-.016	-.015
Poverty	-.003	-.006	-.004	-.006
Neglect/Abuse	-.004	-.022	-.003	-.004
Criminal Family	-.006	-.013	-.004	-.005
Age of Onset	.265**	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.057**	-----	-.127**	-.134**
Total Time Incarcerated	-.017	-----	-.037	-.046
Educ. Attainment	.135**	.167**	.153**	.153**
Age	.084*	.183**	.219**	.222**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.122**	-.063**	-.069**
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.038*	-----	-.031
Adj. R square	.170	.143	.156	.156

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 21. OLS Regression on Community Involvement for Whites Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Poverty	-.004	-.004	-.006	-.007
Neglect/Abuse	-.005	-.020	-.004	-.005
Criminal Family	-.010	-.016	-.007	-.007
Age of Onset	.276**	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.072**	-----	-.146**	-.150**
Total Time Incarcerated	-.012	-----	-.027	-.032
Educ. Attainment	.126**	.158**	.142**	.142**
Age	.065*	.182**	.215**	.216**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.126**	-.065**	-.068**
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.056**	-----	-.014
Adj. R square	.171	.139	.155	.154

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

Table 22. OLS Regression on Community Involvement for Blacks Using Age-Graded Measures of Criminal Embeddedness

	Model 1 Beta	Model 2 Beta	Model 3 Beta	Model 4 Beta
Poverty	-.007	-.014	-.007	-.009
Neglect/Abuse	-.003	-.027	-.003	-.007
Criminal Family	-.003	-.016	-.005	-.008
Age of Onset	.098	-----	-----	-----
# of Prior Arrests	-.058	-----	-.093*	-.107**
Total Time Incarcerated	-.044	-----	-.060	-.061
Educ. Attainment	.151**	.174**	.161**	.161**
Age	.149**	.163**	.209**	.219**
Early Arrest (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.065	-.010	-.020
Early Incarceration (before age 24 = 1)	-----	-.014	-----	-.057
Adj. R square	.100	.087	.097	.098

* sig. at $p < .05$

** sig. at $p < .01$

VITA

Kent Ryan Kerley was born in Oak Ridge, Tennessee in 1973. He graduated with honors from Harriman High School in 1991. He then attended East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tennessee where he graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice in May 1995. Kent then enrolled in the graduate program at the University of Tennessee in the Department of Sociology in August of 1995. He completed the MA degree in May of 1997 and the Ph.D. in May of 2001. His major areas of specialization are criminology and criminal justice with expertise in crime and the life course, policing, law and society, and white-collar crime. While at UT, Kent served as a teaching associate and research associate. He received special recognition for his excellence in teaching and research. Kent was named the Graduate Student of the Year in the Department of Sociology for 1999-2000 and received a \$5,000 Arthur E. Yates Dissertation Fellowship for 2000-2001. Kent attended several professional conferences and has numerous professional publications. He has published articles in four refereed journals; including *Justice Quarterly*, and has four chapters in edited collections. He also has a contract with Prentice Hall to edit a book on program evaluation in policing.

In January, 2001 Kent accepted a tenure-track faculty position in the Department of Sociology at Mississippi State University. He will begin teaching and conducting research there in August, 2001.