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Released to Kill Again: An Analysis of Paroled Murderers Who Murder Again While on Parole


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Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Police and Criminal
Psychology, Austin, Texas, September 27, 2016



The Research Idea

- Radford Serial Killer Database
 - Since 1950 (date of last kill)
 - 2,883 serial killers in the United States
- Of those 2,883
 - 478 killed again while on parole for murder (16.6%)
 - 138 killed again while in prison (4.8%)
 - 23 killed while escaped from prison for murder (0.8%)
 - 11 killed while on NGRI release for murder (0.4%)
- 650 (22.5%) killed again after an initial conviction for murder!



Does this mean we should not parole murderers?

- No!
- Our meta-analysis
 - Research articles
 - Federal recidivism reports
 - State recidivism reports
- 33 relevant studies/reports in the U.S.
- 56,948 paroled/released murderers
 - 466 killed while on release/parole
 - Less than 1% (0.82%) killed again!



Number of Murders

	Pre-Parole Kills			
Post-Parole Kills	1	2	3	4+
1	290	22	9	5
2	66	4	4	1
3	30	1	1	0
4+	31	6	1	0



Interesting Findings

- From all previous studies on recidivism
 - 466 paroled murderers killed again after release
- We have 478 in our database alone!
- Of the 419 from previous studies falling in the time period of interest (since 1950), only 44 overlap with our database
- That means our serial killer database is missing at least 375 serial killers (defined as two or more kills in separate incidents)
- The other studies are missing at least 434 paroled murderers in the same time period and state of their study
 - Does this mean recidivism studies greatly underestimate the true recidivism rate?
 - Recidivism studies normally limit the follow-up to 3 or 5 years whereas our follow-up period had no limit
 - Our data show that 62% of parolee murders occurred within three years, 73% within five years



Green Standards

- Green v. Missouri Pacific Railroad (1977)
 - 8th Circuit Court of Appeals
- In considering an applicant's criminal history, an employer must take into account
 - The nature of the crime
 - The relevance of the crime to the job in question
 - The amount of time that has passed since the person was released from prison
- Recidivism research does not support the Green factors
 - "Seriousness" of the crime is not related to recidivism
 - Most criminals are not specialists that only commit one type of crime



Langan & Levin (2002)

- Released in 1994
- 3-year period
- Percent rearrested for murder
 - 2.4 Motor vehicle theft
 - 2.0 Burglary
 - 1.6 Assault
 - 1.2 Homicide
 - 1.1 Robbery
 - 0.7 Drug offenses
 - 0.6 Larceny/theft
 - 0.6 Public order offense



Durose, Cooper, & Snyder (2014)

- 404,638 inmates released in 2005 from 30 states
- 5-year period
- Percent rearrested for any crime
 - 84.1 Larceny/motor vehicle theft
 - 81.8 Burglary
 - 77.1 Assault
 - 77.0 Robbery
 - 77.0 Fraud
 - 76.9 Drug offenses
 - 73.6 Public order offense
 - 60.1 Rape
 - 51.2 Homicide



Langan & Levin (2002)

- Released in 1994
- 3-year period
- Percent rearrested for any crime
 - 78.8 Motor vehicle theft
 - 74.6 Larceny/theft
 - 74.0 Burglary
 - 70.2 Robbery
 - 66.7 Drug offenses
 - 66.3 Fraud
 - 65.1 Assault
 - 62.2 Public order offense
 - 46.0 Rape
 - 40.7 Homicide



Method

- Locate names of murderers paroled/released in the U.S. since 1950 who killed after release
 - N = 478
- Collect data on
 - Sex
 - Race
 - Age
 - Method
 - Motive
 - Time from release to murder



When do released murderers kill?

Years Since Parole	N	%	Cumulative %
0	80	19.66	19.66
1	81	19.90	39.56
2	56	13.76	53.32
3	36	8.85	62.16
4	25	6.14	68.30
5	21	5.16	73.46
6	17	4.18	77.64
7	18	4.42	82.06
8	12	2.95	85.01
9	9	2.21	87.22
10	10	2.46	89.68



When do released murderers kill?

Years Since Parole	N	%	Cumulative %
11	10	2.46	92.14
12	5	1.23	93.37
13	5	1.23	94.59
14	3	0.74	95.33
15	1	0.25	95.58
16	2	0.49	96.07
17	2	0.49	96.56
18	2	0.49	97.05
19	3	0.74	97.79
20	3	0.74	98.53
21	0	0.00	98.53



When do released murderers kill?

Years Since Parole	N	%	Cumulative %
22	0	0.00	98.53
23	2	0.49	99.02
24	1	0.25	99.26
25	2	0.49	99.75
26	0	0.00	99.75
27	0	0.00	99.75
28	0	0.00	99.75
29	1	0.25	100.00
30	0	0.00	100.00
31	0	0.00	100.00
32	0	0.00	100.00



Food for Thought

- Reconcile the available data sets
- Network with researchers in the area of Recidivism
- Based on recidivism data from state reports (does not include national studies or academic articles) the median three year rates are:
 - Re-arrest 55%
 - Re-incarceration 40%
 - Commit new crime 16%



Food for Thought

- What's the impact on Organizations based on how we define/measure recidivism
 - New crime
 - Rearrested
- Reassess use of criminal record on employee selection



Questions?



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Citation Information

Aamodt, M. G. & Surrette, M.A. (2016, September). *Released to kill again: An analysis of paroled murderers who murder while on parole*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Police and Criminal Psychology, Austin, TX.