

Some Criminal Career Queries

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Impressive Collection of Data Relevant to Criminal Careers from Juvenile to Adult

- Hundreds of Thousands of Cases
 - So all findings are “statistically significant”
 - 45 years of data
 - All of Georgia
- Inevitably very heterogeneous
 - Different jurisdictions with different practices
 - Arrest, adjudication, sealing/expungement, status offenses, “discrimination”
- Some fascinating observations
 - Raise interesting questions to be pursued

Greater Penetration into CJS as Juveniles Leads to Worse Offending as Adults

- CJS has Criminogenic Effects Mixed In with Its Controls
 - More association with more serious offenders
 - More alienation
- But the JJ system does have its own risk-assessment capability
 - It can identify the “bad guys” and penetrates/controls them more
- Family structure must be an important determinant
 - Better family structure controls kids’ behavior better
 - Also factors in kids’ penetration
 - JJ system sees a weak structure and detains its kids
- Tension between Prediction/Control vs Treatment

Career Specialization

- Crime-Switch matrix
 - Matrix of previous crime type vs. next crime type
 - 5 crime types: Violence, Property, Drug, Sex, Other
 - Diagonal/Column Average of Others
 - Violence 1.88 Personal
 - Property 1.68 Opportunity
 - Drug 1.94 Career?
 - Sex 9.71 Very High
 - Other 1.33 Low

Age at First Arrest (AFA) and Career Length (CL)

- Juvenile CL is 4.3-4.5 years long regardless of AFA
 - In many studies, AFA is strongest risk factor for continuation
 - Why no such effect here?
- Adult careers are 5.5 years long regardless of AFA
 - Again, not much variation with age
 - Older adult starters should have shorter CL
- Then, if AFA=17 (first “adult” year in GA), career length = 11.2 years
 - Why??
 - My studies with Cohen, Canela, and Hsieh suggest for adults
 - CL (property) ~ 5 years, CL (violence) ~10 years

Some Suggestions for Next Steps

- Have identified some interesting phenomena
 - Also some intriguing challenges of conventional wisdom
 - Strong challenge or result of data oddity?
- Find some cooperating jurisdictions with less heterogeneity in data
- Incorporate family structure information into models
- Elaborate regression analysis with more covariates as available
- Consider some RCT's, but don't be optimistic about carrying them out
 - But grab the opportunity if it becomes available