

# The Prison Journal

<http://tpj.sagepub.com/>

---

## **Blended Sentencing, Early Release, and Recidivism of Violent Institutionalized Delinquents**

Chad R. Trulson, Darin R. Haerle, Matt DeLisi and James W. Marquart  
*The Prison Journal* 2011 91: 255 originally published online 8 June 2011  
DOI: 10.1177/0032885511409868

The online version of this article can be found at:  
<http://tpj.sagepub.com/content/91/3/255>

---

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

On behalf of:

[Pennsylvania Prison Society](#)

**Additional services and information for *The Prison Journal* can be found at:**

**Email Alerts:** <http://tpj.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

**Subscriptions:** <http://tpj.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

**Reprints:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

**Permissions:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

**Citations:** <http://tpj.sagepub.com/content/91/3/255.refs.html>

---

# Blended Sentencing, Early Release, and Recidivism of Violent Institutionalized Delinquents

The Prison Journal  
91(3) 255–278  
© 2011 SAGE Publications  
Reprints and permission:  
sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav  
DOI: 10.1177/0032885511409868  
<http://tpj.sagepub.com>



Chad R. Trulson<sup>1</sup>, Darin R. Haerle<sup>2</sup>, Matt DeLisi<sup>3</sup>,  
and James W. Marquart<sup>4</sup>

## Abstract

This study explores the recidivism outcomes of 1,804 serious and violent delinquents sentenced under a blended sentencing statute and released early by juvenile correctional authorities without continuing their blended sentence in adult prisons. Released at an average age of 19, roughly 50% of releases were rearrested for a felony-level offense postrelease. The remaining 50% of all releases did not incur a postrelease arrest or were rearrested for an offense no higher than a misdemeanor. Measures for assaultive institutional misconduct and prior delinquent adjudications were predictive of recidivism in models examining rearrest for any offense and rearrest for a felony only. Substance abusers, gang members, those with a gang-related commitment offense, and homicide-related state commitments were significantly more likely to be rearrested for any offense postrelease. This article ends with a discussion of implications specific to this high risk cohort of released delinquent offenders.

---

<sup>1</sup>University of North Texas, Denton, TX, USA

<sup>2</sup>University of California–Irvine, CA, USA

<sup>3</sup>Iowa State University, Ames, IA, USA

<sup>4</sup>The University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, TX, USA

## Corresponding Author:

Chad R. Trulson, PhD, Associate Professor, University of North Texas, Department of Criminal Justice, Box 305130, 1155 Union Circle, Denton, TX 76203, USA Department of Criminal Justice  
Email: [ctrulson@unt.edu](mailto:ctrulson@unt.edu)

**Keywords**

youth violence, recidivism, blended sentencing, institutionalized delinquents, institutional misconduct

**Introduction**

The former boundary that funneled the delinquent and wayward into one justice system and adults into another has eroded (Butts & Mitchell, 2000). Beginning with U.S. Supreme Court decisions of the 1960s and 1970s, and continuing with the broadening and simplifying of waiver provisions in the 1990s (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006), the juvenile justice system has increasingly come to resemble adult justice. Indeed, adult court waiver provisions in the 1990s signaled in earnest the dismantling of the border between juvenile and adult justice. In unprecedented numbers, the adult system reached down into traditional juvenile court matters to deal with the most incorrigible delinquents deemed no longer fit for the treatment-oriented juvenile system.

The boundary changes above are perhaps best exemplified today by what are broadly known as “blended sentencing” statutes (Griffin, 2008). Becoming prevalent in the mid-1990s, blended sentencing represents another generation of blurring boundaries between juvenile and adult justice. Blended sentencing schemes expand the sentencing authority of judges where either a juvenile or adult court judge, depending on state law, can sentence a delinquent to juvenile and/or adult correctional sanctions. Unlike the binary choice of traditional juvenile court processing or adult court waiver, the intent of such schemes was to provide judges more flexibility in the sentencing of serious and violent delinquents (Podkopacz & Feld, 2001). Despite some variation among the states, blended sentencing laws authorize longer sentences for serious and violent delinquents than those available through traditional juvenile court processing. They provide another option for younger delinquents who have not yet reached a state’s minimum age for adult court waiver but are otherwise waiver-worthy. Such schemes also enable authorities to deal with older delinquents in situations where adult court waiver is somehow undesirable or impractical but where traditional juvenile court processing is not enough.

As a whole, blended sentencing schemes preserve the potential for rehabilitation in juvenile justice and the option of adult punishment if rehabilitation fails. In practical terms, blended sentencing serves as the last vestige of the indeterminate sentence for serious and violent delinquents—such schemes

give “the offender some rope, enough to yank himself out of a life of crime, or to hang himself and wind up in prison” (Smallheer, 1999, p. 262).

## The Present Study

Thirty-two states now have some form of blended sentencing (Griffin, 2008). Researchers have studied blended sentencing relative to processing outcomes at the front end of the system (Dawson, 1988, 1990; Podkopacz & Feld, 2001), the similarities and differences between adult court waived and blended sentenced offenders (Fritsch, Hemmens, & Caeti, 1996; Podkopacz & Feld, 2001), and other consequences associated with blended sentencing from a policy standpoint (Feld, 1999; Mears, 1998; Podkopacz & Feld, 2001; Smallheer, 1999; Zimring, 2005). To our knowledge, however, there has not been a study of the recidivism outcomes and factors related to recidivism for youthful offenders who received a blended sentence, were incarcerated in state juvenile correctional facilities, and who were subsequently released by juvenile authorities early without continuing their blended sentence in adult prisons.

The lack of research on the offending outcomes of blended sentenced offenders following early release from juvenile incarceration is an important gap in the literature. Although legislative changes such as blended sentencing do not alter the population from which serious and violent youthful offenders are drawn, blended sentencing does change how such offenders are dealt with once they enter the system. Unlike those delinquents waived to adult court and sentenced to adult imprisonment, for example, serious and violent delinquents sentenced under a blended sentencing statute may have the adult portion of their sentence suspended and be released directly from juvenile confinement with one more chance to change their violent ways. As a result, blended sentenced offenders may reenter free society after a short time as some of the most serious and risky offenders in either the juvenile or adult system. Indeed, a small amount of research has revealed that blended sentenced offenders are not only younger than their adult court waiver counterparts (Podkopacz & Feld, 2001) but also may serve less time incarcerated for similar offenses (Fritsch et al., 1996), may be released from incarceration at a relatively young and crime-prone age, and may not be much different on important indicators such as current offense or delinquent history.

The current study examines the backgrounds and postrelease recidivism of a large cohort of violent delinquents originally sentenced in juvenile court under a blended sentencing statute (hereafter, sentenced offenders) and released early by juvenile correctional authorities without serving the

remainder of their original blended sentence in the adult prison system. Situated in the context of blended sentencing, the primary goal of this study is to explore whether this cohort of violent offenders continued to perpetrate serious crimes following their release and to examine the factors that might help shed light on their postrelease recidivism outcomes.

## **Release, Recidivism, and Institutionalized Delinquents**

A relatively small and varied literature focuses on the factors related to recidivism of institutionalized delinquents. One of the most important gaps within this literature is that few studies have examined samples of the most serious and violent delinquents on their direct release from juvenile incarceration. Perhaps one reason for this gap in knowledge is that prior to blended sentencing, the most serious and violent of all delinquent offenders were typically, although not always, waived to adult court and sentenced to adult prison terms extending well into adulthood. While the literature does include a rigorous and recent body of research on serious and violent state delinquents, this research base has focused primarily on long-term adult trajectories, the influence of local life circumstances, and the determinants of career length of one-time youthful offenders, in many cases, decades after their release from juvenile institutionalization (Ezell & Cohen, 2005; Haapanen, Britton, & Croisdale, 2007; Piquero, Brame, & Lynam, 2004; Piquero, Brame, Mazerolle, & Haapanen, 2002; Sampson & Laub, 2003).

Instead of decades after juvenile facility release, a smaller body of research has investigated the characteristics and backgrounds of serious and violent juvenile offenders, and their institutional experiences, that may be related to recidivism more proximate to their release from juvenile incarceration. In one of the most recent studies, Wiebush and colleagues (2005) followed a random sample of 435 high risk incarcerated juvenile offenders on their release to juvenile parole in three cities. Rearrest rates in the 12-month follow-up ranged from 78% to 87% for any rearrest and from 43% to 63% for any felony rearrest. Between 4% and 16% of released delinquents were rearrested for a violent felony in the follow-up. Regression analyses revealed only a few variables related to recidivism, such as prior referrals, gang membership, and commitment for a property offense. Controlling for the type of commitment as a violent offense failed to be a significant predictor of postrelease recidivism at any site.

Trulson, Marquart, Mullings, and Caeti (2005) examined the recidivism outcomes of 2,436 state incarcerated delinquents 5 years following their

release from a large southwestern juvenile correctional agency. Results revealed that 85% of the sample was rearrested in the follow-up, 79% of which incurred at least one felony rearrest. Trulson and colleagues did not control for commitment offense (e.g., violent commitment) although their results indicated a number of variables related to felony recidivism among their sample of state committed delinquents. Consistent with Weibush, Wagner, McNulty, Wang, and Le (2005), gang members and state delinquents with a higher number of prior felony adjudications were significantly more likely to recidivate for a felony. Moreover, males, delinquents younger at their first referral to the juvenile justice system, and those who engaged in institutional violence while incarcerated were significantly more likely to reoffend for a felony offense, net the effects of other variables.

In perhaps one of the most comprehensive studies on the outcomes of institutionalized delinquents and factors related to recidivism, Lattimore, MacDonald, Piquero, Linster, and Visher (2004) examined the rearrest outcomes of 3,586 state committed delinquents during a 3-year period following their parole release from the California Youth Authority (CYA). Paroled at an average age of 20 years, the serious state delinquents in this study accumulated more than 16,000 rearrests in the 3-year follow-up, corresponding to an average of 1.70 arrests per parolee for each year "free." Delinquents with a higher number of prior arrests, property offenders, those who abused drugs and/or were drug-related offenders, gang members, those who engaged in institutional violence, those with a higher rate of rule infractions while confined, and school dropouts had increased expected arrest frequencies. Those older at their age of first arrest, alcohol abusers, and White and Hispanic parolees had significantly lower expected arrest frequencies. Evidence of prior violence was negatively associated with the expected arrest rate holding other variables constant (see also, Lattimore, Visher, & Linster, 1995).

Other relatively recent studies have examined offender characteristics and recidivism among samples of released state incarcerated delinquents (Benda, Corwyn, & Toombs, 2001a, 2001b; Ryan, Davis, & Yang, 2001). As opposed to rearrest indicators, in each of the studies incarceration or sanctioning in the adult correctional system was the measure of recidivism. Benda and colleagues (2001a) examined a convenience sample of 414 serious adolescent offenders 2 years following their release from confinement in the Arkansas Division of Youth Services (DYS). Overall, 65% of offenders recidivated and were sentenced to the adult correctional system in Arkansas (in either adult institutional or community placement). Among other findings, females, gang members, those who engaged in crime at a later age, and those with a higher number of previous incarcerations were significantly more likely to recidivate

(see also Benda et al., 2001b). Ryan and colleagues (2001) examined recidivism outcomes among a sample of 397 adjudicated delinquents incarcerated and released from juvenile residential placement in Michigan. In a 5-year follow-up, 28% were eventually incarcerated in the Michigan Department of Corrections. Analyses revealed that minorities and those offenders with a higher number of prior adjudications and out-of-home placements were significantly more likely to be incarcerated in the adult correctional system.

## **Insight Into the Postrelease Recidivism of Institutionalized Delinquents**

Recidivism rates among samples of state committed delinquents have approached nearly 90% for any rearrest, and as high as 79% for a repeat felony offense within 1 to 5 years following release from confinement (Trulson et al., 2005; Wiebush et al., 2005). These findings are generally consistent across studies that have reported overall rearrest outcomes of delinquents following their release from state juvenile incarceration but which did not examine the influence of additional variables on recidivism—roughly 75% rate of rearrest of CYA parolees after 3 years and 90% after 8 years (Ezell & Cohen, 2005); 85% rearrest rate within 3 years (Parker, Morton, Lingefelt, & Johnson, 2005); 40% reoffense within 1 year (Heilbrun et al., 2000); 32% overall and 27% rearrest for a violent offense in roughly 1 year (Fagan, 1990); and 19% rearrest rate after 90 days (Josi & Sechrest, 1999). Studies which have examined recidivism as later incarceration or sanctioning in adult justice, as opposed to rearrest or its variations, have ranged from a low of 28% within 5 years following release from juvenile incarceration (Ryan et al., 2001) in upwards of 60% within 2 years of release (Benda et al., 2001a, 2001b).

Beyond overall recidivism levels, those studies that focused on individual and delinquent history variables revealed a number of factors related to the postrelease recidivism of institutionalized delinquents. For the most part, these variables are consistent with the body of literature on recidivism in general, which finds offense and delinquent history variables as some of the strongest and most consistent predictors of recidivism (see, for example, Cottle, Lee, & Heilbrun, 2001; Lattimore et al., 1995; Lipsey & Derzon, 1999). The most consistent variables associated with recidivism across the studies above included gang membership (Benda et al., 2001a, 2001b; Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005; Wiebush et al., 2005), prior adjudications, referrals, or arrests (Lattimore et al., 2004; Ryan et al., 2001; Trulson et al., 2005; Wiebush et al., 2005), prior incarcerations/commitments/out-of-home placements

(Benda et al., 2001a, 2001b; Ryan et al., 2001), institutional infractions (Lattimore et al., 2004), and institutional violence (Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005). Other less consistent variables across the studies have included age at first formal referral, alcohol abuse, previous drug use, familial risk factors, and victimization history (Benda et al., 2001a, 2001b; Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005; Wiebush et al., 2005).

## **The Legislative Context of the Present Research**

The specific blended sentencing legislation in the state under study is called the Violent Offender Statute (VOS; a pseudonym; confidentiality was a condition of data use by the juvenile correctional system). The VOS is considered a juvenile-contiguous form of blended sentencing and prescribes a determinate length sentence for a defined set of serious and violent crimes.

Provided a juvenile offender is prosecuted and adjudicated under the VOS, juvenile court judges in the state under study have the authority to issue a sentence that can extend well beyond the state's maximum age of juvenile correctional jurisdiction and well into adulthood (see generally, Griffin, 2008; Snyder & Sickmund, 2006).<sup>1</sup> Procedurally, on adjudication and disposition under the VOS, the offender is first placed in a state juvenile correctional facility. Prior to the offender's 18th birthday, the original commitment court holds a hearing to determine whether the offender should be released from state juvenile confinement at a maximum age of 21, or rather, be transferred to the adult correctional system to continue the original determinate sentence handed down by the court. This study examines the offending outcomes of those who were granted early release from the juvenile correctional system.

## **Method**

### *Sample and Data*

The sample for the present research includes 1,804 male offenders sentenced under the VOS since 1987 and released from state juvenile correctional jurisdiction by the end of 2004. All offenders of focus in this study were released by juvenile correctional authorities short of facing the remainder of their original determinate sentence in the adult correctional system.<sup>2</sup> Data for the present study were provided by the YCS and come in two general forms from which the independent and dependent variables were derived. The first type of data includes the personal characteristics, family characteristics, delinquent

history, institutional misconduct, and programming variables for the sentenced offenders in this study. These forms of information were originally compiled through a combination of official record checks, offender self-reports, observations, and/or on-site diagnostic procedures conducted by YCS staff at intake and during the juvenile's confinement.

The second type of data provided by the YCS constitutes the recidivism data for the present research. Statewide arrest data are collected and centrally maintained by the Department of Law Enforcement (DLE; a pseudonym) in the state under study. The YCS, in conjunction with the DLE, maintains arrest information on all state committed offenders incarcerated and released from state juvenile confinement and continues to track arrest outcomes into adulthood.

### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable, rearrest, is a binary item that is operationalized in two ways in this study: (a) rearrest for any offense and (b) rearrest for a felony offense. Unfortunately, the data provided by the YCS do not include a count of postrelease rearrests, the specific timing of postrelease arrests, or the specific rearrest charge beyond the general offense category (e.g., capital felony) and therefore limited the type of analytical techniques.

### *Independent Variables*

There are five categories of independent variables used in the analyses. We generally follow the construct groups created by Lipsey and Derzon (1999) to help organize and present the variables. Unless otherwise noted, the variables below are indicative of offender characteristics at the point of YCS intake and/or prior to YCS commitment. Variables and their coding are listed below (for categorical variables, 1 = *condition present*; 0 = *condition not present*).

*Personal characteristic variables.* There are five categorical personal characteristic variables in the data and were included based on their relevance in previous recidivism research (Benda et al., 2001a, 2001b; Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005). The first variable is race and includes codes for Africa American ( $M = .32$  or 32% of the sample), Hispanic ( $M = .40$ ), White ( $M = .26$ ), and "Other" ( $M = .02$ ). This variable was dummy coded for use in multivariate models. Other personal characteristic variables include whether or not the offender had a history of suicidal behavior prior to commitment and/or exhibited suicidal tendencies at intake ( $M = .05$ ), and whether the

offender was categorized by YCS as a substance abuser ( $M = .43$ ), mentally challenged ( $M = .07$ ) or mentally ill ( $M = .06$ ) at state commitment.

*Family characteristic variables.* Consistent with previous research (Benda et al., 2001a, 2001b; Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005) we included seven family characteristic variables present in the data provided by the YCS. These variables include whether the offender had experienced moderate to severe physical abuse ( $M = .13$ ), moderate to severe sexual abuse ( $M = .11$ ), or emotional abuse ( $M = .24$ ) prior to YCS commitment. Also included is whether or not the offender lived in a home environment prior to state juvenile commitment characterized by evidence of poverty ( $M = .56$ ), chaos ( $M = .69$ ), or whether any family members were gang related ( $M = .09$ ). To capture previous violence beyond that indicated by delinquents' official commitment offense, a variable is included indicating whether or not the offender had been violent toward his family prior to commitment ( $M = .25$ ).

*Delinquent history variables.* Several delinquent history variables exist in the data. Continuous delinquent history variables include the age at YCS commitment ( $M = 15.35$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ), age at YCS release ( $M = 18.90$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ), days served in YCS ( $M = 1,305$ ,  $SD = 439$ ), number of previous felony adjudications ( $M = 1.26$ ,  $SD = .57$ ), total previous delinquent adjudications ( $M = 1.56$ ,  $SD = .90$ ), and out-of-home placements prior to the current commitment ( $M = .43$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ). The first categorical delinquent history variable includes the specific commitment offense for each sentenced offender. The numerous separate commitment offenses were collapsed and dummy coded for the multivariate analyses into *homicide-related offenses* (capital murder, attempted capital murder, murder, attempted murder, criminally negligent homicide, and voluntary manslaughter;  $M = .26$ ), *sexual-related offenses* (aggravated sexual assault, attempted aggravated sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, and sexual assault;  $M = .39$ ), *serious property/person offenses* (aggravated robbery and attempted aggravated robbery;  $M = .19$ ), and *other offenses* (felony injury to a child or elderly individual, felony indecency with a child, deadly conduct, aggravated kidnapping, aggravated assault, arson, conspiracy to commit murder, and solicitation to commit murder;  $M = .16$ ; see Table 1).<sup>3</sup> Additional categorical delinquent history variables include whether or not the offender was gang affiliated at state commitment ( $M = .35$ ) and whether or not the offender's commitment offense was considered gang related ( $M = .16$ ). A variable was also created, which indicated whether the offender was released from YCS on juvenile parole supervision ( $M = .42$ ) or was released without supervision requirements. In addition, a variable indicating whether or not the offender was released post-1995 was created to account for any potential period effects due to changes that came to the VOS in 1995 ( $M = .89$ ).<sup>4</sup>

**Table 1.** Commitment Offense Profile for Released Sentenced Offenders

Commitment offense	Released (N = 1,804)	
	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Homicide-related offenses</b>		
Capital murder	24	1.3
Attempted capital murder	73	4.0
Murder	170	9.4
Attempted murder	174	9.6
Conspiracy to commit murder	1	0.1
Solicitation to commit murder	1	0.1
Criminally negligent homicide	1	0.1
Voluntary manslaughter	22	1.2
Category total	466	25.8
<b>Sexual-related offenses</b>		
Aggravated sexual assault	630	34.9
Attempted aggravated sexual assault	10	0.6
Attempted sexual assault	4	0.2
Sexual assault	61	3.4
Category total	705	39.1
<b>Serious property/person offenses</b>		
Aggravated robbery	346	19.2
Attempted aggravated robbery	5	0.3
Arson	3	0.2
Category total	354	19.6
<b>Other offenses</b>		
Felony injury child/elderly individual	15	0.8
Felony indecency child	37	2.1
Deadly conduct	31	1.4
Aggravated kidnapping	29	1.6
Aggravated assault	167	9.3
Category total	279	15.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,804</b>	<b>100</b>

Notes: Percentages are column percentages. Due to rounding, percentages within each category may not equal category total percentages. Commitment offense groupings by offense differ slightly from those used for dummy code groupings in multivariate analyses.

*Institutional misconduct.* Consistent with previous research (Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005) we utilized three variables to capture misconduct while incarcerated. Two variables capture forms of serious misconduct and

include whether or not the offender assaulted institutional staff and/or residents while incarcerated ( $M = .65$ ) and whether or not the offender engaged in gang-related activity while incarcerated ( $M = .13$ ). To capture the total amount of misconduct while incarcerated, regardless of type, we created a variable indicating the total number of infractions while incarcerated ( $M = 56$ ,  $SD = 88$ ). For multivariate analyses, we divided the total number of institutional infractions by the number of years each offender was incarcerated prior to release to create a rate of YCS infractions per year ( $M = 17$ ,  $SD = 24$ ; see Lattimore et al., 2004).

*Violent Offender Program (VOP).* In conjunction with the VOS, the YCS created the Violent Offender Program (VOP, a pseudonym) specifically for sentenced offenders. The general structure of the VOP is an intense 6-month program that emphasizes empathy for victims, taking responsibility for crimes, and learning how to manage hostility and aggression. Participation in the VOP is not voluntary nor is it a prerequisite to juvenile system release for sentenced offenders (vs. continued incarceration in the adult prison system). Only a small number of sentenced offenders released by the YCS go through the VOP ( $n = 305$ ,  $M = .17$ ) due to space limitations. To account for any possible influence of this unique treatment program on postrelease recidivism, despite the small number of sentenced offenders who received this program, a variable indicating whether or not sentenced offenders participated in the VOP was created.

## Results

### *Commitment Offense Profile for Released Sentenced Offenders*

Table 1 examines the original commitment offenses for the 1,804 released sentenced offenders. Overall, 26% of released sentenced offenders were committed for a homicide-related offense, 39% were committed for a serious sexual-related offense, 20% were committed for a serious property/person offense, and another 16% were committed for “other” serious and violent offenses such as aggravated assault and aggravated kidnapping.

### *Comparing Released Sentenced Offender Recidivists to Nonrecidivists*

Table 2 shows that 1,157 or 64% of released sentenced offenders were rearrested postrelease for any offense (853 felonies and 304 misdemeanors as the most serious rearrest; 647 or 36% were not rearrested). Compared

**Table 2.** Comparison Between Released Sentenced Offender Recidivists and Nonrecidivists

Variables	Released recidivists (N = 1,157)		Released nonrecidivists (N = 647)		Comparisons
	M	SD	M	SD	Value
Personal characteristics					
Race					
African American	0.38	—	0.20	—	-8.35*
Hispanic	0.38	—	0.42	—	ns
White	0.22	—	0.34	—	5.40*
Other	0.01	—	0.03	—	2.67*
Suicidal	0.05	—	0.06	—	ns
Substance abuser	0.45	—	0.40	—	-2.03*
Mentally challenged	0.08	—	0.07	—	ns
Mentally ill	0.07	—	0.05	—	ns
Family characteristics					
Physical abuse	0.12	—	0.13	—	ns
Sexual abuse	0.10	—	0.14	—	2.25*
Emotional abuse	0.24	—	0.23	—	ns
Poverty	0.59	—	0.52	—	-3.00*
Chaos	0.70	—	0.65	—	-2.23*
Family gang related	0.10	—	0.07	—	ns
Previous violence toward family	0.25	—	0.25	—	ns
Delinquent history					
Age at YCS commitment	15.34	1.10	15.38	1.23	ns
Age at YCS release	18.81	1.29	19.03	1.25	3.45*
Days served in YCS	1280.15	436.66	1349.72	441.02	3.22*
Previous felony adjudications	1.31	0.62	1.18	0.47	-5.03*
Total delinquent adjudications	1.64	0.91	1.42	0.87	-5.00*
Previous out-of-home placements	0.43	1.09	0.42	1.11	ns
Commitment offense					
Homicide-related	0.29	—	0.18	—	-5.74*
Sexual-related	0.35	—	0.47	—	5.01*
Serious person/ property	0.20	—	0.18	—	ns

(Continued)

**Table 2. (continued)**

Variables	Released recidivists (N = 1,157)		Released nonrecidivists (N = 647)		Comparisons
	M	SD	M	SD	Value
Other	0.15	—	0.16	—	<i>ns</i>
Gang affiliated	0.39	—	0.28	—	-4.51*
Gang-related commitment offense	0.19	—	0.11	—	-4.61*
Released on juvenile parole supervision	0.45	—	0.38	—	-2.88*
Post-1995 release	0.86	—	0.94	—	5.44*
Institutional misconduct					
Assaultive activity in YCS	0.69	—	0.59	—	-4.20*
Gang-related activity in YCS	0.11	—	0.16	—	3.03*
Total number of YCS infractions	57.22	85.67	56.39	93.67	<i>ns</i>
Violent Offender Program VOP Participation	0.17	—	0.16	—	<i>ns</i>

Notes: Recidivism is categorized as rearrest for any offense. Categorical variables were dichotomized and indicate proportion with 1 as coding score under the *M* column. For example, gang affiliated for released recidivists at 0.39 indicates that 39% of the recidivists for any offense were gang related. Using actual proportions to obtain *N* may be slightly off because of rounding. *ns* = not significant.

\* $p < .05$ .

to nonrecidivists, recidivists appeared to be somewhat more risky on their commitment, and more disruptive while incarcerated, but were released sooner and younger than nonrecidivists.

### *Descriptive Recidivism Outcomes of Released Sentenced Offenders*

Table 3 explores the most serious rearrest category of the 1,157 released sentenced offender recidivists (64% of all releases were rearrested). In essence, Table 3 addresses whether the recidivists, as a group, continued their serious and violent ways postrelease as determined by the offense

**Table 3.** Most Serious Rearrest by Offense Category for Released Sentenced Offender Recidivists

Original commitment offense	Total released	Number rearrested	Category of most serious rearrest									
			CF (%)	F1 (%)	F2 (%)	F3 (%)	SJF (%)	UF (%)	MA (%)	MB (%)	MC (%)	UM (%)
Homicide-related offenses	466	347	2	27	28	10	10	1	12	9	0	1
Sexual-related offenses	705	402	1	12	21	16	23	1	9	12	0	1
Serious property/ person offenses	354	234	1	18	18	10	15	0	16	19	0	1
Other offenses	279	174	1	18	25	13	11	1	17	13	0	0
Total	100%	64%	1	19	23	13	16	1	13	13	0	1

Notes: Percentage values rounded to the nearest percent. Commitment offense groupings by offense differ slightly from offenses used for dummy code groupings in multivariate analyses. From most to least serious offense category: CF = Capital felony; F1 = Felony 1; F2 = Felony 2; F3 = Felony 3; SJF = State jail felony; UF = Unclassified felony; MA = Misdemeanor A; MB = Misdemeanor B; MC = Misdemeanor C; UM = Unclassified misdemeanor.

category of their most serious rearrest. At the broadest level, 73% of the recidivists were rearrested for at least one felony postrelease as their most serious offense (Capital Felony-Unclassified Felony [CF-UF]). While not every released offender recidivated, a majority of the recidivists appeared to continue their serious ways postrelease, and the most serious and violent of all commitments (e.g., homicide commitments) appeared to have the highest rate of rearrest and to be rearrested for the most serious crimes postrelease as indicated by the felony offense level category.

### *Relationship of Variables to Rearrest for Any Offense*

The first logistic regression model revealed several variables related to postrelease arrest for any offense among released sentenced offenders (Table 4).<sup>5</sup> Consistent with the literature, four delinquent history variables were significant and positively related to the odds of rearrest: the total number of delinquent adjudications prior to state commitment (Lattimore et al., 2004; Ryan et al., 2001; Trulson et al., 2005; Weibush et al., 2005), being a homicide-related offender, being gang affiliated (Benda et al., 2001a, 2001b, Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005; Wiebush et al., 2005), and having

**Table 4.** Relationship of variables to rearrest for any offense and felony offense

Variables	Model 1: Any rearrest			Model 2: Felony rearrest		
	B	SE (B)	Odds ratio	B	SE (B)	Odds ratio
<b>Personal characteristics</b>						
Race						
African American	1.60	0.37	4.97***	1.77	0.45	5.88***
Hispanic	0.83	0.37	2.28*	0.91	0.44	2.50*
White	0.71	0.37	2.03	0.90	0.45	2.45*
Suicidal	0.00	0.24	1.00	0.10	0.24	1.10
Substance abuser	0.09	0.12	1.09	0.26	0.11	1.30*
Mentally challenged	0.01	0.22	1.01	-0.06	0.21	0.94
Mentally ill	0.42	0.24	1.52	0.11	0.22	1.12
<b>Family characteristics</b>						
Physical abuse	-0.03	0.18	0.97	0.06	0.18	1.05
Sexual abuse	0.04	0.18	1.04	-0.12	0.18	0.90
Emotional abuse	0.16	0.15	1.17	0.37	0.14	1.45***
Poverty	0.10	0.12	1.10	0.10	0.11	1.09
Chaos	0.10	0.13	1.09	0.10	0.13	1.10
Family gang related	-0.06	0.21	0.94	0.12	0.19	1.13
Previous violence toward family	0.07	0.14	1.07	0.07	0.14	1.07
<b>Delinquent history</b>						
Age at YCS commitment	-0.10	0.10	0.92	-0.10	0.10	0.91
Age at YCS release	0.02	0.11	1.02	0.01	0.10	1.01
Days served in YCS (Log)	-0.64	0.37	0.53	-0.30	0.33	0.76
Previous felony adjudications	0.16	0.11	1.18	0.14	0.11	1.15
Total delinquent adjudications	0.22	0.08	1.24***	0.17	0.07	1.18*
Previous out-of-home placements	-0.02	0.05	0.98	-0.10	0.05	0.94
<b>Commitment offense</b>						
Homicide-related	0.43	0.20	1.53*	0.21	0.19	1.23
Sexual-related	-0.10	0.18	0.93	-0.40	0.18	0.96
Serious person/property	0.22	0.18	1.25	-0.10	0.18	0.90
Gang affiliated	0.30	0.13	1.35*	0.20	0.13	1.23

(continued)

**Table 4. (continued)**

Variables	Model 1: Any rearrest			Model 2: Felony rearrest		
	B	SE (B)	Odds ratio	B	SE (B)	Odds ratio
Gang-related commitment offense	0.42	0.18	1.53*	0.12	0.17	1.12
Released on juvenile parole supervision	0.11	0.12	1.11	0.26	0.12	1.30*
Post-1995 release	-0.43	0.23	0.65	-0.58	0.20	0.60**
Institutional misconduct						
Assaultive activity in YCS	0.36	0.12	1.43**	0.41	0.12	1.51**
Gang-related activity in YCS	-0.67	0.17	0.52***	-0.48	0.17	0.62**
Infraction rate/year	0.01	0.00	1.01*	0.00	0.00	1.00
Violent offender program						
VOP Participation	-0.22	0.17	0.81	-0.02	0.16	0.99
Constant	4.18	2.39	65.31	1.11	2.12	3.02
Model $\chi^2$		208.2***			218.1***	
Nagelkerke $R^2$		0.15			0.16	
Cox & Snell $R^2$		0.11			0.12	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

perpetrated a gang-related commitment offense. Offenders who engaged in assaultive activity in YCS and those with a higher infraction rate/year were also significantly more likely to be rearrested for any offense postrelease, net the effects of other variables in the model (Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005).<sup>6</sup> However, those who engaged in gang-related activity while confined were significantly less likely to experience rearrest for any offense postrelease.

### *Relationship of Variables to Rearrest for Any Felony*

Table 4 also reports the results of the logistic regression analysis concerning rearrest for any felony. Offenders categorized as substance abusers at their state commitment, and those who had experienced emotional abuse at the

hands of their parents or guardians were significantly more likely to incur a felony arrest postrelease. As with rearrest for any offense, the total number of previous delinquent adjudications was positive and significantly related to postrelease felony arrest. In addition, offenders released on parole supervision were significantly more likely to experience a felony rearrest postrelease than those not released on parole supervision. This finding was not entirely unexpected, for those offenders released on state juvenile parole supervision were likely to have greater scrutiny on their behavior considering their serious and violent past, and thus, perhaps a greater likelihood of felony rearrest than those without such supervision, net the effects of other variables in the model.

Consistent with studies on samples of offenders most similar to those of this study, institutional misconduct variables emerged as the most consistent factors related to rearrest across models (Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005). Offenders who had assaulted staff and/or residents while incarcerated were significantly more likely to be rearrested for a felony postrelease, holding other variables constant. Consistent with Model 1 (rearrest for any offense), those who participated in gang-related activity during confinement were significantly less likely to experience postrelease felony arrest, net the effects of other variables in the model. While the coefficient was small, this unexpected finding in both models may be an artifact of correctional system practice—for example, variations in discovering and documenting gang-related activity or the timing of such misconduct relative to release (early vs. later).

## Discussion

This study examined the recidivism outcomes of a cohort of serious and violent delinquents who were sentenced under a blended sentencing statute and released early from juvenile correctional authorities without serving the remainder of their determinate sentence in the adult correctional system. Consistent with previous research, gang membership was positive and significantly related to rearrest, yet this relationship only held for the model examining any postrelease arrest. With the exception of emotional abuse and substance abuse (Table 4, Felony Rearrest model), no support was found for other family characteristic variables being related to postrelease recidivism, even though these variables have found limited support in the literature (Benda et al., 2001a, 2001b). None of the age-based variables (age at YCS commitment and age at YCS release), or days served in YCS were associated with rearrest. Still further, the specific type of commitment offense was

related to rearrest in only the model examining any rearrest, and this was only true for homicide-related offense commitments.

While the regression models explained a modest amount of variance, we are missing crucial variables for a more complete explanation of the postrelease outcomes of the serious and violent sample of this study. Most important, it is possible that changes in the life circumstances of these offenders since release may provide more relevance in explaining their postrelease behavior than do variables that tap the experiences of offenders years into their past (Sampson & Laub, 2003). Although we did not have such recent information, it is noteworthy that some of the most proximate behavior displayed by offenders, assaultive institutional misconduct, emerged as a significant and consistent factor across both models. As opposed to many of the personal, familial, and delinquent history variables collected at an offender's state commitment, the more recent indicators of institutional misconduct, especially assaultive misconduct, may be a potentially important barometer of postrelease outcomes. While it is premature to come to a concrete explanation of the importance of institutional misconduct relative to recidivism with this study, this is a finding that continues to gain support in the literature among samples comprised of at least some serious and violent institutionalized delinquent offenders (see Lattimore et al., 2004; Trulson et al., 2005). Current information on other life changes after release from state commitment, even within the first few years, would likely have improved our ability to explain variation in the recidivism behavior of released sentenced offenders. Indeed, a growing body of research indicates that local life circumstances are an important part of explaining current behavior (Piquero et al., 2002; Sampson & Laub, 1993, 2003) and this study would have benefited by having that information.

We believe it is important to mention other limitations of this study that if improved, may have provided better insight to the outcomes of sentenced offenders postrelease and more generally, the consequences of a blended sentencing law that allowed for the early release of such serious and violent offenders. For example, the data were limited to official rearrests and it is possible that the released sentenced offenders counted as nonrecidivists may have simply avoided detection in some way instead of truly desisting postrelease. This is not a new topic in the literature (Brame, Bushway, & Paternoster, 2003; Brame, Fagan, Piquero, Schubert, & Steinberg, 2004; Bushway, Piquero, Broidy, Cauffman, & Mazerolle, 2001) but this is a limitation that could have affected the outcomes of this study. We were also limited in that the data did not indicate the final disposition of rearrests. Knowing the eventual outcome of court proceedings would have improved the analyses and perhaps provided more validity to the binary recidivism measure.

While there are other limitations to this study (e.g., the absence of count data on rearrests, timing of rearrests, lack of a comparison group of blended sentenced offenders transferred to prison and released), we believe the findings herein serve as an important foundation to further research examining the recidivism of serious and violent institutionalized offenders, and a beginning point to examine the consequences of “early release” created by some states’ blended sentencing schemes.

## Conclusion

We do not know what would have happened if the released sentenced offenders were instead transferred to prison to continue serving their determinate sentence. What we do know is that 1,804 serious and violent offenders were released early by juvenile correctional authorities by way of a blended sentencing law—offenders who would have likely otherwise been waived to adult court and sent to adult prison well into adulthood.<sup>7</sup> On average, these serious and violent delinquents served less than 4 years in the YCS for their crimes, were released as very young adults (roughly 19 years of age on average), and more than the balance were released without further supervision requirements. While confined, and facing a significant continued determinate sentence in the adult correctional system, released sentenced offenders engaged in high levels of institutional misconduct. Indeed, roughly 65% of all releases continued offending “inside” by assaulting staff and/or residents while incarcerated (69% for eventual recidivists). This appears to be an important finding of this study. Participation in institutional misconduct, especially assaultive misconduct, was consistently related to postrelease arrest net the effects of other important variables.

After release, nearly 65% all 1,157 releases were rearrested. However, the most serious rearrest for 304 (26%) of the recidivists was no higher than a misdemeanor—a far cry from the seriousness of their commitment offense to YCS. And, 647 released sentenced offenders were not rearrested postrelease according to official records. As a whole then, slightly more than 50% of the 1,804 released sentenced offenders either were not rearrested (647) or were rearrested for an offense no more serious than a misdemeanor (304)—the other roughly 50% were rearrested for felony level offenses postrelease.

Based on the findings of this study, it appears that indicators of institutional misconduct should receive continued attention when it comes to the release of the most serious and violent delinquents by way of blended sentencing. Those offenders who engage in assaultive and aggressive behavior while incarcerated would be the prime candidates for continued incarceration,

or at the least, heightened scrutiny before they are released early. To this end, future research should explore the specific types, seriousness, frequency, and timing of institutional misconduct and the utility of such misconduct variables in explaining recidivism among similar samples of offenders.

This study ultimately boils down to risk and the benefit of the doubt. Blended sentencing in the state under study allowed extremely serious and violent delinquents one more chance to change their ways by giving 1,804 of them the benefit of the doubt. Fortunately, the overall level of recidivism for this risky group of offenders appears lower than that found in the literature for samples of state-committed delinquents. Unfortunately, the risk was that roughly one half of the recidivists continued to perpetrate felony-level crimes postrelease. While this study cannot definitively answer what would have happened with continued adult incarceration of these offenders, blended sentencing was the catalyst for their juvenile system release when such offenders were eligible for continued adult incarceration. The “early” release of such offenders, many who continued their aggressive ways while confined, should be examined closely by practitioners and researchers to avoid unnecessary risks to the public for the sake of giving such deep-end delinquent offenders once more final chance to change.

### **Acknowledgments**

The authors would like to thank TPJ editor, Dr. Rosemary Gido, and the anonymous reviewers for helpful comments that improved this article.

### **Author's Notes**

An earlier version of this article was presented at the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 2008.

### **Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### **Funding**

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### **Notes**

1. The maximum age of juvenile correctional jurisdiction is 21. VOS sentences can range from 10 to 40 years depending on offense. For example, a 15-year-old delinquent prosecuted and committed for capital murder under the VOS faces a possible sentence of 40 years, with the first several years served in the YCS and the remainder served in the adult correctional system.

2. The only sentenced offenders excluded from this study included a small proportion of females ( $N = 139$ ), offenders transferred to adult prison ( $N = 716$ ), sentenced offenders who had died either during incarceration or shortly after their release ( $N = 6$ ), 81 sentenced offenders whose status could not be determined for certain at the time of data collection (e.g., transitioned to prison, remained in the YCS, etc.), and several offenders recently sentenced under the VOS who have not faced a release or transfer determination.
3. The commitment offense groupings in Table 1 vary slightly from the dummy code groupings in the multivariate analyses. For example, conspiracy to commit murder was included as an “other” category in the dummy coding for the multivariate analyses due to the noncommission nature of this offense.
4. Certain changes, such as instituting a mandatory minimum term of incarceration and expanding the list of offenses eligible for VOS prosecution occurred post-1995.
5. To check for collinearity issues, bivariate correlations were inspected. We also produced a separate OLS model to gauge only the tolerance and VIF for each of the variables in the logistic regression analyses. The only variables exceeding 2.0 VIF were age at YCS admission and age at YCS release. We included both variables in the analyses based on their importance in the literature. However, excluding either of these variables did not change the logistic regression models significantly.
6. Separate analyses were run for each dependent variable by including an “exposure time” variable that consisted of the log of the time between release and the last date in the data retrieved by the YCS. “Exposure time” was excluded from the final models because it likely masked the effects of certain variables on the dichotomous outcome and is endogenous to the failure process itself. Excluding exposure time uncovered significant effects for the homicide-related, gang-affiliated, and gang-related commitment offense types in the “any rearrest” model only. It did not significantly alter the outcomes in the felony rearrest model.
7. Based on the minimum age of waiver in the state under study, more than 90% of the offenders in this study would have been eligible for waiver through both age and offense criteria. Thus, the VOS has likely replaced adult court waiver in many situations.

## References

- Benda, B., Corwyn, R., & Toombs, N. (2001a). Recidivism among adolescent serious offenders: Prediction of entry into the correctional system for adults. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 28, 588-613.
- Benda, B., Corwyn, R., & Toombs, N. (2001b). From adolescent serious offender to adult felon: A predictive study of offense progression. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 32(3), 79-108.

- Brame, R., Bushway, S., & Paternoster, R. (2003). Examining the prevalence of criminal desistance. *Criminology*, *41*, 423-448.
- Brame, R., Fagan, J., Piquero, A., Schubert, C., & Steinberg, L. (2004). Criminal careers of serious delinquents in two cities. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, *2*, 256-272.
- Bushway, S., Piquero, A., Broidy, L., Cauffman, E., & Mazerolle, P. (2001). An empirical framework for studying desistance as a process. *Criminology*, *39*, 491-513.
- Butts, J., & Mitchell, O. (2000). Brick by brick: Dismantling the border between juvenile and adult justice. In C. Friel (Ed.), *Boundary changes in criminal justice organizations* (pp.167-214). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Cottle, C., Lee, R., & Heilbrun, K. (2001). The prediction of criminal recidivism in juveniles: A meta-analysis. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *28*, 367-394.
- Dawson, R. (1988). The third justice system: The new juvenile-criminal system of determinate sentencing for the youthful violent offender in Texas. *St. Mary's Law Journal*, *19*, 943-1015.
- Dawson, R. (1990). The violent juvenile offender: An empirical study of juvenile determinant sentencing proceedings as an alternative to criminal prosecution. *Texas Tech Law Review*, *21*, 1897-1937.
- Ezell, M., & Cohen, L. (2005). *Desisting from crime: Continuity and change in long-term crime patterns of serious chronic offenders*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Fagan, J.(1990). Treatment and reintegration of violent juvenile offenders: Experimental results. *Justice Quarterly*, *7*, 233-263.
- Feld, B. (1999). *Bad kids*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Fritsch, E., Hemmens, C., & Caeti, T. (1996). Violent youth in juvenile and adult court: An assessment of sentencing strategies in Texas. *Law & Policy*, *18*(1), 115-136.
- Griffin, P. (2008). *Different from adults: An updated analysis of juvenile transfer and blended sentencing laws, with recommendations for reform*. Pittsburgh, PA: National Center for Juvenile Justice.
- Haapanen, R., Britton, L., & Croisdale, T. (2007). Persistent criminality and career length. *Crime & Delinquency*, *53*, 133-155.
- Heilbrun, K., Brock, W., Waite, D., Lanier, A., Schmid, M., Witte, G., . . . Shumate, M. (2000). Risk factors for juvenile criminal recidivism: The postrelease community adjustment of juvenile offenders. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *27*, 275-291.
- Josi, D., & Sechrest, D. (1999). A pragmatic approach to parole aftercare: Evaluation of a community reintegration program for high-risk youthful offenders. *Justice Quarterly*, *16*(1), 51-80.
- Lattimore, P., MacDonald, J., Piquero, A., Linster, R., & Visher, C. (2004). Studying the characteristics of arrest frequency among paroled youthful offenders. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, *41*(1), 37-57.

- Lattimore, P., Visher, C., & Linster, R. (1995). Predicting rearrest for violence among serious youthful offenders. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 32(1), 54-83.
- Lipsey, M., & Derzon, J. (1999). Predictors of violent or serious delinquents in adolescence and early adulthood: A synthesis of longitudinal research. In R. Loeber & D. Farrington (Eds.), *Serious and violent juvenile offenders* (pp. 86-105). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Mears, D. (1998). Evaluation issues confronting juvenile justice sentencing reforms: A case study of Texas. *Crime & Delinquency*, 44, 443-463.
- Parker, J., Morton, T., Lingefelt, M., & Johnson, K. (2005). Predictors of serious and violent offending by adjudicated male adolescents. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 7, 407-418.
- Piquero, A. R., Brame, R., & Lynam, D. (2004). Studying criminal career length through early adulthood among serious offenders. *Crime & Delinquency*, 50, 412-435.
- Piquero, A., Brame, R., Mazerolle, P., & Haapanen, R. (2002). Crime in emerging adulthood. *Criminology*, 40, 137-169.
- Podkopacz, M., & Feld, B. (2001). The back-door to prison: Waiver reform, blended sentencing, and the law of unintended consequences. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 91, 997-1071.
- Ryan, J., Davis, R., & Yang, H. (2001). Reintegration services and the likelihood of adult imprisonment: A longitudinal study of adjudicated delinquents. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 11, 321-337.
- Sampson, R., & Laub, J. (1993). *Crime in the making*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Sampson, R., & Laub, J. (2003). Life-course desisters? Trajectories of crime among delinquent boys followed to age 70. *Criminology*, 41, 555-592.
- Smallheer, R. (1999). Sentence blending and the promise of rehabilitation: Bringing the juvenile justice system full circle. *Hofstra Law Review*, 28, 259-289.
- Snyder, H., & Sickmund, M. (2006). *Juvenile offenders and victims: 2006 national report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Trulson, C., Marquart, J., Mullings, J., & Caeti, T. (2005). In between adolescence and adulthood: Recidivism outcomes of a cohort of state delinquents. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 3, 355-387.
- Weibush, R. G., Wagner, D., McNulty, B., Wang, Y., & Le, T. (2005). *Implementation and outcome evaluation of the intensive aftercare program: Final report*. Washington, DC: National Council on Crime and Delinquency.
- Zimring, F. (2005). *American juvenile justice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

## Bios

**Chad R. Trulson** is associate professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of North Texas. His current research examines recidivism and institutional misconduct among state committed delinquents and the impact of racial desegregation in the Texas and California prison systems. His most recent book (with James W. Marquart) is *First Available Cell: Desegregation of the Texas Prison System* (University of Texas Press, 2009).

**Darin R. Haerle** is currently pursuing a PhD in criminology, law, and society at the University of California-Irvine. Prior to her graduate studies, she was employed as a group living counselor for female juvenile offenders. Her current research interests are in the area of corrections and specifically involve the rehabilitation and recidivism outcomes of serious and violent juvenile offenders.

**Matt DeLisi** is coordinator of criminal justice studies, associate professor of sociology, and faculty affiliate with the Center for the Study of Violence at Iowa State University.

**James W. Marquart** is dean of the School of Economic, Political, & Policy Sciences at the University of Texas at Dallas. His current research involves an analysis of the long-term effects of the in-cell racial integration policies in the California and Texas prison systems, and examining sexual assault activity in the Texas prison system.