

Discussant Comments -“Does Parole Supervision Work?”

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These comments are based on review of published papers and not the 6/2/06 event.

1. This is a weak database for purposes of most analyses.

- 20 years experience submitting and reviewing Ohio’s data
- great distortions by combining across states
- meager opportunities for statistical control
- Ohio differs greatly from overall profile; our arrest records are terrible; our unconditional releasees are the least serious (short sentences, less serious crimes)

2. Ohio 1993 Back to Prison Chart (see page 2 of this document) (different from Amy Solomon’s rearrest numbers)

- Which is more important? Back to Prison for New Felony or Total Return?
- Parole vs. Unconditional Release—Total Back to Prison—43% to 35%
- Parole vs. Unconditional Release—New Felony Back to Prison—20% to 35%
- How does unknown offender behavior break down? How does supervision affect offender behavior.
 - Returned because of trouble but before new felony takes place.
 - Returned for new technical behavior only
 - Returned to prison for felony behavior to save CJ system processing

or

- Supervision (surveillance and treatment) prevented new crime

We don’t know how this behavior breaks out. Patterns vary between jurisdictions.

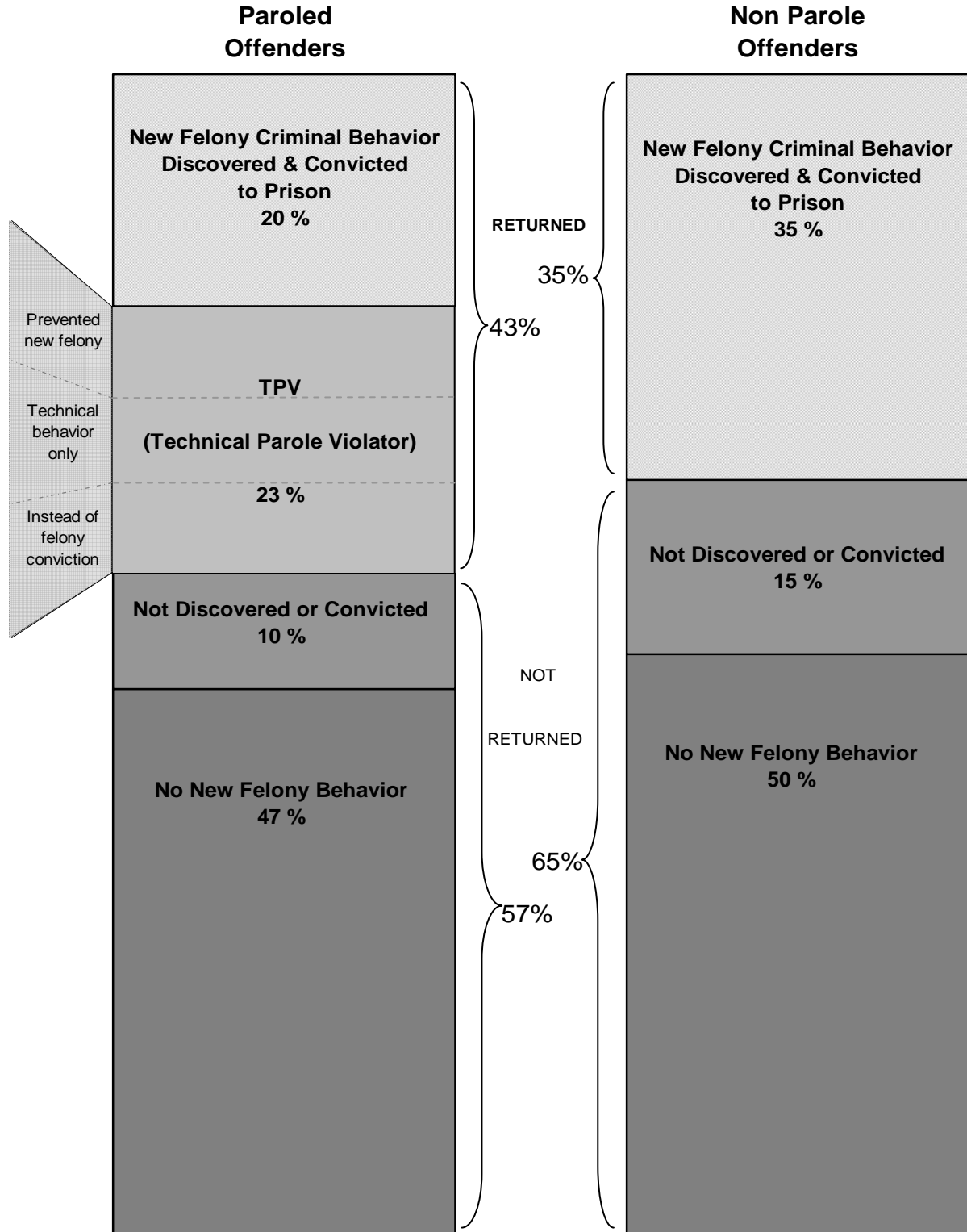
3. Some agreement on numbers. Based on a 1981 Paper—“Parole: Does It Reduce Crime?” & other DRC research I have suggested for 20 years that parole supervision:

- Delays some recidivism
- Actually reduces serious misbehavior—4-6 % points overall, especially because of case planning & treatment side of supervision; higher reductions among high risk

4. Agree with Solomon on a key summary question, “What does it mean to reduce recidivism by a few percentage points?” and on follow-up—“If used, how can supervision be shaped for maximal impact?”

5. Are programs only effective when an offender “volunteers,” that is, chooses to enter and stay? Can coerced or mandated programs be effective? Some recent research suggests it can. If so, isn’t supervision necessary?

Back to Prison Chart



1993 data used as model
3-year follow-up