THE PRESTIGE OF CRIMINAL AND CONVENTIONAL OCCUPATIONS: A SUBCULTURAL MODEL OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY[*]

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We explore the prestige of criminal and conventional occupations using a longitudinal design and ratings from unemployed drug addicts and ex-offenders in seven major metropolitan areas of the United States. These prestige ratings allow us to (1) search for a criminal counterpart to the conventional structure of occupational prestige; (2) examine the relative prestige ratings of criminal and conventional occupations; and (3) assess behavioral hypotheses, derived from theories of criminal subcultures, concerning the relationship between occupational prestige and income from legal and illegal sources. Our respondents rank conventional occupations uniformly higher in prestige than criminal occupations. Moreover, respondents' illegal activities are related to their ratings of the prestige of criminal occupations, but not to their ratings of the prestige of conventional occupations. These results have implications for theories of criminal subcultures.

Criminologists have long assumed that, within the inner city, criminal occupations like loan shark, numbers banker, and pimp are accorded a certain prestige and therefore provide attractive alternatives to low-status legitimate jobs. This proposition is at the heart of many subcultural theories of crime, which posit that criminal subcultures constitute an alternative status hierarchy for the lower class (Cohen 1955; Cloward and Ohlin 1960). Surprisingly, this proposition has never been rigorously tested. With the exception of a few ethnographic studies, the prestige of criminal or conventional occupations as ranked by deviants and criminals has not been examined. This contrasts with the large body of research on the prestige of conventional occupations as ranked by the general public (North and Hatt 1947;

Hodge, Siegel, and Rossi 1966; Treiman 1977; Lin and Xie 1988).

We attempt to fill this void by exploring prestige ratings of criminal and conventional occupations. We use rigorous analytical methods, a longitudinal design, and a multi-city sample of drug addicts and ex-offenders. All members of our samples have histories of chronic unemployment, most have committed serious crimes, and most are at risk of committing more crimes. Because they confront a social world in which criminal activity is salient, their views of the prestige of criminal and conventional occupations may differ from those of the general public. Their views allow us to address four research questions: (1) Do members of deviant subpopulations rank occupations in the same way as members of the general population? (2) How do deviants view the prestige of occupations of the criminal world? (3) Do deviants' prestige ratings of criminal occupations predict their illegal activities? (4) What general theory of subcultures best accounts for deviants' prestige ratings of criminal occupations?

TRADITIONAL RESEARCH ON OCCUPATIONAL PRESTIGE

Survey research on occupational prestige has found strong consensus in rankings of the prestige of conventional occupations: Regardless of nation, demographic group, cultural boundaries,

ecological group, or historical period, respondents rank occupations similarly (Reiss 1961; Siegel 1970; Bose 1985; Hodge, Treiman, and Rossi 1966; Treiman 1977; Lin and Xie 1988). Based on these ratings, stratification researchers assign prestige scores to occupations, which are then used in models of status attainment and occupational mobility (e.g., Hauser and Featherman 1977; Blau and Duncan 1967). Studies that have explicitly searched for subcultural variation in prestige ratings of conventional occupations have generally found none. A typical example is Siegel's (1970) study of occupational prestige ratings among blacks: Blacks and whites evaluated occupations similarly, and thus the hypothesis of a distinct prestige hierarchy of occupations within black communities was not supported. Similar results have been found with respect to the age, occupational position, gender, and urban residence of the rater (Reiss 1961; Bose 1985; Treiman 1977).

A few studies have explored the prestige of unconventional or deviant occupations. Some ethnographic studies take an occupational perspective on crime and explore the world of work within criminal subcultures (Letkemann 1973; Adler and Adler 1983; Luckenbill 1986; Åkerström 1985; Polsky 1967; Maurer 1964; Steffensmeier 1986). These studies have identified rudimentary forms of hierarchical stratification among deviant occupations and careers (Adler and Adler 1983; Luckenbill 1986). High prestige crimes share many features of high prestige legitimate jobs, such as specialized skills, long-term commitment, ambition, reliability, high monetary returns, and connections to powerful people (Åkerström 1985; Letkemann 1973; Steffensmeier 1986; Sutherland 1937). At the bottom of the hierarchy are unorganized impulsive street crimes and sex crimes. These studies suggest that the prestige of crime is an important element of the criminal world.

A second group of studies uses more rigorous methods and broader samples of conventional populations (Treiman 1977; Cullen and Link 1980). Treiman's (1977) cross-national survey of 60 nations included four illegal occupations — narcotics peddler, moonshiner, smuggler, and illegal lottery agent — out of a total of 509 occupations. On average, respondents ranked each of these illegal occupations at the bottom of the prestige scale, well below beggars and recipients of public assistance. In Cullen and Link's (1980) survey of college students, respondents rated 20 criminal occupations, including a variety of white-collar and street criminals like bookie, fence, drug pusher, and Mafia king. Respondents rated crimes according to criteria typically used in status rankings of conventional occupations, such as the degree of training or skill required for the job.

In sum, conventional respondents rank criminal occupations at the bottom of the prestige hierarchy. When asked to differentiate crimes, they tend to use conventional criteria. These findings raise an important question: Would members of deviant subcultures — the subjects of ethnographic research on crime — rate criminal occupations in the same way? This question requires two critical elements: survey measures that assess the prestige of illicit occupations, and samples from deviant subcultures.

CRIMINAL OCCUPATIONS AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Crime as an Occupation

We define occupation as an organized set of activities pursued for economic support. (By "organized" we mean that activities are interrelated at the individual level, not that the activities are a part of some larger organization at a structural level.) A classic criminal occupation is Sutherland's (1937) description of professional theft as an organized set of activities marked by a complex division of labor, an explicit set of rules and understandings, and high prestige among criminals. Most criminal activities are far less organized, ranging from highly-systematized activities that resemble occupations to disorganized activities that share few characteristics of conventional occupations (Cressey 1972). Several researchers, drawing on ethnographic evidence, have argued forcefully in favor of an occupational perspective on crime (Polsky 1967; Letkemann 1973; Åkerström 1985). Indeed, Polsky (1967) advocated not only studying illegal occupations, but also overcoming our fascination with their *illegal* aspect and focusing on their *occupational* aspect, because "a theory of illegal occupations can be but a special case, albeit an important one, of general occupational theory" (p. 101; see also Letkemann 1973; Cullen and Link 1980).

From an occupational perspective, researchers have found several similarities between conventional and criminal occupational spheres. For example, safe-crackers, bank robbers, and other "regular thieves" typically have specialized technical skills (including having "nerve," and possessing manual dexterity), are motivated by mon-

etary gain, see themselves as businessmen and their criminal activity as work, take pride in their workmanship, and seek status through their criminal activity (Letkemann 1973; Åkerström 1985). They see themselves as "having a line" or specialty, which provides them with an occupational identity (Sullivan 1989, p. 245). Nevertheless, the illegal nature of their work leads to unique occupational characteristics and concerns. Because of rapidly shifting opportunities and risks, criminals can engage in crime only sporadically and typically commit a variety of offenses (Letkemann 1973). Criminals may be more accurately characterized as "moonlighters," because many hold intermittent, unskilled legitimate jobs in the secondary labor market (Polsky 1967; Holzman 1983). Indeed, many property crimes are motivated by monetary gain and are committed regularly, and thus resemble low-skill occupations in the secondary labor market.

Some criminologists have challenged the concept of organization among criminals, and by implication, the concept of a criminal occupation. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), for example, argued that descriptive research suggests that crime cannot be organized. They cited three pieces of evidence. First, the *modal* forms of crimes — including white-collar, violent, and monetary crimes — share common characteristics, including impulsivity, risk, immediate gratification, absence of planning, lack of skill, and pain to the victim. Second, research on offenses of juveniles and young adults finds versatility rather than specialization of offenses (Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin 1972; Bursik 1980; Klein 1984; Kempf 1987; Farrington, Snyder, and Finnegan 1988). That is, robbers do not specialize in robbery — as a surgeon specializes in surgery — but also tend to assault, vandalize, and rape. Third, delinquent and criminal behavior is relatively stable over time (Olweus 1979; Elliott, Huizinga, and Ageton 1985).

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) maintained that the modal image of the criminal is one of an individual lacking self-control, which makes the criminal unable to plan, organize, acquire skills, delay gratification, or sympathize with the suffering of others. They inferred that low self-control is a stable individual trait that causes crime and prevents criminals from developing stable organizations. Thus, the concept of organization among criminals, including organized roles and alternative status hierarchies, is the fanciful creation of organizational sociologists applying their conceptual tools to inappropriate phenomena

(Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990, pp. 202–14). Moreover, the concepts of criminal organization, criminal subculture, and criminal occupation are theoretically bankrupt (see also Kornhauser 1978; Hirschi 1969). Equally bankrupt is the concept of a prestige hierarchy among criminal activities. From this standpoint, then, subcultures are "pseudocultures" — disorganized, impotent, and ineffectual in affecting criminal behavior.

Empirically, this "pseudoculture" position implies the futility of any analysis based on the concept of occupational prestige: Prestige rankings of crime are meaningless, indiscriminate, and unrelated to behavior. Our analysis of occupational prestige assesses these claims, and contrasts them with the claims of other scholars who take an occupational or subcultural perspective on crime. The occupational perspective contends that the concept of criminal occupations is useful and that a prestige hierarchy among criminal occupations is an important element of criminal subcultures.

Perceived Prestige of Occupations as a Determinant of Criminal Activity

A central proposition of subcultural theories is that deviant subcultures offer an alternative mechanism for attaining social status (Cohen 1955; Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Short and Strodtbeck 1965; Vigil 1988). Blocked from attaining social status through conventional means, lower class persons are likely to innovate or affiliate with a criminal subculture, which provides an illegitimate opportunity structure in which status is based on theft, violence, or drugs (Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Cohen 1955; Cohen and Short 1965). An important element of criminal subcultures is a distinct set of values, including an alternative status hierarchy that allocates prestige to high-status criminal roles. Thus, criminals often seek status by making their "good scores" known to their peers (Letkemann 1973, p. 44). Gang leaders join gang fights because they are unwilling to risk loss of status in their gangs (Short and Strodtbeck 1965). Without conventional role models, lower class persons are likely to value criminal role models who display power, money, and prestige (Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Spergel 1964; Shaw and McKay 1969, p. 170). The "big shot" is highly respected, the traitor stigmatized as a "rat," and the petty thief disdained (Shaw and McKay, 1931, p. 391). A classic quote from one of Shaw's (1968) case studies characterizes this subcultural status system:

Naw, I don't wanna be a big lawyer or business man, I wanna amount to something. I wanna be a big shot. . . . Have all the guys look up to me. Have a couple of Lincolns, lots of molls, and all the coppers lickin' my shoes. (p. 88)

Subcultural theories predict that, among lower class deviant populations, individuals rating criminal occupations as prestigious are more immersed in a criminal subculture, more likely to adopt a criminal lifestyle, and more motivated to achieve status by engaging in criminal activity. Two hypotheses derive from this view. First, the prestige conferred on criminal occupations affects criminality, i.e., individuals who assign greater prestige to criminal occupations are more likely to engage in crime. Second, because the disenfranchised lack legitimate opportunities for success, their ratings of the prestige of conventional occupations are irrelevant to their criminal activity. Only the prestige of criminal occupations, then, affects crime. For both hypotheses, then, the criterion for subcultural participation requires high rankings of criminal occupations *and* a high degree of criminal activity. In contrast, pseudocultural theories imply two competing hypotheses. First, because prestige ratings of criminal occupations do not reflect subcultures, they have no effect on crime. Second, because prestige ratings of conventional occupations reflect a commitment to conventional culture, they have a negative effect on crime.

A Strategy for Analyzing Perceived Status and Crime

We conduct two distinct analyses, one focusing on occupational prestige, a second focusing on criminal subcultures. Our first analysis follows traditional research on prestige of conventional occupations (North and Hatt 1947; Treiman 1977) by examining mean prestige ratings of conventional and criminal occupations to determine whether ratings by ex-offenders and addicts differ from ratings by conventional populations sampled in previous work. We also examine whether these mean rankings vary by subgroups such as race, gender, age, and prior criminal experience.

Our second analysis departs from traditional stratification research, and addresses research on criminal subcultures. Traditional stratification research averages individual prestige ratings of each occupation to produce a mean rank for each occupation, and then assigns prestige scores to occupations based on rank. These occupational

prestige scores are then used in studies of social mobility and status attainment. Rather than viewing individual prestige ratings of occupations as reflecting objective characteristics of occupations, our analysis treats them as measures of an individual's *perception* of the relative prestige of various legal and illegal occupations. This enables us to test whether such perceptions are related to illicit behavior, as predicted by subcultural theories. Thus, the ratings of the prestige of criminal occupations by respondents at the margins of society are treated as a measure of subcultural values.[1]

Our strategy has precedents in studies of delinquent subcultures. Several studies have examined whether the status of criminal roles is an important element of delinquent subcultures. Spergel (1964) asked lower class urban males, "What is the occupation of the adult in your neighborhood whom you would most want to be like ten years from now?" Responses of "racketeer" were taken to indicate subcultural participation. Short and Strodtbeck (1965) examined how gang boys, lower-class boys, and middle-class boys evaluated criminal and conventional roles, such as "works for good grades," "likes to read books," "saves money," "car washer," " fence," "pimp," "drug user," and "has connections to avoid trouble with the law." All three groups rated middle-class roles ("works for good grades," "likes to read books," and "saves money") high, and all rated car washer higher than fence. Criminal roles, particularly pimp, fence, and having connections to avoid the law, were evaluated highest by gang members and lowest by middle-class boys (Short and Strodtbeck 1965, pp. 50–76). Kobrin, Puntil, and Peluso (1968) asked members of six street gangs in a community to rank the prestige of each gang. They found that sophisticated (characterized by lucrative rackets) and conspicuous (skilled gang fighters) delinquents were ranked at the top, while occupational (petty theft) delinquents and respectable (social club members) nondelinquents were ranked at the bottom.

We extend this literature by examining whether prestige ratings of criminal occupations are related to criminal activity, perhaps the best crite-

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[1] Our subcultural theoretical framework treats prestige ratings of criminal occupations as a measure of deviant subcultural values. Debates in stratification research concerning the relative merits of prestige versus socioeconomic indices of occupations are not relevant here (Featherman and Hauser 1975; Jencks 1990).

rion of subcultural participation. In a preliminary step, we examine the dimensionality of prestige ratings of occupations to determine whether the ratings cluster into one or more dimensions. This is important because different clusters of occupational prestige ratings could have different effects on legal and illegal behavior. Long ago, Hatt (1950) questioned whether occupational prestige rankings form a unidimensional scale (Coxon and Jones 1978). Using Guttman scaling, Hatt found eight dimensions that he termed occupational "situses." Unlike Hatt, however, we investigate dimensionality not to uncover clusters of *objective* characteristics of occupations, but rather to identify the factors underlying individuals' *subjective* ratings of occupations. We then examine the extent to which variation in prestige ratings of legal and illegal occupations is determined by prior experiences with the criminal justice system, by prior legal and illegal activity, and by demographic variables (Reiss 1961).

Finally, we examine the subcultural hypothesis that among lower-class disenfranchised populations, perceptions of the status of criminal occupations reflect an attachment to a subculture and affect criminal activity. The effect of prestige ratings on criminality, however, could be biased for at least three reasons. First, such an effect could be spurious: The same exogenous forces that cause individuals to assign high prestige to criminal occupations may also compel them to engage in illegal activity. For this reason, we examine the effect of prestige on crime while holding constant a vector of exogenous variables known to affect crime, including demographic characteristics, prior experiences with the criminal justice system, peer influences, and prior criminality. Prior criminality should not only capture continuity in criminality, but also should help to control for unobserved individual heterogeneity when predicting future illegal activity. Second, a positive effect of prestige ratings of criminal occupations on illegal activity could reflect a "social desirability effect" in which respondents who understate their illegal activity also understate the prestige of criminal occupations. Our models partially control for social desirability by including prior illegal activity, which is measured at the same time as occupational prestige. Because social desirability effects on contemporaneous reports of prior illegal activity should be as high or higher than their effects on future reports of subsequent illegal activity, controlling for prior illegal activity should partially control for social desirability. Third, the effect of prestige on illegal activity could

Table 1.   Characteristics of the Pooled Sample of Addicts and Offenders, 1975

Characteristic	Value
Initial interview	
Average age	26.3
	(6.4)
Percent male	89
Percent black	79.5
Percent Hispanic or other	9.8
Percent Anglo	10.7
Average years of schooling	10.4
	(1.8)
Percent ever used opiates	68
Percent with "straight" best friends	77
Percent with any legal earnings last year	41
Average weeks worked last year	7.1
	(12.0)
Average monthly legal earnings last year	$70
	($141)
Percent with any illegal earnings last 6 months	81
Average total illegal earnings last 6 months	$359
	($1140)
Average expected monthly earnings from best available legal job	$709
	($331)
Percent ever arrested	96
Average number of arrests	8.9
	(12.0)
Percent ever incarcerated	68
Average weeks incarcerated last year	21.5
	(19.9)
Nine-month interview	
Percent with any legal earnings	74
Average monthly legal earnings last 9 months	$264
	($267)
Percent with any illegal earnings last 9 months	24
Average total illegal earnings last 9 months	$539
	($1487)
Percent arrested, last 9 months	28
Number of cases	2,877

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations.

reflect a general effect of occupational prestige ratings on income from any source, rather than a specific effect on illegal income. To address this problem, we estimate equations for legal earnings and hypothesize that criminal prestige should have null or negative effects on legal earnings. In sum, we test the subcultural view that prestige ratings of criminal occupations are a cause of illegal activity versus the pseudocultural view that such ratings are either spuriously related to crime or are merely post hoc rationalizations of crime.

SAMPLES AND DATA

The data were collected as part of the National Supported Work Demonstration Project, a randomized experiment that examined the relationship between opportunities for legitimate work and subsequent criminal behavior. The project, carried out between 1975 and 1978 in seven metropolitan areas, collected data from two independent samples of adults with severe labor market disadvantages: previously incarcerated offenders and drug addicts. All participants were required to have been recently and chronically unemployed. Offenders were required to have been released from jail or prison in the six months prior to participation; drug addicts were required to have been involved in a drug treatment program in the year preceding their participation. Approximately one-half of the participants were randomly assigned to Supported Work jobs of up to 18 months' duration, while the other half served as a control group. All participants had an initial interview and were scheduled for two follow-up interviews at nine-month intervals. Our analyses focus on the pooled sample of 1,757 offenders and 1,120 addicts who completed the first two interviews.[2] Separate analyses of offenders and addicts revealed no substantial differences between samples. For a detailed description of the sample, eligibility criteria, and sample attrition, see Piliavin, Gartner, Thornton, and Matsueda (1986).

Because of the requirements of the Supported Work Demonstration Project, our samples include many respondents with long records of criminality and unemployment. Immersed in urban poverty, respondents should be familiar with the status system of lower-class occupations, whether legal or illegal. These samples provide an excellent opportunity for exploring occupational prestige among the relatively disenfranchised.[3]

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[2] The percentage of participants completing both waves of interviews was 78 percent for addicts and 73 percent for offenders. Although these percentages are reasonably high, attrition could bias parameter estimates. Brown (1979) has examined whether sample attrition in the Supported Work Demonstration Project was systematic and, if so, whether it biased estimates of models of criminal behavior. Using Heckman's (1976) method of correcting for sample selection bias, he found no biasing effects on selected program outcomes, including self-reported arrests.

[3] Because our samples are not conventional populations, we can only contrast our results to findings from previous research based on conventional popu-

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the pooled samples. Respondents are predominantly black, male, and poorly-educated, and most have been arrested. In the 12-month period before the initial interview, mean monthly earnings from legitimate jobs were a meager $70. The standard deviation of $141 reveals that variation around this mean is substantial. Moreover, less than one-half of the sample reported *any* earnings from conventional jobs. The average income from criminal activities in the six-months prior to the initial interview was $359. Again, dispersion around the mean is substantial. Most respondents report some income from illegal activities. In fact, at the time of the initial interview, the average income from illegal activities exceeded the income from legitimate sources. During the first 12 months of the Supported Work Demonstration Project, levels and sources of income changed because 50.9 percent of the participants were in the experimental group and received Supported Work jobs. Overall, legal earnings more than doubled and exceeded illegal earnings. Also, most of the respondents (60 percent) reported at the initial interview that they could earn more money through illegal activities than through legitimate jobs, and about one-half reported at least weekly opportunities to earn money from crime (data not shown). Clearly, the relevant labor context for members of our sample is one of meager income from both legal and illegal occupations.

RESULTS

A Descriptive Analysis of Respect for Legal and Illegal Occupations

Our measures of occupational prestige follow those used in the original National Opinion Research Center (NORC) study (North and Hatt 1947). Respondents were asked to rate, on a thermometer scale of 0 to 100, how much respect they held for persons in each of 20 occupations.

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lations. Moreover, our samples are not probability samples, but were drawn by the National Supported Work Demonstration. Some of our respondents may have self-selected into the study, producing an overrepresentation of certain subgroups. For example, individuals with conventional attitudes may have been more likely to volunteer for the program and stay with it. However, few of our respondents self-selected — most were referred by social service agencies and we believe that, overall, the referral practices of disparate social agencies do not seriously bias the samples.

Table 2. Percentage Distribution of Respect Ratings for 10 Legal and 10 Illegal Occupations: Addicts and Offenders, 1976

	Percentage Distribution						
Occupation	Looked Down on (0–24)	Not Respected (25–49)	Average Respected (50–74)	Highly Respected (75–99)	Very Highly Respected (100)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Legal occupations							
Doctor	2	1	6	13	77	91.4	19.7
Teacher	2	2	12	23	61	85.5	22.3
Construction worker	2	2	20	24	52	81.8	23.0
Postal worker	2	2	20	25	51	81.0	23.4
House painter	3	5	33	25	34	71.7	25.3
Factory worker	4	9	34	22	31	68.1	27.5
Cleaning person	5	10	33	19	33	67.4	28.7
Police officer	19	10	25	17	29	57.6	36.3
Car washer	11	19	37	13	20	54.4	30.1
Prison guard	27	14	28	14	17	45.7	35.2
Illegal occupations							
Numbers banker	30	16	24	11	18	43.3	36.4
Hustler	33	18	26	10	13	39.0	34.5
Gambler	31	20	29	9	11	38.4	32.5
Numbers runner	32	24	26	8	9	34.9	31.3
Loan shark	43	21	19	7	9	30.1	32.7
Counterfeiter	46	18	19	8	8	28.8	32.4
Prostitute	48	18	19	6	8	27.3	31.7
Drug dealer	52	18	16	5	8	25.5	31.9
Pimp	56	15	15	7	7	24.2	32.1
Purse snatcher	77	13	6	1	2	9.5	19.9

Note: Number of cases is 2,844.

To anchor the scale and provide a metric, descriptive labels were provided for five categories. The question asked: "Judge *how much you respect* these kinds of people by giving them points: (100 points) *Very* highly respected, looked up to and admired; (75 points) Highly respected; (50 points) Average respected; (25 points) *Not* respected; (0 points) Looked down on, very low."[4]

Ten of the occupations are conventional occupations (doctor, teacher, construction worker, house painter, postal worker, factory worker, cleaning person, car washer, police officer, and prison guard); the other ten are illegal occupations in the sense that their performance requires law violation (numbers runner, numbers banker, loan shark, gambler, hustler, counterfeiter, prostitute, pimp, purse snatcher, and drug dealer). These 20 occupations were selected for their salience to members of criminal subcultures. The illegal occupations represent typical monetary crimes engaged in by street criminals; the conventional occupations are either high-profile ca-

[4] The NORC study used a similar question: "For each job mentioned, please pick out the statement that best gives *your own personal opinion* of the *general standing* that such a job has: (1) Excellent standing; (2) Good standing; (3) Average standing; (4) Somewhat below average standing; (5) Poor standing." Available evidence indicates that alternative methods of measuring occupational prestige give similar results, as long as "'prestige' or some synonymous term, such as 'respect' or 'social standing,' is specified as the ordering criterion" (Treiman 1977, p. 43). Thus, our measures should be comparable to those used in previous studies of occupational prestige (Coleman and Rainwater 1978).

reers or jobs that our respondents (or people they know) might hold, including low-status jobs in the secondary labor market.[5]

Table 2 presents the distribution of the occupational respect ratings. Consistent with previous studies of occupational prestige, which find greater variation in prestige ratings of low-status jobs (Hunter 1977; Guppy and Goyder 1984), we find slightly smaller standard deviations for legal activities compared to illegal activities, except for the criminal justice occupations and purse snatcher. That is, respondents disagree over the prestige of prison guards and police officers, but agree that purse snatchers have low prestige. In general, there is more consensus in ratings of legitimate occupations than illegitimate occupations. Moreover, on average, our respondents rate all ten legal occupations higher than the ten illegal occupations. The mean rating of all but one of the legal occupations is greater than 50, which marks the category "average, respected." The one exception, the rating for prison guard, perhaps reflects the large number of respondents who have had contact with the criminal justice system and the adversarial relationship between prison guards and criminals. All of the illegal occupations have mean scores below 50. Thus, "cleaning person" and "car washer" receive substantially greater respect than do relatively skilled illegal activities like numbers banker, hustler, and gambler. These ratings suggest that respondents used similar criteria in rating legal and illegal occupations. That is, the most highly respected legitimate occupations are professional occupations (doctor, teacher) and well-paid, skilled, blue-collar jobs (construction worker, postal worker). Similarly, among illicit occupations, those that produce more income and require more skill receive more respect (e.g., numbers banker) than those that lack these qualities (e.g., purse snatcher). These results are comparable to Cullen and Link's (1980) survey of college students — the rank order correlation of the six illegal occupations common to both studies is .77.

We can offer further evidence on this issue by comparing respondents' ratings of conventional

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[5] Thus, our occupations are not a random sample from a larger population of occupations, but rather were selected based on substantive considerations. Because of the limited number of occupations examined, our results are only suggestive and we do not generalize to the population of all legal or illegal occupations. Clearly, only further research can determine whether our results hold over a broader range of occupations.

occupations with those made by the general population in previous studies. We ranked our ten conventional occupations using prestige scores from Siegel's NORC prestige scale (Hauser and Featherman 1977). The rank-order correlation between Siegel's scale and the rankings based on our thermometer scale is .73. Thus, the prestige ratings of conventional occupations made by individuals at the margin of society resemble those made by the general public.

Finally, we examined subgroup variation in the ranking of the 20 occupations. For ten variables tapping demographic characteristics and prior experiences with deviance (age, sex, black, Hispanic, education, straight friend, drug use, illegal income, jail, and offender status), we dichotomized respondents on each variable using a nominal category or the mean value. For each pair of subgroups (e.g., blacks and whites), we averaged the occupational ratings across members of the subgroup for each of 20 occupations. This yielded 20 average ratings for each subgroup (e.g., one set of 20 average ratings for blacks, another for whites). We then computed Pearson correlations between the average ratings for pairs of subgroups (e.g., the correlation between the 20 average ratings for blacks and the 20 average ratings for whites). Because the associations may not be linear in the average ratings, we also transformed the average ratings to ranks and computed Spearman rank-order correlations, obtaining similar results. These results confirmed prior research: All correlations were remarkably high. In fact, the lowest rank-order correlations were .94 for prior illegal income and .98 for straight best friend. We re-estimated the correlations using only the ten criminal occupations and again the correlations were very high. The lowest were .86 for age, .89 for drug use, and .92 for Hispanic ethnicity. Thus, among lower-class individuals at the margins of society, the structure of occupational prestige is remarkably invariant across subgroups.

The Dimensionality of Occupational Prestige

Before presenting a model of occupational prestige, we examine the dimensionality of the occupational prestige ratings. If the prestige ratings of occupations cluster into multiple dimensions rather than forming a unidimensional scale, the different dimensions could be related to legal and illegal activity in different ways. To consider these possibilities, we estimated a confirmatory factor model of prestige ratings of the 20 occupations

using Jöreskog and Sörbom's (1984) LISREL VI program, which provides maximum-likelihood estimates and a likelihood-ratio test. The occupational ratings cluster into four substantively meaningful factors: Three dimensions (professional, criminal justice, and working class) underlie the measures of legal occupations, and one dimension underlies the criminal occupations. The overall goodness-of-fit test (including substantive and measurement portions) with 13 measurement error correlations yields a χ^2 of 1,640 with 412 degrees of freedom. Additional factors either failed to improve the fit of the model or were not interpretable. Criminal occupations, in particular, are clearly unidimensional. The occupations are relatively reliable measures of their underlying factor — loadings range from .52 to .81. While the professional, criminal justice, and working class factors are moderately intercorrelated (.42, .47, and .61), each is orthogonal to the criminal factor. Thus, the legal-illegal dimension is paramount in generating covariation across ratings.

We should note two caveats in this finding. First, the unidimensionality of the ratings of the prestige of criminal occupations is restricted to our set of ten criminal activities. If more highly-skilled and highly-paid illegal activities like Mafia kingpin or insider-trader were included, multiple dimensions might emerge. Second, the distinction between criminal and conventional occupations could reflect differences in sporadic versus full-time work. That is, criminal occupations are typically not full-time occupations and, in fact, criminals may engage in a variety of sporadic criminal activities. To examine this interpretation directly would require data on the prestige of sporadic conventional occupations, e.g., farm laborer. We can, however, examine this possibility indirectly: If our criminal prestige dimension is merely tapping the prestige of sporadic work rather than the prestige of illicit occupations, it should be unrelated to illicit earnings.

Determinants of Occupational Prestige

Our substantive model specifies occupational prestige ratings as a function of a vector of exogenous variables, including background characteristics (age, gender, and race), and prior experiences that predict crime (legal and illegal earnings, prior arrests and jail time, drug use, having a straight best friend, and expected monthly earnings). Our measures of occupational prestige are the factor scores from our confirmatory factor

analysis (Jöreskog and Sörbom 1984). (We also estimated covariance structure models of measurement and substantive components simultaneously, which assumed linear and continuous variables, and found similar results.)

We hypothesize that the work experiences and illicit activities of respondents influence their prestige ratings of occupations, i.e., net of background variables, the prestige of criminal occupations is increased by prior involvement in illegal activities (illegal earnings, drug use, arrests, and jail). We also expect prior illegal activities to increase the likelihood of adversarial experiences with the criminal justice system, which in turn decreases respect for criminal justice occupations. Such activities encourage involvement in a criminal subculture, leading to denigration of conventional occupations. Conversely, respect for legal occupations is increased (and respect for criminal occupations decreased) by having a straight best friend, earning money legitimately (in the 12-month period before the program), and expecting greater monthly earnings from a conventional job.

Table 3 presents ordinary least squares estimates of equations predicting factor scores of occupational respect ratings. Demographic variables show substantial effects of age and race on the ratings of occupational respect: Older respondents report more respect for conventional occupations and less respect for illicit occupations. Relative to whites, blacks tend to rate all four types of occupations higher, especially criminal occupations. Like blacks, Hispanics rate criminal occupations higher than do whites.[6] As expected, on average, having a straight (non-criminal) best friend increases respect for conventional jobs and decreases respect for criminal jobs.

The effects of legal and illegal activities on respect for occupations indicate that respondents who made more money through illegal means

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[6] Because blacks rank *all* occupations higher than do whites, the effect of race (and perhaps other exogenous variables) on our prestige ratings may reflect different responses to the scale rather than structural variation in subcultures. To examine this, we computed deviation scores for each occupational prestige rating: An individual's prestige rating averaged across all occupations was subtracted from the individual's rating of each occupation. All variables had similar effects except race, which no longer had a significant effect on the prestige of criminal occupations. Thus, for race we cannot rule out the hypothesis of differential response effects.

have more respect for criminal occupations. The amount of prior illegal earnings is the strongest predictor of respect for criminal occupations. Legal earnings affect only the prestige of working-class occupations. The small effect of legal earnings probably reflects the restricted range of such earnings in our sample — few respondents earned a substantial wage before entering the Supported Work Demonstration Project. Finally, as expected, prior illegal earnings, prior arrests, prior drug use, and weeks spent in jail decrease respect for criminal justice occupations. Prior arrests also significantly increase respect for criminal occupations. The R^2s for these equations indicate that our models explain only modest amounts of variance in occupational respect factor scores.

These results are consistent with a subcultural view of the prestige of criminal occupations: Within a marginal population, those individuals most at risk of serious crime are, on average, those who view criminal occupations as prestigious. But this is only a provisional conclusion because, contrary to a subcultural view, the individuals who view criminal occupations as more prestigious may not be the same individuals who will engage in future illegal activities. To examine this question, we turn to our models of legal and illegal earnings.

Determinants of Legal and Illegal Earnings

Our models of earnings specify illegal and legal earnings to be a function of occupational ratings as well as the vector of exogenous variables. To reduce ambiguity in making casual inferences, exogenous variables and occupational prestige factor scores are taken from the initial interview (time 1), while subsequent legal and illegal earnings were measured at the nine-month follow-up interview (time 2). The natural logarithm of both legal and illegal earnings is used because previous research has found that earnings functions follow a logarithmic functional form. Also, the use of logged earnings reduces skewness in the distribution of earnings, reducing heteroskedasticity and increasing the efficiency of our estimator and the accuracy of estimated standard errors.

Following a subcultural perspective, we hypothesize that respondents' prestige ratings of occupations are related to future pecuniary activities. Because persons expressing respect for criminal occupations are more deeply committed to criminal subcultures, they should derive

Table 3. Ordinary Least Squares Coefficients for Regression of Factor Scores of Prestige Ratings of Criminal and Conventional Occupations on Selected Independent Variables: Addicts and Offenders, 1976

	Dependent Variable			
	Conventional Occupations			
Independent Variable	Working-Class Occupation (1)	Criminal Justice Occupation (2)	Professional Occupation (3)	Criminal Occupation (4)
Intercept	43.91***	63.13***	55.52***	7.76
Age	.225***	.271**	.163***	-.249***
	(.101)	(.068)	(.080)	(-.098)
Male	-.707	-.621	-1.44	2.82**
	(-.015)	(-.008)	(-.034)	(.053)
Black	3.45***	3.73*	2.33**	6.72***
	(.098)	(.059)	(.072)	(.167)
Hispanic	1.12	4.66*	-.202	1.90
	(.023)	(.054)	(-.005)	(.034)
Experimental group	.179	.577	.279	-1.21
	(.006)	(.011)	(.011)	(-.037)
Years of education	-.400*	-.573*	-.025	.303
	(-.050)	(-.040)	(-.003)	(.033)
Straight friend	2.28***	4.01***	1.16	-4.50***
	(.069)	(.067)	(.038)	(-.118)
Expected legal earnings (ln)	-.264	-3.32*	.268	1.54
	(-.007)	(-.052)	(.008)	(.038)
Prior drug use	-.279	-4.17***	.959	1.48
	(-.009)	(-.076)	(.034)	(.042)
Prior legal earnings (ln)	.471*	.114	.304	-.319
	(.080)	(.011)	(-.056)	(-.047)
Prior weeks worked	-.070	.050	-.040	-.016
	(-.060)	(.024)	(-.037)	(-.012)
Prior illegal earnings (ln)	-.142	-.822***	-.031	.894***
	(-.029)	(-.094)	(-.007)	(.159)
Prior weeks in jail	-.016	-.143***	-.005	.015
	(-.022)	(-.113)	(-.007)	(.019)
Prior arrests	-.030	-.125**	-.001	.098***
	(-.026)	(-.061)	(-.001)	(.075)
Offender	3.61***	-.883	-1.58*	-.805
	(.126)	(-.017)	(-.060)	(-.024)
R^2	.041	.051	.028	.093
Number of cases	2,458	2,458	2,458	2,458

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

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standardized coefficients.

more money from illegal activities and less from legal activities. Predictions involving conventional occupational prestige are less clear-cut. Some subcultural perspectives posit that structural barriers prevent members of the lower class from attaining prestigious conventional occupations. These barriers make the prestige of con-

ventional occupations — particularly professional occupations — irrelevant for activities of the lower class. This implies that prestige ratings of conventional occupations are orthogonal to illegal activity. Other subcultural perspectives suggest that the effects of the prestige of conventional occupations vary by type of occupation. For example, members of the lower class who hold more respect for professional occupations may become frustrated when they are blocked from attaining those jobs. This frustration, in turn, could increase the likelihood of illegal activity. Such a mechanism would not operate for working-class occupations because there are fewer barriers. Furthermore, the prestige of criminal justice occupations could operate differently, perhaps through a process of "condemning the condemners." Members of criminal subcultures may denigrate criminal justice occupations, which motivates further criminal behavior (Sykes and Matza 1957). Our structural model tests these hypotheses.

We examine two conceptualizations of our outcome variables that correspond to distinct substantive questions. First, can our models account for the decision to seek income from either legal or illegal sources? This resembles a model of *participation* in crime used by criminologists (Nagin and Smith 1990). Our dependent variable is a dichotomy in which no earnings is coded 0 and some earnings is coded 1. Parameters are estimated using a probit model. Second, can our models account for variation in the amount of earnings? This corresponds roughly to a model of *frequency* of criminal activity. Our outcome variables — legal and illegal earnings — have severely censored distributions because income cannot take negative values and many respondents had no legal or illegal earnings. This results in a severe floor effect, which could exert a downward bias on parameter estimates of linear models that assume continuous distributions throughout the range of dependent variables. To avoid this potential bias, we use a censored (tobit) regression model for the natural log of amount of earnings measured in dollars (Tobin 1958; Maddala 1983). Furthermore, Greene (1990, p. 732) showed that if identical substantive mechanisms lead to participation in crime and accumulating greater illegal earnings, a proportionality constraint between probit and tobit coefficients should hold within the bounds of sampling error. Therefore, using the likelihood-ratio method, we can test whether processes leading to participation and amount of earnings

are invariant.[7] The parameters of the tobit model were estimated using the maximum-likelihood estimator of Greene's (1989) LIMDEP program. The program also provides asymptotic standard errors and a likelihood ratio test statistic distributed approximately χ^2 in large samples.

Determinants of illegal earnings. Table 4 presents probit coefficients predicting presence of any illegal earnings (Models 1 to 3) and tobit coefficients predicting amount of earnings from illegal sources in the nine months since the initial interview (Models 4 to 6).[8] Models 1 and 4 present probit and tobit reduced-form coefficients expressing illegal earnings as a function of the exogenous variables; Models 2 and 5 present coefficients for the structural form, which adds the four occupational prestige variables. Comparison of the reduced-form and structural-form coefficients reveals only modest differences, implying that occupational prestige mediates little of the effects of the exogenous variables on illegal activity. Furthermore, the sign, significance, and relative magnitude of the tobit and probit coefficients are similar (Model 1 versus Model 4, Model 2 versus Model 5) and a formal likelihood-ratio test fails to reject the null hypothesis of invariant mechanisms. Thus, the substantive process leading to participation in monetary crimes resembles that for increases in returns from such crimes.

Among the demographic variables, age, gender, and Hispanic ethnicity exert significant effects on illegal activity — as expected, young

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[7] If the process leading to participation in income-producing activity is identical to the process leading to linear changes in income, the tobit and probit coefficients are proportional to each other: $\beta_j/\theta_j = \sigma$. We can test for invariance by computing a likelihood-ratio test statistic from a probit equation that constrains the coefficients $\beta_j = \theta_j/\sigma$, where θ_j and σ are obtained from the corresponding tobit model (Nagin and Smith 1990).

[8] Full information was available for 2,458 cases for prestige ratings and legal earnings (a loss of 15 percent) and for 2,218 cases for illegal earnings (a loss of 23 percent). To reduce the effect of missing values, we imputed the mean value for missing values on three variables — straight friend, expected earnings, and criminal prestige. We control for this imputation by including exogenous dummy variables. Sample size was increased to 2,742 and 2,464 respectively, and yielded identical estimates to models using listwise deletion. Finally, the distributions of the variables for which full information existed were similar when those with missing values on a variable were compared with those without missing values.

Table 4. Maximum Likelihood Coefficients for Regression of Subsequent Illegal Earnings on Selected Independent Variables: Addicts and Offenders, 1976

Independent Variable	Presence of Illegal Earnings			Amount of Illegal Earnings		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Intercept	-1.22*	-1.09*	-1.12*	-12.09*	-10.73*	-11.00*
	(.520)	(.536)	(.539)	(4.72)	(4.77)	(4.79)
Age	-.021***	-.018**	-.018**	-.183***	-.156**	-.155**
	(.005)	(.006)	(.006)	(.050)	(.050)	(.050)
Male	.483***	.458***	.457***	4.61***	4.30***	4.29***
	(.117)	(.119)	(.119)	(1.08)	(1.07)	(1.07)
Black	-.099	-.147	-.148	-.786	-1.19	-1.20
	(.096)	(.098)	(.098)	(.862)	(.866)	(.865)
Hispanic	-.299*	-.293*	-.291*	-2.60*	-2.45*	-2.42*
	(.135)	(.136)	(.136)	(1.22)	(1.21)	(1.21)
Years of education	.006	.003	.004	.049	.023	.033
	(.017)	(.017)	(.018)	(.156)	(.155)	(.155)
Straight friend	-.144*	-.073	-.074	-1.44*	-.748	-.750
	(.070)	(.071)	(.071)	(.624)	(.625)	(.625)
Expected legal earnings	-.011	-.031	-.034	-.006	-.190	-.214
	(.077)	(.077)	(.077)	(.700)	(.686)	(.686)
Prior drug use	.441***	.424***	.423***	4.15***	3.92***	3.90***
	(.075)	(.076)	(.076)	(.691)	(.686)	(.686)
Experimental group	-.084	-.062	-.065	-.826	-.588	-.615
	(.060)	(.060)	(.060)	(.538)	(.533)	(.533)
Prior legal earnings	-.009	-.004	-.004	-.106	-.058	-.055
	(.023)	(.023)	(.023)	(.207)	(.204)	(.204)
Prior weeks worked	.004	.004	.004	.044	.040	.038
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.041)	(.040)	(.040)
Prior illegal earnings	.089***	.078***	.078***	.808***	.690***	.688***
	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)	(.094)	(.093)	(.093)
Prior weeks in jail	.004	.003	.003	.039*	.031	.032
	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)
Prior arrests	.011***	.010***	.010***	.096***	.084***	.084***
	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)
Offender	.174*	.202*	.199*	1.53*	1.75*	1.73*
	(.082)	(.084)	(.084)	(.739)	(.738)	(.738)
Imputed value for straight friend	-.145	-.140	-.148	-1.40	-1.44	-1.49
	(.227)	(.230)	(.230)	(2.05)	(2.04)	(2.04)
Imputed value for expected earnings	.204	.195	.192	1.84	1.73	1.69
	(.177)	(.179)	(.180)	(1.59)	(1.58)	(1.58)
Imputed value for criminal prestige	—	-.155	-.153	—	-1.50	-1.49
		(.137)	(.137)		(1.22)	(1.23)
Working class prestige	—	-.005	-.005	—	-.042	-.050*
		(.003)	(.003)		(.024)	(.025)
Criminal justice prestige	—	-.0024	-.001	—	-.024*	-.009
		(.0013)	(.002)		(.012)	(.016)
Professional prestige	—	.002	.001	—	.015	.014
		(.003)	(.003)		(.024)	(.024)
Criminal prestige	—	.010***	.010***	—	.094***	.087***
		(.002)	(.002)		(.018)	(.019)
Ranks a criminal occupation over working class occupations	—	—	-.099	—	—	-.830
			(.117)			(1.03)
Ranks a criminal occupation over criminal justice occupations	—	—	.133	—	—	1.19
			(.094)			(.832)
Sigma	—	—	—	9.67***	9.50***	9.49***
				(.367)	(.360)	(.360)
Log-likelihood	-1158.2	-1139.6	-1138.4	-2631.3	-2610.7	-2609.5
Number of cases	2,464	2,464	2,464	2,464	2,464	2,464

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

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

adults and males are more likely to have illegal earnings and to receive greater average returns from monetary crime. Hispanics are less likely to have illegal earnings and to receive less illegal earnings than non-Hispanics. The effect for blacks was not significant. The effect of years of education was also not significant, possibly because of the restricted range of education in our sample. Having a straight best friend reduces the likelihood of later illegal activity and the returns from illegal activity. None of the measures of legitimate work, including experimental group, legal earnings, and prior weeks worked, exerts a significant effect on subsequent illegal activity or returns from such activity. Prior arrests, previous illegal earnings, prior drug use, and offender status all exert significant positive effects on the likelihood of subsequent illegal activity and amount earned from that activity. The substantial effect of prior illegal earnings, combined with our earlier finding that prior illegal earnings also positively affects perceived prestige of criminal occupations, underscores the importance of controlling for illegal earnings when examining effects of prestige on later illegal activity.

The most important finding concerns the effect of respect for criminal occupations on illegal activity. Net of background and experience variables, the prestige of criminal occupations significantly increases criminal activity — as predicted, those who accord greater prestige to criminal occupations are more likely to engage in crime and, on average, reap greater returns from crime. This is consistent with a subcultural view of pecuniary crime, which argues that subcultures develop alternative status hierarchies that accord prestige to criminal activities that in turn increase the attractiveness of criminal activity. Furthermore, several statistically significant indirect effects on illegal earnings can be traced through respect for criminal occupations. Consistent with differential association theory, respondents without a straight friend are more likely to engage in illegal activity because they accord higher prestige to criminal occupations. In addition, respondents who are young, black, had greater illegal earnings in the past, or were arrested more often, are more likely to engage in illegal activity in part because they have higher respect for illegal occupations.[9]

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[9] This assumes that the effects are linear and additive. If that assumption is violated, the result could be misleading. For example, even though young blacks with extensive criminal histories, on average, accord

Contrary to the pseudocultural perspective, the prestige ratings of professional, working-class, and criminal justice occupations are unrelated to the likelihood of illegal activity or the returns from illegal activity. This holds for tests of the individual coefficients, a joint test of the three coefficients, and a test of the coefficient when conventional occupations are included as a single index. The prestige accorded conventional occupations neither dissuades persons from crime (e.g., by bonding them to conventional society), nor motivates them to crime (e.g., by frustrating them from attaining professional occupations). The prestige of conventional occupations is irrelevant to the unlawful activities of the disenfranchised — only the prestige of criminal occupations matters.[10]

Determinants of legal earnings. Table 5 presents parameter estimates of equations predicting the presence and amount of legal earnings in the nine months since the enrollment interviews. The reduced-form equations (Models 1 and 4) and the structural-form equations (Models 2 and 5) for legal earnings show few differences, again suggesting no substantial indirect effects of exogenous variables through occupational prestige. Overall, the signs and significance of the probit and tobit coefficients appear similar, although the magnitudes differ sufficiently that the hypothesis of invariance is rejected. The most striking finding is that the experimental manipulation

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high prestige to criminal occupations, they may not be the same individuals who engage in illegal activity. This implies an interaction effect by age, race, etc. We created interaction variables by multiplying criminal prestige by the exogenous variables and failed to reject the hypothesis of no interaction effects. This result also increases our confidence in the external validity of our conclusions.

[10] An alternative specification posits that illegal activity is the result of the difference between criminal and conventional prestige. This hypothesis can be tested by testing the constraint that $\beta_1 + \beta_2 = 0$, where β_1 is the coefficient for the prestige of criminal occupations and β_2 is the coefficient for the prestige of conventional occupations. Using a Wald statistic, which approaches a chi-square distribution in large samples (Greene 1990), the difference hypothesis for both probit and tobit models is rejected when conventional prestige is measured using working class, criminal justice, or professional occupations. Moreover, the fact that β_2 is not significantly different from 0 implies that a difference model is untenable. Thus, for subsequent criminal activity, respondents are oriented to the prestige of criminal occupations, not to the difference between criminal and conventional prestige or the prestige of conventional occupations.

Table 5. Maximum Likelihood Coefficients for Regression of Subsequent Legal Earnings on Selected Independent Variables: Addicts and Offenders, 1976

Independent Variable	Presence of Illegal Earnings			Amount of Illegal Earnings		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Intercept	-.500 (.518)	-.504 (.534)	-.454 (.538)	.208 (.964)	.221 (.992)	.287 (.998)
Age	-.010* (.005)	-.012* (.005)	-.012* (.005)	-.014 (.009)	-.017 (.009)	-.017 (.009)
Male	.101 (.099)	.109 (.099)	.110 (.099)	.272 (.190)	.289 (.190)	.292 (.190)
Black	-.313** (.104)	-.292** (.105)	-.291** (.105)	-.687*** (.180)	-.640*** (.182)	-.637*** (.182)
Hispanic	.002 (.138)	.003 (.138)	-.001 (.138)	-.058 (.244)	-.052 (.244)	-.056 (.244)
Years of education	.030 (.017)	.033 (.017)	.033 (.017)	.075* (.032)	.079* (.032)	.078* (.032)
Experimental status	1.56*** (.067)	1.56*** (.067)	1.56*** (.067)	3.32*** (.112)	3.31*** (.112)	3.31*** (.112)
Straight friend	.045 (.071)	.018 (.072)	.018 (.072)	.118 (.135)	.067 (.136)	.066 (.136)
Expected earnings	.067 (.078)	.083 (.078)	.084 (.078)	.187 (.143)	.208 (.143)	.209 (.143)
Prior drug use	-.024 (.073)	-.011 (.074)	-.011 (.074)	-.072 (.136)	-.052 (.136)	-.052 (.136)
Prior legal earnings (ln)	.044 (.023)	.042 (.023)	.042 (.023)	.110** (.042)	.107** (.042)	.108** (.042)
Prior weeks worked	.004 (.005)	.004 (.005)	.004 (.005)	.004 (.008)	.004 (.008)	.004 (.008)
Prior illegal earnings (ln)	-.005 (.011)	.001 (.011)	.001 (.011)	.0002 (.020)	.011 (.021)	.011 (.021)
Prior weeks in jail	.007** (.002)	.007*** (.002)	.007** (.002)	.016*** (.004)	.016*** (.004)	.016*** (.004)
Prior arrests	-.004 (.002)	-.004 (.003)	-.004 (.003)	-.015** (.005)	-.013** (.005)	-.013** (.005)
Offender	.054 (.083)	.037 (.084)	.041 (.084)	.041 (.156)	.017 (.158)	.020 (.158)
Inputed value for straight friend	.262 (.222)	.279 (.224)	.282 (.224)	.483 (.395)	.498 (.395)	.507 (.395)
Inputed value for expected earnings	-.136 (.169)	-.139 (.170)	-.142 (.170)	-.282 (.326)	-.270 (.326)	-.276 (.326)
Working class prestige	—	.003 (.003)	.003 (.003)	—	.004 (.005)	.004 (.005)
Criminal justice prestige	—	.001 (.001)	-.000 (.002)	—	.002 (.002)	.000 (.003)
Professional prestige	—	-.003 (.003)	-.003 (.003)	—	-.003 (.005)	-.003 (.005)
Criminal prestige	—	-.005* (.002)	-.004 (.0021)	—	-.010* (.004)	-.008* (.004)
Inputed value for criminal prestige	—	-.013 (.124)	-.014 (.124)	—	-.013 (.230)	-.014 (.230)
Ranks a criminal occupation over working class occupations	—	—	-.042 (.120)	—	—	-.000 (.232)
Ranks a criminal occupation over criminal justice occupations	—	—	-.071 (.093)	—	—	-.124 (.174)
Sigma	—	—	—	2.79*** (.047)	2.79*** (.047)	2.79*** (.047)
Log-likelihood	-1186.1	-1181.9	-1181.4	-5701.4	-5697.6	-5697.3
Number of cases	2,742	2,742	2,742	2,742	2,742	2,742

* p < .05   ** p < .01   *** p < .001

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

exerted a huge effect on the probability of having legal earnings and on the amount of such earnings. In fact, the experimental effect dwarfs the effect of prior legal earnings, and the effects of most other independent variables. This is a clear indication that the experimental manipulation was successful: Members of the sample who were assigned Supported Work jobs had substantially greater legitimate earnings than did controls. Because most of the Supported Work jobs were fairly similar and yielded modest monetary returns, legal earnings among experimental subjects were virtually fixed by the experimental condition. Thus, it would not be surprising that, net of the experimental variable, nothing predicts legal earnings among experimental subjects, while among controls, where legal earnings are stochastic, other independent variables affect earnings. We examined this interaction hypothesis by estimating separate models for experimental subjects and controls, but found essentially the same results for both groups. Apparently, the modest legal wages of both groups are not responsive to differences in other variables included in the model.

A few other variables exert small but significant effects on legal work and its returns. Being young increases the likelihood of legitimate work; being better educated, having fewer arrests, and having more legal income in the past increases subsequent earnings from legitimate work; being white and having spent more time in jail increases both participation and earnings from conventional jobs.

Paralleling the findings for illegal earnings, none of the prestige factors for conventional occupations significantly affects legal earnings, net of the effect of the experimental condition. However, the prestige of criminal occupations exerts a small but significant negative effect on the presence and amount of legal earnings, i.e., the greater the respect for criminal occupations, the less likely are respondents to engage in legal activities.

In sum, the most important finding concerns the robust effect of perceived prestige of criminal occupations on illegal activity. The effect is not spurious, does not reflect a response bias, and is not merely a post hoc rationalization because it persists in models controlling for prior illegal activity as well as demographic characteristics and experience with the criminal justice system. The effect does not reflect a general relationship between prestige and income because criminal prestige has a negative effect on earnings from legitimate jobs.

DISCUSSION

Our results have implications for the three disparate perspectives on deviant cultures: pseudocultures, countercultures, and subcultures. The pseudocultural perspective views the precepts of criminal and deviant cultures as impotent, dwarfed by those of the larger culture. Compared to conventional culture, the values and status systems of subcultures are incomplete, unable to engender deep commitment, and not binding on behavior (Kornhauser 1978; Hirschi 1969). These weak subcultural values fail to motivate behavior and serve only to rationalize, after the fact, failure in the conventional status game. Wherever culture is weak, subcultures are even weaker. All behavior, whether conventional or criminal, is explained by the strength of commitment to the dominant culture rather than by participation in subcultures.

This view is partially supported by the finding that our respondents, drawn from the ranks of the urban unemployed, rate conventional occupations in much the same way as do members of the general population. Thus, they participate at least minimally in the general culture. The pseudocultural view, however, is undermined by our finding that the prestige ratings of criminal occupations affect criminal activity. From a pseudocultural perspective, prestige ratings of crime should reflect ineffectual deviant pseudocultures or post hoc rationalizations of crime. In either case, reports of prestige of criminal subcultures should not predict future crime net of prior crime.

The countercultural perspective views criminal and deviant cultures as omnipotent for their members, who retreat into the world of contracultural values. Contracultural values are the antithesis of conventional values (Miller 1958; Yinger 1960, 1982). In some formulations, it is the repudiation of conventional values that defines contracultural values (Cohen 1955). The distinction between counterculture and subculture is not always clear-cut because subgroups may embrace elements of each and countercultural values vary in intensity. Nevertheless, following Yinger (1982), we define contracultural values with the terms "oppositional," "reversal," and "upside down." According to this view, members of oppositional criminal subcultures (countercultures) invert conventional values, and thus view criminal occupations as more prestigious than conventional occupations. Moreover, their criminal behavior is determined not by adherence to conventional culture, whose values

are rejected, but rather by adherence to opposi-
tional contracultural values.

This countercultural view of deviant culture is
repudiated by our finding that respondents rate
conventional occupations higher on average than
criminal occupations, and rate all occupations
using conventional criteria. But this finding is
based on averages across respondents; within the
sample there may be some countercultural mem-
bers who assign high prestige to criminal occu-
pations and engage in substantial crime. We at-
tempted to identify such respondents by varying
the criterion for defining a member of an opposi-
tional subculture. At the extreme, such respon-
dents would rank all criminal occupations above
all conventional occupations. Under this crite-
rion, however, none of our respondents would be
classified as members of contracultures. Indeed,
few respondents expressed even moderately op-
positional views: Only two percent ranked one
or more illegal occupations higher than all legal
occupations. Moreover, when respondents are
classified according to this dichotomy, the re-
sulting variable does not significantly predict le-
gal or illegal earnings in our models. Further-
more, a dichotomy distinguishing respondents
who rank criminal occupations higher on aver-
age than conventional occupations (7 percent)
also fails to predict crime in our models. Thus,
these operationalizations do not support a counter-
cultural perspective.

We examined several other ways of identify-
ing members of countercultures: respondents who
ranked at least one criminal occupation over all
working-class occupations (8 percent), and re-
spondents who ranked at least one criminal oc-
cupation over all criminal justice occupations (38
percent). Entered as dummy variables in our
models, neither classification significantly pre-
dicted legal or illegal earnings (Models 3 and 6
in Tables 4 and 5), and neither interacted with
our continuous measure of prestige of criminal
occupations. Other classifications yielded simi-
lar results. In sum, our findings do not support a
countercultural perspective of crime.

The third model of criminal culture is the sub-
cultural view, or as Empey (1967) called it, the
"infracultural view." The subcultural view con-
tends that participants violate the law while con-
forming to values that are exceptions, extensions,
or modifications of conventional culture (Matza
and Sykes 1961; Yinger 1982). In general, the
subcultural view suggests that criminal and devi-
ant cultures are weaker than conventional cul-
ture, but that behavior is determined by the ex-

tent of participation in each. Structural condi-
tions like social class can effectively sever some
individuals from conventional society (including
conventional systems of status like occupational
prestige), making them susceptible to the influ-
ence of subcultural values and prestige systems
(Cohen 1955; Cloward and Ohlin 1960). Thus,
behavior is determined by the relative contact
with criminal subcultures versus conventional
culture (Sutherland and Cressey 1978), which in
turn is determined by position in the legitimate
and illegitimate opportunity structures (Cloward
and Ohlin 1960).

According to the subcultural perspective, per-
sons blocked from conventional society can iden-
tify the conventional status system of occupa-
tions, even though that status system may be ir-
relevant to their own situation. Our respondents
appear to fit this portrayal: They have been cut
off from economic success through legitimate
means and therefore often turn to illegitimate
sources of income. Because they participate at
some level in conventional society (they are not
outcasts, severely mentally handicapped, or oth-
erwise isolated from society), they recognize and
accept the general status system of society, but
because of structural barriers, that status system
is irrelevant to their pecuniary activity. Their per-
ceptions of the prestige of conventional occupa-
tions do not influence their behavior. Pursuit of
conventional norms and ways of gaining status
may be morally virtuous but is nevertheless un-
suitable to their social position. Whether they
receive a steady income through illegitimate ac-
tivity is determined, in part, by the status they
accord criminal occupations: The higher the sta-
tus, the deeper their involvement in the subcul-
tural system, and the more they will view illicit
activity as justified, valued, and legitimate.

This interpretation has implications for sub-
cultural theory and the complex interplay among
social structure, subcultural values, and behav-
ior. The salience of values, whether subcultural
or cultural, is an important link between social
structure and individual behavior. Whether an
individual acts on a value (either cultural or sub-
cultural) depends in part on the relevance or sa-
lience of the value to the individual's immediate
situation — goals, interests, and opportunities —
which in turn is shaped by the larger social struc-
ture. Salience of a value may also affect dissemi-
nation of the value to others in a similar position
in the social structure.

Any theory of subcultures that ignores social
structure is incomplete and will fail to predict

when individuals who have been exposed to the values of the subculture will act on those values. Subcultural theories, such as Wolfgang and Ferracuti's (1967) subculture of violence or Miller's (1958) lower-class subculture of focal concerns, would benefit from a structural analysis of the genesis and persistence of the subculture (Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Yinger 1982). Thus, the lower-class and other disenfranchised groups are not irretrievably immersed in a deviant subculture, helplessly following deviant values and norms. Rather, they have no legitimate opportunities and must develop and follow alternative norms (Wilson 1986). Subcultures, then, are intimately tied to structural opportunities. Because structural opportunities affect crime partly through affecting subcultures, any structural explanation of crime that ignores subcultures is incomplete.

Our results show that examination of the structure of illicit occupations can shed new light on the social organization of deviant subcultures, but they are only suggestive. They are limited to the criminal and conventional occupations for which we have prestige ratings. Had we included higher status criminal occupations like insider-trader, Mafia boss, and professional thief, we might have found that the prestige of criminal occupations is not unidimensional, and that criminal occupations are not uniformly ranked lower in prestige than conventional occupations. Future research should examine the extent to which our findings can be generalized to the full range of occupations.

Because our sample is restricted to unemployed addicts and offenders, we cannot generalize our findings to larger or more general populations. Nevertheless, we can speculate that although ratings of the prestige of conventional occupations by the general population would not differ from ratings by our sample, the behavioral consequences of such ratings would differ. Members of conventional populations have many opportunities for legitimate work and are isolated from criminal subcultures. Therefore, unlike our respondents, such persons have access to conventional opportunities and are subject to conventional social controls: The higher their ratings of the prestige of conventional occupations, the greater their legal earnings and the less their illegal earnings. Because they do not participate in criminal subcultures, conventional persons should rate the prestige of criminal occupations lower than did the members of our samples. Moreover, variation in such ratings should have little effect

on conventional behavior, and perhaps criminal behavior as well.

If this speculation is correct, it offers a different interpretation of previous research on pseudo-cultural, subcultural, and countercultural theories. Pseudocultural theories may account for social control *within conventional populations* in which opportunities abound and deviant subcultures are unnecessary, but fail to account for social control *within subcultures* in which conventional opportunities are blocked and subcultural values provide an alternative status system. Most previous research, which has relied almost exclusively on conventional populations, may be inadequate to test subcultural and countercultural theories. What is needed is a sample stratified by subcultural membership and an analytical strategy that examines the salience of values (e.g., Short and Strodtbeck 1965). Such research could extend our major findings that the prestige of criminal occupations is a significant component of deviant subcultures and that a subcultural perspective on deviance accounts for the operation of this system of prestige.

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