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Human Development and Criminal Behavior

New Ways of Advancing Knowledge

With contributions by:

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Preface

This book presents the conclusions and recommendations of the first two years' work of the Program on Human Development and Criminal Behavior. Jointly sponsored by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, the program was created to design and launch an integrated series of longitudinal studies of human development from birth to age 25 focusing on conduct disorder, delinquency, criminality, and other antisocial behaviors. This book is a sequel to *Understanding and Controlling Crime* by David P. Farrington, Lloyd E. Ohlin, and James Q. Wilson, which was also published by Springer-Verlag, and to some extent represents a further development and elaboration of the ideas first presented then.

The program began in February 1988. During its first phase, which lasted roughly one year, three working groups were created to focus separately on "pathways to the onset of conduct disorder," "the onset of delinquency and criminality," and "continuation of criminality and desistance from it." These working groups were chaired, respectively, by Felton Earls, David Farrington, and Lloyd Ohlin. The working groups were charged to survey theory, knowledge, instruments and measures, promising interventions and experiments, and existing studies in relation to the age groups and developmental stages with which each was centrally concerned. Their reports were completed in December 1988. During the second phase of the program, two working groups were appointed and charged with building on the work of their predecessors to develop a comprehensive design for longitudinal research. These groups were concerned with issues of "research design" (jointly chaired by Felton Earls, David Farrington, and Lloyd Ohlin) and "research administration and organization" (chaired by Albert Reiss). The members of all these working groups are listed in Appendix III. This book is based on the report of the research design working group, which was completed in December 1989.

Each agency has now agreed to support a third phase of developmental work, and the headquarters of the program has been transferred from Castine Research Corporation to the School of Public Health, Harvard University, under the joint direction of Felton Earls and Albert Reiss. After a third phase of continued devel-

opment of instruments and measures, execution of pilot and methodological studies, completion of plans for data analyses, and selection of research teams and sites, it is hoped that longitudinal projects will be fielded in one or more major metropolitan areas in a fourth phase. We anticipate that much of the data collection and other field work in the fourth phase will be carried out by scholars who are not now associated with the program and who will be selected through competitive processes.

During the first two phases of the program's activity, Lloyd Ohlin and Michael Tonry have served as codirectors and David Farrington as research director. We have benefited from the advice and wisdom of a research advisory board consisting of Albert Reiss (chair), Alfred Blumstein, Felton Earls, Norman Garmezy, Malcolm Klein, Norval Morris, Lee Robins, and James Q. Wilson, in addition to ourselves. We would like to acknowledge especially the unstinting support over many years of Alfred Blumstein, Norval Morris, and James Q. Wilson, which has been crucial in establishing and maintaining this program.

The research agenda set out in this book proposes a series of studies which, if they are carried out, will be the most ambitious and important research on crime, delinquency, and antisocial behavior that has ever been undertaken. We have had the good fortune that both sponsoring agencies were prepared to provide funds for extensive planning and consultation with scholars from a wide array of fields. The product, we believe, is the most genuinely interdisciplinary proposal for research that has ever been devised in criminology. We hope that readers of this book will agree that the fruits of this planning have been worth the expense, time, and effort that they required.

James Stewart, director of the National Institute of Justice, has offered patience and support for our efforts and, in a policy world in which answers are usually wanted yesterday, has appreciated the value of careful step-by-step planning. Richard Linster, Joel Garner, and Carol Petrie have offered advice but never intrusion, and our work is the better for their help. Joel Garner made a special contribution through his stimulating analyses of issues arising in longitudinal-experimental designs. At the MacArthur Foundation, William Bevan and Denis Prager, the successive directors of the Health Program, have consistently encouraged and supported the interdisciplinary thrust of the entire planning effort. We are also grateful for the support provided by James Furman who, in his former capacity as executive vice president of the MacArthur Foundation, fostered the work of the predecessor Justice Program Study Group from 1982 to 1986 and the development of this program.

Michael Tonry, Lloyd Ohlin, and David Farrington are listed as the primary authors of this book because of their role in directing the program during its first two phases. They and the five contributing authors collaborated in preparing initial drafts of separate chapters and in preparing successive revised versions. The final versions reflect the views of many people, including members of the program's research advisory board. Michael Tonry was the primary writer of Chapter 1. Felton Earls was the primary writer of Chapter 2 on "Overview of Theories and Hypotheses," and of Appendix II on "Issues in the Use of Biomedical Measures." David Farrington was the primary writer of Chapter 3 on "Accelerated

Longitudinal Design,” Chapter 4 on “Longitudinal-Experimental Combinations,” and Chapter 13 on “Young Adolescent Cohorts.” Robert Sampson was the primary writer of Chapter 5 on “Community Sampling” and Chapter 8 on “Site Selection.” Robert Sampson and David Rowe were the primary writers of Chapter 6 on “Household and Individual Sampling.” Kenneth Adams was the primary writer of Chapter 7 on “Sampling Yield,” Chapter 9 on “Common Variables,” Chapter 10 on “Measurement Issues,” Chapter 11 on “Statistical Methods and Analysis,” and Appendix I on “Preparatory Field Work and Supplemental Studies.” Felton Earls and Richard Tremblay were the primary writers of Chapter 12 on “Prenatal and Preschool Cohorts.” Kenneth Adams, Lloyd Ohlin, and Robert Sampson were the primary writers of Chapter 14 on “Young Adult Cohorts,” and David Rowe was the primary writer of Chapter 15 on the “Sibling Study.”

Our roles in this venture have provided wonderful opportunities for intellectual growth and a sense of satisfaction in being involved in what, we hope, will prove to be one of the most important research initiatives ever undertaken in criminology. The enthusiasm, sense of accomplishment, and intellectual excitement expressed by participants in this planning process have heightened our belief in the potential value of the research proposed in this book. We are grateful for the commitment and unstinting contributions of thought, time, and energy made by every scholar involved in the first two phases of this program.

Michael Tonry
Lloyd E. Ohlin
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