

1945

## Prison Trade School--Students and Training, A

Elmer R. Akers

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/jclc>

 Part of the [Criminal Law Commons](#), [Criminology Commons](#), and the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Elmer R. Akers, Prison Trade School--Students and Training, A, 35 J. Crim. L. & Criminology 311 (1944-1945)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology by an authorized editor of Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons.

# A PRISON TRADE SCHOOL—STUDENTS AND TRAINING

Elmer R. Akers

Trade training of prison inmates has been increasing for some years and has received impetus from the widespread demands from war industries for skilled mechanical workers. Have the results of this trade training of prisoners justified the costs? Should this training be expanded in the post-war building program? The author, a Sociologist in the State Prison of Southern Michigan, gives an illuminating picture of the training program in force during the past two and one-half years in one of our better state prisons. (Editor).

In some of the better prisons of this country, trade training of inmates has for some years been increasing. One of the assumptions back of this activity is that such training enhances the capacity of prisoners for vocational and social readjustment to society when they are paroled or discharged. We should observe, also, that as this stupendously disorganizing and costly war draws to a close, almost every organization, public and private, is formulating a post-war building program. The traditional American hope for bigger and better business is, of course, motivating many of these projects, and, while we in the Correctional field do not share that hope, we do anticipate the need for enlargement of our programs and facilities—at least in some phases. Should our trade training program and equipment be expanded? Has the trade training work in our prisons been worth its cost in effort and money? It is high time for the lens of scientific scrutiny to be turned on this problem.

The objects of this paper are: To show, first, how and on what scale the mechanical trades school of Jackson Prison has operated from January 1, 1942 to June 30, 1944; and second, to indicate the value of the work of this school to the comparatively small number of prisoners whose training has been effectuated by one civilian employee and by the use of a very modest amount of housing space and machinery.

In the two and one-half year period covered by this study, 306 men received trade training. In this same two and one-half year period, approximately 4900 prisoners were incarcerated in this prison. Thus approximately 6 per cent of the number representing commitments equals the number receiving training in one or another of the mechanical trades. One of the questions suggesting itself at this point is: Whether the percentage of the trade trainees should not have been, say, six times 6 per cent of the population intake—36 per cent rather than 6 per cent.

## *A Biographical Sketch of One Trade Trainee*

Let us introduce a picture of the prison trade school by giving the following sketch of one of the students: A 39 year old Negro received a certificate from the Michigan State Board of Control for Vocational Education, attesting his completion of a course in the

Machine Shop of the Jackson Prison Trade School, in April, 1944. He was paroled on May 15, 1944 to Detroit for 1½ years, and for five months has been working as an "apprentice machinist" in one of the smaller factories in Detroit, and the reports from his Parole Officer, as well as a letter from the man himself—which I shall read presently—show that he is doing very well. But, first, let me give you a sketch of his life.

Born in Mississippi, probably of illegitimate parents, raised to the age of 13 by great grandparents and grandparents, on a farm, he quit school at 13 when he was in the seventh grade in order the more effectively to help with the farm work. A little later, he left the farm to work at various jobs in nearby Greenville, Mississippi, and at about 18 years of age he went to Chicago, worked in various meat packing houses and factories until he was about 25 years old, at which time he came to Detroit. Here he got employment briefly in the Briggs Mfg. Co., then did porter work and shoe-shining until 1932. He then began working in Negro night clubs and gambling houses. Twice he served terms, one and two months, respectively, in the Detroit House of Correction, for thefts. In 1934 he was sentenced to Jackson Prison for Larceny from a Building; paroled on March 20, 1936 to Detroit, he violated and was returned to prison on September 1, 1936. He was discharged on his maximum on November 30, 1939, returned to Detroit and did occasional jobs and resumed working in gambling houses.

On April 28, 1942 he was sentenced to serve a second prison term for Attempted Breaking and Entering a Dwelling in the Night Time, 2nd Felony, for a term of two and one half to seven and one half years. During the ensuing one and two-thirds years in prison, he worked in the Cannery 4 months, and the Twine Mill 14 months, was a satisfactory worker. His Special Good Time expiration date was February 24, 1944, and a Progress Report was prepared on the man on December 8, 1943.

The Sociologist who wrote the Progress Report said,

"In the one and two-thirds years this Negro has served on this, his second prison term, he has been a satisfactory worker for a year in the Twine Mill, has incurred no misconduct reports, and has just been enrolled in the Vocational School for some kind of machine shop training. Probably illegitimately parented, raised by grandparents, he has never married but admits he has had two "common-law" mates. He is a second felony offender who apparently has little regard for the laws respecting property and certainly has no concern about the laws and customs governing marriage. Improvident, he has spent everything he has earned and—has not yet made any educational progress. If and when paroled, he will probably continue to live in "common-law", and will return to gambling. Certainly he should not be paroled until he has completed his Vocational School course".

The Parole Board did not parole him but passed him "to be heard when recommended by Mr. Toms" (the Civilian Supervisor

of the Prison Trade School). He completed the 13 weeks course in Machine Shop and then Mr. William Toms wrote the Parole Board on March 14, 1944, saying, "This is to inform you that the above mentioned man has been steadily attending the Vocational School since December first, 1943, also to let you know that he has satisfactorily completed a course in machine operation.

"This boy has been a sincere, hard-working student and his attendance has been perfect. His attitude, behavior and ability have been excellent. In fact, his desire to learn has been so avid that I have granted him the privilege of attending the school on Saturday and Sunday to enhance his knowledge.

"There is no reason whatsoever why \_\_\_\_\_ cannot step out of here into a good paying job in some factory as a very competent machine operator.—  
Respectfully yours".

He was paroled on May 15, 1944 to Detroit for one and one-half years and through the United States Employment Service Office was placed on a job in a small factory. He has now been out on parole nearly six months. Recently the following letter dated October 29, 1944 came to the Vocational School supervisor from this parolee:

"Dear Sir:

"It has been my honest intention to have wrote you long before now, but I do hope that you will forgive me for this long delay.

"I wanted to write and tell you of my gratitude to you and your capable staff of instructors for the wonderful benefits of vocational training which I received while attending your school.

"Your school, occupying such an unique position behind the grimly gray walls of a prison, the average person is inclined to think very lightly of the benefits and training one can receive. But let me say to all concerned, (and I speak from personal experience), there's no greater opportunity of vocational training for Men who have passed their youth, than can be learned in your school. I guess you recall how apprehensive I was when I first started in school but after seeing the interest and patience that you and your staff put forth, I was really ashamed, and also had a very keen sense of fear, when I realized what a wonderful opportunity I almost threw away, and as you yourself can attest to, from that day on I worked and studied with all I had. And too, let me say right now, I am very proud of every minute I spent in your school.

"Mr. Toms when I attended school there, I heard some of the students say, I don't need to learn this or learn that, all I want to learn is how to operate a machine. Well, to those men who feel that way, I am sure they are passing up a great opportunity. I for one, am working in a small jobbing shop and everything that I learned there have been of use, and have benefitted me in the operation of machines I had never seen. I also feel that my services have been satisfactory, as I have received three raises in less than five months.

"So again I want to thank you and your staff of instructors and teachers, for the patience they gave in seeing that I got the most of the time I spent in school. So my regards and best wishes to all and I do hope you every success in the expansion of your school.

Respectfully yours,

....."

Quite a number of such letters have been received by the

Trade School Supervisor from the alumni of this Prison Trade School—this in spite of the inclination in ex-convicts to forget so far as possible every aspect of their formal prison life.

#### *The School Supervisor's Philosophy and Methods*

The Trade School Supervisor, Mr. William J. Toms, has aimed to give his students training in more than industrial skill. In group conferences and in private interviews he has taught them the necessity of cooperating with fellow employees and with factory management. "Trade training," he says, "isn't merely giving technical information; it includes inculcation of a code of ethics." He has several inmate assistants who do much of the actual teaching. Mr. Toms declares that the success of his school has been due largely to the work of his inmate teachers.

#### *The Courses Given*

The trade courses taught include: Drafting, Arc Welding, Pattern Shop, Sheet Metal Work, Brick Laying, Sign and Poster Painting and Machine Shop Practices. The extension division of the school gives courses in Shop Theory, Shop Mathematics, Elementary and Advanced Blue Print Reading, Air Conditioning, Mechanical Drawing, and Elementary Electrical Theory. Prisoners whose minimum terms have yet more than 6 months to go are encouraged to take extension courses in preparation for the time when they may be allowed to enroll for full time school training. Several courses begun in the early part of 1942 had to be discontinued because of war "priorities." Auto Bumping and Repair and Electrical Work are examples. When restrictions caused by the war are lifted, the school expects to resume these courses and also to start a course in Plastics.

The numbers of men graduated in the course given are indicated as follows: Machine Shop—161; Welding—36; Drafting—28; Foundry—25; Bricklaying—19; Radio Code—12; Sheet Metal—8; Sign Painting—5; Blue Print Reading—4. Of the 161 men who graduated in Machine Shop, 142 received the State Board of Control for Vocational Education certificate.

Every man considered for enrollment in the mechanical trades school is given a mechanical aptitude test.<sup>1</sup> This is required not primarily to determine whether or not he shall be allowed to enroll, but to establish a barometer of the amount of progress that can be expected of the man. In a private conference with the Trade School Supervisor, the inmate is told what will be expected of him in case he is enrolled. He is given to understand that he will be expected to "cut the buck"—produce, or get out. There is a long waiting list of men who want a similar chance.

<sup>1</sup>Minnesota Paper Form Board AA, and BB. Mechanical Comprehension AA, and BB: George K. Bennett.

For the past two years, in most of the courses taught only inmates with 6 months or less to serve on their minimum terms have been enrolled. This has helped to narrow the number of applicants. It has been felt, too, that the inmates would use the school's facilities better and would be better prepared to leave prison on parole if the trade training were "fresh in their minds" at the time of parole.

*Assistance from the Michigan State Board of Control  
for Vocational Education*

On April 1, 1942, the Michigan State Board of Control for Vocational Education finally consented to take the Jackson Prison Trade School "under its wing." From that date onward the standards of training required were those of this State Board. From this Board some additional equipment was secured: 7 lathes, two shapers, one drill press, one surface grinder, and many other items of trade school equipment. At first the State Board of Control for Vocational Education officials were skeptical, but in the ensuing two years the results have been such that, as the Supervisor says, "We've justified their faith in our project."

The students for the Trade School are drawn from several sources: The largest part of them are drawn from the large number who apply voluntarily for such training; some are advised by the Classification Committee, or by one of its members during a pre-classification interview, to learn a trade in the school; others are "passed," or "fopped," by the Parole Board to learn a trade. When it is apparent to any of these officials that a man is unskilled, but has the capacity for acquiring trade skill, and especially if he has a family who will need the fullest earning capacity which he is capable of achieving, then he is advised, sometimes directed, and occasionally *required*, to enroll for trade training.

*Racial Groups in Training*

The 306 graduates comprised the following: 250 whites, 51 Negroes, three Mexicans, two Indians. The proportions of Negroes and whites were respectively 1 to 5. The proportion of Negroes taking trade training was much below their proportion in prison. Perhaps the chief reason for this is that the opportunities for employment of Negroes in the skilled mechanical trades are, comparatively, very limited. Even if they are allowed to enroll to acquire a skilled trade, the Negroes cannot feel confident that they will be hired by automobile and other factories for work utilizing those skills. This fact will be demonstrated at a later point in this paper in which will be shown the proportions of Negroes and whites who were able to get jobs in line with their trade training in prison.

The average age of the 306 trade school graduates was 32.8 years. This is almost exactly four years under the average age of the men who serve their terms in Jackson Prison. It should be noted in this connection, that almost all the prisoners under 23 years of age are transferred to the Reformatory of Ionia, and they are not included in the average ages cited for the trade school and the control groups. A break-down of the trade school groups shows the following percentages in each 5-year section, beginning with age 20: 20 to 24—6 per cent; 25 to 29—36 per cent; 30 to 34—24 per cent; 35 to 39—15 per cent; 40 to 44—9 per cent; 45 to 49—6 per cent; and the sections including men whose ages were above 50 years totaled 4 per cent. The men whose ages were from 25 years to 35 comprised 60 per cent of the total student group. However, there were 15 per cent who were 35 to 39 years of age, an age when men are ordinarily assumed to have passed their student days, or, as the Negro whose letter I read said—and he was 39 years of age, you will recall—“men who have passed their youth.”

#### *Vocational Backgrounds Represented*

One of the facts about the men sentenced to prison which is little less than amazing is that skilled workers—in legitimate enterprise, I mean—are almost never found among them. A break-down of the 306 members of the trade school group, using the eleven major occupational divisions of the United States Census Classification, shows the following: Professional and Semi-Professional—3; Farm Owners and Farm Managers—none; Proprietors, Managers and Officials, except Farm—none; Clerical, Sales and Kindred Workers—20; Craftsmen, Foremen and Kindred Workers—7; Operatives and Kindred Workers—27; Domestic—none; Protective, Service Workers—none; Service Workers, except Domestic and Protective—20; Farm laborers—15; Laborers, except Farm—198; and the remaining 17 men represented what we listed as “varied parasites”—15; 2 have been in prison since 16 years of age, and 2 have lived such shiftless and changeable existences that they seemed to belong in none of the occupational groups. These figures show, then, that at least 90 per cent of this group were unskilled along any definite professional or trade line.

Prison populations are made up to a notoriously high degree of vocationally unstable individuals—nomadic, shiftless, aimless, unaspiring. The term “vocationally unstable” as here used denotes men who have no trade, who have followed no one type of work consistently and have never, so far as the information gathered in our prison records show, worked so much as one year at any one job, or one type of work in one place. A break-down of the 306 students in terms of vocational stability, voca-

tional instability and borderline shows: stable—30; unstable—211; borderline—65. The control group divides into stable—50; unstable—233; borderline—23.

It is interesting to see what an investigation of the types of communities represented by these 306 men reveals.—But it should be added hastily that what is found in approximately half of the cases is not a cleanly distinguishable type of community of residence, but a kind of kaleidoscopic blur composed of one community after another—first perhaps a rural community as the birthplace, then a move to another farm, and another and another, then to a town or a city, then another city, and, of course, usually more than one house has been lived in in each city. Scarcely one of these men had lived all his life in one community, and few had lived in only one city. Our count shows: rural—11; cities—131; rural and towns—29; rural, towns and city or cities—28; towns and cities—24; and 89 cases showed such miscellaneous combinations as farm home and orphanage, town and city; nomad, farm and cities; city, boys industrial school, farms and city. A review of the evidence as to the residential mobility present in a majority of these cases suggests that these prisoners and their parents must have tried hard to avoid the misfortune suggested in the platitudinous observation “One-half of the world does not know how the other half lives!” But the incentive back of this mobility is usually not the desire to see the world and to understand it, but, rather it has been a response to the richer green of distant pastures, or an effort to escape from an accumulated combination of threats from creditors, unfriendly attitudes in the neighbors, and a curiosity about the opportunities for different kinds of work reported by former relatives or neighbors who have moved to parts further afield.

At one point in the case history prepared on each man preparatory to his Classification is recorded the inmate's answer as to his plans for his future, following his release from prison. Here it often becomes painfully apparent, if it had not already become so, that the inmate had never given much thought to this matter. He has never formulated a plan of life for himself. In such cases it then becomes a part of our work with him in prison to help him develop such a plan, to get a trade learned, to organize his efforts toward some definite vocational objective by which he can support himself and his dependents, if he has any. If, as in the case of the Negro presented at the beginning of this paper, the man has never received help in realizing to the full his capacity for learning a trade, then he is all too likely to drift into activities lying on the “fringe of the law” and into crime.

### *IQ Ratings of the Students*

The average intelligence rating of the trade school group was 98.5 and of the control group 89.9<sup>2</sup>. Thus it is obvious that the trade school students were 8.6 points higher than the control group. But it is not required by the trade school supervisor that the prospective student have an IQ above a certain minimum. The IQ's of the group under study ranged from one of 64 to one of 140. The Supervisor knows from an examination of the prison folder in every case just what the candidate's IQ is. He has found from experience that applicants for trade training sometimes flunk the course, but rarely has it been for lack of intellectual capacity. And very rarely has he advised an applicant against signing up for a course on the grounds that the applicant was not sufficiently intelligent. He may not appear capable of taking Machine Shop or Drafting, but there are other courses—Foundry, Bricklaying, etc.

In the two and one-half-year period covered by this study, 85 men started work in the school but did not complete any course. Why didn't they finish? The Supervisor explains it this way: "They hadn't enough self-discipline. They hadn't the ability to make themselves do things when the going got tough. It's true, some students we get lack mechanical aptitude. But some of these men who flunked out showed in their tests that they had good mechanical aptitude but they didn't have stick-to-it-iveness, they had no self-discipline, and so they gave up, quit."

### *The Crime Categories Represented*

It might be interesting, if not necessary, to note briefly what crimes have been committed by this group of prisoners. This remark is not made in a facetious spirit; our experience with offenders against society and the laws has led us to the conclusion that our concern should not be with forgers, thieves, murderers, rapists, and what not, as such, but as men. They are men with little training in law observance and even in the common deencies and customs of social intercourse; they are men with various personality defects, men with primitive notions regarding personal and social obligations; men without trade training and with poor work habits. But here, for what it is worth, is a listing by type of crime or "present offense" of the number of men serving for each type of offense:

Robbery Armed .....	54
Breaking & Entering in the Night Time.....	38
Larceny .....	36

---

<sup>2</sup>The control group used in this study has a slightly higher average IQ than the prison population mean as it was given in a former study—see Akers and Fox, *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, "The Detroit Rioters and Looters Committed to Prison", XXXV. No. 2, July-August, 1944.

Breaking & Entering in the Day Time, and Entering without Breaking in the Day Time.....	20
Rape, Statutory Rape, Assault to Commit Rape.....	19
Unlawfully Driving Away an Automobile.....	19
Forgery .....	19
Felonious Assault, Assault to Do Great Bodily Harm.....	18
Murder .....	12
Carrying Concealed Weapons.....	12
Indecent Liberties .....	10
Escaping from Prison.....	8
Robbery Unarmed .....	7
Manslaughter, Negligent Homicide.....	7
Violating the Narcotics Law.....	4
Non-support, Contempt of Court, Nonpayment of Alimony.....	4
Hit and Run, Failure to Stop and Assist, etc.....	4
Attempted Robbery .....	3
Drunk and Disorderly, 3rd Offense.....	3
Gross Indecency .....	2
Polygamy, Bigamy .....	2
Pandering .....	2
Malicious Destruction of Property.....	2
Receiving Stolen Property .....	2
Indecent Exposure .....	1
Accepting Money from a Prostitute.....	1
Obtaining Money Under False Pretenses.....	1
Possession of Burglar Tools.....	1

A tabulation of the states and countries—the latter in cases of immigrants—shows that 121 men, or 40 per cent, were natives of Michigan. 33 other states and 9 foreign countries were represented of which Illinois contributed 19, Pennsylvania 14, Ohio 13, Tennessee 11, Indiana and Georgia 10 each, and smaller numbers were from the other 27 states. Ten men were from Canada; England and Greece sent us two, each; and one each came from Poland, Roumania, Hungary, Germany, Austria, and Italy. Some of the immigrants were naturalized, usually though through naturalization of the parents.

#### *Their Previous Criminal Records*

It is noteworthy that of the 306 men in this group, 56 were parole violators when returned to prison the last time prior to enrolling in the trade school. Some of these 56 had been returned as parole violators with an added, or new, sentence, and the rest were returned as "straight P. V.'s", as we say in prison jargon. A count of the number of previous prison terms served by this group shows 271 terms, as compared with 285 previous terms served by the control group. A break-down of the previous crim-

inal records of the two groups to comparable levels shows the following:

	Trade School		Control Group	
	No. of men—terms		men—terms	
No previous criminal record.....	42		52	
Juvenile record, only.....	5		3	
Jails .....	62		58	
Jails, probations, suspended sentences.....	30		22	
1 prison, jails, probations, etc. ....	92	92	78	78
2 prisons, jails, probations, etc.....	43	86	51	102
3 prisons, jails, probations, etc.....	20	60	20	60
4 prisons, jails, probations, etc.....	7	28	7	28
5 prisons, jails, probations, etc.....	1	5	1	5
6 prisons, jails, probations, etc.....	0	0	2	12
		271		283

### *Their Adjustment on Parole*

On August 30, 1944, two and two-thirds years after the beginning of the period of trade school work studied and reported on in this paper, 170 of the 306 graduates had been paroled. It is required by Michigan law that men must have an approved job to go to when paroled. During this war period, the job in some cases has been represented by induction into a branch of the Armed Services. However, not many men have been paroled directly into the Service from the penal institutions. Usually the man has been paroled to a job investigated and reported on by the Parole Officer, in the community, and the job has been approved by the Division of Paroles of the Department of Corrections. Then the parolee contacted his local draft board and his draft status was established, resulting in his continuance in civilian employment or induction into the Armed Services, if he passed the tests.

During the war there has been a wide and insistent need for skilled mechanical workers. And the Department of Corrections has done all it could to contribute to the "war effort" by getting its parolees into jobs where they were most needed—providing, of course, that the attendant circumstances seemed favorable to the parolee's adjustment. Most of the trade school graduates have been cleared through the United State Employment Service. Of course, the graduates themselves have endeavored to secure employment in defense factories where they could use their newly acquired trade skill.

Here is the information on what happened to the 170 paroled graduates. Number paroled to job for which trained in the prison trade school—71; number paroled to jobs for which not equipped by prison trade school training—88; number on which no information has been received from the Parole Officer—7; number

paroled and inducted into the Armed Forces directly from the prison—4; total 170.

What has happened to these parolees in the four types of situation given? Of the 71 men paroled to jobs in line with their training, 54 are still working in line with the training and 15 of these have received promotions, 11 have been inducted into the Armed Services, 4 have changed to jobs out of line with their trade, and one violated his parole and has been returned to prison. Of the 88 graduates paroled to jobs not in line with their trade training, 62 are still working on jobs not in line with their trades, 2 have later gotten jobs in the trade, 13 have been inducted into the Armed Services, 6 have absconded, and 5 have violated parole and been returned to prison, one of these with a new sentence for another felony.

Of the 88 graduates paroled to jobs not in the line of their trades, 25 were Negroes, one was a Mexican and two were Indians. There were only two Indians who took trade school work, you may remember—it was noted above. Both violated parole, one absconded and the other has been returned to prison. The Indians' notorious addiction to "firewater" is the core of the explanation of the failure of these two men on parole. Both took Machine Shop training. One went out on a mechanic's helper job for a bus company depot in a small city and the other went out on a plumbing job. Also, there were three Mexicans in the trade school graduates, and one of these failed to get a job in his trade. In these three ethnic groups, then, there were 28 of the 88 trade school graduates who went out on jobs not in line with their training.

One of the trades seldom used by its graduates was Bricklaying. 19 men took this course. 15 of the 19 were Negroes. Bricklaying is a construction labor skill, and since there has been very little housing and factory construction in which Bricklaying was utilized during the past two and one-half years, it is obvious that the students with this trade would count heavily in the group who failed to get jobs in their trade line. Summing up the placements of the 170 trade trained men, who have been paroled, we find the following percentages: 42 per cent were paroled to jobs in line with their trade training; 52 per cent were paroled to jobs not in line with their trade training; 4 per cent we have received no information on; and 2 per cent were paroled and inducted directly out of prison.

*Comparison of Parole Adjustment of Trade School Graduates  
With That of Control Group*

Let us now compare the performance on parole of the 170 trade school graduates with that of the control group. The con-

trol group has already been mentioned two or three times in this paper. This was constituted by all the men committed from December 3, 1940, until 306 commitments was reached, but not including the younger men under 23 years of age who were classified for transfer to the Reformatory at Ionia. The number 306 was reached on February 13, 1941. An explanation of the procedure followed is necessary. The control group prisoners were received in prison during a three months period, December, 1940, through February, 1941. Between that time January 1, 1942, which is the date when the period covered by this study begins, some of the control group and of the trade school group had been paroled, some of the parolees had violated and returned, and many of those with short sentences had been discharged. In drawing comparisons of the performance of the two groups, we will take January 1, 1942, as our starting point in time for observing the control group.

From January 1, 1942, to August 30, 1944, 133 men had been paroled. During this period, 170 trade school graduates were paroled. On the 133 control group parolees, no effort has been made to tabulate the types of jobs they went out on. But we do know that 33 of these men violated parole. Of these 33 violators, 20 were returned as "straight P. V.'s," 9 were returned with new sentences, 4 absconded. Also, in the parole files of the Department of Corrections in Lansing there are notices from the Parole Officers alleging that 10 others in this group have violated parole, indicating that they are "slipping," and some of them will probably be returned in the not distant future. It should be noted, also, that whereas only one man from the 170 parolees from the trade school group violated by committing new felonies, here in the control group we found 9. Moreover, if the number of parole violators from the smaller control group—133 as compared with 170—is made proportional to the larger trade school parolees group—170, we get 42 violators, of whom there would be 11 new felony offenders. The comparison then would stand: 42 violators as compared with 13; 11 violators returned with new sentences for further felonies as compared with one of the trade school parolees.

There are a few other factors in the situations of the two groups which have some measure of importance and should be evaluated in order to arrive at the highest achievable degree of commensuration. But probably none of these factors would materially affect the evidence that the trade training has greatly fortified its beneficiaries against the tendencies toward parole violation and further criminality.

*Conclusions*

The following conclusions may be drawn from this study of a prison trade school and the results observed:

1. About 4900 men were committed to, and retained in, State Prison of Southern Michigan, during the two and one-half year period, January 1, 1942 to June 30, 1944, and a number of men equal to a little more than 6 per cent of that figure were trained in the mechanical trades during this period.

2. Most of the trade trainees asked for enrollment, some were directed by the Classification Committee, some by the Parole Board, to take training.

3. In spite of screening by a Vocational aptitude test and critical selection by the Trade School Supervisor, nearly one-fourth of the enrollees failed to graduate. Their failure was due mainly to inadequately developed capacity for self-discipline and lack of purpose.

4. The proportion of Negroes trained was less than their proportion of the prison population, partly because mechanically skilled Negroes find fewer "skilled jobs" in private and public agencies.

5. Average age of trade school trainees—32.8 years, or 4 years under that of the control group.

6. Few of the prisoners studied were even partially skilled when received in prison. Few of the control group acquired by apprenticeship training any trade skill during imprisonment.

7. These trade trainees were, by and large, both residentially and vocationally unstable prior to imprisonment.

8. Most of them had not, prior to incarceration, acquired or developed any plan of life, any vocational objective.

9. Their average IQ rating was 98.5, or 8.6 points higher than that of the control group.

10. On August 30, 1944, or two and two-thirds years after the beginning of the period of trade school work studied, 170 of the 306 graduates had been paroled. Of these, 42 per cent were paroled to jobs for which they were trained and 52 per cent to jobs not in line with their training, on 4 per cent we have no parole information and 2 per cent were inducted into the Armed Services directly from prison.

11. A comparison of the success on parole of the trade school graduates as compared with the control group shows 33 violators as against 13, and 9 new felonies committed by the control group violators as against one in the trade school group. When we pro-rate the groups, we find: 42 violators to 13, or 4 to 1 in favor of the trade school graduates and 11 new felony offenders against one.