

Understanding Career Doubling Up:

Why Men Combine Legal Work and Income Generating Crime

Research Thesis

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation *with Research Distinction* in
Criminology and Criminal Justice in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University

by

Phoebe Wasserstrom

The Ohio State University

May 2025

Project Advisor: Professor Steven Lopez, Department of Sociology; Professor Paul Bellair,

Department of Sociology

INTRODUCTION

“I liked the way it felt, when I came home from work and my girlfriend, you know what I mean, had made me something to eat and washed my clothes for me, and you know, it felt good. A normal life.” A direct quote from a man who has combined legal work and income-generating crime throughout his criminal career. Notice his reasons are without mentioning monetary motivations. While criminologists and sociologists of work have continuously claimed that criminals “double up” (Fagan and Freeman 1999) for instrumental reasons (Ngyuen 2023), a study of 28 career doublers reveals that the intrinsic rewards of legal work are an important but overlooked part of the explanation for why individuals with illegal income also hold down a steady job. While extrinsic, or instrumental, rewards were present, they held less weight. These motivations varied from enjoyment of work to being able to provide for their family. 28 interviewees were categorized as career doublers, meaning they engaged in legal and illegal work simultaneously for an extended period of time. 25 of those 28 listed their motivation for legal work as intrinsic and therefore will be the sample for this study. Why, if so many people double up for reasons not previously researched, has this been left out of the literature for this long? How can sociologists claim to understand work without fully comprehending the motivations behind it?

Fagan and Freeman’s groundbreaking 1999 study coined the word “doubling up,” but in 1983, Sviridoff and Thompson were some of the trailblazers that acknowledged the necessity of further studies on those that work a legal job at the same time as an illegal job. Since then, other sociologists and criminologists have expanded upon their ideas by conducting studies and providing rationales for this. Fagan and Freeman’s study found that legal work facilitates illegal work in ways beyond being a cover (Sviridoff and Thompson), which was the original

assumption. Additional studies confirmed these findings (Witte and Witt 2000). Salina's (2023) study found that many individuals "double up" in order to have a legal job to fall back on if the illegal work can no longer be carried out. Another 2023 study established that income generated from legal and illegal work can be used for different things (Nguyen et al. 2023). For example, finances sponsored by drug selling cannot be used for child support. While these studies are strong and should not be disregarded, the information provided is extremely limited.

This paper will reevaluate and expand the core reasons for "doubling up" by providing a new motivation: expressive rewards. That is, career doublers hold on to their legal job because it may be part of their identity or the positive feedback they receive from loved ones. Fagan and Freeman's work will guide this study by providing an outline for what is considered "doubling up." The goal is to uncover the deep-rooted motivations for holding two jobs, those of which have little in common. The argument has historically been as follows: a person will desist from criminal activity if they have a legal job. Yet, this study finds that numerous people hold down legitimate jobs while still making money via illegal means. Additionally, the reasons for holding both jobs go beyond financial reasons, and actually reside in personal reasons, such as the enjoyment of working. Many interviewees felt empowered by their work, feeling that the work they do is important to society while also benefiting their loved ones. This is extremely important as it complicates a once understood theory. If people enjoy their legal work, one will assume there is no need for an illegal income. The literature claims that criminals only hold jobs for instrumental reasons, but this study found that other motivations are just as important. In order for an individual to desist from crime, they not only have to engage in legal work, but fully reject all aspects of their life tethering them to deviant behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In 1983, Michelle Sviridoff and James W. Thompson completed a study at Riker's Island where they found the relationship between employment and crime to be deeper than previously understood. They found working a legal and illegal job simultaneously is rather common and quite nuanced. It was later that Jeffrey Fagan and Richard B. Freeman devised "doubling up," the term used for this occurrence (1999). Since then, other sociologists and criminologists have expanded upon their ideas by conducting studies and providing rationales for this. That said, the scope has been limited to mostly extrinsic rewards and as a means to an end (Maccoun and Reuter 1992; Fagan and Freeman 1999; Ngyuen 2015 2023; Nur and Nguyen, 2022; Salinas 2023; Witte and Witt 2000;).

It should be noted that rational choice theory is a key factor in the study of crime and work. This theory originated from a study on human nature but is currently used in criminology to describe the consideration of loss and rewards that a person may come across when making a decision (Becker 1968; Cornish and Clarke 1986). In 1977, Isaac Ehrlich and Joel Gibbons explained that when rational choice theory is applied into the study of economics, people will make decisions, legal or not, that provide them with the most "utility," or the reward they were hoping for. The men we interviewed were perfect examples, as they decided the the benefits of illegal work outweigh the costs, and therefore chose to continue engaging in illegal activity while working a legal job.

The instrumental motivations noted are vast and have been applied to doubling up many times. Sviridoff and Thompson found in their 61-person study that people double up in order to have a cover for their illegal job (1983). If someone has a legitimate job and paycheck, it will be harder to prove their money comes from an illegal source. Studies have specifically shown that this explanation is rather common for drug dealers (Fagan and Freeman 1999). Similarly, Robert

MacCoun and Peter Reuter's study found that having a legal job may assist a criminal in their illegal profession (1992). Career doublers may obtain objects that assist them in their illegal work, such as products to sell. Additionally, a doubler may meet people from a job, form a relationship, and go into illegal business together (Witt and Witte 2000).

Holly Ngyuen has numerous published and unpublished studies all revolving around the coexistence of work and crime. Her 2023 study focusses on how different sources of income can be used for different purchases, which is commonly seen for tax purposes or child support. These finances require proof of legitimate income and therefore cannot be paid in cash or by means in which one does not want to disclose. This results in obtaining a legal job for the sole protection of getting caught.

Additional studies have suggested that career doublers may keep their legal job as a hedge (Salinas 2023). There are many reasons a person may stop participating in illegal work, whether it be with pure intention to desist from crime or the physical toll that it has taken on one's body. Mike Salinas' 2023 study states that there are many risks associated with drug selling. Therefore, as one gets older, they will no longer rationalize the work they do. If a person has never had a legal job in their lifetime, it would be challenging to find one middle-aged. Instead, career doublers may work both and keep a legal job while working illegally to maintain an income once they deem illegal work too dangerous. A hedge can also be used if one's criminal career is interrupted by arrest or injury (Salinas 2023). Although they may not have a large use of the legal job currently, the job is an investment into their own future.

Given that much of the literature on the topic of career doublers has revolved around physical and extrinsic motivations, there are some studies that allude to the prominence of intrinsic motivations, which can be defined as the characteristics associated with joy, interest,

and/or control relative to the task itself (Kalleberg 1977 p. 128). Arne L. Kellenberg found the factors associated with intrinsic motivation, including stimulation, resulted in a higher level of job satisfaction (Kalleberg 1977, p. 136), highlighting the importance of this dimension. While job satisfaction sometimes refers to monetary gains, there are also internal factors that are present. Some sociologists therefore recommend studying the connection between internal and external factors (Bradburn 1969), arguing that external motivations are valid, but most of the time, they are accompanied by intrinsic desires. Kallenberg and Griffen expand upon this the following year, relating social class to job satisfaction, finding that intrinsic motivations are less impactful for the working class, compared to those in white-collar jobs (1978).

Psychologists have analyzed the difference between expressive and instrumental motivations, finding that expressive motivations are more likely to provide immediate gratification (Dunning and Fetchenhauer 2013). Instrumental motivations, such as legal work acting as a cover, emphasize an individual's desire for immediate and personal gratification. More specifically, John W. Budd's book, *The Thought of Work* (2011), expands upon intrinsic rewards by focusing on the relationship between work and self-fulfillment, highlighting personal achievements and the human drive to have a purpose. Budd's work presents a guideline for what can be considered an internal drive for legal work by writing a chapter solely on how work can be attributed to an individual's identity. Budd writes that identity arises from lived experiences, with a focus on an individual's ever-changing mind and their interpersonal roles (2011). A major takeaway from Budd's work is the connection between working and being human. Therefore, those who engage in work as a social norm prove their desire to be a functioning member of society, showing that people may work legal jobs for reasons beyond monetary gains.

A recent study on meth cooks found that many had expressive and identity-based motivations for their illegal work (Erickson et al. 2021). Some enjoyed the act itself, highlighting the adrenaline rush and quality of the product they produce. Additionally, the meth was something that others needed, resulting in respect from others. While this study focuses on the identity factors of illegal work, much of it can be applied to legal work. There can be personal motivations for legal work that are more powerful than those for their illegal job, which will likely affect career doublers.

Additional studies have hinted at non-monetary motivations, including Salina's 2023 study. He offers many ideas as to why a person successful in illegal work would continue working legally, noting that drug selling does not occur during a legal job. Instead, drug selling often peaks "in the evenings, at weekends, or on days when welfare or public transfers are made" (228). This alludes to the idea that an individual wants to be doing something during the day. They have an internal drive to have a schedule and find some form of meaning. Additionally, Salinas mentions the feeling a drug dealer may have towards their job. Many dealers may find their work "uninspiring" or "boring" implying they have a personal drive to feel fulfilled in their work. While Salinas does not focus on expressive motivations as the basis of his study, he does not fully neglect the concept either.

Obtaining a legal job does not make a person a law-abiding citizen. Instead, career doublers must revoke all associations with criminal activity while simultaneously understanding the importance of expressive rationales. Criminal trajectories can only change if an individual honors their inner desire for normalcy and cuts ties with institutions and people that support deviant behavior.

METHODS

This study, conducted between 2020 and 2024, consisted of 100 in-depth interviews of currently or previously incarcerated men in Ohio. Career doublers are defined as individuals with extended criminal careers across a long portion of the life course who also held down legal jobs throughout their criminal career. The participants varied in racial demographics with ages ranging from 35 to 55. Out of the 100 men interviewed, 28 were classified as career doublers. 15 of the 28 men self-identified as white, with the remaining 13 identifying as Black and/or African American. It is also important to note that 18 of the 28 career doublers are considered criminal persisters, meaning they were still criminally active during their most recent period in the community. The remaining 10 were currently desisting from criminal activity with no self-reported crime within the past three years.

The mode of interviewing varied on a case-by-case basis, with many conducted via Zoom or phone call, while those currently re-incarcerated took place in person. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed to ensure accuracy. The names of the interviewees have been removed from this study and replaced with pseudonyms, to ensure privacy. Details about race and age are mentioned in this study solely for context and future studies.

A routine questionnaire was the basis for all the interviews, with room for flexibility depending on the interviewee's responses. Each interview started with general questions on the prison sentences each interviewee served, without going into much detail. All that was required was the year it occurred and length of incarceration. Respondents were also asked about the years they were employed, unemployed and looking, or unemployed and not looking. The following questions consisted of topics related to employment history, likes and dislikes of said employment, and illegal work history (mostly drug or property crimes), followed by mental and physical health. Each respondent was also asked about their support systems, if applicable.

For continuity, each interviewee was asked detailed questions about three different legal jobs. The first job respondents were asked about was their current job. If they were not employed, they would answer about their most recent job. The second set of questions was about the job they worked immediately upon release. The final job was the one obtained in between. If a respondent had held less than three jobs, the existing one sufficed, and if a respondent held more, the longest/most important would only be focused on. Specific questions on legitimate jobs consisted of how they obtained the job, the wage and benefits, how long they worked there, and why it ended.

Depending on answers, more time would be allocated for questions that required more detail or provoked follow-ups. Across the 28 interviews mentioned above, participants were specifically asked why they kept their legal jobs if they already had an illegal source of income, as the answers were the data for this study. Additionally, the depth and nature of respondents' attachment to their legal work was explored across all three jobs.

Previous studies have shown that career doublers work illegally because it is more lucrative, often ignoring the motivations associated with legal work. Therefore, this study provided the space to better understand the varying rationales for legal work, later categorized as instrumental or expressive. Any mention of money or relation to illegal work was classified as instrumental, while those specifically about the legal job and their internal feelings about it were classified as expressive. The instrumental motivations were as follows: (1) legal and illegal money is useful for different things (Nguyen et al. 2023), (2) legal work is a cover for illegal work (Sviridoff and Thompson 1983), (3) legal work facilitates illegal work beyond serving as a front (Freemen 1999; Witte and Witt 2000), (4) legal work as something to fall back on if a criminal career is interrupted (Salinas 2023), and (5) the pay/benefits. Answers that related to

emotions and legitimate aspects of life were put under the umbrella of intrinsic and organized individually.

Once the transcriptions were completed, we used NVivo to code and analyze the qualitative data. The two parent codes were for legitimate and illegitimate work. Children codes for both likes and dislikes for the jobs were created, followed by the specific motivations mentioned above. The coding allowed us to find similarities between respondents and therefore draw conclusions on the importance of expressive rationales as equal to instrumental rationales.

INSTRUMENTAL RATIONALES FOR LEGAL WORK

Instrumental rationales have been studied due to its historical prominence. That said, it is not surprising to see that most of the career doublers from this study had motivations falling into this category. Each interviewee was different with unique characteristics, but instrumental rationales were a common thread, re-emphasizing its ongoing importance.

21 of the 28 career doublers interviewed were categorized as listing instrumental motivations as an important factor for maintaining their legal job. Specific reasons varied, including the following: legal and illegal funds are used for different things (Nguyen et al 2023), legal work as a cover for illegal work (Sviridoff and Thompson), legal work facilitates illegal work (Freeman 1999; Witte and Witt 2000), the legal job is a hedge for when their criminal career stops (Salinas 2023), and the income itself (Salinas 2023). These reasons were used at varying rates and were often accompanied by expressive rationales.

Three interviewees shared the importance of a paper trail, which illegal work, such as drug selling, does not provide. Mike, a 48-year-old African American male criminal desister, stated, “you need something as a legitimate source of income to prove here’s my taxes, here’s

my paperwork.” The other two responses relayed similar beliefs, adding that child support specifically requires proof of income. John, a Black man who also kept his legal job to pay his child support bills, explained the pressure he was under to get a job for that reason.

Mike, John, and Dean, the three individuals who kept their legal jobs because the different sources of income could be allocated differently, also explained that their legal job served as a cover. This rationale was mentioned by 10 of the career doublers, making it the second most common instrumental rationale. Dave a 60-year-old white man specifically noted the importance of hiding his illegal activity from his kids: “maybe my children won’t know that I am selling drugs again.” He adds that when his children were growing up, they were under the impression their father sold cars, due to his high income. They were unaware he was dealing OxyContin. Dave alludes to a sense of embarrassment for his illegal activity, as he knows his kids would not be supportive.

Consider Brian, a 45-year-old who has now stopped his involvement in drug selling but began before he was 10. While selling heroin and other drugs, he would routinely make around \$40,000 per month. He explained that to be a “true hustler, you must have an avenue. I have to have something to say where I’m getting this money from.” He had to have a legal job to ensure his money stayed his. Dealers without a legal job often stand on street-corners all day, allowing them more chances to get caught. Brian adds that his proof of working 40-hour weeks allowed him to obtain additional assets, prohibiting the police from taking “everything from me.” He also mentioned his advantages over dealers who do not have a legal job, explaining how he can hide parts of his lifestyle as well as keeping people unaware of the fact that he may have funds in a bank.

Larry expanded on this motivation, his reasoning being the following: “because if I ever got pulled over by the cops, with a nice amount of money in my wallet or in my possession I need to be able to have a pay stub.” This is a rather common thought, as another interviewee, Connor, also touched on this:

I can make a whole week's paycheck in an hour. So if I can keep legal means to cover up what I got, then they can't take it from me. So if I'm selling dope, I got to have something to show how I got what I got. If I don't, they can take that shit away. So it's a way to cover my ass in the same sense. But I take pride in everything I do. It don't matter if I'm drugging or fighting or if 'm working or selling, It don't matter, I put 100% into everything I do.

Other interviewees mentioned legal work as cover for additional reasons, such as Craig holding down a legal job to satisfy his parole officer.

11 of the 28 career doublers specifically listed monetary and extrinsic motivations as a key reason for working two jobs, resulting in it being the main external factor for many of those interviewed. While many reaped the benefits associated with their employment, a driving factor for many was the way the legal job supported the individual's drug habits, many being men who continue to work two jobs to this day. Their legal work was stable, providing them with a predictable income, unlike illegal work. Take Charlie, who initially started stealing from his wife to support his drug addiction, and later advanced to other forms of income generating crime. He explained, “If you gon have a habit, you got to be able to pay for it. So, I kind of kept that mentality.”

John, Mike, and Dean also kept their legal jobs because of the extrinsic rationales, such as benefits and pay. The money obtained from the legal job would directly go to child support bills. While the salary made from the legal job was not enough to deter these individuals from crime, the additional income was still appreciated.

An important factor that should be noted is that four of the 10 criminal desisters did not list any instrumental rationales, which allows for questioning on its prominence for those trying to stop their illegal activity. That said, instrumental motivations still accompanied 6 of our desisters and 15 of the persisters, confirming its need to for future studies.

The instrumental motivations mentioned in our interviews mirror those in previous literature. Instrumental rationales are extremely important for career doublers, highlighting the need for continued research on the phenomenon. While some interviewees were motivated by monetary gains, others were more focused on how their legal job assisted their illegal work. However, our study dives into uncharted territory, allowing expressive rationales to be considered just as intensely as those instrumental.

EXPRESSIVE RATIONALES FOR LEGAL WORK

Even more common than instrumental rationales were those categorized as expressive. 25 of the 28 career doublers noted internal factors as key reasons for maintaining their legal occupation. These intrinsic motivations highlight the timeliness of expressive rationales; that is, pleasure is a direct outcome of the job, instead of the job being a “means to an end” (Dunning and Fletchenhauer 2013: 142).

It should be noted that an expressive rationale accompanied 18 out of 20 of the career doublers who also listed instrumental motivations. This supports the future inclusion of this

variable, as expressive traits hold prominence alone while also offering a better understanding of its variation alongside instrumental motivations.

This study also found that seven respondents solely listed expressive rationales, with no mention of instrumental motivations. White respondents made up 6 out of the 7 people for this specific sample, insinuating the importance of race among career doublers and different types of motivations. Our study does not provide an explanation for this occurrence, so future researchers should look more closely at the connection between career doublers and racial makeup.

When looking at the specifics of the expressive rationales, explanations varied across respondents. Some interviewees stressed the prominence of their pride in skill relative to their legal job, while others enjoyed their job due to the sociability it fostered. The variations are just as important as its prominence, emphasizing the role of internal drives in desisting from criminal activity.

Nine of the career doublers we interviewed mentioned pride in skill as a reason for doubling up. That is, they kept their legal job because they were proud of the products they were creating and genuinely enjoyed the work they were doing.

George, a white criminal persister, is a great example of a career doubler who kept his legal job due to his pride in skill. He held multiple jobs throughout his life, many in the construction industry. He explained that his legal job provided him with a sense of calmness, as he's been in the industry since he was young. George highlighted the importance of making "something with [his] on hands" and being able to "watch everything come to life, watch all the projects get started and finished," allowing for a sense of pride over his work, causing him to want to keep the legal job.

Like George, Henry too kept his job because of his pride. He has worked in trucking for many years and shed light on various expressive rationales, including his genuine admiration for working: “I love detailing cars. I love bringing a car back to life.” He adds that he enjoys knowing that it was his own hands that were able to make said change.

Connor, mentioned above, highlighted the physical intensity of drilling, explaining the feeling of accomplishment he would feel after “directional drilling 75 hundred pounds.” He mentioned his desire for people to know it was his work, stating “we want to act like we were there.” Similarly, Sam, who worked in roofing explained how good he felt knowing he completed a house worth \$200,000; He explained that telling people he took part in it left him with a sense of pride.

When we asked Adam, who had worked in construction, about his personal motivation, pride in skill was incredibly important. He explained how it felt to complete something alone, while also recognizing how it made him feel to help people.

I built a lighthouse in an 85-year-old ladies' backyard, with a fountain, it was in the middle with the fountain around it. I did it all by myself, I mean, my dude helped me with some of the measurements and stuff, but I did it all by myself and... it's the best thing I ever built in my life. The lady was ecstatic, and so I was ecstatic with it, it was like she had seen a pot full of gold or something, she was really, and it made me feel so wonderful inside, that she was cause you know, that lady prolly don't have many years left with us, and anything to make her happy and joyful, it was great to me and made me feel good inside. Plus, I did a hell of a job on it.

This quote clearly shows that having pride in one's skill will foster career criminals in working legally. The joy derived from his legal work could not come from his illegal work, causing a person to be a career doubler.

Pride in skill commonly went together with joy of the work itself, specifically in the case of Mike.

I mean I like building businesses, I like building relationships, I like learning the new skills, cause prior to that I never even thought about waterproofing and concrete as a business, as a job or trade so I was able to learn on the job. I was building a business.

It was very common for the interviewees to enjoy the work attached to the job, motivating them to continue working.

16 out of the 25 career doublers who mentioned expressive rationales specifically referenced their desire to be legitimate members of society; for example, Frank, who worked in plumbing and installed floors. He referenced the social stigma associated with crime, saying he believes "a man should work for a living and have an actual job." Charlie said something similar, adding that working a legal job made him feel like a man, adding the importance of his children's opinion. He wanted to be legitimate for his kids.

Another interviewee, Jared, quickly fell in love with the legitimate work he began to do; he described it as his dream.

"Man, I was gonna start a landscaping business. I had bought all the trucks and stuff. I had bought an ice cream truck. I was gonna sell ice cream and other treats off of there. It was all for—it was mixed in the bad and the good because I wanted to create legal structure, but I also wanted to clean up illegal money I was making."

He rationalized his illegal activities by using his money gained from said activities and investing them into legal aspects of his life.

Many of the men that stressed the important of legitimacy explained that their desire was rooted in their familial approval. For example, George and Henry both explained that holding down a legal job has allowed their family members to feel a sense of pride for them, something many of the interviewees strive for. Tyler specifically mentioned his father:

My dad was a union bridge painter in New York City. He worked his whole life and he ended he was always big on working. When I was a kid it was always like your dad is a hard worker, you need to you know I mean, you got it in you to be like him like this and that you know I mean. I kinda grew up thinking about that like I always wanted to be working but I always had problems with drugs up passing away, he fell off the Triboro Bridge when I was like 11 and died.

Being legitimate often coincided with wanting to be a provider. For example, Doug, an African American man who worked in home remodeling while partaking in shoplifting, spoke about his children and mother as motivations for being a career doubler. He explained that the mother of his children and himself struggle with addiction. He adds this his mother is currently raising other children from the family. Therefore, Doug stresses the importance of giving money to his mother because she has consistently provided him with a place to stay. And, he feels good doing it, knowing the money comes from a legal source.

Another example is Zach, who explained that his sister struggles with obesity and therefore has mobility problems. She cannot get out of bed or provide for herself, resulting in Zach frequently giving her money. He added that his legal job allows him to put legitimate money into the bank, fostering his desire to help others: “I give money to homeless people...I help a lot of people.” He made additional accounts referencing the number of people who go to him for help, proving that career doublers, although technically criminals, still enjoy giving back and helping their loved ones.

Charlie, who was discussed earlier, also kept his legal job for the purpose of providing for this son:

At the end of the day when my son needs some milk, he ain't gonna be hearing me...I'm gonna get up, and I'm gonna walk and do what I gotta do. Even when I was on drugs.

Charlie added that holding a legal job, while making him a provider, also was the “manly thing to do.” He explained that anyone can sell dope and run from the police, but only certain people are able to do that and care for his own family.

It is also extremely important to note that 12 interviewees expressed affective attachments to occupational identities. For example, Matthew has been an aerial lineman for most of most of his life and emphasized that he cannot imagine his life without it. Legal work identity for a career criminal has limited research, yet this study found that it's actually quite

common. These men continue working their legitimate jobs because deep down, it's who they are inside.

Illegal work is often done independently with the presence of competition between sellers. While not as common, multiple of our respondents highlighted the sociability associated with legal work. Consider Henry, mentioned above, who is still truck driving and doing illegal work, compares work to a home. "We treat each other like family. And that's one thing we do... We're not there to judge a person on how or what's going on in their life... We just work as a team."

Similarly, George referred to his coworkers as his "buddies," adding that although disagreements may arise, they work together well and provide quality products. Larry expressed that his employers were incredibly kind: "It was a real family feel in that place."

As mentioned above, out of the 18 criminal persisters, meaning they are still working an illegal job and a legal job, only one interviewee listed strictly instrumental rationales. This supports the idea that those who work illegally still strive for internal motivations and to be legal members of society.

Therefore, expressive rationales are just as important as instrumental rationales, and future studies should dictate this.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

We interviewed 100 men in Ohio, both previously and currently incarcerated, to learn about their employment history. 28 of these interviewees were career doublers, meaning they worked a legal job and illegal job simultaneously. Just as previous studies have found, instrumental rationales are extremely important as 21 of the 28 interviews utilized included this type of rationale. These

motivations are highlighted by their timeliness. These motivations are satiated almost immediately after completing the work and/or are a direct result of the job. A key example of this is monetary gains. These motivations also include using work as a cover and work as a hedge in case their criminal career is interrupted (Sviridoff and Thompson 1983; Salinas 2023). Our findings also aligned with previous research conducted by Nguyen in 2023, shedding light on the fact that money earned from an illegal job and a legal job can be utilized differently.

Our study differed from those completed before, as we looked at expressive rationales, a topic that has limited research. These motivations are rooted in the individual's identity, meaning they see their job as a key characteristic of who they are as a person. These motivations can manifest in different forms, such as pride in skill and being able to provide for one's family. These motivations and rewards do not come directly from the work itself, but rather the idea of working legally. Some of the interviewees said working a legal job was enough motivation to keep at it. Expressive rationales were even more prominent than those listed above, as 25 out of the 28 career doublers included at least one.

As mentioned before, our study aims to put expressive motivations on the same pedestal as instrumental motivations. Most of the previous studies conducted strictly account for the motivations of keeping the illegal job, often ignoring the impact legal work has on a person. When a study does focus on the motivations for the legal job, it centers on the instrumental rewards. Instead, additional time and resources should be allotted to expressive rationales, as it allows for a better understanding of what is needed for a person to desist from crime and continue on with their legal occupation.

Although these motivations have been studied, the results need to be better utilized in order to help recidivism. Our study found that a legal job providing economic security and

protection from future prosecution is not enough to make a criminal into a law-abiding citizen.

Instead, the individual will likely benefit from internal motivations, as these factors help a person change their mindset on what work should be.

It should also be noted that this specific study does not account for race, type of legal work, type of illegal work, or many other variables. Therefore, certain motivations may appear more frequently across different occupations, socio-economic status, or familial situations. That said, this study continues research on instrumental motivations, while also allowing for no data and understanding when it comes to understanding those expressive motivations.

Works Cited

- Becker, Gary S. 1968. "Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach." *Journal of Political Economy* 76(2):169–217.
- Budd, John W. 2011. *The Thought of Work*. Cornell University Press.
- Cornish, Derek B., and Ronald V. Clarke. 2017. *The Reasoning Criminal: Rational Choice Perspectives on Offending*. New York: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781315134482.
- Dunning, David, and Detlef Fetchenhauer. 2013. "Behavioral Influences in the Present Tense: On Expressive versus Instrumental Action." *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 8(2):142–45. doi: 10.1177/1745691612474319.
- Ehrlich, Isaac, and Joel C. Gibbons. 1977. "On the Measurement of the Deterrent Effect of Capital Punishment and the Theory of Deterrence." *The Journal of Legal Studies* 6(1):35–50.
- Erickson, Jacob H., Andy Hochstetler, and Heith Copes. 2021. "Meth Cooking as a Job: Identity and Dirty Work." *Justice Quarterly* 38(5):849–69.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2019.1675746>
- Fagan, Jeffrey, and Richard B. Freeman. 1999. "Crime and Work." *Crime and Justice* 25:225–90. doi: 10.1086/449290.
- Nur, Alexandra, and Holly Nguyen. 2022. "Getting By: Low Wages and Income Supplementation." *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice* 64(2):35–58.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.3138/cjccj.2022-0008>
- Nguyen, Holly. 2015. "One Foot In, One Foot Out: Towards Understanding the Legal and Illegal Work Overlap." PhD dissertation, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Pennsylvania State University.

Nguyen, Holly, Thomas A. Loughran, and Volkan Topalli. 2023. "Crime, Consumption, and Choice: On the Interchangeability of Licit and Illicit Income." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 60(4):416–54. doi: 10.1177/00224278231152624.

MacCoun, Robert, and Peter Reuter. 1992. "Are the Wages of Sin \$30 an Hour? Economic Aspects of Street-Level Drug Dealing." *Crime & Delinquency* 38(4):477–91. doi: 10.1177/0011128792038004005.

Salinas, Mike. 2023. "'Doubling up': Drug Dealing as a Profitable Side-Hustle." in *Understanding Drug Dealing and Illicit Drug Markets*. Routledge.

Sviridoff, Michelle, and James W. Thompson. 1983. "Links between Employment and Crime: A Qualitative Study of Rikers Island Releasees." *Crime & Delinquency* 29(2):195–212. doi: 10.1177/001112878302900201.