

FOREWORD

Much has been written and many studies have been made of selected aspects of the criminal justice system and its ability to deal with and provide needed assistance to offenders. The work that has been done, however, has dealt primarily with the male offender population, which is probably due to the greater numbers of male offenders and the more violent nature of their crimes. As a result, the female, to a great extent, has been forgotten and her problems largely ignored by criminologists, lawyers, penologists, social scientists, and criminal justice programers. Given this lack of attention and indications that female crime is increasing, we have completed a study of what is happening to the female offender in the criminal justice system.

This study represents the first effort of the General Accounting Office to gather information dealing strictly with the female offender's involvement in the criminal justice system. This effort was undertaken so that we could better understand the system relative to the female offender before addressing specific aspects where we feel improvements could be made.

Our work involved research of published materials, including studies made by a number of agencies, groups, and individuals knowledgeable about the subject, many of which are listed in appendix II. To get a closer view of the system we visited several local jails, two State female prisons, and two Federal institutions. We also made visits to community agencies which provide services and programs for ex-offenders.

We interviewed inmates and corrections officials in an attempt to better understand the needs and problems of the female offender. We contacted many individuals who were either directly involved in research or who represented agencies that had an interest in the female offender. We also discussed the female offender with law enforcement officials, judges, probation and parole officers, and government agencies involved in assisting offenders when released from institutions.

Our efforts to understand the criminal justice system and its ability to deal with the female offender have surfaced issues which seem to have an adverse impact on the female. Among the needs that emerged during our study were:

--Adopted policy on purpose of corrections--habilitation or punishment.

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CHAPTER 1

THE FEMALE OFFENDER: A PROFILE

The female offenders we interviewed were unique individuals in many ways, yet they shared certain characteristics. To capture the salient characteristics of the female offender, we have developed composite profiles of two hypothetical individuals, Terry Kendrick and Linda Lane. Quoted material attributed to these individuals is language recorded during interviews with inmates. The remaining part of the chapter discusses in more detail the results of experts' research efforts and statistics related to females and crime. We also discuss some of the circumstances which may have led to the criminal acts.

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Terry Kendrick is a 20-year-old black woman with three children, a seventh-grade education, no job skills, and a drug habit. Until her arrest for mail theft she had lived on welfare, supplemented by her addict-husband's sporadic earnings and "whatever I could steal to feed my kids."

Ms. Kendrick had held high expectations when she entered prison. When the judge sentenced her to 18 months at a Federal penitentiary, he told her that there she would get the drug and social rehabilitation she needed and wanted. On a methadone program at the time, Ms. Kendrick had expected to continue the treatment in prison.

However, when she got to the penitentiary no methadone program existed, and she spent 2 weeks "cold turkey." Finally, badly frightened and unable to endure withdrawal any longer, she drank some hair spray to get "high." This violation earned her a transfer to another prison, but Ms. Kendrick still received no drug therapy or any other rehabilitation. Caseworkers and counselors seemed too busy or unconcerned to help her, and the prison offered no training that she felt would lead to an economically viable job.

Ms. Kendrick is now bitter and disappointed. "The judge lied to me," she says. "I thought everything was going to be all right, but it's not. Instead, I'm getting into deeper trouble."

Her future offers bleak hope at best. With no job skills, Ms. Kendrick sees little use in entering a halfway house and no chance of supporting herself.

These women are not unique individuals; they are two of an estimated 15,000 women incarcerated across the United States and part of the unknown numbers of female offenders who come in contact yearly with the criminal justice system. Are Ms. Kendrick and Lane typical of the women who break the law?

Today, many see the contemporary female offender as an aggressive operator, committing many more felonies than formerly, and engaging in more violent, "masculine" crimes. This view has been greatly reinforced by the news and entertainment media, as well as by several recent books. ^{1/} However, it has been nearly impossible to verify or disprove conclusively this popular concept of the female offender because, until recently, very little reliable data on her existed.

In 1972, the District of Columbia Commission on the Status of Women was moved to state:

"The paucity of data on the female offender is only slightly less disturbing than the lack of concern. Neither the criminal justice system nor the public even knows who the female offender is, much less what her needs and problems are."

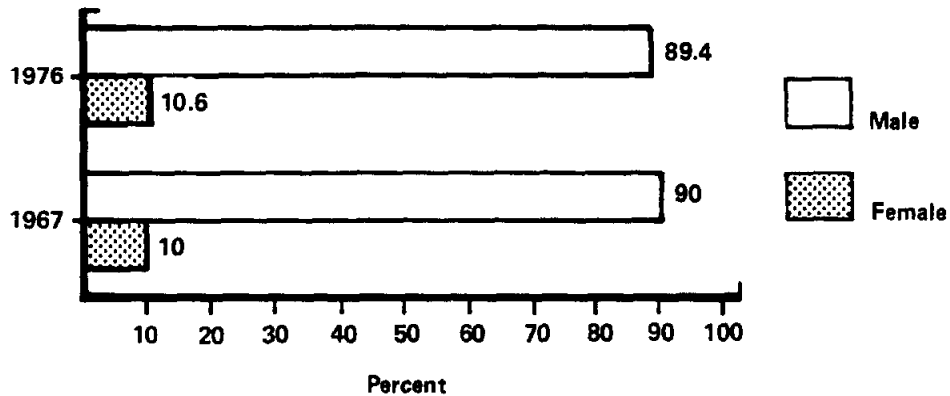
Experts in the field have attributed this indifference to society's former preoccupation with the more numerous and dangerous male criminal. "Women's problems" of any sort have been widely ignored for years, and female offenders were seen as "erring and misguided creatures who need protection and help rather than as dangerous criminals from whom * * * society should be protected"--who, therefore, warranted no special attention. Now, due to the woman's liberation movement, the growing public concern over the prevalence of crime in America, and the apparent increase in female violence, researchers have finally begun to study the female offender. The picture emerging from these studies fits many of society's traditional conceptions about women offenders but offers a few surprises, too.

Of the Nation's total female offenders, most come from racial or ethnic minorities: black, Hispanic, Amerind. They

^{1/}Laurel L. Rans, "Women's Crime: Much Ado About ...?" Federal Probation (May 1978), p. 46; and Laura Crites, "Women Offenders: Myth vs. Reality," in The Female Offender, ed. Laura Crites (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1976), pp. 35 and 36.

FIGURE 1-1

ARRESTS FOR VIOLENT OFFENSES: FEMALE AND MALE RATES IN 1967 AND 1976 (note a)



a/See tables 2A & B of appendix I for greater detail.

Among women themselves, in 1976 only 3.3 percent of all their arrests were on charges of violent crime. (See table 1 of app. I.) Moreover, though the number of female arrests has risen over 60 percent in the last 10 years, they still represent less than 15 percent of all adult arrests. (See table 2 of app. I.) This 60 percent increase is due mostly to a rise in drug and property offenses, rather than violent or "masculine" crimes.

In summary, the female offender includes the myriad kinds of individuals found in the rest of society, but the typical female offender bears strong resemblance to Terry Kendrick and Linda Lane.

DATA BASE TO THE COMPOSITE PROFILE

"Offender means any adult or juvenile who is confined in any type of correctional institution and also includes any individual * * * assigned

yet information about them is still meager, especially when compared to that of the arrestee and the inmate. We could find no comprehensive studies of these women. For the present, therefore, any effort to picture the female offender must be derived from the Uniform Crime Reports and such studies as Glick and Neto's, with the recognition that the final portrait may change somewhat when data on nonconfined offenders becomes available.

WHO, THEN, IS THE FEMALE OFFENDER?

As Joseph Horn and others have noted, the term "criminal" covers a greater variety of human behavior than perhaps any other description. Female offenders include rich, violent, highly educated, and professional women. They are habitual offenders and first timers--from ages 17 to 70, stable marriages and serial relationships, and broken homes and privileged backgrounds. They include lesbians, grandmothers, political activists, psychotics, teachers, and housewives. However, the majority of female offenders surveyed by researchers share particular characteristics which, taken together, make up a composite portrait of the woman offender.

Age and race

Studies have found female offenders to be young; most are 18 to 29 years old, (see table 3 of app. I) with a median age of 24 for unsentenced women and misdemeanants and 27 for felons. The majority of these women are from minorities; though only 10 percent of the population in selected States included in the study by Ruth M. Glick is black, a disproportionate amount--50 percent--of female inmates in some States were black. (See fig. 1-2) Indians also seem to be overrepresented.

Childhood

Female offenders encompass all social classes and family circumstances, but many of these women come from deprived or abused backgrounds. About a third report being poor as children, and at least one-third come from families entirely dependent on welfare. Only half seem to have come from a two-parent family, and many have had at least one parent who abused alcohol or drugs. In addition, evidence indicates that a significant number of all female offenders were victims as children of habitual physical or sexual abuse, including incest. Their childhood families also exhibit a greater than normal incidence of emotional instability and mental retardation.

Health

With such distressing backgrounds, it is not surprising that female offenders have poor mental and physical health. Estimates show that perhaps as many as one-fourth of all female inmates have spent some time in mental hospitals, and the number of unstable women who pass undiagnosed through the criminal justice system could up these figures considerably. A sizeable number of female offenders--60 percent by one estimate, 50 percent by another--are substance abusers, and about one out of every four has emotional problems (psychosomatic illnesses, anxiety, depression) serious enough to affect her health and functioning as an adult. Moreover, Margery Velimesis, from the President's Commission on Mental Health, estimates that 20 to 30 percent have attempted suicide at least once. ^{1/}

Physical health among female offenders is generally poor; most suffer the obvious effects of substance abuse, anxiety, and inadequate hygiene. Gynecological complaints are common. The most frequent chronic diseases reported were diabetes, hypertension and drug addiction or alcoholism.

Criminal history

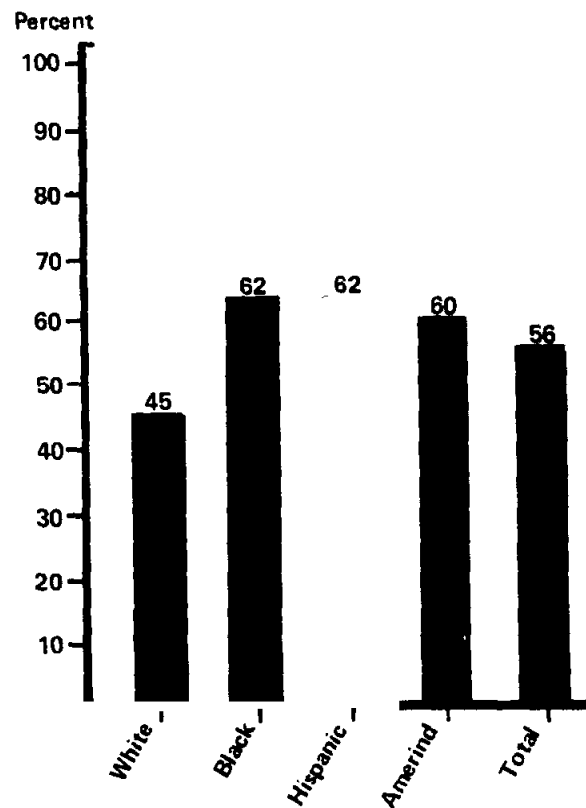
This background of poverty, illness, deprivation, and childhood abuse also includes an early familiarity with crime and the courts. At least 50 percent (see table 5 of app. I)

^{1/}Margery Velimesis, "Women Offenders" a Report to the President's Commission on Mental Health, Task Panel on Special Population, Washington, D.C.; December 1977, p. 2; and "The Mistreating of Female Offenders," p. 2. [draft].

relies on a man, or depends on welfare, 1/ she has problems maintaining an existence above the poverty level.

FIGURE 1-3

WELFARE SUPPORT PRIOR TO INCARCERATION (note a)



a/Glick and Neto, p. 121.

Those offenders who worked made very little money. Ten years ago the Department of Labor, while surveying two Federal Institutions for female offenders, found that

"* * * one-third of the women who had worked prior to their arrest had earned less than \$60 per week, and half had earned less than \$70."

1/Glick and Neto, xviii, 122.

None of these figures compare favorably to the 1976 poverty level of \$5,815 (\$3,700 in 1969). Also, most of these women are mothers whose salaries grow even more pinched when baby-sitters must be paid. As Mary Ann Huckabay, a consultant with the Cleveland Foundation, points out, the female offender is caught in a classic double-bind:

"If she works, who can care for her children at a price she can afford? If she doesn't work, how will she and her children survive economically?"

General dependency

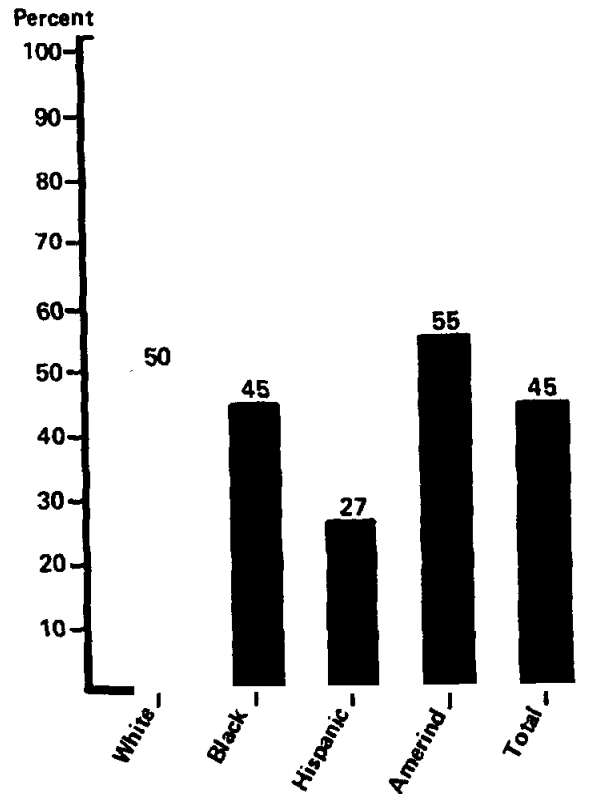
Economic reliance on public funds is only one thread in the web of dependencies enveloping the female offender. As prison officials, social workers, rehabilitation agencies, and the women themselves will testify, female offenders generally lack coping skills. Their knowledge of such basics as housekeeping, birth control, nutrition, and budgeting are often scant and inadequate. Frequently these women do not know how to apply for--nor even know of--unemployment benefits or social, medical, and educational programs open to them. Instead of depending on themselves, these women have relied on their families, friends, acquaintances, a few familiar institutions--and crime. Even those who can obtain welfare or hold down a job have turned, in the end, to crime to meet their real and perceived needs. Crime lies either close to or at the center of their webs of dependency. Too few are independent and capable enough to recognize socially acceptable alternatives and turn to them.

Vocational training and employment

In Glick and Neto's study group, 43 percent, have received some job training before incarceration, most of it in vocational schools; only 7 percent have been trained in previous correctional institutions. (See fig. 1-5.)

FIGURE 1-6

INCIDENCE OF EMPLOYMENT JUST PRIOR
TO INCARCERATION (note a)



a/Compiled from Glick and Neto, p. 135.

A woman's marital status and number of children have no bearing on whether she works, but her education does. The higher her education, the more likely she is to work. The female offender with a high school diploma usually has the clerical position; without one, she is in blue-collar or service jobs. Still, in many of these occupations she does not make enough money to keep above the poverty level. (See table 8 of app. I.)

Yet the female offender wants to work, ideally at a job that will make her financially independent. The female offender believes that work is appropriate for a woman. The 1969 study of female prisoners by the Department of Labor found that:

WHAT ARE THE CRIMES?

The crimes women commit tend to support their claims of economic necessity and accessory participation, refuting the violent image of them held by many Americans. Only three percent of all female arrests concern violent crimes, and these are mostly "crimes of passion." Such crimes seem to be responses to intolerable situations and are seldom repeated by the offenders. ^{1/} Instead, the great bulk (66 percent) of women's offenses are "victimless" crimes (substance abuse and prostitution) and economic offenses against property. (See tables 2a and b of app. I.)

Drug offenses

Though narcotic-related offenses make up only 6 percent of all women's arrests in 1976, they account for 11 percent of the less serious crime. ^{2/} Glick and Neto found that 22 percent of female felons and 20 percent of the misdemeanants were convicted of drug offenses. Of the unsentenced women, 22 percent were charged with drug offenses. Moreover, if California figures are nationally representative, up to one-half of all adult female convictions may be for drug violations.

Too little study has been done on the female drug offender to permit more than a tentative description. She can be of any age and any racial/ethnic group. For White and Indian offenders, drug violations seem to be one of the two most common crimes; for Hispanic women, it is by far their major crime. (See table 10 of app. I.) Most violators are users, not pushers or organizers. Those women with five or more children or those who have one or a series of boyfriends are the most likely drug users and offenders, generally acting in accomplice roles rather than independently. Recidivism is very high.

^{1/}Women's acts of manslaughter and homicide have generally been seen as arising from the frustration, subservience, and dependence of their traditional female roles. Their case histories have shown that, when their frustration and anger become intolerable, they kill the cause of their condition. When the cause is gone, so is their need to kill. See Rita J. Simon, The Contemporary Woman and Crime (Rockville, Md.: Health, Education, and Welfare, National Institute of Mental Health, 1975), p. 4.

^{2/}Examples of less serious crimes are: prostitution, gambling, liquor law violations, and disorderly conduct.

Property crimes

The most widespread of female offenses are property crimes. In 1976, property crimes alone accounted for 25 percent of all women arrested, and related crimes--forgery, fraud, embezzlement, and stolen property--added another 9 percent (See table 1 of app I.) Among the major and serious crimes, property and related offenses make up 78 percent of all female arrests. Glick and Neto found that conviction rates closely follow these arrest rates.

These are obviously the "crimes of choice" among women, starkly contrasting with the much more even distribution of male crimes. Nearly 25 percent of all arrested women are apprehended for larceny, as compared to only 8 percent of all men arrested. (See table 9 of app. I.) Fraud accounts for 6 percent of female arrests, 2 percent of male arrests. Moreover, while women make up only 11 percent of arrests for violent crimes, they account for 38 percent of arrests for fraud, 36 percent for embezzlement, and 35 percent for larceny. (See table 2 of app. I.)

All races, ages, and types of women commit property offenses--mostly shoplifting (larceny), passing bad or forged checks, and defrauding welfare programs. Among the property crime offenders, a few characteristic trends exist. For instance, larceny is most common among women under 26 and those women with boyfriends; more black women commit larceny than any other property crime. On the other hand, forgery and fraud, besides drugs, are the most common of crimes among white and Indian women. (See table 10 of app. I.) Forgery, a white-collar crime, is also a favorite of women with only one marriage, a better education, and with clerical, professional, or skilled occupations. It cannot be emphasized too strongly, however, that the female property offender comes from all ethnic, racial, educational, economic, and social groups. She represents a cross-section of the Nation's women.

From 1953 to 1976, arrests for property crimes by women, especially larceny, nearly tripled. This rapid rise is almost wholly responsible for the much-publicized increase in serious crimes by women, and it shows no signs of abating. If present trends do continue, by 1990, the rate of fraud committed by women will equal that of men; by 2010, forgery rates will be equal.

What is the cause for this bulge of crime? Well, clearly these property crimes have an economic object. They are a source of ready cash, and as such they meet the very real needs of the typical female offender, who is generally poor.

CHAPTER 2

PRETRIAL CONFINEMENT AND SENTENCING

When a female suspect is apprehended, she travels along a series of steps in the path of the criminal justice system: (1) arrest and booking, (2) pretrial confinement, (3) trial, (4) acquittal or sentencing and incarceration, and (5) parole or release. At nearly every step she is in a situation beyond her control; and at the end of the path she sees nothing ahead but the same road she just traveled. However, at many of the steps along the way she may be offered alternatives that can lead to new highways, new horizons for her.

PRETRIAL DETENTION

Several alternatives to arrest and booking already exist and are gaining wider acceptance; through diversionary programs, arrestees can often erase charges against them by overcoming such problems as the addiction or unemployment that led to their crimes. However, those women considered dangerous, unlikely to appear in court, or from other States are confined in local jails to await and stand trial.

The problem

Since many jails are poorly planned, funded, and staffed to hold women, ¹/ pretrial detention often becomes a physical and psychological punishment for women not yet convicted of any crime. Many of these women will be found not guilty or released on probation.

Most jails have not been designed or funded to hold female offenders, much less female detainees, so facilities are generally inadequate. In our visits to city jails, we observed that detainees often share cells with convicted offenders under the same conditions, regulations, and privations. (Jail conditions and inadequacies are discussed in ch. 3.) Frequently the detainee's pretrial status is a lot worse than that of her sentenced roommate. Because she has not been convicted, she is denied access to the few inmate programs or resources the jail may offer, so most of her time is spent in idleness. Shorn of any resource or distraction,

¹/Patsy Sims, "Women in Southern Jails", in The Female Offender, ed. Laura Crites (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1976), pp. 138, 145; and Isabel Beiser, "Conditions Facing Women in Maine County Jails," a report to the Main Civil Liberties Union, March, 1978, p. 19.



ONLY THE BAREST OF PHYSICAL NECESSITIES ARE PROVIDED.

also provide constructive use of the arrestee's time and improve her chances of release or probation. "What happens to an individual prior to trial may well affect [her] correctional improvement once convicted." 1/

SENTENCING FACTORS

When a person is convicted, the law either dictates a specific sentence or permits the judge to choose from among several sentencing alternatives: probation, fines, incarceration, or a number of innovative programs. Requirements of the law and personal attitudes of criminal justice officials determine a woman's sentence.

Legal requirements

Laws concerning sentencing differ greatly among the Nation's many jurisdictions, but the various codes and statutes usually provide judges a range of fines and sentence lengths. In many courts, however, women are a special case. At the turn of the century, several State legislatures, believing that the nature of women justified a different manner of punishment and rehabilitation, passed special sentencing laws requiring correctional officials, rather than judges, to determine the length of a woman's sentence. Such indeterminate sentencing has frequently denied women equal protection, resulting in longer sentences being served than for males for the same crime. Many of these statutes have recently been revoked by State equal rights amendments or in response to court challenges.

Personal attitudes

The kind of thinking behind such indeterminate sentencing is still active in the criminal justice system. The discretionary power of judicial officials, which plays a critical role in all phases of the justice system, is determined in large part by officials' personal beliefs and attitudes toward defendants/convicts. The assumptions of individual officials concerning women too often result in differential treatment--some favorable, some not--of female offenders.

Many officials have paternalistic views toward women. A female offender may be released rather than punished or put in contact with habilitative programs, because her "place" is at home, keeping house for husband and child.

1/Corrections, pp. 136-137.

--Judges are less likely to dismiss the cases of women.

--Judges are more likely to convict women than men.

SENTENCING: OLD PRACTICES AND NEW APPROACHES

Once a person is convicted, a number of sentencing alternatives are available. In some cases, a sentence is dictated by law. In other cases, a judge may use discretion and choose from among several alternatives, such as

--probation,

--incarceration,

--required participation in community service programs,
and

--fines and restitution.

Probation

Probation is the most frequent type of sentence handed down. For example, in California during 1977, about 11,300 females were convicted of criminal conduct: almost 4,500 received straight probation, and another 4,300 received probation after spending some time in jail. Probation is widely chosen because:

--It offers a better chance for habilitation and real change than incarceration.

--Its costs are much lower than those of incarceration.

--Offenders can earn money to pay court-assessed fines and restitution to victims. 1/

Probation is a conditional agreement between the court and the offender which allows her sentence to be served in the community. Some States prescribe general conditions of probation, which include maintaining employment, reporting monthly to a probation officer, and staying out of trouble. The court may add special conditions, such as participating in a drug or alcohol program or completing vocational training. If the offender violates any of the conditions, the court can revoke her probation and send her to an institution.

1/ "State and County Probation: Systems in Crisis" GGD-76-87 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office May 27, 1976), p. 8.

with drug or alcohol problems and those who must learn to cope with jobs and other societal demands. One such community program is Quest House in San Francisco. It accepts felons and misdemeanants referred by probation officers and the courts as an alternative to incarceration. Quest House assumes that circumstances have caused these women to commit crimes, so it focuses on teaching them basic coping skills (i.e., vocational skills, self-awareness, assertiveness, education, and such practical skills as budgeting). Participants live in the facility and work at jobs in the community. House staffers work closely with the women, using persuasion, support, and reassurance to assist them in succeeding within the system.

Another community program is the Women's Residential Center in San Jose, California. The offenders live in a county-owned apartment complex and participate in a work/study furlough program with peer-group meetings and individual counseling. The center does not provide direct services (other than housing and counseling) to program participants, but refers them to existing community agencies for any services they need.

The programs described above restrict an offender's involvement in the community to those activities considered habilitative. Such programs give the offender a chance to pay her debt to society and at the same time work, improve on learning new skills, and maintain family relationships.

Judges and other officials have expressed their support of community programs; they would like to see more such facilities and would sentence more women to alternative programs if they were available.

CHAPTER 3

CONFINEMENT

The female offender sentenced to incarceration serves her time either in jail or prison. Jails are generally local facilities intended to house pretrial detainees, misdemeanants, and felons awaiting transfer. Women's prisons are penal establishments which hold felons serving various terms and are generally located in rural areas.

With few exceptions, neither type of correctional facility today does more than warehouse its female inmates; physical plant, staffing, services, and programs are needed to create an atmosphere promoting positive behavioral change, but those existing are sadly inadequate. This situation arises from the lack of money, planning, and direction afflicting most penal institutions. 1/

For the most part, inadequacies in jails and prisons differ only in degree, not in kind. A few problems are restricted to one type of institution, but most concern the physical facilities, staff, services, and programs provided to the female inmate in both penal systems.

PHYSICAL PLANT

Many jails were never planned to hold female offenders, so they are ill-equipped to deal with women in any way. Moreover, the small number of women offenders has continued to make their presence incidental to the planning and direction of local jails, despite the fact that their incarceration often exacerbates an already overcrowded situation. In many jails without regular female facilities, officials must clear a complete cell block of its male inmates to house one or two females, often for extended periods.

These facilities often deprive women of their privacy, self-respect, and safety, and according to two studies, may violate State regulations as well. (See the photograph on p. 34.) Many States now require the separation of male and female inmates, but frequently in local jails--especially rural ones--such separation does not occur. For example, a

1/Corrections, pp. 10-14, 290, 364, 601.

Not many jails have facilities for outdoor exercise; prisons may have facilities but may lack equipment. At one State prison we visited, new tennis courts had been built, but no rackets or balls were available. Other institutions have no gymnasium, thereby limiting sports activities and indoor exercise in the winter months.

Physical location

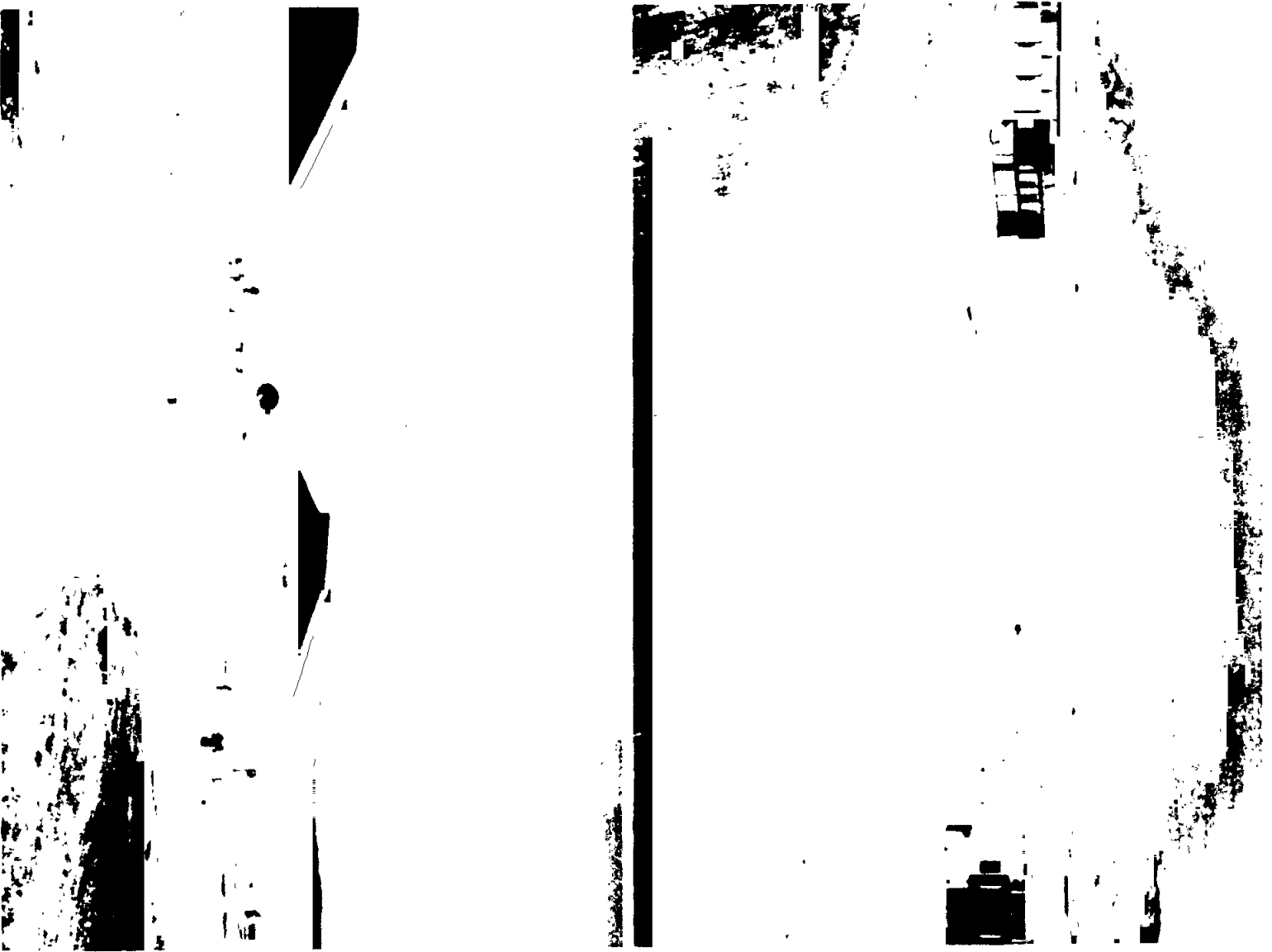
The location of the institution is often a serious problem for female offenders. In some instances, because local jails cannot physically cope with female inmates, they are sent to other, larger jails removed from the women's home area. Federal prisons nearly always separate people by great distances from their families and homes; the Federal Bureau of Prisons operates several institutions where women may serve time and two of these--at Alderson, West Virginia, and Pleasanton, California--are solely for women. Nearly every State has a women's prison, most of which are in insolated rural areas not easily accessible by public transportation. (See photographs on p. 37.)

The remoteness reinforces the female offender's feelings of isolation and powerlessness in several ways:

- Although most incarcerated women are from urban areas, staffs are recruited largely from the rural area surrounding the prison. The resultant differences in staff and inmate backgrounds often make relating to each other difficult.
- The small communities surrounding rural women's institutions offer little opportunity for study or work release programs. Commuting distances to larger cities make such programs unfeasible.
- Volunteer programs in remote women's institutions are few, because volunteers are reluctant to travel so far.
- Distance and limited transportation services make family visits difficult. Separation from her children and her inability to assure herself that they are adequately cared for cause an incarcerated woman great anxiety and degrade her self-image.

The women locked up so far away from their homes are concerned about the loss of relationships with their families, particularly with infants and young children. Mothers worry that either their babies will not know them when they return home or that older children will not respect them anymore. Most of the inmates' children are cared for by relatives rather than foster parents, but the women still have a great many legal problems concerning custody, as well as divorce suits.

Since 1971, one State institution has tried to alleviate the separation problem by permitting frequent conjugal



PRISONS HOUSING WOMEN ARE FREQUENTLY LOCATED IN REMOTE PASTORAL SETTINGS THAT OFFER LITTLE OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDY OR WORK-RELEASE PROGRAMS.

"* * * inmate after inmate repeated virtually the same stories of what happened to them, or to the women in the next cell: the oral sex through bars; the constant intrusion of male trustees who slither in and out of the women's cells as unrestricted as the rats and roaches; the threats of 'you do, or else'; the promises of 'Girl, you got thirty days, we'll knock off ten if you take care of my friend here.'"

Nothing that we are aware of shows that most jails and prisons condone such outright physical abuse as Sims and others describe, but the dehumanizing attitude behind such abuse pervades our penal system. More subtle forms of degrading and humiliating treatment are widespread and just as damaging to the inmate's self-image and identity. When the inmates' family visits, she talks to them through a phone in a window; she is not allowed to touch them. Her clothing, except for a set of "court clothes," is taken away and replaced with an ill-fitting jail uniform and thongs--or often no shoes at all. Jail canteens frequently offer her only men's toilet articles.

Nothing we observed indicates widespread physical mistreatment. However, the basic posture toward female offenders still reflects a punishing attitude that many believe has insidious effects on the inmates.

This aspect of prisons is not always readily apparent. Women's prisons have frequently replaced the penitentiary style of building with the "cottage plan"--a series of separate dormitory-like buildings placed in pastoral settings. They look like college campuses, sometimes even dispensing with a fence around the grounds and give the appearance of enforcing only minimal security precautions. Such moderation, however, is illusory.

"One of the most serious and least understood problems of women's institutions today," writes Helen Gibson in the Wisconsin Law Review,

"is the psychological harm done to the inmates. Arguably all prisons are psychologically harmful, but the typical women's institution inflicts graver damage, in spite of its more attractive appearance. In fact, the outward attractiveness of the prison for women not only confuses the inmates, but works to deaden any impetus for changes."

Medical care

Adequate health care in jails is rare, 1/ especially for women's specialized needs. A Pennsylvania study of jailed female offenders found a doctor's presence 12 hours a week for 100 women to be typical. Untrained matrons or paramedics determine who will see the doctor during his visits. Specialists from the community are often cited as "on call," but the decision to call those specialists, as with seeing the doctor, rests with an untrained person. Gynecological and obstetrical care are often unavailable.

Medical care in prisons is similarly poor, with inadequate staffing and facilities. 2/ Most prisons have small infirmaries of several beds, but very few have facilities for emergency care. Inmates are screened to decide who sees the doctor, and in many cases an inmate must sign up for sick call the day before if she is to get care. Little preventive medicine is practiced; with a shortage of staff, yearly physicals for the inmate population are impossible. Many women's prisons have no gynecologists.

Efforts to provide medical care in prisons are hampered by their isolated locations; the remoteness of prisons makes it difficult to recruit and retain well-qualified medical staff. A recent GAO report 3/ found nearly every prison system had problems attracting and keeping qualified health staff because of unsatisfactory salaries, facilities, job status, personal safety, and protection from potential malpractice suits.

The inmates we interviewed voiced many concerns about medical care in prison. Their major concerns were:

- Inaccessibility of the staff physician.
- Quality of the medical care received.
- Qualifications of medical staff.
- Excessive use of psychotropic drugs.
- Lack of emergency care.

1/A Federal Strategy Is Needed to Help Improve Medical and Dental Care in Prisons and Jails, GGD-78-96 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1978), p.6.

2/GGD-78-96, p. i.

3/GGD-78-96, pp. i,ii.

State prisons offer no medical or psychological help for substance abusers. Many addicted women go "cold turkey" when they are confined. If inmates were participating in a methadone program, some jails will allow them to continue; others will not. In State prisons, substance abuse programs may exist in name only, taking the form of general counseling aimed at promoting institutional adjustment.

At Federal prisons, greater emphasis is placed on drug and alcohol programs. Inmates involved in the drug programs live in a separate dormitory and work closely with a special treatment team.

Recreation

Most incarcerated women say that additional recreational activities are badly needed at penal institutions. Not only is recreation important to relieve the monotony of confinement, but it is also recognized as a potential resource for learning new behavior patterns. Basic to an adequate recreation program are adequate staff, equipment, and facilities, but few institutions have all these elements.

In many jails, organized recreation is nonexistent; others have such programs only when volunteers are available to run them. Those jails that do have recreation programs (often federally funded) frequently devote recreational staff time and resources to their male population and exclude women because of their small numbers or the reluctance to permit coed participation. The women are left listening to a radio or playing board games in cells or dayrooms. (See photographs on p. 44.)

Prison inmates generally have a basic recreational program. As noted earlier, however, facilities and equipment are often lacking, and the staff can be too overextended to administer an adequate recreational program. Correctional counselors and matrons usually have other duties in addition to organizing recreational activities.

PROGRAMS

Incarceration is not just detention and punishment; it is also an opportunity to habilitate, to "normalize" the inmate, to give her the skills, abilities, and resources to successfully conduct her life within society's confines. Incarceration presents the chance to help the female offender change, to break her recycling through the criminal justice system--and thereby, perhaps, to positively affect her children and their chances of a criminal life. The "rehabilitated" ex-offender represents an immeasurable savings in human life, as well as definite fiscal savings to law enforcement and penal systems.

In order for the female offender to reform during her confinement, she must have access to programs designed to meet her educational, vocational, and other needs. The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals considers it an offender's right, not a privilege, to receive rehabilitation programs during incarceration. However, many jails offer no such programs, and with few exceptions prisons do not provide programs and services responsive to inmate needs.

Jails

In many local jails women are idle 75 to 100 percent of the time. They pass their days in front of a television (if available), playing cards, or staring through barred windows. Those few jails that do offer vocational, educational, or work release programs frequently deny female offenders access to them, even when Federal funds support these programs. Various reasons are given for restricting access:

- Coed training and education programs are security risks. No separate programs are provided the women because of their small numbers.
- Women must be sentenced in order to participate. This precludes participation by the larger number of pretrial and presentence detainees.
- There is no way to house separately those women who would participate in work release programs. (Such segregation from other inmates is believed necessary to control contraband.)

One metropolitan jail we visited does provide some educational courses to both male and female inmates--basic

They are rarely allowed to teach, tutor, or otherwise use their skills at the institutions, and work or study release opportunities are limited by institutional locations. They either remain idle or enroll in available courses for something to do, taking slots which might be filled by those with less education or skill.

Vocational training

Since the majority of female offenders lack job skills but must support themselves and their children, vocational training has long been highlighted in correctional institutions. Some type of job skill and work experience could help ex-offenders gain financial independence and perhaps avoid further crime; however, with few exceptions women's prisons are not offering training for the kinds of jobs the inmates need.

A recent GAO report 1/ on male correctional institutions concluded that existing academic and vocational programs do not prepare the men for viable employment. Programs in female prisons are fewer and aimed at lowerpaying jobs. The average number of programs for males is 10; for females it is 3.

Most women's prisons require an inmate to spend at least some part of her day performing institutional maintenance. In many cases this is the only "vocational training" a woman receives. Such unskilled jobs in support of the institution provide no job skills for securing gainful employment.

"I thought I could get rehabilitated here, but all I'm doing is mopping floors in the administration building, cleaning their toilets and scrubbing the steps seven days a week. Do you think I can get rehabilitated here? I'm trying * * * I sing in the choir and I'm taking an English class. My back hurts a lot from scrubbing the floor." 2/

Some women's institutions try to provide viable job training, but usually this training is confined to stereotyped

1/Correctional Institution Can Do More to Improve The Employability of Offenders, GGD-79-13, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1979), p. i.

2/An interview with a 19-year old drug addict by Kathryn Burkhart, as quoted in Helen Gibson's, "Women's Prisons: Laboratories for Penal Reform," in The Female Offender, ed. Laura Crites (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1976), p. 115.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Some correctional officials we talked to recognized the plight of women in jails and prisons. Improving of facilities, staff, programs, and services is needed; but, given such public attitudes as "we're not running a Holiday Inn," elected sheriffs and State legislators are not likely to seek additional funding. Various State rules and regulations already address these problems, but they are not always enforced.

The Bureau of Prisons has set up a task force to evaluate many of the issues concerning Federal inmates discussed in this chapter. Among these are long-range planning of women's facilities; local confinement of District of Columbia code violators, inmate medical needs, inmate management, incarcerated mothers and their children, skill training, staff selection and training, cost-effectiveness of co-corrections, and community treatment and work release centers. The task force has made recommendations to the Bureau of Prisons's executive staff on these issues. To date, action has been taken on three issues as follow:

- Modified the proposed plan for women's facilities.
- Rejected a proposal to establish a contract facility in the District of Columbia for District code violators (they are currently housed in Alderson). However, a 1-year work release plan was approved as an alternative.
- Agreed that community treatment centers are equally accessible to males and females and that current policies should be continued.

Most of the issues discussed in this chapter, however, have already been addressed by knowledgeable groups who have developed standards for each problem area. Besides the detailed, comprehensive standards proposed by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, we looked at several others relevant to the women's correctional system:

- A draft of the proposed Department of Justice Standards.
- A Manual of Standards developed by the American Correctional Association.
- Standards for Health Services in Correctional Institutions, by the American Public Health Association.

Healthful facilities

The National Advisory Commission maintains that each person in custody has a right to a healthful place in which to live. Every facility should provide each inmate with:

- Her own room or cell of adequate size.
- Climate control to maintain temperature within a comfortable range.
- Natural and artificial light.
- Clean and decent installations for maintaining personal hygiene.
- Recreational opportunities and equipment; when weather permits, exercise in the open air.

Both the American Public Health Association and the Department of Justice standards contain a number of provisions concerning the healthfulness and safety of correctional facilities:

- The facility should maintain temperature at a level suitable to the prisoners' physical activity to minimize the chance of respiratory and other disease.
- The facility should have a written evacuation plan for a fire or major emergency "* * *" and a written procedure which specifies the means for prompt release of inmates from locked areas in case of emergency."
- All surfaces and equipment should be easy to clean and kept clean and in good repair. "All inside and outside areas should be kept neat, clean, dry and free from litter * * *. A clean environment is conducive to a cheerful outlook and helps promote emotional health." Each inmate should also receive clean bedding.
- Inmates are entitled to access to recreation and equipment, including outdoor exercise. Facilities must ensure this right, and they must provide "safe, adequately sanitary and suitable indoor and outdoor recreational space, facilities, and programs * * * adapted to the prevailing weather * * *."

the care of their bodies * * * can be an important aspect of rehabilitation and enhancing self-respect."

The adequacy of medical care has been questioned in several lawsuits, especially in a New York case (Cooper v. Morin), 1/ which raised questions concerning the special medical problems of female offenders. A consent order awarded plaintiffs damages and required the defendants to comply with the American Public Health Association standards, which include the following requirements:

- Medical personnel must be available at least 16 hours a day.
- Consenting prisoners must be given a physical exam within 72 hours of incarceration.
- Unlimited access to outside specialist must be provided, particularly to gynecologists and obstetricians.

Mental health care

The American Public Health Association believes that mental health services should be available at every correctional institution to every inmate. Moreover, the Association recognizes that "the very fact of incarceration may create or intensify the need for mental health services." An institution's minimum direct mental health services should include:

- Crisis intervention.
- Brief and extended evaluation.
- Short-term therapy, both group and individual.
- Long-term therapy, also both group and individual.
- Therapy with family and significant others.
- Medication.
- Inpatient hospitalization for the severely disturbed.
- Counseling.

This last service should be open to all inmates on request.

1/50 M.S.C. 2d 32 (1975), Monroe County Jail.

The Department of Justice standards recommend the following programs in jails and prisons:

- "[A] certified, comprehensive and continuous education program available to all inmates that extends through the high school level."
- Vocational training programs for women inmates that go beyond traditional areas of employment for women.
- "To the extent possible, inmate work assignments [providing] experience relevant to the current job market." These should not be limited to traditional women's work.
- Prerelease training. All sentenced inmates should be given the chance to participate in a prerelease program before they leave the facility.

available differ widely in form and administration, but they are designed to provide the female ex-offender with some sort of structured reentry into the community.

PRERELEASE PROGRAMS

The Federal Bureau of Prisons and various State penal officials have recognized the importance of prerelease programs in easing an inmate's return to society. They believe that such programs should begin as soon as an offender enters a correctional institution and should address several issues:

- Family relationships.
- The offender's responsibility while on parole.
- Community organizations that help offenders on release.
- Money management.
- Information concerning employment assistance.

Many women's institutions do not offer such programs nor do many male institutions, as a recent GAO study discovered. 1/ In the course of this study, we found prerelease preparation to be practically nonexistent at two institutions we visited. Neither offered any formal prerelease program. Correctional counselors work with women nearing release only when they request such assistance; local parole officers told us that many parolees at one State institution are released without Social Security cards and identification documents. At another, social workers try to work with its prereleases, but they recognize the need for a more organized program that teaches coping skills and helps the women to seek employment.

On the other hand, prerelease programs for female offenders did exist at other institutions we visited. One of these institutions has a program for the short-term inmate; when she has 8 months left to serve on her sentence, she is moved into a prerelease cottage. By this time she should have completed her education and employment training and be ready to go out on job interviews. The staff is supposed to help them in this process and in obtaining a driver's license and Social Security card. At 6 months before release, a parole plan is put together and forwarded to a parole agent; it includes information on where the inmate will live, who she will live with, and whether she will have a job waiting for

1/GGD-79-13, p. i

- Child care.
- Emergency funds for housing and food.
- Temporary housing.
- Residential treatment for alcoholics.
- Mental health services.
- Employment and vocational training.

RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY-BASED CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Correctional facilities located in communities can provide a step halfway out of the institution; in such a facility, a woman remains in the custody of a correctional agency, lives in a supervised group setting, and works or attends classes in the community. (See photographs on p. 63.) The amount of supervision provided varies. In some cases supervision is so great that the facility is merely an extension of the prison. In other programs, however, participants have more freedom and large blocks of time for which they are responsible, thus giving them the chance to take some control of their lives.

Work release programs

The State of Virginia operates a work release house for women in Richmond. Inmates within 18 months of their release can participate in the program, working at jobs in the community during the day and returning at night to the supervision of house personnel. They can travel to and from their jobs by themselves but must arrive within a reasonable time. Those who earn regular wages pay them into a special account at the Center, out of which they pay \$5.00 a day for room and board and draw funds for personal items. Work release habilitation counselors advise the women in adaptive skills, such as financial responsibilities, bank accounts, credit, income tax preparation, and Social Security cards.

Another example is The Women's Employment Assistance Program in Norfolk, Virginia. This program is a community-based residential program for female prereleasees, designed to help felons reenter society. At present, all program participants are Federal offenders accepted under a contract with the Bureau of Prisons. Although the program will accept State prisoners, there have never been any in the program.

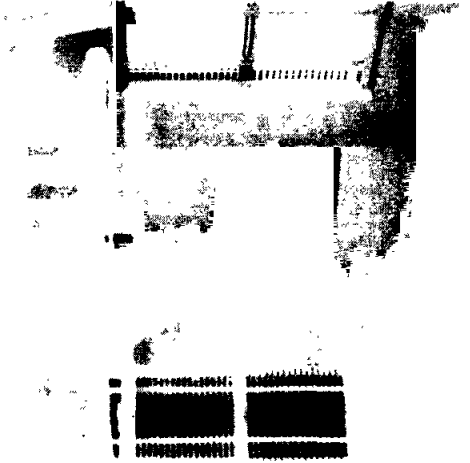
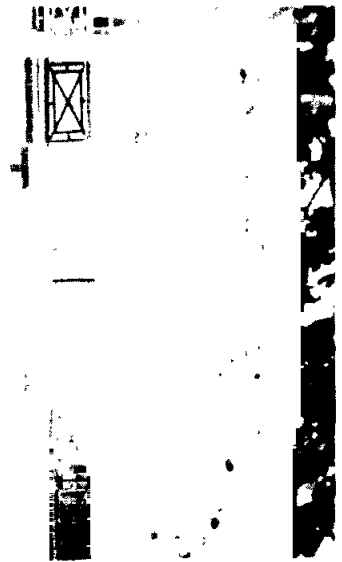
Vocare House in Oakland, California, opened in 1972 as a halfway project on the relationship between drug addicts and their children; as a result, Vocare began to include ex-addicts and their children in its program. Women are referred to Vocare as an alternative to incarceration; referrals are also made for those in prerelease programs or who still need a structured environment after leaving prison.

The executive director, an ex-offender herself, prefers to call Vocare a treatment center. At Vocare, women participate in a series of weekly counseling sessions with the significant people in their lives. One night a month, women and their husbands/ boyfriends meet with staff to explore the changes in their relationships brought about by incarceration. Another session is spent with other family members and/or probation officers, parole officers, etc., to determine what kind of support these people can give the women. A third meeting is held between the women, their children, and the children's custodian. Through these sessions women reestablish and continue relationships with their children.

In addition to the therapy sessions, women at Vocare receive job development training. An extensive series of programmed teaching aids have recently been introduced to acquaint women with various job areas such as health, food services, child care, communications, and business administration. To give practical experience, Vocare operates a delicatessen and a child care center.

Friends Outside, in San Francisco, is a voluntary organization that provides support services to ex-offenders and to the families of incarcerated individuals. Among these services are transportation to prisons to visit incarcerated family members, a community day-care center, a thrift shop, a summer camp, and a halfway house for female offenders.

Residents of the halfway house share responsibility for maintaining their home and cooking meals, and pay a minimal amount for



COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES CAN PROVIDE A STEP HALFWAY OUT OF THE INSTITUTION AND BACK TO THE COMMUNITY.

TRANSITION PROGRAMS

We discussed the need for transition programs with a wide cross-section of experts in the criminal justice field. They identified elements which were desirable for such programs:



IT MUST HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING.

- THE PROGRAM MUST GAIN COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE AND INVOLVEMENT.

- THE FACILITY SHOULD BE LOCATED NEAR TRANSPORTATION, TRAINING, JOBS, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

- THE STAFF MUST HAVE STABILITY AND EXPERIENCE.

- THERE MUST BE MUTUAL TRUST AND RESPECT BETWEEN STAFF AND RESIDENTS.

- IT MUST ENSURE RESIDENT SUCCESS EARLY TO BUILD HER SELF-ESTEEM.

- CRITERIA BY WHICH PROGRAM AND RESIDENT SUCCESS ARE MEASURED SHOULD BE CLEARLY STATED.

- THE PROGRAM MUST BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO MEET THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF A DIVERSE GROUP.

- THE PROGRAM MUST TEACH RESIDENTS TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEMSELVES.

- RESIDENTS MUST HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY MEDICAL CARE.

Current questions about the sufficiency and appropriateness of programs to aid female offenders' readjustment to the community indicate a need for further study. In this connection, we plan to follow this initial effort by addressing specific issues that we feel are particularly important to the rehabilitation of the female who has come in contact

CHAPTER 5

FEMALE OFFENDERS: THE ISSUES AND NEEDS

The preceding chapters demonstrate the plight of female offenders as they cycle through the criminal justice process. Mechanisms for diversion from the criminal justice system and opportunities for constructive change within that system are rare. The causes underlying these women's problems and their likely solutions have been addressed by a wide range of corrections officials and experts, whose opinions are summarized here. There seem to be several underlying causes for this inadequacy and ineffectiveness: lack of interest in female offenders; lack of an organized, coordinated approach to criminal justice programming; and lack of adequate, specific funding for female offender programs and facilities.

LACK OF INTEREST

Criminologists, lawyers, penologists, social scientists, and criminal justice programmers have shown little interest in or concern for the problems of female offenders. Their small numbers and less violent crimes have made it easy to ignore the situation of women caught up in the criminal justice system. Further, women inmates themselves have called little attention to their situation. The serious prison riots of the 1960s and early 1970s that focused public attention on prison reform occurred in men's institutions.

Because of this lack of concern, little knowledge about the female offender and her problems exists. Hence, the understanding and awareness critical to the formulation of programs and policies have not developed.

THE LACK OF AN ORGANIZED, COORDINATED APPROACH

Criminal justice programming has been hampered by the lack of a clear-cut goal for corrections. Little agreement exists regarding the purpose of corrections: is it to punish, to separate an offender from society, to serve as an example, or to provide opportunities for change?

Over a century ago, the corrections profession committed itself to a habilitative rather than a punitive purpose; the Federal Bureau of Prisons and most State correctional codes today express a rehabilitative intent. Yet, as we talked with officials throughout the criminal justice system, we were told

TABLE 1

FEMALE ARREST TRENDS (ADULT), 1967-1976 (note a)

Offense charged	1967		1976		Change in percent of total arrests
	Arrests	Percent of total female arrests	Arrests	Percent of total female arrests	
Total	301,511	100.0	489,329	100.0	-
Major crimes (note b)	52,412	17.4	139,389	28.5	11.1
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	884	0.3	1,129	0.2	-0.1
Forcible rape	-	-	-	-	-
Robbery	1,414	0.5	3,751	0.8	0.3
Aggravated assault	6,872	2.3	11,227	2.3	0
Burglary	3,087	1.0	6,103	1.2	0.2
Larceny-theft	39,057	13.0	115,214	23.5	10.5
Motor vehicle theft	1,098	0.4	1,965	0.4	0
Violent crime (note c)	9,170	3.0	16,107	3.3	0.3
Property crime (note d)	43,242	14.3	123,282	25.2	10.9
Serious crimes (note b)	33,102	11.0	77,790	15.9	4.9
Other assaults	13,834	4.6	21,737	4.4	-0.2
Arson	214	0.1	527	0.1	0
Forgery and counterfeiting	3,904	1.3	8,529	1.7	0.4
Fraud	8,776	2.9	31,000	6.3	3.4
Embezzlement	801	0.3	1,996	0.4	0.1
Stolen property--buying, receiving, possessing	1,029	0.3	4,398	0.9	0.6
Vandalism	1,539	0.5	3,923	0.8	0.3
Weapons--carrying, possessing, etc.	3,005	1.0	5,680	1.2	0.2
Less serious crime (note b)	215,997	71.6	272,150	55.6	-16.0
Prostitution and commercialized vice	15,962	5.3	29,672	6.1	0.8
Other sex offenses	3,013	1.0	2,466	0.5	-0.5
Narcotic drug laws	5,316	1.8	30,719	6.3	4.5
Gambling	4,800	1.6	4,148	0.8	-0.8
Offenses against family and children	3,603	1.2	2,593	0.5	-0.7
Driving under the influence	11,830	3.9	34,742	7.1	3.2
Liquor laws	10,983	3.6	11,487	2.3	-1.3
Drunkenness	80,068	26.6	43,131	8.8	-17.8
Disorderly conduct	38,070	12.6	36,683	7.5	-5.1
Vagrancy	7,097	2.4	2,968	0.6	-1.8
All other offenses (except traffic)	35,255	11.7	73,541	15.0	3.3

a/Compiled from data presented in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 1976 Uniform Crime Reports, p. 176; for a comparison of male and female arrest trends, see table 2 of appendix I.

b/Percentages are based on actual arrest totals and may not add to 100 due to rounding.

c/Includes murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

d/Includes burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

TABLE 2-B

TOTAL ADULT ARRESTS, DISTRIBUTION BY SEX: 1976 (note a)

Offenses charged	Number of arrests			Percent of total arrests		Male to female arrests
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	
Total	489,329	2,801,558	3,290,887	14.9	85.1	5.7
Major crimes	139,389	477,069	616,458	22.6	77.4	3.4
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	1,129	6,218	7,347	15.4	84.6	5.5
Forcible rape	-	10,674	10,674	0	100.0	-
Robbery	3,751	46,598	50,349	7.4	92.6	12.4
Aggravated assault	11,227	72,172	83,399	13.5	86.5	6.4
Burglary	6,103	102,843	108,946	5.6	94.4	16.9
Larceny-theft	115,214	211,056	326,270	35.3	64.7	1.8
Motor vehicle theft	1,965	27,508	29,473	6.7	93.3	14.0
Violent crime (note b)	16,107	135,662	151,769	10.6	89.4	8.4
Property crime (note c)	123,282	341,407	464,689	26.5	73.5	2.8
Serious crimes	77,790	347,667	425,457	18.3	81.7	4.5
Other assaults	21,737	148,708	170,445	12.8	87.2	6.8
Arson	527	3,175	3,702	14.2	85.8	6.0
Forgery and counterfeiting	8,529	18,786	27,315	31.2	68.8	2.2
Fraud	31,000	50,568	81,568	38.0	62.0	1.6
Embezzlement	1,996	3,554	5,550	36.0	64.0	1.8
Stolen property--buying, receiving, possessing	4,398	32,069	36,467	12.1	87.9	7.3
Vandalism	3,923	34,348	38,271	10.3	89.7	8.8
Weapons--carrying, possessing, etc.	5,680	56,459	62,139	9.1	90.9	9.9
Less serious crimes	272,150	1,976,822	2,248,972	12.1	87.9	7.3
Prostitution and commercialized vice	29,672	13,255	42,927	69.1	30.9	0.4
Other sex offenses	2,466	25,032	27,498	9.0	91.0	10.3
Narcotic drug laws	30,719	192,677	223,396	13.8	86.2	6.3
Gambling	4,148	38,186	42,334	9.8	90.2	9.2
Offenses against family and children	2,593	22,589	25,182	10.3	89.7	8.7
Driving under the influence	34,742	377,454	412,196	8.4	91.6	10.9
Liquor laws	11,487	90,452	101,939	11.3	88.7	7.9
Drunkenness	43,131	566,707	609,838	7.1	92.9	13.1
Disorderly conduct	36,683	217,142	253,825	14.5	85.5	5.9
Vagrancy	2,968	16,110	19,078	15.6	84.4	5.4
All other offenses (except traffic)	73,541	417,218	490,759	15.0	85.0	5.7
Major and serious crimes	217,179	824,736	1,041,915	20.8	79.2	3.8
Property and related offenses (note d)	169,205	446,384	615,589	27.5	72.5	2.6
Prostitution and sex offenses	32,138	38,287	70,425	45.6	54.4	1.2
Substance abuse (note e)	120,079	1,227,290	1,347,369	8.9	91.1	10.2

a/Compiled from data presented in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 1976 Uniform Crime Reports, p. 176.

b/Includes murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

c/Includes burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

d/Includes note c and forgery, counterfeiting, fraud, embezzlement, and stolen property.

e/Includes narcotic drug laws, driving under the influence, liquor laws, and drunkenness.

TABLE 4

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF
INCARCERATED WOMEN (note a)

<u>Group</u>	<u>9 years of school</u>	<u>1-3 years of high school</u>	<u>4 years of high school (diploma)</u>	<u>Some college</u>
Total (N = 6440)	14%	45%	23%	18%
White	12	36	30	22
Black	14	49	19	18
Hispanic	24	55	16	5
Amerind	20	29	22	29
National female population	21	17	40	22

a/Glick and Neto, pp. 128 and 129 and 1976 Statistical Abstracts, p. 124.

TABLE 6

MARITAL PATTERN OF INCARCERATED WOMEN
BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP (note a)

<u>Group</u>	<u>Marital pattern (note b)</u>				
	<u>No rela- tionships (single)</u>	<u>Boy- friend(s)</u>	<u>One marriage</u>	<u>One past marriage (note c)</u>	<u>Serial re- lationshps (note d)</u>
Total	22%	21%	9%	16%	33%
White	16	14	10	14	46
Black	27	24	8	18	23
Hispanic	16	23	7	20	35
Amerind	18	23	6	14	40
Other	40	30	13	4	14

a/Glick and Neto, p. 115.

b/Figures may not add to 100 due to rounding.

c/One marriage followed by divorce, widowhood, or separation.

d/Includes two or more marriages or one marriage plus other non-marital living relationships.

TABLE 8
WORK EXPERIENCE, SALARY, AND ASPIRATIONS
OF INCARCERATED WOMEN (note a)

<u>Occupational group</u>	<u>Jobs held most often (N = 5916)</u>	<u>1976 (national) median annual salary of women</u>	<u>Job aspir- ations (N = 6466)</u>
Professional and technical	<u>b/4.2%</u>	\$11,300	<u>b/35.8%</u>
Managers	0.5	9,700	2.8
Skilled	1.6	7,700	3.3
Clerical	24.5	7,600	20.7
Semiskilled	15.1	6,300	6.5
Unskilled	14.4	<u>c/5,600</u>	3.9
Sales	3.8	5,800	0.9
Personal services	28.0	5,700	12.4
Other	8.0	<u>d/6,300</u>	13.5

a/Adapted from Glick and Neto, pp. 136 and 255-257 and the Department of Labor, U.S. Working Women: A Databook, 1977, p. 34.

b/Figures may not add to 100 due to rounding.

c/Based primarily upon figures for farm laborers.

d/Based primarily upon figures for nonfarm laborers.

TABLE 10
OFFENSES OF INCARCERATED
WOMEN (notes a and c)

Current offense (note b)	Racial/ethnic group of crimes					Total
	White	Black	Hispanic	Amerind	Other	
Violent	28%	42%	20%	29%	30%	34%
Murder	13	19	9	13	9	15
Robbery	9	14	9	7	7	11
Assault	3	8	2	6	14	6
Other	2	2	1	3	-	2
Property	37	30	30	37	44	33
Burglary	6	4	13	6	3	6
Forgery/ fraud	22	11	8	24	29	16
Larceny	8	14	9	7	12	11
Drugs	20	20	40	21	18	22
Prostitution	1	3	2	1	7	2

a/Adapted from Glick and Neto, p. 153.

b/These categories represent only the most numerous of the serious crimes women commit. Other offenses are not included in this table.

c/Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Crime in Virginia: January to December, 1977. Virginia Uniform Crime Reporting Program. Richmond, Va.: Department of State Police, 1978.

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TABLE 9
ADULT ARREST TRENDS BY SEX, 1967-1976 (note a)

Offense charged	Females			Males		
	Percent of total female arrests		Change in percent of total female arrests	Percent of total male arrests		Change in percent of total male arrests
	1967	1976		1967	1976	
Total	100.0	100.0	-	100.0	100.0	-
Major crimes (note b)	17.4	28.5	11.1	10.7	17.0	6.3
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	0.3	0.2	-0.1	0.2	0.2	0
Forcible rape	-	-	-	0.2	0.4	0.2
Robbery	0.5	0.8	0.3	1.0	1.7	0.7
Aggravated assault	2.3	2.3	0	1.8	2.6	0.8
Burglary	1.0	1.2	0.2	2.6	3.7	1.1
Larceny-theft	13.0	23.5	10.5	3.8	7.5	3.7
Motor vehicle theft	0.4	0.4	0	1.1	1.0	-0.1
Violent crime (note c)	3.0	3.3	0.3	3.3	4.8	1.5
Property crime (note d)	14.3	25.2	10.9	7.4	12.2	4.8
Serious crimes (note b)	11.0	15.9	4.9	9.3	12.4	3.1
Other assaults	4.6	4.4	-0.2	5.0	5.3	0.3
Arson	0.1	0.1	0	0.1	0.1	0
Forgery, counterfeiting	1.3	1.7	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.1
Fraud	2.9	6.3	3.4	1.1	1.8	0.7
Embezzlement	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	0
Stolen property	0.3	0.9	0.6	0.4	1.1	0.7
Vandalism	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.6
Weapons	1.0	1.2	0.2	1.4	2.0	0.6
Less serious crimes (note b)	71.6	55.6	-16.0	80.0	70.6	-9.4
Prostitution, commercialized vice	5.3	6.1	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.3
Other sex offenses	1.0	0.5	-0.5	1.0	0.9	-0.1
Narcotic drug laws	1.8	6.3	4.5	1.3	6.9	5.6
Gambling	1.6	0.8	-0.8	1.9	1.4	-0.5
Offenses against family, children	1.2	0.5	-0.7	1.4	0.8	-0.6
Driving under the influence	3.9	7.1	3.2	6.7	13.5	6.8
Liquor laws	3.6	2.3	-1.3	3.6	3.2	-0.4
Drunkenness	26.6	8.8	-17.8	41.6	20.2	-21.4
Disorderly conduct	12.6	7.5	-5.1	9.6	7.8	-1.8
Vagrancy	2.4	0.6	-1.8	2.6	0.6	-2.0
All other offenses (except traffic)	11.7	15.0	3.3	10.3	14.9	4.6

a/Compiled from data presented in the FBI's 1976 Uniform Crime Reports, p. 176.

b/Percentages are based on actual arrest totals (see tables 2-A & 2-B) and may not add to 100 due to rounding.

c/Includes murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

d/Includes burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

TABLE 7
NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH
MOTHER PRIOR TO INCARCERATION (note a)

<u>Group (note c)</u>	<u>Number of children (note b)</u>				
	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3-4</u>	<u>5+</u>
Total (N = 4573)	26%	32%	20%	17%	6%
White	34	39	15	11	2
Black	18	31	22	21	8
Hispanic	35	17	27	16	6
Amerind	35	13	19	27	7
Other	16	53	13	0	18
National average (note d)	39	25	17	19	

a/Adapted from Glick and Neto, p. 118 and 1976 Statistical Abstracts, p. 43.

b/Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

c/Of those incarcerated women who have children.

d/Percentages of female heads of households with own children under 18.

TABLE 5
PRIOR ADULT INCARCERATION OF FAMILY
MEMBERS AND SELVES (note a)

<u>Group</u>	<u>Previous incar-</u> <u>ceration as adult</u>	
	<u>Family</u>	<u>Self</u>
Total (N = 6387)	50%	54%
White	40	68
Black	54	72
Hispanic	59	76
Amerind	62	72

a/Glick and Neto, p. 159.

TABLE 3

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF INCARCERATED WOMEN (note a)

<u>Group</u>	<u>Age in years (note b)</u>						
	<u>18</u>	<u>18-21</u>	<u>22-25</u>	<u>26-29</u>	<u>30-34</u>	<u>35-39</u>	<u>40+</u>
Total	1.2%	18.4%	26.7%	18.2%	15.5%	8.8%	11.1%
White	1.1	17.2	28.6	15.6	12.8	10.7	14.0
Black	1.5	19.3	25.7	19.6	17.1	7.1	9.7
Hispanic	0.5	14.7	25.1	26.5	16.0	9.0	8.1
Amerind	-	20.3	25.6	5.7	17.3	16.7	14.4
Other	-	32.8	27.7	14.3	16.0	4.2	5.0

a/Glick and Neto, p. 110.

b/Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

TABLE 2-A

TOTAL ADULT ARRESTS, DISTRIBUTION BY SEX: 1967 (note a)

Offense charged	Number of arrests			Percentages of total arrests		Male to female arrests
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	
Total	301,511	2,532,672	2,834,183	10.6	89.4	8.4
Major crimes	52,412	271,394	323,806	16.2	83.8	5.2
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	884	4,017	4,901	18.0	82.0	4.5
Forcible rape	-	6,197	6,197	0	100.0	---
Robbery	1,414	26,084	27,498	5.1	94.9	18.4
Aggravated assault	6,872	46,518	53,390	12.9	87.1	6.8
Burglary	3,087	66,008	69,095	4.5	95.5	21.4
Larceny-theft	39,057	95,976	135,033	28.9	71.1	2.5
Motor vehicle theft	1,098	26,594	27,692	4.0	96.0	24.2
Violent crime (note b)	9,170	82,816	91,986	10.0	90.0	9.0
Property crime (note c)	43,242	188,578	231,820	18.7	81.3	4.4
Serious crimes	33,102	236,062	269,164	12.3	87.7	7.1
Other assaults	13,834	126,344	140,178	9.9	90.1	9.1
Arson	214	1,486	1,700	12.6	87.4	6.9
Forgery and counterfeiting	3,904	14,788	18,692	20.9	79.1	3.8
Fraud	8,776	29,000	37,776	23.2	76.8	3.3
Embezzlement	801	2,940	3,741	21.4	78.6	3.7
Stolen property--buying, receiving, possessing	1,029	10,129	11,158	9.2	90.8	9.8
Vandalism	1,539	14,874	16,413	9.4	90.6	9.7
Weapons--carrying, possessing, etc.	3,005	36,501	39,506	7.6	92.4	12.1
Less serious crimes	215,997	2,025,216	2,241,213	9.6	90.4	9.4
Prostitution and commercialized vice	15,962	4,252	20,214	79.0	21.0	0.3
Other sex offenses	3,013	25,221	28,234	10.7	89.3	8.3
Narcotic drug laws	5,316	31,673	36,989	14.4	85.6	6.0
Gambling	4,800	48,001	52,801	9.1	90.0	10.0
Offenses against family and children	3,603	34,939	38,542	9.3	90.7	9.7
Driving under the influence	11,830	168,525	180,355	6.6	93.4	14.2
Liquor laws	10,983	91,303	102,286	10.7	89.3	8.3
Drunkenness	80,068	1,052,939	1,133,007	7.1	92.9	13.2
Disorderly conduct	38,070	242,319	280,389	13.6	86.4	6.4
Vagrancy	7,097	64,747	71,844	9.9	90.9	9.1
All other offenses (except traffic)	35,255	261,297	296,552	11.9	88.1	7.4
Major and serious crimes	85,514	507,456	592,970	14.4	85.6	5.9
Property and related offenses (note d)	57,752	245,435	303,187	19.0	81.0	4.2
Prostitution and sex offenses	18,975	29,473	48,448	39.2	60.8	1.6
Substance abuse (note e)	108,197	1,344,440	1,452,637	7.4	92.6	12.4

a/Compiled from data presented in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 1976 Uniform Crime Reports, p. 176.

b/Includes murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

c/Includes burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

d/Includes note c and forgery, counterfeiting, fraud, embezzlement, and stolen property.

e/Included narcotic drug laws, driving under the influence, liquor laws, and drunkenness.

repeatedly that rehabilitation is not considered viable; in its place is concern with custody and punishment. Existing facilities and programs reflect these conflicting purposes.

Given the lack of agreement over what corrections should accomplish, it is not surprising that no accepted set of standards exists delineating what correctional facilities should look like and what services should be provided. States may have guidelines for penal institutions and jails; however, they are vague and frequently unenforceable. Most of the standards cited in chapter 3 are only recommended; no one has responsibility for enforcing them.

THE LACK OF ADEQUATE, SPECIFIC FUNDING

Adequate, specific funding for female offender programming is lacking. We found few community programs specifically for women; all too frequently, programs established to serve men and women are male oriented and male dominated. Other programs which could serve both groups, such as those found in local jails, frequently deny women access.

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Fundamental to any improvement in corrections is agreement on a corrections policy. The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice made the following statement regarding such policy:

"The ultimate goal of corrections under any theory is to make the community safer by reducing the incidence of crime. Rehabilitation of offenders to prevent their return to crime is in general the most promising way to achieve this end."

As the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals stated:

"Corrections must seek ways to become more attuned to its role of reducing criminal behavior. Changing corrections' role from one of merely housing society's rejects to one of sharing responsibility for their reintegration requires a major commitment on the part of correctional personnel and the rest of the criminal justice system."

with the criminal justice system. The work will deal with alternatives that would permit the expansion of education, training programs, and other services. The alternatives should provide greater opportunities for employment in good paying jobs permitting the ex-offender to support herself and her family.

NONRESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

The number of nonresidential supportive programs available to ex-offenders is growing. For example, the San Francisco Sheriff's Department has an inmate reentry program which provides newly released prisoners money for emergency temporary housing and food. However, it has lost most of its funding through departmental budget cuts. Examples of other such programs follow.

Project AID-SIR (Aiding Inmate Development through Social Involvement and Research) is a prison after-care program based in Richmond, Virginia; it is Federally and State funded through the Virginia Department of Corrections and the Virginia Department of Welfare. The majority of its staff are ex-offenders. Services include prerelease counseling, family counseling, behavioral analysis, housing, career development and employment placement, parole planning, and limited job training. Since its beginning in 1972, this program has served 2,700 people, about 15 percent of whom were women.

STEP-UP (Skill Training Employment Placement-Upward Progress) was originally funded under Comprehensive Employment and Training Act Title I funds and operated throughout the State of Virginia to help female ex-offenders obtain employment in non-traditional jobs. When that funding ran out, some Virginia localities picked up the program under Comprehensive Employment and Training Act Title III. The local funding sources have insisted that the program serve males as well. This program offers job counseling and referrals, makes training placements, and gives supportive services as needed. During the 2 years the program operated statewide, 900 to 1,000 women were served. From March to July 1978, the Norfolk area counselor saw 200 women and made 35 to 40 employment placements and 15 training placements.

room and board. There are no structured activities or treatment programs at this facility, but staff from Friends Outside are available for counseling if requested. Ex-offenders for the most part are responsible for finding their own jobs or vocational training.

Reality House West, also in San Francisco, operates a halfway house for short-term female ex-offenders (90 to 120 days). Housing is the only direct service provided; the ex-offenders are put in touch with the various community social service agencies. The program deals only with its residents' short-term needs-- jobs, medical care, and reestablishment of family ties. Most of the program's referrals come under contract with the Bureau of Prisons; it also gets some referrals from the county jail. Program personnel visit the San Francisco County Jail and Pleasanton on a regular basis to interview prospective clients.

The participants do not have jobs when they come to the program; a job development counselor in the program assists them in finding employment and counsels them about job-finding techniques. Each woman also has a counselor who works with the participant on personal relationships, responsible work habits, finances, and constructive leisure pursuits.

Halfway houses

Halfway houses are another residential means for structuring the transition of paroled ex-offenders from institutional confinement to society. Some of the halfway houses we visited are described below.

Delancy Street is a nonprofit corporation founded 7 years ago by an ex-convict. There are five Delancy Street facilities: three in San Francisco, one in Sausalito, California, and one in Sante Fe, New Mexico. At the time of our visit there were 204 residents in the 5 facilities.

Delancy Street operates according to a self-help philosophy. Residents are forced to come to terms with their behavior through group therapy sessions. They work on changing their behavior so that their lives do not follow old, destructive patterns.

About 90 percent of the residents are there on court probation; the rest are parolees and voluntary participants. Everyone at Delancy Street attends school or works, either on the outside or in one of the corporation's business enterprises: a moving company, a restaurant, an advertising/marketing firm, a construction company, an automobile service center, a procurement service, and a Federal credit union (which is a separate corporation). Profits are used to support the residents. Those who work outside the corporation donate their salaries to the Delancy Street organization.

The corporation's housing facility in Sausalito is the only one where children are allowed. There are five families living there, serving as models to the other residents.

her. However, the program is not working as it should because of staff shortages; at present only one counselor is available for the 120 residents of the prerelease cottage. As a result, many women are released with nothing more done than their institutional paperwork.

At another institution, inmates who are nearing their release dates are advised on how to obtain a job and go through mock job interviews. Each interview is videotaped, played back, and assessed. If the inmate is scheduled to enter a halfway house or continue her education when released, she is put in contact with the appropriate facility. Local merchants provide the inmates some consumer education.

PAROLE

The parole officer monitors the ex-offender's conduct following her early prison release via periodic face-to-face contacts and inquiries among her family members, friends, and employer. 1/ The officer is also responsible for ensuring that any parole conditions, such as obtaining psychiatric counseling or enrolling in a drug or alcohol rehabilitation program are carried out. But perhaps his most important service is putting his parolee in touch with the community service agencies that best meet an ex-offender's needs.

The parole officers we talked to were well informed about the available community services, so they should be able to help an offender reenter society. However, many parole officers are hindered in their efforts to supervise ex-offenders by large caseloads, collateral duties, and a lack of community services. 2/

Federal probation/parole caseloads in one area we visited were about 35 cases for each of the officers. The parole officers considered this a manageable level. However, a lack of community resources, particularly for employment, and psychiatric care, limits their ability to help their clients. Several State probation and parole officers in the same area also remarked on the lack of community resources for women parolees, including:

1/ Probation and Parole Activities Need To Be Better Managed, GGD-77-55 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1977), pp. 9-10.

2/ Previous GAO reports (GGD-77-55 and GGD-76-87) have cited these problems as obstacles to parole officer effectiveness.

CHAPTER 4

RELEASE

When a man is released from prison, he usually has a home and family to return to; 1/ when a woman is released, she usually has to reestablish a home and family--yet this can be difficult for her meager personal and financial resources. She will have great difficulty in adjusting again to life on the street--even more in trying to make a radically different life for herself.

The woman may have many problems when she leaves the prison. Some she had before incarceration, others have been caused by her incarceration. Some situations she may be faced with include:

- Regaining custody of her children and reestablishing mother-child relationships severed and damaged by her long absence.
- Establishing a new life style or returning to an environment that has already pushed her into crime.
- Finding an apartment suitable for children but within her limited means, if she has any.
- Finding a job that will pay her sufficient income even though she probably does not have marketable skills and does not know how to obtain a steady job.

This is the plight of the typical female ex-offender--she lacks a home, money, employment, skills, practical knowledge, and hope. Many women on return from confinement suffer a severe lack of self-esteem; some feel that being in prison has marked them as worthless. The ex-offender, if she is to face and surmount her difficulties, needs understanding, acceptance, and support.

This support can be provided by transition programs. Studies have shown that such programs are vital in helping the offender to gain self-confidence and successfully reenter and function within her community, yet few transition programs exist for women. Those that are

1/Laura Crites, "Women in the Criminal Courts," in Women in the Courts, eds. Winifred L. Hepperle and Laura Crites Williamsburg, Va.: National Center for State Courts, 1978, p. 171.

Substance abuse treatment

The standards also require medically supervised detoxification for addicted inmates. The Department of Justice standards require detoxification from alcohol or drugs to be performed at the facility under medical supervision when not provided in a community health facility. It also suggests a written policy and procedure for setting up substance abuse programs for user inmates. The National Advisory Commission recommends that medical treatment be administered to drug users as soon as they enter the facility.

Recreation

The Department of Justice standards recommend written plans setting up a comprehensive recreational program. This program should include leisure-time activities comparable with those available in the community. The program should provide at least an hour of physical exercise every day in an area away from the cell and dedicated to recreation. Frequent opportunities to exercise outdoors should be given. Cultural activities should also be offered.

Jail and prison programs

Department of Justice standards urge equal access for all inmates. The policies and procedures of each institution should ensure

"* * * the right of inmates not to be subjected to discriminatory treatment based on race, religion, national origin, sex * * *. This should include an essential equality of opportunity in being considered for various program options, work assignments, and decisions concerning classification status.

"Where male and female inmates are housed in the same facility they [should] have equal access to all available services and programs and are not denied opportunities solely on the basis of their smaller number in the population."

State laws also regulate these opportunities. California guidelines list the programs in which female inmates should be allowed to participate, including inmate employment programs, academic and vocational programs, and work and educational furloughs. Virginia rules encourage jails housing 65 or more people to furnish vocational, educational, counseling (alcoholic and narcotic), and prerelease and work release programs.

Facilities for visits

The Department of Justice standards state:

"The facility [should devote] sufficient space, time and personnel to maximize visiting opportunities for inmates. Visiting facilities should allow for physical contact between inmates and the visitors of their choice except in those specific cases where such a procedure would jeopardize the safety or security of the facility."

State of Virginia rules for local jails uphold an inmate's right to confidential visits with the following persons:

- (1) Attorney, probation officer, and authorized social worker.
- (2) Any minister, priest, rabbi, doctor, psychiatrist, or practicing psychologist.

Medical care

The various corrections standards are emphatic in their requirements for medical and dental care.

National Advisory Commission: "Each correctional agency should take immediate steps to fulfill the right of offenders to medical care. This should include services guaranteeing physical, mental, and social well-being as well as treatment for specific diseases or infirmities. Such medical care should be comparable in quality and availability to that obtainable by the general public."

Department of Justice: "Each facility [should ensure] the right of inmates to medical and dental services and treatment needed to maintain basic health * * *. In facilities where women are housed, there [should be] medical services to meet the special health needs of women, including the availability of an obstetrician, gynecologist and family planning services."

American Public Health Association: "A substantial number of health needs of women require the service and sensitivity of persons clinically trained in gynecology and obstetrics. Family planning services and health education are also of particular importance to women. Teaching women about

Though none of these standards are yet mandatory, they represent the combined thinking of many of the country's legal, correctional, and other relevant experts. Their proposals provide, if not a blueprint, at least a starting point for rehabilitating our jails and prisons.

Separation of inmates

Many States' rules require male and female inmates to be separated. The National Advisory Commission recommends that every jurisdiction operating local correctional institutions adopt a classification system on which to base residential assignments and program planning. Different categories of inmates should be observed, and the mentally ill should not be kept in a detention facility. Further,

"Serious and multiple offenders should be kept separate from those whose charge or conviction is for a first or minor offense. * * * The State government should insist on the separation of pretrial and post-trial inmates, except where it can be demonstrated conclusively that separation is not possible and every alternative is being used to reduce pretrial detention."

Similar Justice standards require that the facility provide separate management for males and females, convicted and unconvicted inmates, and other classes of detainees where appropriate.

Matrons in jails

The Maine Civil Liberties Union recommends that a facility provide full-time matron coverage and frequent cell inspections when a female is incarcerated:

"Full-time matron coverage not only insures the physical safety of the women inmates, but reduces the adverse effects of isolation. In addition, matron coverage may serve to protect the female from possible sexual abuse by male correctional personnel and may also protect male personnel from accusations of sexual abuse."

The California penal code requires counties with a population of more than 275,000 to appoint a female deputy sheriff in charge of women prisoners. When a jail has not appointed such a deputy but has female prisoners, it designates a woman to give the inmates immediate care.

occupations: secretary, cosmetologist, nurse's aide, waitress, and cashier. As noted earlier, these occupations pay very poorly. Many inmates enroll in such "training" only out of boredom or because it counts toward parole; they have little expectation that it will prove useful.

Other women's prisons have institutional industries such as garment factories, in which the inmates may work. This employment is called on-the-job training, but the women seldom can get jobs in these fields when released. What is more, the training is technologically useless; prison machinery is usually outdated and no longer used commercially, so the women cannot transfer their acquired skills to a real job on the outside.

Recognizing the limitations of the usual prison vocational programs, a few institutions have begun to offer some innovative training. For example, one Federal women's prison is beginning apprenticeship programs, such as auto mechanics, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and painters. A State women's prison has set up an upholstery shop. We noticed, however, that another State prison could provide training in a nontraditional area. The facility already operates a motor pool to care for its vehicles. Inmates having such repair skills can work there, but no training is given through the pool.

At the prisons we visited, many women who could benefit from the existing vocational programs do not participate in them for several reasons:

- They are not interested in the occupations offered.
- Those with a long time to serve feel they will forget what they learn long before their release, so they plan to wait until their sentences are nearly up.
- They do not meet eligibility criteria (e.g., a high school diploma) of some programs.
- The slots are limited.

Work release and work/study programs

Work release and work study programs help inmates acquire educational and vocational skills while learning how to adapt to society as independent women. They feature work in the community while still confined or supervised, but the isolated location of most prisons makes such programs difficult to establish. These programs are discussed in chapter 4.

English (grades 6-12), civics, math, psychology, journalism-- and they can take typing and reprographics (facsimile reproduction). A Prisoners' Legal Services Project provides them legal assistance. The jail also offers a work furlough program.

On occasion, women have forced their inclusion in jail programs. In 1974, female inmates of the San Mateo county jail in California sued the county Board of Supervisors for violating their rights to equal protection. 1/ Male inmates had been authorized work and educational furloughs and provided such facilities as honor farms and training centers, while the women had been denied these programs. The female offenders dropped their case when the Board provided them a halfway house.

Prisons

Prisons constitute relatively stable communities and present an opportunity for more indepth programs than most jails offer. Ideally a prisoner could use her time in confinement to acquire significant skills that could provide her independence and support when she leaves prison. The time served in prison gives the inmate an opportunity to obtain education, vocational training, and to gain job experience through work release programs.

Education

Most prisons provide basic courses leading to a high school diploma. Some prison programs include several college-level courses, frequently in conjunction with nearby community colleges, but few offer entire curricula culminating in an associate's or bachelor's degree. Also, educational programming usually leaves out inmates at the upper and lower end of the academic scale. Those who are mentally retarded are rarely identified and aided through any special program, 2/ while those women already possessing college degrees have no educational outlets in prison.

Women with college degrees are a small proportion of the incarcerated population (estimated at 2 percent), yet they present programing difficulties to correctional officials.

1/Taylor v. Whitmore, No. C-73-0415 SC (N.D. Cal. Sept. 1974).

2/"Prisons are not Providing Adequate Mental Health Care: More Effective Federal Involvement is Needed" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office) [draft].



IN LOCAL JAILS RECREATION IS OFTEN LIMITED TO PLAYING CARDS AND BOARD GAMES OR WATCHING TELEVISION.

The general reaction of prisons' staffs to these complaints was that many inmates are chronic malingerers who use minor (though real) and imagined ailments to get out of work.

Mental health care

Some of the women we talked to in local jails and prisons expressed a need for psychiatric care. Many of these women are emotionally disturbed if not psychotic, and they have histories of psychiatric hospitalization. However, local jails rarely provide for this kind of service through the community.

A link may exist with the local mental health clinic, but female inmates presently do not receive appropriate psychiatric care, much less the benefits to be derived from a jail mental health program.

Many women in jails have problems which lend themselves to counseling. Some are losing custody of their children, some are being divorced, some do not know how or where to look for a job when their release comes, and others just need some one to talk to. Yet many jails do not have counselors on their staff; whatever counseling occurs is done hit-or-miss by existing staff. Where female inmates do get adequate counseling, it is due mainly to the dedication of the individual staffer, not to any jail policy or service.

Prisons are little better. Mental health services in State and Federal prisons, as characterized in a draft GAO study, are limited and their effectiveness often questionable. Many prisons do not routinely evaluate inmates to determine what mental health services they need, and those that do perform such evaluations do not have enough staff to provide the needed services.

One State prison's psychological staff consisted of a consulting psychiatrist (once a month) and one full- and one part-time psychologist for over 300 women. At a Federal prison we visited, the staff consisted of one psychiatrist and five full-time psychologists; but much of the psychologists' time was devoted to such activities as evaluations for courts and parole boards, unit meetings, admissions, and training and supervising correctional counselors. They have little time for one-on-one treatment of inmates.

Substance abuse treatment

Many incarcerated women have drug or alcohol dependencies and have been involved in related crimes, yet many jails and

While women are not subjected to the tiers of cells and iron bars, guns and guard towers, virtually every aspect of the female inmates' lives is controlled. Yet, no matter what the crime, women are subjected to rules originally designed to control only those few requiring maximum security. An inmate's freedom of movement and choice of daily activities are strictly limited; rules imposed by the prison staff guide the smallest details of her life. As a result, the inmate's opportunity--and therefore ability--to make adult choices are restricted. Yet, when she leaves prison she will have to resume responsibility and support herself and her children. Thus the institution is demanding dependence of women whose greatest need is to acquire independence.

Counselors tend to emphasize a woman's adjustment to the institution rather than to society. Little or no effort is made to identify and deal with the problems that led to her involvement with crime. Counselors' duties frequently relate to decisions about security classifications, work assignments, and such offender activities as family matters, visiting lists, and transfer of offender funds. Only coincidentally will counselors work with families or make appropriate contacts with outside agencies for women leaving prison.

Many of the inmates we talked to complained that staff members are insensitive to their needs and ignore their requests for help with personal problems. Some prison staff have told us that they see the prison's primary purpose as incarceration and punishment rather than rehabilitation. One official told us that the prison's success is measured in terms of numbers of escapes.

SERVICES

One penal official told us that being incarcerated is punishment enough; the institution's job, therefore, is to provide for the inmates' basic needs. He is in at least partial agreement with the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, which believes that adequate health care and appropriate rehabilitation programs are basic rights of offenders. Yet few such services are available to women in local jails or prisons.

STAFFING

The amount of funds and planning affects not only the facilities but also the staff of a jail or prison. Inadequate staffing can deny the female offender her safety, basic services, and participation in programs.

Although States now require their correctional facilities to have matrons on duty when housing female offenders, many jails do not provide staff to deal with women inmates. In some instances these jails send their female inmates to neighboring facilities; thus a woman may await trial or serve her sentence many miles from her community and family.

Some smaller jails have no one on duty after 5:00 p.m.; many others hire "paper matrons": female dispatchers or sheriffs' wives who serve meals and perform other minor jobs but do not stand guard duty.

Other jails hire only the minimum number of matrons; strapped for funds and preoccupied with their far more numerous male inmates, jail officials feel they can justify only one matron per shift. Yet the single matron on duty is an ineffective guard. Many jails forbid a matron from entering any cellblock alone, so if a fight or a suicide attempt occurs, she must summon help and wait for it to arrive before she can intervene.

Staff shortages are often cited as the reason for many inmate complaints about jails and some prisons. Some examples are:

- Women cannot talk to their attorneys privately where there are not enough staff to supervise such arrangements.
- Female inmates cannot visit their personal physicians (a privilege often guaranteed by jail rules) because no matron is available as escort.
- Women are denied access to programs available to men because there is not enough staff (male and female) to supervise a mixed group of inmates.

Attitudes

Many jail employees consider female inmates contemptible human beings--"fallen women"--to be degraded and exploited with impunity. Patsy Sims described her interviews with more than 50 women in Southern jails:

visits. Refurbished house trailers on the grounds serve as private apartments where inmates can be with their visiting spouses and children. The institution has found this policy to be very workable and beneficial for inmates and their families. However, not all prisons permit such visits. Some prisons use furloughs in part as substitutes for conjugal visits, but these furloughs can be very restricted and infrequent. Such limited access can adversely affect her relations with her spouse and children.



THESE FACILITIES OFTEN DEPRIVE WOMEN OF THEIR PRIVACY, SELF- RESPECT, AND SAFETY.

Civil Liberties Union study of local in two counties access to the women's the male section; no other way exist to get out, even in an emergency.

Separation of the sexes, when it comes to the women's disadvantage. In small jails, a few females in a year, the woman may be in solitary confinement. In urban areas, access to their cell block and denied use of program areas to avoid fraternizing. In a large county jail we visited, for example, access to recreational facilities was limited because the facilities were located in the men's unit. It was difficult for the men to make the recreation area. We surmised from conversations with inmates that this often happens. A few State prisons and females share this problem and use the same way--by denying women access to

Limited housing for female inmates cannot be separated from each other. Inmates of various ages and offense records, both sentenced, together in the same cell block. Some jails may have a program for classifying inmates and assigning them to various sections of the jail. This may affect only the male inmates. The new inmate may learn all she needs to know or fraud from her more experienced cellmate.

Occasionally the female prisoner is placed in a cellmate; acutely psychotic women are placed with other inmates while awaiting commitment to a hospital.

Penal structures have other flaws besides separate facilities. Though women's facilities are attractive and well maintained, many are unsafe and unsanitary. In one major city cited the women's facility for noncorrupt code; there are no sprinklers, and they must be opened manually and individually. Female inmates are not issued clean pillows when they enter the jail. Instead, they use pillows from previous inmates have left behind. (Slop jars must serve as toilets.

Most jails cannot adequately control ventilation. Few jails are air-conditioned. Windows allow little, if any, cross-ventilation. In some buildings may be cold and drafty.



A COMMUNITY-BASED RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO PROBATION OR INCARCERATION.

Some States do not systematically classify new probationers according to the amount of supervision and case-work service each needs. Such a practice would help apportion probation resources more effectively. A previous GAO report ^{1/} recommended using prediction models to identify offenders suited to minimum parole supervision. Probation officers would thus have more time to spend with probationers needing close supervision and support.

Incarceration

Both misdemeanants and felons may be sentenced to serve time in a correctional institution. Women from large metropolitan areas tend to be incarcerated in local jails. In rural counties, women serving more than a few months are likely to be sent to a larger county or to a State prison far from home. Federal offenders may be contracted out to a local jail or sentenced to a community treatment center, a Federal women's prison, or a cocorrectional facility. Our observations on the situation of women in jails and prisons are discussed in chapter 3.

Alternatives

Many in the field of criminal justice advocate the development of alternatives to incarceration and probation for several reasons. Alternative sentences can offer a variety of programs by using the resources already existing in the community. Also, a person who remains in the community can maintain family relationships. Community programs, being smaller than prisons, can deal with each person's needs and problems individually. Community-based programs are often less costly than maintaining a person in prison, and, by operating in the real world outside the prison gates, they minimize the alienation that so frequently accompanies imprisonment.

Such alternatives appear especially appropriate for women, whose crimes are usually victimless or property offenses and who therefore do not need high-security environments. Women are rarely convicted of violent crimes, so they are a small threat to the community. Indeed, officials at female institutions told us that many of their prisoners would be better served by some sort of community program.

An alternative program to incarceration or probation is the community-based halfway house that serves many kinds of clients. (See the photograph on p. 30.) It assists women

^{1/}GGD 76-87, pp. 52, 53.

Judges are also more reluctant to send women to prison. They often believe that the female offender, though occasionally moved to a "crime of passion," seldom possesses the strong criminal tendencies of the male offender and is able to reform herself. These judges usually feel that only the truly violent or incorrigible women should undergo the entire criminal justice process and serve prison terms.

On the other hand, some officials believe crime is unnatural in women and so advocate harsher treatment for female over male offenders. A judge may sentence women to longer prison terms than a man not only as punishment for her statutory offense, but for transgressing the judge's expectations of womanly behavior.

In setting sentences, many judges depend on presentence reports for detailed information on a defendant's social, economic, and criminal background. These reports are usually prepared by a probation officer, who frequently includes a recommendation on sentencing to the judge. If the judge follows this recommendation or relies heavily on the presentencing report, the female offender's sentence can directly reflect the probation officer's attitude toward female roles.

Criminologists who have addressed female criminality most often have described the female offender as receiving more chivalrous treatment in the criminal justice system than her male counterparts. ^{1/} A few studies appear to support this notion. For example, a 1971 study by Nagel and Weitzman, using American Bar Foundation data, compared the treatment of male and female defendants. The women received favorable treatment with regard to being kept out of jail if convicted. They found unfavorable treatment of females with regard to not receiving a jury trial. Previous research has indicated that juries are less likely to convict a female. Currently, Rita Simon and Navin Sharma are studying the processing of defendants in the District of Columbia. Their conclusions which are still in draft show that:

--Prosecutors are less likely to pursue convictions of women charged with property and economic offenses than of men so charged.

^{1/}Gail Armstrong, "Females under the Law--'Protected' but Unequal," Crime and Delinquency 23 (April 1977), pp. 109, 110; and Etta A. Anderson, "The 'Chivalrous' Treatment of the Female Offender in the Arms of the Criminal Justice System: A Review of the Literature," The Female Offender (1976), p. 350.

Recommended standards and goals

The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals has stated that persons awaiting trial should be presumed innocent, but persons awaiting trial in most jurisdictions are considered to be in the same class as persons already convicted and sentenced. They are housed together in degrading and inhumane facilities and deprived of basic amenities. 1/ The Commission further stated:

"* * * Detention before trial is based on the state's interest in assuring [why] the presence of the accused at trial. Where persons are already convicted of an offense, the state can with varying degrees of legitimacy argue that practices are motivated by concepts of punishment, retribution, deterrence, or rehabilitation. None of these rationales can be applied to justify treatment of a person not yet convicted of an offense." 2/

The Commission has outlined several measures to protect detainees' rights. Specifically, they should not be confined with convicted offenders, nor should they be placed in isolation "except in the most exceptional circumstances." They should be granted:

- Protection against physical abuse and inhumane treatment and living conditions.
- Protection against arbitrary administrative action.
- Substantial continuance of the rights of free speech and expression.
- Full access to courts and legal services.

Moreover, counseling, recreation, and various programs (educational, vocational, addiction) should be available voluntarily to the pretrial detainee. Not only would these services meet or begin to meet pressing needs, but they would

1/National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Corrections (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1973), p. 101. This source hereinafter is referred to as Corrections.

2/Corrections, p. 134.

she is left prey to anxieties about such things as her trial, her children, or her job. Her addiction or emotional problems are left untreated.

For example, one detention center we visited offered only the barest of physical necessities. It consisted of a large "cage" or holding area that doubled as a day room, a series of regular cells, and two isolation cells for solitary confinement. (See photographs on p. 23.)

The women spend most of each day, including meals, in the cage, which can hold 20 to 30 inmates. Furnishings consisted of a few benches and tables with no television, radio, books, magazines, games, or hobbies for the inmates to pass the time. Nor did the jail have any programs for these women. There is nothing for them to do all day.

Each cell where the women sleep holds six to eight inmates. In full view of cellmates and adjoining cells each cell has a single washbasin and toilet stand. Bunks are bare mattresses, without sheets or pillowcases; blankets are issued each night and collected every morning.

The isolation cells for violent detainees and those undergoing drug withdrawal contain only a bunk and a hole in the floor to serve as a toilet with no toilet paper, no sink, or light.

On the average, a woman stays in this detention center for 8 days. However, if she is fighting or awaiting extradition, she may remain 60 to 100 days without diversion or relief. The National Advisory Commission states that persons in custody have a right to healthful surroundings.

Numerous studies of these women have found a lack of money to be the motive for their crimes, and the disparity between the increase in female property crimes and the stability of violent crimes supports this economic motive. Joseph Weis, ^{1/} in particular, believes that female property crimes have risen because the economic pressures on women have increased (as a result of a depressed economy and unemployment). Such pressures are most certainly felt by the female offender, and since she has little chance to earn a livable wage, she returns to property crimes more often than any other offense.

^{1/}As quoted in Rans, p. 47. Mr. Weis is the author of several articles on criminality.

Alcohol offenses

As with drug offenders, few statistics are known about women who violate liquor laws and related statutes, though they constitute a sizable part of arrest totals. Unlike drugs, however, possession and use of alcohol by adults are not criminal--so abuse--although widespread among female offenders--is not reflected in liquor law violations. (In 1976, 11,487 women were arrested.) But the abuse becomes apparent when drunkenness (43,131 arrests) and driving under the influence (34,742) are added to liquor law totals. Together these three crimes account for 18 percent of all arrests and one-third of all lesser offenses.

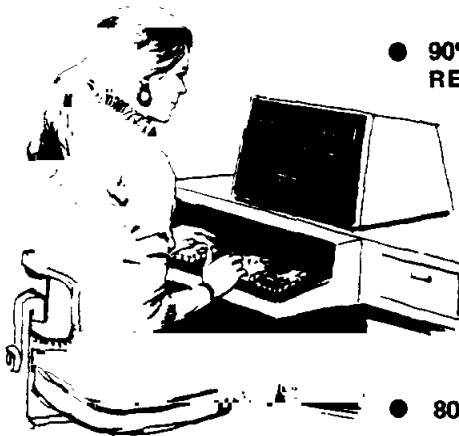
Prostitution

In 1976, about 32,000 women were arrested for prostitution and related sex offenses. This number represents 7 percent of the total arrests, and 12 percent of the less serious arrests, and an even larger percentage of lesser convictions. Prostitution occurs in all races and ethnic groups (see table 10 of app. I), though Blacks seem more vulnerable than others to arrest.

Studies have shown that most women enter prostitution for pressing economic reasons and see it as a viable alternative to scraping by on welfare or poverty-level wages. It also tends to be self-reinforcing. Once the woman has a prostitution conviction on her record, she finds it difficult to get a job. In addition, bail demands are often so high that the prostitute must get money from her pimp to get her freedom. Consequently, recidivism is high.

The woman incarcerated for prostitution often suffers more serious consequences than a record. She generally acquires other criminal skills during her confinement. Though most prostitutes spend little time in prison, they spend a lot in jail. Over 30 percent of the inmates in most women's jails are convicted prostitutes, and they serve longer sentences than other misdemeanants. For these women, long jail terms become schools for crime; 7 out of every 10 women imprisoned for felonies were first arrested for prostitution. ^{1/} Clearly, the prostitute is particularly vulnerable to continually being recycled through the criminal justice system and remaining a habitual female offender.

^{1/}Marilyn G. Haft, "Hustling for Rights," in The Female Offender, ed. Laura Crites (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1976), pp. 213-214.



- 90% OF THE WOMEN EXPECTED TO WORK AFTER RELEASE TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES AND OTHERS

- 85% WANTED MORE JOB TRAINING

- 80% WANTED MORE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In 1972, the Women's Prison Association asked New York women inmates what assistance they would need most after release: "help getting jobs" was the overwhelming answer.

The female offender generally aspires to a higher status, white-collar job in a traditional occupation; however, she is ready to take on the higher paying male-dominated jobs in the blue-collar sector to meet her financial needs. For instance, a majority of women in Glick and Neto's study found such jobs as truck driver, carpenter, and car mechanic acceptable. In another survey, inmates requested training and listed welder, butcher, and barber among the jobs they sought.

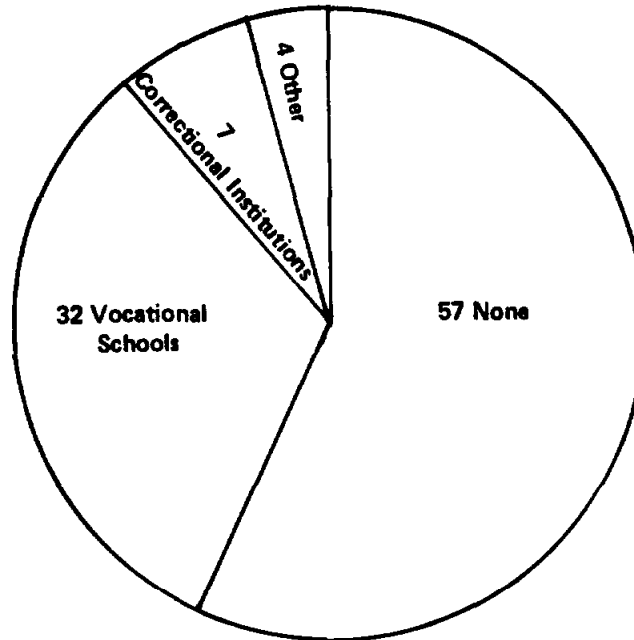
Personal attitudes

The female offender's break with tradition concerning work is symptomatic of economic necessity, not of a more liberated attitude. In an era of aggressive feminism that cuts across socioeconomic borders, women offenders form a relatively conservative group. Despite their willingness to enter some male-dominated occupations, they are in favor of traditional sex roles.

Female offenders as a group believe that men should be the primary supporters of their families; women ideally should be housewives and depend upon their men. Having children is very important to these women, but they are oriented toward work also. This dual role naturally causes enormous inner conflicts, yet their self-esteem is nevertheless surprisingly high. Many female offenders believe they just "drifted" into crime by helping the men they depend on, but most feel they entered crime only because they saw no alternative means for sufficient support.

FIGURE 1-5

INCIDENCE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING
PRIOR TO INCARCERATION (note a)



a/Computed from Glick and Neto, p. 131.

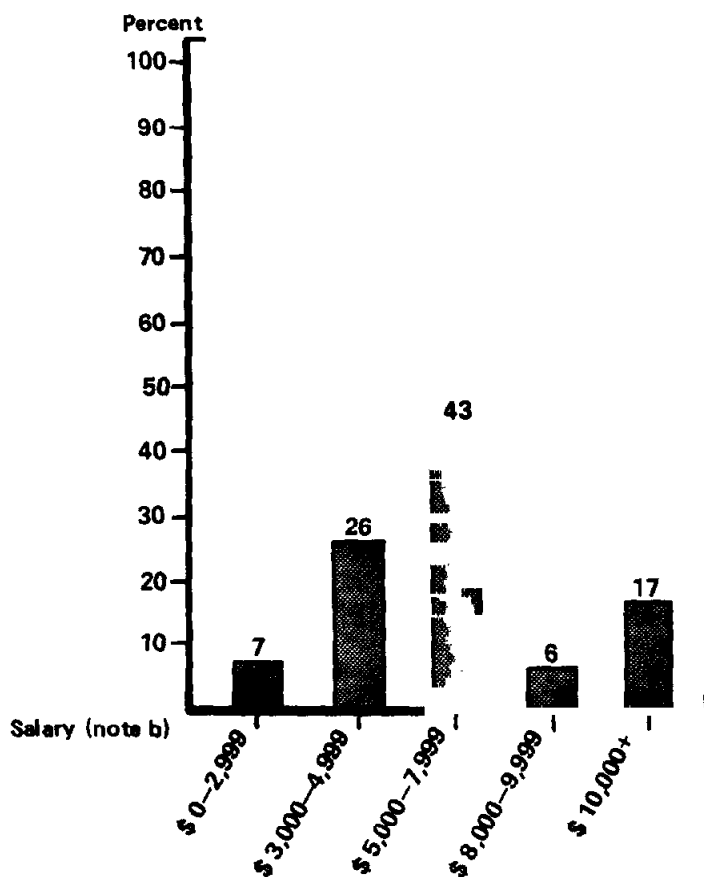
However, the majority of their training concerns the traditional female occupations: clerical, cosmetology, nurse's aid, and paramed. Usually this training has led to jobs, although the women are often underemployed.

In fact, whether they are trained or not, nearly all female inmates seem to have worked at some time; almost half are working when they are arrested. (See fig. 1-6.)

In essence, at least half of the inmates had made below \$3,600 a year. Since that time these women have made little if any economic progress. A Bureau of Prisons survey in 1977 shows that about 33 percent of its female prisoners who reported income had earned less than \$5,000 a year. (See fig 1-4.)

FIGURE 1-4

SALARY OF FEDERAL FEMALE INMATES WORKING
PRIOR TO INCARCERATION, 1976 (note a)



a/Computed from data presented in Bureau of Prisons report entitled Female Offenders in the Federal Prison System, p. 8.

b/Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

of the women in Glick and Neto's study have had other family members who were incarcerated, and 66 percent also had friends who had been imprisoned or jailed. The study shows that one-third of the women offenders themselves have served juvenile detention, usually for status offenses (such as truancy, running away, and incorrigibility), and another 49 percent had been arrested for the first time between 18 and 24 years old.

Heterosexual relationships

As might be expected, the formidable pressures of her background, environment, and personal experiences overwhelm the female offender's attempts to maintain stable personal relationships. A conventional or common-law marriage would provide the woman offender with a measure of social and economic security and emotional stability, but only 1 out of every 10 manages to keep such a relationship intact. Nearly 60 percent of the inmates in Glick and Neto's study had married at least once (see table 6 of app. I), but at the time of their incarceration only 10 percent had actually been living with their husbands. About 9 percent have had only one marriage; most of the rest either engage in a series of short-lived liaisons or remain uninvolved. Whites and Indians most often turn to serial relationships, while Blacks most often stay unattached.

Children

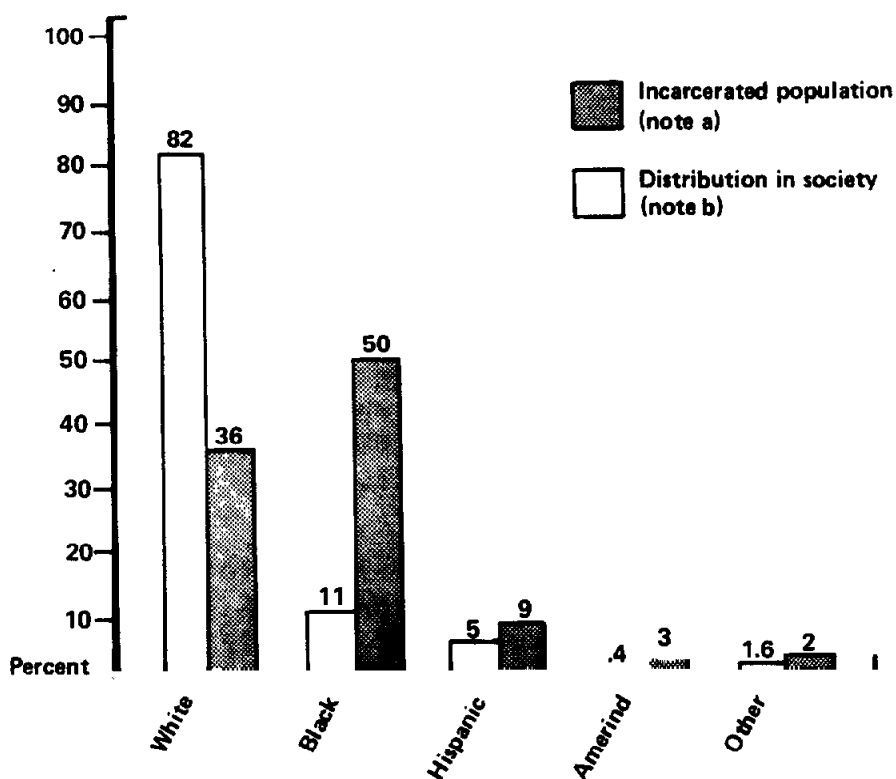
The female offender may not have a man with her all the time, but she does have a family ever-present. About 56 percent of all female offenders are the sole support of their children. A third of these have one minor child at home, 20 percent have two children, and another 23 percent have three or more (see table 7 of app. I)--an average of 2.5 children, which is above the national average of 2.2. Those women with five or more children to support are overrepresented in drug, assault, and murder charges. However, if a woman has a previous record, her chances double that her children are not living with her. In such a case, if the offender must stay in jail or prison, other relatives take care of her children. In only 10 percent of these cases will the father assume care of the motherless family.

Economic status

It would be unrealistic to suppose that the female offender--handicapped by her educational, ethnic, social, personal, and familial status--should be financially secure and independent. With these obstacles to viable employment, the woman offender is poor. Whether she works,

FIGURE 1-2

ETHNIC/RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN
INCARCERATED AND IN SOCIETY



a/Glick and Neto, p.104

b/1976 Statistical Abstracts, pp. 31&34.

Education

Crimes are committed by women from all educational levels; criminals holding postgraduate degrees share courtrooms and cells with illiterate grade-school dropouts. However, as a rule, female offenders are poorly educated; both their functional knowledge and their formal education fall below national averages. (See table 4 of app. I.) Female offenders usually lack a high school diploma: 45 percent have dropped out of high school, and another 14 percent have attended only the elementary grades. Glick and Neto found that, except for those from New York and California, the older offender is most likely to have dropped out before high school. White and Indian women have the most formal education, while Hispanics are the least educated.

to a community based facility or subject to pretrial, probationary, or parole or other stages of the judicial, correctional or probationary process where Manpower training and services may be beneficial."

--The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973

Until recently the female offender has been a shadowy figure, the subject of few comprehensive sociological studies or standardized criminological reporting. The major source of data on women offenders has been and continues to be the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports. These reports provide arrest figures yearly on the number of women arrested for various types of crime. Though the information is fairly uniform and continuous, it is imprecise and can easily mislead the reader searching for a profile of the female offender. The Uniform Crime Reports record arrests--not crimes, convictions, acquittals, or dropped charges--so the female arrestee is often considered the female criminal. Further, Uniform Crime Report data are affected by several factors.

- The number of agencies which report their data to the Federal Bureau of Investigation varies from year to year.
- Certain crimes are underreported, and police discretionary powers affect arrest rates.
- Arrest rates are not adjusted for changes in classification of property crimes (misdemeanor to felony) due to inflation.

At the most, therefore, the Uniform Crime Report approximates the number of arrests of women, with some (unmeasured) qualifications.

In the last decade, researchers have begun intensive studies and surveys of the female offender to provide useful empirical data consistently gathered and reported. Their work has augmented the sketchy figures of the Uniform Crime Report. Dr. Ruth Glick and Virginia Neto, in particular, have completed an extensive survey of women in the prisons and jails of 14 States. Their work has yielded a definite image about the typical female offender.

However, much work remains to be done on the female offender between arrest and confinement. Women not confined after arrest represent the majority of the female offenders,

are, for the most part, younger than the general population--under 30--and less educated. Many have had a troubled or abused childhood, and only a small percentage have intact, functioning marriages or similar stable relationships. Their mental and physical health is much worse than that of the average American woman; involvement with alcohol or drugs is common, and personal hygiene is often rudimentary. Slightly over half of these women have children--usually more than one--dependent solely upon them, and they are poor. The majority have received some form of welfare, frequently Aid to Families with Dependent Children. For many, welfare is their sole legal source of subsistence. Most of these women are caught in a web of dependency which they do not know how to break.

These female offenders are not as unskilled and diffident as experts have supposed--nor are they as negative about themselves or about work as has widely been assumed. Instead, these women generally exhibit self-respect and a willingness to work. 1/ Nearly half the female offenders have had vocational training; in addition, most have worked at some time in their lives, often just before their arrests, and those who work generally commit the same offenses as those who do not. Despite their nontraditional outlook, however, militant feminism seems absent from their world and thought. The majority still accept the traditional importance of motherhood and continuing reliance upon men as the primary provider.

Finally, contrary to popular and media perceptions, arrest statistics show that women are not turning to violent crimes. 2/ In 1967, adult women 3/ had accounted for 10 percent of all arrests for violent offenses; in 1976 4/ this figure had crept up to 10.6 percent, which is hardly a dramatic increase. By comparison, arrests of men for violent offenses were more than 8 times greater in both 1967 and 1976. (See fig. 1-1.)

1/Ruth M. Glick and Virginia V. Neto, National Study of Women's Correctional Programs (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1977), pp. 163, 172, 191.

2/Rans, pp. 45, 46; and Crites, p. 35.

3/Throughout this study, data on women and men will be limited to discussion of adult offenders.

4/Throughout this report we use 1976 Uniform Crime Report data because 1977 statistics were not available when the report was drafted. A subsequent review of 1977 statistics shows only minor changes in female arrest data.

A man is sending her money right now, "but soon he'll get funny with his money and stop sending it." Though she would prefer to be independent when she's released, Ms. Kendrick and her children will have to rely on someone else for support, so she plans to marry a 60-year-old man who owns two cabs. She sees no other choice.

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Linda Lane also plans to marry for security when she gets parole. She met her fiance through a friend while serving part of her 23-year sentence for murder at the State prison. Incarcerated for the last 5 years, Ms. Lane does not feel ready for the outside world. Though she will accept parole, "I do not want to be set free, because I need a lot of supervision."

A white woman in her late 20s, Ms. Lane has led a troubled life. Both parents were alcoholic and abused her frequently; when the family split up, she raised herself. Ms. Lane quit school in the eighth grade and, except for a stint at go-go dancing, has never worked steadily.

Her marriage at age 18 lasted no longer than one of her jobs; her husband's family has kept their son. In the rootless period that followed her divorce, Ms. Lane bore a second son; he has adjusted well to foster parents during her prison term, and she fears that now he will not want to live with her when she is released. At the time of her arrest, Ms. Lane was "just living around" with a cycle gang-- "Mainly," she says, "because I had no other place to go."

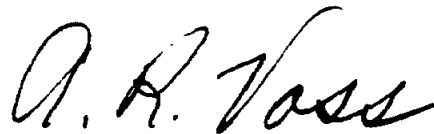
Her days are long and empty in prison, no real drug program exists, though she needs one, and her only recreation is watching a few inmates play basketball or dance with each other. Job training is limited to a few traditionally oriented courses such as cosmetology, which Ms. Lane is taking, though she does not expect to use it. She would rather see more programs in higher paying fields, like nurse's aide and carpentry.

However, coming to the State prison may be the best thing that has happened to her. "I've grown up here," she states. "I know I need help." But prison is safe, secure, and comfortable compared to freedom out there. "When I was on the street, I didn't know where my next meal was coming from. Here I'm taken care of."

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- Specific, accurate, and comprehensive data on the female offender to serve as a basis for making policy decisions.
- Alternatives to incarceration and probation which will permit a more diversified and individualized approach to corrections.
- Adequate funding to provide needed services and programs which will offer opportunities for positive behavioral change.
- Diversified and relevant education and training programs in the institution which will prepare the inmate for transition back to society.
- An effective link from the institution back to society that will provide meaningful employment or training and other services necessary for an individual to make a successful transition.

Although these issues apply to the larger population of male offenders, as shown in prior reports, the female seems to be affected to a greater degree. For this reason and because the smaller population of females offers a better opportunity to try new concepts and approaches, this study is limited to a discussion of the female offender, the crimes committed, the criminal justice process, the habilitative services offered inmates, and issues which warrant the attention of criminal justice officials. We plan to follow this study with additional work which will address specific issues affecting female offenders.



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Director

