

Women & The Drug War

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1.

"At midyear 2007, the incarceration rate of black women held in custody (prison or jail) was 348 per 100,000 U.S. residents compared to 146 Hispanic women and 95 white women. With the exception of females ages 55 to 59, black women were held in custody at higher rates than Hispanic or white women across all age categories."

Source:

Sabol, William J., PhD, and Couture, Heather, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prison Inmates at Midyear 2007 (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, June 2008), NCJ221944, p. 8.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/pim07.pdf>

2.

The most serious offense for 65% of women in federal prisons and 29.1% of women in state prisons is violation of drug laws.

Source:

Bureau of Justice Statistics, Compendium of Federal Justice Statistics, 2003 (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, Oct. 2005), p. 108, Table 7.10; Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, PhD, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2005 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, Nov. 2006), p. 9, Table 13.

3.

The number of women incarcerated in prisons and jails in the USA is approximately 10 times more than the number of women incarcerated in Western European countries, even though Western Europe's combined female population is about the same size as that of the USA.

Source:

Amnesty International, "Not Part of My Sentence: Violations of the Human Rights of Women in Custody" (Washington, DC:

Amnesty International, March 1999), p. 15.

4.

"During 2005 the number of females under the jurisdiction of State or Federal prison authorities increased by 2.6% (table 5). The number of males in prison rose 1.9%. At yearend 2005, 107,518 females and 1,418,406 males were in prison. Since 1995 the annual rate of growth in female prisoners averaged 4.6%, which was higher than the 3.0% increase in male prisoners. By yearend 2005 females accounted for 7.0% of all prisoners, up from 6.1% in 1995 and 5.7% in 1990."

Source:

Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, PhD, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2005 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, Nov. 2006), p. 4.

5.

"Since 1995 the total number of male prisoners has grown 34%; the number of female prisoners, 57%. At yearend 2005, 1 in every 1,538 women and 1 in every 108 men were incarcerated in a State or Federal prison."

Source:

Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, PhD, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2005 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, Nov. 2006), p. 4.

6.

"Relative to their number in the U.S. resident population, males were over 14 times more likely than females to be incarcerated in a State or Federal prison. At yearend 2005 there were 65 sentenced female inmates per 100,000 females in the resident population, compared to 929 sentenced male inmates per 100,000 males."

Source:

Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, PhD, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2005 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, Nov. 2006), p. 4.

7.

"Female incarceration rates, though substantially lower than male incarceration rates at every age, reveal similar racial and ethnic differences. Black females (with an incarceration rate of 156 per 100,000) were more than twice as likely as Hispanic females (76 per 100,000) and over 3 times more likely than white females (45 per 100,000) to have been in prison on December 31, 2005. These differences among white, black, and Hispanic females were consistent across all age groups."

Source:

Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, PhD, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2005 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, Nov. 2006), p. 8.

8.

Women are the fastest growing and least violent segment of prison and jail populations. 85.1% of female jail inmates are behind bars for nonviolent offenses.

Source:

John Irwin, Ph. D., Vincent Schiraldi, and Jason Ziedenberg, America's One Million Nonviolent Prisoners (Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute, March 1999), pgs. 6-7.

9.

From 1986 (the year mandatory sentencing was enacted) to 1996, the number of women sentenced to state prison for drug crimes increased ten fold (from around 2,370 to 23,700) and has been the main element in the overall increase in the imprisonment of women.

Source:

Amnesty International, "Not Part of My Sentence: Violations of the Human Rights of Women in Custody" (Washington, DC: Amnesty International, March 1999), p. 26.

10.

From 1985 to 1996, female drug arrests increased by 95%, while male drug arrests increased by 55.1%.

Source:

Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports 1985 (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1986), p. 181, Table 37; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1997 Uniform Crime Report (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1998), p. 231, Table 42.

11.

In 2008, there were a reported 2,622,694 arrests of women, of which 240,600 (9.17%) were for drug offenses. (Note: Arrests covered 11,713 agencies submitting 12 months of arrest data for 2008 with an estimated population of 230,897,506 Americans.)

Source:

Crime in the United States 2008, Uniform Crime Report (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Sept. 2009), Table 40, from the web at http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/data/table_40.html

12.

Between 1990 and 1996, the number of women convicted of drug felonies increased by 37% (from 43,000 in 1990 to 59,536 in 1996). The number of convictions for simple possession increased 41% over that period, from 18,438 in 1990 to 26,022 in 1996.

Source:

Greenfield, Lawrence A., and Snell, Tracy L., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Women Offenders (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 1999), p. 5, Table 11.

13.

In 1997 a US Justice Department investigation of women's prisons in Arizona concluded that the authorities failed to protect women from sexual misconduct by correctional officers and other staff. The misconduct included rape, sexual relationships,

sexual touching and fondling, and "without good reason, frequent, prolonged, close-up and prurient viewing during dressing, showing and use of toilet facilities." (CIV97-476, US District of Arizona).

Source:

Amnesty International, "Not Part of My Sentence: Violations of the Human Rights of Women in Custody" (Washington, DC: Amnesty International (March 1999), p. 39.

14.

Retaliation for reports of abuse impedes women's access to protection of their human rights. One woman who won a lawsuit against the Federal Bureau of Prisons for sexual abuse reported that she was beaten, raped and sodomized by three men who in the course of the attack told her that they were attacking her in retaliation for providing a statement to investigators.

Source:

Amnesty International, "Not Part of My Sentence: Violations of the Human Rights of Women in Custody" (Washington, DC: Amnesty International, March 1999), p. 59.

15.

Sick and pregnant women are routinely shackled during hospitalization and childbirth if they are inmates of prisons or jails in the USA.

Source:

Amnesty International, "Not Part of My Sentence: Violations of the Human Rights of Women in Custody" (Washington, DC: Amnesty International, March 1999), p. 63.

16.

Approximately 516,200 women on probation (72% of the total), 44,700 women in local jails (70% of the total), 49,200 women in State prisons (65% of the total), and 5,400 women in Federal prisons (59% of the total) have minor children.

Source:

Greenfield, Lawrence A., and Snell, Tracy L., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Women Offenders (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 1999), p. 7, Table 17.

17.

"Of the Nation's 72.3 million minor children in 1999, 2.1% had a parent in State or Federal prison. Black children 7.0% were nearly 9 times more likely to have a parent in prison than white children 0.8%. Hispanic children 2.6% were 3 times as likely as white children to have an inmate parent."

Source:

Mumola, Christopher J., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Incarcerated Parents and Their Children Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, August 2000!, p. 2.

18.

In 1997 an estimated 2.8% of all children under age 18 had at least one parent in a local jail or a State or Federal prison. About 1 in 359 children have an incarcerated mother - for a total of 194,504 children with their mothers behind bars.

Source:

Greenfield, Lawrence A., and Snell, Tracy L., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Women Offenders (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 1999), pp. 7-8, Tables 17 and 18.

19.

Forty-four percent of women under correctional authority, including 57% of the women in State prisons, reported that they were physically or sexually abused at some point in their lives. Sixty-nine percent of women reporting an assault said that it had occurred before age 18.

Source:

Greenfield, Lawrence A., and Snell, Tracy L., Bureau of Justice Statistics, Women Offenders (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, December 1999), p. 8, Table 20.

20.

Many women in prisons and jails in the USA are victims of sexual abuse by staff, including male staff touching inmates' breasts and genitals when conducting searches; male staff watching inmates while they are naked; and rape.

Source:

Amnesty International, "Not Part of My Sentence: Violations of the Human Rights of Women in Custody" Washington, DC: Amnesty International, March 1999!, p. 38.

21.

As of June 1997, two-thirds of the AIDS cases in Hispanic women were directly linked to injecting drug use: 42.8% of Hispanic women contracted AIDS by injecting drugs, and an additional 23.2% contracted the disease through sexual intercourse with male injecting drug users.

Source:

National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, HIV/AIDS: The Impact on Minorities (Washington, DC: National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, 1998), Figure 6, pg. 16.

22.

"At the end of 2000, 86,000 women were living with injection-related AIDS or had already died from it. Many thousands more were infected with HIV. African American and Latina women are the hardest hit; they accounted for over 75 percent of all women with injection-related AIDS in 2001."

Source:

Dawn Day, Ph.D., Health Emergency 2003: The Spread of Drug-Related AIDS and other Deadly Diseases Among African Americans and Latinos (New York, NY: Harm Reduction Coalition, 2002), p. 14.

23.

"In spite of the medical advances in AIDS treatment, AIDS was still a leading cause of death for African American and Latina women age 25 to 54 in 2000. AIDS was among the top five leading causes of death for African American women and was among the top seven leading causes of death for Latinas. Over 60 percent of those AIDS deaths were injection-related."

Source:

Dawn Day, Ph.D., Health Emergency 2003: The Spread of Drug-Related AIDS and other Deadly Diseases Among African Americans and Latinos (New York, NY: Harm Reduction Coalition, 2002), p. 14.

24.

"The burden of HIV/AIDS falls most heavily on infants of color and their mothers. Some 80 percent of the infants born with HIV are African American or Latino."

Source:

Dawn Day, Ph.D., Health Emergency 2003: The Spread of Drug-Related AIDS and other Deadly Diseases Among African Americans and Latinos (New York, NY: Harm Reduction Coalition, 2002), p. 14.

25.

"As women become infected and die of AIDS, they leave children behind. In 1998, there were 67,000 American children under the age of 18, mostly children of color, who had lost their mothers to the AIDS epidemic. More than half of these children were 12 or younger."

Source:

Dawn Day, Ph.D., Health Emergency 2003: The Spread of Drug-Related AIDS and other Deadly Diseases Among African Americans and Latinos (New York, NY: Harm Reduction Coalition, 2002), p. 14.

26.

"Of the 13,573 treatment facilities that responded to the 2000 N-SSATS National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services!, 60 percent reported that they provided at least one of the special programs or services for women. Almost one third of the facilities 33 percent! provided one program or service, 17 percent of the facilities provided two programs or services, 8 percent of the facilities provided three, and 3 percent provided four programs or services data not shown!. Of the facilities providing programs or services for women, 63 percent reported providing programs for women only, 56 percent reported services addressing domestic violence, 34 percent provided programs for pregnant or postpartum women, and 16 percent offered on-site child care services."

Source:

"Facilities Offering Special Programs or Services for Women," The Dasis Report Washington, DC: Dept. of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies, Oct. 11, 2002!, pp. 1-2.

27.

"Facilities offering special programs or services for women were more likely to provide a variety of treatment services than facilities that did not offer such programs or services Figure 1!. These included transitional employment with the largest difference, 42 percent vs. 25 percent!, relapse prevention 83 percent vs. 67 percent!, transportation assistance 42 percent vs. 26 percent!, family counseling 83 percent vs. 69 percent!, and pharmacotherapies 46 percent vs. 36 percent!. Some 97 percent of facilities with women's programs or services offered individual therapy compared with 91 percent of facilities without special women's programs or services. In addition, 91 percent of facilities with women's programs or services offered group therapy compared with 84 percent of the other facilities."

Source:

"Facilities Offering Special Programs or Services for Women," The Dasis Report Washington, DC: Dept. of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies, Oct. 11, 2002!, p. 2.

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