Maine’s Women Offenders: What Do We Know?

Erica Hansen King
June 17, 2008
1. Who are Maine’s women offenders?
   Illustrate the demographic characteristics of women involved with Maine’s correctional system across 3 cohorts (’04, ’05, ’06)

2. At what rate do they recidivate?
   Calculate recidivism rates for Maine’s female offender probation population (prison, county jail and straight probation)
• Guided by what is accessible in Department of Corrections CORIS database

• Includes 2,092 women across 3 cohorts

• These are women who entered probation (from prison, jail or straight probation) in either 2004, 2005 or 2006
From 1977 – 2004, there was a 757% national increase in women’s prison population, whereas the increase in males during that same period was 386%.

1977: 11,212, women imprisoned in the U.S.
2004: 11,408 women imprisoned in Texas alone

National Landscape

Source: Four measures of serious violent crime, 1973-2005, Bureau of Justice Statistics
National Landscape

- Female offending is qualitatively different than that of males, yet programs and policies are disproportionately designed for men.

- There is a qualitative difference in the way that women’s incarceration impacts families, communities and taxpayers.

- Recidivism (defined in this study as any new arrest for a new crime) has been the primary outcome measure of success.
Maine in Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Women Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Approximately <strong>25 women</strong> across Maine’s five state prisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 2002</td>
<td><strong>45 women</strong>, at the start of construction of the Women’s Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 2003</td>
<td>At capacity, with <strong>75 women</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>Overcrowded with <strong>140 women</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10th, 2008</td>
<td><strong>158 women</strong> (124 at Maine Correctional Center, 34 at Women’s Reentry Center) in our state prison system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data, history and counts provided by Becky Hayes Boober, Director of Women’s Services, Maine Department of Corrections
Maine in Context

- While Maine has one of the lowest per capita female incarceration rates, it experienced the largest increase (114%) in incarceration of women in the US between 1999 and 2004 (Frost, Greene & Pranis)

- A 21% increase in Maine’s prison population is projected between the years of 2006-2011 (PEW Report)

- The Women’s Center has drawn national attention for its innovative approach to providing gender responsive services

- Due to overcrowding and extensive media coverage, legislature appropriated funds for the development of a 38 bed Women’s Reentry Center in Bangor, Maine

- An average of 44 women a year leave Maine’s prison system
• “The number of studies of female offenders, and in particular of incarcerated female offenders, adult female offenders and female offenders in a restorative justice context, is very small” (Andrews, D.A. & Dowden, C., 1998).

• A 1999 meta analytical study (Dowden, C. & Andrews, D., 1999) of ‘what works’ for female offenders noted that of sixty seven studies that looked at women’s programming, none of them linked recidivism to program components.
Pathways Model for Female Offenders

- Abuse/Neglect
- Mental Health Problems
- Running Away
- Substance Abuse
- Drug Selling/Robbery
- Serious, Chronic, Crime and/or Delinquency

Juvenile Justice Involvement

What is Gender Responsiveness?

• To be gender responsive means to demonstrate adherence to the guiding principles of a gender responsive program. Such principles include:

  ✓ gender
  ✓ environment
  ✓ relationships
  ✓ service & supervision
  ✓ socioeconomic status
  ✓ community

_Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2003_
Methodology

• Secondary data generated from the Corrections Information System (CORIS) database of the Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) for the purposes of a National Institute of Corrections sponsored research project

• Contained basic demographic information (e.g. gender, age, race/ethnicity, etc.), sentencing, risk, recidivism, and case plan data
• For this study all 2,092 females from across the three cohorts were selected

• A new variable created to sort women by location (i.e. straight probation, county jail, state prison)

• Data was examined in such a manner that the women in the sample could not be readily identified
Data Analysis Levels

1. Univariate Analysis
   – Demographic features (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviation)

2. Bivariate Analysis
   – Factors that correlate with recidivism (crosstabulation, descriptive statistics)

3. Multivariate Analysis
   – Actuarial risk domain scores, overall risk level & recidivism (binary logistic regression)
Demographic Characteristics of Maine’s Women Offenders
Women Offenders by Cohort-% of Overall Sample by Year (n=2092)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of Women Offenders by Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>597</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Race of Maine’s Women Offenders (n=2051)

Race

- White: 95%
- Non-white: 5%
Education Level of Maine’s Women Offenders (n=1612)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than HS</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS/GED</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some secondary</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's/Master's</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Employment of Maine’s Women Offenders (n=1490)

- Self Employed: 1%
- Full Time: 34%
- Part Time: 16%
- Intermittent: 2%
- Unemployed: 38%
- Not in Labor Force: 9%
Marital Status of Maine’s Women Offenders (n=2092)

- Unknown: 14%
- Divorced: 18%
- Married: 18%
- Separated: 6%
- Single: 42%
- Widowed: 3%
Criminal History of Maine’s Women Offenders

Age at First Arrest
- Mean, 24 years old
- N=2,087
- Minimum, 10 years old
- Maximum, 72 years old

Number of Prior Convictions
- Mean, 3.18
- N=1,902
- Minimum, 0 priors
- Maximum, 60 priors
• **26.7%** of the sample were younger than 18 at the age of first arrest, indicating that slightly over a quarter of Maine’s women offenders have had previous involvement with the juvenile justice system.
Women’s Sentencing

Sentence Data, N=2007

Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Split Sentence</th>
<th>Straight Probation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1137</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Misdemeanor & Felony Offenses

Offense Type by Cohort

Number of Entrants

- Misdemeanor
- Felony

Year
- 2004
- 2005
- 2006

- 537
- 312
- 263

- 289
- 302
- 304
Most Prevalent Offense Types

Top 5 Misdemeanor Offenses for all 3 Cohorts (n=880)

- **FORGERY**: 52
- **THEFT**: 108
- **DRUGS**: 119
- **OUI**: 239
- **ASSAULT/THREATEN**: 362

These offenses account for 79% of all misdemeanor offenses.
Most Prevalent Offense Types

Top 5 Felony Offenses for all 3 Cohorts (n=720)

- DRUGS: 295
- THEFT: 209
- BURGLARY: 97
- FORGERY: 63
- ASSAULT/THREATEN: 56

These offenses account for 80% of all felony offenses.
Incarcerated Women by Location

# in Jail vs # in Prison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Jail</th>
<th>Prison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Average Time Served in Jail

Mean # of Days Served in Jail by Cohort

- 2004: 47 days
- 2005: 48 days
- 2006: 54 days
Average Time Served in Prison

Mean # of Days Served in Prison by Cohort

- 2004: 681
- 2005: 704
- 2006: 787
Age at Community Reentry (n=2,087)

- 18-24: 30%
- 25-34: 30%
- 35-44: 27%
- 45-54: 11%
- 55-64: 2%
Reentry by County (n=2,092)

- Kennebec: 300
- Cumberland: 292
- Androscoggin: 287
- Penobscot: 229
- York: 219
- Knox: 176
- Somerset: 109
- Waldo: 95
- Aroostook: 87
- Hancock: 78
- Washington: 69
- Franklin: 46
- Oxford: 44
- Lincoln: 25
- Sagadahoc: 23
- Piscataquis: 11
Reentry by MDOC Region (n=2,092)

Reentry by Region

Number of Female Reentrants

Region

1  2  3  4

506  410  599  568
Recidivism
Rates of
Maine’s
Women
Offenders
Measurement of Recidivism

- Recidivism provides a measure to evaluate correctional program effectiveness.

- Recidivism may also indicate other challenges to the process of reentry (e.g. limited resources, barriers to employment, ‘collateral sanctions’).

- Recidivism is defined as any new arrest for a new crime (misdemeanor or felony). This does not include technical violations.
Women Offender Recidivism Rates

Recidivism Rates by Cohort Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort Year</th>
<th>1 year</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Women Offender Recidivism Rates

Recidivism Rates for Prison

Cohort Year

Recidivism Rate

2004 2005 2006

1 year
2 years 3 years

16% 18% 13%

30% 32% 39%

30% 32% 39%

45% 40% 35% 30% 25% 20% 15% 10% 5% 0%
Women Offender Recidivism Rates

Recidivism Rates for Jail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort Year</th>
<th>1 year</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Women Offender Recidivism Rates

Recidivism Rates for Probation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1 year</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cohort Year

Recidivism Rate
Recidivism Rates by County (n=1,708)

- Aroostook: 36%
- Lincoln: 33%
- Somerset: 33%
- Kennebec: 30%
- Cumberland: 29%
- Knox: 28%
- Oxford: 24%
- Penobscot: 22%
- York: 22%
- Sagadahoc: 20%
- Waldo: 19%
- Hancock: 17%
- Piscataquis: 17%
- Washington: 16%
- Androscoggin: 14%
- Franklin: 11%
Recidivism & Employment (n= 1,490)

Employment and Recidivism Rates

- Self Employed: 15%
- Full Time: 14%
- Part Time: 16%
- Intermittent: 11%
- Unemployed: 18%
- Not in Labor Force: 20%
Recidivism & Employment (n=1490)

Recidivate-Yes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0 50 100 150 200 250
Recidivism Rate by Offense Type

Recidivism Rates for Felonies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort Year</th>
<th>1 year</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Recidivism Rate by Offense Type

### Recidivism Rates for Misdemeanors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1 year</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>19%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar chart showing recidivism rates for misdemeanors over three years](chart.png)
Actuarial Risk for Recidivism

- Formal methods for assessing risk are categorized as either actuarial or clinical.

- Actuarial methods base their predictability on reliably observed relationships between re-offending and factors centered on criminal thinking, attitudes, and behavior (called criminogenic needs).

- The Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) is the actuarial assessment tool used by Maine Department of Corrections (and many other jurisdictions internationally) to determine appropriate contact levels and to drive the process of correctional case management.
Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R)

Risk is determined according to the following categories:

1. Administrative  
2. Low  
3. Moderate  
4. High  
5. Maximum

Measures within the following subscales are assessed to score the instrument:

- Criminal History  
- Financial  
- Accommodations  
- Companions  
- Emotional/Personal  
- Education/Employment  
- Family/Marital  
- Leisure/Recreation  
- Alcohol/Drug  
- Attitudes/Orientation
Many ‘gender-neutral’ assessment processes over classify women’s risk levels.

Most classification systems have been designed to assess white males and don’t adequately reflect diversity in gender, culture, etc.

Because of this, most actuarial assessment tools disproportionately reflect male behavior & risk factors “that have only a tenuous relevance to female offenders”.

Source: Kelley Blanchette, Ph.D, Integrating Evidence-based Practice and Gender-responsive Strategies for Women, 2007 presentation at 12th National Workshop on Adult and Juvenile Female Offenders, Baltimore, MD
Actuarial Risk Level

Actuarial Risk Level (n=2,092)

- Moderate: 54%
- Administrative: 20%
- Missing: 11%
- Low: 7%
- High: 6%
- Maximum: 1%
## Predictive Factors by Risk Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Level</th>
<th>LSI Subscale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Leisure/Recreation*</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Criminal History**, Financial**, Alcohol &amp; Drug**</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Companions*, Family/Marital*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Maximum and low are too small in sample size to analyze, not enough iterations to make determinations

* $p < .05$  ** $p < .01$
Key Findings-Discussion

• Average # of days served for Maine women has increased in both jail and prison settings, which indicates need for analysis of statewide sentencing policy.

• At the county level, Aroostook, Kennebec, Lincoln and Sagadahoc have the highest recidivism rates (all at or above 30%).

• Franklin, Androscoggin, Washington, Piscataquis and Hancock counties have the lowest recidivism rates (all at or below 17%).
• The one year recidivism rate for women in prison is suggestive that the gender responsive Women’s Center may have a role in mediating factors that may have otherwise led these higher risk women to recidivate at a higher rate (as the data tells us that the women in prison are at higher risk to recidivate than those in county jail or on probation).

• Maine’s women offenders, when analyzed according to risk level, are quite diverse. Different levels of risk predict different criminogenic needs that correlate with recidivism. Therefore, services should be targeted to dynamic needs accordingly.
Conclusion

For more information about the study:

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