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## Drug Use Trends Among Anchorage Arrestees: 1999-2001

*Brad Myr Stol*

Roughly one out of every two arrestees in Anchorage tests positive for recent drug use, and marijuana seems to be the illicit “drug of choice” among arrestees in Anchorage—particularly arrestees under the age of 30—according to several years of data assembled under the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program.

Since 1999, the Justice Center at the University of Alaska-Anchorage has served as the site contractor for the ADAM program. ADAM is a national, multi-site drug monitoring program funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) that measures the extent and nature of alcohol and drug use among those who have been recently arrested. ADAM collects information by conducting in-depth interviews with recent arrestees and collecting urine samples.

ADAM possesses several unique characteristics that distinguish it from other alcohol and drug monitoring data collection systems. First, while most alcohol and drug research relies almost solely on respondents’ self-reported behavior, ADAM incorporates both arrestee self-reported behavior *and* an objective measure of alcohol and drug use: the presence of alcohol and drugs in arrestees’ urine. The ADAM program uses the Enzyme Multiplied Immunoassay Testing (EMIT) system, one of the most accu-

rate drug testing methods available, to screen for the presence of drugs and alcohol in urine. In combination, arrestee self-reports and urine samples provide an unparalleled breadth and depth of knowledge about alcohol and drug use.

Second, unlike other drug use monitoring efforts, information from ADAM is based on local rather than national estimates. National surveys such as the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse provide extensive information on state and national drug use trends, but are not designed to assess the nature of alcohol and drug use for smaller social collectivities such as counties, cities or neighborhoods. Criminologists, policy makers, and lay persons alike have long known that alcohol and drug use behaviors are not randomly distributed in society, but instead display wide variation across different localities. By providing contextualized knowledge of drug and alcohol use, ADAM helps local public policy makers to develop programs and policy especially relevant to local communities.

Third, ADAM focuses on a group of people known to be at high-risk for substance abuse and addiction: recent arrestees. Individuals brought within the scope of the criminal justice system demonstrate rates of substance abuse and dependence greater than the general population; yet, prior to the implementation of the ADAM program, only limited knowledge existed about the nature and extent of alcohol and drug use among those incarcerated in correctional institutions in the United States—especially jails. As the number of persons incarcerated in jails and prisons—now over two million—continues to rise, it becomes increasingly important to collect more extensive information about alcohol and drug use behaviors for those entering the criminal justice system.

Finally, ADAM uses probability-based sampling techniques that allow researchers to provide accurate and representative estimates of alcohol and drug use among arrestees. The significance of using probability sampling methods for ADAM is that

local policy makers and their constituents can be assured that the data gathered and reported by the ADAM program truly represent the underlying arrestee population.

### ADAM Methodology

Early in its history ADAM relied on convenience samples of arrestees. (Prior to 1997, ADAM was known as the Drug Use Forecasting (DUF) program.) With no probability-based sampling protocol, ADAM sites could not determine whether deviations in drug use trends were significant or simply random variations to be expected with any phenomenon. In other words, if a site found a 10 percent increase in the proportion of arrestees who tested positive for cocaine from one time period to the next, it could not be reliably determined if that change was truly an increase or simply a random perturbation in the data. This began to change in 1997 when the ADAM program underwent an extensive re-design.

By 2000 each ADAM research site had an explicit sampling plan in place detailing the selection of male arrestees into the ADAM sample. (At present, female arrestees are not selected using a probability-based sampling plan. Convenience sampling is used to select female arrestees.) To begin, arrestees can only be interviewed within 48 hours of their arrest. (In order to maximize the reliability of urinalysis results, those who have been incarcerated for more than 48 hours are not included in ADAM sample.) The second requirement for inclusion is that arrestees must be jailed for committing a new offense. Individuals held for a change of venue or awaiting transport to another facility, transfers from another facility, those awaiting extradition, and court-ordered remands following trial are not eligible for the study. In addition, federal detainees are not included in the ADAM sample. Third, juveniles under the age of 18, even if they are charged as adults for their

### HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- A look at implementation of ADAM internationally (page 2).
- An examination of alcohol use among Anchorage arrestees (page 3).
- A description of drug use measurements used in the U.S. (page 5).
- An examination of criminal victimization in Anchorage (page 6).
- A review of *Invisible Punishment*, which examines the effects of the nation’s high rate of incarceration (page 8).

Please see *Drug Use Trends*, page 10

## ADAM in an International Context

Since the late 1990s, researchers from a number of other countries have sought to implement the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) research program within their own systems. Under the auspices of the National Institute of Justice, a loosely-organized network of justice researchers and administrators have worked to adapt the standardized methodology developed in the United States (see "Drug Use Trends Among Anchorage Arrestees: 1999-2001") to the needs of different systems. While, in general, participating countries must provide their own funding for implementing the research, NIJ has facilitated this international effort—I-ADAM—by holding several conferences focused on the exchange of information among those interested in the research platform. While the primary goal of the participating countries has been to use ADAM to learn more about the drug picture in their own countries, another objective has been to broaden the international basis of information on drug use.

The first comprehensive look at this cross-cultural effort, a compendium of reports from eight countries, including the U.S., was released in May 2002. The document, "I-ADAM in Eight Countries—Approaches and Challenges," describes the genesis of the international project in the participating countries—Chile, Great Britain, Scotland, the Netherlands, Malaysia, South Africa, Australia and the United States.

Such formally structured quantitative justice research in an international context has been relatively rare. In the forward to this document, James Finckenauer, who was then director of the International Center of the National Institute of Justice, points out some of the obstacles and pitfalls encountered in comparative justice research—the administrative complexities; the difficulties posed by translating a survey instrument into multiple languages; the varied cultural traditions; and the effect of different criminal justice systems on the implementation of projects. Finckenauer notes, however, that there are compelling reasons for trying to discern patterns of drug use on an international basis: drug use devastates families and community life; the drug market is an international market; and drug money corrupts governments and feeds disorder and war. Monitoring drug usage among arrestees over time, as done with the I-ADAM effort, can inform policy development.

Because not every question on the U.S.-developed interview instrument was applicable or useable in every locale, the country research teams addressed this barrier to gath-

ering comparable data by retaining a set of core questions. Individual countries tailored additional items to fit their own needs. Because urinalysis for drug usage is more easily kept standard from location to location, results from this component of the study presented fewer problems of comparability.

The NIJ report is primarily descriptive, providing an overview of the development and implementation of the project in each country. It also presents limited summary results. Little comparative analysis is done, although one clear finding is noted: marijuana is the drug most commonly used by arrestees in all eight countries.

In most cases project administrators for each country authored the section devoted to that country, with the report forward written by James Finckenauer and a concluding discussion by Henry Brownstein, also with NIJ. The contents of the country sections are somewhat standardized; that is, the same issues are discussed for each country.

The eight countries had different purposes in undertaking the I-ADAM research. This, in fact, is one of the benefits of I-ADAM—that it can provide insights for a range of goals. Most countries, of course, were interested in further understanding the connection between drugs and arrestees in order to better develop their law enforcement programs, but most—some to a greater degree than others—also emphasized the implications of the research for treatment approaches.

The countries have differing research traditions. Some, like the U.S., Britain and the Netherlands have strong, established research programs with regular interaction between government and researchers and with some history of policy makers using research, while others, like Chile and Malaysia, seem to have a more limited history of collecting justice research data for policy purposes.

The descriptions of project implementation hint at widely different histories and cultural attitudes toward policing and law enforcement as well as varying degrees of trust in government agencies. In Chile, for example, where distrust of the police was considered to be a barrier to the project, it was decided that uniformed nurses from the Ministry of Health, which sponsored the program, would collect the urine samples to convince arrestees that the information would not be used against them. In the discussion of Malaysia's project, it was noted that because the police collected urine samples, participation of arrestees might not be voluntary.

Other differences with implications for the research project also emerged. For example, countries made varying arrangements to protect the confidentiality of research results. Australia and England, lacking the statutory provisions ensuring the confidentiality demanded by this type of research, found it necessary to negotiate special assurances for this project. In the Netherlands, the Bar Association required that each participant sign an informed consent form, introducing an element that might have an effect on the response rate.

As mentioned above, the NIJ report does not emphasize the specific data findings of these first I-ADAM efforts, and it warns against making rigid comparisons. Some valid points do emerge, however. An initial overview reveals that marijuana, in one form or another, may be the drug most commonly used by arrestees throughout the world. All countries reporting results, including the U.S., found a high usage of marijuana among arrestees.

Usage patterns particular to individual countries and regions also emerged from these limited results. The South African research showed a sizeable percentage of arrestees testing positive for mandrax—a blend of methaqualone and antihistamine rarely seen in other countries. England noted frequent usage of opiates and Scotland found drug use by injection was prevalent.

One of the major benefits of the NIJ report is that in addition to the presentation of the results from the first I-ADAM efforts, it also contains a rich mine of information on the widely differing law enforcement, legal and judicial systems of the participating countries. The formal structures of individual systems are outlined and, for some countries, background crime and arrest data presented. The individual country drug policies, extent of participation in international drug agreements and legislative histories of drug laws are also presented. Absent from the report—beyond its scope but necessary for a full understanding of the research findings—is a discussion of how political, social and historical realities impact the day-to-day operation of the justice system in the drug arena.

NIJ reports that the number of countries expressing an interest in the ADAM project has grown, but in many cases, even for the eight countries contributing to this initial report, lack of funding is a major barrier to the research.

*The report I-ADAM in Eight Countries, NCJ-189768, is available from the National Institute of Justice.*

## Alcohol Use Among Anchorage Arrestees

Brad Myr Stol

While a great deal of energy has been expended in criminal justice and criminological research on the topic of drugs, there has been relatively little attention paid to the role of alcohol in crime or its impact on the criminal justice system. This is somewhat curious when one considers that alcohol is a strong correlate for both criminal offending (especially violent crime) and criminal victimization. Quite simply, there is impressive empirical evidence for a direct relationship between alcohol and violent criminal behavior. The difficulty, however, is that alcohol is so intertwined with crimes of violence that it has been difficult for researchers to isolate the effects of alcohol from other individual, situational and social factors. For instance, it is not uncommon for both parties to an assault to be drunk, thus making it difficult to conclude that alcohol was the “cause” of the “offender’s” (i.e., usually the person who prevails physically) violent behavior. Yet, despite these analytical difficulties, it is evident that alcohol remains deeply implicated in crime and social disorder. The challenge is to untangle the complex relationship between alcohol and socially proscribed behavior. This article is a first step toward understanding the dynamics of alcohol use among those who have engaged in criminal behavior and are known to be at-risk for substance abuse and addiction: arrestees booked into jail in Anchorage.

The article presents a summary of alcohol use information gathered as part of the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program. (See accompanying article, “Drug Use Trends Among Anchorage Arrestees: 1999-2001.”) Because ADAM measures the alcohol use behaviors of only a small segment of those engaged in criminal activity—those who come to the attention of authorities—the data gathered provide only a partial picture of the total alcohol-crime relationship. Nevertheless, even with this limitation, the data collected in ADAM tell us a great deal. Moreover, ADAM data are less limited in their ability to provide reliable information about the raw material of criminal justice: the people who enter the system. For those tasked with apprehending, supervising, sentencing, educating and treating persons brought within the purview of the criminal justice system, the information collected by ADAM researchers is an invaluable resource.

ADAM interviewers ask respondents about several dimensions of their alcohol use:

**Table 1. Heavy Alcohol Use Among Arrestees in Anchorage, 2000 and 2001**

Number and percentage of arrestees responding “Yes”:

	Female arrestees (n = 257)			Male arrestees (n = 1,161)		
	N	Percent of total asked	Percent of those who have ever had 5 or more drinks on same day	N	Percent of total asked	Percent of those who have ever had 5 or more drinks on same day
Ever had 5 or more drinks of beer, wine, or any other type of alcohol on the same day?	211	82.1 %	—	1,045	90.0 %	—
Did you have 5 or more drinks on the same day in the past 12 months?	175	68.1 %	82.9 %	877	75.5 %	83.9 %
In the past 30 days, did you have 5 or more drinks of beer, wine, or any other type of alcohol on the same day?	141	54.9 %	66.8 %	755	65.0 %	72.2 %

- If they have ever had five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day. (A “drink” is defined as 12 ounces of beer, 8 ounces of wine, or one ounce of hard liquor.)
- How old they were the first time they had five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day.
- If they have had five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day in the past 12 months.
  - The number of times respondents had five or more drinks on the same day, each month, over the past 12 months.
- If they have had five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day in the past 30 days.
  - The number of days, in the past 30, they had five or more drinks on the same day.

Questions such as these allow researchers to estimate the extent of alcohol use among the arrestee population (“prevalence”) and also measure the degree of alcohol use for individual arrestees (“incidence”). What follows is a brief overview of the results of these questions.

### Prevalence and Incidence of Heavy Alcohol Use

Data from the ADAM-Anchorage project show heavy alcohol consumption to be common among Anchorage’s adult arrestee population. ADAM-Anchorage program staff interviewed 1,178 out of the 2,155 males booked into Anchorage jails in the eight data collection quarters of 2000 and 2001; of these, 1,161 were asked if they ever

had five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day. Ninety percent of male respondents who answered the question (n = 1,045), indicated that they had at least five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day—an indicator of heavy alcohol use—at least once in their lifetime (see Table 1). More than eight of every ten of those asked reported having had five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day within the past twelve months, and seven of every ten stated they had used alcohol at that level within the past 30 days. When the incidence of heavy alcohol use was examined (the frequency of heavy use for individual respondents), in contrast to prevalence (the frequency of heavy use among a population of individuals), the extent of problematic alcohol use was more evident. The average number of days male respondents had five or more drinks on the same day in the past 30 days was eleven. In other words, those who did engage in heavy drinking within 30 days of their incarceration in Anchorage jails did so at a pace of roughly every third day.

Although among female arrestees there was a lower rate of alcohol use, the extent of use was still far-reaching. Slightly more than 82 percent (n = 211) reported that they had consumed five or more drinks on the same day at some time in their life (see Table 1). Sixty-eight percent of women asked told ADAM interviewers that they had consumed five or more drinks of alcohol within the 12 months immediately preceding their current arrest and incarceration—a rate similar to that for male arrestees. And the similarities

Please see *Alcohol Use*, page 4

## Alcohol Use (continued from page 3)

don't stop there. For those who told interviewers they had engaged in heavy drinking at some point in their life, more than half (55%) reported having five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day within 30 days of their being booked into Anchorage lock-ups (65% of males responded the same way).

The difference between male and female arrestees lies with the odds of having ever engaged in heavy drinking: males are more likely to report having had five or more drinks of beer, wine or any other type of alcohol on the same day than women. For those individuals who *have* had five or more drinks of alcohol on the same day, however, the odds are nearly even for male and female arrestees that they will have engaged in that level of alcohol consumption within the past year and within the past month.

Men and women booked into Anchorage jails did differ in terms of the incidence (i.e., individual frequency) and age of onset for their heavy drinking. Females who reported engaging in heavy drinking within a month of their current arrest did so an average of 8 days out of 30, whereas males had five or more drinks of alcohol an average of 11 days out of 30. In addition, male arrestees who reported heavy drinking began, on average, more than a year before their female counterparts (16.4 years vs. 17.7 years).

### Arrestees At-Risk for Future Alcohol Abuse and Dependence

ADAM incorporates a 6-item scale for determining if an arrestee is at-risk for alcohol abuse. Interviewers ask respondents:

*In the past 12 months: a) Have you spent more time drinking than you intended? b) Have you neglected some of your usual responsibilities because of using alcohol? c) Have you wanted to cut down on your drinking? d) Has anyone objected to your use of alcohol? e) Have you frequently found yourself thinking about drinking? f) Have you used alcohol to relieve feelings such as sadness, anger or boredom?* A pattern of alcohol use with a positive response to two of these indicators shows risk for alcohol *abuse*. However, if the indicators "thinking about drinking" and "drinking to relieve emotions" are the two indicators, there is a risk for alcohol *dependence*. A positive response to three or more indicators shows a risk for alcohol *dependence* if one of these indicators is either "thinking about drinking" or "drinking to relieve emotions."

Not surprising, given the results discussed above, was the finding that nearly 15 percent of male arrestees who had engaged in heavy drinking at least once in the 12 months immediately preceding their current remand to jail were determined to be at-risk for alcohol abuse. More startling was the discovery that 57 percent of this group were at serious risk for alcohol dependence, not merely abuse. Women booked into Anchorage jail facilities were somewhat less likely to be flagged as at-risk for future abusive alcohol consumption behavior—with 12 percent of those who had five or more drinks of alcohol in the past year. However, female arrestees were at even greater risk for alcohol dependence than their male counterparts. Almost two-thirds (65%) of the women who had drunk five or more servings of alcohol on the same day in the year preceding their

arrest were found to be at-risk for alcohol dependence.

This description of alcohol use by Anchorage arrestees makes one thing clear: heavy alcohol use is very common among those arrested and booked into jail. Between 80 and 90 percent of jailed adults in Anchorage report having engaged in heavy drinking at least once, with more than half having done so within 30 days of their present offense. It is also likely that those who drink heavily do so several days per week. In addition, there is better than a 50-50 chance that every other person remanded to jail custody in Anchorage who has engaged in heavy drinking within one year of their present arrest is at-risk to develop a dependence on alcohol, and better than one of every eight individuals booked into custody is at risk for alcohol abuse.

While these findings do not establish a clear causal link between alcohol consumption and criminal behavior, they do reveal the extent to which alcohol pervades the lives of the people caught in the criminal justice net. Simply stated, among those that enter the criminal justice system through jails, problematic alcohol use is rampant. These descriptive data also hint at the social costs of alcohol abuse and dependence for the citizens of Alaska in general, but especially for the community of Anchorage. Beyond the costs associated with maintaining a criminal justice system that is clearly tasked with responding to alcohol-related incidents, there are other yet-to-be-identified costs incurred by communities when so many of those arrested and later released are at-risk for alcohol abuse or dependence.

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## Justice Center Project Highlights

*The following is a list of some current Justice Center research and public education projects. For further information about any of these please contact the Center.*

Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) Project (JC 0001)—Robert H. Langworthy and Brad Myrstol

Assessing the External Validity of Anchorage ADAM Data: Third Quarter 2000 to Second Quarter 2002 (JC 0310)—Robert H. Langworthy and Brad Myrstol

Project Safe Neighborhoods: Research Partner (JC 0312)—Darryl Wood

East Anchorage Weed and Seed Impact Evaluation (JC 0307)—Allan R. Barnes

Crime Problem Solutions in Public Housing (JC 0308)—Allan R. Barnes

Epidemiological Study of Sexual Assault in Anchorage (JC 0107)—André Rosay

Gender-Specific Juvenile Probation Planning (JC 0306)—N.E. Schafer

Analysis of Data for an Evaluation of Court Processing of Child in Need of Aid (CINA) Cases (JC 0309)—N.E. Schafer

## Child Custody Video Completed

The Justice Center and the Alaska Court System have completed an instructional video on child custody issues. The program, entitled "Two Homes...", examines some of the important issues separating couples should consider with regard to their children—parenting plans, mediation, and conflict and communication.

Antonia Moras of the Justice Center wrote and produced the video. Karen Largent was project manager for the court system. The video is available through the court system.

## Measuring the Use of Drugs

The ADAM program discussed in this issue of the *Forum* is one of several national projects collecting data on the extent of drug use. It is also one of the few instruments regularly administered in Alaska under either state or federal auspices that provides any localized information on drug use.

In addition to ADAM, the federal government has three other major drug use indicators which provide data on a national basis: the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA), the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) and Monitoring the Future.

The NHSDA is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It has been conducted since 1971, with a significant redesign in 1999. Researchers conduct interviews with a national probability sample of persons aged twelve and over on past and current use of a wide range of licit and illicit substances. The NHSDA research design includes Alaska in its sampling. Table 1 shows results from the survey for 1999 and 2000.

Unlike the NHSDA and ADAM, the other two national data collection efforts do not

sample Alaska, although their results still may have implications for the state. DAWN assembles data semi-annually from emergency rooms on deaths from drug abuse and emergency room treatment related to drug abuse. Monitoring the Future, which is sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, surveys high school students on the availability and use of drugs and attitudes toward drug use.

There seems to be no continuing in-state measurement of illicit drug use among the Alaska population, although a number of state agencies have occasionally assembled data which contribute to the picture of drug use as a whole. In particular, in 2002, the Alaska Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse and the Division of Public Health released the results of a state needs assessment study conducted by the North Charles Research and Planning Group of Cambridge, MA. This study focused on determining the substance abuse treatment needs of the state's population. It estimated that nearly 40,000 people may need treatment of some kind for substance abuse. It also found—as have many other studies—that the substance most

widely abused in Alaska is alcohol.

Another statewide measurement, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey administered to high school students by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services assesses health-threatening attitudes and behaviors, including involvement with drugs and alcohol. The survey is part of a national effort conducted since 1990 by the Centers for Disease Control. Because its administration in Alaska has been inconsistent, with some districts—including the large Anchorage School District—not participating at various times, the results have not been comparable from year to year. The 2003 survey is currently underway.

As with much other research, an obstacle to gathering comprehensive data on the extent of drug and alcohol use in the state is the fact that pertinent data lie with many diverse agencies. In general, the data bases of the agencies do not interface with each other, making the assembly of information more laborious and the design of research more problematic.

**Table 1. Estimated Prevalence of Drug and Alcohol Use During Lifetime by Type of Drug and Age Group, United States, 1999 and 2000**

Percent reporting use during lifetime.

Type of drug	Total		Age group							
			12 to 17 years		18 to 25 years		26 to 34 years		35 years and older	
	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000
<b>Any illicit drug<sup>a</sup></b>	39.7 %	38.9 %	27.6 %	26.9 %	52.6 %	51.2 %	53.2 %	50.9 %	35.7 %	35.5 %
<b>Marijuana and hashish</b>	34.6	34.2	18.7	18.3	46.8	45.7	47.7	46.0	31.5	31.6
<b>Cocaine</b>	11.5	11.2	2.4	2.4	11.9	10.9	17.8	15.1	11.4	11.8
Crack	2.7	2.4	0.6	0.6	3.3	2.8	5.1	3.8	2.3	2.2
<b>Heroin</b>	1.4	1.2	0.4	0.4	1.8	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.4
<b>Hallucinogens</b>	11.3	11.7	5.7	5.8	19.3	19.3	16.4	15.8	9.4	10.1
LSD	8.7	8.8	3.8	3.6	14.7	14.0	12.4	11.8	7.3	7.8
PCP	2.6	2.6	0.9	1.1	2.4	2.3	2.2	1.8	3.0	3.1
<b>Inhalants</b>	7.8	7.5	9.1	8.9	14.1	12.8	11.4	11.0	5.3	5.3
<b>Nonmedical use of any psychotherapeutic<sup>b</sup></b>	15.4	14.5	10.9	10.9	20.9	19.5	18.6	16.9	14.2	13.5
Pain relievers	9.0	8.6	8.2	8.4	15.2	14.6	11.0	10.4	7.3	6.9
Tranquilizers	6.3	5.8	2.5	2.5	7.9	7.4	8.2	6.9	6.1	5.8
Stimulants	7.2	6.6	3.9	4.0	9.0	7.6	8.2	6.8	7.1	6.7
Methamphetamine	4.3	4.0	1.4	1.3	5.2	4.1	5.4	4.8	4.3	4.2
Sedatives	3.5	3.2	0.8	0.8	2.0	1.6	2.5	2.1	4.5	4.2
<b>Any illicit drug other than marijuana<sup>c</sup></b>	24.1	23.6	18.3	18.1	33.3	31.9	32.8	30.4	21.0	21.1

a Includes use at least once of marijuana or hashish, cocaine (including crack), heroin, hallucinogens (including PCP and LSD), inhalants, or any prescription-type psychotherapeutic used nonmedically.

b Includes nonmedical use of any prescription-type stimulant, sedative, tranquilizer, or analgesic; does not include over-the-counter drugs.

c Includes use at least once of any of these listed drugs, regardless of marijuana/hashish use; marijuana/hashish users who also have used any of the other listed drugs are included.

Source: *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 2001*

# Fear of Crime and Quality of Life in Anchorage

Matthew Giblin

During Spring 2002, the Justice Center conducted the Anchorage Adult Criminal Victimization Survey (AACVS) to gather data from residents about their experiences with crime as well as their perceptions of their neighborhoods, the city, and the local police. The *Alaska Justice Forum* plans to present highlights from the survey over several issues. This first article in the series will address perceptions of neighborhood and city quality of life, neighborhood conditions, and fear of crime.

## Methodology

The AACVS instrument was an almost exact replica of the instrument used in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) data collection program, which began in 1973. The NCVS questions are comprehensive, addressing both violent and property victimizations regardless of whether the victimizations were actually reported to law enforcement. The Anchorage survey included an additional series of questions based on the COPS Addendum of the U.S. Department of Justice, Community-

Oriented Policing Services. These included items pertaining to fear of crime, quality of life, perceptions of the police, and personal safety measures.

The survey was administered between April 1, 2002 and June 30, 2002 to residents of Anchorage; eligible respondents were residents age 18 or older contacted via a household (non-business) line. Telephone calls were primarily made on weekdays between 10:00 AM and 9:00 PM, although calls were generally not made during the dinner hours between 5:00 PM and 7:00 PM. A random-digit dialing (RDD) method that generates numbers using a computer program was used to make calls. Use of this method increased the likelihood that the residents surveyed were, in fact, representative of Anchorage residents, since each household with a telephone had an equal chance of being contacted.

Interviewers explained the purpose of the study to potential respondents in each household, guaranteed confidentiality, and asked for participation. It should be noted that households were randomly called, but no random selection of individuals within households occurred. While such randomization was attempted in the first few days of survey administration, interviewers quickly realized that the number of callbacks necessary to secure an interview with a randomly selected respondent would be both time and cost prohibitive. Participating respondents within a household were selected simply based on who was willing to answer the survey questions (in most cases this was the individual answering the telephone). The overall survey cooperation rate (number of completed interviews divided by the sum of completed interviews, refusals, terminations, hearing/language problems, and respondent unavailable) was approximately 60 percent, based on a total of 781 secured interviews.

As shown in Table 1, a comparison of AACVS respondent characteristics and Anchorage Census 2000 data shows strong similarities, but two key differences are worth noting. First, AACVS respondents were disproportionately female. Second, a smaller proportion of AACVS respondents reported household incomes of \$50,000 or more, although this difference is likely due to the larger number of respondents who refused to answer the income question.

## Neighborhood and City Quality of Life

All respondents were asked to identify their level of satisfaction with the quality of life in their neighborhood and in their city.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of AACVS Respondents and Municipality of Anchorage Residents Based on Census 2000**

	AACVS respondents		2000 Census	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
<b>Sex</b>				
Male (age 18 or older)	299	38.3 %	92,953	50.4 %
Female (age 18 or older)	481	61.6	91,959	49.6
Refused	1	0.1	--	--
<b>Race<sup>1</sup></b>				
White	597	76.5 %	188,009	72.2 %
African-American	40	5.1	15,199	5.8
Alaska Native/American Indian	49	6.3	18,941	7.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	21	2.7	16,856	6.5
Other	22	2.8	5,703	2.2
Multiracial	27	3.5	15,575	6.0
Don't know	1	0.1	--	--
Refused	23	2.9	--	--
<b>Hispanic origin<sup>1</sup></b>				
Hispanic	41	5.2 %	14,799	5.7 %
Non-Hispanic	723	92.6	245,484	94.3
Don't know	1	0.1	--	--
Refused	16	2.0	--	--
<b>Age</b>				
18-19	33	4.2 %	7,192	3.9 %
20-24	60	7.7	17,694	9.6
25-34	164	21.0	40,113	21.8
35-44	179	22.9	48,210	26.1
45-54	167	21.4	38,803	21.0
55-64	106	13.6	18,158	9.8
65+	57	7.3	14,242	7.7
Don't know	1	0.1	--	--
Refused	14	1.8	--	--
<b>Household income<sup>2</sup> # and % of households</b>				
Less than \$50,000	283	36.2 %	42,108	44.3 %
\$50,000 or more	344	44.0	52,972	55.7
Don't know	37	4.7	--	--
Refused	117	15.0	--	--

1 Census data related to race and Hispanic origin refer to the entire population, while the data for the AACVS refer to respondents age 18 years and older.

2 A \$50,000 dividing mark was used, since the census and AACVS categories only corresponded at this mark.

Overall, more than 92 percent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of life in their neighborhood, while more than 86 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of life in the city. The ratings were based on a four-point scale (very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, satisfied, very satisfied), with four indicating the highest level of satisfaction. Note in Table 2 that although

respondents were generally satisfied, their mean rating for satisfaction with the quality of life in the city (3.03) was considerably lower than their rating for neighborhood quality of life (3.35). In other words, as a group, the respondents were more satisfied with the quality of life within their neighborhoods than they were with the quality of life in the city as a whole ( $p < .001$ ).

While overall satisfaction levels were high, several significant differences across demographic characteristics emerged in the data. With regard to city quality of life, males (3.10) were more satisfied than females (3.00,  $p < .05$ ); white respondents (3.08) were more satisfied than Alaska Native/American

*Please see Fear of Crime, page 8*

**Table 2. Mean Respondent Ratings for Satisfaction with Quality of Life<sup>1</sup>**

	Satisfaction with quality of life			
	City		Neighborhood	
	Mean rating <sup>2</sup>	N	Mean rating <sup>2</sup>	N
<b>All Respondents</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>778</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	3.10	293	3.38	296
Female	3.00	475	3.34	481
Refused	2.00	1	2.00	1
<b>Race</b>				
White	3.08	589	3.39	594
African-American	3.00	39	3.33	40
Alaska Native/American Indian	2.77	48	3.14	49
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.95	21	3.38	21
<b>Other</b>	2.77	22	3.41	22
Multi-racial	2.88	26	3.22	27
Don't know	3.00	1	3.00	1
Refused	3.05	22	3.09	23
<b>Hispanic Origin</b>				
Hispanic	2.95	41	3.37	41
Non-Hispanic	3.04	712	3.36	720
Don't know	4.00	1	4.00	1
Refused	2.93	15	3.06	16
<b>Age</b>				
18-19	2.81	31	3.06	33
20-24	3.07	59	3.28	60
25-34	3.02	163	3.26	164
35-44	3.06	176	3.37	177
45-54	3.07	165	3.36	166
55-64	2.95	104	3.48	106
65+	3.11	56	3.63	57
Don't know	4.00	1	4.00	1
Refused	2.86	14	3.00	14
<b>Household income</b>				
Less than \$10,000	2.94	17	3.12	17
\$10,000-\$19,999	2.92	37	3.13	39
\$20,000-\$29,999	2.88	75	3.20	76
\$30,000-\$39,999	2.90	68	3.25	69
\$40,000-\$49,999	3.04	79	3.35	80
\$50,000-\$59,999	3.21	78	3.41	79
\$60,000-\$69,999	3.08	52	3.42	52
\$70,000 or more	3.08	212	3.46	213
Don't know	2.94	36	3.27	37
Refused	3.06	115	3.40	116

1 Respondents answering "don't know" are excluded.  
 2 Figures based on a four-point scale: (4) very satisfied; (3) satisfied; (2) satisfied; (1) very dissatisfied.

**Table 3. Mean Respondent Ratings for Fear of Crime<sup>1</sup>**

	Fear of crime			
	City		Neighborhood	
	Mean rating <sup>2</sup>	N	Mean rating <sup>2</sup>	N
<b>All Respondents</b>	<b>2.41</b>	<b>773</b>	<b>1.91</b>	<b>778</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	2.23	296	1.81	297
Female	2.51	476	1.97	480
Refused	3.00	1	3.00	1
<b>Race</b>				
White	2.40	589	1.91	595
African-American	2.30	40	1.75	40
Alaska Native/American Indian	2.55	49	2.18	49
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.38	21	1.80	20
<b>Other</b>	2.55	22	1.68	22
Multi-racial	2.52	27	1.85	27
Don't know	4.00	1	4.00	1
Refused	2.22	23	1.87	23
<b>Hispanic Origin</b>				
Hispanic	2.44	41	1.93	41
Non-Hispanic	2.40	715	1.92	720
Don't know	3.00	1	1.00	1
Refused	2.19	16	1.81	16
<b>Age</b>				
18-19	2.42	33	1.64	33
20-24	2.32	60	1.78	60
25-34	2.34	161	1.93	164
35-44	2.47	177	1.99	176
45-54	2.41	167	1.98	167
55-64	2.46	106	1.89	106
65+	2.42	55	1.77	57
Don't know	2.00	1	2.00	1
Refused	2.31	13	2.00	14
<b>Household income</b>				
Less than \$10,000	2.18	17	2.18	17
\$10,000-\$19,999	2.69	39	2.20	40
\$20,000-\$29,999	2.35	74	1.96	75
\$30,000-\$39,999	2.57	69	2.04	69
\$40,000-\$49,999	2.48	80	1.89	80
\$50,000-\$59,999	2.45	78	2.03	79
\$60,000-\$69,999	2.31	52	1.87	52
\$70,000 or more	2.43	213	1.87	213
Don't know	2.25	36	1.50	36
Refused	2.26	115	1.83	117

1 Respondents answering "don't know" are excluded.  
 2 Figures based on a four-point scale: (4) very fearful; (3) somewhat fearful; (2) not very fearful; (1) not at all fearful.

## Fear of Crime

(continued from page 7)

Indian respondents (2.77,  $p < .01$ ); and those with higher household incomes were more satisfied than those with lower household incomes ( $p < .05$ ). Significant differences were also found in ratings of neighborhood quality of life. Younger respondents were less satisfied with neighborhood quality of life than older respondents ( $p < .001$ ), and respondents with higher household incomes were more satisfied than those with lower household incomes ( $p < .05$ ).

## Neighborhood Conditions

A series of questions in the COPS Addendum portion of the AACVS asked respondents whether or not disorderly conditions existed in their neighborhood. These conditions included disorderly behaviors (illegal public drinking/drug use, public drug sales, prostitution, panhandling/begging, loitering/hanging out, truancy, transients or homeless sleeping on streets or benches) and disorderly conditions (abandoned cars/buildings, rundown/neglected buildings, poor lighting, overgrown shrubs/trees, trash, empty lots, vandalism or graffiti). The most commonly cited condition, identified by 23 percent of respondents, was poor neighborhood lighting. Other common conditions included empty lots (19.1%), il-

legal public drinking/drug use (19.1%), vandalism/graffiti (18.8%), loitering/hanging out (18.4%), overgrown trees and shrubs (17.9%), rundown/neglected buildings (15.4%), trash (15.1%), truancy (15.1%), and abandoned cars/buildings (14.1%). Less common were transients/homeless sleeping on streets or benches (10.6%), panhandling/begging (10.2%), public drug sales (8.6%), and prostitution (4.9%).

## Neighborhood and City Fear of Crime

Survey respondents were asked several questions concerning their level of fear in their neighborhood and the city. Once again, a four-point scale (not at all fearful, not very fearful, somewhat fearful, very fearful) was used; higher mean scores indicate higher levels of fear. As shown in Table 3, respondents indicated that they were not overly fearful of crime in their neighborhood. The mean rating (1.91) was very close to "not very fearful" on the four-point scale. Only about 1 in 5 respondents (20.5%) acknowledged being very fearful or somewhat fearful of crime in their neighborhood. The analysis revealed that female respondents were more fearful than male respondents ( $p < .01$ ). In addition, the large number of respondents answering "don't know" to the household income question ( $n = 36$ ) had significantly lower levels of fear than respondents in other income categories. Finally,

Alaska Natives/American Indians exhibited more neighborhood fear than other racial groups ( $p < .05$ ).

Respondents' level of fear in their city (2.41) was higher than respondent level of fear in their neighborhood (1.91), with the differences statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). Nearly half (46.6%) of all respondents expressed some fear (either somewhat fearful or very fearful) about crime in their city. Again, female respondents reported higher levels of fear than male respondents ( $p < .001$ ). Respondents with household incomes in the \$10,000-\$19,999 and \$30,000-\$39,999 categories also reported higher levels of fear in the city ( $p < .05$ ).

This brief descriptive analysis suggests that most Anchorage residents are satisfied with the quality of life in their city and neighborhood and are not generally fearful of crime. It will be possible to conduct more sophisticated analyses with the survey data in order to examine relationships between variables. For example, what factors affect respondent fear? Do disorderly conditions in a respondent's neighborhood cause them to express more fear about crime?

*The complete results of this analysis will be available in a final report later this spring. Matthew Giblin is an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at York College of Pennsylvania. From 2000 to 2002, he was a research associate with the Justice Center.*

# Review Essay—Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment

John Riley

*Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*

Edited by Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind

The New Press, New York. 2002. 355 pages.

Incarceration is a costly business. There are now over two million persons held in American jails or prisons, and recent official statistics indicate that state and federal agencies spend over \$27 billion annually to fund correctional programs. Given our aging prison population, there is little doubt that costs will continue to rise in the years to come. Of course, the cost of incarceration cannot be measured in exclusively financial terms. Imprisonment imposes a variety of costs on inmates, correctional workers, and on the community. Some of these costs have

long been obvious, while others have only recently come to our attention.

*Invisible Punishment*, edited by Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind, is a collection of articles focusing attention on "the collateral consequences of mass imprisonment." These consequences, often only dimly foreseen at sentencing, have a tremendous impact, not only on the offender, but also on families, communities, and on the nation as a whole. On a broad scale, imprisonment today typically involves felony convictions of poor and minority defendants, often for charges involving drugs. Some of the consequences of a felony conviction are well known—longstanding restrictions on travel, firearms ownership, and voting—but many additional restrictions have been enacted in laws passed since the beginning of the "get tough" movement in the 1980s. There have been hundreds of changes to state

and federal law that impose additional penalties on felons, penalties that also impact families and the communities from which the majority of today's felons come. These include laws limiting access to public housing, federal educational benefits, jobs, and job training. This collection of articles brings together a set of concerns that until now have been discussed independently, in works reaching smaller, more narrowly focused audiences. This is the first comprehensive discussion of the broad range of consequences imposed on us by recent policies of mass incarceration. For this reason alone *Invisible Punishment* is a useful and important book.

Mauer and Chesney-Lind are well known and respected contributors to the criminal justice literature. In addition to collaborating on an introduction, they have each authored individual articles that appear in

this collection. The book also includes work by others who are well known in the criminal justice community, including Todd Clear, Angela Davis, Vivian Stern, Peter Y. Sussman, and Jeremy Travis.

The articles found in *Invisible Punishment* touch on topics as diverse as family life, voting behavior, epidemiology, econometrics, and foreign policy. Taken as a whole, the articles raise serious questions about the viability of a national crime policy that seems grounded in fear of the poor and tends to reject rehabilitation in favor of punishment and exclusion. The essays use first-rate scholarship and the substantial experience of the authors without becoming mired in apologetics, formulaic criticism, or professional jargon. Some of the articles, like Forman's essay on minority/police relations, are focused on problems within the justice system. But most go beyond the system itself, suggesting that the impact of mass incarceration may be discerned in a variety of unexpected places in the larger society. In *Invisible Punishment*, we see the collateral consequences of punishment in the eroding status of poor and minority women, in policies that force innocent family members from their homes as punishment for the suspected crimes of others, in the struggles of communities forced to forgo the social and economic contributions of many of their young men, and in the spread of diseases like drug-resistant tuberculosis and AIDS. We also see systematic distortion in electoral politics and in economic planning and policies.

Mauer's "Mass Imprisonment and the Disappearing Voters," an account of the electoral consequences of current incarceration policies, is particularly thought-provoking. According to Mauer, four million Americans were prohibited from voting in the presidential election of 2002 by laws that disenfranchise convicted felons. Citing the work of sociologists Christopher Uggen and Jeff Manza, Mauer argues that disenfranchisement of convicted felons has changed the face of American politics:

Even with a projected lower turnout, [Uggen and Manza] conclude that disenfranchisement policies have affected the outcome of seven U.S. Senate races from 1970 to 1998, generally in states with close elections and a substantial number of disenfranchised voters. In each case the Democratic candidate would have won rather than the Republican victor. Projecting the impact of these races over time leads them to conclude that disenfranchisement prevented Democratic control of the Senate from 1986 to 2000.

Western, Pettit, and Guetzkow's article, "Black Economic Progress in the Era of Mass Imprisonment," describes another way in which current crime policies alter both the political landscape and our perception of our own economic progress. The authors argue that the failure to account for incarcerated individuals in standard economic statistics has resulted in misleading official reports on employment and economic inequality. Standard reports create the illusion of economic progress for many low-income Americans where actual progress is lacking. They do so through a kind of statistical slight-of-hand:

In measuring employment or wages, the predominately low-skill and minority men locked up in prisons or jails are not included in the standard labor force. Thus imprisonment effectively conceals economic inequality by excluding large numbers of poor men from official accounts of the labor market. As we will see...the economic progress of young black men has been substantially overstated.

According to Western, Pettit, and Guetzkow, conventional economic statistics show that the employment prospects of young, white dropouts improved between 1980 and 1999, while their research, after adjusting for incarceration, found that employment for this group actually declined during those years. Adjustments for other incarcerated populations produce even worse findings. Conventional economic statistics overstated employment for young black high school dropouts by 9 percent at the start of the incarceration boom in 1980 and by 21 percent in 1999. Overall, the authors of this piece conclude that mass incarceration "...conceals and deepens economic inequality between blacks and whites."

While many of the individual contributions to this collection shine, it is the overall collection that is the great strength of the book. The individual articles come together to offer a broad and compelling perspective on America's abnormal dependence on incarceration. The essays are united by a number of themes, perhaps the most powerful of which is the notion that mass incarceration may well become a self-perpetuating phenomenon—a vicious cycle of arrest, imprisonment, and recidivism. Researchers have only recently begun to consider the ways in which mass incarceration weakens social control in poor, high-crime communities. Emerging evidence suggests that we may actually promote increased recruitment to criminal careers in these communities when we incarcerate at the very high rates that have been common in the United States in the last

twenty years.

Since incarceration on the scale now seen in the United States is unprecedented in modern, western democracies, it is not surprising that it should have unprecedented consequences, and the longer policies of mass incarceration are tolerated, the harder they may be to eliminate. The articles brought together in *Invisible Punishment* show how mass incarceration has undermined the status of minorities and women, diminished trust in the legal order, weakened families and communities, altered political outcomes and economic policies, and hurt our standing in the rest of the world. These are compelling reasons to rethink our sentencing policies and to reconsider those alternative sentencing options that have proven useful and durable in other democratic nations. As legislatures become increasingly hard pressed to find the resources required to sustain high levels of imprisonment, these options may come to seem more attractive.

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## Drug Use Trends

(continued from page 11)

across racial/ethnic groups. For both males and females, arrestees of African descent were significantly more likely than any other ethnic group to test positive for cocaine. (The small number of Hispanic females— $n=1$ ;  $n=4$ ;  $n=4$ —and Asian females— $n=4$ ;  $n=4$ ;  $n=2$ —renders their prevalence estimates highly erratic and susceptible to drastic variation with the addition/subtraction of only one or two positive test results. Therefore, for comparative purposes, the percentage of Hispanic and Asian females who tested positive for drug use were excluded.) Conversely, Alaska Native and American Indian arrestees were found to be the least likely of the ethnic groups studied to test positive for cocaine. It should also be noted that while the cocaine screen detects the re-

cent use of both powder cocaine and rock cocaine, it does not differentiate between the two forms of the drug; therefore the method of ingestion is not discernable from the assay data.

Urinalysis results for opiates, methamphetamine and PCP (not presented here) converge on one point: among the Anchorage arrestee population, there is a remarkably low prevalence of opiate, methamphetamine and PCP use. While it does appear that female arrestees might have a higher rate of opiate use, the number of positive test results for both men and women booked into Anchorage jails is so low that making such distinctions is somewhat premature and dubious.

The final column in each table provides the urinalysis results for male and female arrestees who tested positive for any of the 10 drugs screened in the ADAM program.

On the whole, female arrestees appear to have a greater probability than males of testing positive for any of 10 drugs. Moreover, there is evidence that women brought to Anchorage jails in 2001 were more likely to test positive for any of the 10 drugs tested than in 2000, especially white and Native women under the age of 30. In the aggregate, the pattern of drug use among males across the 10 drugs tested did not change noticeably across age or race/ethnicity groups. Despite the subtle differences in drug use patterns between women and men arrested in Anchorage, female and male arrestees share one important drug use characteristic: roughly one out of every two arrestee intakes will have used at least one of the ten drugs screened by ADAM within days of their incarceration.

*Brad Myrston is a research associate with the Justice Center.*



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