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# "Doing" parenthood : fragile families in the fast life and under mass correctional supervision

Ana Lilia Campos-Holland  
*University of Iowa*

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“DOING” PARENTHOOD:  
FRAGILE FAMILIES IN THE *FAST LIFE* AND UNDER  
MASS CORRECTIONAL SUPERVISION

by

Ana Lilia Campos-Holland

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree  
in Sociology in  
the Graduate College of  
the University of Iowa

July 2012

Thesis Co-Supervisors: Professor Karen Heimer  
Associate Professor Michael Sauder

## ABSTRACT

Parenthood is a role that shapes the lives of parents and children. According to the sociology of families and marriages, criminology, and the sociology of punishment, the most alienated individuals in *unequal America* practice parenthood in *fragile families* struggling with poverty, the *code of the street*, and under correctional supervision. In attempts to connect and contribute to these literatures, this research project examines how individuals' delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage influence their parent role performance on the home stage. To do so, this qualitative study collected 57 semi-structured interviews (12 mothers and 45 fathers) and analyzes participants' parent role, delinquent/criminal role, and client/inmate role. The findings suggest that a cross-generational role conflict shapes participants' parent role performance throughout their life course. Although conflicting roles (roles with conflicting expectations) can coexist in the self, limited resources (time, energy, and money) and problematic boundaries (weak or impenetrable) between social situations bring role conflict to the center of role performance. In this case, the role conflict between participants' ideal parent role on the home stage, delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and client/inmate role on the correctional stage shapes participants' parent role performance throughout their life course.

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Graduate College  
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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PH.D. THESIS

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This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

Ana Lilia Campos-Holland

has been approved by the Examining Committee  
for the thesis requirement for the Doctor of  
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Carol Coohy

To my parents, my siblings, my nieces and nephew, my husband, and all those  
who came before me.

Human lives are typically embedded in social relationships with kin and friends across the life span...The misfortune and the opportunity of adult children, as well as their personal problems, become intergenerational.

Glen H. Elder (1994, 6)



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It took a village to make this project possible. I will be eternally grateful to the mothers and fathers who opened their lives and shared with me their struggles. I would like to thank the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections (pseudo name for the state where the study took place) for granting me access to the research settings and the Institutional Review Board at the University of Iowa for always prioritizing participants' safety. I would like to thank my dissertation committee members, Mary Campbell, Steven Hitlin and Carol Coohy, for their continuous support. And I am especially grateful to my dissertation committee co-chairs, Karen Heimer and Michael Sauder, who supported and encouraged me during this project and throughout my graduate studies. This project was completed with the support of the American Sociological Association, the National Institute of Drug Abuse, Augustana College, and the University of Iowa.

¡Gracias!

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO “DOING” PARENTHOOD

After a long and deadly war against Pablo Escobar, Columbia’s government identified his Achilles heel, his wife and children.<sup>1</sup> A significant portion of individuals involved in the illicit distribution and/or illicit consumption of substances/drugs are fathers and mothers (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002). Whether it is the crack dealer in the streets, the meth lab producer in the one bedroom apartment, the cocaine delivery boy in the suburbs, or the alcoholic at the family gathering, the illicit distribution and consumption of substances/drugs is a family matter. *Decent* and *street families* in alienated communities within *unequal America* struggle with the *code of the street* (Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003). Thus, it is imperative to investigate how individuals practice parenthood within criminal culture (*fast life* here after).

Furthermore, the United States has become the world leader in incarceration, with 756 prisoners per 100,000 individuals in the national population (Wallmsley 2009; see tables A1 & A2 Appendix A, page 436). Beyond this imprisonment era, the criminal justice department has developed a wider grip. From 1980 to 2009, the probation population changed from 1,118,097 to 7,225,800, the jail population changed from 182,288 to 760,400, the prison population changed from 319,598 to 1,524,513, and the parole population changed from 220,438 to 819,308 (see table A3 in Appendix A, page 437). In addition to the expansion of all correctional programs, the population under correctional supervision experiences high recidivism rates (Snyder 2011). Thus, the United States is not only experiencing a mass imprisonment era, but a mass correctional supervision era (Goffman 2009). And using data from the 1990s, Momula (2006) finds that 3,725,900 individuals under correctional supervisions are parents to 7,476,500 children (see table A4 in Appendix A, page 437). Thus, it is essential to investigate how individuals practice parenthood under mass correctional supervision.

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<sup>1</sup> “The True Story of Killing Pablo,” History Channel (March 24, 2003)

And according to the sociology of families and marriages, parenthood is a role that shapes the lives of parents and children and varies across time, places, social locations, historical periods, cultural circumstances, and subsectors of society (Gatrell 2005; Furstenberg 2011; Morgan 2011; Glassman and Eisikovits 2006; Datta 2007; Berkowitz and Marsiglio 2007). In *unequal America*, unplanned births and being born to teen parents, to unmarried parents, and to parents with children in multiple households are specifically concentrated in the lower classes (Ellwood and Jencks 2004; Cherlin 2011; England, McClintock, and Shafer 2011). The sociology of families and marriages, criminology, and the sociology of punishment have found individuals in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision to initiate their parent role trajectories in unstable relationships and practice parenthood in *fragile families* within alienated communities in *unequal America* (Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003; Hairston 2003; Travis and Waul 2003; Cherlin 2011; England, McClintock, and Shafer 2011; Goffman 2009). Thus, it is fundamental to investigate how individuals practice parenthood in *fragile families* within the *fast life* and under correctional supervision.

More specifically, how do individuals' delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage influence their parent role performance on the home stage? Taking a symbolic interactionist and holistic approach, this study attempts to answer this research question and connect/contribute to the sociology of families and marriages, the sociology of punishment, and criminology. To do so, this qualitative study analyzes 57 semi-structured interviews (12 mothers and 45 fathers), with a focus on participants' parent role, delinquent/criminal role, and client/inmate role trajectories across the life course and within a cross-generation process.



### Contributions

In attempts to contribute to and connect criminology, the sociology of punishment, and the sociology of families and marriages, this study examines parenthood practices in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision. First, with the exception of Wilkinson and colleagues (2009), criminology has been primarily concerned with understanding the criminal culture and parenthood in criminal culture has been an afterthought (see Short, Strodbeck, and Cartwright 1962; Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003). Thus, this study brings parenthood to the center and attempts to understand how individuals practice parenthood within criminal culture. Second, methodologically speaking, this study joins Goffman (2009) and encourages the sociology of punishment to expand its empirical inquiry from the mass imprisonment era to the mass correctional supervision era.<sup>2</sup> With this purpose, this study attempts to understand how being under mass correctional supervision influences parenthood within *fragile family* life. Third, the sociology of families and marriages presents parenthood as a role that changes across time, places, social locations, historical periods, cultural circumstances, and subsectors of society (Gatrell 2005; Furstenberg 2011; Morgan 2011; Glassman and Eisikovits 2006; Datta 2007; Berkowitz and Marsiglio 2007). Contributing to this literature, this study attempts to understand parenthood within the criminal culture and during the mass correctional supervision era. Fourth, the human experience is complex and it is empirically limiting to separately study parenthood in the criminal culture and parenthood under correctional supervision. In attempts to connect these three literatures, this study takes a holistic approach and attempts to understand how *fragile family* life, the criminal lifestyle, and being under correctional supervision are interconnected. Lastly, human lives are embedded within kin social relationships across the life course in a cross-

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<sup>2</sup> The criminal justice system has a wider grip than previously established (including all correctional programs), the population under correctional supervision is continuously transitioning from one correctional program to the other, and experiences high recidivism rates (Wallmsley 2009; Bureau of Justice Statistics 2009; Snyder 2011).

generational process (Elder 1994). To contribute to the recent interest in the generation transmission of parenthood, criminal behavior, and being under correctional supervision, this study attempts to understand participants' parenthood experiences in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision within a cross-generational process. Parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision is a complex social phenomenon.

### Organization

This study investigates how participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and client/inmate role performance shape participants' parent role performance. With this purpose, this dissertation includes a review of the literature, methods, eight analysis chapters, and concluding thoughts. Chapter 2 (*Theoretical Foundations*) reviews previous literature regarding the impact class has on parenthood, the relationship between social alienation, family, and crime, and the impact mass correctional supervision has on family life. Furthermore, this chapter identifies symbolic interactionism as the ideal theoretical framework to analyze participants' attempts to perform multiple conflicting roles throughout their life course. Although fragmented, the sociology literature establishes the foundation for this study.

To capture individuals' lived experiences with "doing" parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision, this study conducted 57 semi-structured interviews with parents under correctional supervision in two community-based correctional facilities in a *Midwest State*. Chapter 3 (*Methods*) discusses this study's methodological approach, the importance of analyzing the impact mass criminal justice surveillance has on family life, parents under correctional supervision and their children as the population of interest, a full description of the research setting (the *Metro Area*<sup>3</sup>), recruitment, the sample, and data preparation and analysis. And chapters 4-11 present participants' parent

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<sup>3</sup> To protect the participants, this study will use the *Metro Area* as a pseudo name for the urban area where the study took place. This urban metropolitan area includes four cities, two cities in *Midwest State* (County III) and two cities in *State B* (County I). The interviews took place in *Midwest State* and *State B* is the pseudo name for the neighboring state.

role performance in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision (see table A26 and A27 in Appendix A, pages 455 and 456; see figure B3 in Appendix B, in page 459).

Chapter 4 (*“Doing” Parenthood within Linked Lives*) illustrates participants’ initial construction of the ideal parent role and acquisition of the delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role during participants’ childhood and adolescence through a cross-generational process. Chapter 5 (*Transition into “Doing” Parenthood*) illustrates how the delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role shape participants’ initiation into their parent role trajectories (conception, pregnancy, and birth processes). Chapter 6 (*“Doing” Parenthood in the Fast Life*) illustrates how the role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the ideal parent role shapes participants’ parent role performance. More specifically, drug dealing parents practice two-sphere parenthood and substance/drug using parents practice partial parenthood. Chapter 7 (*“Doing” Parenthood under Surveillance*) illustrates how institutions of social control (the family in collaboration with family court and the juvenile/criminal justice system) responds to participants’ *inadequate* parent role performance and delinquent/criminal role performance and removes children and parents (respectively) from the home stage.

Chapter 8 (*Snatched from “Doing” Parenthood*) illustrates participants’ negotiation with children’s caretakers for access to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage. Chapter 9 (*“Doing” Parenthood under Corrections*) illustrates how participants manage their limited resources (time, energy, and money) to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage. Chapter 10 (*Reintegration into “Doing” Parenthood*) illustrates how reintegrating participants negotiate with caretakers and their children for access to the home stage and the opportunity to perform their parent role upon their return. And lastly, chapter 11 (*“Doing” Parenthood in the Aftermath*) illustrates how participants perform their parent role after gaining access to their home stage. Living linked lives, embedded within kin

social relationships across the life course in a cross-generational process (Elder 1994), role conflict threatens parenthood.

### Overall Findings

Living linked lives, participants acquire and begin to perform their parent role, delinquent/criminal role, and client/inmate role at an early age within a cross-generational process. In a complex society, the individual plays multiple roles and roles are very likely to conflict (Stryker 2002). Although conflicting roles (roles with conflicting expectations) can coexist in the self, limited resources (time, energy and money) and weak (or impenetrable) boundaries between social situations bring role conflict to the center of role performance (Stryker 2002; Goffman 1959). In this case, role conflict between the ideal parent role on the home stage, delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and the client/inmate role on the correctional stage shapes participants' parent role performance throughout their life course (see tables A26-27 in Appendix A, pages 455-456; also see figure B3 in Appendix B, page 459). Overall, conflicting role expectations, limited resources, and weak (or impenetrable) boundaries between social situations threaten participants' parent role performance in the *fast life* and under mass correctional supervision.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

This study builds on the theoretical and empirical foundations of several research areas. Specifically, it draws on work in the sociology of families and marriages that has explored the impact class has on parenthood. It builds on the criminology literature that has established the relationship between social alienation, family, and crime. In addition, it draws on research on the sociology of punishment that has explored the impact mass incarceration, reintegration, and recently the impact hyper criminal justice surveillance has on family life. These three literatures are beginning to expand into the generational transmission of parenthood, crime, and incarceration, and this study contributes to those efforts. And symbolic interactionism offers the theoretical framework that I employ to analyze participants' attempts to perform multiple conflicting roles throughout the life course. The present study takes a holistic approach and analyzes the lived experiences of 57 participants with parenthood in *fragile families*, the criminal culture, and under correctional supervision.

#### Parenthood and *Fragile Families*

According to the sociology of families and marriages, parenthood is a role that shapes the lives of parents and children and changes across time, places, social locations, historical periods, and cultural circumstances (Castelain-Meunier 2002; Gatrell 2005; Goldscheider, Hogan, and Bures 2001; Furstenberg 2011; Stueve and Pleck 2001; Morgan 2011; Liamputtong, et al. 2004; Glassman and Eisikovits 2006; Datta 2007; Berkowitz and Marsiglio 2007). Like other roles, being a parent is associated with behaviors, obligations, and privileges (Stryker 2002; Enos 2001). Mothers are expected to invest time, energy and emotional work in their children while managing multiple roles (Gatrell 2005). And although fathers traditionally have been relegated to secondary parenting roles in the family context, recent literature suggests that fathers are now

expected to provide economic support, be nurturing and care-giving, be involved in leisure and play activities, provide moral guidance and discipline, ensure the safety of the child, connect the child to his extended family, and link the child to community members and other resources (Christiansen and Palkovitz 2001; Suderland 2000; Carlson and England 2011). And although the father role is expanding (Henwood and Procter 2003), the mother continues to be the primary parent involved in child care and child related activities (Craig 2006). More relevant to this study, parenthood varies across stratified society.

In today's *unequal America*, highly educated individuals are more likely to marry and less educated couples are more likely to divorce, creating a wide class gap (Carlson and England 2011). More specific to this study, unplanned births and being born to teen parents, to unmarried parents, and to parents with children in multiple households are specifically concentrated in the lower classes (Ellwood and Jencks 2004; Cherlin 2011; England, McClintock, and Shafer 2011). According to Edin, Nelson, and Reed (2011), unwed fathers experience most conceptions in ambiguous relationships, pregnancy occurs short after the initiation of a romantic relationship, and only a few pregnancies are planned. And the social norms that define roles and responsibilities are less clear in ambiguous relationships (Forste 2002). Although the fathers are initially enthusiastic and the ambiguous relationships become more stable, infidelities, sexual jealousy, and gender mistrust lead to repeated breakups (Edin, Nelson, and Reed 2011). Using the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study data, McLanahan (2011) finds that two-thirds of the initially unwed couples (at birth of their child) in the sample were no longer together five years later. More relevant to this study, the end of a relationship is met with a re-partnering, having another child in the new relationship, ending the second relationship, continuously repeating this re-partnering pattern, and creating a complex and long-term unstable home environment or fragile families (McLanahan 2011). In this context, low

income fathers are more likely to live apart from their children (Carlson and England 2011).

Furthermore, previous studies suggest that whether it is single-parenthood or parenthood in continuous unstable and complex romantic relationships, parenting in low income families involves support within an extensive kin network. Stack (1970) illustrates the salience of reciprocity in kin networks to survive poverty in American society. Individuals become involved in *swapping*, sharing the limited resources within kinship lines in a continuously reciprocal process. For example, in the analysis of working-class and low-income custodial African American single fathers (n=24), Hamer and Marchioro (2002) find men's kin networks enhance their parenting. The reciprocity within kinship networks makes family life bearable below the poverty line.

Overall, the sociology of families and marriages defines parenthood as a role, establishes the relationship between class and family life, and highlights the importance of kin networks for survival under the poverty line. Using this literature as a foundation, this study moves forward and attempts to understand the entanglement between *fragile family* life, social alienation, and crime.

### Crime and *Fragile Families*

Criminology theories have identified the family as a control mechanism that reduces delinquency/crime, and as source of deviant/criminal definitions and strain that increases delinquency/crime (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990; Hirschi 1969; Sutherland, 1947; Agnew 2006). Most relevant to this study, the focus on parenthood in criminal culture is not a recent interest in criminology (Short, Strodtbeck, and Cartwright 1962), but there is a limited literature. Primarily concerned with understanding the criminal lifestyle, parenthood in criminal cultures has been an afterthought. Although limited, a few recent studies have illustrated the entanglement between *fragile family* life and criminal culture in poor communities in the inner-cities of *unequal American* society. In

alienated communities, *decent* and *street families* struggle with the *code of the street* (Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003).

*Decent families* in urban disadvantaged neighborhoods embrace middle class values (working hard, saving money, having something, and building a good life) and accept the *make-do-with-what-you-have* philosophy (Anderson 1999). In this spirit, *decent families* focus on raising children, instilling in them middle class values, a sense of responsibility, a *backbone*, and a certain amount of hope for the future. “Decent parents tend to be strict in their child-rearing practices, encouraging children to respect authority and walk a straight moral line,” (Anderson 1999, 39). Adults in these families sacrifice for children, become allies with outside institutions (school and churches), are polite and considerate of others, and have a positive outlook. The minority of *decent families* is male-headed nuclear families and the majority is female-headed households, both continuously struggling to keep the children away from the street culture. *Decent* and *street* individuals may coexist in the same extended family, *street* individuals may present themselves as *decent*, and one person may exhibit both *decent* and *street* orientations depending on the circumstances (Anderson 1999).

The most desperate and alienated people of the inner cities are *street families*, the casualties of the American socio-economic stratified system (Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003). Living in an urban environment with limited education, *street families* have limited access to well-paying jobs, are objects of exploitations, are continuously involved in an intense competition for scarce resources, are constantly on guard, approach all persons and situations as part of life’s obstacles, and lack an outlook that would allow them to see far beyond their immediate circumstances (Anderson 1999). In this context, *street families* experience frustration over bills, food, liquor, cigarettes, and drugs, and embrace the *code of the street* wholeheartedly (Anderson 1999). Street individuals have limited understanding of priorities and consequences, prevail by being *slick* and *outsmarting* others, and perceive conventional systems unworthy of respect (Anderson



1999). As the most socially alienated individuals in society, *street families* engage in income-generating illicit opportunities (Wilkinson, Magora, and Khurana 2009).

In a masculine driven street culture, *decent* and *street* oriented individuals become parents at a young age and begin to build *fragile families*. Similar to the family and class literature, the criminology literature has found that young couples in street culture do not know each other well before they have a child (Furstenberg 1995; Nurse 2004). Men in street culture perceive non-relative women as “whores” to “be exploited who [are] weak, untrustworthy and not much bothering with in a personally invested manner” and “vehicles for fulfillment of men’s criminal objectives and sexual desires” (Mullins 2006, 104; also see Short, Strodbeck, and Cartwright 1962). With a sample of rural and urban whites and Latino males, Nurse found an atmosphere of antagonism against women (2004). In this antagonistic context, men are encouraged to lead a promiscuous life. “A young man’s primary goal is to find as many willing females as possible...must get some...and prove he is getting it...Sex is prized as a testament not of love but of control over another human being,” (Anderson 1999, 150). The *code of the street* encourages men to live free from formal conjugal ties, devalue conventional marital relationships, and view long-term ties with women and children as a burden to their ability to “come as I want and do as I please,” (Anderson 1999, 156; also see Nurse 2004 and Short, Strodbeck, and Cartwright 1962). In a street culture where men prove their masculinity through sexual conquest, becoming a father is a casualty of the environment (Short, Strodbeck, and Cartwright 1962; Bourgois 2003; Mullins 2006). Men who are credited with a pregnancy and chose to deny fatherhood gain points for their defiance amongst their street peers. While those who accept it are perceived to be *chumps* or *fools* (Anderson 1999; Short, Strodbeck, and Cartwright 1962; Bourgois 2003).

Offering a different perspective and using a sample of 416 young men who lead an active criminal life, Wilkinson and colleagues (2009) offer the most recent and complete look at fatherhood within the criminal culture and differentiates between

expectations and parent role performance. In recounting their experiences and reflections of fatherhood, the subjects discussed various father role expectations—being a financial provider, taking care of the child’s basic needs, being a protector and/or moral teacher, taking the child on outings, spending the time with the child and family, ensuring the child *knows who father is*, setting goals for the future, helping the next generation to do better than he did, and acknowledging the need for personal change for the child’s well-being. However young age, early procreation, dispersed family kin network, no father role models in their family of orientation, not residing with the children, not being romantically involved with the mother, and having low human capital limited their ability to perform the father role. Most importantly, the young fathers lived linked lives and their interpersonal relationships with the child’s mother, their family of orientation, the child mother’s family of orientation, and criminal peers influence their ability to be present and involved fathers. Fathers with weak or no ties were the most likely to be absent and disengaged. Overall, Wilkinson and colleagues (2009) found that young fathers who are experiencing cumulative disadvantage struggle with multiple challenges that limit their ability to achieve their fatherhood expectations. And similar to men, the criminal subculture shapes women’s motherhood.

In criminal culture, girls and women balance their ideal romantic dreams with a harsh reality of a masculine driven street culture. With a limited sense of the future, “when a girl is approached by a boy, her faith in the dream [of having a boyfriend, a fiancé, or a husband and the fairy-tale prospect of living happily ever after] clouds her view of the situation,” (Anderson 1999, 152). Moreover, becoming a young mother meant “following the traditional path of escaping from a troubled home by falling romantically in love with an idealized man and embracing motherhood wholeheartedly,” (Bourgeois 2003, 275). In becoming mothers, young women gain access to their kin networks and access the family’s very limited resources in the community (Bourgeois 2003; Anderson 1999; Short, Strodbeck, and Cartwright 1962). And post welfare reform

and under her family's pressure, the prospective mother is to identify the father and make him responsible for the child (Anderson 1999).

Although fatherhood has been found to be a motivation for profitable criminal activity in the streets (Anderson 1999), the unstable low-wage conventional labor market and the unreliable underground labor market limit men's ability to fulfill the providing expectation. Unable to fulfill the *decent daddy* role, men embrace the *code of the street* (Bourgois 2003; Anderson, 1999). "Street culture and the underground economy provided them with an alternative forum for redefining their sense of masculine dignity around promiscuity, conspicuous violence, and ecstatic substance abuse," (Bourgois 2003, 288). And to survive in a world of scarcity, a portion of the males "converted the shame [of their] inability to maintain a household into a celebration of the street art of being an economic parasite, *cacheteando* [freeloading] off his girlfriends," (Bourgois 2003, 289). In this context, relations are strained, distrustful, and manipulative (Nurse 2004; Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004). And men's relationships with the mothers of their children determine their access to their children and level of involvement, and access is especially denied when mothers feel the father is not living up to his commitment (Nurse 2004). Thus, men perceive their relationship with the mother of their child and the child as *a package deal* (Furstenberg 1995; Nurse 2004). Furthermore, in an unstable home with marital conflict and scarce resources within the criminal culture, children are exposed to violence and substance/drug use (Parke and Clarke-Stewart 2003).

According to Anderson (1999), *street* individuals have a rather *superficial* sense of family and community. They love their children, but have a difficult time coping with the physical and emotional demands of parenthood and are unable to reconcile their needs with those of their children. Children *come up hard* in a home environment characterized by anger, verbal disputes, physical aggression, and even mayhem (Anderson 1999). Amongst the *street families*, women continue to be the primary parent

(Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003). And when the mothers prioritize the streets (employment in the for-profit illicit labor market or addiction), it “results in a parenting vacuum” (Bourgois 2003, 260). Consequently, children experience neglect/abuse and become exposed to violence in the home and the streets.

Substance/drug using mothers believed they could balance parenting and drugs by separating substance/drug use and parenting into different parts of their day (Enos 2001). However, a successful separation is not possible in the long run. Addicted mothers experienced a loss of control, became obsessed with substance/drug, neglect the children they love, expose them to substance/drug use and at times abandon them (Haight, Carter-Black, and Sheridan 2009; Mckeganey, Barnard and McIntosh 2002). Bourgois (2003) found the children of an addicted mother “sitting in the dark [because the electricity bill had not been paid], scraping the last corners of peanut butter out of an empty jar. Their mother was passed out on the bed, recovering from last night’s mission,” (263). Addicted mothers have been found to be involve their children in selling, initially as lookouts and later successful at dealing, or placed children in others’ care (Enos 2001). In this context, children learn that “you cannot take survival itself, let alone respect, for granted; you have to fight for your place in the world” (Anderson 1999, 49). And when children are not abandoned or sent to others’ care, they are exposed to violence in the home.

In addition to neglecting children, the criminology literature documents how *street families* expose their children to violence in the home and the streets (Haight, Carter-Black, and Sheridan 2009). “Many [of the males] were constantly violent against their loved ones...lashing out against the families they were unable to support,” (Bourgois 2003, 260). In discussing their use of violence within their romantic relationships, participants in the Bourgois (2003) ethnography identify children as peripheral casualties, “And then the kids [5 minor children] were there in the room all nervous [during a domestic violence episode]. I guess they were crying. She was over

the limit [embracing masculinity in the streets], and what could I do? The kids were watching. Even [infant] Lillian was there,” (Bourgois 2003, 234). Older children intervene, but get caught in the middle of the violence. “They all looked like they was going to swing at me, man, even the kids...The children knew their mother was wrong, but I was hitting their mother, and they wanted to jump me...When I saw their faces, I knew that I had to be prepared for them...I was ready to like, block their swings,” (Bourgois 2003, 238). *Street families* expose their children to violence in the home and the streets, and “by default, street culture becomes a more important socializing force when fragmented families force children to take refuge in the streets” (Bourgois 2003, 260; also see Mckeganey, Barnard, and McIntosh 2002 and Mallett, Rosenthal, and Keys 2005). Children in *street families* come-up-hard, experience neglect/abuse and are exposed to violence.

And although parents in *street families* appear to devalue the parent role (Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003), previous literature has established parents’ concerns for children. In a qualitative study with a sample of 68 crack cocaine using mothers, Kearney, Murphy and Rosenbaljm (1994) challenge the image of the neglectful substance/drug using mother. Their findings conclude that their participants highly valued motherhood, held firm standards for childrearing, and were concerned about the possible risks to their children. And when unable to fulfill motherhood responsibilities, mothers placed children with family members or/and lost custody involuntarily. To cope with the loss of their children, mothers often increased their drug use. Although women acknowledge the negative impact their addiction has had on their children, their retrospective accounts suggest they felt capable as parents (Baker and Carson 1999).

In addition to identifying the family as a control mechanism and trigger of delinquency/crime, the criminology literature has captured the interwoven realities of socioeconomic alienation, crime, and family life. Using this literature as a foundation, this study moves forward in attempts to understand how participants practice parenthood

in *fragile families*, in the criminal culture and under correctional supervision. And the sociology of punishment offers the foundations to understand the relationship between correctional supervision and family life. According to the sociology of punishment, parenthood is already fragile, and parental imprisonment adds a burden to the already *fragile families*.

#### Social Control and *Fragile Families*

Whether state punishment is a response to crime or a social phenomenon on its own rights, it reaches beyond the individual being punished (Gardland 1990). Scholars have established the negative effect imprisonment has on informal social control, political processes, the socioeconomic status of individuals, communities, and families (Mukamal 2007; Rose and Clear 2002; Uggen and Manza 2002; Western, Kleykamp, and Rosenfeld 2006; Travis, McBride, and Solomon 2003; Hagan and Dinovitzer 1999). More pertinent to this study, the effects of mass imprisonment reaches more deeply into the substance of family life (financial and social family life) and damages the human/social capital of those who are incarcerated, their families, their communities, and their children (Braman and Wood 2003; Hagan and Dinovitzer 1999). In most cases, incarceration adds to the burdens of those already struggling to overcome life's obstacles and setbacks (Travis and Waul 2003). The literature on the collateral consequences of mass imprisonment for families has focused on parental incarceration, lately on parental re-integration and the lives of families under mass correctional supervision. Just as socioeconomic alienation and criminal culture, state punishment shapes family life.

#### Parental Incarceration

When children are not present during parental arrests, frightened parents do not tell the police about their children to avoid social services (Parke and Clarke-Stewart 2003; Bourgois 2003). But whether children are noticed or not during arrests, parental incarceration changes family composition and children's living arrangements (Travis and

Waul 2003). During the past two decades, the collateral consequences literature has documented the impact incarceration has on parent role performance, the gendered selection of caretakers, parents' struggles with the caretakers to access children, the family's financial strain, and children's experience with stigma and other problems. Parental incarceration threatens already *fragile families* and children's everyday life.

### The Parent Role

Although the sociology of punishment has focused on the impact parental incarceration has on children and families, only a few studies have attempted to understand parent role performance from prison. Enos (2001) is the leading work in understanding the mother's perspective on practicing the parent role from prison. First, mothers experience the *pains of imprisonment* and other mother specific pains, including separation from their children, concern for children's well-being, and lack of contact (Sykes 1958; Covington 2003; Enos 2001; Moe and Ferraro 2006). This is especially true for first time offenders, for those who are not familiar with the criminal justice system, and those who lived with their children prior to incarceration (Enos 2001). Second, mothers are continuously concerned with losing their parent rights or that others will take their place (Enos 2001; Hairston 2003; Alleyne 2006). In some states, parents' criminality and incarceration leads to an automatic termination of parent rights (Hairston 2003). To cope with termination of parental rights, incarcerated women claim that *mothers and children always know each other* and their mothering is unique and irreplaceable (Enos 2001). Third, mothers' criminal and correctional statuses challenge their mother identity (Enos 2001). In response, mothers engage in *identity talk*, distance themselves from other inmates, express a desire to be with their children (correct others who do not do so), separate the mother identity and addict identity, separate different parent role performance based on children (not all children), and avoid criminal identities (Enos 2001; Moe and Ferraro 2006). Fourth, while performing the mother role in prison,

mothers focus on arranging visits, express interest in improving parenting, demonstrate knowledge of and interest in their children, plan reunification, and use the state of their children as an indicator of maternal fitness (Enos 2001). Incarceration threatens women's mother identity and mothers reconstruct the mother role to fit their correctional reality.

As for fathers, the *Fragile Families* and Child Wellbeing Study recently shed light on the impact incarceration has on father role performance. According to Swisher and Waller (2008), father's incarceration prior to the birth of their child, having been incarcerated since or at birth of the child, and being currently incarcerated decreases the number of days during the past month that the father has seen the child. Using the same data, Woldoff and Washington (2008) find that ever being booked and ever being incarcerated decreases the number of days fathers engage in activities with their children. Past and present incarceration decreases father's ability to be present and involved in their children's lives. And while mothers and fathers are in prison, minor children are under the care of others.

### The Caretaker

Minor children are placed in the care of others prior to and upon parental incarceration. Whether the family or social services becomes involved in placing children, parents' gender influence who becomes the child's caretaker<sup>4</sup> (Travis and Waul 2003; Enos 2001). In 1997, 58% of mothers in state prisons and 73% of the mothers in federal prison had one or more children living with them prior to imprisonment (Mumola 2000). According to Johnson and Waldfogel (2004) and Dallaire (2007), the majority of incarcerated mothers' minor children are in the care of the child's grandparent<sup>5</sup> or other relatives (65-78%), followed by children in the care of the father (17-28%), foster home

<sup>4</sup> In addition to gender, Enos (2001) suggests that differential cultural expectations influence parents' decisions about which caretaker resources to use during incarceration (also see Richie 2002).

<sup>5</sup> See Letiecq, Bailey and Porterfield (2008) for a discussion about the legal policy for grandparents as caretakers.



and other institutions (10-12%), and other caretakers (6%). In predicting children's placement during mothers' incarceration, Johnson and Waldfogel (2004) find that as the mother's number of pre-school children increase and if the mother is African American or Hispanic, the odds a child will be placed in the care of a grandparent or a relative increase (age decreases the odds). And as the mother's number of pre-school and school age children increase, if the mother is African American, and if the mother lived with the child prior to arrest, the odds a child will be placed in foster care or other institutions increase (age decreases the odds). Overall, the children of incarcerated mothers are primarily cared for by the child's grandparents.

In 1997, 35% of the fathers in state prisons and 47% of the fathers in federal prisons had one or more children living with them prior to imprisonment (Mumola 2000). Similar to the class/family literature and the criminology literature, the punishment literature suggests that the families of male prisoners are more complex than a two-parent household (Hairston 2003). The majority are not married, have more than one child with different women, their parenting role differs with the different children within the same household, and consider biological children as part of their family but not the mother of their child if not in a committed relationship (Hairston 2003). In male prisoners' families, care-giving responsibilities are shared within extended family, the women's households include relatives and other males, and only some children lived with their father prior to incarceration (Hairston 2003; Travis and Waul 2003). Thus, the incarcerated father's minor children are primarily in the care of the child's mother (78-90%), followed by children in the care of the child's grandmother or other relatives (11.5-15%), in foster care or other institutions (1-1.5%), or others (1.5-6%) (Johnson and Waldfogel 2004; Dallaire 2007). Johnson and Waldfogel (2004) also find that if the father lived with the child prior to incarceration, the odds the child will be placed in the care of the child's grandparent increase. And as the father's number of school-aged children increase, the odds the child will be placed in foster care or other agency increase.

Overall, the majority of children of incarcerated fathers are in the care of the child's mothers. And overall, parents' gender drives children's placement during their parents' incarceration.

Regardless of who becomes the caretaker, the caretaker assumes responsibility without knowing the length of the need, without enough resources to address the problem, and with no formal rights (Harm and Thompson 1995; Katz 1998; Beltran 2001; Hanlon, Carswell, and Rose 2007; Hanlon, et al. 2005). Thus, the common message to children is that residential changes will be temporary, although parental imprisonment tends to lead to long-term parental absence and residential instability (Enos 2008; Braman 2002; Phillips, et al. 2006). Changes in living arrangements also include changes in authority structure, an overall increase on non-parent adults as caretakers (adult relatives and non-relatives), and possibly separation from other siblings (Furstenburg 1995; Travis and Waul 2003). All families experience a shift in family structure, family roles are renegotiated, and new caretakers have to readjust their lives (Condry 2007; Enos 2001; Travis and Waul 2003). Furthermore, children are caught in the middle of a gendered caretaker-parent struggle.

#### Contact with Parents<sup>6</sup>

The most common caretaker of children of incarcerated fathers is the child's mother, who has a current or historic relationship with the incarcerated father (Nesmith and Ruhland 2008). And the mother's emotional reaction to the father's incarceration influences father's access to the children (Nesmith and Ruhland 2008; Nurse 2004). Upset mothers threaten fathers' ability to interact with their children, *trash talk* the father and discouraged children from contacting their incarcerated father (Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004). While being romantically involved with the mother three years after the

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<sup>6</sup> See Laughlin, Arrigo, Blevins and Coston (2008) for a full discussion regarding legal policy and children's visits to incarcerated parents.

birth of the child, controlling for past and current incarceration, increases the number of days during the past month that the father has seen the child (Swisher and Waller 2008). A romantic connection with the mother eases father's access to children.

In addition to the child's mother keeping children from visiting fathers, a portion of the fathers do not want to receive visits from the children because they think they *cannot do much*, they are fulfilling short sentences and children's visits are not necessary, they think they can compensate for their absence once they come back, and/or they want to avoid visits that are too emotionally painful for them and the children (Hairston 2003; Braman and Wood 2003). Although some fathers do not want to see their children, grandmothers keep children close to the incarcerated father (Braman and Wood 2003). While fathers navigate their romantic relationship with their children's mothers, incarcerated mothers experience positive and negative relationships with their children's caretakers.

A portion of the incarcerated mothers in the Enos (2001) study had supportive and competent caretakers. The caretakers offered children a place to live, practiced parenting practices at times superior to what the mother had been offering, and were doing things the mothers thought were important. Most importantly, the caretakers kept mothers in a central position, upholding their role as the child's mother, and involving the mothers in the decision making. But other mothers in the Enos (2001) study clashed with hostile caretakers. In these cases, the caretakers moved into the mother position, undermined or excluded the incarcerated mothers, and at times contested custody/ownership of the children. These dynamics exacerbated especially when the incarcerated mothers had left their children to pursue crime or drugs, the children had been removed because of previous inappropriate parent role performances, or the incarcerated mothers were unable to exert power over the caretaker. Conflict with the caretakers decreases contact between mothers and their children (also see Poehlmann 2005). In these cases, mothers fought a

losing battles, but claimed their biological connections and bonds with their children were *so strong that the law and its workings would have little impression* on the children.

And in addition to the caretaker not wanting children to see the parent or the incarcerated parent not wanting to see the children, other obstacles to visiting the parent arise. The additional obstacles include children not wanting to see the parent, children not having the necessary documentation for a visit or enough information about how to go about visiting, had little or no help from correctional facilities about visiting arrangements, the visit involved traveling great distance, uncomfortable and humiliating visiting procedures, correctional and social services questioning the benefit and safety of children's visits, prison environment being perceived as oppressive for children, the increased risk children would accept prison as normal, and/or if the incarcerated parent had been previously abusive (Nesmith and Ruhland 2008; Travis and Waul 2003; Hairston 2003). And when visits did occur, the visits were not a positive experience because correctional staff is solely focused on safety and security (Covington 2003). Also, travel exhaustion, the clearance process, noise level, distractions in visiting room, lack of privacy and limited toy availability threatens children's visiting experience (Covington 2003). Furthermore, visits remind parents of others' lives continuing despite their absence and that others are occupying their place (Enos 2001). In general, incarcerated mothers tend to report more frequent contact with their children than incarcerated fathers, but visits and general contact with their children decreases in quantity and in quality as the length of the parent's sentence and the number of incarcerations increase (Lynch and Sabol 2001; Nesmith and Ruhland 2008; Dodge and Pogrebin 2001).

With or without visits, incarceration can have a positive or negative impact on parents' relationship with their children. When invested in their family lives pre-incarceration, the parents' incarceration has a heightened and devastating negative effect on the child-parent bond (Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004). And even when the mother

caretakers support father-child relationships, fathers miss key events that serve to build bonds and show they are going to support the child emotionally and financially (Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004). But when an individual's criminal behavior (usually severe drug or alcohol use) has previously threatened his/her family life and/or the parent gets older, s/he uses the time in prison to rebuild severed ties with children (Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004). Thus, incarceration can damage or improve parent-child relationships. In addition to residential instability and the loss of a parent, parental imprisonment triggers the loss of financial resources and the addition of expenses, draining the family's limited financial resources (Hagan and Dinovitzer 1999).

### Financial Strain

Already relying on reciprocal kinship networks to survive poverty (Stack 1970), parental incarceration exhausts the limited financial resources.<sup>7</sup> Unavailable for employment, parental incarceration leads to the loss of the parents' income and their financial contribution to the household (Braman and Wood 2003; Travis and Waul 2003; Hairston 2003). Prior to imprisonment, a total of 70.9% of the 1997 parents in state and federal prisoners were legally employed (Mumola 2000; also see Hairston 2003), with the majority being the sole financial provider for their children (Glaze and Maruschak 2008; Thompson 2007). The loss of parental income also means the loss of child support payments. Of the formal child support, the loss ranges from \$5,000 to \$16,000 of non-payment per imprisoned parent, which continues to accumulate upon release (Festen, et al. 2002; also see Hairston 2001, 2008a, 2008b; Travis, McBride, and Solomon, 2003; Travis and Waul 2003). In addition to parents' loss of income, the funds from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families are not easily transferred from a parent to a temporary caretaker (Thompson 2007; Hairston 1998, 2002; Jeffries, Menghraj, and

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<sup>7</sup> La Vigne, Davies, and Brazzell 2008; Phillips and Gleeson 2007; Phillips, et al. 2006, Phillips, et al. 2002; Phillips and Bloom 1998; Arditti, Lambert-Shute, and Joest 2003; Arditti 2003, 2005, 2008

Hairston 2002; Bloom 1995). Furthermore, after a child joins a new household, caretakers must reduce work hours to meet childcare needs (Arditti, Lambert-Shute, and Joest 2003). Parental incarceration triggers the loss of income and other financial resources.

In addition to the loss of income, the parent's incarceration requires the development of new costly family roles revolving around the offender's needs as s/he navigates the criminal justice system (Condry 2007; Braman 2002; Braman and Wood 2003; Hairston 2003). These needs include attorney fees, collect calls, travel to prison, and everyday financial expenses in prison (Arditti 2005). Because of the high cost, most members in the kin network block the communication do not accept expensive phone calls and the prisoners' mothers tend to become the primary contact. Furthermore, the loss of income and additional expenses threaten the reciprocity kin networks.

The absence of the incarcerated parent creates a gap in the family generational structure, overloads the immediate family members and burdens extended family networks (Braman and Wood 2003; Braman 2002). As the family/class and criminology literatures have established, low income families often rely on extended kin networks to cope with poverty (Stack 1970). But parental incarceration reduces and drains resources, making it difficult for caretakers to be reciprocal family members, creating tensions in the family, and destroying social ties (Braman and Wood 2003; Braman 2002). With an absent and incarcerated generation, the grandparent caretakers are especially overburdened and unable to retire (Enos 2001; Burton 1992; Braman 2002; Braman and Wood 2003). And caretakers who have provided care for long periods of time become exhausted (Enos 2001).

The economic hardship, overall limited resources, and stresses of the changes in family structure places children in a household without the incarcerated parent and a stressed caretaker (Braman and Wood 2003). The limited resources (along with depression, blame, emotional withdrawal and irritability) affects caretakers' parenting

practices, including punitive, erratic, non-supportive parenting and at times neglectful or abusive (Bifulco, et al. 2002; Oyserman, Bybee, and Mowbray 2002; McLoyd 1990; Braman and Wood 2003). In this stressful context, it is common for marital relationships to become strained and end in divorce (Travis and Waul 2003; Hairston 2003). The free spouse becomes unhappy, financially stressed, have to prioritize the care of the child, and cannot afford to stay in the marital relationships (Braman and Wood 2003). To survive, young mothers request resources from their kin networks, search for new financial resources from other males, or/and embrace illicit means over hunger and expose children to neglect/abuse (Bourgois 2003; Braman and Wood 2003). In response to the caretakers' stress, children are sensitive and attentive to the caretakers (and incarcerated parent) and take adult responsibilities (Nesmith and Ruhland 2008).

### The Children

Children are the hidden victims of parents' criminal activity and tough on crime policies (Enos 2008; Richie 2002). Regardless of the circumstances, the loss of a parent is always a traumatic event for children (Covington 2003; Braman and Wood 2003). And although the impact parents' incarceration has on children and children's reactions vary with children's age, gender, race/ethnicity and over time (Parke and Clarke-Stewart 2003; Travis and Waul 2003; Wakefield and Wildeman 2011), the literature suggests children experience stigma and a variety of problems.

Parental imprisonment is stigmatizing for family networks (Goffman 1963; Western and McLanahan 2000; Arditti, Lambert-Shute, and Joest 2003; Foster and Hagan 2009). According to Condry (2007), family members suffer from secondary stigma, caught in a web-of-shame constructed around kin contamination and kin culpability. Stigma expresses itself through the reduction of social support, depletes children's social capital, and keeps families socially silent (Arditti, Lambert-Shute, and Joest 2003; Scheff and Retzinger 1991; Hagan and Dinovitzer 1999; Travis and Waul

2003; Braman 2002). To reduce stigma from outsiders, caretaking parents do not tell the children or encourage the children to be discrete (Braman and Wood 2003; Parke and Clarke-Stewart 2003). Following directions, children do not reveal their parents' correctional status to others and guard their privacy, but do seek friendships with other children of prisoners for support (Nesmith and Ruhland 2008).

In addition to stigma, children experience socio-emotional, psychological, academic, and behavioral problems.<sup>8</sup> First, children's emotional experience after parental imprisonment varies widely depending on the related life changes and stressful experiences (Richie 2002; Braman 2002). But children tend to respond with shame, guilt, anger, disappointment, resentment, worry, embarrassment, withdrawal, lack of trust, isolation, and become quiet, guarded, worried, shy, and closed off, and experience frustration, anxiety and fear upon ambiguity (Christian 2009). Second, children of incarcerated parents experience mental health problems, such as depression, attention disorder, trauma, and difficulty sleeping, and concentrating (Hairston 2008a, 2008b; Foster 2008). Geller and Garfinkel (2008), using the 1998/2000 *Fragile Families* and Child Wellbeing Data, with a sample of 3,830 fathers<sup>9</sup> and 4,898 mothers,<sup>10</sup> found that children of prisoners have a higher anxious/depressive scores. The literature suggests that the way adults handle the situation can trigger children's shock, confusion, and post-traumatic stress, leading to adjustment difficulties and poor self-concept (Moerk 1973; Murray 2005; Bouchet 2008). Third, children of imprisoned parents perform at lower academic levels, have higher truancy, suspension, and dropout rates, and engage in

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<sup>8</sup> See Arditti, Lambert-Shute, and Joest 2003; Bilchik, Seymour, and Kreisher 2001; Bouchet 2008; Braman 2002; Christian 2009; Davies, et al. 2008; Foster 2008; Foster and Hagan 2009; Garfinkel, Geller, and Cooper 2007; Geller and Garfinkel 2008; Hairston 1998, 2002, 2001, 2008a, 2008b; Hanlon, Carswell, and Rose 2007; Johnson, Selber, and Lauderdale 2001; La Vinge, Davies, and Brazzel 2008; Miller 2006; Murray, Janson, and Farrington 2007b, 2006b; Parke and Clarke-Stewart 2003; Phillips and Gleeson 2007; Phillips, et al. 2002; Richie 2002; Thompson 2007; Trice and Brewster 2004; Wilbur et al. 2007

<sup>9</sup> By the child's third birthday, 40% of the unmarried fathers and 10% of the married fathers had experienced incarceration.

<sup>10</sup> By the child's third birthday, 7% of the unmarried mothers and 2% of the married mothers had experienced incarceration.



disruptive behaviors in the classroom (Foster and Hagan 2009). In addition, parental incarceration is associated with children's anti-social behavior.

Parental imprisonment is associated with an increase in children's anti-social attitudes and behaviors, higher exposure to violence, association with delinquent peers, the use of aggression, inappropriate acting out, disruptive behavior, substance/drug use, early pregnancy, and other anti-social behavior (Hairston 2001, 2002, 2008a, 2008b; Phillips and Gleeson 2007; Kampfner 1995; Hanlon, Carswell, and Rose 2007; Bouchet 2008; Davies, et al. 2008; Geller and Garfinkel 2008; Thompson 2007; Eddy and Reid 2003). Wildeman (2010) used the *Fragile Families* and Child Wellbeing Study data and found father's incarceration is associated with boys' increase and girls' decrease in physical aggression. Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) suggest that without intervention, children's responses to the trauma can be manifested in physical and verbal aggression, hyper vigilance, or sexualized behavior. Despite all these struggles, Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) have recently documented children's resilience and coping.

#### Parental Reintegration

Just as parenting in criminal culture and from prison, reintegration is an additional struggle for parents. During reintegration, parents struggle to access children and their parent role (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001). Bourgois (2003) hints at individuals' numerous reintegration attempts, "Many of the crack dealers not only admitted to aspiring to the ideal-type nuclear family but had actually lived in such households for significant periods of time," (303). In making this possible, the family has been identified as a reintegration resource and incarcerated parents use their children as motivation to reintegrate. However, parents struggle with social services and changes in family structure to access their children. And once they access their children, parents struggle to meet children's needs and face recidivism.

The addiction treatment literature and the collateral consequences literature have identified the importance of family reunification for a successful reintegration (Huang and Ryan 2011; Dodge and Pogrebin 2001). According to Travis and Waul (2003), continued contact with the family during incarceration and post incarceration fosters reintegration into the community and reduces recidivism (also see Dodge and Pogrebin 2001). Extended family members provide a place to live, money for necessities, transportation, food, connections to job opportunities, and a listening ear (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001; Travis and Waul 2003). And when prisoners assume family roles, they have greater success upon release (Travis and Waul 2003). Although families can play a powerful role, some are too fragile (poverty, mental health problems, addiction, and/or domestic violence) and cannot provide support (Carlson, et al. 2006; Travis and Waul 2003). Moreover, family members who do not know how to deal with the recovering addict, reunification with spouse (or another intimate relationship) that create stress, and past *empty promises* make it difficult for families to help the reintegrating persons (Gideon 2007). With or without family support, incarcerated parents use children as their motivation to recover and reintegrate.

Parents use their children as motivation to press through correctional programs and look forward to reintegration. Bourgois (2003) described Candy's heavy involvement in the drug world, violent street life, and incarceration, but "it was her love for children that stabilized her and restored meaning to her life...saved herself and her household from terminal self-destruction," (Bourgois 2003, 275). During incarceration, individuals experience heightened guilt, a desire to spend time with their family, and begin to fantasizing about the activities they will engage in with children upon their return (Nurse 2004). Furthermore, incarcerated young fathers share their plans with the mothers of their children, encouraging the women to stay in the relationship (Nurse 2004). Incarcerated mothers perceive children as the only thing they have left, a source for change, and a valuable obstacle against future drug use and crime (Enos 2001). And

children experience conflicting emotions, joy/excitement combined with ambivalence/skepticism, anxiety, anger/hurt, and wonder, hoping this time will be different (Carlson, et al. 2006; Nesmith and Ruhland 2008). Although parents use children as motivation towards recovery, reunification with children is a source of stress.

Upon return to *free society*, the reintegrating parents face challenges to access their children. With children in foster care, paroled parents face a difficult time convincing child service workers that they have become responsible adults who are capable of providing adequate care for their children (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001). Recovering addicts *live a clean day at a time* and experience stigma in the social service system (Travis and Waul 2003; Carlson, et al. 2006). Moreover, the constant threat of having children removed again is a challenging experience (Carlson, et al. 2006). And in addition to struggles with social services, returning parents find a re-structured family arrangement.

Males returning from prison expect nothing has changed with their partners, but women have become more independent and reintegrating fathers are unable to resume former roles (Travis and Waul 2003). Bourgois (2003) relates Felix's return from prison, "Every Friday and Saturday night...Felix would arrive at Candy's project apartment, furiously drunk. Bursting into tears, he would demand the right to see his children. Hugging them, he would then collapse asleep in a pile with them," (247). Also, young fathers might return to find the mother of their children with a new boyfriend (at times someone the father knows). In these cases, the returning fathers feel replaced, feel ashamed that their involvement does not match that of the new boyfriends, feel uncomfortable in presence of the new boyfriends (tension and hostility), the boyfriends might take steps to prevent the father from seeing the child, fathers may reduce contact to avoid the new boyfriend, and fathers' overall involvement with their children is threatened (Nurse 2004). Moreover, the caretaking mothers are embedded in a reciprocal kinship network (Stack 1970; Bourgois 2003). Thus, these family members became

invested in raising the child during the father's incarceration and influence father's access and involvement in their children's life during reintegration (Nurse 2004). In response, fathers eventually withdraw and become less inclined to have contact with family and children (Nurse 2004; Travis and Waul 2003). Furthermore, some women use males' parole status to control the returning father (threat with reporting a parole violation) (Nurse 2004; Goffman 2009).

Returning parents who manage to overcome the social service and family obstacles, struggle to meet children's everyday needs. In the absence of informal and/or formal supports, recovering mothers struggle to find childcare, to provide food, recreation, a safe and protective environment, and the emotional support to help children work through their anger and hurt (Carlson, et al. 2006). Moreover, reintegrating parents experience a difficult time re-establishing bonds and authority over children with whom they had little contact while in prison, especially if others took over the parent role, if family members discourage contact, or if there is a history of domestic violence (Herman and Wasserman 2001; Travis and Waul 2003). Furthermore, feeling guilt and ashamed over their criminal behavior and attempting to compensate for their previous poor parenting behaviors, the returning parent has a difficult time setting limits for their children (Carlson, et al. 2006).

Furthermore, mass imprisonment was paired with an expansion of recidivism rates (Braman and Wood 2003). Returning parents' expectations do not always translate into reality and parents return to the illicit drug market and prison. In attempts to understand the impact anticipated maternal roles have on reintegration, Robbins, Martin and Surratt (2009) followed 276 female respondents for up to 18 months after their release from prison (approximately 12 months after their completion of a community-based reintegration program). Although female offenders who planned to live with their minor children following release from custody were more likely to enter community-based reintegration programs, these expectations had no statistically significant

relationship with arrests or substance/drug use post release. According to Brown and Bloom (2009), using a combination of quantitative analysis of women's parole case files (N=203) and in-depth interviews (N=25), conclude that returning parents confront the same pre-incarceration obstacles during reintegration attempts, including poverty, lack of education, unstable housing, lack of access to social services, underemployment, and addiction. With only limited access to the low-wage conventional labor market, returning individuals become a financial strain rather than a resource to families and experience family tensions, making reunification work and staying clean difficult (Carlson, et al. 2006; Braman and Wood 2003; Travis and Waul 2003). After buying into the returning parents' promises of reintegration, whole families experience disappointed upon their return to the criminal culture and prison (Nurse 2004).

#### Mass Criminal Justice Surveillance

In addition to mass incarceration and reintegration, hyper criminal justice surveillance has become part of family life in disadvantaged neighborhoods (Goffman 2009). With data from 6 years of fieldwork in Philadelphia, including 217 households in which 144 out of 308 men report having warrants, Goffman (2009) expands the field from mass imprisonment to mass criminal justice surveillance (curfews, video cameras, random stops to check for warrants, police helicopters, cyber warrant maps, probationers/parolees without legal rights, and aggressive police behavior), which shapes individuals' already weak social relations with family, work, and community. "Children learn at an early age to watch out for the police and to prepare to run," (Goffman 2009, 343). During childhood play, children pretend to be cops who run after the other children, push children down, handcuff them, pat them down, seize the few cents they have, and threaten with "you ain't never coming home" (Goffman 2009, 343). Criminal-justice language has become part of children's and adults' everyday conversation in disadvantaged communities. The police search for and arrest *the wanted* at work, at

hospitals during their children's births, and at home and street corners where they threaten family and friends with arrests. Moreover, because the use of police and courts is risky, neighborhood members with warrants do not report victimization and avoid family court. And intimate relations (friends, family, and romantic partners) control young men's behaviors and retaliate against them with threats to report them to the police or community-based correctional services. Continuously under surveillance and *being wanted* limits individuals' abilities to lead routine lives with work and family, further threatening already *fragile families* (Goffman 2009)

Overall, the sociology of punishment has captured the impact mass incarceration, reintegration, and mass criminal justice surveillance has on the everyday lives of families in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Using this literature as the foundation and taking a holistic approach, this study attempts to move forward and understand how participants manage the conflicting demands of the client/inmate role, the parent role, and the delinquent/criminal role. Furthermore, this study attempts to contextualize these interwoven roles in a generational process. Although limited, the sociology of families and marriages, criminology, and the sociology of punishment have begun to explore parenthood, crime, and incarceration as a generational process.

#### A Generational Matter

When calling for research on the collateral consequences of imprisonment, Hagan and Dinovitzer (1999; also see Braman 2002) emphasized the loss of a generation and the instability of the next generation. Since then, scholars have highlighted the high-risk and disadvantaged settings in which children of incarcerated parents are coming of age, creating a cross generation process of social instability (Wildeman 2009). Although not an extensive literature, past research has attempted to understand the transition of parenting and crime across generations. And the sociology of punishment has very recently moved to understand incarceration experiences in families across generations.

Overall, the transmissions of socioeconomic disadvantage sets in motion the next generation's experience with parenting, crime, and incarceration.

A society or sectors of a society transmits belief systems, defines parenthood, and sets the expectations for individuals' parent role trajectories (Glassman and Eisikovits 2006; Harkness, Super and van Tijen 2000). In traditional societies, the parent role is one of the main inter-generationally transmitted patterns of culture (Harkness and Super 2000). Through actions (or lack of actions), one generation transmits parenting patterns to the next generation. With a sample of 313 addicted parents, Nurco and colleagues (1998) document the generational transmission of the parent role. During childhood, the subjects experienced low parental involvement, low attachment to their parents, and low parental discipline, but lived in a punitive household. In comparison to their parents, subjects' current parenting include less involvement, children's lower attachment, less responsibility, less discipline, and less punitive actions. In interaction with the transmission of disadvantage, one generation influence the next generation's experience with parenthood.

In regards to delinquency/crime, the literature has focused on the transmission of substance/drug use from one generation to the next. After controlling for lack of parental presence and involvement, Nurco and colleagues (1998) established the causal relationship between parental substance/drug use and children's substance/drug use. When other members of the family, especially one of the parents, is involved in criminal activity or is an addict, there is less familial control, the odds of disruption in household composition increase, and children are more likely to engage in delinquent/criminal behavior (Sampson and Laub 1993; Watt 2002; Keller, et al. 2002; Nesmith and Ruhland 2008). It is qualitative research that has limitedly documented the transmission of disadvantage and access to criminal culture (including substance/drug use and drug dealing) across the generations. Bourgois (2003) discusses "the wholesale destruction of the children" in the streets (261). "[Within] five short years, my little neighbor Gigi

metamorphosed from being an outgoing, cute, eager-to-please eight-year old who gave me a construction paper Valentine's card every year, into becoming a homeless, pregnant, crack-using thirteen-year-old teenager. Meanwhile, her older brother Hector was transformed from a shy, giggling undersized twelve-year-old into a juvenile inmate, guilty of 'assault with a dangerous weapon,'" (Bourgois 2003, 261). This metamorphosis occurs in a disadvantaged neighborhood and a *fragile family*-street-context that exposes children to neglect/abuse and the criminal life style.

In a similar manner, recent sociology of punishment scholarship has established the impact parental incarceration has on children's correctional status (Braman 2002). With a sample of 6,146 incarcerated parents (1,014 mother and 5,132 fathers), Dallaire (2007) established the cross generational correctional experience across three generations. First, 1179 of the participants (19%) in the sample have had their own mother and/or father previously incarcerated (Dallaire 2007). Of the female sub-sample (n=1,014), 1.15% have experienced their mother's incarceration and 14.7% have experienced their father's incarceration. Of the male sub-sample (n=5,132), 4.74% have experienced their mother's incarceration and 15.1% have experienced father's incarceration. Of the subjects with adult children (324 mothers and 1,103 fathers), 21% of the mothers and 8.5% of the fathers experienced the incarceration of at least one of their adult children. More relevant to this study, the odds an adult child will experience incarceration vary with the incarcerated parents' gender (324 mothers and 1,427 fathers) (Dallaire 2007). For the subsample of incarcerated mothers, the odds of incarceration of one of their adult children increase as her number of children increase, if the children's father had also been incarcerated, if she reports using an illegal drug regularly, if her spouse had been incarcerated, and if she is African American. As for the father subsample, the odds of incarceration of one of their adult children increase as his age increases, as his number of children increase, if he reported being a single parent, if the spouse had been incarcerated, and if he is African American. Children of imprisoned



parents are 5 to 6 times more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system (Springer, Lynch, and Rubin 2000) and twice as likely to be convicted of a criminal offence between ages 19 and 39 (Murray, Janson, and Farrington 2007b). In a similar manner, Huebner and Gustafson (2007) use the mother child sample of the 1979 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth in attempts of understanding the long-term effect of maternal incarceration on adult offsprings' involvement in the criminal justice system. Controlling for the adult child's gender, peer pressure, race/ethnicity, mother's absence and mother's education, they find that mother's incarceration and mother's delinquency/crime both independently increase the odds an adult child will be convicted or placed under probation. Mass imprisonment contributes to a system of stratification in which crime and incarceration are passed down from one generation to the next (Wildeman 2010).

These recent studies move beyond speculation and identify key factors influencing the generational transmission of incarceration. However, it is important to consider the structural hand on the incarceration experience across generations. In addition to crime rates, the sociology of punishment has established the impact election season, conservative citizenship, economic threat, racial/ethnic threat, correctional funding and policy changes have on punitive outcomes (Rusche and Kirchheimer 1968; Gardland 1990; Becket and Sasson 2004; Maur 2006; Becket, Nyrop, and Pflugst 2006; Coaplow and Simon 1999; Jacobs and Carmichael 2001, 2004; Stucky, Heimer, and Lang 2007). Thus, it is important to consider the noncriminal social forces that influence the incarceration of the next generations. With juvenile court data from a large urban county in the southwest, Rodriguez, Smith and Zatz (2009) attempt to determine whether family structure, perceptions of family dysfunction, and parental incarceration influence out-of-home placement decision (instead of community supervision or release to the parent) in juvenile court. Although age decreases the odds of out-of-home placement, being African American, prior referrals, being in foster care, family dysfunction, and father's

incarceration increases the odds of out-of-home placement. Beyond delinquency/criminality, it is important to consider the non-criminal social forces influencing the next generations' experience with incarceration.

Sociology of families and marriages, criminology, and sociology of punishment have begun to explore parenthood, delinquency/crime, and correctional supervision within a cross-generational process. And this study attempts to move these literatures forward and capture parenthood in criminal culture and under correctional supervision across generations. To do so, this study will use symbolic interactionism to analyze participants' life histories.

### Symbolic Interaction

To contribute to and unite the sociology of families and marriages, criminology, and the sociology of punishment, this study will use symbolic interactionism as the theoretical framework to analyze participants' lived experiences with crime, corrections, and parenting.<sup>11</sup> According to symbolic interactionism, social interaction produces a meaningful classified world where individuals negotiate meaning through an interpretative social process (Blumer 1969; Stryker 2002). Within this classified world, individuals occupy social *statuses* and play *roles*. Roles provide individuals with the behavioral expectations, obligations, and privileges. From a symbolic interactionism perspective, the *family* represents a set unit of interacting individuals who are continuously constructing family life (Burgess 1926). In a life course, individuals' role configuration shifts and role performances change (Elder 1994). Individual's lived experiences develop through a complex process of role taking, role making, role configuration and role performance throughout the life course. In attempts to understand participants' attempts to "do" parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional

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<sup>11</sup>*Mothering from the Inside* (Enos 2001) and "Fathering at the Margins of Society" (Wilkinson, et al. 2009) analyze individuals' lived experience using symbolic interaction.

supervision, it is important to have a theoretical foundation of the role-taking (acquisition) and role-making (role negotiation and construction) process, role conflict and role configuration, role performance, and the life course.

The *self*, the gathering of discrete statuses and its complementary roles, emerges through social interaction and an ongoing reflective process (Mead 1934; Stryker 1968, 2002). As reflective social beings, individuals engage in *role-taking* (role acquisition), learning the shared meaning of roles within social relationships (Turner 1956; Reitzes and Mutran 2002; Parsons and Shils 1951). Role-taking is premised on the attribution and acceptance of a status and its associated role (Stryker 2002). Thus, in interactions with others, individuals actively seek a status or/and are forced into a status through a labeling process (Becker 1963; Turner 1956). Although statuses appear stable, the associated roles are not fully scripted. Thus, individuals engage in a *role-making* (role negotiation and construction) process, actively negotiate role expectations with other individuals in the social situation (Goffman 1959; Stryker 1980). Once statuses have been acquired and roles negotiated, individuals living in a complex social world possess a self composed of multiple roles (Stryker 2002; Devos, Blanco, and Rico 2008; Abele and Spurk 2011). And when occupying multiple statuses, at least some of its roles are likely to provide conflicting or contradictory behavioral expectations (Allan, Wilder, and Atkinson 1983; Stryker 2002). Thus, before attempting to understand parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision, it is important to understand role conflict and role configuration.

With multiple roles within the self, roles are likely to provide conflicting or contradictory behavioral expectations (Allen, Wilder, and Atkinson 1983; Stryker 2002). Although conflicting roles can coexist in a self when performed in separate social situations, access to limited resources or the absence of boundaries between social situations triggers role conflict (Mead 1934; Stryker 2002). Thus, to understand participants' attempts to balance multiple conflicting roles, it is important to consider role

configuration (Mead 1934; Stryker 1968; Lobel 1991). In the identity literature, two competing approaches attempt to explain individuals' role configuration to manage role conflict (Mead 1934; Stryker 1968, 1980).

Salience identity theory suggest that the probability a person invokes a given role during a social situation depends on the role's importance (Stryker 1968, 1980, 2002; Callero 1985; Howard 2000). The importance (or salience) of a role depends on its association to the individual's self-worth, perceptions of it as a moral obligation, its ability to provide a sense of belonging, the number of network ties entered by virtue of a role and the depth of these relationships, structural ties that constrain a person to maintain the role, and overall role-person merger (Stryker 1968, 1980, 2002; Stryker and Serpe 1994; Reitzes and Mutran 2002; Turner 1978). In this context, the role's salience increases the likelihood an individual will evoke it in a given social situation (Turner 1982; Oakes 1987; Bruner 1957; Super 1986). And individuals invest greater resources (time, energy and other resources) on roles of greater salience (Mead 1934; Reitzes and Mutran 2002). Thus, the problem of managing multiple and conflicting roles is solved by favoring a role over others.

A competing role configuration argument is a non-hierarchical holistic vision of multiple roles in a self (Mead 1934; James 1890; Marks 1977, 1979; Thoits 1983). All roles ready to be evoked have high enough standing in the self system (Markus and Nurius 1986; Linville 1987). Most importantly, an individual's many roles are not separate but are organized in interaction with other individuals, and groups may develop clear notions about the particular roles they deem worthy of vigorous performance (Marks and MacDermid 1996). Thus, the way people organize their roles is an empirical matter, not an established fact (James 1890; Mead 1934). In attempts to understand participants' lived experiences with conflicting roles in this study, it is important to use the salience hierarchy perspective and be open to the possibility of other role

configurations (Jackson and Berkowitz 2005). For example, the family literature has explored individuals' work and family role configuration.

In attempts to understand work and family life, the sociology of the families and marriages explores how individuals handle work-parent role conflict (Moen 2003; see Sanchez and Thomson 1997 for gender difference in housework after becoming parents and Helms-Erikson 2001 for parenthood, marital happiness, and house work). The *role expansion theory* suggests that having multiple roles, such as being an employee and a parent, is beneficial for the individual because it generates social and economic resources, a satisfactory self-image, and a healthy life situation (Barnett and Hyde 2001; Nordenmark 2004). However, *role stress theory* suggests that the combination of the employee role and parent role in the self often creates more demands and can lead to role conflict (Cleary and Mechanic 1983; Nordenmark 2004; Scharlach 2001). In attempts to address this role conflict, Lobel (1991) uses *identity salience theory* to suggest that the relative salience of employee role and parent role determine an individual's relative investment in a career and a family.<sup>12</sup> And role balance (opposite to role conflict) will increase as roles' expectations become more similar and conflicting roles are kept separate (Lobel 1991). Lastly, the employee and parent role conflict is gendered. Since the father role is traditionally associated with providing and the mother role is associated with nurturing, mothers experience higher levels of role conflict between the employee role and the mother role (Gatrell 2005; Baxter, Hewitt and Haynes 2008). Whether it is the employee role and the parent role or other conflicting roles, role configuration influences how role conflict is transformed into role performance on the stage of everyday life.

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<sup>12</sup> It is important to acknowledge that society's structural family-work policies shape the work-family life of its citizens (Auer 2002; Singley and Hynes 2005; Smeeding and Carlson 2011). And just as work policies influence parenthood, parenthood influence work (Dermott 2006).

As participants attempt to “do” parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision in this study, it will be important to consider others’ responses to their role performance. According to Goffman (1974), individuals are introduced onto the stage of everyday life upon birth, where they acquire, negotiate, and perform roles. Through a self construction process, the individual emphasizes or interprets roles to guide his/her *role performances*. When entering a social situation (or a front stage), individuals invoke a role performance that reflects the surrounding classified social world and influence the audience’s perceptions (Stryker 2002). On the front stage, individuals’ role performances are exposed to the audience’s judgment (Goffman 1974). Thus, individual’s role performances are continuously under review and audiences respond. Consequently, individuals’ attempts to perform conflicting roles on stage increase individuals’ propensity to leave the organization (Nordenmark 2004; Miles 1977). Furthermore, self construction is embedded in a cross-generational process (Mead 1934; Elder 1994; Stryker 2002). Born into a social location within a network of linked lives, individuals’ self construction process is set in motion by previous generations (Mead 1934; Mills 1959; Elder 1994). Thus, family roles are the means to understand family life (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Johnson and Wu 2002; Steffensmeier 1982; Stryker 1968).

The *life course* perspective contends that role processes (role taking, role making, role configuration, and role performance) unfold over the life course and are continuously changing as family members negotiate meaning (Elder 1994; Macmillan and Copher 2005). In the process, individuals build trajectories through role performances at various durations across the life course, such as being a parent from the child’s birth to death. In the process, transitions embedded in trajectories occur in a discrete time span, such as becoming a parent or an adult child’s marriage. In a complex world, it is the interlocking of multiple role trajectories that create individuals’ life paths (Elder 1994). “Human lives are typically embedded in social relationships with kin and friends across the life span...The misfortune and the opportunity of adult children, as well as their personal

problems, become intergenerational” (Elder 1994, 6). Roles, role configurations, and pathways in the life course unfold as part of a complex system that involves other life courses. As family members, the lives of parents and children are intimately entwined and the intergenerational links persist throughout the life course. Features of parents' lives set the stage for their children's experiences deep into the life course. Most importantly, pathways are embedded in linked lives across generations (Elder 1994). Role processes occur in a life course and are continuously changing. Using this theoretical foundation, this study attempts to understand how participants “do” parenthood in the *fast life* and under corrections.

### Conclusion

Using the sociology of families and marriages, criminology, and the sociology of punishment as the foundations, this study will conduct a symbolic interactionism analysis of 57 life histories. Taking a holistic approach, it attempts to understand how individuals' delinquent/criminal role, client/inmate role, and parent role are interwoven in a cross-generational process. Individuals lives are not compartmentalized, but complex. Furthermore, individuals do not live in a vacuum. Individuals are born into an ongoing social process and their life courses are linked to those before them. Thus, this study takes a holistic approach in attempts to capture individual's lived experiences in *fragile families* of orientation, in the criminal culture, under correctional supervision, and in *fragile families* of procreation. To do so, I conducted 57 interviews in two community-based correctional programs in *Midwest State*, a work release center (WRC) and a residential correctional facility (RCF).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

To capture individuals' lived experiences with "doing" parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision, I conducted 57 semi-structured interviews with parents under correctional supervision in two community-based correctional facilities in *Midwest State*. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss this study's methodological approach. First, this study moves Goffman (2009) forward and encourages the sociology of punishment to look beyond mass imprisonment and begin to analyze the impact mass criminal justice surveillance has on family life. Second, it introduces parents under correctional supervision and their children as the population of interest. Third, it provides a full description of the research setting, the *Metro Area* and surrounding areas, the two departments of corrections (*Midwest State* and *State B*) predominantly supervising the participants, an in-depth description of the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections population, and the two correctional facilities where the data was collected (WRC and the RCF in *Midwest State*).<sup>13</sup> Fourth, access to the research setting and the participants involved a long recruitment process, including accessing the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections and the two facilities where the interviews took place (WRC and RCF), recruiting participants at the facilities, and the consent process. Fifth, this chapter will describe the sample. And lastly, I will discuss data preparation and analysis. Overall, this chapter will address the methodological approach used to develop a deeper understanding of parents' lived experiences while living *the fast life* and under correctional supervision.

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<sup>13</sup> To protect the participants, this study will use the *Metro Area* as a pseudo name for the urban area where the study took place. This metropolitan area includes four cities, two cities in *Midwest State* (County III) and two cities in *State B* (County I).



### Mass Correctional Supervision

As discussed in chapter 2, the sociology of punishment has been concerned with the collateral consequences of mass imprisonment (Mukamal 2007; Rose and Clear 2002; Uggen and Manza 2002; Western, Kleykamp, and Rosenfeld 2006; Travis, McBride, and Solomon 2003; Hagan and Dinovitzer 1999). The prison system is a prevalent characteristic of American Society and the United States leads the world in incarceration (Wallmsley 2009). However, it is not until recently that the United States has earned its leading role in incarceration rates (see table A1 in Appendix A, page 436). When looking at the rates of sentenced prisoners in the last three decades, from 1980 to 2009, the imprisonment rate has been on a steady climb from 139 sentenced prisoners per every 100,000 people in 1980 to 502 in 2009 (Sabol and West 2009a, 2009b; see table A2 in Appendix A, page 436). It is from these changes that the sociology of punishment developed a concern for the collateral consequences of imprisonment. However, the department of corrections in American Society, federal and state, has a wider grip on its population than documented in the imprisonment rates (Goffman 2009).

Individuals under correctional supervision navigate through a variety of correctional supervision programs, including jails, prisons, probation, transitional correctional programs, and parole. In the United States, of the 7,225,800 adults under correctional supervision in 2009, 58% were under probation, 10% were in jail, 21% were in prison, and 11% were under parole (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2009; see table A3 in Appendix A, page 437). And alike the imprisonment population, community corrections has experienced a massive increase, especially the probation population that went from 1,118,097 adults in 1980 to 4,203,967 in 2009 (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2009).<sup>14</sup> The United States is not only experiencing a mass incarceration era, but a mass correctional supervision era (Goffman 2009) where community based corrections (probation and

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<sup>14</sup> A raw figure not accounting for population growth

parole) is 69.5% of the adults under correctional supervision (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2009).

Throughout these various correctional programs, individuals experience different supervision levels. For example, the director of the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections (MS DOC), provided a summary of the adults under correctional supervision by supervision level to the Justice Appropriations Subcommittee in February of 2009. Using 2008 IDOC population data, he concluded that 11,180 adults (12.6%) are considered low risk probation and were placed in minimum risk programs (community corrections monitored programs), 52,728 individuals (59.4%) are under regular supervision in the community for regular probation, parole, and pre-trial release, 4,304 individuals (4.9%) were under intensive supervision including sex offenders, pre-trial release, and low functioning, 5,788 individuals (6.5%) were under quasi-incarceration in residential facilities,<sup>15</sup> 482 individuals (0.5%) were in violators program (the smallest proportions of adults under correctional supervision in *Midwest State*), and only 12,223 adults (16%) under correctional supervision were in prison (MS DOC Director 2009). Although the probation and other community corrections programs can appear as light punishment, individuals under community correction are not separate from the imprisoned populations.

Regardless of where the individual is in the correctional department (jail, prison, probation, transitional programs, or parole), there is always the possibility of being transferred to a different correctional program as punishment or reward for behavior during the time of their sentence, from probation to prison or from prison to parole. In 2008, *Midwest State* revoked individuals under probation as a consequence of new felony (41.42%), other new convictions (23.8%), a new charge (16.4%), or other violation (18.67%), and were imprisoned (MS DOC Director 2009). At the national level, when

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<sup>15</sup> The interviews took place in two quasi-incarceration facilities (community based corrections)

following the 1994 released prisoners from 15 states 3 years after released, 61.5% were re-arrested, 54.1% re-adjudicated, 47.3% reconvicted, 39.2% incarcerated, and 26.3% re-imprisoned (Snyder 2009). Recidivism speaks to the revolving door of the United States correctional system. And the line differentiating the imprisoned population from the probation/parole population is rather thin and dotted.

The convicted experience continuous uncertainty at the mercy of the correctional department, from the threat of the dark room while in prison to the removal of freedom while under probation. The populations under correctional supervision include individuals under various correctional programs (jails, prisons, probation, transitional programs, and parole) who flow across programs. Thus, it is imperative that the sociology of punishment not only study the collateral consequences of imprisonment, but the collateral consequences of mass correctional supervision (Goffman 2009). And this study attempts to capture how mass correctional supervision across the life course influences participants' ability to perform their parent role within a *fragile family* context.

#### Population of Interest

Within the mass correctional era, a significant portion of the convicted population is parents. Thus, it is important to identify this population of interest at the national level. During the late 1990s and throughout the 2000s, the Bureau of Justice Statistics attempted to capture the presence of parents in prison and under other correctional supervision programs. According to Mumola (2006), there are 3,725,900 parents under correctional supervision who are parents to 7,476,500 children (see table A4 in Appendix A, page 437). From the parents under correctional supervision recorded in Mumola's 2006 report, 68.9% were under community corrections (2,575,700 adults under state probation, state parole, and federal parole) and 30.9% incarcerated (1,150,200 adults in local jails, state prisons, and federal prisons). The limited knowledge about parents under

correctional supervision is partial to imprisoned parents, with a focus on the 1990s (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002). And because the population under correctional supervision flows across all correctional programs, the information about incarcerated parents is important for the purpose of this study.

The 1997 Surveys of Inmates in state and federal correctional facilities captures who the incarcerated parents are in a snapshot, providing key demographic variables (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002). With a population of 637,315 incarcerated parents (46,679 mothers and 590,636 fathers), the Bureau of Justice Statistics surveys a sample of 8,047 parents (1,889 mothers and 6,158 fathers) (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002). First, inferring from the sample of 8,047 parents, the state and federal incarcerated parent population is 29% white/Caucasian, 49% black/African American, and 18% Hispanic/Latino. Their marital status includes 28% divorced/separated, 22% married, and 47% never married. Only 51% have a high school diploma or a GED. The average mother is 32 years-old and has 2.38 children, while the average father is 33 years old and has 2.04 children. Second, continuing to infer from the sample of 8,047 parents, the parents' incarceration is due to violent crimes (40.7%), property crimes (22.7%), and drug offences (25.7%) (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002). In regards to their substance drug use, 74.8% consider themselves regular marijuana/hashish users, 40% use crack/cocaine on regular bases, and 16.6% are regular heroin/opiates users (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002). Overall, the incarcerated parent population is predominantly African American, most have never been married, nearly half did not complete high school, are in their early 30s, and have 2 children (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002).

One of the most important characteristics of prisoner population is their own childhood experience. During childhood, of the 8,047 incarcerated parents surveyed in 1997, 42% lived with both mother and father, 40% lived with their mother only, 3.4% lived with their father only, 8.8% lived with their grandparents, 2.6% lived with other relatives, and 13.3% lived under foster care at some point in their childhood (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002). In regards to victimization, 20.9% were physically abused and 13.69% were sexually abused at some point in their lives (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002).

Although it becomes tempting, specially methodologically, to focus on only one life stage of a family member, such as the participants' current situation, it is important to consider his/her overall life experience in relation to all family members. For example, one can be interviewing an incarcerated-adult parent who is neglecting his/her children and can easily ignore that s/he was an abused/neglected teen during the birth of his/her child. The key in studying the lives of parents under correctional supervision is to consider the possible generational mechanisms at play. Thus, it becomes a family matter rather than individual phenomenon.

Lastly, although this study will not focus on the children of prisoners, rather on parents practicing parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision, one of the key elements in the discussion is their children. Thus, it is important to consider the national children-of-prisoners population. In 1999, 20 per every 1,000 children in the U.S. had an incarcerated parent (Johnson and Waldfogel 2002). According to Wildeman (2009), 1 in 25 white children born in 1990 had a parent imprisoned, 1 in 4 black children born in 1990 had a parent imprisoned, and inequality in the risk of parental imprisonment between white children of college-educated parents and all other children is growing. By

age 14, 50.5% of black children born in 1990 to high school dropouts had a father imprisoned. Parental imprisonment is a distinctively American childhood risk, concentrated amongst black children and children of parents with low educational levels. With 7,476,500 children of parents under correctional supervision, understanding parents relationships with their children becomes essential (Hairston 2008; Arditti 2008; Arditti, Lambert-Shute, and Joest 2003; Mumola 2006). Thus, this study analyzes participants' experiences with parenting their children in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision.

#### The Setting<sup>16</sup>

Data for this study was collected in two transitional-correctional facilities within the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections (MS DOC). The two facilities include a work release center (WRC) for (state and federal) post-prison release convicts and a residential correctional facility (RCF) for probation violators and mandatory substance/drug treatment. These transitional residency programs are located in the *Metro Area*, a metropolitan area in a state border between *Midwest State* (MS) and *State B* (SB). The voices of the participants echo across state lines, life stories weaving past, present and future connecting four cities across state lines in the *Metro Area*. To provide a full description of the research setting, this section will describe the (i) *Metro Area* and surrounding areas, (ii) the two departments of corrections (MS and SB) that heavily supervise participants, (iii) an in-depth description of the population in the *Midwest State*

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<sup>16</sup> In January of 2009, *Midwest State*'s community based corrections employed 1,228 staff including probation/parole officer (481), residential officer (278), secretaries (109), probation/parole supervisors (52), and treatment coordinators (35) to serve 1,467 adults under correctional supervision (MS DOC Director 2009).

Department of Corrections, (iv) the WRC and the RCF, and (v) participants' perspective on the setting.

The *Metro Area* is a metropolitan area surrounded by farming and river towns. Its economy includes factory towns (meat packing, dog food, and farm equipment) and a military arsenal. *Metro's* landscape features farming land within an urban environment, several well respected private colleges, access to two community colleges, two neighboring county jails (one in *Midwest State* and another in *State B*), and the two transitional correctional facilities (WRC and RCF). According to the 2010 Census, the *Metro Area* are (County III in MS and County I in SB) have a slight overrepresentation of a 55 years and older population, an overrepresentation of whites/Caucasians ( 9.2-13.7% higher than the national level), and an underrepresentation of African Americans and Latinos (see tables A5-A8 in Appendix A, page 438-441). Most importantly, according to the 2005-2007 American Community Survey, the *Metro Area* is characterized by high unemployment, (31.4-36.7%) and a significant portion of families and individuals living below poverty (8.3-10.4% and 11.8-14% respectively) (see table A7 in Appendix A, page 440). All 57 participants are from the *Metro Area* and surrounding areas (see table A8 for city level demographics in Appendix A, page 441). *Metro's* population and that of the surrounding areas are under the criminal justice surveillance of *Midwest State* and *State B*. In the *Metro* area, only .72 miles separate County I jail in *State B* and County III jail in *Midwest State*.<sup>17</sup> Thus, participants' lives are woven into the structure of two state correctional departments (*Midwest State* and *State B*).

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<sup>17</sup> Originally, requests were made to *Midwest State's* and *State B's* correctional departments for access. However, only *Midwest State* responded and granted access.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, *State B* places criminal charges on individuals at a higher rate than *Midwest State*, 6,418 in *State B* compared to 4,471 in *Midwest State* per every 100,000 residents in 2007 (see table A9 in Appendix A, page 442). In regards to general correctional supervision, *Midwest State* supervises 1,638 adults per every 100,000 adult residents, lower than 2,609 in *State B* (see table A9 in Appendix A, page 442). However, *Midwest State* incarcerates a higher percentage of its adults under correctional supervision (33.7%), compared to 26.6% in *State B* (see table A9 in Appendix A, page 442). With a brief understanding of the differences and similarities between *Midwest State* and *State B*'s correctional profile, it is important to understand *Midwest State*'s Department of Corrections at a deeper level.

*Midwest State*'s Department of Corrections has primarily focused on controlling property crimes, driving under the influence, larceny-theft, illicit use of weapons, and drug abuse (see table 9A in Appendix A, pages 442). Its imprisoned population is predominantly white (65.29%), with an overrepresented minority population (see table A5, A9 and A10 in Appendix A, pages 438, 442 and 443 respectively). According to 2010 U.S. Census, *Midwest State* is 2.9% African American, while 25.59% of its 2009 state prisoners are African American. Although at a much lower level than the African American population, Hispanic/Latinos are also overrepresented in *Midwest State*'s prisons (see tables A12 and A5 in Appendix A, pages 444 and 438 respectively). Also, the average *Midwest State* prisoner has 11.6 years of education, a 9.4 reading level, and is 35 years old (see table A12 in Appendix A, page 444). And as the rest of the nation, *Midwest State* faces a struggle against illicit distribution and consumption of alcohol and drugs. In 2005, inmates identified alcohol and/or drugs as a problem, the top drug



problems being meth, marijuana, and crack/cocaine (see table A13 in Appendix A, page 444). One of the issues associated with prison re-entry is offender's substance/drug abuse or dependence. For example, from a random sample of incoming offenders into *Midwest State's* prisons (n=320) between 2005 and 2007, 85% of the men and 91% of the women had a current substance/drug dependency problem (MS DOC Director 2009). Approximately 78% of the men and 55.3% of the women experience an alcohol-use disorder during their life time (MS DOC Director 2009). Two of the 23 *Midwest State* Community Based Correctional facilities that struggle with these issues are the WRC and the RCF.

The WRC focuses on the transition of adults from prison (state and federal) to *free society*. Although the WRC's number of residents changed on a daily basis, with new residents enrolling and others being released to other programs or to *free society*, it maintained an average of 79 adults under correctional supervision during the data collection period, including 9 women. The program requires individuals to job search, establish employment and housing, and integrate into *free society*. As one enters the building, one would face the front desk (also known as the control room) separating the general population from some of the WRC facilities (cafeteria, dining hall, T.V. room, and a few offices). After granted permission, one can use the elevator to reach the woman's floor, the men's floor, or the correctional offices that house all the counselors, probation/parole officers, and administration staff. During my first visit, a senior officer gave me a building tour and showed me the woman's floor (the only time I was allowed in the resident's living area). He placed his key in the door of a female room, briefly announced our presence, and immediately walked into the room. One of the residents, a

woman in her late 30s or early 40s, was coming out of the shower, properly dressed. He proceeded to show me the average room. The room has two twin beds, a shared bathroom, with very little presence of private property. The woman sat on her bed and ignored our presence, while the officer discussed the extensive privacy the residents have in comparison to prison. We then return to the first floor, and the program directors assigned me a temporary office across from the front desk, with a big window for the correctional officers to have a plain view of the room (recruitment and interview issues discussed in later sections). The room offered the participant audio privacy (not visual). Forty-three of the 57 participants were recruited from the WRC.

Also in the *Metro Area*, the RCF is a smaller program, serving an average of 64 residents (men and women). The residents in the RCF are those serving probation violations (inability to maintain housing, unemployment, failing to meet with probation officer, failing to attend required treatment programs, and/or new minor offenses) or those moving from county jail with a quasi-incarceration sentence under strict mandatory treatment, such as alcoholic/narcotic anonymous or sex offender treatment groups. As one parks on the side of a very empty street, one is met with what appears an empty and deteriorating building (RCF). After opening a brown door, one is greeted by a short and narrow hallway that provides three options— (1) on the right is a window to the front desk where all residents, staff, and guest must check in, (2) to the left is a waiting room with a few bookshelves as the face to the correctional offices, and (3) straight forward is the entrance to the facility's main room that houses the cafeteria and a dining area with tables where residents can be. To the right of the dining area is a hall and alongside it are the rooms the residents share. For interviewing purposes, the staff allowed me to use the

offices of the officers or counselors who were not in the building. Thus, the interviews took place in different offices in the building (all with no visual or audio access to others). Fourteen of the 57 interviews took place at the RCF. Although the research setting has been discussed using official data from *Midwest State* Department of Corrections and my observations, it is an incomplete description without the participants' perspective.

At the WRC and RCF, the staff uses the term *client* to identify the individuals under correctional supervision who are residing in the facilities. The *client* emerged during the rehabilitation era, where individuals under correctional supervision were perceived as patients to be cured. No longer in the rehabilitation era, the term *client* changes in meaning. In the just desserts era, *the client* is an involuntary consumer of unwanted services in the courts and correctional departments. Most importantly, unsatisfied *clients* face an endless debt that includes court costs, restitution, general fees, rent and food services in quasi-incarceration facilities, and a climbing debt they have left in the outside world (such as child support, mortgages, student loans, or car loans). Participants perceive the WRC and RCF programs as *all about money* and express a growing resentment towards the departments of corrections.

Also, the correctional program from which individuals are transitioning (jail/prison or parole/probation revocations) will also have an influence on their perspectives about the WRC and RCF, especially how they handle their limited freedom. Those exiting the state or federal prisons become *quasi-free* and perceive the WRC from four perspectives. First, participants who had been institutionalized (accustomed to prison life) were cautious and used the WRC as a safe environment from which to slowly

transition into *free society*. Second, other WRC *clients* experienced a difficult time balancing the quasi-freedom the WRC grants and resented the quasi-incarceration. Third, individuals accustomed to being in and out of prison saw the WRC as part of everyday life, and felt comfortable under correctional supervision and in *free society*. Fourth, other individuals were very careful at maintaining the quasi-freedom and prioritized the WRC policies because they wanted to do it right this time. One leg in prison and the other in *free society*, clients are closely monitored at work and during furloughs, and any violation can lead to the removal of any granted freedom (removal of furloughs or return to prison).

The *clients* entering the RCF are coming from jail after being convicted, after being classified in the department of corrections, or from *free society* after a probation revocation hearing (becoming *quasi-incarcerated*). First, those who were facing prison prior to joining the RCF, although not necessarily happy to be under correctional supervision, are happy to be in a quasi-free environment where they can *get their life together* and are safe from further *reckless behavior*. Second, *clients* mandated to enroll in the RCF as part of an unwanted treatment, refused to acknowledge *their problem* (predominantly addiction problems). Third, individuals at the RCF because of technical violations (loss of housing or employment) are at first happy to have a place to stay, but face a brutal job search and a *piling debt*. Overall, data collection occurred in the two-community-based correctional facilities in the *Metro Area*. Now with an understanding of the *Metro Area*, the *Midwest State* and *State B* correctional departments, and the WRC and RCF, this chapter will briefly discuss issues of access and recruitment.

### Access and Recruitment

Access to the research setting and recruitment of participants involved a long process, including accessing the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections and the two facilities where the interviews took place (RCF and WRC), recruiting participants at the facilities, and the consent process. After several phone conversations, a meeting in the capital (Des Moines, IA) with the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections research coordinator, and several meetings with staff at the local judicial district, I was given access to *the clients* in the RCF and the WRC. Although the *Midwest State* DOC granted access at the end of 2008, the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) at University of Iowa did not approve the study until early 2010 due to the vulnerable population. As part of the process, a prisoner advocate reviewed the study, recommended approval and the IRB approved the study on February 2010. Data collection took place from March to October 2010 at the WRC and the RCF.

Although all parents residing in the WRC and RCF were invited to participate, only those with no current trials were eligible (for legal safety purposes). During the initial recruitment process, I posted flyers in the recreational areas of the RCF and WRC two weeks prior to the interviews. The staff then gave me a list of all the residents in the facility (79 at the WRC and 64 at the RCF) and each participant was invited. The invitation consisted of a half sheet providing the prospective participant with basic information. Those interested filled out the back of the sheet, which requested basic information—last name, first name, RCF/WRC room number, his/her number of children, and a brief open ended question about his/her parenting experience (all sheets have been shredded). S/he then placed it in the locked box at the front desk (see figure

B1 in Appendix B, page 458). I then unlocked the box and compared the signup sheets with the official resident list, screened those interested (ensured that the individual was not on trial), and began calling the interested individuals into my temporary office.

To call a prospective participant into my temporary office, I first checked that s/he was in the facility (s/he could be out job seeking, at work, or on a furlough). I then requested that the front desk staff (secretary or correctional officer) called the individual. At the WRC, the front desk staff initially called their room through a speaker phone in their room (not a phone call), said the resident's name several times, and if s/he did not come to the phone, they used the public announcement (PA) system in the facility, "[Name], please report to the control desk." At the RCF, prospective participants were simply called through the PA system. Although a very efficient approach, the participants later informed me that hearing their names through the speaker phone or the PA system requesting their presence at the control desk gave them an initial panic. In their everyday life at the facilities, having ones name called by an officer could mean that *the client* is in trouble or release dates have changed. Once they realized it was a researcher wanting to provide them with more information about the study, they relaxed and felt a relief.<sup>18</sup> Once the prospective participant came to my temporary office, the door was closed (preventing anyone from listening to the conversation and/or interview), and the consent process began.

Adults under correctional supervision have limited autonomy, rights, and privileges as citizens.<sup>19</sup> In the sociology of punishment, most recruitment occurs in

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<sup>18</sup> This is a methodological problem and a concern I will address in my next project.

<sup>19</sup> When conducting research in a correctional setting, it is vital to protect participants' privacy and respect them as individuals and as clients/inmates. In a structured environment, participants have limited access to meals and missing a correctional activity can have detrimental consequences. Thus, the researcher needs to

correctional facilities (jails, prisons, and community correction facilities) because the purpose of the studies is to understand the correctional experience. In studies where the researcher recruits in correctional facilities, s/he must ensure respect for all participants' individual rights, ensure genuine consent, protect privacy and confidentiality, and avoid exploitation (Noaks and Wincup 2004). Thus, a careful consent process and steps to ensure privacy and confidentiality are of great importance. During the consent process the participants in this study were provided with information about the researcher's interest in the subject, a consent form from the University of Iowa IRB, a consent form to access official records including *Midwest State Courts Online* (public record that includes all *Midwest State* courts), and County I Jail (in *State B*). The researcher and prospective participant read and discussed the items in the informed consent document. Three items in the consent form were of special interests to the prospective participants, risk and confidentiality, voluntary participation, and special information for prisoners.

This study involved two major risks, emotional and legal risks. First, the participant could expose him/herself to emotional risk or discomfort when discussing family problems and life history. During the consent process, prospective participants were made aware of the risk. Using a semi-structured interview, participants discussed very sensitive topics, from issues of incest in the family to having to watch their child sentenced to life in prison. In attempts to protect the participant, I used time after the interview to ensure s/he left my temporary office with a positive outlook. Second, participants take a legal risk. Thus, they are discouraged from sharing past, present, and future illegal activity. To reduce this risk, confidentiality was and is a priority. The

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ensure participation in the study does not threaten participants' wellbeing and successful completion of the correctional program.

consent document and the interview (survey and audio tape) have been kept separate. And once the consent documents were all complete, the participant selected a pseudo name such as “Red” or “Diamond” to use in the survey and interview (see table A17 in Appendix A, page 444). In discussing issues of family and corrections, participants chose to discuss illegal activity that s/he had been convicted for (no risk of re-conviction for the same crime) under their pseudo name. And any time someone’s name slipped off their tongue (their own or that of an associate), the tape recorder was rewound and taped over. Most importantly, aware of this risk, participants chose not to answer some of my questions. After the interview, I never linked the names of the participants with the pseudo-names, making it impossible for me to connect the person with its pseudo name if ever requested. Once all interviews were transcribed and all possible identifiers brushed off the transcripts, the audio tapes were destroyed to avoid any voice recognition. Although there is always a risk, especially when discussing illegal activity, the data collection process was designed to reduce this risk. During the consent process, I emphasized that this study is independent from the department of corrections, participation is completely voluntary and s/he can end the interview at any point.

Those who chose not to participate included individuals who did not want to discuss their lives any further and wanted *to leave the past in the past*, did not want to talk about parenthood because they considered themselves *bad parents* and did not want to discuss *his/her failure* (even after I assured them that their input would be valuable to the study), had experienced traumatic parenting events (such as the recent loss of a child in family court), or had an extremely busy schedule with work and furloughs (family). Individuals who chose to participate in the study did so because s/he is proud to talk



about his/her children, wants his/her story to be heard and acknowledged by society, wants to simply talk without judgment, needs others to view him/her as a whole person rather than *just a convict*, or thought it would be fun and a time killer. Overall, I spoke with 56 parents in the WRC (43 chose to participate) and 16 at the RCF (14 chose to participate), ending with a sample of 57 parents.

### The Sample

After 8 months of data collection, the data collection concluded on October 2010 with a total of 57 in-depth interviews (see table A16 in Appendix A, page 446). First, the sample demographics follow *Midwest State's* correctional population patterns. The sample is predominantly African American (30 African American, 21 white/Caucasian, 4 Hispanic/Latinos, and 2 multi-racial), male (45 fathers and 12 mothers), and low educational levels (31 have less than a high school education, 20 have a high school diploma or GED, 5 have some college, and 1 has a master's degree), and single (29 single, 13 separated/divorced, and 15 married). And the average age is 36, but the ages range from 20 to 66 years old.<sup>20</sup> Second, participants' self reported correctional experience reflects the populations under correctional supervision. At some point in their correctional history, all participants have experiences an arrest and jail time, 48 have been placed under probation, 48 have spent time in state prison, 9 have spent time in federal prison (8 male drug dealers and 1 female substance/drug user), 35 have been under parole, 43 have been residents at the RCF, and 48 have been residents at the WRC. Overall, the participants' correctional experience speaks about the fluidity of the

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<sup>20</sup> There was no original methodological reasoning behind the sample's age range

population under correctional supervision, flowing from one correctional program to another.

Although only parents (no children) were interviewed for this study, the interview topics revolved around their children. Thus, it is important to get a sense of who their children are (see table A20 in Appendix A, page 449). The 57 parents in the sample had a total of 154 children, with a range of 1 to 9 children, and an average of 2.7 children per participant. The children are predominantly females (89 daughters and 65 sons), and minors (average age is 14.7 including 61 adult children and 93 minor children), and minor children are predominantly under the care of their mothers (caretakers include 62 mother, 22 extended relatives, 5 under DHS or with adoptive parents).<sup>21</sup> The 57 parents in the sample and the discussion of their 154 children provide a window to understanding parenthood in the *fast life* and under mass correctional supervision.

#### Data Collection

In considering the research question posed, this study takes a qualitative approach. Qualitative research brings forth participants' own categories of meaning and captures complex phenomena and dynamic processes (Noaks and Wincup 2004). The interview is a dominant data collection tool in qualitative research, and is used in an attempt to understand participants' social worlds from their perspectives, including the meaning individuals derive from their experience and their lived social world (Kvale 1996; Patton 1990; Eder and Fingerson 2002; Fetterman 1989). Thus, I use the interview guide approach (semi-structured) to capture participants' retrospective life histories and

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<sup>21</sup> Three of the minor children are deceased and 61 are adult children.

take a holistic approach (Patton 1990).<sup>22</sup> It is a systematic and comprehensive research tool characterized by an informal and conversational tone (Noaks and Wincup 2004). Semi-structured interviews are ideal for exploring participants' lived experiences and the meaning of their experiences.<sup>23</sup>

Interviews are ideal to get participants' thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and retrospective accounts of events (Warren 2001; Johnson 2001). However, the semi-structured interview has several advantages and disadvantages. The semi-structured interview allows the participant to describe their own world and what is meaningful for him/her, there is high credibility and face validity because participants engage in a genuine conversation with the researcher, it ensures general validity because the researcher has the opportunity to make sure that participants are interpreting questions the way they were intended, and new meaningful information can emerge. But the semi-structured interview is intrusive, is vulnerable and can be threaten by interpersonal dynamics between interviewer and interviewee, and external validity is difficult to achieve because the data collection process focuses on depth rather than breadth. However, for the purpose of this project, attempting to understand how participants experience parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision, the semi-structured interview is the ideal data collection tool.

The interview process began as soon as all necessary consent forms were understood, agreed upon and signed, and all schedule conflicts were overcome. I

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<sup>22</sup> See Wilkinson and colleagues (2009) for the use of a retrospective interview to explore fathering and crime.

<sup>23</sup> To complement the life history semi-structured interview, I collected a demographic survey and used public records. The demographic survey and public records were used to collect basic variables, to confirm data and increase confidence in the validity and reliability of qualitative analyses (Marshall and Rossman 1989).

introduced the participant to the interview process, including the selection of a pseudo name and giving participants control over the recorder. Familiarity with the recorder gave participants power over the situation and allowed them to actively protect their identity (recording over identifiers). To set up the interview, the participants developed a time line that simultaneously captured their lives in the streets, correctional history, and parenting experiences. As the recorder began to roll, I kept a list of priority topics to be discussed—family life across generations, life in the streets, corrections, and parenting. And the interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 4 hours.

As students of human behavior, it is important to stay as objective as possible and humble to the learning process. To achieve this, it is beneficial to be genuinely non-judgmental, be honest, continuously build rapport, and stay in sync with the participant's tone. First, the WRC and RCF staff initially gave me the opportunity to review prospective participants' records prior to the interview. To avoid preconceptions, I did not review their records prior to the interview and I made the following statement during my introduction—

It is important for you to know that I do not know anything about you besides your name, which will be promptly replaced with the fake name you have selected. You have full control over what I will know about you (Campos-Holland, *Field Notes*, 2010).

And once participants began to share their past delinquent/criminal experiences, from burglary to child molestation, it became vital that my interaction was genuinely non-judgmental. With this purpose, I left my personal beliefs aside during the interview and focused on capturing participants' lived experiences. Second, to facilitate the learning process, I let participants know I did not have any children (honesty is always the best

policy) and I was extremely interested in learning from them.<sup>24</sup> This clarification made the participant comfortable and gave them the upper hand during the interview. Third, it is important to find points of genuine commonality to build rapport throughout the interview (not full discussion from the researcher's part) and maintain the participant engaged. Fourth, it is important for the interviewer to be genuinely in sync with the interviewee in regards to body language, linguistic mannerism, and the tone of the conversation. During the interview, it is beneficial to be genuinely non-judgmental, be honest, continuously build rapport, and stay in sync with participant's tone.

#### Data Preparation and Analysis

To capture the complexity and reality of participants' lived experiences, the analysis took a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Grounded theory analysis allows the data to speak for itself and is concerned with the development of concepts that explain individuals' actions regardless of time and place (Glaser and Strauss 1967). The survey and public records were used for sample description purposes (see tables A16-A25 in Appendix A, pages 446 to 455), while the semi-structured interviews are the meat of this analysis. And the interviews went through an extensive data preparation process.

First, once all interviews had been collected, each micro audio tape was transcribed using the Sony M2020 transcriber. The M2020 transcriber allows the listener to forward and rewind the recording using a pedal, allowing for the listener's hands to remain on the key board typing everything being said. In this discussion, it is important to keep in mind that the interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 4 hours, the transcription

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<sup>24</sup> In the field, the researcher is the student and the participants are the teachers. Although sociology of parenthood is one of my academic concentrations, I have never been a parent. And acknowledging it gave participants control of the situation and we began to build genuine rapport.

material ranged from 17 to 58 single spaced pages in length, times new roman, 12 point font. Each interview was transcribed by the first transcriber, and was then checked and revised by the second transcriber. The second transcriber checked for accuracy and consistency between audio and transcript and captured Midwest lingo (first transcriber is from the west coast while the second transcriber is a Midwest native). For example, when listening to an interview, focusing on one person's linguistic mannerisms, it is easy to slip into autopilot and type what one expects the person to say. For example, a participant began the interview saying "you know what I'm saying" as a statement within sentences. By the middle of the interview he was more relaxed and began to shorten the statement to "you know w' saying." Under autopilot as the first transcriber, I replaced all the "You know w' saying" with "You know what I'm saying." Although this might appear irrelevant for the purpose of this study, accuracy is crucial. For example, a female participant described her relationship with her first daughter, a product of a teen love affair. She gave birth to her oldest daughter and soon after her boyfriend at the time became incarcerated. Upon his return, she was in a difficult financial situation and he rented her and her daughter a small apartment, in which he kept them under lock and key. The first transcription stated, "As I screamed to let us out, he would stand out in the street *and shoot at us.*" As the second transcriber listened to the interview and revised the first version of the transcription, he discovered that she said, "As I screamed to let us out, he would stand out in the street *just looking at us.*" Thus, accuracy is vital and the second transcriber ensured it.

Lastly, the content of the interviews was analyzed with the aid of Qualrus, qualitative analysis software, from a grounded theory approach (Glaser 1992). The

analysis began with open coding. I went through the data, line by line, to begin the abstraction process and find the core themes in the data. Next, I engaged in a more selective coding, concerned with the generation of concepts that are free from the constraints of time, place, and people. And, throughout the coding process, I engaged in memoing (Glaser 1992), documenting the emergence of theoretical ideas and the relationships across concepts. Memos were initially used to track ideas. As the analysis became more abstract, the memos were used to refine the theoretical development (Glaser 1992). I then sorted the memos, giving cohesion to fractured data and allowing new ideas to emerge, which were documented by the second phase of memoing. Lastly, the analysis concluded with the write-up process, connecting the overall ideas and theoretical abstractions from the open coding, selective coding, theoretical coding, memoing, and sorting (see Glaser and Strauss 1967 for a full discussion of the process). In doing so, three dominant themes were identified throughout the interviews—parenting in the *fast life*, parenting under correctional supervision, and reintegrating into parenting within a cross generation context.<sup>25</sup> These themes are the soul of the next chapters (see table A27 for themes, in Appendix A, page 456).

### Conclusion

To capture the meaning behind individuals' lived experiences with “doing” parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision, this study conducted 57 semi-structured interviews with parents under correctional supervision in two community correction facilities at *Midwest State* in the *Metro Area*. The purpose of this chapter was to discuss this study's methodological approach. First, because of the fluidity of

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<sup>25</sup> Unlike the transcription, no second person was involved in the analysis (coding).

individuals across correctional programs, this study moves Goffman (2009) forward and encourages the sociology of punishment to look beyond mass imprisonment and begin to analyze the impact mass correctional supervision has on family life. Furthermore, because of high recidivism rates, this study presses the sociology of punishment to analyze correctional supervision as an ongoing process in an individual's life course. Second, it briefly introduced the population of interest, parents under correctional supervision and their children. Third, it provided a full description of the research setting, the *Metro Area* and surrounding areas, the departments of corrections (*Midwest State* and *State B*), an in-depth description of the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections population, and the two correctional facilities where the data was collected (WRC and RCF). Fourth, gaining access involved a long process, including accessing the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections, recruiting participants at the facilities, and the consent process. Lastly, the chapter discussed issues of access and participant recruitment, the sample, data collection, data preparation, and data analysis. Overall, this chapter addressed the methodological approach used to develop a deeper understanding of participants' lived experiences while parenting in *the fast life* and under correctional supervision. In addition to contributing to the sociology of families and marriage, criminology, and the sociology of punishment, this study encourages a holistic approach to fully understand individuals' family lived experience in the streets and under correctional supervision.



## CHAPTER IV

### “DOING” PARENTHOOD WITHIN LINKED LIVES

Participants’ ideal parent role, delinquent/criminal role, and client/inmate role emerge during participants’ childhood and adolescence. As children and adolescents, participants interact with their social surroundings and begin to construct their selves in a cross-generational process. In doing so, within a *fragile family* context and embedded in a network of linked lives, participants begin to construct the ideal parent role they will soon attempt to accomplish, acquire the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and begin to perform their legally forced client/inmate role on the correctional stage. It is participants’ self-construction during childhood and adolescence sets the foundation for their parent role performance throughout their life course.

Participants are born into a social location in an ongoing social system. Within a *fragile family* context, participants experienced child neglect and abuse, parental absence, and limited or no parental involvement during childhood and adolescence. In a cross-generational identity construction process, participants respond to their parents’ attempts or lack of attempts to “do” parenthood and construct their ideal parent role. In constructing the ideal parent role, participants expect themselves to protect their children from neglect and abuse, and be present and involved in their children’s everyday lives. But just as participants’ ideal parent role, the conflicting roles participants face in their attempts to “do” parenthood emerged during childhood and adolescence.

In the same cross-generational process, participants acquire their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage during childhood and adolescence. As participants interact with their parents and engage in family life, a significant portion of the sample witnessed parental deviant/criminal behavior during childhood and adolescence. In the process, participants acquire their delinquent/criminal status in the street’s social structure through *street play* and become consumers and employees in the illicit drug labor market. Just as the ideal parent role, participants build a

delinquent/criminal identity that will soon threaten participants' ability to "do" parenthood during childhood and adolescence.

In addition to constructing the ideal parent role and acquiring the delinquent/criminal role, participants are legally forced into the client/inmate role during adolescence. Through the same cross-generational process, a portion of participants are exposed to the correctional threat against *fragile family* life as their parents attempt to "do" parenthood while struggling with recovery and incarceration. Furthermore, in their interaction with conventional family members and criminal-justice-system staff, participants begin to build a negative reputation. First, conventional family members attempt to control participants' delinquent/criminal role performance. And at the same time, participants face the public social-control institution, the juvenile justice system and eventually the criminal justice system. Although participants' perceptions of the juvenile/criminal justice system varied, from a memorable first arrest to a harsh transition into the adult criminal justice system, all participants were legally forced into the client/inmate role on the correctional stage during adolescence. The self construction process during childhood and adolescence set in motion participants' parent role, delinquent/criminal role, and client/inmate role trajectories.

#### The Ideal Parent Role

With history and biography influencing how individuals construct and attempt to perform parenthood, parents engage in different parenthoods across time, social groups, and geographical locations (Mills 1959; Furstenberg 1995; Gatrell 2005). Through everyday interaction within the *fragile family* context and a network of linked lives, participants begin to create expectations for the parent role they will soon attempt to accomplish. When constructing their ideal parent role, participants' most salient reference is their parents' attempts or lack of attempts to "do" parenthood. Rooted in their childhood experiences with neglect/abuse, parental absence, and lack of parental

involvement in their *fragile families* of orientation, participants identify three of their six ideal parent role expectations— (i) protecting their children from neglect and abuse, (ii) being present in their children’s lives, and (iii) being involved parents.<sup>26</sup>

Only a few participants in the sample (3/57) experienced a childhood and adolescence free of child neglect/abuse. And participants’ experiences with child neglect/abuse varied from abandonment to molestation.<sup>27</sup> As victims of child neglect/abuse and reflective social beings, participants include protecting their children from child neglect and abuse to their parent role expectations. Dee, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, experienced continuous neglect and abuse throughout childhood and adolescence and it was not until her mother’s deathbed that she faced one of her abusers—

[My mother] would hug and kiss me [while in her deathbed]. That felt really strange, ‘cause I wasn’t used to her. I just asked her, “Why didn’t you want me as a child?” She said, “You, devil.” “Why would you look at a baby and say, ‘devil’? When I was five years old, I had to go in the hospital because I was starving. Why you didn’t feed me? You beating up on me with extension cords, pulling knives, hitting me in the head with hot skilletts. Why?” No child of mine—, I never did that to none of my kids. No, no, no [as she waves her index finger to gesture “no”]. The only parenting I got from her was a beating, a beat down. Uh, it’s not normal for a child not to be nurtured, not to be held, not to be loved. You know, it’s very painful.

In response to her childhood experience, Dee refuses to repeat her mother’s abusive behavior. And because the majority of participants experienced neglect/abuse during childhood, one of the dominant themes as participants constructed their ideal parent role was the quest for no more child neglect/abuse. Star, now a 27 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, recalls his childhood and identifies what he will do different as a parent—

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<sup>26</sup>Once participants became parents (chapter 5), the definition of the situation changed and they added three more expectations to their ideal parent role (providing, guiding, and developing/maintaining a parent-child relationship).

<sup>27</sup>According to MacMillan (2001), children and adolescents are most vulnerable to violence and other victimization. And experiences with child neglect/abuse have been found to have a lifelong socioeconomic impact, increase the likelihood of unemployment, low family incomes, poverty, being on Medicaid and not having any health insurance at all (Zielinski 2009; Macmillan 2009).

I can't forget all the things [my step-father] put me through when I was younger. At 8 years old, my step-brother broke a window, blamed it on me, [and] my dad made me stay in the corner after kicking my butt with a cable. [He] wouldn't let me go to the bathroom. Three hours after I sat in the corner, I wet my pants and he kicked my ass for it. I won't do that. No. I could never do that to [my daughter]. And I would kill anyone who dare—, no.

It is based on their childhood victimization experiences that participants begin to construct their ideal parent role, to avoid victimizing their own children and to protect them from other perpetrators. When Doug, now a 31 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, discussed his children's childhood, he refers to his own childhood—

Better than mine. My childhood was shit, trouble all the time. I got in trouble at home a lot. I had my step-dad, he'd beat me. He kept beating me all the time. I was always getting my butt whooped, so it kind of sucked. So, I still to this day have not put a hand on my son. I refuse to do that. I won't do it.

*When you were getting beat by your step-dad, where was your mom?*

She kicked my ass sometimes too, but she like, she either wasn't there or there really wasn't much she could do about it. I never wanted to come home. I always ran away. I would rather go get in trouble and have then take me to jail or something. Put me in [a juvenile detention] or do something with me instead of taking me home. My son won't have to do that. He'll love to come home. He'll want to be home. I'll make sure no one touches my son.

In recalling their parents' parent role performance, participants decipher their likes and dislikes, and part of their ideal parent role emerges. TR, now a 38 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, wants to avoid his parents' overall parenting practices—

I didn't want to be like my parents was. They were, well my mom, she was like an enabler type person [father was a substance/drug user]. My dad was more of that type of person where he didn't like beat us or anything like that, but he was more or less, like verbally abusive. You know, towards me and my other brothers. But like, my sisters, they could do no wrong, you know. But I didn't want to be that type of parent.

With the exception of three individuals, participants experienced neglect/abuse during childhood and/or adolescence. And as reflective social beings, they identified protecting children from neglect/abuse as a vital expectation of their ideal parent role. Furthermore, participants add being present and involved to their ideal parent role.

As participants construct their ideal parent role, identifying the expectations for the parent role they soon attempt to perform, they move towards increasing parental presence in their children's lives. During childhood, the majority of participants experienced some sort of parental absence (see table A18 in Appendix A, page 448). A portion of participants experienced *single parenthood* (26/57), the continuous presence and care of only one parent (mother or father). Participants also experienced *interval parenthood* (12/57), both parents parenting during separate periods of time, such as 5 years with one parent and the next 4 years with the other parent. Also, a minority of participants experienced the *two parent household* (12/57), mother and father being continuously in the care of the child in one household. And only the smallest minority of participants experienced the permanent *absence of both parents* (7/57) and were cared by grandparents, other relatives, or no one. As reflective social beings, participants respond to their parents' absence and add parental presence to the ideal parent role they will soon attempt to accomplish. Mary, now a 59 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, who experienced the absence of both parents and was raised by her grandmother, highlights the importance of parental presence—

But like my father, who I never knew, there is a void there. I'm just now getting help, now that I'm 59 years old, but that void never goes away. It never goes away. I want so bad to see my dad. I want to just know where I came from. I wanted so bad to have that hug, or that nurturing, you know, from a family, you know what I mean, mine. Not somebody else's family, you know, but mine. And it's caused me problems in my adult life. Stuff that I didn't understand in my psyche, you know, in my emotions. This thing in the Bible that really helped me in the past six years says, "He's the mother to the motherless and father to the fatherless." So, I adopted God as my mom and dad. You know, and then, I became his child. And so, I let him nurture me through his words. But at the same time I still long—, I still do. It's always gonna be that—, it's not gonna ever go away. Even though, okay, like in my case, those people are gone now. My mom is dead, you know. More than likely, whoever was my dad, he's probably dead too. So, I'm just gonna have to deal with this, you know, for the rest of my life. But I never want my kids to feel this, not knowing me or they dad. I've been in they lives, and they know they dad. I made sure they spent time with they dads when they was kids. Now they grown and they look for me.

Mary has experienced the pain of abandonment and identifies parental presence as a vital expectation of her ideal parent role. Like Mary, 45 of the participants experienced some sort of parental absence and began to socially construct an ideal parent role involving parental presence. Carol, now a 35 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, continues to feel her mother's abandonment and initially identified parental presence as one of her ideal parent role expectations—

[My mom] left me when I was little. She preferred the streets over me. So, my parents divorced when I was two. And my dad got custody of me. I've never met my birth mother, ever. My grandmother, his mother, raised me. I mean, she was a good woman. I was spoiled. I had the basic stuff, but it wasn't the same as a mother and a father.

*Where was your dad?*

Working, you know, he couldn't take care of a little girl on his own. Even though I'm an adult, I still feel that pain. I didn't want my girls to feel this pain. I thought, I wanted to be with them all the time, be there for my daughters.

The pain of abandonment was a common childhood experience amongst participants, creating a desire to spare their own children from a similar experience. Bubbles, now a 45 year old white/Caucasian father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, discusses his mother's abandonment—

When I was about 12, I smoked pot. So next time, I felt comfortable and got real high. I thought, "This is how I should feel all the time! This is what I'm missing in my life!" At that age, I was very upset [that] my mother didn't want me [nervous laughter]. For a child to be living with the father and not the mother, it was very uncommon then. I mean, I didn't really notice it until I started getting a little further along in school, "How come you live with your dad, not your mom? Your mom probably didn't want you." You know how kids are. And it affected me. She was 50 miles away. You know, I just never saw her. I got one half-sister and two half-brothers, [and] they were with her and their father [Bubbles was the only non-biological child of the mother's new husband at the time]. It just felt empty. I got cheated. I didn't want to cheat my children like that 'cause it feels like shit. Children need their parents, to see their mom and dad. I never wanted my children to feel rejected by me. I wanted to be in their lives.

Alike other participants, Bubbles used substance/drug use to medicate his mother's abandonment. Most relevant to this study, this pain pushed him to construct an ideal parent role free of parental absence. Jimmy, now a 21 year old white/Caucasian father

and recovering substance/drug user, experienced interval parenting as a child and constructs an ideal parent role to include parental presence—

I didn't know my dad. I didn't know my real dad 'til I was 8. When I met [my dad], oh, it was awesome! Yeah, my mom just dropped me off, so. I lived with him in between kindergarten to first grade. Then my mother pretty much kidnapped me back, but I wasn't trying to go. She made me go in the car. Then I lived with my dad again when I was 13 until four years ago. I'm gonna be there for [my son]. My dad was in and out of prison. I haven't talked to my dad in over a year. It's not up to my standards, I guess. I love my dad. We have fun all the time. He's cool, but, I mean, it's just not the ideal situation, I guess.

*What would be the ideal situation?*

Oh! Having my dad there all the time, him doing everything I needed to do, and getting the job done. Yeah, I will have the job done for my son. I'd like to be there when he needs me.

Participants' first encounter with parenthood was their parents' attempts or lack of attempts to perform the parent role. Those who experienced single, interval, or complete parental absence during childhood and adolescence constructed an ideal parent role free of parental absence. In a reflective process, participants move towards protecting and being present in their children's lives.

In addition to an ideal parent role free of child abuse/neglect and parental absence, participants described wanting to be more involved as parents. During childhood and adolescence, all participants reported a lack of parental involvement in their everyday life from at least one parent. Thus, participants add parental involvement to the ideal parent role they soon attempt to perform. Dee felt her mother's distance and lack of involvement since birth—

[My mother] didn't want kids. When she had me, I didn't have a name. The church named me [Dee]. They got me a wet nurse until she got back on her feet, but when she got back on her feet, she went back to partying, didn't wanna have nothing to do with me, you know. Would not look at me [stops to think]—, would not play with me. She was not my mother. Really, she wanted nothing to do with me. I'm not like that. I am my children's mother. I mean, if you add up the years of abuse and denial, I didn't have a family. Not from [my teen mother]. I didn't have parenting from her. I think that [other family members] can't help. Even though they do everything they can, to love that child, like my grandma did me, it was always stuck in the back of my head. "How come she—? What's up with her? How come she ain't here? How come she not at my school? I'm doing

this play. How come she's not here?" You know what I mean. But I'm not like that. I am my children's mother.

To this day, Dee considers herself an unwanted child with an uninterested mother. Thus, she refuses to be like her mother, and attempts to be continuously involved in her children's lives. Scott, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, experienced a two-parent household with an uninvolved father—

When I was going to school [a local private university in the *Metro Area*], I didn't work for a period of time. I was really a stay-at-home dad. And we did a lot of stuff together. We went swimming. We'd go to the park. Man, we had a lot of fun. You know, and it kind of, it felt, I knew it was good for them because that's what I always wanted when I was growing up that I didn't really have. [My father] never even try to talk with me, never knew what I was up to. My kids, they scream, "Dad!" and run up and give me a hug, you know. I do things with my kids.

As participants recall their childhoods' unfulfilled wants, they attempt to become involved in their children's everyday lives. This involvement also means engagement in the children's lives through discussion and communication. Jerry, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, pushes for a parenthood involving open communication—

I think my way is more understanding and discussing issues. I really dig and get to the bottom of the issue a lot more. My mom, she was a disciplinarian. She wasn't having it, you know. And my step-father, he was a big disciplinarian too, and he was not going for no bull. Their way of parenting was a lot more aggressive. I talk to my son. We talk. I know what he's thinking. I know what he's doing. I'm in his life.

For participants, being an involved parent means attending children's schooling activities, engaging in entertainment with the children, and creating a path of access to children's thoughts and activities. Rooted in their parents' lack of involvement, participants construct an ideal parent role that includes parental involvement in children's daily lives.

Overall, as reflective social beings living within a network of linked lives, participants use their parents' attempts or lack of attempts to perform the parent role as the foundation to construct their own ideal parent role. First, in response to their victimization during childhood and adolescence, a significant portion of participants aim



at not becoming perpetrators of child neglect/abuse and protecting their children from external perpetrators. Second, in response to their parents' absence, participants identify parental presence as a vital parent role expectation. Third, in response to their parents' lack of parental involvement, they vow to be involved parents in their children's lives. It is participants' experiences during childhood and adolescence that initiate the social construction of a new ideal parent role.<sup>28</sup> These three expectations are part of the ideal parent role participants attempt to perform in criminal culture and under correctional supervision. And just as the foundations for a new ideal parent role emerged during childhood and adolescence, so do the conflicting roles that soon challenge participants' attempts to perform the new parent role. Participants acquired their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and are legally forced into the client/inmate role on the correctional stage during childhood and adolescence.

#### The Delinquent/Criminal Role

Participants live within a network of linked lives, engaging in the social construction of self within a cross-generational process. Thus, participants use their experience in their *fragile families* of orientation to construct their selves during childhood and adolescence. For a significant portion of participants, their initial brush with deviance was a product of their parents' deviant/criminal behavior.

#### “My Parents Smoked Dope!”

During childhood and adolescence, these participants were very aware of their parents' deviant/criminal behavior. When asked to identify the biggest parental problem at home during their childhood and adolescence, participants identified domestic violence (5/57), drug dealing (8/57), and substance/drug use (41/57). Only a minority of participants experienced no parental problems (3/57) (see table A18 in Appendix A, page

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<sup>28</sup>See chapter 5 for three additional expectations post childbirth.

448).<sup>29</sup> Thus, it is parents' deviant/criminal role performance that prompts participants' initial exposure to the *fast life*. Participants (i) witnessed their parents' struggle with the role conflict between the parent role and the delinquent/criminal role while attempting to "do" parenthood in the *fast life*. Consequently, (ii) participants desire to maintain a distance between their children and the *fast life*. But (iii) participants acquire the delinquent/criminal role early on in their life course.

As children and adolescents, participants were second to the *fast life* in their parents' priority list, setting in motion a cross-generational struggle with the delinquent/criminal role in the streets. And as their parents' struggled with role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role while attempting to "do" parenthood, participants slowly faced the consequences and were exposed the *fast life*. Joe#1, now a 20 year old African American/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, recalls his parents' deviant/criminal behavior and its consequences—

My mom and dad smoked dope. They never bought me any clothes or anything like that. I was eating out for a long time [sigh], and I had to try to survive out there. They smoked a lot of dope. So, they would get money and spend it. I wouldn't get nothing out of it. Had no money, no nice clothes or nothing like that. Everybody else was looking nice. I wasn't hustling or nothing like that. I wasn't on the streets. Me and my mom had somewhere, but just the point that I didn't have no money, no clothes. Everything I had was dusty, not compared to what I got now. I didn't go to school. I quit school 11<sup>th</sup> grade. I didn't wanna go to school wearing no bum. That was not my style. That was not me. If I looked like a bum, you won't see me. That's why I'm glad I'm in here. Because, I mean, I ain't bumbish, I got nice clothes and nice shoes, but I still feel like a bum.

Joe#1's parents struggled with role conflict between the parent role and the delinquent/criminal role, brought material scarcity and instability into the home, and exposed Joe#1 to the *fast life*. Jake, now a 26 year old Mexican American father and ex-

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<sup>29</sup> Although most participants experienced more than one parental problem during childhood and adolescence, the noted parental problem was what participants' considered most prominent. Three participants did not experienced parental deviant/criminal behavior during their childhood/adolescence.

drug dealer, recalls his parents' deviant/criminal behavior and their inability to maintain family stability—

My mom is 43 [his mother was 16 and his father was 33 upon his birth]. But, you know, it went bad. My dad was always using, alcoholic too, and he used to beat my mom pretty bad, back in the day, you know, so. So did my mom [substance/drug use and drug dealing]. So, we were never all together. I spent most of my childhood in foster homes.

Living with his parents on and off during childhood, with an open door to the streets,

Jake was eventually picked up by foster care and juvenile corrections. Amongst

participants, family instability became one of the prominent features of their parents'

attempts to "do" parenthood in the *fast life*. Rosie, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian

mother and recovering substance/drug user, emphasizes her family's instability—

I was born when my dad was 16 and my mom was 38. So, there's a huge-huge age difference. I don't know if there was no DHS in the 80s or what?! They were neighbors, I guess. And then my mom got pregnant with me. And when my dad turned 18, they got married. And they were together for about 15 years. And my dad just got real heavy into alcohol. My dad did really good at shielding me from their problems [maternal bipolar disorder and substance/drug use]. So, when he left, I was just kind of like, "Dad's leaving?!" He didn't want anything to do with my mom. So, he didn't really talk to me very much either. And my mom has real bad bipolar, and tons of mental problems. So, the state came for me because she had these suicide attempts and I wasn't going to school. And then the CPS [child protective services] came in and took me from my mom, and I had a child [mother at 16 years of age]. They had to adjudicate both of us, me and my son.

It was when Rosie's father gave into alcoholism and stopped shielding her from her

mother's problems that she began to experience the real chaotic environment in her

*fragile family* of orientation. This lack of family stability freed Rosie to experience the

*fast life* in the streets as an adolescent—substance/drug use, partying, sex, and teen

pregnancy. As participants' parents struggled with the role conflict between the parent

role and the delinquent/criminal role, participants were exposed to the *fast life* during

childhood and adolescence and it set in motion the cross-generational struggle with the

delinquent/criminal role.

When recalling their parents' struggle with role conflict between the parent role and the delinquent/criminal role, participants express a desire to maintain a distance

between the *fast life* and their children.<sup>30</sup> However, their parents' deviant/criminal role performance opened their door to the *fast life*. As Diamond, now a 22 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, attempts to understand what led her to the *fast life*, she looks back at her parents' deviant/criminal behavior and makes plans for her daughter—

I don't understand how I got like I am, because I had good parents. I grew up with a mom and dad. I was to go to school every day. I had nice clothes. My mom and dad used to make sure I had Jordan shoes on, Air Force Ones, nice clothes, Dream. My dad used to iron our clothes for the week. So, I don't know. I guess it was the lack of attention. Even though I had all these things, my mom was always working and my dad was an alcoholic. And he used to beat us, very abusive. So, he used to beat on my mom. So, I think that, the anger and the rebellion, it came from that. I had a good mom and dad, but I still have to admit to what was going on in the home, even though I got what I wanted, when I wanted it. There was still all these drinking and fighting, and all that came with it. My daughter, she's not going to live like that. She's not.

In Diamond's *fragile family* of orientation, her parents' struggled with role conflict between the parent role and the delinquent/criminal role. Although she wants to maintain the *fast life* and her daughter at a distance, her door was opened towards the streets during childhood and adolescence. In the same manner, Mike#1, now a 32 year old white/Caucasian, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, witnessed his parents' struggle with the role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and parent role—

My parents are very active alcoholics. And it makes them moody. Ummm, I don't want to be like that. Alcohol was very accessible [laughter], but I'm not gonna blame my parents that I drink. They definitely enable me though. After I turned 18, I was drinking every day. Parents should just be there emotionally, just be a provider, protector. And, be a dad or a mom. My parents were always cool. They did not beat us or anything. But, if we needed a spank, we got a spank. Things like that. And with my kids, it would take a lot to want to spank them. But, I don't see that happening. And I don't drink around my kids. I don't want to be moody around them. I don't plan on drinking at all anymore.

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<sup>30</sup>All participants express this desire throughout the interviews. An even when participants discussed their own children's delinquent/criminal behavior in chapter 11 ("doing" parenthood in the aftermath), they continue to express a desire to pull their children out of the *fast life*.

Mike#1's parents did not encourage his alcohol consumption, but made it accessible. And although he wants to accomplish the ideal parent role away from the *fast life*, his early exposure to his parents' deviant/criminal behavior opened his door to the *fast life*. In a similar manner, Purple, now a 29 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, experienced his parents' struggle with the role conflict between the parent role and the delinquent/criminal role, that opened the doors for his illicit employment in the streets—

I grew up in a dope house. I was born in a dope house. I was spoiled too. It was hard, especially when my mom started smoking. That's all I knew. I really didn't know how to bring up a child. And I didn't have my dad there to really show me [father has been in and out of prison]. But I ain't trying to have nobody have pity on me. I knew what I was doing. I could've chosen a different path, but I chose the path I went to [drug dealing]. The money was good, but it wasn't worth it [drug dealing]. Two years in prison, away from my son, it wasn't worth it. Now, you know, I gotta work hard to show myself and my son. I don't want my son around that kind of life.

His parents' struggle with role conflict opened Purple's door to the illicit drug labor market during his childhood and adolescence. Although interested in keeping the *fast life* away from his son, it is going to be a difficult task. Miguel, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, was not only exposed to his mother's substance/drug use, but engaged in substance/drug use with his mother during childhood and adolescence—

When I lived with my mom, she found pot [marijuana] in my pocket when she was doing laundry and put it back in my dresser. My dad would've never stood for that deal [father was not a user]. And then she came and asked me for some of it. I was like, "What are you talking about?" You know, she just came out and told me, "Don't bullshit me. I rather you do it in front of me than hide behind my back." And I was like, "Okay!" And then I started drinking with her too. I'd also smoke pot, partied with my mom as a kid. It was probably not the right thing to do. I would never approve if my kids do that, knowing what I know now. There's no way, no way at all.

Similar to Miguel's mother, a few other parents engaged in deviant behavior with the participants during childhood and adolescence (4/57). Whether participants were exposed to their parents' deviant/criminal role performance or engaged in

deviant/delinquent behavior with their parents, they aim at distancing the *fast life* from their children. However, their parents' attempts to "do" parenthood in the *fast life* exposed them to the *fast life* and opened their door towards the street.

Participants' exposure to their parents' deviant/criminal role performance in the home was coupled with exposure to the *fast life* in the streets. The criminology literature has established the relationship between delinquent/criminal role performance and poor family management, family conflict, and parent acceptance of delinquency (Fagan, et al. 2011). And exposure to parents' deviant/criminal role performance provided participants with access to the streets, where they soon after acquired their delinquent/criminal role. To do so, participants began navigating boundaries and expectations within the family and school. Once in the streets, children took on the delinquent/criminal role through *street play* and soon become employees and consumers of the illicit drug market. As children and adolescents in the streets, participants engaged in delinquency as part of play, such as *joy riding*. In the streets, participants soon transition from *street play* to delinquent/criminal role performance, substance/drug use and/or drug dealing. In the narratives, 17 participants self identified primarily as employees (all fathers), 29 as consumers (12 mothers and 17 fathers), and 11 as consumers and employees (all fathers) in the illicit drug market. It is participants' delinquent/criminal role that soon will challenge their ability to perform their ideal parent role (see chapter 6).

Overall, linked to previous generations, participants were exposed to the *fast life* through their parents' deviant/criminal role performance. Most importantly, participants witnessed their parents' struggle with role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role. In response, participants expressed a desired to keep their own children at a distance from the *fast life*. However, participants' exposure to their parents' deviant/criminal role performance opened their door towards the streets. Engaged in the

role acquisition process, participants soon after acquire the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage.

### The Client/Inmate Role

As participants experience their parents' attempts (or lack of attempts) to "do" parenthood and are initiated into the *fast life* on the street stage, they come under the surveillance of two institutions of social control, the family (the private social-control institution) and the juvenile/criminal justice system (the public social-control institution during adolescence). In constructing the self through the cross generational role acquisition process, participants acquire the client/inmate status. Unlike the delinquency/criminal status acquisition, the client/inmate status was legally forced upon participants through a labeling process that participants perceive as part of the *fast life*. Thus, it is important to understand the participants' experiences as the family and the juvenile/criminal justice system attempt to control their deviant/delinquent role performance during adolescence.

Just as participants witnessed their parents' deviant/criminal role performance (54/57), a portion of participants experienced their parents' continuous visits to (i) substance/drug treatment (21/57) and (ii) correctional facilities (17/57) throughout their childhood and adolescence.<sup>31</sup> It was then that participants were first exposed to the role conflict between the parent role and the client/inmate role, as their parents' attempt to "do" parenthood under correctional supervision. Simultaneously, (iii) conventional family members attempted to control participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and (iv) participants come under the surveillance of the juvenile/criminal justice surveillance. Just as the parent role and the delinquent/criminal role, the client/inmate

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<sup>31</sup> It is important to note that the majority of participants experienced parental absence and it is possible a portion of their parents chose not to tell them about their treatment/correctional status. Thus, participants have limited knowledge about their parents' overall correctional status.

role became part of participants' selves through a cross-generational self construction process.

Participants' first encounter with the substance/drug use recovery-relapse process occurred when witnessing their parents' attempt to overcome addiction (21/57). Most importantly, it is during their parents' attempts to recover when participants first encounter the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the parent role, experiencing the recovery-relapse rollercoaster through their parents. Jake has witnessed his father's delinquent/criminal role performance (substance/drug use and drug dealing) take over his life and his numerous attempts to recover—

I seen my dad in and out of prison, in and out of treatment throughout my life. He's always needing to go to meetings, always avoiding meetings. Now, he's in prison. Since I can remember, it just been that way. It's hard, you know. It sucked then. When I was younger, I kept thinking he wanted out. He'd come home, be with us, then he be back in the streets. Once I was on the streets, I didn't care. This is just what we do, you know.

Just like a significant portion of the sample, Jake's childhood and adolescence involved his father being in and out of treatment and correctional programs. Although some parents were more successful than others, 21 participants witnessed their parents' attempts to "do" parenthood during the recovery-relapse cycle. Miguel discusses his mother's battle with substance/drug use as he attempts to recover—

I would drink with her boyfriend when she was trying to stop drinking. She's telling me—

"Why do you drink?"

"To get drunk."

"Do you realize what you're doing?"

"No."

"This is how you tell me who I am?"

"What are you talking about ma'?"

"This is how you become an alcoholic. And we realize that we can't live a normal life. We drink."

"Oh, whatever!"

I just thought she was getting weird on me. She was pissed off. I was a little kid at the time. I was too content with what I was doing. I didn't want to stop. But she'd get mad 'cause she was trying to quit. She be gone to treatment, be back, and again. She just kept falling, like me.



Miguel's mother took an open approach to parenting and substance/drug use, allowing delinquent/criminal behavior in the home. However, this approach made it difficult for her to recover and "do" parenthood. As parents struggle to recover and "do" parenthood, participants witnessed success and failure. Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, compares her mother's preference for alcohol and eventual abandonment to her father's recovery and involved parenting—

[My father] raised me and my brother since we were in 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. He was a single dad. My mom has been an alcoholic since I can remember and she left. She [lives out of state] and calls me when she's drunk, but I don't want to talk to her or anything. I think she's still on drugs. I don't know.

*How do you feel about your mom?*

I guess I don't have any feelings for her, you know. I used to be mad a lot when I was growing up. I didn't have a mom, started my period and having a boyfriend. But, I had a really good dad. He did a lot of stuff with us when we were kids. He would take all of us to the drive-in when we had one up here [movies] and go watch [baseball] games. He used to do a lot of fun stuff with us. All the kids would come over to our house and play. He quit drinking when he got custody of us, went to AA meetings, a lot of AA meetings, and to church every Sunday. Yeah, he was a good dad.

In the same family, two parents struggled with alcoholism. One successfully recovered and performs his parent role, while the other continues with her addiction and abandoned any attempt to "do" parenthood. Whether success or failure, their parents' attempt to recover and rehabilitate is participants' first exposure to the struggle between the client/inmate role and the parent role.

Whether participants' parents were engaged in substance/drug use or other criminal behaviors, it was during childhood and adolescence that a portion of the sample was first exposed to correctional facilities through their parents' incarceration (17/57).<sup>32</sup> In this cross-generational process, participants become familiar with the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. Eric, now a 32 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, is the child of an incarcerated father —

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<sup>32</sup>Of the participants who recall experiencing parental incarceration during childhood and adolescence (17/57), it was predominantly father's incarceration (17/17). Only one participant discussed the incarceration of both parents (mother and father) and no one discussed only mother's incarceration.

*Do you remember what it was like visiting your dad in prison?*

Yeah, I remember everything. When I used to go see my dad, it was like seeing a super star. 'Cause I really didn't know him like that. And when he did come around, it was always like at night, when he'd get out of prison. It was always at night time, never in the daytime. When I did get to see him too, it was in prison. And it always felt like, man, this dude is my dad. If it takes for me to come in this prison to see him, then so be it. It's my dad. And I always felt like it was more of a loyalty thing than anything. That's why I looked up to him so much, even though he was in prison. When I used to go down there to see him, I just felt like I always just wanted to be just like him. I think I got comfortable with that environment. And I think I kind of got caught up into it, going to see my dad when I was that young. To actually go to prison on my own, it wasn't a big thing. I mean, I was nervous because it was really new to me, doing time and being away from home, but I got used to going to prison. I don't want my kids to get comfortable.

As children of previous incarcerated generations, a portion of the participants was introduced to corrections and the client/inmate role while visiting their incarcerated parent. As witnesses of their parents' struggle with the role conflict between the parent role and the client/inmate role, they began to make plans for their children. Purple witnessed his father's incarceration and now refuses to expose his son to the same experience—

I knew how I was when I was actually that young. I looked at my dad. He was in prison at the time too. We used to always go see him. I always knew he was an inmate more than anything else. When I was young, I used to think that that was somewhere I wanted to be, due to the love I had for somebody that was in a place like that. So, as I grew older it was kind of instilled in my brain that that was a place to be. So, I was just careless out here, like driving [driving while barred], it wasn't nothing major, having the "I-don't-care" attitude. I was aware of those thoughts and feelings, so I don't want my son to feel that way.

As children of incarcerated parents, these participants were recipients of their parents' attempts to "do" parenthood while under correctional supervision. In this cross-generational process, participants develop ideas about the client/inmate role and "doing" parenthood. Taylor, now a 25 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, recalls the conflict between the parent role and the client/inmate role during his father's incarceration—

I didn't even wanna see my dad in prison [his father has been in and out since he was born]. I mean, with my dad, it gets to the point that, "Oh, here we go again.

It's nothing new." It gets to the point where you know there's nothing you can do about it. When it came to it, I knew he couldn't do much for me. I knew.

Any of his father's attempts to "do" parenthood were limited by his client/inmate role.

Thus, Taylor eventually lost interest during his father was incarcerated. Similar to participants' first encounter with the *fast life* and the recovery-relapse cycle, their first encounter with corrections was during their adolescence. And simultaneously, participants began to acquire the legally forced client/inmate role under the surveillance of the family (private social-control institution) and the juvenile/criminal justice system (public social-control institution).

Just as their parents, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance did not go unnoticed in the family context. It was during participants' childhood and adolescence when conventional, recovered, and rehabilitated family members ("conventional family members" here after) begin their attempts to control participants' delinquent/criminal role performance. This initial struggle between the family (the private social-control institution) and participants is the genesis of an ongoing attempt to control participants' behavior and eventually limits participants' access to their children (see chapter 7 on "doing" parenthood under surveillance and chapter 10 on reintegration into "doing" parenthood).<sup>33</sup> Initially, conventional family members become aware of participants' delinquent/criminal role performance, attempt to pull the children from the street stage, and soon confronted the *fast life*'s strong grip. In the process, conventional family members find themselves fighting a lifelong war against the *fast life* for participants' lives and to protect the next generation. During childhood and adolescence, regardless of conventional family members' attempts, participants were lured into the *fast life* on the street stage and soon found themselves legally forced into the client/inmate status on the correctional stage.

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<sup>33</sup>Unlike participants' full discussion about their parents' attempts to "do" parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision; participants do not discuss conventional family members controlling their parents' access to them as children. The only window we have to this phenomenon is participants' experience with parental absence and lack of parental involvement during childhood.

Participants' delinquency/criminal role performance and conventional family members' inability to control it captures the attention of the public institution of social control, the juvenile/criminal justice system. Participants' initial experience with the juvenile justice system was a memorable moment during *street play*. Embedded in the *fast life*, participants' encounters with the juvenile/criminal justice system become repetitious and the client/inmate status was perceived as part of everyday life. In agreement with the criminology literature, this data suggests that participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and court procedures are not always in sync (Coleman and Moynihan 1996). Because their client/inmate role was not grounded in participants' truth, participants perceive the process as an unjust *cat-and-mouse game* and initially reject the label. This unjust *cat-and-mouse game* perception allows participants to temporarily dismiss the client/inmate role during adolescence.<sup>34</sup> However, participants' transition into the adult criminal justice system forces them to fully perform their client/inmate role. While and/or after struggling with the family, participants come under correctional supervision and are legally forced into the client/inmate status, which will soon threaten participants' ability to perform their ideal parent role.

Overall, just as participants begin to construct their ideal parent role and acquire their delinquent/criminal role, they are legally forced into the client/inmate role during childhood and adolescence. A portion of participants saw their parents as client/inmates in recovery (21/57) and under correctional supervision (17/57). It is in this cross-generational process that participants first encounter the role conflict between the parent role and the client/inmate role. As the recipients of this struggle, participants begin to develop views about "doing" parenthood under correctional supervision. Although their parents' treatment and correctional experiences first exposed participants to corrections, it is not until the family and the juvenile/criminal justice system attempt to control their

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<sup>34</sup> Similar to rejecting labels through neutralization techniques (Sykes and Matza 1957, 1988)

delinquent/criminal role performance that participants acquire their client/inmate role on the correctional stage.

### Conclusion

In a cross-generational process, participants begin to socially construct their selves during childhood and adolescence. In doing so, within a *fragile family* context and embedded in a network of linked lives, participants begun to construct the ideal parent role they will soon attempt to perform, acquire the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and are forced into the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. It is during childhood and adolescence that participants acquire roles with conflicting expectations.

Within a *fragile family* context, participants experienced child neglect and abuse, parental absence, and limited or no parental involvement during childhood and adolescence. In a cross-generational process, participants respond to their parents' attempts or lack of attempts to "do" parenthood and begun to construct their ideal parent role. In constructing the ideal parent role they would soon attempt to accomplish, participants expect themselves to protect their children from neglect and abuse, and be present and involved in their children's everyday lives. But just as participants' ideal parent role emerges, the conflicting roles that threaten their attempts to "do" parenthood also emerge during childhood and adolescence.

In the same cross-generational process, participants acquire their delinquent/criminal role during childhood and adolescence. As participants interact with their parents and engage in family life, they witness their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance. Simultaneously, participants acquire their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage through *street play* and become consumers and employees in the illicit drug labor market. Although unaware at the time, the delinquent/criminal role becomes a prominent part of the self, which soon threaten participants' ability to "do" parenthood.

In addition to the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role, participants are forced into the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. Through the same cross-generational process, participants are exposed to corrections as their parents attempt to “do” parenthood under correctional supervision. Simultaneously, in their interaction with conventional family members and the juvenile/criminal justice system staff, participants build a negative reputation. First, conventional family members attempt to control participants’ delinquent/criminal role performance. Soon after, participants face the public social-control institution, the juvenile justice system and eventually the criminal justice system. Although participants’ perceptions of the juvenile/criminal justice system varied, participants are legally forced into client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. It is their delinquents/criminal role on the street stage and the clients/inmate role on the correctional stage that will eventually challenge participants’ ability to perform their ideal parent role.

Overall, participants are born into a social location in an ongoing social system. Living linked lives, participants are recipients of their parents’ attempts or lack of attempts to “do” parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision. In this context, participants begin to carve a social space within the family, the streets, and the juvenile/criminal justice system. During childhood and adolescence, participants respond and begun to construct an ideal parent role, and acquired the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. Whether these roles are in a salience hierarchy or on equal grounds within the self, the roles have conflicting expectations and challenge participants’ ability to perform their ideal parent role. And just as participants acquired their delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role at a young age, they transitioned into the parent role during their teen and young adult years.

## CHAPTER V

### TRANSITION INTO “DOING” PARENTHOOD

Soon after participants acquire their delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role, they acquire their parent role.<sup>35</sup> And their delinquent/criminal role performance and client/inmate role performance shape the initiation of their parent role trajectories (conception, pregnancy and birth processes). At the time of the interview, the 57 participants were parents to 154 children (see table A20 in Appendix A, page 449). In this study, eighteen participants became first time parents between 14 and 17 years of age. And the majority of participants became first time parents before 21 years of age (40/57)<sup>36</sup> while on the street stage or the correctional stage. And it is during conception, pregnancy and the birth process that participants come face to face with role conflict in their lives for the first time.

Embedded in the *fast life* and performing their delinquent/criminal role, participants' transition into the parent role on the street stage. While living the *fast life*, participants conceive their children in unstable relationships, including teenage couples experiencing *puppy love*, adult-adolescent couples in at times illicit relationships, couples in uncommitted/undefined relationships, and/or in casual-sex encounters. Participants' delinquent/criminal role performance shaped their conception experiences.

From conception, the transition into the parent role involves crediting participants with the pregnancy and participants accepting the parent role. Once participants were credited with the pregnancy, a portion of participants transform the shocking news to *bundles of joy* and accept their new parent role. However, a portion of pregnant girls and women kept the pregnancy news from male participants, not giving participants the

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<sup>35</sup> Previous literature has found a significant association between teen fatherhood and individuals' history of parental separation/divorce in early childhood, exposure to family violence in early childhood, and illicit drug use (Tan and Quinlivan 2006).

<sup>36</sup> Eighteen between 14 and 17 years of age, twenty-two between 18 and 21 years of age, eleven between 22 and 25 years of age, five between 26 and 30 years of age, and one at 34 years of age become parents for the first time (see table A20 in Appendix A, page 449).

opportunity to take on the parent role until later in their children's lives. Whether during pregnancy or later on in children's life, participants were accredited with pregnancies and accepted the parent role.

To transition from accepting the parent role to performing the ideal parent role is a difficult process. The street stage is hazardous for pregnancy and the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role begins to emerge. On the street stage, a portion of the substance/drug using participants prioritize *the high* over protecting their fetuses and/or being present and involved. And as a portion of drug dealing participants prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance, pregnant girls and women are pushed aside and prospective fathers become absent and uninvolved. The role conflict between the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role emerges during pregnancy.

Although participants neglected the protecting, involvement, and presence expectations of their ideal parent role, they returned to the role construction process during the initiation into their parent role. Once participants' definition of the situation changed from childhood/adolescence to becoming prospective parents, they added the providing expectation to the ideal parent role. To fulfill the providing expectations during the pregnancy process, participants used the low-wage and illicit labor markets to increase their income. Moreover, once the due date arrives, participants experience the birth process while in *free society* and *convict society*.

When participants are in *free society* during the birth process, participants' previous delinquent/criminal role performance shapes their experience. But once the delivery begins, all other roles fade to the background and participants face the terrifying moments of the birth process and enjoy their children's first moments of life. However, past delinquent/criminal role performance reinstates its presence with a threat of child removal minutes after birth. Role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role shapes participants' experience in the birth process in *free society*.



On the correctional stage, the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the client/inmate role shape participants' experiences during the birth process. Although participants' experiences with the birth process on the correctional stage varied, participants begin to perceive their client/inmate role as problem in their lives. The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role both expect presence and involvement. Unable to fulfill the ideal parent role during the birth process, participants experience emotional distress and a sense of powerlessness. It is during the birth process that participants come face to face with the role conflict between their client/inmate role and their ideal parent role on the correctional stage.

Once participants had their children in their arms, a portion of the fathers requested paternity tests. In the case of the parent role, the role acquisition process involved being credited with a pregnancy and accepting the parent role. Because male participants have witnessed paternity fraud while under correctional supervision and their children were conceived in unstable relationships, a portion of the fathers request paternity test before transitioning into the parent role and investing in their parent role performance.

And once participants became parents and their definition of the situation changed, they return to the role construction process and add two additional expectations to the ideal parent role. In addition to being present, being involved, protecting children, and providing, participants add guiding and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship to the ideal parent role after the birth process. Overall, the delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role shape participants' transition into the parent role.

#### Initiation into Parenthood

As participants' transition into the parent role, their delinquent/criminal role shapes their conceptions and pregnancy experiences. Similar to previous findings in the sociology of families and marriages, criminology, and sociology of punishment

literatures, participants on the street stage conceive children in unstable relationships. Children are conceived in *puppy love* relationships, in at times illicit adult-adolescent relationships, uncommitted and undefined relationships, and in casual sex encounters. Upon the news of an unplanned pregnancy, participants mangle with the transition into the parent role as they accept or reject paternity. Similar to previously documented transitions into parenthood (LaRossa and Sinha 2006), participants construct meaning and respond to the pregnancy news. Although the news was initially shocking, the majority of the participants who were credited with a pregnancy re-conceptualize it into *shocking bundles of joy in free society and convict society*.<sup>37</sup> Once participants accept the parent role, a portion of participants have a difficult time transitioning into role performance, prioritize their delinquent/criminal role and neglect to be present, be involved, and/or protect the fetus during pregnancy. However, prospective mothers and fathers return to construct their parent role and add providing to the ideal parent role expectations and begin to perform the parent role through low wage and illicit labor markets. As participants' initiate their parent role trajectories, their delinquent/criminal role performance shapes their experiences during the conception and pregnancy processes.

#### “It Was Just Sex!”

On the street stage, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance shapes their ability to accept the parent role. Similar to previous findings in the class and family literature (Ellwood and Jencks 2004; Cherlin 2011; England, McClintock, and Shafer 2011; Nurse 2004; McLanahan 2011), participants in this sample experienced pregnancy with partners who they did not know well, at a young age, in ambiguous relationships with different partners, and create a complex and long term unstable home environment.

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<sup>37</sup> In this context, *free society* refers to the social world outside the incarceration walls (jail or prison walls); *captive society* refers to the client/inmates' social (cultural) world within prison walls (Sykes 2007)

Furthermore, this data confirms the *fast life* as the antithesis of commitment, an exciting world that cultivates sexual encounters within unable relationships (similar to Bourgois 2003; Anderson 1999; Short, Strodbeck, and Cartwright 1962). Thus, participants begin to transition into the parent role in ambiguous and unstable relationships. First, a portion of participants conceive their children at young age (i) in *puppy love* relationships. Second, with the *fast life*'s limited or no perceived difference between adolescence and adulthood on the street stage (previously documented by Bourgois 2003), a portion of participants conceived children (ii) in at times illicit adolescent-adult sexual relationships.<sup>38</sup> Third, while performing the delinquent/criminal role, participants are discouraged from commitment and male participants are encouraged to engage in casual sex (similar to Anderson 1999 and Mullins 2006). Thus, a portion of participants conceive their children (iii) in undefined/uncommitted relationships and (iv) through casual sex encounters. The unstable relationship context in which the next generation is conceived threatens participants' ability to transition into parent role performance.

In the *fast life*, participants acquire their status sets at very young age, including their parent status. Although only a minority of participants became teen parents (18/57), a significant portion conceived their first child during their teen years (22/57). On the street stage, children are conceived in unstable *puppy love* relationships. Red, now a 38 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, was 16 years of age when he conceived his first child with his 15 year old girlfriend. Soon after receiving the news, he faced his girlfriends' family to answer questions that would determine his child's existence—

We was together since like middle school, until high school. It was in high school. She's like, "I'm pregnant! What are you gonna do?" "What you mean I'm gonna do? I cain't carry the baby!" Her mom and her dad called me to come over their house. When I got there, her mom and her dad was sitting there. They was steaming. He is definitely gonna kill me! I was like—

"Man, what's up?"

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<sup>38</sup> Age of consent varies across states, but the legal age of consent is 16 in *Midwest State* and 17 in *State B*.

“Hey man, we got a situation here. Do you love my daughter?”

“Yeah.”

“Do you really love my daughter?”

“Yeah.”

“Well, she pregnant.”

“Oh yeah, I know. She told me.”

“What we are wanting her to do is to terminate the pregnancy.”

“Why?”

“Because you’re not old enough and she’s not old enough to take care of the baby.”

“What you mean we’re not old enough to take care of the baby? I understand, we both young. But no!”

“She’s young. She still has to go through school. And it’s gonna be harder on her to do it.”

“Yeah, I understand that. But, I’m not good with any type of abortion.”

“So, are you going to take care of the baby?”

“Of course, yeah. I’m gonna do what I got to do.”

“Okay. But we still feel that we need to terminate the pregnancy.”

“I respect you as a man. I know this is your daughter and you love her. But let me do what I got to do. That’s my baby. You don’t have a choice in this.”

“I’m gonna respect you as a man and let you do what you feel you need to do.”

And that’s when my son was born. There is no reason, unless either the baby or the mother is in danger, for termination of pregnancy.

As a teenage prospective father, Red took on the parent role and performed the protection expectation of his ideal parent role to ensure his child’s existence. Rosie, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, also conceived her first son in a *puppy love* relationship—

We were in love. We were messing around and we shouldn’t have, but I loved him. I was 15 and he was 17. But when I got pregnant, all the love he felt for me disappeared I guess, because he left. He didn’t want anything to do with me. It broke my heart because I loved him. And I thought he loved me. When he left, I thought, “I need to keep going to school. I need to get my life together for my baby.”

While on the street stage, Rosie conceived her first son in a *puppy love* relationship.

Upon the pregnancy news, her boyfriend abandoned her and the baby, but Rosie took on her parent role at a young age. ‘Till June, now a 45 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, was 15 years old when she conceived her only son—

I was still in high school. We were young. But his father has always been in his life. We haven’t been in a relationship, but he has always looked out for our son.

Even here, I saw him the other day, he brought [my son] clothes he needed to go job seeking.<sup>39</sup>

*When you found out you were pregnant at such a young age, what went through your mind?*

It was fine. I knew other girls who had kids at that age. And I kept going to school. I graduated from high school. It was hard, but I did it.

‘Till June conceived her only son during her teenage years and focused on her education in preparation to perform the parent role. In the sample, a significant portion of participants become parents at a young age through unplanned pregnancies in *puppy love* relationships. In the process, conception in *puppy love* relationships creates a difficult setting for participants to perform their ideal parent role.

In addition to initiating their parent role trajectories at a young age in *puppy love* relationships, a significant portion of participants conceived their children in at times illicit adolescent-adult sexual relationships. On the street stage, the *fast life* ignores age differences between adolescence and adulthood and includes minors into the uncensored adult world (similar to Bourgois 2003). In the process, age differences become unnoticeable (or are ignored) and participants conceived their children in at times illicit sexual relationships. Ray, now a 38 year old Mexican American father and recovering substance/drug user, describes the context of the conception of his first child as a *puppy love* relationship—

I seen her at a fair out here in [the *Metro Area*] and her sister lived in [my town, 30 miles away]. I was really attracted to her and she thought I was too young [14 year old boy chasing a 17 year old young girl]. I chased her for like two years before she even talked to me. She was waiting until I got older. I did get to talk to her, and then got with her. I’d be lying if I said I didn’t love her, ‘cause I did. The first 6 or 7 months, playing that dating game, it was great. And then, before we knew it, she was pregnant [he was 16 years old and she was 20 years old at the time]. But then the true colors come out. She started getting real controlling, but I was really in love with her. She did like me, but I don’t know if she like really loved me then. But I didn’t think about it then. I was there for her, went to every doctor appointment.

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<sup>39</sup> ‘Till June and her no 30 year old son were simultaneously serving their sentences at WRC at the time of the interview.

Ray was in love and conceived his first son at 16 years of age with a 20 year old.

Although not an illicit relationship in *Midwest State*, because 16 years old is the age of consent, the age difference made it difficult for Ray to fully perform the ideal parent role throughout their marriage. In a similar manner, Jerry, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, explored the *fast life* during his teen years and girls and women became more accessible—

I was 14 when he was born and [my son's] mom didn't really tell me. I kind of got the idea that she was embarrassed because she was a lot older than me [she was 22 at the time]. She didn't want to be seen as that type of person [who was] having a relationship with a youngster. But it wasn't like that. I would've said something or try to get her in no trouble. I really really really actually liked her. I had a crush on her forever. When I was younger, she used to watch us [him and his siblings], you know, babysit us for my mom. And once I got up in my teen years, I was always hanging around older people. The crowd that I hung around with, she was kind of related to 'em. And then she started seeing that I was mature, that I was basically on my own, grown. And then, it just happened.

In peer relationships with adults on the street stage, the age gap socially disappeared and Jerry conceived his first child in an illicit adolescent-adult sexual relationship. Because it was an illicit sexual relationship in *Midwest State*, the mother moved out of state to avoid criminal charges and hid their son's existence for 14 years, making it difficult for Jerry to take on the parent role. Juan, now a 53 year old Mexican American father and recovering substance/drug user, conceived his last child at 39 years of age with a 15 year old girl—

*Why did you get arrested?*

Because of my daughter. They figured her mother was young and they got me for sexual abuse. See, I met her at a bar. And you had to be 21 to go into the bar. And she was there. I guess she had a fake ID. I didn't ask her anything. But I thought she was hiding something because she wouldn't let me visit her. Then her mom came looking for me. She said, "My daughter is pregnant." And I asked her, "Who is your daughter?" She told me and I was like, "Yeah, we've been dating." And then she told me she was only 15, "I know my daughter. She probably lied to you. I'm not going to call the police, but you better take care of the baby." So, I said I would. After [my daughter] was born, the police was looking for me for something else and they knocked on her door. She opened the door and they saw my daughter. They asked who was the father and she told them it was me. So, they couldn't get me for what they thought, but accused me of a sex offence.

*But couldn't you see she was young?*

Now that I look back, yeah. But at the time, I was just happy to be with a young woman. It was not like she looked like a little girl. She had the body of a woman.<sup>40</sup>

In and out of his other eight children's lives, Juan conceives his last child in an illicit adult-adolescent sexual relationship. On the street stage, the boundaries between adulthood and adolescence are blurred and a portion of the next generation is conceived in at times illicit adolescent-adult sexual relationships, creating a difficult setting for participants to perform their ideal parent role.

Regardless of age, the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage encourages sex in undefined and uncommitted relationships (similar to Anderson 1999 and Bourgois 2003). Thus, the majority of participants conceived their children in uncommitted and undefined relationships, at the end and/or beginning of relationships. TR, now a 38 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, was released from prison at 25 years of age. Upon his return, his high school sweetheart and mother of his two children at the time attempted to recover their failed relationship. It was in this undefined and uncommitted relationship where their third child was conceived—

When I got out, we got back together. Like she came from [out of state] and I moved back down here, to [the *Metro Area*]. And we tried to reconcile, but we couldn't because there was too much everything under the bridge [the death of their infant only a few years back]. And we ended up doing us. And next thing you know, she leaves. And my mom was like, "Girl, don't be surprised if you leave going back to [out of state] with a baby" [interviewer laughs]. And, next thing I know, I get that phone call, "Ring." Here comes [my daughter].

A few months into the reconciliation attempt, she returned home defeated and pregnant, and TR returned to prison soon after. Upon his next release from prison and placed at a residential corrections program (quasi-incarcerated), TR began a new uncommitted sexual relationship in which he conceived his fourth child days into the dating process—

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<sup>40</sup>This interview was originally in Spanish. Also, the social construction of adolescence/adulthood and its interaction with sexual scripts is an important theme in need of empirical inquiry across cultures and subcultures.

I served two years and then got out on parole. And then violated and went back. I did 13 months. I was then here at the WRC and that's when [my daughter] came along [laughter].

*Were you in a relationship with the mom?*

I don't know what you wanna call that [laughter]! I was here and she just starts calling and calling [for another resident on the payphone]. For some odd reason every time she called, I answered the phone. She would just call and ask to speak to somebody and I would be like, "Well, he ain't down here" [the residents' rooms are upstairs and the pay phone is on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor]. And she was like, "Well, okay. Who is this?" "This is [TR]." And she's like, "I heard of you." And I'm like, "What you hear about me?" She's like, "Bad things!" And I was like, "Okay." So we just started talking and next thing you know, one thing led to another. It was a nice company at first because she didn't know who I was. And I didn't know who she was. I mean, we talked a little bit about ourselves, but I didn't really get a grasp. I went down to see my cousin and went on an OPA to meet her [out of place assignment, a violation of his client/inmate role at the WRC]. We went up to my sister's house. And that's where we made [my daughter]. First time ever having sex with her and she gets pregnant! Okay!

*Are you thinking about protecting yourself at this point?*

Am I? Not really! Because, I'm like, "Okay. I wanted the kid." 'Cause I wasn't with my other kids. I was like, "Alright, it's cool!"

Soon after he received the pregnancy news, TR was sent back to prison and was unable to witness the birth of his fourth child. Pregnancy in the uncommitted and undefined relationship context was a common reality for participants, in the beginning or end of a relationship. Jake, now a 26 year old Mexican American father and ex-drug dealer, conceived his two children at the end and beginning of two different relationships—

I had my daughter when I was 19. I was like, "Wow!" The girl I was with, she was my first love [she was an addict]. We was together for about three years before she got pregnant. It was probably the biggest mistake I made, because we were about to break up. She was a Latin Queen, and her family all alcoholics. And I wanted to be with her, but I was younger. We would fight all the time, but I loved her a lot. And my son, I started seeing this girl. We had just gotten together and she got pregnant with my son right away. I wasn't even sure if I really wanted to be with her, but hey!

Although Jake was interested in a stable relationship with his first love, she was preoccupied with her delinquent/criminal role performance. Thus, his first child was conceived at the end of a relationship with his high school sweetheart. As for the conception of his second child, Jake had not had the opportunity to define the relationship before the pregnancy news arrived. In the *fast life*, the delinquent/criminal role



encourages participants to avoid commitment. Thus, pregnancies in undefined and uncommitted relationships were a common experience for a significant portion of participants. Chester, now a 20 year old white/Caucasian father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, conceived his children in undefined relationships—

[My son's mom], I have known her 'cause we used to go together before. And she knows I didn't want to go for it [be together again], 'cause I was with my other kids' mom. I don't care really. When I found that [my ex-girlfriend] was pregnant [in the *Metro Area*], I went to [a neighboring major city in *State B*]. She's like, "What you gonna do?" I'm like, "I'm not coming back. What you gonna do? I mean, are you gonna have my son?" And she took it as me saying I don't want nothing to do with her or the baby. I'm just like, there's nothing I can do now, you know. I have to take care of my responsibilities. I'm not gonna brush that off.

Already in a different relationship, Chester returned to his ex-girlfriend and conceived a son in an undefined and uncommitted relationship. On the street stage, the delinquent/criminal role discourages commitment (see Bourgois 2003; Anderson 1999; Mullins 2006). In the process, participants conceive children in undefined and uncommitted relationships, an unstable social environment to perform their ideal parent role. In addition to *puppy love* and relationships in limbo, children were conceived in casual-sexual encounters outside the relationship context.

On the street stage, pregnancy within the casual-sex context was a common experience amongst male participants.<sup>41</sup> In addition to encouraging the avoidance of commitment, the delinquent/criminal role encourages casual sex on the street stage for males (see Bourgois 2003; Anderson 1999; Mullins 2006). And without the relational access to the mothers, parent role performance becomes a difficult task. Joseph, now a 28 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, had to clarify the boundaries of his relationships or lack of relationships to the two women who became pregnant with three of his children within a month from each other (one gave birth to twins)—

When I told [my ex-girlfriend] about getting [my other ex-girlfriend] pregnant at the same time. She's like, "What?!" I was like, "Yeah man. She said she's

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<sup>41</sup> Females also conceived children in the casual-sex context, but described it as short-term or undefined/uncommitted relationships.

pregnant too.” And, so I gotta deal with the consoling her. And I’m like, “Man! Well, you knew.”

*Did they think they were in a relationship with you?*

No, that’s the thing you know. And that’s another reason why I felt like they couldn’t really fault me, you know. They knew the situation. Like, “I wasn’t being faithful and ya’ll know that.” I had my own place and was pretty much living a bachelor life. I mean, they knew the situation. But I guess females is a little different. Like, when a female is messing with a guy, they want it be that one. And it was just something I wasn’t ready for. And I rather tell them, “Look, look, I’m not ready for that right now. And if you don’t want to mess with me no more, then that’s fine. I can’t do nothing but accept that.” But, I ain’t gonna be nobody arm and be like, “Oh yeah, you my girl. And you’re the only one.” I ain’t gonna lie like that. I was honest. And that’s another reason why they kind of, you know, respected me a lot. She’s like, “Well, I am a little mad at myself because I knew the situation, and I just thought you would change.”

*What did [your other ex-girlfriend] say?*

My [other ex-girlfriend], she was more or less in a state of shock. We had a relationship before. I’ve been messing with her sine I was like 13. And I got older, we kind of died out, but we still messed around here and there. And we always was just friends. So, I guess, one thing led to another. When I told her, about my other baby mama being pregnant, she didn’t like it one bit. “Oh, she’s lying. She just wants to be pregnant because I am.” I’m like, “No, that’s not true, because she was pregnant before you.” “She what?! She was pregnant before me?! And you had a baby on me?!” And I’m like, “Oh, oh my god! Now this conversation is going somewhere to where it is not supposed to be going for one. ‘Cause, you know, you ain’t in no position. I don’t have no obligations to you or nothing like that. So, you selling yourself false dreams! As far as if you’re thinking anything other than what it was! I mean, you can call me a dog or whatever. I can accept that. ‘Cause, pretty much I was. I am. But you can’t really fault me and blame everything on me like that. You knew!”

*How are you doing now?*

I am now expecting my fifth child. I was like, “What the fuck am I doing? Like, why do I keep having sex unprotected?” But I ain’t gonna fully blame it on her. ‘Cause it takes two, but I feel I was bamboozled. She was telling me she was on birth control. But I can’t fully be mad at her ‘cause here I am, with condoms in my pocket, and still, didn’t use ‘em. I can’t really get mad at her.

Regardless of the women’s perceptions, from Joseph’s perspective, he was engaging in casual sex with several women and living the bachelor lifestyle.<sup>42</sup> And his parent role trajectory begins in the mist of confusion. On the street stage, Sam, now a 35 year old

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<sup>42</sup> Although participants did not openly discuss it as masculine driven, it can be argued that pregnancies in the casual-sex context reinforced the masculine street culture (Maher 1992; Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003; Mullins 2006).

African American father and ex-drug dealer, conceived his son in a casual-sex encounter and had a difficult time accepting the parent role—

Before I got incarcerated, his mom was pregnant [both teenagers at the time]. There was a discrepancy in the dates, in the guys that she was with at that time. After the guy I used to run with got locked up for a few days, me and his girl, you know, hooked up and she got pregnant. She saying it was mine and she wanted to have an abortion. I gave her the money and he's supposed to have been aborted. She got the money and did else with it. And he was born before I got locked up. The guy was there when the boy was born, signed the birth certificate and all that. Years go by, I'm in prison and he can't see but me in this boy.

On the street stage, children are conceived through causal-sex encounters and challenge participants' ability to accept and perform the parent role. Oblivious to the consequences, a portion of participants conceived their children with casual-sexual partners. Jason, now a 27 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, was in a committed relationship with the mother of his daughter. However, he could not afford to say no to casual sex with other girls and women while performing his delinquent/criminal role on the street stage—

I was messing with other females. And I can't really lie. No, I didn't say [abortion] for my daughter, but I said it for the other young girl because I knew how [my daughter's mother] was hurting. She was very hurt by it. But then I thought about it, "No, skip it. If the shorty [baby] is mine—" I still had a few money, and I could take care of a new baby. I mean, I messed up. I was stupid, young, with money, and females was just around.

Although not legally his choice, Jason's concerns for his girlfriend and mother of his daughter prompted him to consider abortion for the second child. In a male dominated street culture, males are encouraged to engage in casual sex, where a portion of the next generation is conceived (similar to Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003; Mullins 2006). The confusion and the lack of relational foundation make it difficult for male participants to accept and eventually perform the parent role.

On the street stage, participants initiate their parent role trajectories in unstable relationships. A significant portion of participants conceived their children in *puppy love* relationships at a young age. With a limited or no perceived differences between

adolescence and adulthood in the *fast life*, children are also conceived in at times illicit sexual relationships. Furthermore, the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage encourages undefined and uncommitted relationships. Thus, the majority of participants conceived their children in unstable relationships, at the end and/or beginning of relationships. Lastly, the delinquent/criminal role encourages casual-sex for males and children are conceived outside the relational context. While living the *fast life*, participants conceive their children in unstable relationships, which challenge their ability to accept and eventually perform their parent role.

#### “Shocking Bundles of Joy!”

A high portion of pregnancies in the United States are unintended, with populations in poverty experiencing it at higher rates (Finer and Henshaw 2006). Living the *fast life* on the street stage, engaging in sexual activity in unstable relationships, participants’ transition into the parent role begins with unplanned pregnancies. This transition is premised on being credited with a pregnancy and accepting the parent role. When participants are credited with the pregnancy, they are given the opportunity to take on the parent role. In the process, a portion of participants credited with pregnancy transformed the *shocking news* into *shocking bundles of joy* on (i) the street stage and/or (ii) the correctional stage. However, (iii) a portion of the fathers is not initially credited with the pregnancy and denied the opportunity to transition into the parent role.

On the street stage, news of unplanned pregnancies is a shocking experience for participants. In attempts to accept their new parent role, a portion of participants transform the news of their children’s prospective arrival from shocking to joyful. Red sums up the realities of the pregnancy news—

When I found his mom was pregnant, at first I was scared to death [16 years old]. “Oh my Goodness! You’re trying to kill me!” And then I was like, “Okay. Okay. God bless—, I got this.”

Under pressure and within seconds, Red transforms the shocking news to a blessing, and soon after take on the new parent role and begins to perform it to protect his child (see above). In a similar manner, Chester quickly moved from shock to joy—

I was 19 when my first child was born. When I found out, when she told me she was pregnant, I was like, “What the hell?!” That’s what I really said. And then I was happy. There was a shock and then happiness. And then I just wanted to be like the father that my dad wasn’t.

Although shocked with the news, Chester accepts the parent role and moves towards welcoming his first child. The transition from shock to joy and acceptance varies in length and is at times a difficult process. TR was taken aback by the news of his fourth child in an unstable relationship and its attached expectations—

She was like, “I missed my period!” And I’m like, “Okay, so maybe your cycle is just changing, you know.” She’s like, “Well, I made a doctor’s appointment anyway.” So we go to the doctor. She goes in and gets the examination and come out, “Well, I’m pregnant!” [valley girly impression]. And I’m like, “Oh wow!” It was not a good thing or a bad thing. It was a shock thing. I think she just wanted me to jump up and be like, “Yay, okay! Alright!” And I’m just sitting there like, “Okay.” And she gets all pissy, “You don’t even love me. And don’t even give me a hug ‘cause I’m having your freaken baby!” So, she’s snapping out on me, calling me all kind of “black, stupid, dumb, mother f’er” in the doctor’s office.<sup>43</sup> I was so embarrassed, “Okay, whatever. Let’s get out of here.” My mom come gets us. And she’s like, “Mom, I’m pregnant! I’m pregnant! I’m pregnant!” And my mom like, “I knew it girl!” You know, and they all happy and ecstatic, and I’m just sitting in the back like this [arms crossed and serious], ‘cause it’s like, “Okay.” It took days before I got excited.

Within a few weeks into their undefined sexual relationship, TR received the shocking news of his fourth daughter’s prospective arrival. The unstable relationship context made it difficult for him to immediately transform his daughter’s conception from shock to a *shocking bundle of joy*. In their initiation into the parent role, participants’ transition from shock to acceptance varies in length. Diamond, now a 22 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, became pregnant while performing her delinquent/criminal role and refused to accept her unplanned pregnancy. “I knew I was pregnant, but didn’t know it, right. I did not act like it. I was doing everything I was

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<sup>43</sup> The prospective mother was a white/Caucasian substance/drug user.

doing before. I refused to accept it, right.” Diamond refused to acknowledge her pregnancy and did not accept it until her water broke. For Sam, now a 35 years old African American father and ex-drug dealer, the transition from shock to acceptance varied with his age. Two 15 year old girls gave birth to two baby girls and identified teenage Sam as the father. Heavily invested on his delinquent/criminal role performance, Sam initially ignored the shocking news but eventually accepted the parent role. Four years later, Sam conceived two boys with two different young women and experience a less difficult transition—

With the girls, I wasn’t ready to be a parent. I didn’t really care about it. And when they were born, I didn’t have a choice but to have some little knowledge of being a parent. And my sons, it wasn’t horrible news like it was the first time. This time it was like, okay, bring it on. I’m ready this time, even though I was still the same person, running around in the streets. When I got locked up, my sons wasn’t even a year.

As Sam became more comfortable with the parent role, the transition from shock to acceptance was smoother. Participants’ experienced unplanned pregnancy within unstable relationships on the street stage and were initially shocked, but sooner or later transforming the news from shocking to *shocking bundles of joy* and accepted the parent role. This transition into the parent role occurred on the street stage and the correctional stage.

Although participants were suddenly removed from the street stage and forced onto the correctional stage (incarceration), news makes it thru correctional walls. The news of pregnancy arrives at the correctional stage through letters, phone calls, and visits. In transitioning into the parent role, participants struggle with being incarcerated and the shocking news of children’s prospective arrivals. Doug, now a 31 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, recalls the exact place where he received the news—

I found out when I was in jail, and I thought I was shit out of luck. I was just in shock. I was in jail, not ready. It was good news, but I was, just kept thinking, “I’m a dad. That kid is gonna be mine!” When my son was born I got over the shock.

Doug's incarceration interacts with the shocking news of his child's prospective arrival. Although in a difficult situation, he quickly accepts the parent role. The legally forced client/inmate role shapes how and when participants receive the pregnancy news. While in prison, Joseph, now a 28 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, received a letter from his ex-girlfriend—

When I got locked up, I got a letter. I'm reading a letter and it said, "PREGNANT!" I'm thinking in my head, "By who? What the fuck? You're pregnant? Hell no! I wasn't ready for this shit right now!" And that's when it gets you man, just always off guard. I wasn't expecting it at all. It's making me think five times. Like man, you is fucking tripping. She's gonna be furious [the other girlfriend who was already pregnant at the time]. They worst enemies, man. That shit's gonna be crazy!

Josephs' unstable relationships on the street stage followed him onto the correctional stage with news of unplanned pregnancies in the "wrong" relationship. Thus, accepting the parent role is a difficult process. Joe#1, now a 20 year old African American/Caucasian father and recovering substances/drug user, had a similar experience—

I found out on a weekday. She came to see me to [county jail]. I was like, "Oh, God! Damn! Damn! I'm not ready for no kids yet." Her getting pregnant is just something that just popped up. I mean, it wasn't planned. I had no kids. It wasn't a stable anything, ever. No. And then she didn't help me out while I was in prison, so I was like, "No. I'm not with that. I won't be with you now. I'll be there for my daughter, but I'm not being with you." So, I got a daughter that's beautiful as hell!

While Joe#1 is incarcerated, the news of an unplanned pregnancy raises the relationship expectations between the prospective parents.<sup>44</sup> As his girlfriend failed to fulfill his expectations during his incarceration, he ends their romantic relationship but accepts the parent role. From participants' unstable relationships on the street stage, news of pregnancy crosses thru correctional walls and arrives at the correctional stage. In their transition into the parent role, participants' client/inmate role interacts with the news of their *shocking bundles of joy*.

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<sup>44</sup> See chapter 8 for a full discussion about expectations for romantic partner during participants' incarceration (similar to Nesmith and Ruhland 2008).

When the pregnancy was credited to a participant, they had the opportunity to accept the parent role. However, a portion of pregnant girls and women in unstable relationships kept the news from the prospective fathers, refusing them the opportunity to transition into the parent role. Eli, now a 33 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, did not know about the pregnancy or birth of his son until his release from prison—

Didn't even know nothing about the pregnancy. I caught a case over in [*State B*], a mob action case. And over here in [*Midwest State*], I caught another charge for carrying a dangerous weapon. And they sent me to prison. I got a 2-year sentence and I went to prison. I sat in for like 4 months and they released me to [the WRC], where I was discharged at. But before I went to jail and all that stuff, I didn't know nothing about my baby mama's pregnancy. We were just messing around.

Whether on the street stage or the correctional stage, Eli never received news about his son's existence from the mother. It was not until years later that he was given the opportunity to transition into the parent role. Keeping children hidden is a difficult task. Thus, fathers eventually receive hints regarding their paternity. Nineteen years ago, Jerry, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, engaged in a brief illicit sexual encounter with his ex-babysitter—

I was wild on the streets when we hooked up. She had a baby, but did not tell me. My cousin was the first to say something, 'cause he knew about me and her situation. His mom had a picture of me when I was a baby. [My cousin] picked up the picture and was like, "Why you got a picture of [Mary]'s baby?" My aunt is like, "That's not [Mary's] baby." He's like, "Yeah it is. This is [Mary's] baby right here." She's like, "No, that's a picture of your cousin [Jerry]." So, I had an idea, but I really didn't put too much into it. I was doing my thing [drug dealing]. I was actually locked up in a training school when he was born [teenager at the time]. That was right around the time that he was conceived and born. I spent 10 months down there. And, you know, I really didn't have no idea about having a son, or having kids or anything like that. So, I basically was ready to get back out there and run wild again, you know. And, that's what I did.

Although Mary did not credit Jerry with the pregnancy, Jerry became aware of his son's possible existence. However, he was too eager to return to his delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and opted to ignore the signs and not transition into the parent role until 14 years later. And even when the father knows about the pregnancy,



mothers in the *fast life* use denial of paternity to eliminate fathers' presence. Eight years ago, Scott, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, was deep into substance/drug use when his daughter was conceived—

Eight to 9 months after [my cousin] died, I found out I was gonna be a father [also right after a psychological breakdown due to substance/drug use]. And then a couple of months into the pregnancy, her mother and I weren't getting along. And she informed me that I wasn't the father. I said, "Well, fine! Screw it! I'm leaving!" She wanted to have a different father in [my daughter's] life, a guy she was seeing. So, that's when I decided to move down to [the *Metro Area* from the surrounding area]. They got married, but got divorced shortly after she was born. I had an idea she was my daughter when they broke up, but I didn't look into it any further. I didn't want to be a dad at the time, just kind of wanted to do my own thing. And it wasn't until [my daughter] was 4 years old when I knew she was my daughter. 'Cause I sort of went back [home], and I was parking and accidently saw her. I took one look at her and I knew she was my daughter. She was identical to my niece. I went up to [her mother] and I said, "Is that my daughter?" And she said, "Yeah."

Similar to Jerry, Scott was semi-aware of his daughter's existence, but chose to focus on his delinquent/criminal role performance over transitioning into the parent role. In attempts to perform a solo parent role, a portion of the mothers kept the news of pregnancy and the children's existence from the fathers, denying them the opportunity to transition into the parent role. And when the news emerged, the uninterested fathers chose to focus on their delinquent/criminal role performance over transition into the parent role.

News of pregnancy circulates equally efficiently in *free society* and *convict society*. In transitioning into the parent role, whether on the street stage or on the correctional stage, participants who received the news experienced shock. After shock, most participants transition to accept the parent role and embrace their *shocking bundles of joy*. However, a portion of pregnant girls and women did not inform the prospective fathers. Unable to keep the news hidden, the prospective fathers eventually found out but initially chose their delinquent/criminal role. While living the *fast life*, participants'

delinquent/criminal role performance threatens participants' transition into the parent role.<sup>45</sup>

“We Didn’t Quit!”

To transition from accepting the parent role to parent role performance is a difficult process for a portion of participants on the street stage during the pregnancy process. When living the *fast life* during the pregnancy process, a portion of participants and the other parents focused on their delinquent/criminal role performance and neglect to perform their ideal parent role. A portion of substance/drug using prospective parents and the other parent on relapse (i) prioritizes *the high* over the parent role. While a portion of (ii) drug dealing male participants push pregnant girls and women to the margins to focus on their delinquent/criminal role performance. The role conflict between the parent role and the delinquent/criminal role thrives during the pregnancy process and a portion of participants and the other parents place their delinquent/criminal role over their just acquired parent role.

As substance/drug using mothers and fathers prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance, a portion of prospective parents neglect their just acquired parent role. Doing so, parents neglect to be present, be involved, and/or protect the fetus during the pregnancy process. Forty-two years ago, Dee, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, faced a teen pregnancy while on the street stage and married the drug addicted prospective father—

I met my husband in the streets [she was 15 and he was 22 years old] and gave birth at 16. He was fresh out of Vietnam, the father of my first daughter. And so, he had a really bad dope habit. He got a dishonorable discharge because he went up in the mountains with the natives. They took care of him until the war was over. Then he came out, but he had a monstrous habit, monstrous! The dope in the United States was nothing compared to the dope in Vietnam. I think he was doing crimes at night while I slept ‘cause he was dressed all the time. And always

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<sup>45</sup> Whether participants accept or not accept the parent role during pregnancy, a portion of the fathers confirm their paternity post-birth, prior to investing on their parent role performance (see “Lies and More Lies!” in the following section).

had money, gave me money, and buy stuff for the baby. I married him at 16, a 7-month marriage 'cause he disappeared and we never saw him again.

Although it was initially becoming a stable relationship through marriage, his delinquent/criminal role performance took over and prioritized over the parent role performance. Upon his absence, Dee was left addicted and pregnant on the street stage. In a similar manner, Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, became pregnant and the father prioritized the high—

When I found out [about the pregnancy], he was at the RCF [same facility where her interview took place], but he wasn't using any more. I was still working. I worked at the factory. When he got out [from the RCF], he came to live with me. I would wake up in the morning to go to work, and my car would be gone. He would be gone. Every morning I would worry if my car was gonna be there so I can get to work. He would drop the car off, and have somebody come and pick him up. It was really bad. He [was] real messed up [relapse]. I was really pregnant then, 7-8 months. I thought that me and him would get closer, but it was just the opposite. That really broke my heart. I made him go to [a drug treatment center]. Then he lied to me about that. He would tell me he was going, but he wasn't going. And he went back [to jail] before she was born. But he was out [on pre-trial release] when she was born.

In her attempts to recover the father of her child, Ruth spent countless hours worrying and trying to gather resources to help him. Instead, he dragged her into substance/drug use and attached her to a distribution of illicit substances criminal charge. Ruth's husband focused on his delinquent/criminal role performance, disregarded his parent role performance, and threatens Ruth's ability to perform her parent role. In addition to neglecting to be present and/or involved, a portion of the substance/drug using prospective parents neglected to protect the fetus' health.<sup>46</sup> Twenty four years ago, Javier, now a 51 year old white/Irish father and recovering substance/drug user, was expecting his second child with his drug-addicted second wife—

When we found out that [my second wife] was pregnant with [my daughter], we didn't think a whole lot. We didn't quit doing cocaine and drinking. She smoked weed to help with some morning sickness. I did ask when we went to the Lamaze class about smoking weed. And at that time smoking weed while you're

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<sup>46</sup>In 2002, the approximate numbers of births complicated by maternal use of drugs in the United States were 172,934 for illicit drugs, 723,911 for tobacco and 394,129 for alcohol (Shankaran, et al. 2007). Infrequent and ineffective use of contraception amongst substance/drug users is common (Hathazi, et al. 2009).

pregnant, at that time they really had no studies on it and didn't have any answers for it [during the 80s]. They did about smoking tobacco. They tried to tell me, "Well, there are 400 chemicals." And I said, "Well, what do they do to you?" "Well, we don't really know. We don't have any studies about what they do to a fetus." I don't believe it had any bearing on [my daughter]. No!

In prioritizing their delinquent/criminal role performance, Javier and his wife neglected their parent role performance and did not protect the fetus. Diamond refused to accept her pregnancy and continued with substance/drug use—

I was 20 years old and partying when I found out that I was pregnant. I was in denial. It didn't kick in. I didn't believe it. The doctor told me I was pregnant. Everybody told me I was pregnant. I didn't feel it until I was actually holding my child. If I was—, I'd probably wouldn't 've went to prison [gave birth in prison]. I was doing a lot of the same things that I was doing when I wasn't pregnant. I was smoking. I was drinking. I was having sex. I was going to the club. I was doing everything that a normal person would do. And I was pregnant. I didn't think nothing of it. And my stomach was so little. It looked like a little baby ball, wasn't big. So, it was summer time. I still wear short shorts, mini-skirts, and heels. And, it was just like I just had a little pudge. Like one time I got really really drunk. And I got so drunk, I was throwing up, and I was just crying. I'm like, "God!" You know. "Why am I doing this?" And, she was like moving around. I was torn up and praying. I was evil, just a different person.

In favoring her delinquent/criminal role performance, Diamond chose to ignore her pregnancy and did not accept nor performed the parent role. A portion of the substance/drug using prospective parents in the *fast life* prioritize their delinquent/criminal role over their parent role, and only a limited few in the sample attempt to recover. Unlike her husband, Dee reached out and recovered for a few years to perform a solo parent role—

I joined the Black Panthers and got clean. They helped me to get off drugs. I was on heroine, ummm, had to quit cold turkey 'cause they did not allow drugs of any kind. They didn't tolerate. Before I joined I had to be at the community center for six months, before I became an actual Panther. My daughter was born when I was with them. I was off the drugs for a while, after I left the Black Panthers. And so, all through the 70s, I didn't use.

Dee joined the Black Panther Movement and avoided her delinquent/criminal role performance to prioritize her parent role performance. Although this recovery lasted throughout her daughter's early childhood and the birth of her other three children, her need to perform the delinquent/criminal role returned and challenged her ability to

perform her parent role. With the exception of a few participants who attempted to recover, a significant portion of the substance/drug using participants in the sample how they or the other parent prioritized the delinquent/criminal role performance over the parent role performance during the pregnancy process.

In a similar manner, a portion of drug dealing fathers pushed pregnant girls and women to the margins as they prioritized their delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage. In the process, they neglected to be present and involved during the pregnancy process. Twenty years ago, fifteen-year-old Sam was focused on his delinquent/criminal role performance and ignored his parent role during the pregnancy process—

I find out that two girls are pregnant by me [all teens *running the streets*]. I was in the county when I found out [jail]. You gotta understand, back then [as a teen], I was wild in the streets. The last thing that was in my mind was some pregnant girls. Excuse my language. Now I'm a totally different person. But the last thing that was on my mind then was some girl that was pregnant. I was just *running the streets*, running the block, running the walls in the block, controlling this, trying to control that, basically a bunch of nothing that got me years in prison. You know, when I should've been out there being a father. I didn't have a clue about a relationship, for one, much less being a parent.

Although Sam had previously accepted paternity (the parent role), he was too focused on his delinquent/criminal role performance and neglected to be present and involved during the pregnancy process. Upon his release from jail, Sam returned to his delinquent/criminal role performance for a few more years before he came to have stable contact with his children and begins his parent role performance. Living the *fast life* on the street stage, a significant portion of the drug dealing participants prioritize the illicit drug market's needs and push pregnant girls and women to the margins. LA, now a 46 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, began an unstable relationship with a stripper four years ago—

I start dating [Lisa the stripper]. She moved in with me and she got pregnant right away. We got together in January; she was pregnant by the end of January. And God! I didn't pay too much attention. And then she says she wants to go back [with her family out of state]. She goes, has the baby while she's down there

[now 3 year old son], stays over there for 9 months, and I keep doing my business here.

*When she's gone, do you still think of her as in a relationship?*

Yeah, but I had other girlfriends. You know, I mean, she knows. She knew that. She know. 'Cause it come with—, I shouldn't say that, but yeah, it comes with that kind of life, you know. She expects it.

*So, when she came back—?*

When she come back with the baby, I go back to jail and I lost track for a while. But now [my son] is with her cousin and her mom [out of state].

The pregnancy was not necessarily unwelcomed, but LA prioritized his delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and neglected his parent role. In performing their delinquent/criminal role, a significant portion of the drug dealing fathers marginalize pregnant girls and women and neglected to be present and involved. Rosie, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, became sexually involved with a drug dealer while her husband was imprisoned. After a few months of fun and excitement on the street stage, she became pregnant. Upon the unexpected news, the prospective father prioritized his delinquent/criminal role performance. "It was over. I told him about [our daughter]. He was happy about it, but then he had no time for me! He was too busy running the streets!" During the pregnancy process, a portion of drug dealing fathers prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance, push pregnant girls and women to the margins, and neglect to be present and involved.

On the street stage, a significant portion of participants and the other parents prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance over their parent role during the pregnancy process. In the process, substance/drug using parents on relapse neglect to protect the fetus and drug dealing participants neglect to be present and involved. Just like accepting the parent role, a portion of participants have a difficult time transitioning into parent role performance when they prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance. Role conflict between participants' delinquent/criminal role and parent role shapes participants' experience with the pregnancy process.

“Peddling the Streets Faster!”

Although a significant portion of participants prioritized their delinquent/criminal role performance over accepting and/or performing their ideal parent role, pregnancy changes participants’ definition of the situation (fathers and mothers) and prompts them to return to the construction of their ideal parent role. Drug dealing participants and substance/drug using participants on recovery who accepted the parent role during pregnancy (i) add providing to the ideal parent role and submerge themselves into (ii) the low-wage conventional labor market and/or (iii) illicit labor market to increase income in preparation for their children’s arrival.

During pregnancy, participants begin to transition from childhood/adolescence to the responsibilities of parenthood, return to the role construction process and identified *providing* for their children as an expectation of their ideal parent role. Unlike presence, involvement and protection, providing is a task participants faced as the *shocking bundles of joy* announced their upcoming arrival. Doug defines parenthood as, “providing for your children, shelter, everything that’s essential to them.” Whether participants were in *free society* or in *convict society*, in a *puppy love* relationship or a casual-sex encounter, accept the parent role immediately or years later, mothers and fathers identified providing as an expectation for their ideal parent role. James, now a 49 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, received the pregnancy news while in county jail and quickly made plans—

I was happy [24 years of age at the time]. I was very excited! I was happy. All I thought about is just getting out of that place and successfully completed the four month program. And I got a job [conventional low wage labor]. My mom always taught me to take care of my responsibilities.

Although previous literatures have identified providing as part of the father role (Christiansen and Palkovitz 2001; Suderland 2000; Carlson and England 2011), pregnancies in unstable relationships, fathers’ incarceration, and mothers’ absence prompted females (female participants and the females involved with male participants)

to embrace the providing task (see chapters 6-11) as part of the mother role and father role. And when substance/drug using mothers prioritized their delinquent/criminal role performance or were legally forced to prioritize their client/inmate role, they become absent parents and the caretakers officially or unofficially requested child support from the mothers. According to Susie, now a 33 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, “We both send money when we can [mother and father are legally force to send child support to caretaker]. The children are ours. You know what I mean.” Alike other families living in poverty (Stack 1970), prospective mothers and fathers in the illicit and/or conventional low wage markets begin to perform the providing expectation as they prepare for their children’s arrival during the pregnancy process.

After accepting the parent role during pregnancy, a significant portion of participants join the conventional low wage labor market to perform the new parent role expectation, proving for their prospective child. Similar to previous studies, employment in the illicit drug labor market supplements conventional employment in the low-wage labor market (see MacCoun and Reuter 1992). Anthony, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, immediately searched for conventional employment—

When I found out I was going to be a father, it was scary. I was like, “What am I gonna do?” I’m working this little petty job at [a fast food restaurant]. But in the same, I loved it ‘cause I was gonna be a first time father. A father that spoil my kids [both laugh]. And also a protective father, you know, loving and nurturing. I made sure I got another job. I was working, and started working at a KFC [Kentucky Fried Chicken fast food restaurant]. The more hours they gave me, the more I worked. Then, I’m home every night with my girls. It made me feel complete. I got my girl, my kids, you know. When the second one came, I worked harder. I struggled with the first one, but I had to work harder. It was two of ‘em now. We both was abused when we was kids. And we didn’t want that. So, we made it happen, you know. I worked two jobs to make sure they had everything.

In performing his ideal parent role, Anthony search for a second low wage job during the pregnancy process to provide for his children. Like other prospective parents, he worked



endless hours to meet the prospective children needs. Ruth pushed herself to work extensive hours during her pregnancy—

I was a factory worker, packing room or whatever. I loaded trucks. There were carts. I pushed them on the trailer.

*You were still loading things on the trucks when pregnant?*

Yeah. I would still push the cart, to push on the truck. I don't know. It didn't bother me. I mean, they had other people come and help me a lot more when I start getting bigger. But I liked my job.

Prior to the birth of her daughter, with a drug addicted prospective father, Ruth had no other options but to work endless hours to prepare for the arrival of her daughter. A portion of participants begin their ideal role performance during pregnancy, including the providing expectation. Ray faced the realities of preparing to become a teen parent—

When I found out [about the pregnancy], I was really scared because I was still in high school. And I also had a boxing career that I wanted to pursue that got put on hold. And my dad, he was my boxing coach. So, I let both of us down. He was upset. I had calls from the Army and the Navy to box for their teams. I had a pretty bright future ahead of me. But when this happened, I was 16. I was young, but can't use that as an excuse to say, "Well, I'm not going to see my baby! You go ahead and raise her." I can't get up and leave her. [My dad] told me, "Well, you know what, you got yourself into this, you gotta start working and you are gonna finish school." So, I just started working, working, and working, going to school during the day and working at night. I was really tired from work. And then you gotta get up in the morning, go to school, and do the same thing all over again. My grades went down. But, I graduated high school. It was a disappointment at first, but once she had the baby, that's part of you.

During the pregnancy, Ray began to perform his ideal parent role, attending school and employment in the low wage labor market. After accepting the parent role, a significant portion of participants took on the providing expectation and began to perform it during the pregnancy process. All participants, consumers and employees in the illicit drug labor market, were employed in the low wage labor market at some point in their lives.

Also in fulfilling their providing role expectation, a significant portion of participants increase their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance in the illicit labor market. In doing so, participants do not begin a new illicit activity, but increase the activities they have been performing on the street stage prior to the pregnancy. Forty-two

years ago, Dee was a substance/drug using pregnant teen in recovery and used multiple sources of income to provide—

When I got pregnant [at 16 years of age], I was getting clean and started working at a coffee shop [conventional labor]. I am blessed I've never had to sell my body, thank God! I couldn't do that. I come from a very strict Christian family. My grandma raised me. So sex was taboo for me. I just couldn't do the sex thing. I kept stealing. I just couldn't do the sex thing. So, I just managed, work here and steal there. I was the only one she had. And I worked without a break to make sure she had what she needed.

Although employed in the low-wage conventional labor market and unable to engage in the illicit sex labor market, Dee used theft to support a portion of her daughter's material needs. Although no one in the sample joined the illicit labor market to fulfill the providing expectation, a significant portion of those already in the illicit labor market *peddled the streets* faster than ever and only slept when necessary. Purple, now a 29 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, changed his street routine to increase profit—

When I found out that I was going to be a father, it was just such a feeling that you know, I could never really explain. If I could paint a picture of it, it'd be real bright. Then I knew that eventually a part of me was gonna get ready and come to this earth. So, it was just like, it was time for me to step it up and only went home to sleep a few hours. I was peddling the streets at all hours in a hurry [drug dealing]. You know. I was happy. He didn't come quick enough!

Excited to welcome his son into his life, Purple invested his time and energy on his for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to provide for his prospective son. In addition to performing their for-profit delinquent/criminal role during pregnancy in the *fast life*, participants also readjust their financial life. Jason, now a 27 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, recalls his approach to preparing for his daughter's arrival—

At the time I found out I was gonna be a father, I was young and selling drugs. So, we be both basically having a baby at that age [both 15 years old at the time]. She got some nice big family, 5-6 kids all together. And she was a baby having a baby, but they was looking at me as a hoodlum, selling drugs. Her parents moved away because of financial problems they had before I knew she was pregnant. But I end up moving her back. I gave her mom some money to move back. Her and her three sisters moved back. When she came back, I was in jail. I requested

her not to come see me. I didn't really want her to be on the highway, pregnant in a predicament like that. Plus, I didn't have much time; it wasn't really nothing [not a long sentence]. When I got out, we moved into some nice apartments [housing projects]. My point of view changed a lot. Like my financial ways of living was changing, no more throwing money around [no more excess]. I was getting a nice little piece of money anyway [drug dealing]. So, I was like, "I gotta save money for my shorty [the baby]." If I would've never had that baby, I probably would've went deeper. I probably would of gotten more trouble. I stopped spending.

Already heavily invested on his for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance, Jason chose to limit his expenses in order to save for his prospective daughter. In preparation for children's arrival, a significant portion of participants used their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to provide for the prospective children.

Throughout the analysis, the delinquent/criminal role conflicts with the ideal parent role with the exception of for-profit delinquent/criminal performance and the providing expectation of the ideal parent role. However, for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance is not reliable and only temporary (see chapter 6 for full discussion). Regardless, a portion of participants use their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to provide during the pregnancy process.

Whether working more hours in the conventional labor market or *peddling the streets* faster on the street stage, a significant portion of the participants (drug dealers and substance/drug users in recovery) embraced the providing expectations of the ideal parent role during the pregnancy process. First, the providing expectation emergences once participants' definitions of the situation changes and mothers/fathers faced the financial realities of pregnancy. Second, participants initiate or increase their participation in the conventional low wage labor market as part of their nesting process and begin to perform their ideal parent role. Third, a portion of participants refocus and continue their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to fulfill the providing expectations of the ideal parent role. Overall, participants return to role construction and initiate their parent role performance as they embrace providing for their *shocking bundles of joy*.

Overall, participants' delinquent/criminal role shapes their experience during the conception and pregnancy process. On the street stage, participants conceive their children in unstable relationships. Children are conceived in *puppy love* relationships, at times illicit adult-adolescent relationships, uncommitted and undefined relationships, and in casual-sex encounters. Upon the news of an unplanned pregnancy, participants accept or reject the parent role. If given the opportunity, a significant portion of participants accepted the parent role and embraced their *shocking bundles of joy*. When participants accept the parent role, a portion of participants have a difficult time transitioning into ideal parent role performance and prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance as substance/drug users and drug dealers during the pregnancy process. A significant portion of the substance/drug using participants prioritizes *the high* and neglect to protect the fetuses, while a significant portion of the drug dealing participants focus on the needs of the drug labor market and fail to be present and involved during the pregnancy process. However, prospective mothers and fathers return to the role construction process, add providing to the ideal parent role expectations and begin to perform the parent role through employment in the low wage and illicit labor markets. As participants initiate their parent role trajectories, their delinquent/criminal role performance shapes their experiences during the conception and pregnancy processes. With the exception of the for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance temporarily complementing the providing expectation, the delinquent/criminal role threatens the ideal parent role. And just as during conceptions and pregnancy, role conflict shapes participants child-birth experience.

#### Transition into Parenthood

Whether the prospective parents were in *free society* or in *convict society*, the stork arrived and role conflict shaped participants' experience during the birth process. First, when in *free society* during the birth process, the role conflict between participants'

delinquent/criminal role and their ideal parent role shaped participants' hospital experience. Although, role conflict fades to the background as participants face the physical realities of birth and enjoy their children's first moments of life, it soon returns and threatens with child removal. Second, although the birth experiences on the correctional stage varied, the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role staked its territory, and participants experience emotional distress and a sense of powerlessness. Third, whether in *free society* or *convict society*, a portion of the fathers in the sample request scientific confirmation of paternity to avoid paternity fraud. Lastly, once parents have a child in their arms, participants return to the role construction process and add guiding children and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship to their ideal parent role expectations. The delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role threaten participants' ability to perform their ideal parent role during the birth process.

“It Was Terrifying!”<sup>47</sup>

As the due date approaches, participants begin to face the realities of the birth process. Once the birth process begins, (ii) participants' previous delinquent/criminal role performance shapes their hospital experience. As the delivery begins, all other roles fade to the background and participants (ii) face the terrifying moments of the birth process and (iii) enjoy their children's first moments of life. However, (iv) past delinquent/criminal role performance reinstates its presence with a threat of child removal minutes after birth. Role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role shapes participants' experience during the birth process.

Participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance and neglect of their family roles shape participants' experience with the birth process. Focused on their

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<sup>47</sup> It is important to note that prospective parents who experienced the birth of their children in *free society* were under none-residential community-based-corrections (probation or parole), just out of correctional supervision, in the process of returning to correctional supervision, or not yet under any correctional supervision.

delinquent/criminal role performance, a portion of the fathers neglected their parent role and the relationships with the mothers during the pregnancy process. Consequently, these fathers struggle to access their children's birth and first moments of life. Joe#1 has never experienced a stable family life. During the pregnancy, he pushed the prospective mother to the margins while he prioritized his delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role—

No, I didn't see her be born. She didn't want me to be up there when she's having the baby. I was like, "Forget it then!" She had a C-section, got hell-a sick, and the doctors thought she could've died. I wanted to see, but what can I do. She was hell-a mad.

Because conception occurred in the casual-sex context and Joe#1 was focused on his delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role, he neglected to perform his parent role during the pregnancy process. Upset with his lack of presence and involvement, the prospective mother chose to exclude him from the birth process. The role conflict shapes participants' ability to witness the birth of their children. Javier, now a 51 year old white/Irish father and recovering substance/drug user, is the father of three children. The youngest two children were conceived in an unstable marriage with the same substance/drug using mother. During the pregnancy of their second child, they both continued to perform their delinquent/criminal roles. And during one of his *highs*, Javier molested his 13 year old stepdaughter. His wife at the time threw him out of their home and pressed criminal charges—

We were separated shortly after we find out she was pregnant, so I didn't see my son be born. And I was mad about that. I was working third shift and my dad stopped by and said, "Hey, you got a son, early this morning." And I asked my boss, I said, "Can I walk up to the hospital?" I was about 8 blocks away. He says, "Not for another three hours." And I said, "Well, I quit." So, I walked off to the hospital. I went to the maternity ward and I said, "What room is [my wife] in?" They told me, but the nurse says, "Wait a minute. Who are you?" I said, "I'm the father." "I suppose to call the police if you showed up." I said, "Well, here's the phone. You call 'em. I'll be in the room." So, I went down to the room and said to her, "Call that desk! All I want to do is see my son." She called down. So I fed him, held him and stayed for awhile. Oh, it was just cool man! I love my kids.

Javiers' past delinquent/criminal role performance and his past neglect of family roles shaped his hospital experience. Participants' delinquent/criminal role performance makes relational instability the norm, threatens family roles, and shapes participants' experiences during the birth process. Joseph was actively performing his delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and conceived his daughters with two different women in unstable relationships. Only a few weeks apart, the mothers gave birth in the same hospital to a girl and a set of twin girls. To the staff's surprise, both mothers allowed his presence during the birth process—

I was here in [the *Metro Area*] when my girls were born [the twin girls and another girl, now all 3 year-olds] and I was there. It was very interesting. That was very interesting, a long labor process. I went back to the hospital a few weeks after the twin's birth for my other daughter's birth [same hospital with a different prospective mother]. The doctors was like, "Hey, weren't you just here a couple of weeks ago?" "Yeah." "Wow!" I was like, "Uh, man!" I felt like they was kind of trying to tell on me or something like that [that his twin daughters had just been born], but she already knew. I just felt like they didn't have to say that. They could've just kept it to themselves. Honestly, I felt a little embarrassed just 'cause, I figure they looking at me, like a stereotypical little young fucker running here, having sex with everybody without protection. "And he got this young lady pregnant, and this other young lady pregnant!" I felt a little embarrassed. I really didn't feel comfortable. They just kept looking at me.

Participants' delinquent/criminal role performance normalizes unstable relationships and influenced Joseph's hospital experience. In the process, role conflict between participants' delinquent/criminal role and family roles shapes participants' experience in the hospital. However, the participants who did gain access to the birth process focus on the mother and the child once the delivery process begins.

Participants with access to the birth process, mothers giving birth to their children and fathers witnessing their children's birth, faced the physical realities of the delivery process and experienced terrifying moments. During this moment of intense crisis, participants push aside all other roles and focus on the health of the mother and the child.

Ray was 16 when his first child was born—

I was really young and she was in labor for 20-30 hours. My wife was short and petite. She only weighed like 89 pounds and then trying to push the baby. She

couldn't push him out so they had to do a C-section. We always make fun of him because he had a really big head.

Ray takes pride as he recalls being present during his children's birth, but describes it as a terrifying moment. The fathers, unable to physically aid the mothers during the birthing process, felt a sense of powerlessness during the event. For Joseph, the birth of his twin girls was terrifying—

The twin's birth, man! I was actually pretty nervous and scared just because to give birth even to one child can be a scary situation. Just because anything can happen throughout the birth, whether it be to the baby or to the mother. And this ain't her first time being pregnant, but it was her first time having twins. It was a little scary 'cause I don't want nothing to happen. And when [the first twin] came out, they was having some little complications with her because she wasn't turned around like how she was supposed to. That got a little scary and shit! I'm like, "Oh my god! What the hell's going on?!" And she's acting like she can't push no more, just tired. And then they get her situated, turned around, but she was too tired. She's really just laying there, half way in and out. She talking about she can't push no more. I'm panicking, "Oh my god! What the hell?! What you mean you can't push?! You better do something!" So, yeah that was scary. It was definitely frightening!

The birth concluded with two healthy baby girls, now two healthy three-year-old toddlers. During the birth process, parents with access focus on the mother-child's health and experience frightening moments while the role conflict temporarily fades to the background. Ruth's substance/drug using husband was present during their daughter's birth—

He was there when my daughter was born. I was proud of him. He stayed there the whole time and it was really long, 2 days. They had to induce me, but it didn't work. So they had to do it the next day. She was a big baby though, nine pounds ten ounces. I was scared to death of having a baby, scary. It was so long. I thought it would never happen. I don't want to go through that again anytime soon.

Whether it was a father witnessing the birth of his child or a mother giving birth, participants faced the physical realities of birth. In the middle of the birth process and concern for the health of the mother and child, participants temporarily ignored any other roles. Jason and his girlfriend, both teenagers at the time, welcomed their daughter—

I saw my daughter be born. It was the happiest day of my life, but I was scared. At that time I was smoking marijuana. I was so nervous that I didn't even smoke that day! I got a good blessing when the lord let me witness new life coming into



my life. It was a signal. They say that the lord gives us signals. I think that was my signal to stop selling drugs.

Jason's delinquent/criminal role faded to the background as he witnessed and focused on the birth of his daughter. For participants who acquire or have access to the birth process, their delinquent/criminal role fades to the background as they focused on the health of the mother and child. And once the child was born, participants are captivated by the presence of a new being in their lives.

The participants who witnessed their children's birth (fathers witnessing the birth of their children and mothers giving birth) allowed their delinquent/criminal role to fade in the background to enjoy their children's first moments of life. The first moments of their children's lives were memorable and created an instant connection. Diamond ignored her pregnancy until her daughter's arrival. And she will never forget when she first saw her daughter—

When she came out, I was shocked. You know what I'm saying. She was crying and screaming. It was just crazy how she looked like her dad. She had like her nostrils flared up and she just had her own little look. She's like a light caramel-ish color and grey-brown eyes. She was a very beautiful baby. Yeah, she's very pretty. I couldn't stop looking at her! She's something I would have for the rest of my life. And that would love me for who I am, despite what I've been through. You know, little human being that just loves me with everything in it and vice versa. So, it was kind of like a present, like a Christmas present.

It was until the birth of her daughter, seeing a physically independent being present, that Diamond accepted her parent role. Participants express a sense of joy about their child's birth, a moment when the context in which they were conceived and the experiences during pregnancy fade to the background. Chester conceived his son in an unstable relationship, but the couple pushed the conditions of conception and pregnancy aside to enjoy their son's arrival to this world—

I was playing basketball. I hadn't talk to my son's mother for like a while. We were not getting along. But it was fine. Everything was fine, yeah. Watching the baby being born kind of grossed me out, but it was fun. He shot out of her. Dear lord! I cut the umbilical cord and everything, but I almost dropped him. God! It was amazing!

When a small, fragile, and innocent being joins their lives, and participants are captivated by their children's first moments of life. Red discusses his experiences during the birth of his children and the first moments—

With my last daughter [Red was 28 years old at the time], her mom told them, “If he ain't coming in here, I'm gonna cause all kinds of trouble.” And I was like, “Oh my goodness! I really don't want to go in!” But I went in. They was like, “All you have to do sir is just stand right there, and just make sure she's comfortable.” And I was just standing there and she was talking to me like nothing was going on [c-section]. I'm sitting. She's lying on this bed. And then there's a blue curtain at her mid section. And then there is all kind of lights back there. And she's talking to me like ain't nothing happening. Then the doctor said, “Mr. [Red], do you want to stand back here for a second?” I step back there. He pulled the curtain over her mid section and right then he had my baby. The nurse took her to the table, started to wipe her down a little bit and said, “You need to take the scissors and cut the cord. I was like, “Wow!” And she put something in her eyes and her eyes looking my way. “You are the very first person that she ever looked at.” I almost passed out when she said that. I always thought babies couldn't see, but I don't even care! I said, “God, whatever you have for her to do, I give her to you.”

These first moments of a child's life are memorable and participants begin to experience a parent-child connection. The role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role temporarily faded to the background as parents were caught in the moment, struggling with fear during the delivery and enjoying their children's first moments of life. But once these first exciting moments passed, participants face the role conflict head on.

After facing the physical realities of the birth process and enjoying the children's first moments of life, the role conflict reinstates its presence. Participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and inadequate parent role performance during the pregnancy process did not go unnoticed and the audience responds. Concerned for children's safety, hospital staff, social workers, and family court staff threaten to remove children from the new parents' care. Mason, now a 41 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, was delighted to see the birth of his daughter, but he was soon faced with the possibility of losing his child—

The doctor said something about her mom doing some type of drugs, that the baby might have some type of problems. They called the social workers, and everybody came in. “There was drugs in the baby’s system!” I kept thinking, “They’re not gonna take her! They better not take her!” But they didn’t. She’s 10 years old now and she has no problems.

The threat of removal creates an immediate sense of insecurity and fear. A fragile and innocent child arrived and participants’ ability to perform their ideal parent role and protect the child is immediately threatened. Diamond spent her pregnancy performing her delinquent/criminal role. Soon after seeing her daughter for the first time and finally accepting her parent role, the threat of permanently losing the baby took over—

She came out and she was screaming. I mean, screaming! And the doctor said, “Wow! She sure has good lungs.” I had been smoking marijuana and drinking. So, I knew it was a possibility that marijuana could have been in her system. I was really nervous that they was gonna take her or something bad was gonna happen. They said they found a little bit of marijuana in her system. But overall, she was healthy!

The role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role during pregnancy threatened the new parents’ ability to keep their children and perform their parent role. And although a small amount of marijuana in the children’s system was not enough to remove a child, child removals directly after birth were common amongst the substance/drug using sub-sample. Joe#2, now a 26 year old Hispanic father and recovering substance/drug user, became a father only a month before the interview. He developed a relationship with a substance/drug using woman who had previously lost her daughter in a child neglect/abuse case in family court and her name was given to all maternity wards in the area. With an active delinquent/criminal role performance and an *inadequate* parent role performance on record, the threat of removal was immediate—

My ex-girlfriend had done wrong with her first child. She got into doing drugs and being around stupid people. And she didn’t do what she supposed to do to keep [her first daughter]. So, DHS took [her first daughter] from her. And now they’re trying to take my daughter [born last month] because of her past history, three years ago. To get her back, we have to go to parenting classes, couples counseling, anger management and whatever else they can make up. But DHS don’t like me at all. ‘Cause, I don’t know [he laughs nervously].

*What did they say?*

I don't know exactly why they don't like me. They think that I'm just gonna stay getting in trouble all the time, keep getting in fights and going to jail. And that's not the case this time. 'Cause if I don't do something, I'm not gonna be able to be with my kid. And that's more important to me right, is my daughter.

*What was the trouble that they were seeing?*

At the hospital, they came before trying to take [my daughter] from me. And immediately after she was born, they came and then they left, and said that they were coming back. And I had a bunch of my friends outside when they came back. And by the time they came back my daughter was already gone. She went to her grandma's with her mom. So, they couldn't take my daughter. And that's why they don't like me. So, they made sure that I was here [at the WRC] before they went up there to take my daughter. 'Cause I would've—, they think that I would've freaked out. But that's not the case, because I already was prepared for them to come and take [my daughter], just because of the past. I mean, I wasn't. I don't want them to take my daughter, but I was expecting them to. So, now they bring this all up. So, now my lawyer's gonna try to get my daughter back for me tomorrow. Because if they're going on stuff that's three years old, that's not the case now.

Social-control institutions respond to Joe#2's past delinquent/criminal role performance, to his girlfriends' past *inadequate* parent role performance and past delinquent/criminal role performance, and removed the new born right after the delivery. Although role conflict faded to the background during the delivery and first moments of the child's lives, participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance and previous removals make it difficult to keep the new born and perform the parent role.<sup>48</sup> Rosie had experienced the removal of her first two sons. Two years later, at 20 years of age, Rosie felt she had found the love of her life, married him (also a substance/drug user), and soon became pregnant with her third child—

I got pregnant with [my third child] and [my husband] was just like thrilled. He was so happy. He went to every doctor's appointment. And by then, DHS was already involved with [my two other kids] and gave my name to the hospitals. When he was born, he was healthy and everything. DHS called a meeting and I couldn't really go there because I was in the hospital. [My husband] went to the meeting and they said, "You can't keep the baby." And he cried, cried and cried! I was waiting for him at the hospital to come back from this meeting. He comes back in the door and told my mom, "Come here." He told my mom first. He didn't want to tell me. I was like, "No, no, you are going to tell me right now."

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<sup>48</sup> Parents who are continuously performing their delinquent/criminal role or their client/inmate role are perceived as *inadequate* parents. Thus, child protective services, concerned for the *children's safety and permanency*, remove participants' current and future children.

He came in and said, “DHS said we can’t keep this baby.” I’m like, “When are they coming to get him?” He said, “I don’t know.” So, we had a family emergency meeting [with conventional family members]. I checked out from the hospital early and I took the baby. We went home. We were lucky because we kept him over the weekend. They took us to court on Monday. I had a doctor who verified I was taking my medication [for a bi-polar condition]. After the hearing, we were sitting out in the hallway, waiting for all these people to make up their mind about what they’re gonna do with our child! The doctor came out first and I said, “What happened? What happened? What happened?” He says, “Well, your lawyer will talk to you about it.” And didn’t even went to the lawyer, I knew right there and then. I said, “[Husband], we gotta go!” And I don’t know what we thought we were gonna do. We just knew we wanted to get to the baby. We told my mom, “They’re coming for the baby.” We just looked out the window and there was the police and the social worker. I was in the bedroom. They came in the door, and I just couldn’t do it. I just lay on the floor crying. [My husband] came in there and helped me. He cried too. And my mom was pretty pissed because she didn’t think that we deserved it. She knew how hard we had been trying. She put him in the car seat. She said to the social worker, “I hope you’re happy.”

Rosie and her husband’s previous delinquent/criminal role performance and inadequate parent role performance prompted the legal removal of their son. Soon after experiencing the terrifying physical realities of the birth process and enjoying their children’s first moments of life, role conflict threatens mothers and fathers with child removal. Whether the hospital staff calls social services or the mother was already under surveillance, role conflict between participants’ delinquent/criminal role and their parent role makes its presence known at the maternity ward with the threat of removal.

Overall, if in *free society*, a portion of participants experienced the birth process. Once the mother is in the maternity ward, participants’ role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and family roles during the pregnancy process shapes their experience turning the birth process. For the participants who gain access to the birth process, fathers witnessing their child’s birth and mothers giving birth, the role conflict fades to the background as they focus on the physical realities of the delivery and enjoy their children’s first moments of life. Immediately after the birth of the child, the audience respond to participants’ role conflict and threatens with child removal. And just as children are born to participants actively focused on their delinquent/criminal role

performance on the street stage, children are also born to participants legally forced to focus on their client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage.

“I Was a Prisoner!”<sup>49</sup>

When it is time to join the world, children are not concerned with parents’ correctional status. Thus, children were born while parents were incarcerated or quasi-incarcerated. Diamond is one of the two women in the sample who experienced child birth while incarcerated—

I had just arrived to [state prison]. I was sitting by my bed one day, and my water broke. Well, my cousin was my bunkie [both were arrested and incarcerated for the same event]. I was on the bottom bunk and I felt something come out. I got up to use the bathroom and I changed my panty liner, not knowing my water had broke. I washed [washed] my hands, laid in my bed, and 20 minutes later a big gush came out. I tapped on my cousin’s bed. I used the bathroom again, but this time everything was wet. So, she called the COs [correctional officers] and they took me to the medical center.

Whether in jail, prison, or in a quasi-incarceration facility, the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role shapes the experience of a significant portion of participants during the birth process. The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role both demand presence and involvement. With limited time and energy and with the client/inmate role legally demanding fulltime performance, participants’ role conflict limits their ability to perform the ideal parent role during the birth process. Although participants’ experience with the birth process on the correctional stage varies, the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the parent role (i) shapes participants’ experience during the birth process experience and (ii) threatens their ability to perform the parent role. Consequently, participants experience (iii) emotional distress and (iv) a sense of powerlessness.

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<sup>49</sup> It is important to note that participants who experienced the birth of their children on the correctional stage were quasi-incarcerated (residential community based correctional facility) or incarcerated (jail or prison).

Although participants' experience with the birth process while incarcerated varied, the conflict between the client/inmate role and ideal parent role staked its presence on the correctional stage. Miguel, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, became a father at 19 years of age while in jail and was soon sent to prison in a 5 year sentence after a probation violation with new offences.

When his daughter was born he felt—

Scared, I wasn't sure. I was in jail at the time. I knew I wasn't going to be there when she was born. I didn't know what to think about it. I didn't know. I knew I wasn't, you know, going to see her be born or be in the first part of her life, those two years [in *Midwest State* the prison sentence is cut in half]. I wasn't there!

Surrendered to his legally forced client/inmate role performance, Miguel waited for news of his daughter's birth and eventually became part of her life through prison visits. It was during his daughter's birth that Miguel began to experience the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the parent role. In attempts to partially perform their ideal parent role, participants begin to find ways to navigate around their legally forced client/inmate role performance while incarcerated. TR conceived his last daughter while at the WRC ten years ago and was soon re-incarcerated. While performing his client/inmate role, he became creatively involved in the birth process—

I was in jail when she was born, going back on a violation. But I talk to her mom all through the delivery. Oh it was cool! It was alright! I was sad because I wasn't there, but I was happy to be there through the phone. I heard everything, and she had the phone next to her ear the whole time. I heard my daughter's first cry. I was happy! We had a healthy little girl! Oh! It was joy!

To simultaneously perform his conflicting roles, TR use the phone to be involved during the birth process. Although this can be perceived as an effortless activity, the client/inmate role is under strict role performance guidelines and being involved through a phone during his daughter's birth took in-depth coordination. For others, bars are not the only reminder of the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the parent role during the birth process. Diamond gave birth to her daughter only a few days after incarceration at a community hospital—

This whole time there was a guard sitting right next to me because I was in prison, a man. The whole time he's watching my delivery he was talking trash. He was saying, "I don't want to see this. I got fixed so me and my wife couldn't have kids." He just had a dog or whatever. So I was like, "Well, I'll be the first person that you ever see have a baby?" He's like, "I don't want to see it." He was just really rude and disrespectful. So, I'm like, "Okay. Do you wanna watch or are you gonna go over there?" He said, "No, I'm not gonna watch." Because I had nobody there, for me it was a privilege to actually have somebody there whether they wanted to be there or not. You know what I'm saying. So he was behind the curtain. But it was amazing that when it was all done, he sit down on the couch, like next to my bed, and he said, "Wow! That needle was long!" I said, "What needle?" He said, "The needle that they put in your back." And I said, "I thought you wasn't gonna watch me. So you was watching me?" And he said, "Yes! It was amazing!" He was like really nice to me after that.

Although role conflict was invasively present during the delivery, Diamond redefined the invasion into company. And in the presence of the *miracle of life*, the convict and guard relationship became secondary. However, just as the role conflict between the delinquency/criminal role and parent role in *free society*, the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the parent role is soon restored as the excitement of the birth process wears off. Liz, now a 23 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, gave birth to her son 5 years ago while incarcerated. Once the birth process began, she was also taken to a community hospital. The role conflict between the client/inmate role and the parent role was invasively present throughout the birth process—

One of my arms was tied to the bed. Oh my God, it was the worst thing ever! To get out of bed you had to have your leg shackled or your arm shackled. I said I would get my leg shackled due to the fact that I needed my hands to wash up my body. I just had a baby. Blood was everywhere. I cried, cried, and cried. 'Cause the tubs are like really high and you had to put your leg up in order to get in it. I tried to get in but when you have the shackles on your feet, you can't just lift one up and then the other 'cause it's too far apart. I had to sit on the side of the tub, and remember I just had a baby, blood everywhere. It was degrading, humiliating, painful, nasty, and I had to sit on this [tub side]. And the CO [male correctional officer] can't undo the shackles so I can put on my pad and my under stuff. So, I'm waiting 15 minutes for somebody to come and help me, and then I had to wash all over again.

Although bars did not prevent Liz's ability to be present and involved during the birth process, the shackles were a permanent reminder of the legally forced client/inmate role



performance and the consequential inability to control her environment. During incarceration, participants' experience with the birth process varied, but the role conflict staked its presence as participants begin their parent role trajectories. As parents move from full incarceration to quasi-incarceration, the role conflict continues to shape participants' experiences during the birth process. Doug was placed at the RCF for the first time at 17 years of age, the same month his son was due—

Well, I was still going to high school when my son was born. So, they let me go [from the RCF] and I got to see him born. It was crazy. I was the only one in there crying. I just had a kid. That's my son right there. I just brought that life into the world. So, it's time to change, to switch it up. I had to leave the hospital at like 4 in the morning to go to school at like 6. The whole day I was on no sleep. After school I went back to the RCF. But what I really wanted to do was see my son!

Doug did not have to wait for news or talk to the mother on the phone during the birth process, but he was not able to enjoy his son's first day of life. Parents' experiences during the birth process while on the correctional stage varied, from the incarcerated father who waited for the news to the quasi-incarcerated father who was able to witness the birth of his child. The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role both expect presence and involvement. Regardless of the experience variation amongst participants, role conflict shapes participants' experience during the birth process.

Prior to the birth process, participants had no or limited understanding of the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the client/inmate role. Once the birth process begins, the shackles become more evident and the role conflict stakes its territory. In addition to shaping participants' experiences during the birth process, the role conflict threatens their parent role performance during the birth process. Participants who were quasi-incarcerated had the possibility of witnessing their children's birth. However, because their client/inmate status gave them limited control over their everyday life, the threat of furlough (permission to leave) cancellation was always present. Joe#2

experienced the birth of his daughter while at the WRC a few weeks prior to the interview—

I was anxious about it. They let me leave [from the WRC] so I could see her be born. I had it already arranged, the paperwork filled out and everything, but even though I had the permission, I was worried. Here, things change real quick. One day everything is fine, and the next day you could get a write up, and then, [your furlough is] gone. That night they said [the director] cancelled my furlough, some paper was missing. They looked all over, but they did let me leave here at 7 in the morning. I didn't make it on time to see her be born. I was there right after it. I was mad because I didn't get to see her be born, didn't help her mom go through it. But then again, I was still happy, being able to hold my daughter. I was the first one to hold her. My girlfriend said that since she wanted me to be the first one to hold her, she didn't let anyone else hold her until I got there.

After getting the call regarding his daughter's birth, Joe#2 informed the WRC staff.

While the staff confirmed his paperwork, he missed the birth of his daughter. Both demanding presence and involvement, participants are legally forced to invest their time and energy on the client/inmate role and threaten the parent role performance during the birth process. As participants attempt to perform their ideal parent role, the legally forced client/inmate role pulls against it. Liz recalls her anxiety as she watched the ticking clock while the hospital staff completed the after-birth procedures on her new born son—

The doctors had him for a long time [about 3 hours cleaning him and leveling his temperature] and I just cried, cried, and cried, 'cause I wanted my baby. They wanted to make sure everything was alright. I kept asking for him. This is my baby and I wanted him to be right here with me so I can hold him. And I felt like they were taking up all my time [time between birth and return to prison]. I knew I only had two days to be with him. So I wanted all I could get! They finally brought him to me. I just held him, talked to him, just whisper in his ear so he'll get used to my voice, because I knew I was gonna have to give him up [leave him in the care of her mother while she completed her prison sentence]. I kind of woke up when I was holding my baby. I realized that I didn't want to be a bad person any more.

The client/inmate role shortens her time with her newborn and Liz grows desperate every minute her son is away. The parent role and client/inmate role both expect presence and involvement. Legally forced to perform their client/inmate role, participants are absent or quickly pulled away and unable to perform their parent role during the birth process. In addition to presence and involvement, the ideal parent role expects protection. Unable to

be present, this portion of participants are unable to protect their children during their absence. Diamond was quickly removed from the hospital. Her inability to control her everyday life also meant an inability to guarantee her daughter's safety—

I had to leave on Sunday [return to prison] and [my daughter] had to stay one extra day. And that was the worst day of my life! My mom has not seen her, and I was just panicking, afraid. What if they get the wrong baby? How I'm gonna show them who it is? Once I got back to [state prison], I couldn't call and see if they could pick her up 'cause I had no money. But I finally talked to my family. And they said, "When we went to pick up the baby, we just knew she was yours. There was no hiding." I'm like, "What she look like? Do she look like this? Do she look like that? Hopefully that's my baby. Hopefully they didn't give ya'll the wrong baby." I was trippin' 'cause I didn't know if they gave 'em the wrong baby or tried to keep it.

Diamond's fear eventually ended during her daughter's first visit to prison in her grandmother's arm. Unable to be present in children's lives, the client/inmate role conflicts with the protection expectations of the parent role. Susie, now a 33 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, recalls her roommate's similar struggle—

My roommate here [RCF], she had just had her baby when she got arrested. And they came and arrested her from the hospital [out of state and then sent to *Midwest State*]. She never got to sign the baby's birth certificate or nothing. So, her mom didn't go out there to get her baby. So, they put her baby straight into foster care. And they was trying to get him adopted. And they kept telling her she had to go to court, but RCF wouldn't let her go [out of state] to go to court, so she's gonna lose her baby. They finally just let her out though, after like 5-6 months. I don't know what happened next. At first, she cried and cried. But then she was just mad, mad! And see, without family you're stuck!

The client/inmate role legally expects presence and involvements, limiting the new parents' ability to be present, involved, and protect the new born. Although participants' experience with the birth process while incarcerated varied, the role conflict threatened participants' ability to perform their parent role. And as participants' attempted to perform their parent role, the client/inmate role pulls them away. On the correctional stage during the birth process, participants experienced negative emotions and a sense of powerlessness.

Unable to perform their parent role, participants who experienced their children's birth while incarcerated expressed a sense of guilt and emotional distress.<sup>50</sup> Wanting to be present and involved and feeling responsible for their incarceration creates an emotional turmoil. Anthony recalls the birth of his child—

I was in [jail] on a drug case when [my daughter] was born. Not being there hurt a little bit. It hurted 'cause I wanted to be there, but I did something that got me in trouble. But when I saw her [3 months later] it was a blessing from god. I mean, it made me, it made me happy 'cause she was mine, my child. She don't look nothing like her mama. She looks just like me!

Anthony's pain was accompanied with guilt, acknowledging it was his delinquent/criminal role performance that led to his legally forced client/inmate role performance and kept him from witnessing the birth of his child. As participants face their inability to be present and involved and acknowledge their faults, they experience emotional turmoil during the birth process. Joseph recalls the birth of his daughter ten years ago—

I was in the county actually, when she was born, six days after I got locked up. I was pissed, you know. This is my first child. And I'm just like, "Man, what the hell man?!" I had just turned 18. I was pretty upset with myself just 'cause, it's my first child, and of course I wanted to be there. And I'm looking at all these charges. I know I'm going to prison. "Man, what the hell am I gonna do now?" It just was rough!

As Joseph takes responsibility for his legally forced client/inmate role performance, he struggled with guilt and his inability to perform his ideal parent role. While performing their client/inmate role and neglecting their ideal parent role performance, participants are bombarded with negative emotions. Diamond recalls the emotional turmoil as she returned to prison after giving birth—

After I got back to [state prison], without my daughter, I started getting really really depressed. I was crying. And I didn't see things like I seen them before. It was just like sad. I was having all these crazy thoughts. I was always crying, sleepy, worried, angry, bitter, and so-so-so guilty!

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<sup>50</sup> According to the sociology of emotions literature, the inability to fulfill valued role expectations triggers the arousal of negative emotions (Turner 2010)

Although Diamond met her daughter during the birth process, she wanted to be present and involved in her daughter's life. But legally forced to perform her client/inmate role, it was impossible for Diamond to perform her ideal parent role and she experiences negative emotions. Unable to perform their ideal parent role while on the correctional stage, participants experience negative emotions. In addition to negative emotions, parents who experience the birth process on the correctional stage felt a sense of powerless.

As participants face the role conflict between the client/inmate role and their ideal parent role during the birth process, they experienced a sense of powerlessness. The parent role and the client/inmate role are in opposite sides of the authority scale. The ideal parent role grants the individual authority over his/her children and the client/inmate role removes all authority from the individual (Sykes 2007). Stripped from any autonomy on the correctional stage, participants have no authority to perform their ideal parent role. Butch Green, now a 48 year old white/Caucasian father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, was in prison during the birth of his daughter—

She was born while I was in jail. I just sat wondering what her mom was going through. You know, knowing that I wasn't there while she was born. That was my main concern. How was she gonna be until I got home? And I couldn't do anything about it. I just wanted to jump out of my body, you know what I'm saying. It was a horrible feeling.

Not being present, not being involved, and worrying about what it will be of the mother and child made Butch Green face his powerless status. While performing their legally forced client/inmate role, participants are powerless and unable to perform their ideal parent role. Joe#2 worried about his daughter's care and felt powerlessness—

When I think about prison and my children, it hurts me a lot. I got arrested the day I found out that [my girlfriend] was pregnant. I was more angry at myself than anything else, because I put myself in the position to get in trouble. I felt bad, because I was gonna go back to prison and she was gonna have to take care of the baby by herself. It's not that she can't take care of the baby. It's just that when she's around her friends, she thinks she gotta show off to everybody, and try to be cool with everybody [22 year old substance/drug using prospective mother].

I was sitting there, couldn't do anything. That still hurts me today, but I try to think of myself as, "I'm going home pretty soon!"

While performing his client/inmate role, Joe#2 was unable to be present and involved and knew his daughter was not in safe hands. Unable to control his daughter's surroundings, he felt guilty and powerless. Mike#1, now a 32 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, found a way to manage—

My wife was pregnant before I went to prison. My son was born when I was gone. I was upset. I had a hard time with that one. I wanted to be there for [my wife]. I wrote my son a note explaining why I could not be there. I mean, I know he was not born yet, but, his mom read it to him. There wasn't much I could do. I now had a debt to him and I promised to be there for when he needs me. I just needed to write that note.

Without much power, Mike#1 found an outlet and recognized his accumulating debt to his son. Upon incarceration, participants are forced to perform their client/inmate role and have limited or no conventional power. And as participants experience a desire to perform their ideal parent role, it clashes with their client/inmate role and produces a sense of powerlessness.

Participants' parent role trajectories begin regardless of their correctional status. Although experiences with the birth process varies, the role conflict between client/inmate role and the parent role shapes their birth process experiences and threatened their ability to perform the parent role. Consequently, participants experience emotional distress and a sense of powerlessness. It was during the birth process that participants faced the role conflict between the client/inmate and parent role conflict for the first time in their own lives.<sup>51</sup>

#### "Lies and More Lies!"

Whether participants experienced the birth process in *free society* or *convict society*, issues of paternity were of a great concern amongst a significant portion of the fathers in the sample. Because children were conceived in unstable relationships (see

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<sup>51</sup> Seventeen participants first encountered this role conflict when their parents attempted to perform the parent role under correctional supervision.

above) and (i) participants continuously witness paternity fraud on the correctional stage, a significant portion of male participants (ii) requested paternity test during the birth process. Prior to accepting the parent role and to insure their prospective investment on the parent role performance, a portion of male participants request a paternity test.

While on the correctional stage, participants witnessed fathers' struggle with paternity fraud. In paternity fraud cases, fathers were credited with a pregnancy, they accepted the parent role, invested or were legally forced to invest on the parent role performance, and eventually discovered paternity fraud. Thus, the joy or pain paternity tests bring to incarcerated fathers echo in the halls of correctional facilities. While at the WRC, I took the following field notes in regards to the matter—

As I get ready for an early morning interview, I hear a man pleasantly shouting at the top of his lungs, "I'm not the father! I'm not the father! Fuck Yeah! I'm not the father!" He had just opened the court ordered paternity test results. 'Till June, now a 45 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, approaches the excited young man and places the palm of her hand on his back in a congratulating gesture. She tells him, "This is great news man! This is great!" He responds, "She thought she had me! She fucked me for a little while, but not anymore! I'm not the father!" As other residents congratulated him, 'Till June joined me for an interview and clarified that he had been paying child support for more than three years for a child who was not his. She recalls seeing the mother with different men prior to the pregnancy and is very happy he got rid of her (Campos-Holland, *Field Notes*, 2010).

To witness a father's joy or disappointment in response to paternity test results is commonplace on the correctional stage. Simon, now a 46 year old African American father and recovering substance/drug user, shares his disappointment—

I thought she was mine, but she's not mine. It was devastating to me. And I tell her that she should call me dad. But after she gets done talking me, she said, "Bye [Simon]." Not Dad. She doesn't call me dad anymore. But I'm her dad—. *How do you feel when she calls you by your name and not dad?* It is really painful. I know it's not [my daughters'] fault. I still believe a little bit had to do with the mom. She's much younger than I was. And her whole thing was child support. Child support, don't matter if you're locked up or home. So, she thought she could get money out of me even when she wasn't mine.

With similar stories continuously circulating on the correctional stage, participants commiserate with the cheated father and grow cautious. Mike#2, now a 42 year old

African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, faced the same dilemma last year. He raised three daughters with his wife and once incarcerated received a letter from one of his previous associates. The letter informed Mike#2 of paternity test result confirming his associate's paternity of his youngest daughter and his associate's plans to take over the father role—

It was upsetting to me. You know what I'm saying. Really, it was. How could she do this to me? Him?! Whatever, you can't trust no one in this life. And I saw her be born. I raised her, you know what I'm saying.

For Mike#2, who had invested his limited resource on his parent role performance, this event was devastating. Whether fathers experience joy or disappointment, fear of paternity fraud is common place on the correctional stage. To prevent paternity fraud, fathers request scientific confirmation of their paternity during the birth process prior to accepting the parent role and investing on a parent role performance.

Children conceived within unstable relationship on the street stage and fathers' exposure to paternity fraud on the correctional stage prompts a significant portion of the fathers in the sample to request paternity test during the birth process. The paternity confirmation becomes a condition for initiation into the parent role and performing the parent role. Joe#1 expressed a need to confirm his paternity—

I know that the DNA test is \$135.

*So, you had a DNA test?*

Oh yeah! I had a DNA test. She's gonna put me on child support, you never know. 'Cause my daughter, she look like Asian kid [he is white/Caucasian and African American]. For real, she don't even look like she could be mine. I mean, she's like one of those weird kids.

*What ethnicity is her mom?*

Black and white. [My daughter] got like gray eyes. She's pretty. I wish I had those type of eyes.

With child support in the horizon, Joe#1 felt a need to confirm his paternity. Once the paternity test results were positive, he accepted his parent role and began to invest on his parent role performance. Joseph conceived all his five children in unstable relationships. Thus, he wants to confirm he is the biological father—



I got ‘em paternity tests for all of my kids. Just, I feel like I gotta be sure man. I mean, I ain’t necessarily, you know, saying that [the mothers] be out there like whatever [with other men]. But I mean, I rather be safe than sorry. I’ve cheated, and so I ain’t really gonna put nothing passed nobody else. It wasn’t really the whole trust thing. I mean, they was a little upset at the fact that I said, “I want a paternity tests or whatever.” But at the same time, I guess they kind of felt where I was coming from. And I just explained it to ‘em, “Man, it ain’t nothing personal against ya’ll. It’s just some type of security I need.”

The context in which his children were conceived prompts Joseph to confirm he is the biological father prior to accepting the parent role. Conceived in unstable relationships, the newborn’s physical appearance prompts a few fathers to request a paternity test.

Anthony recalls the birth of his daughter—

When my daughter was born, it was kind of crazy! All my kids have my complexion. And she came out just real light. I’m like, “Oh, hell no! You got me fucked up. Hell no! All my kids dark! I don’t got no light skinned babies! Fuck no, I ain’t! Hell no!” Like I stayed there for them to do the whole birth or whatever, all that. But I didn’t sign the birth certificate. I end up just leaving and shit. And she’s calling, calling, calling, and calling. Word travels. So, everybody, I’m talking to everybody that I see, “Man, I seen that baby. The baby looks just like you. And she light skinned.” She had the Maury Show call me, but hell no! I told her, “No man. I ain’t going to no fucking show! Hell no! But I’ll take the blood test here.” And she was mine! This shit was crazy, man. It got out of control. I felt bad, embarrassed. I was just thinking like, “Damn, how would I tell this to her when she gets older?” I just felt real bad!

After conceiving a child with a woman through a casual-sexual encounter, Anthony anxiously awaits for his daughter. In his insecurity, her skin color becomes a source of anxiety and doubt. Thus, he requests and received scientific confirmation of his paternity. After conceiving children in unstable relationships and continuously witnessing paternity fraud on the correctional stage, a significant portion of the fathers request scientific confirmation of their paternity prior to accepting the parent role and investing on a parent role performance.

Before accepting and performing the parent role, a significant portion of the fathers in the sample request scientific confirmation of their paternity. On the correctional stage, participants witness paternity fraud and fathers’ joyful and disappointing responses to paternity tests results. In response to the unstable relationship

context in which children were conceived and in an attempt to avoid paternity fraud, fathers request paternity test. Overall, paternity tests are used prior accepting and performing the parent role.

“Show ‘em!”

After accepting the parent role, participants return to the role construction process. Based on their parents’ parenting and prior to conception, participants identified being present, being involved, and protecting children from neglect/abuse as expectations for their parent role (see chapter 4). Although a portion of participants failed to be present, be involved or protect the fetus, a portion of participants returned to the role construction process during the pregnancy process. During the pregnancy process, participants added providing to their ideal parent role and began to perform it. After the birth process, with children in their arms, participants’ definition of the situation changed.

Diamond experienced a transformation the moment she saw her daughter—

When I had my daughter, I just looked at her and I started crying, ‘cause, that’s when it actually kicked in. I was a mother. I actually had her in my arms. It just felt like, “Oh my God! This is my baby!” Now I have something to motivate me. It was like a fresh beginning. It just make all the difference in the world. And I didn’t think it was gonna be like that.

After the birth process, participants add (i) guiding children in a norm-centered world and (ii) creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship to the ideal parent role.

The first agent of socialization children encounter is the family. Previous literature have identified providing moral guidance and discipline as one of the many parent role expectations (Christiansen and Palkovitz 2001; Suderland 2000; Carlson and England 2011). Similar to previous studies, participants in this study assign guiding children through the norm-centered world to the ideal parent role. According to Joseph, the parent role includes teaching children right from wrong—

Parenthood is about being there for your kids, teaching ‘em right from wrong, how to be respected as well as respect others. The purpose of a father is to prepare your children to be adults, to be in the world on their own. Because, one thing leads to another. I’m doing this, and then it went from that to staying out all

night, from smoking weed to selling drugs, to fighting, to, just all types of things. I don't want to be strict 'til, where my kids feel like they just want to rebel against me. I also don't want my kids to be scared of me. Like pretty much let them know, "That ain't right. Don't do that." But at the same time let them know, "Hey, you know, I still love you. And, you know, I just don't want you doing something and you get yourself in trouble, or you do something bad to somebody else."

Joseph adds guiding to the ideal parent role. Thus, parents become guides and attempt to teach their children right from wrong. In the same manner, Ray states, "To me parenting is being responsible, being there for the kids, making sure they grow up in a healthy environment. You need to provide for 'em and make sure you keep them in a straight and narrow line." As participants discuss guiding as an ideal parent role expectation, they continuously remind me about their inability to perform this expectation up to this point in time.<sup>52</sup> For Carol, now a 35 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, her past delinquent/criminal role performance presents challenges. "I can't, to me personally [parenthood] is to protect and to show them how to be woman.

How to be good. But I haven't did that, at all." TR discusses this reality—

Parenting is to be a role model. Show your son how to be a man instead of just like some little thug person out in the street, you know. I feel that, I let him down a little bit, because of that. 'Cause my son, I haven't seen my son since he was two [now 14 years old].

Although failure is a very common sentiment, parents attempt to guide their children regardless of their status. According to Jerry—

Parenting is about guidance. I really wasn't there physically [he found out about his son when he was already 14 years old and has since been in and out of prison], but I tried to do as much guiding as I can through words, you know. But, it's nothing like being there. There's no substitute for that, but, it's all about guidance through different issues they're having in the process of learning right from wrong.

Jerry attempts to guide his son while recognizing his limitations. Once participants become parents, they add guiding to the ideal parent role. In doing so, parents are to attempt to guide children through a norm-centered world. In this return to the role

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<sup>52</sup> See chapter 11 for a full discussion on the challenges of guiding when participants have delinquent/criminal role performance and client/inmate role performance in the past.

construction process, participants also add creating and maintaining a parent-child relationship to the ideal parent role.

Children's existence and participants' re-definition of the situation prompts the addition of the last ideal parent role expectation—the creation and maintenance of a parent-child relationship. This relationship is to be based on love, respect, and trust.

According to Red parenthood is—

To me, is me and my kids, a wide range of things. You know what I mean. Like, I want to be a friend to my kids, but I want them to know that I'm still dad. "Don't talk reckless to me, or reckless around me. Even though I'm your friend, we laugh and joke, I'm still the highest authority that you know." That's what I've always did as far as my kids is concerned. Some people say, "You got to make your kids fear you." In a sense, that's cool. But, I've always tried to let 'em know I love 'em as far it, not just in words, but also in deeds.

Red works towards a relationship with his children based on love through actions, with a continuous presence of respect towards the parent as an authority in children's lives.

This relationship is to be maintained through honesty. 'Till June states—

It's always better to establish a bond with you and your kids. The main thing that I told my son was, "No matter what, you can always come to me and tell me, and talk to me about anything. First and foremost, I'm always gonna be your mother, but I'm also going to be your friend. So, if you need someone to talk to, you can always talk to me. And, you can be totally honest with me, and I can't do anything but be totally honest with you." So, you set honesty and trust. Like if my son feels that I'm doing something that is not acceptable, he'll tell me. And then he'll be like, "You need to stop what you're doing." Period.

Although always his mother, 'Till June welcomes her son's input and bases their relationship on honesty. From her perspective, this approach will make the relationship a constant in their lives. According to Jerry, honesty creates bonds of trust that improves the relationship and the influence a parent and child have on one another's lives—

For my son, I'm being somebody to really talk to. 'Cause a lot of people, can't really talk honestly to their parents. So, that's a relationship what I instilled in my son. "Tell me anything, even if you think it hurt me. Just tell me, and if it do hurt me, we can work through that. We can, we can work through almost anything!"

For Jerry, open communication allows for the development and maintenance of the parent-child relationship. Participants add creating and maintaining a parent-child

relationship to the ideal parent role expectations. This relationship is to be based on love, respect, honesty, and trust.

After the birth process and their definition of the situation changes, participants return to the role construction process and revise the ideal parent role. In addition to protecting children from neglect/abuse, being present and involved parents, and providing (above), participants add guiding and developing/maintaining a relationship with their children to the ideal parent role. Although participants develop an ideal parent role, to move from role construction to role performance is a difficult process. With a self composed of conflicting roles, participants face a difficult time in their attempt to perform their ideal parent role.

Overall, whether prospective parents were in *free society* or in *convict society*, the stork arrived and role conflict shaped participants' experience during the birth process. First, when in *free society* during the birth process, participants' previous role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and family roles shaped participants' experience in the hospital. But once the delivery begins, the role conflict fades to the background as participants face the physical realities of birth and enjoy their children's first moments of life. But soon after the birth, the role conflict reinstates its presence and threatens with child removal. Second, although participants' experiences with the birth process on the correctional stage varied, the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role shapes participants' experiences and threatens their parent role performance. Consequently, participants experience emotional distress and a sense of powerlessness. Third, whether in *free society* or *convict society*, a portion of the fathers in the sample request scientific confirmation of paternity to avoid paternity fraud. Lastly, once parents have a child in their arms, they return to the role construction process and add guiding children and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship to their ideal parent role. The delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role threaten participants' ability to accept and perform their ideal parent role during the birth process.

### Conclusion

Soon after participants acquire their delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role, the majority of participants acquire their parent role. Role conflict shapes participants' initiation into their parent role trajectories. On the street stage, the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role shapes how children are conceived, the pregnancy process, and birth process. On the correctional stage, the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the client/inmate role shapes participants' experiences during the birth process. And as participants experience pregnancy and birth processes, participants return to the role construction process and add providing, guiding, and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship to their ideal parent role. As participants' parent role trajectories begin, role conflict threatens their ability to perform their ideal parent role.

Embedded in the *fast life* and performing their delinquent/criminal role, participants initiate their parent role trajectories in unstable sexual relationships on the street stage, including teenage couples experiencing *puppy love*, adult-adolescent couples in at times illicit relationships, couples in uncommitted or undefined adult relationships, and/or individuals who openly engage in casual sex with more than one person. Once participants were credited with the pregnancy, a portion of participants transform the shocking news into *bundles of joy* and accept their new parent role. However, a portion of pregnant girls and women kept the pregnancy news from male participants and did not give them the opportunity to accept the parent role until later in the child's life. Whether during pregnancy or later on in children's life course, participants were credited with pregnancies and accepted the parent role.

To transition from accepting the parent role to parent role performance is a difficult process. And the street stage is hazardous for pregnancy and the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role begins to emerge. On the street stage, a significant portion of the substance/drug using parents prioritizes *the high*

over being involved, being present, and protecting the fetus. And as drug dealers prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance, pregnant girls and women are pushed to the margins and prospective fathers become absent and uninvolved. In addition to shaping participants' experience during the conception process, the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role shape the pregnancy process. Although participants neglected the protecting, involvement, and presence expectations of their ideal parent role, they returned to the role construction process during the pregnancy process. Once participants' definition of the situation changed from childhood/adolescence to prospective parents, participants added providing to the ideal parent role. To begin fulfilling the providing expectation, participants used the low-wage labor market and the illicit labor market to increase their income. Furthermore, once the due date arrives, participants experience the birth process while in *free society* and *convict society*.

When participants are in *free society* during the birth process, the role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and family roles shapes their experience. Once the delivery begins, all other roles fade to the background and participants face the terrifying moments of the birth process and enjoy their children's first moments of life. However, the role conflict reinstates its presence with a threat of child removal minutes after birth. Role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and family roles shapes participants' experience during the birth process in *free society*. In a similar manner, the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the client/inmate role shapes participants' experiences during the birth process on the correctional stage and threatens their parent role performance. The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role both expect presence and involvement. Unable to perform the ideal parent role, participants experience emotional distress and a sense of powerlessness. It is during the birth process that participants come face to face with role conflict between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role on the correctional stage. And whether children were born in *free society* or *convict society*,

paternity needs to confirm. Because participants have witnessed paternity fraud while under correctional supervision and their children were conceived in unstable relationships, a significant portion of the fathers in the sample request paternity confirmation before accepting the parent role and investing on their parent role performance.

And once participants become parents, their definition of the situation changes. Thus, they return to the role construction process and add two additional expectations to the ideal parent role. In addition to being present, being involved, and protecting children, participants added providing to the ideal parent role during the pregnancy process. When children become real after birth, participants add guiding children in a norm-centered world and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship to the ideal parent role expectations. The role construction process is a continuous process as parents interact with others and negotiate expectations.

Overall, as participants initiate their parent role trajectories, they engage in role construction, acceptance of the role, and role performance. Most importantly, role conflict threaten participants' ability to accept and perform the parent role. Using identity salience theory, one can argue that a portion of participants place their delinquent/criminal role over their ideal parent role in their salience hierarchies during the pregnancy process. And this role conflict shapes participants' experience during the birth process. As for the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role, it shapes participants' experiences during the birth process. Unlike the delinquent/criminal role, participants are legally forced to place their client/inmate role over their ideal parent role on their salience hierarchies. As participants chose to and are forced to place other roles over their ideal parent role during pregnancy and the birth process, they begin their struggle to "do" parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision.



CHAPTER VI  
 “DOING” PARENTHOOD IN THE *FAST LIFE*

The *fast life* is part of life within the *fragile family* context. For a significant portion of participants, family history is embedded in the *fast life* and their acquisition of the delinquent/criminal role was perceived as part of their everyday life.<sup>53</sup> Most importantly, the *fast life* is enticing. Jason, now a 27 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, experienced the rewards of the *fast life* at a young age. Soon after, he climbed the ranks of the illicit drug labor market—

We was going out of town, making business trips [with associates from 12-18 years of age]. I threw a party at [the club] in [the *Metro Area*]. I’m at a club that I’m not even old enough to be in. I threw a party for me coming home [from jail], and I can’t even put my picture on the party flyers because I’m underage. I was living it up, but I tried to be more of a father figure to my daughter than my father was to me.<sup>54</sup> Plus, when I was selling drugs, me and my father got closer [he was also in the streets]. When I started getting money and my father started hearing my name, he started more claiming me now. Before he wasn’t claiming me.

After years of parental absence (mother and father in the *fast life* in the streets), Jason’s illicit success prompted his father’s acknowledgement. In doing so, participants attempt to manage the role conflict between their ideal parent role and their delinquent/criminal role.

With limited resources and weak social boundaries, participants attempt to perform their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and their ideal parent role on the home stage. The delinquent/criminal role and ideal parent role have conflicting expectations and demand participants’ limited resources (see table A26-A27 in Appendix A, page 455-456; figure B3 in Appendix B, page 459). On the one hand, the ideal parent role expects participants to be present and involved in children’s lives, protect children from neglect/abuse, provide, guide, and develop/maintain a parent-child relationship on

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<sup>53</sup>Only 3 of the participants came from conventional families(without history of substance/drug use or drug dealing) and were lured into the *fast life* through substance/drug use (3/57). The rest of the sample comes from families with long histories in the illicit drug market as employees and consumers.

<sup>54</sup> Jason was raised by his paternal grandparents, while abandoned by both of his delinquent/criminal parents; became a father at 15 years of age.

the home stage. On the other hand, the delinquent/criminal role expects participants to be present and involved in the *fast life*, avoid commitment/enjoy freedom, male promiscuity, and present a tough/violent image on the street stage. Furthermore, the employees and consumers of the illicit drug market vary in a few additional expectations. For drug dealers, the delinquent/criminal role expects participants to engage in for-profit distribution of illicit substances/drugs and invest on a legal defense fund. For substance/drug users, the delinquent/criminal role expects participants to purchase and use illicit substances/drugs and the loss of control. In attempts to “do” parenthood in the *fast life*, participants struggle to meet the continuous demands from the street stage and the home stage. With limited resources (time, energy, and money) and weak (or impenetrable) social boundaries between social situations, drug dealers and substance/drug users both struggle to “do” parenthood in the *fast life*, but respond differently to the role conflict.

In attempts to perform their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and the ideal parent role on the home stage, drug dealing participants attempt to reinforce the boundaries between the two conflicting roles. Drug dealing participants initially are attracted to *fast money* and become employees of the illicit drug labor market. In doing so, they use the illicit income to provide and fulfill the ideal parent role in the home stage (a continuation from the pregnancy process). However, danger dominates the *fast life* on the street stage. To protect themselves and their children, drug dealing participants present a tough and violent image on the street stage and attempt to practice two-sphere parenting. In “doing” two-sphere parenthood, participants place social and physical distance between the home stage and the street stage to protect children from neglect/abuse and be partially present and involved. However, both roles demand presence and involvement. With limited resources (time and energy), a portion of participants chose their delinquent/criminal role over their ideal parent role. And whether attempting to perform two-sphere parenting or focus fulltime on their delinquent/criminal

role performance, all drug dealing participants were removed from the street stage upon arrest. Although drug dealing participants attempt to reinforce the boundaries between the conflicting roles, their limited time and energy threatens their ability to “do” parenthood in the *fast life*.

Compared to the drug dealing participants, substance/drug using participants have less control over the boundaries between the conflicting roles and their limited resources. Because participants struggle with addiction, they practice parenthood in sync with their recovery-relapse cycle. The delinquent/criminal role and the ideal parent role both expect presence and involvement on the street stage and the home stage respectively. When in deep relapse, participants use their desire to not repeat their parents’ parenting to push themselves onto recovery. Once on the home stage, participants perform their ideal parenthood. However, they are continuously tempted to return to their delinquent/criminal role performance. And once enticed back, participants initially divide their limited resources between their delinquent/criminal role and their ideal parent role, and practice partial parenthood. But in the *fast life*, even partial parenthood is temporary and participants experience deep relapse upon the loss of a role or the removal of role expectations. And once participants return to prioritizing their delinquent/criminal role, arrest is inevitable.

When “doing” parenthood in the *fast life*, participants attempt to balance the role conflict between their delinquent/criminal role and their ideal parent role. To understand this practice, it is fundamental to capture participants’ criminal activity on the street stage. To do so, the *Midwest State* Court Data and participants’ narratives provide a glimpse of participants’ delinquent/criminal role performance in the *fast life*.<sup>55</sup> Prior to

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<sup>55</sup> For participants’ protection, discussion about the extent of criminal activity or details about a specific criminal behavior were not fully discussed during the interview. Thus, participants’ criminal records in *Midwest State* were compiled and analyzed (*Midwest State* Online Courts, August 2011). Participants’ criminal records under other jurisdiction (other states or federal) were not accessible during the analysis. And because of where the sample was recruited, the majority of the substance/drug using participants has suffered with addiction for most of their life course.

taking an in-depth look at the differences and similarities of the parenting practices between drug dealing participants and substance/drug using participants, it is important to gain an understanding of their overall delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage.

### Delinquent/Criminal Role Performance

Participants in this sample led an active *fast life* in the streets. As previously discussed in chapter 4, being under juvenile/criminal justice surveillance (the public institution of social control) is part of participants' everyday life since adolescence. This continuous *mouse-cat-game* is captured in participants' public criminal records. Although criminal records are methodologically limited due to under charging (charge for only a fracture of what the individual is doing), erroneous charging (charging the individual with theft when innocent while not charging him/her for the assault s/he did commit) or overcharging (charging an innocent person), it provides a partial portrait of participants' delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage. Accessed through the *Midwest State* Online Courts (public access and with participants' consent), each participants' delinquent/criminal record was collected and analyzed. The analysis provides descriptive statistics of the criminal charges against the participants (see tables A22-A25 in Appendix A, pages 451-455), a partial portrait of parents' delinquent/criminal role performance. To supplement this official data, the 57 participants provide a more specific description of their delinquent/criminal role performance. Prior to attempting to understand participants' parenthood practices in the *fast life*, it is important to have a portrait of their delinquent/criminal role performance.

As of August 29<sup>th</sup> 2011, *Midwest State* reports 1,400 delinquent/criminal cases against the 57 participants, with a total of 1,957 delinquent/criminal charges, a mean of 34 criminal charges per participant with a range of 4 to 100 criminal charges (a range of 2-60 cases). Of which 16 participants (28% of the sample) accrued a total of 164

delinquency charges (8.38% of all charges).<sup>56</sup> As for criminal charges during their adult life, the 57 participants accumulated a total of 1,793 charges, in which 10.63% are drug crime charges (208 charges), 13.29% are alcohol related crime charges (260 charges), 15.43% are property crime charges (302 charges), 12.06% are violent crime charges (236 charges), 1.03% are sex crime charges (20 charges), 2.75% are crimes against children charges (54 charges), 17.23% are general traffic violations charges (337 charges), 10.42% are other criminal charges (204 charges), and 8.78% are correctional status violation charges (172 charges).

Participants' criminal records come alive when complemented with participants' narratives about their delinquent/criminal role performance. In the narratives, 17 participants self identified as employees (fathers), 29 as consumers (12 mothers and 17 fathers), and 11 as consumers and employees in the illicit drug market (fathers).<sup>57</sup> First, the 17 participants who self-identified as illicit drug market employees (drug dealers) occasionally used marijuana/alcohol or did not engaged in substance/drug use. Second, the 29 who self-identified as consumers were primarily addicted substance/drug users (alcohol, meth or crack cocaine addiction). Although a portion might have thought about drug dealing to support their habit, it was an impossible task because of their heavy addiction. Third, the 11 participants who self-identified as consumers and employees in the illicit drug market did not engage in both tasks simultaneously. They discuss initially engaging in the high ranks of the illicit drug labor market and rapidly falling into substance/drug use, from which they are still attempting to recover. Although recent literature has established women's involvement in the illicit drug labor market as

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<sup>56</sup> In *Midwest State*, the delinquent offender must request to have his/her delinquency record sealed (not automatic). Thus, for participants who did not make the request, their delinquency charges are part of their public criminal record. As for participants who did request a sealed delinquent record, their delinquent record is not part of these findings.

<sup>57</sup> Of the drug dealing fathers, eight (8/28) have spent time in federal prison and all (28/28) have spent time in state prison at some point in their lives. One substance/drug user has been incarcerated in federal prison (1/40) and all substance/drug using parents have been incarcerated in jail, state prison, and/or community corrections (40/40) (see chapter 7 for correctional details).

employees (Sommers and Baskin 1997; Morgan and Joe 1996; Mieczkowski 1994; Jacobs and Miller 1998), for-profit distribution of illicit substances in this sample was male dominated. Although participants' involvement in the illicit drug market as employees (drug dealers) and consumers (substance/drug user) is the dominant theme in participants' narratives, their *Midwest State* criminal records only show 497 illicit substance/drug related charges (27.7% of the charges), including 29 delinquency charges (alcohol, tobacco, and drugs), 24 distribution charges, 148 possession charges, 36 drug paraphernalia charges, and 260 alcohol related charges (operating while intoxicated, open container while driving, public intoxication, and driving with a barred license). The *Midwest State* Courts Data and participants' narratives offer a portrait of participants' delinquent/criminal role performance.

In performing their delinquent/criminal role, participants engage in a variety of illicit behavior, from a traffic violation to assault with attempt to injure. However, all these behaviors captured in their public criminal record are a glimpse to participants' two dominant illicit activities, drug dealing and substance/drug using. And as employees and consumers of the illicit drug market, participants take different approaches to "doing" parenthood in the *fast life*.

#### Drug Dealing and "Doing" Parenthood

As employees in the illicit drug labor market (28/57), participants engaged in a time consuming and dangerous occupation.<sup>58</sup> The *fast life* lures participants to drug dealing with promises of high commissions and promotions. Once in the illicit drug labor market, parents use the illicit profits to fulfill the providing expectation of the ideal parent role. And although financially ideal for those living in the margins of American Society, employment in the illicit drug labor market is dangerous. Participants are under

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<sup>58</sup> According to *Midwest State* Online Courts data as of August 29, 2011, only 7 participants in the sample were charged with distribution of illicit substances (24 charges total). However, 17 participants self-identified as drug dealers and 11 self-identified as drug dealers and substance/drug users (28 employees in the illicit labor market).

constant threat in an illicit world from competitors, consumers, and/or the have-nots on the street stage without legal protection. Attempting to deter victimization and shield children from the danger, drug dealing participants *front* a tough/violent image on the street stage and practice two-sphere parenting. In “doing” two-sphere parenthood, participants add geographical and social distance between the street stage and the home stage to reinforce the boundaries between the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role. Although it can initially appear manageable, drug dealing is a time demanding occupation and participants soon realize that all the illicit financial rewards depend on their presence and involvement on the street stage. Thus, a portion of the fathers prioritize their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and neglect their ideal parent role on the home stage. And whether they perform two-sphere parenting or focus on their delinquent/criminal role performance, it is a temporary phenomenon and all drug dealing participants are eventually arrested and removed from *free society*. While drug dealing participants reinforce the boundaries between the street stage and the home stage, their limited resources (time and energy) threaten their ability to perform the ideal parent role.

“I Loved the *Fast Money!*”<sup>59</sup>

In the streets, with limited access to the low-wage labor market and an open door to the illicit drug labor market, participants are lured with *fast money* into drug dealing.<sup>60</sup> Similar to other samples in previous studies, 28 of the participating fathers transitioned from *street play* to drug dealing with promises of high commissions and promotions

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<sup>59</sup>Similar to other illicit drug markets (Maher 1997; Bourgois 2003; see Sommers and Baskin 1997 or Morgan and Joe 1996 for an exception), *Metro*'s illicit drug labor market is male dominated. Of the women in the facilities, only one woman was part of the illicit drug labor market's high ranks (a phenomena participants highlighted as unique). When invited to participate, she decided not to volunteer for the study. Seven of the 12 female participants played marginal roles in the illicit drug labor market, minor selling in attempts to support a substance/drug use habit or were convicted for illicit distribution in association with males. However, none of the female participants profited from the illicit drug labor market nor joined the high ranks.

<sup>60</sup>For participants, access to the conventional low wage labor market was initially limited due to their age (minors), low educational status, and delinquent/criminal records. However, all participants have been in and out of the conventional low-wage labor market throughout their lives.

(Jacobs 1999; Bourgois 2003). Although participants did not initially join the illicit drug labor market to provide for their children, they did use their illicit income to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role.<sup>61</sup> And when the children are part of their everyday life, (i) drug dealing fathers *peddle the streets fast* to supplement conventional resources. And passed everyday necessities, the drug dealing fathers in the sample begin (ii) to financially prepare for their children's inevitable transition into adulthood. Although the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role are generally in conflict, drug dealing fathers use their illicit income to temporarily fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role.

Once the children are part of participants' everyday lives, drug dealing fathers face their children's everyday necessities and the accumulating expenses. Similar to previous drug dealing studies (MacCoun and Reuter 1992) and their response during the pregnancy process, participants *peddle the streets faster* to fulfill the providing expectations of the ideal parent role and supplement conventional financial resources.<sup>62</sup>

Jason recalls his motivation to *hustle faster*—

I mean, your girl could go and get on what they call WIC<sup>63</sup> or what not, where the government gives them vouchers to go get bread, juices, cheeses, milk and all that. But where the clothes come from?! And if you wearing Jordan outfits, how are you gonna let your son wear some clothes that ain't got no name on it?! If everything in your closet got a name on 'em, don't you got a son? If a man has a son, he wants his son to be exactly like him. If he dressed out, he wants his son to be dressed out. It made you go get it, got to go get the money. How do I get the money? By any means necessary. Selling drugs was nothing. Everybody was selling drugs. I enjoyed my lifestyle. We never ate in. I can't even tell you right now the times that me and [my ex-girlfriend] actually sat in the house and ate real food, maybe cereal [both teen parents at the time]. She never cooked nothing on the fryer.

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<sup>61</sup> See chapter 4 for a full discussion on the providing task, low-wage and illicit labor in preparation for children's arrival during the pregnancy process. Also, a portion of participants (drug dealers and substance/drug users) used property crimes to fulfill their financial needs and partially provide. However, it was not as dominant as drug dealing.

<sup>62</sup> A similar process as when drug dealing fathers received the pregnancy announcement, accepted their *shocking bundles of joy*, and begin to financially prepare for their children's arrival (see chapter 4).

<sup>63</sup> WIC refers to a special supplemental food and nutrition program for Women, Infants and Children.



As a teenager on the street stage, the presence of a newborn in Jason's life meant using his for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to supplement other conventional resources. Just as the *shocking bundles of joy*, the newborns motivate drug dealing fathers to focus and fulfill the providing expectation. Purple, now a 29 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, *peddled the streets faster* while eagerly waiting for the birth of his son (chapter 4). However, he was incarcerated before his son was born and experienced the birth process on the correctional stage. Upon his release, seeing his son in *free society*, he felt the pressure to fulfill the providing expectation of his ideal parent role—

Man, I came out here [from prison] thinking that now that I got a child, I had to be focused and I get to selling that dope. When I got out in '06, that's when I was really focused, trying to do for my son, and that's what it was really all about, my son. Something changed in my mind and just peddling. I would sleep in the mornings, wake up in the afternoon, eat something, and run the streets to make as much money as I could, and the same thing the next day. It was not just about me no more. I just felt like I could be slicker than them [the police]. I didn't know nothing else. That's all I know. And the money was always good. And it got real good then. So, I think that's why I got comfortable with it.

*What kind of money are you talking about?*

It was, it was nice. I can't get into that,<sup>64</sup> but it wasn't no petty money though. But just knowing like I had my son, that's what usually really made me focus and go hard like I was doing. I was just doing. I was just so caught up into trying to make sure he was cool, clothes wise. It was just foolish. It was, it's embarrassing to talk about it. I don't even understand what made me think the way I was thinking, you know.

Purple *peddled faster* after the *shocking bundle of joy* announced his arrival. Upon his release and once his son was in his everyday life, he regained focus. And although looking back can be a shameful experience for Purple, fulfilling the providing expectation of the ideal parent role gave drug dealing fathers confidence and pride. Taylor, now a 25 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, recalls his confidence—

[My ex-girlfriend] wasn't working or none of that. You got to look at it, I was in the *lifestyle*. So, what's the point of working? I mean, she wanted to work. But I

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<sup>64</sup> To protect himself from the state attempts to remove his property, Purple chose not to share the specific amounts.

told her, “You don’t need to work. Look at this.” I’m throwing money at her. “Look, I got money.” But it really wasn’t nothing, but \$10,000 is something to us then. It’s a lot of money. And the baby is not hurting for nothing. The baby got food. I go to the store and spend almost \$150 on diapers, right then and there. And they be older women in there that look at me and be like, “Dang, you’re getting all this?” I be like, “I can’t let my baby run out.” They was like, “Man, I wish my baby-daddy was like that. He don’t come get mine until I got two left.” [My ex-girlfriend] was like, “Maybe he’s right. Maybe I don’t need to work.” And we staying in the projects. So, her rent is what, \$100 a month [living in public housing]. I’m giving her \$1,000 for the month, pay for like ten months. One time we went down there and we tried to give the lady like \$2,500. The lady was like, “Damn, where are you all getting?” So, we took the money and just gave her \$100 because we was like, “Damn!” Then her sister’s like, “Ya’ll can’t be doing that. They’re gonna raise the rent.” And we like, “So what! What are they gonna raise it?!” ‘Cause we got so much that it didn’t matter at that point in time.

Taylor felt pride to be perceived as a good father who can exceed his child’s everyday needs and successfully fulfill the providing expectation of his ideal parent role. Amongst all participants, the providing expectation is a salient expectation of their ideal parent role. And although the delinquent/criminal role and ideal parent role generally conflict, drug dealing fathers use their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to temporarily perform their ideal parent role. Drug dealing participants provide for children’s everyday necessities and soon become concern with the children’s transition into adulthood.

Throughout participants’ parent role trajectories, the expectations shift with children’s transition into different life course stages. In the case of the providing expectation, participants’ behaviors ranged from preparing the nest for the *shocking bundles of joy* to financing children’s transition into adulthood. As previously established, parents’ socio-economic status influence their involvement in their children’s transition into adulthood (Lareau and Cox 2011). In and out of children’s lives, drug dealing fathers in this sample take pride in their ability to teach children (guide) how to approach money and save for their children’s transition into adulthood. In spite of his current correctional and addict condition, TR, now a 38 year old African American

father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, takes pride in his past ability to save for his children's transition into adulthood—

All of my kids are well taken care of by me. They all got money coming to 'em when they hit 18. That was one thing I did do, even though I was in that little fog haze [fell from drug dealing to substance/drug use]. I set 'em all up with trust funds. I started doing that with my first son, put all my money in the bank for him. And then when his sisters came, I took money out of his and made theirs. When they turn 18, they'll get like a check for \$50,000. But like my daughter was always telling me, "I can do without the money. I just wanted my dad." And it just hurts me so bad when she told me, that I didn't know what to say!

Although TR has had a difficult time with being present and involved in his children's lives, he prioritized the providing expectation during his drug dealing years. Although not able to provide, he proudly recalls his financial contribution to the children's prospective transition into adulthood. Drug dealing fathers save for their children's future and guide children on how to approach money. Rick, now a 31 year old African

American father and ex-drug dealer, indirectly teaches his son to manage money—

When my son turns 18, he'll have a nice little bit of money though. Because see from what [my associate] taught me, when he was born, I put \$1,000 in the bank, every birthday he had I put \$300 in there, \$200. If you ain't even got that, just put \$100 in there. So, since he was born I been putting money. With time, it builds up. And then ain't no telling what her mom been putting in there, my grandmother, his other side of the family, my side of the family. He'll be okay and he says that's what I taught him, to save money. He like always saves money.

Rick proudly shares his ability to provide for his son's prospective transition into adulthood and to guide him towards a conservative approach to money. Drug dealing fathers invest in their children's future transition into adulthood and try to teach them how to handle money. Red is the father of three teen children and continuously advises them about the money they will receive on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday—

So, I started when [my second daughter] was born, putting money up for my kids. "I'm a put this over here. I'm put this right here. And I'm a do this right here." So I know that they won't be without. It's a hard lesson that I had to learn that giving money to somebody that don't have no kind of understanding, it's nothing. They gonna throw that money away immediately. Like, I read in the book, "A fool and its money shall soon part." I want to give them more than just giving 'em a little bit of money. I want to give them an idea, give them some type of smarts. "What you wanna do? Make your mind of what you wanna do and take

that little bit of money and plant that money into what you wanna do and go after that. Don't just go out here and put the 24s on a car, 'cause the hour after you put the 24s on the car, it's gonna depreciate in value." That's the hard lesson I had to learn. 'Cause I went out and bought the little diamonds, the gold, and the whatever's I wanted. And now, I wish I had all that money that I just threw in the air. I wish I had put it down and bought some CDs, invested it and all that.

In addition to his saving for children's transition into adulthood, Red has focused on teaching his children how to make use of money. Drug dealing fathers feel pride in their ability to fulfill their providing expectation, meeting their children's financial everyday needs and beginning to prepare for their children's eminent transition into adulthood.

Drug dealing fathers *peddle the streets faster* to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. When the children become part of their everyday life, they *peddle the streets faster* to supplement conventional resources. And, past everyday necessities, participants begin to financially prepare for their children's transition into adulthood. In doing so, they have saved funds and have begun to guide children on how to approach money. With limited access to the low-wage labor market and an open door to the illicit drug labor market, drug dealing fathers temporarily used their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to perform the providing expectations of their ideal parent role.

#### “You Can't Trust Nobody!”

Although the illicit drug labor market facilitates drug dealing fathers' ability to temporarily fulfill the providing expectation, it simultaneously threatens their ability to fulfill the protecting expectation of their ideal parent role. Employment in the illicit drug labor market is a dangerous endeavor as drug dealers face competitors, consumers, and the have-nots on the street stage.<sup>65</sup> To protect themselves and their children from victimization, drug dealing fathers *front* a tough image on the street stage, suffer through the loneliness of a fictitious self presentation, (i) practice two-sphere parenthood, and (ii)

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<sup>65</sup> See Jacobs 1998 regarding drug dealing and negative reciprocity.

adjust their delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage to perform their ideal parent role on the home stage. Role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the ideal parent role (danger versus protection) threatens drug dealing father's ability to perform their ideal parent role.

Invested in their delinquent/criminal role performance, constantly cautious of the ever present danger and *fronting* every second on the street stage, participants adapt to a two-sphere approach to "doing" parenthood. Enos (2001) found that substance/drug using mothers initially maintained their parenting separate from their substance/drug use. In a similar manner, contextualized in the dangers of the illicit drug labor market, drug dealing fathers in this study attempt to maintain two separate worlds. To avoid role conflict and protect the children, drug dealing fathers in the sample reinforce the boundaries between their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and their ideal parent role on the home stage. To do so, they add social and geographical distance between the two conflicting roles. Unlike other professions, the separation is a matter of life and death for the parent and the child. Red took daily caution to ensure this separation—

*How did you manage to keep your children safe and [drug deal]?*

The two never meet. The two never meet.

*Can you really keep 'em separate?*

Yeah. The only way you could really keep 'em separate is to not let nobody know that you really got 'em [children]. You know what I mean. Like, remember, I lived in [State B] and I worked in [both in *Midwest State*]. I've never done anything outside of [*Midwest State* side]. I never sold any dope outside of [the *Midwest State* side]. At all. Nowhere. It's the distance. 'Cause you drive for about a good 15 to 20 minutes to get to [the *State B* side]. And there's so many ways to get to [the *State B* side], you know what I mean. If you following me to where I'm living, I'm uh see you. Yes. Unless they smarter than me, unless they got four, five cars following me, yeah. I'm definitely gonna see ya.

To simultaneously perform two conflicting roles, drug dealing on the street stage and protecting children on the home stage, Red placed social and geographical distance between the two. The social and geographical distance allows drug dealing fathers to perform their delinquent/criminal role. Eric, now a 32 year old African American father,

ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, enjoyed the time with his son when the child was out of state—

I used to see my son, but they ended moving back to [outside the *Metro Area*]. I used to go up there. I would see him two or three times a week. I used to go out there a lot. I liked to take him clothes, shoes, helped her with her bills and stuff. You know, I always stayed in touch [from the *Metro Area*]. But I was kind of glad she was [out of the *Metro Area*] due to what I was doing down here. So that worked out okay. But sometimes, it used to make me mad too, 'cause I used to want my son to get to know my family.

*Is it dangerous for a father to have his kids where he's working?*

Oh yeah, oh yeah, it's real dangerous. It's real dangerous, because you never know who you might be dealing with out in the streets. You know, you never want to bring that to your home. That's why I was glad they were [outside the *Metro Area*].

Whether be across the state border or out of the *Metro Area*, the social and geographical distance between their delinquent/criminal role and ideal parent role allow drug dealing fathers to avoid role conflict. LA, now a 46 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, identifies the separation necessary for everyone's safety—

I'm on the streets. I know my son is with his mom and is safe. He's in a clean and free environment. You know. She's working and I'm giving her lots of money. And maybe I shouldn't say this, but in our family, we focus on what we have to do. We can't let stuff get in the way. You know, if I'm worried too much about my son, then I'm getting distracted over here, doing things that I shouldn't be doing. You know. If I'm taking care of me, then my son is gonna be taken care of. But if I'm worried too much about my son and I'm distracted over here, you know, too dangerous.

*So you have to be focused in the streets?*

I have to be focused. My mind has to be there. My mind can't be wondering, you know, I can't be all on missing my son. I can't be like that. You gotta be hard. I'm seeing him a lot. I'm seeing my son and his mom a lot. You know. When I'm with them, my mind is there. When I'm not with them, my mind is not there.

The social distance, leaving family life on the home stage to focus on the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, protects the participant and the child. To protect the family, whether directly or indirectly, fathers employed in the illicit drug labor market reinforce the boundaries between the home stage and the street stage. The social and geographical distance allows participants to avoid role conflict and protect their children on the home stage while facing danger on the street stage. The two-sphere

approach to “doing” parenthood in the *fast life* is temporarily successful when the parent is able to manage conflicting role expectation.

The drug dealing fathers who manage the two-sphere parenthood approach perform their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and their ideal parent role on the home stage. In doing so, drug dealing fathers temporarily manage the protecting, being present, and being involved expectations of their ideal parent role. Parents shift their daily schedule to meet the demands of parenting and drug dealing, pause one to engage in the other, and with enough rank manage to prioritize their ideal parent role. Joseph, now a 28 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, became a father to three daughters only a few weeks apart (two women, three daughters). Embedded in illicit drug labor market and satisfied with the market’s financial rewards, he was unable to leave it upon the birth of his daughters. Instead, he adjusted his delinquent/criminal role performance to accommodate his ideal parent role performance, *hustling* at night and caring for his children during conventional working hours—

I was doing day care during the day and selling at night. I was seeing them every day. I like, when [the moms] go to work, I have ‘em drop ‘em off to me. And I keep ‘em with me. Let ‘em stay the night a couple of days. And until I get tired of changing pampers and shit like that, “Oh, nuh [no]! I need a break now, you know!” I got ‘em every day, all day, yeah.

*So, how was it?*

[Whistle], very intense. One get to crying, and they be crying. And I’m like, “Damn! Okay I gotta change this pamper. And now I gotta go change this pamper. And I gotta make you a bottle. And I gotta make you a bottle. And, I’m sitting, all my hands all full like this [with three babies in his arms].” Then they don’t want me to put ‘em down. They don’t like the car seat. They don’t like none of that. They want to be held, and they was just spoiled. That shit was driving me nuts [as he smiles].

*I can’t imagine you with three.*

And I’m a guy. I’m having three of ‘em. I don’t know what made me do this. But I went and set up my little video camera. I just set it up and had it sitting up on the TV or whatever, so it’s like recording me with them. I’m running around like a chicken with my head cut off man. Man!

*So, when would you work [illicit drug labor market]?*

When the moms came from work. Once my girls were with their moms, I left. I mean, for a while I was working [low wage conventional employment] and selling there. But I got fired, so I started back on the streets. When they picked

them up, I was out the door. It was fine. My kids and my business, separate. And it was fine for a long time.

Taking the two-sphere approach, Joseph temporarily performed his ideal parent role while the mothers were at their low-wage conventional employment and on the delinquent/criminal role every night. In opposite schedules, he was able to temporarily avoid role conflict and perform both roles. When clear about the value of “doing” parenthood in the *fast life*, parents set the boundaries. Mason, now a 41 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, was clear about his goals and made it clear to his associates—

Even though I was out there selling drugs, and doing what I was doing, I always had a day where everything stopped. My phone was cut off. Everything was pause, just for my kids. You know what I’m saying. “On that day, don’t, if you see me in the street, keep it moving. I don’t know you, no, keep it moving. That day is that day. All business is paused. Everything is cut off. My phone, cut off. On that specific day, everything stops. Everything stops. Do you see me in the street; I’m not going around the house, alright. I already told you two weeks ago, I got somebody else. You really go even when I’m in the street, you rarely gonna deal with me anyway. You gonna deal with my man that’s with me.” You know what I mean. And it’s just me and them [children]. We do what we do. That’s how I, that’s how I always done it once a week.

Mason, with enough rank, reinforced the social distance to keep his children safe while out in the town. When in higher ranks, the social distance is enough to keep the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role from clashing. Red, now a 38 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, had enough power on the street stage to prioritize his ideal parent role even when performing his delinquent/criminal role—

When they went to school, I’m gone. And when I come in at night, they asleep, they out of it. They don’t see me ‘til the morning. That’s it.

*So you were still together [with the mother].*

Na-ah [No], it was like all centered around [my children].

*How do you manage incoming calls from your kids when you’re working?*

If they calling me from the house phone, it’s a certain ring on the phone. If they calling me from any other phone, then I’m a miss that call. But if my daughter call me from my house, it would be like b-ring—b-ring—b-ring—b-ring.

*And you would take it? Even though you were working?*

I could be right in the middle of a deal, it got hold up. Step out the car. “What’s up [my daughter]?” Immediately.

*So, in that sense, you were putting parenting first?*



That's my baby. I got to have it. I don't know what's going on. Anything could be happening with her right now. She could be going through hell. Somebody could be trying to hurt her or something. If I miss that call, and she's screaming on my answering machine, and I get the answering machine ten minutes later, and I'm hearing her screaming on the answering machine, but then I get there, and she laid out on the ground, I'm uh kill everything in that room. Because I'm be mad at me, 'cause I missed it. That' why as soon as I get the phone, I be like, "Hey?" I love 'em. You know what I mean. And it's just it.

Although Red has been able to keep the two spheres separate, and with high rank has been able to prioritize his ideal parent role while performing his delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, the fear of the two conflicting roles clashing is haunting. To avoid role conflict, drug dealing participants reinforce the boundaries between the street stage and the home stage. When properly balanced, participants are able to temporarily practice the ideal parent role on the home stage and the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage without neglecting one over the other.

Overall, employment in the illicit drug labor market is a dangerous role performance. The delinquent/criminal role performance attracts danger, making the protecting expectation of their ideal parent role a challenge for drug dealing fathers. In performing their delinquent/criminal role and in attempts to fulfill the protecting expectation of the ideal parent role, drug dealing fathers *front* on the street stage, suffer through the loneliness of fronting, practice two-sphere parenthood, and adjust their delinquent/criminal role performance to "do" parenthood in the *fast life*. However, this balance is short lived. Just as drug dealing fathers begin to control danger, their delinquent/criminal role performance challenges drug dealing father's ability to fulfill the presence and involvement expectations of their ideal parent role.

#### "It's a Big Fantasy!"

According to Edin, Nelson, and Paranal (2004), as individuals get older, they realize their profits fluctuate widely, that their business constantly exposes them to long hours outdoors, and that drug dealing carries with it a substantial risk of death, addiction

or imprisonment (also see Adler 1992). Although drug dealing facilitates participants' ability to provide for their children, the role conflict between the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role threatens their ability to protect their children. Furthermore, with limited resources (time and energy), drug dealing fathers experience difficulties in fulfilling the presence and involvement expectations of both roles, and neglect the ideal parent role. Drug dealing is a time consuming business on the street stage that (i) threatens participants' ability to be present on the home stage. In addition to being time consuming, (ii) the inevitable arrest also makes being present on the home stage a temporary phenomenon. Thus, (iii) *fast money* is unreliable and temporary, threatening participants' ability to continuously provide. The delinquent/criminal role and ideal parent role both demand the use of limited resources (time and energy), making role conflict inevitable. With only 24 hours in a day and limited energy, participants are forced to choose between their ideal parent role and their delinquent/criminal role, and a significant portion of participants place their delinquent/criminal role over their ideal parent role.

With *fast money* luring participants onto the street stage, participants neglect their ideal parent role and prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage. Focused on their delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage, drug dealing participants at some point neglect to perform the being present and involved ideal parent role expectations on the home stage and family members feel the everyday consequences. Mason fell to the lures of the *fast life* and invested all his wake hours on his delinquent/criminal role, and his family responds—

The problem was the time I was spending away from home and the selling of drugs. Yeah, 'cause, when you selling drugs, you constantly either gone from home, you home and then you gotta go, you know. But mostly I would spend time down the streets and would not go home. I'm from [a major urban city], and I'm used to the just running and hustling. When it gets dark, I'm back up, and when the morning came I go home a king. And that's what I did. After my daughter was born, [my daughter's mother] wasn't working no more. She would tell me, "You don't think you're doing wrong, but get a job. We need you here

with us. I need you here. I need help, you know.” She’s always telling me. She needed help with stuff, but I kept on hustling.

*You liked the life—*

I missed that life and I was making the money, and these people thought I was the man. I was like a celebrity. You know, and that was just hard to give it up. That life! But I mean, I took care of my family.

Although parents initially aim at balancing their limited time and energy between the two roles, once the drug dealing participants choose the delinquent/criminal role over their ideal parent role, family members begin to notice their neglect to perform their ideal parent role. From a wife’s perspective, Susie, now a 33 years old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, recalls her husband’s eventual disappearance into the *fast life*—

He wouldn’t bring it home [distribution of illicit substances/drugs]. He wouldn’t do it at home. He would go, ‘cause we was staying on like the west side of [a neighboring major urban city in *State B*] and he was staying in the suburbs. So, he would go to the suburbs and do what he did. But he would never bring it home, so I wouldn’t have to see anyone be around my kids. But then it started getting to the point where he didn’t want to come home, you know. Me and the kids would be on the bus for two-three hours, trying to go see him, you know. And I’m like, “I’m not gonna strain myself trying to carry four kids on the bus, for three-four hours to come and see you, and then you wanna split up, sit with us for like an hour, and then you’re ready to run the streets.” I was like, “I gotta step up, be a mom and take care of my kids.”

Although the two-sphere approach appears ideal and a portion of participants successfully manage it for a period of time while in *free society*, the delinquent/criminal role performance can take the parent away from the home stage. In the process, participants neglect to perform their ideal parent role and other family members begin to invest more resources on raising children and children begin to feel the neglect. Charlie, now a 43 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, became an absent father during his drug dealing years—

I knew my daughter had cheerleading competitions—, you know what I’m saying. I knew my son was doing good in school. I just, I was too busy running the streets. And they felt it. I felt it when I came home. But I didn’t stop.

With a constant demand for the illicit product and the possibility of collecting higher profit, parents slowly neglect the ideal parent role on the home stage and eventually

abandon it. In the process, family members feel the consequences and children are neglected. In addition to the dangers and time demands, employment in the illicit drug market treatments parents' freedom, completely eliminating their ability to perform their ideal parent role in *free society*.

Participants in this sample invest in knowing the law, reading the newspaper every day, never admitting to illicit drug possession until certain the individual is not a police officer, only talking about superficial topics with associates, limiting substance/drug use, using the right to remain silent, and never storing product at home (see Jacobs 1999 for full discussion of police avoidance and Jacobs and Miller 1998 for gendered avoidance techniques). Most importantly, whether practicing two-sphere parenthood or focusing on their delinquent/criminal role performance, all drug dealing fathers in the sample at some point experienced arrest and became physically absent fathers. And just as presence and involvement, providing is a temporary phenomenon.

Employment in the illicit drug labor market is luring, with promises of *fast money* and temporarily facilitating drug dealing fathers' ability to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. Using a sample of 186 drug dealers on probation, MacCoun and Reuter (1992) documented median net earnings of \$721 per month and \$2,000 per month for 37% of the sample who sold drugs on a daily basis. According to Levitt and Venkatesh (2000), a more recent analysis of the financial activities of a drug-selling street gang, illicit drug dealing earnings are somewhat above the legitimate labor market alternative. But the enormous risks of drug selling offset this small wage premium and their profits fluctuated widely (Levitt and Venkatesh 2000; Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004).

But regardless of the arrest avoidance practices, the ability to provide *fast money* is temporary and threatens drug dealing fathers' ability to fulfill the providing task. Mason is very aware of the end—

I've thrown all that money away. Them people [FBI] came and was like, "We're gonna put you in prison. And by the way, we want this, this, and that."<sup>66</sup> So, when they took this, this, and that, I'm like, "That was a waste of my time." You know what I mean. I did all that hustling, all of that dope selling, to buy this, this, and that, and they just came in and, you know. They took a house, they took a lot 'cause I couldn't prove that I bought it with legal money. So, it's kind of a fake fantasy in a sense. It's a dream that you [begins to laugh], that somebody throw cold water at you and wake you up out of it. You don't live. There is no happy ending in that kind of dream. Know I've never met anybody that's able to say there's a happily ever after. Nobody. And I know a lot of people that either used to sell dope or do sell dope. And there is no happily ever after, 'cause everybody trying to get you. Can't pride for a family like that, you know what I'm saying.

The time spent away from the home stage and the invested energy *hustling* on the street stage can disappear in a second. Most importantly, drug dealing fathers' ability to fulfill the providing expectation using their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance is threatened. *Fast money* is temporary and continuously unreliable. Susie had three children with her drug dealing husband and describes the instability of *fast money*—

Fast money comes quick and goes quick. But a lot of people don't look at it that way. To me, when you get money like that, you spend it quicker 'cause you feel like, "Well, all I gotta do is sell this and I'll get it right back." And I told [my husband], "I'm not gonna deal with that." You know. "I'm trying to get my kids back [currently under the care of a conventional family members]. If this was what you wanna do, then you do that. I'm out."

When money is perceived to be effortlessly accessible, excessive consumption can threaten parents' ability to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. Jake recalls his consumption habits and his inability to protect his financial investments—

The money was good, but everything is gone, everything [property seized]. It's a big ol' fuckin' dream. I think about it sometimes too. The second time I thought, "So, I got caught, but this time I'll be able to do something different. I won't get caught this time." And that's what I did. Obviously I got caught. So, now I can't think this way no more. 'Cause this is not how it works. Eventually everybody gets caught, you know. They [police] watch you. They watch what you do. You know. And, they know what you're doing. That's how people get caught. 'Cause you're being watched, you know. They know what you're buying. How you're buying it.<sup>67</sup> You thinking you building something, for you, for your kids, but it disappeared like that [snaps fingers].

<sup>66</sup> Twelve participants received a seized property order in *Midwest State*; federal and other state's orders were not accessible for analysis.

<sup>67</sup> According to Guerra (1996), "when a non-owner uses another's property as the site for a drug offense, the owners must, to prevent forfeiture of the property, prove to a federal court either that they had no

Property seize orders and excessive consumption threatens participants' illicit profit and their ability to fulfill the providing expectation. Thus, a few parents limited their ambition and simply enjoyed life with family during their time in *free society*. Jason was a teen parent and avoided wealth accumulation dreams. Instead, he enjoyed his profits with the family—

They was older [associates]. So they was more smarter than me. They was spending their money on things that's worth it—houses, cars, things. Me, I'm spending, me and my girl, we buying junk. You go in our house, looking for food, you see all of this [he picks up sodas and chips interviewer had brought for participants], stuff like this. We got junk! And we ain't got no steaks, potatoes. We going out to eat. We ate at Applebee's or the Red Lobster. We eat out more than we eat in. She wasn't never, she didn't know how to cook. If we in, "What kind of pizza do you want or—?" You know what I'm saying. Money was flying. That's why my daughter now is been to a lot of restaurants. She cain't never say that at her age she didn't go to restaurants. 'Cause that's all we did. You know, people keep talking about all the money they got on the streets. I talk about all the money I got on the streets. But it's just a fantasy. It all "puff," disappears in seconds.

Participants focused on their delinquent/criminal role performance use the illicit drug labor market to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. With high hopes, participants face the danger and the demanding hours. However, parents soon realize the street only offers false promises. *Fast money* passes hands quickly, from consumer to drug dealer and from drug dealer to the free economy or to the criminal justice system. Thus, the drug dealing fathers' ability to fulfill the providing expectations, using their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance, is only temporary.

Overall, just like economic success, "doing" parenthood while drug dealing in the *fast life* is a fantasy. Drug dealing is a time consuming business, in which profits depend on the time and energy invested in the delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage, challenging drug dealing fathers' ability to continuously fulfill the being present

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knowledge of any wrongdoing or that they did all they reasonably could have done to prevent the illegal conduct."

and being involved expectations of their ideal parent role. In a similar fashion, arrests are an inevitable obstacle to drug dealing fathers' ability to fulfill the being present expectation. Lastly, *fast money* comes with strings attached and is unreliable, making participants' ability to provide only temporary. The for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance makes being present, being involved, and providing difficult expectations to accomplish. "Doing" parenthood in the *fast life* is a temporary endeavor for participating drug dealing fathers.

In conclusion, drug dealing fathers attempt to "do" parenthood in the *fast life*—providing, protecting, being present, and being involved. However, the role conflict between the ideal parent role and delinquent/criminal role challenges participants' ability to "do" parenthood. First, participants use their illicit income to fulfill the providing expectation, from buying diapers to raising funds for children's imminent transition into adulthood. Second, employment in the illicit drug labor market is a dangerous endeavor and drug dealing fathers *front* a tough and violent image on the street stage, suffer through the loneliness of a fictitious self presentation, practice two-sphere parenthood, and adjust their illicit employment to "do" parenthood in the *fast life*. Third, although drug dealing fathers appear to manage the providing, protecting, being present, and being involved expectations, it is a temporary phenomenon. Drug dealing is a time consuming business and arrests are inevitable, challenging fathers' ability to be present and involved. Moreover, *fast money* is unreliable, making it difficult for fathers to continuously fulfill the providing expectation. Although participants attempt to reinforce the boundaries between the conflicting roles, their limited resources to perform both roles lead to the collapse of both stages and parents are removed from children's lives.

### Substance/Drug Use and “Doing” Parenthood<sup>68</sup>

Another important population living the *fast life* is the consumers in the illicit drug market. And the drug dealers in the sample are very aware of their customers’ demographics. While drug dealing, Jason knew his customers were also mothers and fathers—

I would really like to apologize to the mothers and fathers who were getting high off of the narcotics that I was selling. When I was selling drugs, I was doing things that dudes ask me, “Why a smoker never told on you?” I was nice. On Sundays I didn’t sell. If you came to our projects, you couldn’t buy no dope on Sunday. Mothers’ Day, I gave out free dope. Fathers’ Day, I gave out free dope. I wasn’t greedy in the game. I mean, if a lady came to me and was trying to sell a play station, I asked, “How much you want for it?” And I knew it’s Christmas, and this probably was their son’s or daughter’s, you know what I’m saying.

Just as drug dealers, substance/drug using participants are parents. Participants’ criminal records in *Midwest State* include 473 alcohol/drug consumption related charges.<sup>69</sup>

Although distribution of illicit activities is at times disguised as consumption, 12 mothers and 28 fathers (N=40) in the sample self-identified as consumers in the illicit drug market (29 consumers and 11 employees who became consumers). As previously established in the literature, recovery is a difficult process and the addicted suffer through multiple recovery attempts (Vigilant 2008). Trapped in a recovery-relapse cycle, substance/drug using participants practice partial parenthood. They (i) push themselves towards recovery in attempts to practice a different parenthood than their parents’ parenting. Upon their return, participants (ii) temporarily perform their ideal parent role. However, (iii) participants are enticed back into their delinquent/criminal role and begin to practice

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<sup>68</sup> It is important to remember that the majority of substance/drug using participants in this sample has been struggling with addiction since early in the life course (a very disadvantaged substance/drug using subsample).

<sup>69</sup> According to *Midwest State* Online Courts Data as of August 29, 2011, participants in the sample were charged with 473 substance/drug related charges (24.16% of the 1,957 criminal charges), including 29 delinquency charges (alcohol, tobacco, and drugs), 148 possession charges, 36 drug paraphernalia charges, and 260 alcohol related charges (operating while intoxicated, open container while driving, public intoxication, and driving with a barred license).



partial parenthood. But (iv) partial parenting is only temporary. Substance/drug using participants practice parenthood in sync with the recovery-relapse cycle.

Although wanting to “do” a different parenthood than their parents (see chapter 4 and 5), substance/drug using participants practice their ideal parent role within a recovery-relapse cycle.<sup>70</sup> And when deep in relapse, the want to be different than their parents pulls them towards recovery.<sup>71</sup> Star, now a 27 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, has a family history of alcoholism, is aware of what it means to live childhood in an alcoholic environment, and reminds himself of his ideal parent role to step away from the street stage—

When I got out [after a 2.5 year state prison sentence], I was ripping, running in the streets. I didn't wanna work. I thought everyday was a party, got to drinking, a lot. It was to the point where me and my three friends, we'd get like a big bottle of liquor every single night, every night for a year. My dad is an alcoholic, you know, a big time drinker. I knew that I was drinking so much that I had to stop. 'Cause all my childhood, I always thought I was gonna grow up not to be like him. “I ain't gonna let no liquor control me.” But here I was, an alcoholic trying to be a parent. Stupid, right? So, I tried to recover to be there for my kid.

In attempts to avoid repeating his father's parenting and wanting to be part of his son's life, Star has attempted to regain his ability to perform his ideal parent role through recovery numerous times. Substance/drug using participants experience a desire to achieve their ideal parent role and used it to move towards recovery. Miguel, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, is the son of a substance/drug using mother and has been using since 9 years of age. In his desire to be different, he has pushed himself towards recovery numerous times—

It's crazy, but alcoholism turns people's lives upside down. You know, some people could live with it. Some people can't live without it. Alcohol consumes the person. I never thought that alcohol would lead me the road that it has, never thought that I would have such serious problem. I always thought that I was okay, because I was functioning. I could still go to work, sometimes, until I

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<sup>70</sup> Before becoming parents, 41 participants experienced parental substance/drug use during their childhood and adolescence. See chapter 3 for a full discussion on participants' experience with substance/drug use in their family of orientation during their childhood and adolescence.

<sup>71</sup> Because substance/drug using participants practice parenthood in sync with their recovery-relapse cycle, this section will briefly discuss recovery. But please keep in mind that chapter 10 will fully discuss reintegration and parenting.

started getting drunk. I focused. All my attention was on drugs. I totally forgot about life. I put everything aside, my family, my daughter, everything. I mean, everything! I totally gave it away to do drugs. I didn't want to believe that at the time. I let drugs control my every move, just like my mom did, you know. I couldn't do that anymore. I had to stay clean. If I didn't I'd lose my daughter forever. And I keep falling, but it's a long road to get clean.

Since the birth of his daughter, Miguel has been in the recovery-relapse cycle. Although he wants to be a different parent than his substance/drug using mother, his delinquent/criminal role has taken over numerous, threatening his ability to perform his ideal parent role. Currently, he is in his latest attempt to recover. In the middle of the recovery-relapse cycle, participants push themselves to recover and regain the ability to perform their ideal parent role. Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, is the daughter of an alcoholic mother who abandoned her as a child, the daughter of a recovering alcoholic father who raised her in a conventional lifestyle, the wife of a currently addicted husband, and a recovering substance/drug using mother to a two-year-old daughter. Currently in her first recovery attempt, Ruth aims at not repeating her mother's parenting—

[My husband's] family, they get high all the time, you know. When I'm with him, if it's there, I use it. But since I got pregnant, not anymore. That's all he thinks about. He's either high or trying to figure out how to get high the next time. I'm not like that anymore, you know. It wasn't like I'm a go on a binge days or weeks at a time. Before I had my daughter I would stay all night. But that changed when she was born. I quit after I had her. My mom, she still on drugs, I think. I will not be like her. I refuse. Now, it's all about my daughter. I want to be like my dad. He took care of us. He loves us. My daughter only has me. I have to think of her first.

Ruth and her husband, both from families with long histories of substance/drug use, struggle to raise their daughter in a clean environment. Although not with her daughter during the interview, Ruth engages in her first recovery attempt. The desire to avoid repeating their parents' parenting pulls participants out of relapse and onto recovery. Once on recovery, participants attempt to perform their ideal parent role.

Once granted access to children during the recovery process, a portion of participants become involved in their children's everyday life.<sup>72</sup> In doing so, participants perform their ideal parent role on the home stage. 'Till June, now a 45 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, became present and involved in her son's life during various past recovery attempts—

He's always been very smart. I mean, when he was young, me and my mom, we would sit down with him, and teach him how to read, color, his numbers and ABCs. We bought him all kinds of electronic books that have this little reading pen. The barcode, you take it across and it will read it for you. He did very well in school. He's a smart boy. I always made sure he was doing everything he needed to for his age. I was not perfect, but was a good mother. He says I was a good mother.

During past recovery periods, 'Till June has been an involved and present parent throughout her son's life course. In addition to being present and involved, participants used their recovery periods to guide the children through life. During his last recovery attempt, Scott, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, ensures his son is properly socialized into norm-centered society—

At my son's school, they have a coloring star program. Purple star means you had a great day. Green star means you got into a little trouble. Yellow star means you got in a lot of trouble. So, I told [my son] before I took him to school, "Well, let's get a purple star today." He gets out from school and he says, "I got a purple star. So, we're gonna play some Mario brothers' today!" And I said, "So, if I go ask your teachers, she's gonna tell me you got a purple star?" He said, "No. I got a green star." I said, "Okay [son], you're being dishonest with me. So, now we're not gonna play videogames." He said, "No, I just forgot." And so, I had to think about it for a while and so I said, "So [son], did you forget or were you afraid that you were gonna be in trouble if you come with a green star?" He said, "Well, I was afraid I was gonna get in trouble for getting a green star and not a purple star." And I told him, "Well, since you were just honest with me, just now, we're gonna play the game for a little bit." I want him to be honest, no secrets.

In his ideal parent role performance during recovery episodes, Scott guided his son through the moral mechanism of society. With access during past recoveries, participants participate in every aspect of their children's lives. After the birth of her daughter, Rosie,

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<sup>72</sup> During recovery attempts, participants go through an intensive reintegration process to access children (see chapter 10 on reintegration into "doing" parenthood).

now a 29 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, went on recovery and became invested on her ideal parent role performance. In doing so, she became involved in more than her daughter's family life—

When she was in kindergarten, I was the room mom. I went in and volunteered every week and worked with the kids during lunch time. I loved it. I got her into soccer and t-ball [voice with excitement and pride]. And she was so happy. We were not just like mom and daughter, we were like friends. We would drive down the road, listen to the radio and sing.

Performing the ideal parent role is an ongoing process and participants become involved in children's everyday in sync with the recovery-relapse process. Pushing for parental involvement, parents with access have developed routines with their children that guarantee parent-child interaction and the development of a parent-child relationship.

Dee, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, recovered after the birth of her first child was born. While on recovery, she had two more children and invested her time and energy on performing her ideal parent role—

Being with my kids was very good. We always had something to do. I virtually had a playground in my car. We would picnic out a lot on the beach, I mean, on the lake, and went to all the museums. I mean, to the point that it was getting old. You know what I mean [both laugh]. We would go to the museum this weekend, and next weekend we would go to the zoo. And next weekend we go to the aquarium. And on Saturday we go to eat at the park, and I get a chance to do my indian dance. And we go to the other park, where they had the rides and I could read. We always did something.

Attempting to perform their ideal parent role, participants become present and involved in their children's lives during recovery periods. In this process, they begin to build the desired child-parent relationship and attempt to maintain it. TR, now a 38 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, engaged in his first recovery attempt after the birth of his first son. During a past recovery period, he attempted to perform their ideal parent role—

Oh, it was great. He started walking at nine months, and I took him everywhere. We went everywhere together. He is like my little sack of potatoes. That's what I used to call him, my little sack of potatoes because he was so big, you know. And he's bowlegged, and so every time he tried to walk he would trip over his feet. It was hilarious. So, I would have to carry him a lot, but he was so big, heavy. So, I would throw him over my shoulder like a sack of potatoes. And I bounced when I

walk. So when I walked, he was just laughing all the way down the block. We used to have so much fun.

Parental presence and involvement creates the environment to build a parent-child relationship. During recovery, participants attempt to perform their ideal parent role, being present, being involved, guiding, providing and building a parent-child relationship. However, recovery is a difficult process and participants are continuously tempted to perform their delinquent/criminal role and role conflict returns.

On recovery, participants struggle with the continuous temptation to perform their delinquent/criminal role while attempting to perform their ideal parent role.<sup>73</sup> Once the delinquent/criminal role captures their attention, participants divide their limited resources (time, energy, and money) between the delinquent/criminal role and their ideal parent role. Doing so, participants partially perform their ideal parent role and their delinquent/criminal role. Ray, now a 38 year old Mexican American father and recovering substance/drug user, was part of his three children's lives. However, the delinquent/criminal role enticed his back to the street stage and he began to partially perform the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role—

There were times when I'd go out on binges. I would leave for the weekend. You know. I wasn't helping 'em with their homework and I missed out on stuff. I was pretty good about all their sporting events, 'cause like me, they were real athletic. Like my son, who is a soccer and football player, I made sure I was there. And my wife was a big supporter on their education part. As far as their studies, I wasn't there as much as I should of. But me being drunk all the time was affecting my children because, at that time I was going out on binges. Like I'd stay out on weekends. I'd leave Friday and wouldn't come back until Sunday night. Then I would have to work on Monday, you know. And I was unfaithful. I was going out with other women. I mean, they never knew about it. I'm sure my wife had some sort of idea. I wouldn't mess with anybody there in [town]. I was always coming up to [the *Metro Area*], you know. When I went back, I didn't talk to anyone, straight to my room, took a shower, and went to bed. I didn't want to look them in the eyes. And by Monday, everything was back to normal. And the next weekend, same thing all over again.

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<sup>73</sup> The literature has documented substance/drug using mothers separating their substance/drug use and parenting, but being ineffective in the long term (Enos 2001).

Unable to prioritize his ideal parent role, Ray divided his limited time and energy between his parent role and delinquent/criminal role. In a similar manner, Tommy's, now a 54 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, past attempts to recover slowly transitioned back to the street stage—

After I got my children back [from my sister], I was fine for a few years. I had a girlfriend. It was alright 'til I started getting high again. I was home, but you know, getting high here and there. But after a while, it got out of control, which is why I called [the mother of my children]. [She] was in a much better place at this time [not getting high]. I said, "Look. I think you need to take the kids." And she said, "Why?" I said, "Well, I'm getting out of control."

*When they left, what happened?*

I was still seeing them. I was giving their mom money. I was still getting them on weekends.

Although Tommy's past recoveries have involved years of performing his ideal parent role, the delinquent/criminal role have always enticed him back onto the street stage.

While the children were living with their mother, he partially performed his ideal parent role, providing and seeing them during the weekends. Unable to prioritize the parent role, participants divided their limited resources and partially performed both roles.

Javier, now a 51 year old white/Irish father and recovering substance/drug user, practiced partial parenthood—

I was two different parents. I was a very good dad when I wasn't getting high, but I got high a lot. When they were with me, 'cause their mom was getting high and just needed to be away, it wasn't like I just had them for visitation. It's like you're dad all the time with 'em. I don't just take 'em and go buy, "Let's just go get McDonalds." And I never did that. I'm thankful that I didn't. Because I didn't want them to think that I was trying to buy them.

*But what kind of parenting are you doing while you are not with them?*

I would get 'em for weekends. We did family stuff. It wasn't, "Oh, I got the kids, we gotta go get movies!" And sometimes we didn't do anything.

Sometimes we made chili and watched football. You know, which was fun, and [my daughter] remembers that. And I'm sure [my son] does too, though he may not admit it. I never stop being a parent.

While quasi-sober, Javier partially performed his ideal parent role and his delinquent/criminal role. Unable to prioritize their ideal parent role, substance/drug using participants divide their limited resources and partially performed both roles. However,

when flirting with their delinquent/criminal role performance in a *fragile family* context, deep relapse is inevitable. Already halfway onto the street stage and already partially performing their delinquent/criminal role, participants in this sample respond with deep relapse to the loss of roles during family crises and the removal of role expectation during family fracture. And once participants prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance over their ideal parent role, arrest is inevitable. Substance/drug using participants “do” parenthood in sync with their recovery-relapse cycle and even partial parenthood is temporary.

Overall, substance/drug using participants “do” parenthood in sync with the recovery-relapse cycle. Trapped in a recovery-relapse process, participants push themselves towards recovery in attempts to practice a different parenthood that their parents. While on recovery, participants perform their ideal role. However, participants struggle with the temptation of substance/drug use while attempting to perform their ideal parent role. Once enticed back onto the street stage, participants divide their limited resources and attempt to partially practice both roles. Already halfway back on the correctional stage, the loss of family roles prompt deep relapse. Consequently, even partial parenthood is temporary.

### Conclusion

While attempting to perform the parent role on the home stage and the delinquent/criminal stage on the street stage, participants struggle role conflict. Although conflicting roles can coexist in a self, participants limited resources (time and energy) and the weak boundaries between the home stage and street stage foster role conflict between the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role. Most importantly, drug dealing participants and substance/drug using participants respond differently to the role conflict when “doing” parenthood in the *fast life*.

In attempts to perform their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and the ideal parent role on the home stage, drug dealing participants attempt to reinforce the boundaries between the two conflicting roles. Drug dealing participants initially are attracted to *fast money* and become employees of the illicit drug labor market. In doing so, they use their illicit income from their for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role on the home stage (a continuation from the pregnancy process). However, danger dominates the *fast life* on the street stage. To protect themselves and their children, drug dealing participants present a tough and violent image on the street stage and attempt to practice two-sphere parenting. In “doing” two-sphere parenthood, participants place social and physical distance between the home stage and the street stage to protect children from neglect/abuse and be partially present and involved. However, both roles demand presence and involvement. With limited resources (time and energy), a significant portion of participants at some point chose their delinquent/criminal role over their ideal parent role. And whether attempting to perform two-sphere parenting or focusing fulltime on their delinquent/criminal role performance, all drug dealing participants were removed from the street stage upon arrest. Although drug dealing participants attempt to reinforce the boundaries between the conflicting roles, their limited time and energy threatens their ability to “do” parenthood in the *fast life*.

Compared to the drug dealing participants, substance/drug using participants have less control over the boundaries between the conflicting roles and their limited resources. Thus, they practice parenthood in sync with their recovery-relapse cycle. The delinquent/criminal role and the ideal parent role both expect presence and involvement on the street stage and the home stage respectively. When in deep relapse, participants use their desire to not repeat their parents’ parenting to push themselves onto recovery. Once on the home stage during previous recovery attempts, participants perform their ideal parenthood. However, they are continuously tempted to return to their



delinquent/criminal role. And once enticed back, participants divide their limited resources between their delinquent/criminal role and their ideal parent role and practice partial parenthood. But in the *fast life*, even partial parenthood is temporary and participants experience deep relapse upon the loss of a family role. And once participants return to prioritizing their delinquent/criminal role, arrest is inevitable.

Whether participants are dealers or substance/drug users, role conflict directs their attempts to “do” parenthood in the *fast life*. With limited resources (time and energy) and the weak boundaries between the home stage and street stage, role conflict enables participants to fully perform their ideal parent role. Most importantly, their inadequate parent role performance on the home stage and their active delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage do not go unnoticed. In response, institutions of social control remove parents and children from family life to protect children and society from participants’ delinquent/criminal role performance.

## CHAPTER VII

### “DOING” PARENTHOOD UNDER SURVEILLANCE

Since childhood and adolescence, participants have been under the surveillance of conventional family members (the private social-control institution) and the juvenile/criminal justice system (the public social-control institutions). Continuously on stage, participants' role performance is continuously under review and institutions of social control remove children and parents from the home stage. First, participants' *inadequate* parent role performance prompts conventional family members and family court to remove children from parents' care through termination of parental rights. Second, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance prompts the juvenile/criminal justice system to remove participants' from children's lives through incarceration. Caught in role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role, client/inmate role, and ideal parent role, children are removed from participants' care and participants are removed from children's lives.

In the *fast life*, violence fluidly transitions from the street stage to the home stage. Presenting a tough and violent image on the street stage aids drug dealers to ease illicit transactions, prevent victimization, and protect the family. And amongst substance/drug users, participants used violence to respond to and prevent victimization. In performing their delinquent/criminal role alongside family members on the street stage, participants' use of violence easily transitions into the home stage. And although drug dealing participants attempt to practice two-sphere parenting and substance/drug using parents attempt to practice partial parenting, a portion of participants bring violence to their families of procreation, neglect their ideal parent role and expose their children to danger.

With weak boundaries, children become an active audience to participants' delinquent/criminal role performance. Children notice the small changes in family life and become aware of their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance. And as the boundaries become invisible, children witness their parents' delinquent/criminal role

performance (especially mothers) and children become an active audience. In attempts to rescue the protecting expectation, a portion of substance/drug using participants leaves the home stage. Whether parents know it or want it, children are an active audience and respond to parents' conflicting role performance while "doing" parenthood in the *fast life*.

If the parent chooses not to leave, the role conflict between participants' delinquent/criminal role and their ideal parent role (violence versus protecting) prompts conventional family members to remove children from the home stage. In attempts to protect the next generation, conventional family members accuse participants of child/neglect abuse in family court. Once in court, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and their *inadequate* parent role performance is used to build a case to terminate their parental rights. With their delinquent/criminal role performance on record and an *inadequate* ideal parent role performance, participants take a defeated approach and go to family court to *lose their children*. In response, conventional family members become caretakers of the next generation.

In a similar fashion, participants are removed from their children's everyday life through incarceration. On the street stage, participants' delinquent/criminal role include expectations of violence, involvement in the illicit drug market, and engagement in other illicit behaviors. In regards to the juvenile/criminal justice system, participants' delinquent/criminal role expects participants to prepare for the possibility of being legally forced into client/inmate role performance. Focused on their delinquent/criminal role performance, drug dealing participants accumulate a legal fund in attempts to preserve their freedom and presence in their children's everyday lives. However, drug dealing participants bring legal danger into women's lives and threaten their children with the removal of both parents. Once arrested, conventional family members initially attempt to aid participants through the legal process. But after becoming more familiar with participants' delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and participants' continuous returns to the correctional stage (recidivism), the aid from conventional

family members decreases. Regardless of the preparation, all participants are convicted for a portion of their delinquent/criminal performance and legally forced into their client/inmate role performance through various punitive outcomes. If sentenced to incarceration, participants attempt to rescue their ideal parent role and engage in pre-incarceration nesting.

During the court procedures and days before they transition into the legally forced client/inmate role performance, participants prepare to transition out of their children's lives and into *convict society*. Once in *convict society* (incarceration or quasi-incarceration) participants are unable to be physically present in their children's everyday lives. Thus, participants engage in an extensive preparation process in attempts to rescue a portion of their ideal parent role. In the process, mothers (and occasionally father) seek and secure resources to meet children's needs during their or the other parents' absence. In performing their ideal parent role, participants filter the information children receive regarding their correctional status. And as they transition into client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage, participants say goodbye to the children.

### Removing Children

The weak boundaries between the street stage and the home stage threaten children's safety. In their delinquent/criminal role, participants are expected to construct a tough and violent image to confront danger on the street stage and to be employees or/and consumers in the illicit drug market. With weak boundaries between the home stage and the street stage, children are exposed to domestic violence and participants' delinquent/criminal role performance. As a responsive audience, conventional family members use family court to remove children from parents' care. While "doing" parenthood under surveillance, children are removed from parents' care.

“I Put my Hands on Them!”

In performing their delinquent/criminal role, participants use and face violence on the street stage. Previous studies have found violence to be “taught, practiced, and maintained as a way of negotiating the social realities of street and domestic life” and not always related to drug dealing (Sommers and Baskin 1997, 1; also see Miller 2008). As of August 2011, forty-two participants received 264 violence charges in *Midwest State*, including domestic violence and other violent behaviors during adolescence and adulthood.<sup>74</sup> The normalization of violence in the streets weakens the boundaries between the street stage and home stage. Thus, violence fluidly transitions onto the family context and domestic violence threatens the ideal parent role as participants’ fail to protect their children. Similar to previous literature (Bourgois 2003), participants in this sample move from neglected/abused children to perpetrators of family violence and/or victims of family violence. As previously discussed (see chapter 6 “doing” parenthood in the *fast life*), presenting a tough and violent image on the street stage aids employees in the illicit drug labor market to ease illicit transactions, prevent victimization, and protect the family. As for substance/drug users, participants used violence to respond to and prevent victimization.

And when participants are unable to leave the delinquent/criminal role on the streets and bring violence home, it conflicts with the protecting expectation of their ideal parent role. Miguel, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, recalls his attempt to control his wife—

My actual brothers told me that, you know, “You’re messing up a good thing. You know, she’s a good woman. And, you ruining it.” And I think that to this day. I mean, I know she loves me. And I love her. She’s a good person. She’s a beautiful woman, and has a great personality. And is grateful for things. I don’t think she can trust another man, really. Because of the way I treated her. I never physically abused her. But I threw things around, a lot of verbal abuse, you

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<sup>74</sup> Including 32 participants (males and females) with 79 domestic violence charges, 42 participants with 157 other-violence charges (assault, harassment, armed with intent to harm, and intent to cause injury), and 7 participants with 28 violent delinquency charges (*Midwest State Courts Online*).

know. And she—, [my daughter] was there. You know, nothing happened to her, but she heard the screams and got scared. I shouldn't have—, you know.

Miguel had aspired to protect his daughter from child neglect and abuse. But while verbally abusing his ex-wife and throwing items around the house, he put his daughter in danger and neglected the protecting expectation of his ideal parent role. With conflicting roles on the home stage, participants' transition from protecting to abusing occurred without notice. Scott, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, relapsed while living with his new wife, stepson, and daughter from a previous relationship. During one of his binges, he blacked out and the boundaries between the home stage and the street stage blurred—

I got married and bought a house in 2005. I moved in with my wife, my stepson, and my daughter. So, my stress level went through the roof and I started drinking. Our relationship got pretty rocky. I remember I was drinking with my wife and then I blacked out. My wife told me we'd gotten into an argument, throwing stuff. And she charged at me, hitting me. And I threw her out. I put her outside, shut the door and locked it. She started screaming. And the neighbors came over. They got involved and called the police. So, I was charged with domestic assault, simple domestic assault, arrested. I find out that I had to go to treatment the next day. The children were there [5 and 7 years old at the time]. DHS [department of human services] came, marked my record for child endangerment. I was gone, went to jail. So my daughter went back [to her biological mother]. I was really really angry. I felt that my wife just wanted to jeopardize my daughter living with us. I was totally upset about that.

Already addicted, Scott relapsed when his wife moved in and alcohol became part of everyday life. Under the influence in a blackout, he used violence in the home and endangered the life of his two children. Domestic violence threatens participants' ideal parent role performance, neglecting the protecting expectations. Susie, now a 33 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, recalls the escalating domestic violence episodes as her husband got deeper into his delinquent/criminal role performance—

When I first met him [14 years old at the time], he had a job and all he did was smoke marijuana. And then he got busted for having marijuana on him. They put him on probation and he couldn't smoke anymore. So, he started drinking.  
*Why did he go to prison the first time?*

For beating on me, every time he went was for beating me up. But the last time was for drugs. And he kept saying that he was gonna do me. He had pulled guns out on me before. He had got to the point that somebody outside made him mad, he came in the house and didn't say anything, he's just ready to fight me. It was a point of, he always think he supposed to get the last word. I got with him when I was 14 and I left him when I was 18. And then he tried to kill my other baby daddy. He shot the car up over 100 times, with him in it. And he didn't get hit, but his friend did. He told me that the only reason why my second baby daddy is with me is because he said he could. And whenever he tell him to leave me alone, he's gonna leave me.

*Are you afraid of him?*

Oh yeah! The last time he beat me up, he made me have a miscarriage. And he beat up my mom too at the same time. Last time he went to jail, he told the judge, "You gotta suck my—." And so they locked him up and he did like seven years. And his best friend was dating my cousin. So, he would call his friend and had him call me and was telling me how he was gonna kill me when he got out. And he got out in the WRC and I was thinking about getting back with him, but I had got with my second baby daddy. And he was treating me like a queen. And I said to myself one day, "Why would you go back to this guy? If something goes wrong, he's gonna come and beat you up. If you look at him wrong, he's gonna beat you up. Why you gonna be with this guy that—?"

*What made you even think about going back with him?*

Because he was my baby daddy. But I was like, "I can't do that. I'm not gonna, you know." I had to leave 'cause you don't want your daughter to thinking it's alright for a man to beat on you. So, I had to take her out of that environment. But I'm trying to get over that. I'm trying to be his friend because we have a daughter together.

While performing his delinquent/criminal role, Susie's first husband was unable to leave the violence on the street stage and brought it to the home stage. As the delinquent/criminal role performance invaded home, Susie was sent to the hospital three times, the children were exposed to violence, and she experienced a miscarriage. With role conflict in full bloom on the home stage, Susie's husband neglected his parent role and Susie struggled to protect her children. Although participants attempt to practice two-sphere or partial parenting, the normalization of violence makes it is difficult to keep the delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage. In the process, the delinquent/criminal role comes to the home stage (similar to Bourgois 2003) and undermines the ideal parent role. In addition to domestic violence, children witness participants' overall delinquent/criminal role performance.

“Mom, Dad Is Drunk Again!”

With weak boundaries between the home stage and the street stage, participants are caught in role conflict. In the audience, children are exposed to violence and participants’ overall delinquent/criminal role performance. As previously discussed (chapter 6), substance/drug using participants have a more difficult time maintaining the social and physical boundaries between the street stage and the home stage than their drug dealing counterparts. Although children’s exposure to participants’ delinquent/criminal role performance occurs regardless of participants’ specific activities on the street stage, the most prominent theme in the data is substance/drug using participants exposing their children to delinquent/criminal role performance. Children (i) are very aware of their parents’ delinquent/criminal role performance. And as participants (especially mothers) neglect to reinforce the social and physical boundaries between the street stage and the home stage, (ii) their children move from awareness to witnessing. As an active audience, (iii) children respond to participants’ delinquent/criminal role performance. In attempts to semi-rescue their ideal parent role, a portion of substance/drug using parents (iv) remove themselves from the children’s lives. Although participants aim at protecting their children from neglect and abuse, children are exposed to the dangers of the *fast life*.

Once the boundaries between the street stage and the home stage were weakened, children became aware of their parents’ deviant/criminal role performance. Children begin to notice as their parents neglect their ideal parent role performance or small changes occur in the home. Javier, now a 51 year old white/Irish father and recovering substance/drug user, practiced partial parenting throughout his children’s life course. In the process, his children were aware of his delinquent/criminal role performance—

When I was getting high with my girlfriend, they knew we were getting high. Things changed in the house, attitudes, which happen when you get high. So, they went to their mother’s [home]. I think they saw it as a good thing. [Their mother] was remarried and had a big ol’ house here in [the *Metro Area*]. They ‘all had their own rooms, which they didn’t have with me. And I think [my



daughter] especially; I think she knew what was going on with dad. You know, she probably did. I mean. I don't know how, emotionally, how they felt. I don't have a clue.

Javier has been practicing partial parenting in sync with his recovery-relapse process throughout his children's lives. In the process, his children have been very aware of his and their mother's delinquent/criminal role performance. Although participants attempt to reinforce the boundaries between the street stage and the home stage, children notice the changes at home. Ray, now a 38 year old Mexican American father and recovering substance/drug user, recalls his daughter's graduation—

I never did it necessarily in front of her, but around her and in an important day, her graduation [drinking and driving].

*What happened?*

This happened in 2009. I was still living [out of state] and I came back for my daughter's graduation. We had a party for her that night. You know, I had been drinking and when I drove to stay with my mom, I got pulled over and arrested that night. She wasn't with me, but she sure remembers that one.

Regardless of participants' attempts to distance their children from their delinquent/criminal role performance, children notice the changes in the details. Bubbles, now a 45 year old white/Caucasian father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, put his children to bed before engaging in his delinquent/criminal role performance, but the children noticed—

I was smoking a lot of crack. So was my wife, oh, horrible.

*Were the kids around when all of this was happening?*

They were up stairs in bed. We did it after they went to bed, you know. What brought us [Bubbles and his wife] together was crack. I mean, we were good parents. We would never smoke crack in front of them.

*Well, were they ever noticing anything?*

Well, yeah, you know. I would definitely be acting strange, you know. Their mom, she looks just pretty much normal as she did. But I lost my lucrative job. She lost her lucrative job due to drugs. I left, and she wasn't paying the bills. And I end up losing my house. She hadn't paid in 11 months, and I guess I put a lot on her shoulders to do.

Bubbles tried to keep his substance/drug using schedule away from the children. But the parents' substance/drug use shifted their family life and the children were very aware.

Taylor, now a 25 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, recalls his

children's awareness. Although he did not bring his delinquent/role performance to the home stage, he left the home stage and invested all his limited resources (time and energy) on the street stage—

I was busy, running my business. I mean, the kids never asked, but they knew. I was gone all the time, never around, always running the streets. They had an awareness. When I got busted they were pretty upset with me, of course. I mean, I made headline news. I manufactured a lot of meth. It was like a three day ordeal when I was in the newspaper. They knew something was going on. They didn't see it. But they knew.

Regardless of parents' attempts to maintain the boundaries between the street stage and the home stage, their children were aware of participants' delinquent/criminal role performance. And as the boundaries become less prominent between the street stage and the home stage, children move from awareness to witnessing participants' delinquent/criminal role performance.

Without social or physical boundaries between the street stage and the home stage, children witness participants' delinquent/criminal role performance. Although substance/drug using fathers and mothers both exposed their children to their delinquent/criminal role performance, the dominant theme in the data is children witnessing mothers' delinquent/criminal role performance. Riley, now a 46 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/user, did not censor her behavior—

I smoked pot around her [daughter]. And she knew that it was against the rules. And that we all made choices. I think she did [try marijuana] in high school. [She] told me that her and her friend had tried it. I had always explained to her that you had to face the consequences for the choices.

Without boundaries between the home stage and the street stage, participants expose their children to their delinquent/criminal role performance. And as participants become more desperate, boundaries lose priority. Rosie, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, carries her daughter while engaging in a delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage—

*Why are you here?*

I'm here, my original charge is theft. My husband<sup>75</sup> had gotten out of [WRC]. And we just kind of buddy buddied around a little bit, for probably about 6 months. And um, I needed groceries. And [he] has got a criminal mind like no other. I mean, that's all he knows. You know, and he figured out a plan. We went to Target, and we stole some things from Target. And we could pawn 'em and we would be able to pay bills. So, he actually did the theft. But I was there. I didn't stop him, you know. Well, they caught him going out. The security guard told them my husband did it. You know, they had him on tape, stealing the merchandise, putting it in the cart, wheeling the cart out, you know. And at first they didn't charge me. And because of his record, he went right to jail. And they gave me a ticket. And my daughter was with me this time. But [the police] felt bad or something. They took him to county and he went to prison for that. So, I went home. And my biggest upset at that time was paying the bills. "He's gonna be gone for a while." I was upset about that. And then, probably an hour later, the detective knocks on my door. And, they had watched the tape or whatever, "Well, you were with him the whole time. And you had your daughter with you too! And you knew he was doing that!" So he said, "This is what I'm gonna do. You need to come down and talk to me about this and tell me the truth. I won't put you in jail right now. I'll write you a ticket and I'll see you in court." I said, "Alright." God that was scary. So, I brought everything to my mom's, brought [my daughter] to my mom, went down and talked to him, and I told him the truth. "We're broke. No, I know it's not the right thing to do, you know, bla-bla-bla-blah, but this is why. We're not selling drugs. We're not trying to, you know. We've got a car payment and rent. And that's what we wanted to get."

Concerned for her living expenses, Rosie's husband's return was initially a perceived blessing, but soon turned into a liability. As participants become less careful about the home stage and the street stage boundaries, children witness their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance. Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, found herself in the middle of an illicit deal with her daughter in the back seat—

This time, we were getting ready to go eat with [my husband's] brother. We were gonna eat at the [pizza place]. And I come out with our daughter. And [my husband] had some kid in the car and he said he wanted to drop him off, before we meet his brother at the park. I said no. And he was like, "Can you just go along with this?" And that kid was no good. I guess they had a phone call before I got to the car. The drug task force set him up with a kid and it was on my cell phone. I didn't know, so I give this kid a ride. And, we all got in trouble. It was fake drugs, but I did not need to get in trouble for that. I drive to the park, and [my husband] tried to sell the police some fake drugs. And we all got in trouble. *And your daughter was with you?*

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<sup>75</sup>Husband is also a substance/drug user.

Yeah. I took her to a friends' house and then I had to go back to the Sheriff's station to talk to them. And they put me in jail for one night. And then I saw the judge the next morning. He let me out on pre-trial release 'cause of my daughter. It was my choice, 'cause if I wouldn't have been in that situation, you know. But I need to start making better choices for myself because of my daughter. I need to stick up for myself. I've always been kind of a push over. I'm easy going. I don't like conflict. I don't fight with anybody. So, it's easier to do it and get it over with, than fight and argue with him.

Unable to ignore her husband's request, Ruth drove straight into a legal trap with her daughter in the back seat. Although mothers and fathers both engage in delinquent/criminal role performance in front of their children, children witnessing parents' delinquent/criminal role performance was predominantly in mothers' narratives. Regardless of participants' gender, weak boundaries between the home stage and the street stage threaten children's safety as they witness their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance.

And as children move from being aware to witnessing, they become an active audience. Although children's reactions vary and despite participants' *inadequate* parent role performance, participants continue to receive their children's love. Donovan, now a 37 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, initially avoided substance/drug use in front of his daughter. Soon after his deep relapse, he was unable to hide it from his daughter and she became cautious around her father—

It kind of made my daughter distraught [7 year old at the time]. I mean, I wasn't as around. I was kind of hiding my drug use from her. And I think that she could see that there was something wrong but didn't know exactly what. I was acting kind of paranoid, like look out the windows when I was using. And I knew she knew that something was wrong. She didn't know exactly what, but knew that wasn't normal from what she was used to. So she felt a little betrayed. I mean, she's seen me mixing drinking. And she knew 'cause I'd argue with my wife at the time about drinking. She knew. I mean, my daughter knows that I'm a drug head, an alcoholic. She knows her dad drinks. Ain't don't want anything to do with me when I drink. She don't want anything to do with me while I'm drinking, which is good. 'Cause it helps me. You know. It hurts but it helps. But, you know, I just explain to her where I've been. That's all I can do, is tell her. You know, I can't do anything else.

*How does she react?*

She's careful. Let me give you an example. I was at my buddy's house with a girl I was seeing and my daughter [still married at the time]. My daughter was

like, “Dad, you got a girlfriend?” I said, “No.” And then, of course the girl that I was dating, she was like, “What?!” I went out to a friend’s house ‘cause we were building a second story addition in his house. I started drinking and my daughter went to my buddy’s wife and asked her if she could call her mom. She was upset. You know. My daughter called her and told her I’ve been drinking. She didn’t want to ride home with me. And [my buddy’s wife] came out and told me that my daughter had called [her mother]. That I should tell this girl to leave. And I didn’t want to say, you know, tell her to leave. I didn’t think my wife would really come out. My daughter was out there playing with these kids in the yard and my wife calls, and wanted to come and pick my daughter up. And I was drunk, so I didn’t care. We weren’t getting along anyways. I guess I was just careless.

With his history of substance/drug use, Miguel’s daughter learned to read her father’s delinquent/criminal role performance. And as soon as she detected danger, she called her mother to pick her up. Children, aware of their parents’ delinquent/criminal role, become cautious and take preventative measures. With time, children learn to avoid parents’ delinquent/criminal role performance. Carol, now a 35 African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, is a mother to a teenage girl involved in conventional life—

[My youngest daughter] is only 16. But she’s starting to, she don’t like me at my dad’s [where she lives]. You know. She don’t like that ‘cause she is to the point where she knows, she thinks she probably can’t count on me. So, she’s real careful with me. It don’t mean she don’t love me. It’s just, she’s careful.

*What about your oldest daughter?*

She’s angry, anger all the time. And she lets me know it.

With time, children become a responsive audience to participants’ delinquent/criminal role performance. Carol’s daughters were initially eager to see their mother. After years of witnessing her mother’s *inadequate* parent role performance, they no longer expect much from Carol and keep their distance. Although children become cautious, they continue to express love for their parents. Dee, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, expose her children to her delinquent/criminal role performance. Although the children responded with distance, they continuously expressed their affection—

When they were kids, “You’re the best mother. Why do you think all the kids wanted to stay at our house?” You know, I’ve had kids asked me to adopt ‘em.

They said I was a good mom. “You didn’t, you didn’t understand that I was a user. And things were getting really bad to where I had to go in the street. It got to that point.”

*Where they always that way?*

Well, they changed as they got tired of it. They love me, but they got tired.

Dee’s children’s awareness and response to their mother’s delinquent/criminal role performance changed over time. And when participants’ role performance does not interrupt children’s everyday life, children chose to temporarily ignore their parents’ delinquent/criminal role performance, but eventually respond. James, now a 49 years old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, invested his time and energy on the street stage. His children, aware of his behavior, chose to temporarily ignore it—

They would see me and I would give them money [during his drug dealing years]. I was very supportive, but they didn’t really mention anything about it [drug dealing and substance/drug use]. They knew, but see, they were young teenagers. We was close. They love me, but they wasn’t really curious about what I was doing. They was living the fast track, 16 and 17 year olds, had their own lives. As long as I was supporting them, they were not really questioning me that much. *They didn’t notice?*

Oh they noticed. When I got to using, that’s when they started noticing. They started talking to they mom, talking to me. ‘Cause now it started messing with they lives. You know what I’m saying. I was not supporting them like before.

Jame’s children, too busy with their personal lives, chose to ignore their father’s delinquent/criminal role as long as he continued to provide for them. But once he went from drug dealing to substance/drug using, they became a responsive audience. Whether children became cautious or decided to ignore their parent’s delinquent/criminal role performance, children become an active audience.

When unable to leave their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, substance/drug using participants perform their delinquent/criminal role on the home stage and expose children to substance/drug use. According to Edin, Nelson, and Paranal (2004), shame prompts delinquent/criminal parents to leave the home. In a similar manner, a portion of the substance/drug using parents in this sample chose to leave the home stage in attempts to rescue the protecting expectation of their ideal parent role.

Mike, now a 32 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, decided to remove himself from his children's lives during a long term relapse—

I left [the *Metro Area*], moved [out of town]. And I didn't communicate back to [the *Metro Area*] when I left. I just disappeared. And the drugs progressed. My addiction got worse and worse. I just wasn't in any good shape to be in their lives. That is the way I felt. So, I think they were better off without me. At least that's what I thought. But now, when I listen to 'em, they wish that I had stayed in their lives. I don't think they understand addiction, when I was going through it at the time. Uh, they're not involved in any drugs, or drinking or anything like that. Thank God for that. And I could have exposed them to that if I had stayed around. They were better off without me.

Mike's presence and involvement exposed his children to danger. Thus, he chose to leave and reinforce the boundaries between the home stage and the street stage. In attempts to protect the children, a significant portion of participants sacrificed the being present and involved expectations of their ideal parent role in attempts to protect the children from abuse. Simon, now a 46 year old African American father and recovering substance/drug user, left the home stage in attempts to avoid exposing the children to his delinquent/criminal role performance—

I was too busy getting high and drinking, and doing a lot other things in my life. So, I left and I didn't spend time with them. So, that kind of separated us. They were like 15, 10, and 5. I mean, I just wasn't a good father to 'em at that time, because I was in the streets and all of that. So, it kind of separated us a lot. I chose the streets. I chose the drugs. I didn't want them to see me like that. I wouldn't have been any good anyway. I chose not to see them anymore because of my lifestyle, I could've—. I didn't wanna hurt them. I didn't want to be in their life and then not be.

After choosing their delinquent/criminal role over their ideal parent role, they chose to become absent and uninvolved parents in order to quasi-rescue their protecting expectation. 'Till June, now a 45 years old African American mother and recovering drug user, graduated from a private high school, became a teen parent, and soon after joined the illicit drug market as a consumer. When on the street stage, she left her son in her mother's care in order not to expose him to the dangers of her delinquent/criminal role performance—

I got into drugs. So, I gave my mother temporary guardianship over my son 'cause I didn't want my son with me, living that type of life or being around that type of people. I seen him, periodically. I mean, it wasn't like I just dropped him off and then I was out of his life. No! I go by my mom's house every two to three days. If it was nothing, just to give her money and to see if she needed anything from the store. And then sometimes he would be there and sometimes he wouldn't.

*Why did you leave him?*

I didn't want him to see what I was doing.

Although not completely absent, 'Till June separated herself from her son in an attempt to protect him from exposure to her delinquent/criminal role performance. Aware of the danger their delinquent/criminal role performance posed to their children's lives, a portion of substance/drug using participants chose to leave the home stage. Struggling with role conflict between the ideal parent role and the delinquent/criminal role performance, substance/drug using parents chose to quasi-rescue the protecting expectation, but neglect to be present and involved.

Overall, with weak boundaries between the home stage and the street stage, the children of substance/drug users become an active audience. Children become aware of their participants' delinquent/role performance when they notice the changes in family life. Although children witnessed their mothers' and fathers' delinquent/criminal role performances, mother's narratives of children witnessing their delinquent/criminal role performances were the dominant theme in the data. And as children get older, they become an active audience. Due to participants' inability to maintain the boundaries between the street stage and the home stage, children move from awareness to becoming an active audience. In attempts to semi-rescue the protection expectations of their ideal parent role, a portion of substance/drug using parents remove themselves from their children's lives. And when parents do not remove themselves, conventional family members respond.



### “I’ll Take the Children!”

Since childhood, participants have been continuously under the surveillance of conventional family members (private-social control institution). Thus, *inadequate* parent role performance prompts a family’s concerns. When the parents do not voluntarily leave the home stage, conventional family members intervene. In attempts to protect the next generation, (i) the conventional parents remove children from the care of substance/drug using parents and (ii) conventional family members accuse participants of child/neglect abuse in family court. In court, (iii) participants’ delinquent/criminal role performance is used to build a case to terminate their parental rights.<sup>76</sup> With their delinquent/criminal role performance and an inadequate parent role performance on record, (iv) a significant portion of participants attend family court already defeated. In response, (v) conventional family members become the caretakers of the next generation. In a cross-generation process, the private institutions of social control remove children from parents’ care in an attempt to protect them from child neglect/abuse.

When substance/drug using participants relapse, a portion chose to leave to protect their children. However, when the relapsed parent is unable to choose between protecting the child and being present/involved, conventional family members in the audience make the choice for them and push the parent out of the children’s lives. According to Edin, Nelson, and Paranal (2004), mothers remove delinquent/criminal fathers to protect their family (drug addicts tend to steal even from family) or because the individual drank or smoked their illicit “profits.” Amongst the substance/drug using sub-sample, the mothers pushed fathers out of children’s lives to fulfill the protecting expectation of their ideal parent role. Tommy, now a 54 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, knew he was unable to control his

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<sup>76</sup> Concerned for children’s permanency, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) has increased parental rights terminations (Johnston 2001 in Hairston 2003).

delinquent/criminal role performance and posed danger to the children. However, he was unable to make a choice and his wife made it for him—

I got married in 1982. We had my son right away and she pretty much said, “Quit getting high or we’re leaving.” And I said, “Okay, leave!” So, I wasn’t a very good dad. [My first wife] remarried a wonderful man, wonderful man. I knew him, and he’s just a good guy. They’ve been married for 20 years by now. When [my son] was eight, she asked if I would give up my parental rights to [my son] so [my wife’s husband] could adopt him. And I was so pissed off. I said, “Why, why would you even think I’d do that?” They lived in [a city in *State B*] at the time. She said to me, if she were to die, legally [my son] would go to me. He had a little brother. And she said, “He doesn’t know the life that you live. He only knows this life [conventional].” So, I did. It was obviously, it was a tough decision, but it was the right one for [my son]. They said, “We’ll never not allow you to see [your son]. This is only so he has a stable place to live. They never denied me seeing him. I saw him periodically. I was failure, you know, and I still see it that way. Not only did I give up knowing [him] because of my lifestyle choices, the sole reason, but what did he lose because I wasn’t there? Or what did he gain because I wasn’t there? You know. And I can’t answer that, but I think about it from time to time.

Although he has prioritized his delinquent/criminal role over his ideal parent role, Tommy initially chose presence over protecting. To protect their son, his wife chose to leave and pushed Tommy out of their son’s life. Eventually, Tommy chose to give up his parental rights, permanently prioritizing his delinquent/criminal role over being present. In a similar situation, Louis, now 33 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, relapsed after years of family life and his wife abandoned him in attempts to protect their children—

I was clean for a long time. But when [my daughter] was born, I was using alcohol with marijuana. But eventually I did go back into using hard drugs. I was way way addicted at this point. I’m way—, I’m out there. I would do like on the weekends. And I would go to work, do crack cocaine on the weekends, and go to work and do it on the weekends. But eventually weekends led to weekdays, weekdays led to weekdays. And I was back in the streets. Their mother, she left. It was better for everyone that she leave with the kids.

Too deep into the relapse, a portion of the substance/drug using participants was no longer concerned about their ideal parent role. Thus, someone else had to make a choice for them, to maintain the parental presence or to protect the children from the danger. Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user,

discusses her husband's inability to keep their daughter safe and the choice she was forced to make—

I hope that [my husband] doesn't screw up anymore, you know [both substance/drug users]. I hope that he stays good. When I got pregnant he wanted us to move to a trailer park, but I was scared 'cause I thought I couldn't control him alone. I could keep him clean if he stayed at my dad's house, like he'd be afraid to use. And so, we didn't get the trailer. And then he blamed that on me, 'cause I played dirty and bla bla bla. Probably would've had a bunch of druggies in my house, and I just, I don't know. So, we stayed with his mom. So, I was gonna go back [to work after the birth of my daughter], but I didn't trust him watching her. I quit my job 'cause I didn't feel she was safe with him. I knew his mom was helping him too, but when I was at work I was worried all the time. So, I end up quitting and moved back to my dad's. I stayed with my dad for a little bit.

To fulfill the protecting expectation of her ideal parent role, Ruth removed her daughter from the presence of her substance/drug using father. Although a portion of substance/drug using parents chose to leave, the portion that stayed had to be eventually pushed out of their children's lives. And when unable to remove parents from children's lives, conventional family members use the family court to threaten the relapsed parent.

Conventional family members' attempts to control participants' behavior began during childhood and adolescence. Once participants' delinquent/criminal role performance undermines their ideal parent role performance, the private social control institution intervenes. Bubbles raised three children with his wife while both were addicted to crack cocaine and meth. It became a routine for the couple to put the children to bed and get high after children's bed time—

I never smoked crack before, but I had done cocaine. [My wife] showed me how to smoke crack and God was I wrong, yeah. Outside, all appearances, it looked like I was doing pretty good. I had a 5 bedroom farm house just right outside of town. We had a pool and just a lot of money. I had a job. So did my wife. So, outward appearances looked really good, you know. But really, inside the house, it was turmoil. So, my wife's sister called us out a couple of times. She threatened with calling the police and taking the kids. But you looked at what her sister was going through and doing, compared to us, she went lesbian. To me it seemed like she was crazier. It still looked like we had everything together in the outside, still had things going on. They had no idea that we be getting high [crack cocaine and meth].

Bubbles and his wife attempted to portray a happy family image to their audience, using time to separate parenting and use on the same home stage. However, his sister-in-law noticed their *inadequate* parent role performance and threatened to remove the children. When unable to control neither participants' behavior nor guarantee children's safety, conventional family members threaten to use the public institution of social control. Doug, now a 31 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, argued with his girlfriend (a conventional family member) over their son's care. He was not providing, not being present/involved, and exposed their son to domestic violence. In addition, she was very interested in attending a vocational training program out of the *Metro Area*. During one of his arrests, she moves quickly through family court to remove his access—

I thought I wouldn't see [my son] forever. Like I went to jail, got off on papers, and I was free. I was only in jail like a few days. My son's mother just rolled her eyes and wrote to the judge on some form that crossed my visitation. She wrote on there that she doesn't think I'm fit to see my son, being that I would fight with her and was charged of a burglary. I would never hurt my son at all, you know. I haven't hit my kid once. I couldn't put my hand on him, couldn't do it. And she knows that. She got on her little high horse and thought she had a certain opportunity. She ceased the moment. She went with it and strived. So, I only got to see him on the weekends or something like. And that only lasted a couple of weeks before I went to jail again, before I caught this case. So, when I went to jail, she told the police and the court about all this stuff. So, they pretty much took all my visitations rights and everything away 'till I was done with this case. *Did she have a goal in mind?*

She was going to JobCorp. So, if she got my visitation taken away, she could go to JobCorp. So, that's what she did. I probably would've done the same thing if I was in her shoes.

Although Doug was not using violence directly against his son, he was exposing him to violence, neglecting his ideal parent role. In attempts to protect their child, Doug's girlfriend used his *inadequate* parent role performance to make a case in family court to remove his rights. With child protection in mind, conventional family members use the family court to remove children from *inadequate* parent role performance. Susie decided to move out of state to escape her violent husband. To make it possible, she requested

the children's paternal aunt to care for the three children (in a large urban city in *State B*) while she settled in the *Metro Area* (in *Midwest State*). At the time, Susie trusted her sister-in-law because she had previously cared for the children—

And I had lost my job, so I didn't have an income. So, I had called my oldest daughter's grandmother and my younger three's aunt, can they come stay with them until I get on my feet out here [in the *Metro Area*]. Me and their aunt was like friends at first. I had stayed with her before. She used to come and get the kids on the weekend. So I was thinking, "Okay, this will be pretty good, you know. She already come and get 'em to spend time with 'em until I get on my feet." Well, grandma end up giving the oldest one back, but the aunt don't wanna give the other 3 back.

*Does she have legal rights over the kids?*

All I gave her was temporary guardianship, but she went to court and made it permanent. That's what she did while she was gone for them four years. She went and told the judge that I abandoned them. That she couldn't find me. I was the one that couldn't find her. She just wanted the money [government assistance]. The judge gave her temporary guardianship until I showed up. Then she got permanent custody. I had called up here, trying to find a lawyer [in *Midwest State*]. And they was like, it would be easier for me to go to [*State B*] to find lawyer because if I found one here, I had to pay them for their gas to go back and forth to court. "When I get out of here, and get everything straight, that's gonna be the first thing I do."

*But why did she do it?*

I don't know. She wanted my kids, because she doesn't have any of her own. She was mad because I took too long and wasn't sending her money. And she didn't like [my new boyfriend].

*How did she know about [your new boyfriend]?*

My mom told her.

*Why didn't she like him?*

'Cause he drinks and we were fighting a lot. I lost my job and just started partying with him, gave up. My mom told her she didn't like him.

In attempts to remove her children from their fathers' *inadequate* parental role performance, Susie moved away from (the large urban city in *State B*) and temporarily left her three youngest children under their aunt's care. While Susie was attempting to settle into a new city in the *Metro Area*, she was unable to provide, be present, or be involved in her children's lives. Instead, she invested her limited resources on a new relationship with a substance/drug user. Although initially a voluntary separation, Susie neglected her ideal parent role and the children's paternal aunt filed for custody. As a responding

audience, participants' conventional family members use family court to remove children from their parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and protect the next generation from parents' delinquent/criminal role performance.

In collaboration with the private social-control institution, family court responds to participants' *inadequate* parent role performance. According to Grella and Greenwell (2006), having no conventional work history, initiation into substance/drug use prior to age 20, being never married, having been in foster care or adopted prior to age 16, and ever engaged in sex work increase the odds a substance/drug using mother (N=483) loses her parental rights in family court. Confirming previous literature, this study finds that family court uses the parents' recorded delinquent/criminal role performance to build a case in family court and terminate their parental rights. Jake, now a 26 year old Mexican America father and ex-drug dealer, had two children with his high school sweetheart (a substance/drug user) while the relationship was in turmoil—

*So, when they took [your kids] away, why did they take them away?*

When I got the domestic with her, she called the police and DHS got involved. And she went to this in-patient treatment place with the kids. They got to stay there. But she completed it, and she came home. And we was apart then. Then we end up getting back together. I was selling drugs and we had our own place. And DHS was still involved and she kept dropping dirty UAs [urine analysis]. So, they end up taking the kids.

In response to their *inadequate* parent role performance, Jake's violence and his girlfriend's substance/drug use, the department of human services declared the home unsafe and the family court removes the children from the home stage. In the same manner, TR, now a 38 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, has been in and out of his daughter's life since her conception.

During one of his attempts to reintegrate, he was faced with the loss of his daughter—

We lost my daughter in 2008 [at 8 years of age].

*Why?*

My daughter knows so much about like the lifestyle. You know. Like the drugs. Her mother, she smokes weed. [My wife's mother] called foster care on her and they wanted to do a test on her hair. But she wouldn't let them and they took our daughter from her. But my daughter never wanted for anything.

Although fulfilling the providing expectation, TR and the mother of his daughter exposed their daughter to the *fast life* and TR was continuously absent. With their delinquent/criminal role performance undermining their ideal parent role performance, the department of human services removed their daughter from the home stage. In this cross-generational process, a portion of the participants transition from victims of child neglect/abuse into neglectful parents. Rosie is the daughter of substance/drug users and has been under the surveillance of child protective services since childhood—

When I got pregnant [at 15 years of age], my mom got kind of excited about it. She wasn't like one of those parents, "Oh, you're pregnant!?" She was like, "Yay!" I mean, she was so thrilled. But we just couldn't stop fighting and it was terrible [mother is a substance/drug user]. But I actually settled down once I got pregnant. I started going to a school for pregnant teenagers. And I was really like consistent. I looked at it, he's my son and I'm gonna take care of him. [DHS] kept telling my mom stuff that she had to do as a parent. And she was like, "I don't do that." So, [DHS] sat me down, "We can't let you stay here. Not just for you, but for the baby." So, they took me from her.

Unable to correct the mother's substance/drug use and violence, the department of human services removed Rosie (teen mother at the time) and her child from her mother's *inadequate* parent role performance. To manage, Rosie used government services to provide for her new baby—

They put me in an independent living program. They gave me an apartment, paid my bills, and they were trying to teach me how to do it on my own. I'm getting a free ride, but then I got pregnant right away with [my second son]. I had no knowledge of birth control. My mom never sat down and gave me that talk. My mom threw a fit, called me a whore. She was real mad about that one. [The social workers] were just kind of like, "Again? This is so bad!" Then I turned 18 and that's when the human services is totally up your ass. 'Cause once you're 18, there's nothing. So, they took my two sons 'cause I didn't know what to do and was partying too much. I kept partying and lost my boys.<sup>77</sup>

Rosie transitioned from neglected/abused child to a neglectful parent within two years. As two generations of parents prioritized their delinquent/criminal role performance and engaged in *inadequate* parent role performance, the children were removed. Although participants have the desire to achieve their ideal parent role, the delinquent/criminal role

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<sup>77</sup> After losing her first two sons, she lost her third son during the birth process (chapter 4).

takes over and undermines the protecting expectation. In response, family courts use participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and their *inadequate* parent role performance on record to build a case and remove their parental rights.

Aware of their delinquent/criminal role performance and *inadequate* parent role performance on record, participants go to court already defeated to *lose their children*. When a child has been removed, the department of human services expects parents to attempt to recuperate the child, jumping over numerous hurdles in the name of child safety and permanency.<sup>78</sup> However, participants in this study took a defeated approach—

As I waited for a prospective interviewee, a different prospective participant approached me to re-schedule her interview. She had just received a notice to appear in court for a hearing where her parental rights will be terminated. She summarized the meaning of the event in one statement, “I’m going to court to lose my son.” She finds that this event will make it difficult to discuss parenting; thus, she would like to postpone the interview. Losing their children appears to be a common experience amongst the participants [men and women]. They go to court not to fight for their children, but to lose their children (Campos-Holland, *Field Notes*, 2010).

While “doing” parenthood in the *fast life*, a portion of participants become perpetrators of child neglect/abuse and/or are not present to protect their children from other perpetrators. After an *inadequate* parent role performance, participants take a defeated approach to family court. Louis was in prison while his daughter’s mother prioritized the delinquent/criminal role and neglected their daughter. In his absence, he was unable to protect his daughter and his parental rights were terminated—

It was all crazy in court. I’m in prison. They terminated my rights when I was in prison. I didn’t sign nothing. They just had a court hearing and said, “Your rights

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<sup>78</sup> In *State B*, “The Department of Children and Family Services shall, upon receiving reports made under this Act, protect the best interest of the child, offer protective services in order to prevent any further harm to the child and to other children in the family, stabilize the home environment and preserve family life whenever possible” (Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, *State B*); In *Midwest State*, “The Department of Human Services has the legal authority to conduct an assessment of child abuse when it is alleged that (1) the victim is a child, (2) the child is subjected to one or more of the eight categories of child abuse defined in *Midwest State*...physical abuse, mental injury, sexual abuse, child prostitution, presence of illegal drugs, denial of critical care, manufacturing or possession of a dangerous substance (defined in *Midwest State*), and bestiality in the presence of a child. The abuse is the result of the acts or omissions of the person responsible for the care of the child” (*Midwest State*).



are terminated.” And I didn’t sign nothing! It was crazy. I didn’t matter. And [my daughter’s mother] wasn’t about to do much. She couldn’t win with ‘em. I’m like, “How can ya’ll terminate my rights when I’m in prison?” You know. I was so upset. I mean, I wasn’t there to protect her. But still, how you gonna take my rights when I’m in prison?! [My daughter’s mother] said the social worker told the judge I had a criminal record and that was that, like I didn’t exist. Couldn’t win with ‘em.

Absent and with a delinquent/criminal role performance on record, family court moved to terminate Louis’ parental rights. When participants have a delinquent/criminal role performance and an *inadequate* ideal parent role performance on record, they take a defeated approach as the family court terminates their parental rights, removing children from the home stage. Sam, now a 35 years old African American father and ex-drug dealer, had been in and out of his daughter’s life while she was in her maternal grandparents’ care. Although quasi-reintegrating into her life, he was unable to adequately perform the parent role and the grandparents requested parental rights—

Her mothers’ parents wanted to legally adopt my daughter, even though they had her since birth. You know, basically for benefits for my daughter. I understand this. Her mother turned out to be an alcoholic. And she don’t need no custody period, of even her other kids. She has more, not just mine. But the grandparents want to adopt my daughter and this is when I’m just released [from 10 years in federal prison]. I wasn’t in a position to even try to fight it. I understand why they was doing it. Her mother freely signed her rights over. And they wanted me to do it. And I told ‘em, “I just cain’t do that. Even though I wasn’t around in the beginning, ‘cause I was incarcerated, I’m a different person now. And you just can’t get me to sign my rights over. I understand what you’re doing, and this is what we can do. We can go to court, let the judge take my rights. When we leave the courtroom, we’re gonna have dinner together. I understand why you did it. Just understand that I’m not gonna sign ‘em over. The judge is gonna have to do it. I’m not gonna be mad at ya’ll that it went that far. I just want my daughter to understand I didn’t sign my rights over. “The courts took his rights.”

Aware of his past delinquent/criminal role performance and his inability to perform the ideal parent role at the time, Sam could not fight to keep his daughter and went to court knowing he was going to lose his parental rights. While performing their delinquent/criminal role in the *fast life*, losing children is a common experience. With their delinquent/criminal role performance on record and their *inadequate* parent role performance, whether upset or in peace, participants attend family court already defeated.

Whether conventional family members were accusers or unaware of the situation, they respond to care for the children in attempts to protect the next generation.<sup>79</sup> When granted custody, conventional family members become legal guardians, legally responsible of protecting and caring for the children. TR is currently depending on his mother to recuperate his daughter from child protective services—

We supposed to be getting her back. Her grandmother is supposed to be getting her. And I'm trying to find out what's going on with that. I think it's coming up like March. She supposed to go to court to find out if she could get her back.

*How long has she been gone?*

She's been gone for three years. They never adopted her out because nobody can handle her. They say my daughter is unhandledable because every time they put her with somebody, it's white people. I mean, I'm not a racist, but you can't put a black kid with white people. It's just not gonna work out. They could say, "Oh, [daughter], you're in time out." No, she's like, "What? What you mean I'm on time out?" And she's big. She's not like fat. But she's tall. And uh, she just tells 'em. She talks. She's really smart. She'll say, "Well, my dad told me a long time ago that nobody could whoop me." And we're not even around, you know. She's very defensive. She'll try to fight people.

*Do you talk to her?*

Well, I can't because I lost my rights. But her grandma is gonna get her.

Although upset about his loss of parental rights, TR hopes his mother will recuperate his daughter. Whether participants welcome or reject conventional family members' aid, conventional family members respond and attempt to become the next generations' legal guardians. Rosie found herself with two children at 18 years of age, no financial resources, and under the surveillance of child protective services. It is then that her grandmother responded—

When I had my boys, nobody helped me [family]. My grandma never even saw them. My dad, no "how-is-the-kids?" from him. But once social services came in, and took them away, then all of a sudden they were like, "Oh, we gotta do something." And I'm like, "Dang! Where were you when I needed ya?!" [DHS] said, "We either need to terminate your rights and give them to Dick and Jane over here, or we need to figure something else out." So, my grandma was like, "Well, I'll take them." And I said, "Alright." Just until I got financially better.

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<sup>79</sup> As foster or adoptive parents, the court holds conventional family members responsible for the safety of the children, including protecting the children from the delinquent/criminal parent (see chapter 10 on the reintegration into "doing" parenthood).

Whether conventional family members accused the participant of *inadequate* parent role performance or responded to the family crisis, they became the children's legal caretakers and took over the parent role performance. The moment Mary, now a 59 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, exposed her children to danger and her mother responded to care for the children—

After cheating on her husband, [Mary] confessed to him her transgression. In his drive to get fresh air and calm down, her husband died in a traffic accident. Soon after his death, [Mary] delved into heavy substance/drug use. During a high, her substance/drug using boyfriend raped her young daughter in Mary's presence and threatened to shoot her if [Mary] did anything to stop him. That same night, she waited for him to fall asleep and lit his bed on fire. In the chaos, all the minor children were placed under child protective services. Their grandmother quickly jumped on board, and the children were placed in her care. Throughout the children's underage years, [Mary's] mother cared for the children, took them to treatment, watched them graduate from high school, attempted to control their delinquency, and lost sleep when they got arrested (Campos-Holland, *Field Notes*, 2010).

Although not an accuser, Mary's mother responded to her daughter's *inadequate* parent role performance and fought a war to rescue her grandchildren from the *fast life's* strong grip (see chapter 11 for a full discussion on the next generation). Although her mother is no longer alive and her children are no longer minors, Mary recalls her mothers' aid during the family crisis. Whether participants reject or accept their aid, conventional family members respond to parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and take over the parent role to care for the next generation.

When "doing" parenthood under surveillance, role conflict between participants' delinquent/criminal role and their ideal parent role prompts an *inadequate* parent role performance and the removal of their children from the home stage. When parents do not leave the home stage voluntarily, conventional family members become a responsive audience to participants' *inadequate* parent role performance and removes children from participants' care. When unable to, conventional family members use the family court to remove children. In family court, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and their *inadequate* parent role performance on record are used to build a case and terminate

their parental rights. Knowing the negative impact their delinquent/criminal role performance and *inadequate* parent role performance can have, participants go to court already defeated to *lose their children*. Whether the conventional family members were the accusers and/or responding to the family crisis, they take over the parent role and become the next generation's caretakers. When "doing" parenthood under surveillance, private and public institutions of social control intervene to protect participants' children from child neglect and abuse.

Overall, with weak boundaries between the street stage and the home stage, children experience domestic violence and become an active audience to their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance. First, whether drug dealers or substance/drug users, participants used violence in their delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage. And when participants bring their violence home, it conflicts with their ideal parent role, threatening the protection expectation. Second, the children of substance/drug users become an active audience to their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance. Children become aware of their participants' delinquent/role performance when they notice the changes in family life. Although children witnessed their mothers' and fathers' delinquent/criminal roles, mothers' narratives showcase children witnessing their parents' delinquent/criminal roles performances. And as children get older, they become an active audience and become cautious. Third, participants' *inadequate* parent role performance does not go unnoticed and conventional family members remove children. The conventional parents remove children from the delinquent/criminal parent and threaten to use family court. In family court, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and their *inadequate* parent role performance on record is used to build a case and terminate their parental rights. Thus, participants go to court already defeated to lose their children. Whether the conventional family members were the accusers and/or responding to the family crisis, they take over the parent role performance and become the next generation's caretakers. When "doing" parenthood under surveillance, children

are removed from participants' care. And in addition to family separation through child removal from participants' care, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance prompts the delinquent/criminal justice system to remove parents from children's lives.

### Removing Parents

Under the surveillance of the justice/criminal justice system, participants are continuously under the threat of removal from their children's lives through incarceration. When performing the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, participants perceive their stay in *free society* as temporary. Thus, as part of their delinquent/criminal role performance, participants prepare to leave their children in *free society* as they transition into *convict society*. In "doing" so, male drug dealing participants accumulate a legal fund, but neglect to protect their female romantic companions from legal danger and threaten their children with removal of both parents. Once arrested, conventional family members initially attempt to intervene during the legal process, but all participants are convicted and sentenced. In preparation for their removal through incarceration, mothers (occasionally fathers) find care for their children, and all participants filter the information children receive and say goodbye to their children. When performing their delinquent/criminal role, participants "do" parenthood under surveillance and the juvenile/criminal justice system removes them from their children's lives.

### "I Got a Dime!"

In the *fast life*, participants perceived the juvenile/criminal justice system surveillance as part of everyday life and a *mouse-cat-game*. Focused on their delinquent/criminal role performance, drug dealing male participants accumulate a legal fund in attempts to preserve their freedom and presence in their children's lives. However, they bring legal danger to their romantic partners' lives and threaten their

children with the removal of both parents.<sup>80</sup> Once arrested, conventional family members initially attempt to aid participants through the legal process. However, their aid diminishes once they become more familiar with participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and participants appear to be unable to leave the correctional stage (high recidivism levels). Whether prepared or unprepared, (i) all participants are convicted and (ii) sentenced for a portion of their delinquent/criminal role performance and forced onto the correctional stage to perform their client/inmate role.<sup>81</sup>

Whether participants invested in a legal fund, are caught off guard through their associations, or had the aid of conventional family members, all participants were convicted for a portion of their delinquent/criminal role performance and acquired their client/inmate status (see table A23-A24 in Appendix A, page 453-454). As of August 2011, criminal courts in *Midwest State* have 1,400 cases against the participants, including 1,957 criminal charges, with an average of 34.33 charges per participant and a range of 4-100 charges (see table A22 in Appendix A, pages 451). All 57 participants have used the plea bargain process at some point in their lives and the majority of the charges were handled through the *plea bargain* process (1,268 charges; 67.4% of all charges). Through plea bargains, participants assumed guilt for 965 charges (49.3% of all charges) and the state dismissed 303 charges (15.48% of all charges). Only a minority of participants has experienced *trial* (24/57 participants), where participants were found guilty for 58 charges (2.96% of all charges) and innocent for 6 charges (.30% of all charges). Thirty-six participants had 228 charges *handled by the clerk*, such as traffic violations (11.65% of all charges). And lastly, 397 charges were *dismissed or transferred* to a different court (20.28% of all charges).<sup>82</sup> Regardless of preventative measures, all

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<sup>80</sup> Confirming previous findings in the gender and crime literature (Chesney-Lind and Pasko 2004), women were open to criminal charges through association with males.

<sup>81</sup> An experience of all participants because the sample consists of convicted individuals

<sup>82</sup> Such as a transfer to the federal courts.

participants acquired the client/inmate role for a portion of their delinquent/criminal role performance.

Most importantly, participants are legally forced to perform the client/inmate role on the correctional stage through various punishments (see table A23 in Appendix A, page 453). Regardless of the conviction procedure, participants were found guilty of 1,251 charges in *Midwest State* (63.9% of all charges) and were punished with fines, community service, jail time, quasi-incarceration, prison time, and/or seized property. First, all 57 participants have paid a *fine* at some point, for a total of 835 guilty charges, an average of 14.64 fines per participants and a range of 1 to 48 fines. The 57 participants have been charged a total of \$907,846.20 in fines and court cost in *Midwest State*, an average of \$15,927.13 per participants and a range of \$1,311.76 to \$83,884.42 (see table A25 on Appendix A on page 455). Second, 47 participants have been punished with *jail time* (82% of the sample) for a total of 39,976 jail days, an average of 701 jail days per participants and a range of 0 to 4,004 days. Third, 45 participants have been punished with *probation* (79% of the sample), for a total of 225 of the convictions ending in probation, summing up to 300 years of probation, an average of 5.25 years of probation per participant and ranging from 0-33 years of probation. Fourth, 45 of the participants have been sentenced to *imprisonment*, for a total of 300 years or an average of 5.25 years per participant, ranging from 0 to 48 years.<sup>83</sup> Fifth, only 10 participants were sentenced to *community service*, for a total of 2,049 community service hours, and only 12 participants received a seized property order. Sixth, only 23 participants were initially sentenced to a *community based correctional facilities* (qua-incarceration), while 45 have been assigned to community based corrections as a post-prison transitional corrections (quasi-incarceration and others) program at some point in their lives.

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<sup>83</sup> In *Midwest State*, imprisonment sentences are automatically cut in half. Also, any imprisonments under other jurisdictions are not included in this analysis, such as federal and other state imprisonment. However, according to participants' narratives, 8 of the 28 drug dealers and one substance/drug user in the sample spent time in federal prison to serve 10 year sentences (9/57).

Whether incarcerated or quasi-incarcerated, participants were legally forced to perform their client/inmate role on the correctional stage. And as participants transition into the client/inmate role and parents removal from children's lives, they attempt to rescue part of their ideal parent role.

#### “Pre-Incarceration Nesting”

Once in *convict society*, incarcerated or quasi-incarcerated, participants are unable to be physically present in their children's lives. Thus, participants prepare to transition out of their children's lives in *free society* and into *convict society* during the court procedures and days before they assume their incarceration. Thus, in attempts to rescue part of their ideal parent role on the home stage, participants prepare their children for parental removal. First, (i) mothers (occasionally fathers) arrange care for their children. All participants filter the information their children receive regarding their new correctional status in attempts to (ii) protect the children and (iii) preserve their presence and involvement in children's lives. And when the time comes, participants (iv) say goodbye to the children. Prior to assuming their client/inmate role (full or quasi-incarceration), a portion of participants temporarily returns to the home stage to partially perform their parent role.

When sentenced to incarceration, theirs or that of the other parent, mothers (and occasionally fathers) prepare the care of their children for the parental absence period. Similar to the survival strategies in poor African American/black communities previously documented (Stack 1970; Hamer and Marchioro 2002), mothers (and occasionally fathers) search for and secure resources to ensure their children's needs will be met during parental incarceration. Susie faced her spouse's incarceration and knew she needed to become financially independent to care for her four children—

*When their dad went to prison [second romantic partner], how long did he go for?*

Three or four years, but he was going in and out.

*How was that for you?*



It was tough. ‘Cause the first time, he started going like right after we had our first daughter. He was just steady going back and forth, back and forth. At first he was just like going to county. Then they sent him to boot camp. And then finally they sent him to prison. And I had never had a job before. I was like 22 and here with four kids. So, I went out and got a job. My first job was McDonalds. And I worked there from 10 at night to 6 in the morning. And then I went to school to be a CNA, from 9 in the morning to 3 in the afternoon.

*Who took care of the kids?*

My mom. We lived in the same house and they was little. Me and my kids stayed in one room. So, I took my oldest to school when I was getting up to go to school in the morning. Spend time with them, took care of dinner. Then, I would go to bed so I can get ready to go to work.

*How much did you actually sleep?*

Not a lot.

Upon her husband’s incarceration, Susie quickly took on the providing expectation and performed the single-parent role on the home stage. Upon parental removal, theirs or the other parent’s removal, women seek for and secure resources for children’s survival. In addition to preparing to provide for the children in the absence of the other parent, women make sure the convicted parents’ client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage do not bring danger to the home stage. Jason, now a 27 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, was in the middle of an FBI drug case against him and several associates. At 18 years of age and father to a 2 year old at the time, the FBI pressed him to *snitch* on his superiors in exchange of a less punitive outcome. In the process, Jason shared the possibility of a deal with the mother of his daughter, but she discouraged him from helping the FBI in order to prevent danger from coming to the home stage during his absence—

I respect [my daughter’s mother] 100% for—, she never asked me to tell that day when I told her. I’m like, “I could come home right now.” And she was like, “How? You can? Right now?” I’m like, “Yeap, police just want some questions answered.” And I told her I had to tell. She told me, “No, that’s more danger. Why would you want to even, want to chance something like that? How can you even live with your life? You’re putting our daughter in harm. You never know what that guy is capable of doing to her, what them guys are capable of doing.” He probably put a quarter on my head [\$25,000], something to push a person to do it. There’s people out here that’s killing, snatching purses for \$100. Don’t even know how much money is in there. There’s never a price to a person. A person’s life is priceless.

Jason's girlfriend discouraged him from collaborating with the FBI in attempts to protect their daughter from any retaliation, keeping danger away from the home stage in his absence. Whether it is the father or the mother being legally forced into client/inmate role performance through incarceration, women take the time to prepare the nest for their children. When facing incarceration, Liz, now a 23 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, had become distant from her conventional family members. During her pre-trial release, she found it necessary to reconnect in order to find a caretaker for her daughter—

I called [my mother] and she took [my kids] in. It took a couple of weeks to try to get everything settled down with my mom. She was working at the time, 50 hours a week, but she took them in and she still came to see me at jail. I think our relationship probably got better when I was in jail, you know.

*With the baby?*

Not just with that, she never talked to me before. She made it down there every Sunday, rain or shine, for one hour every Sunday.

In preparation for incarceration, Liz asked her mother to care for her children during her absence. Although previously distanced, Liz's mother accepted and began to care for her children and their overall relationship improved. In preparation for parental absence, participants secure resources to meet children's needs in their absence. In a similar manner, Ruth prepared for her own incarceration and found the resources necessary for her daughter's care. Her substance/drug using husband linked her to the production and distribution of illicit substances/drugs. Thus, she was convicted and sentenced to her current stay at RCF. In preparation for her absence, she searched for a caretaker—

I was going through court and I would always get nervous. Like, "I'm gonna go to jail or not?" And, I don't know. They talk a lot about, "What are you gonna do with [your daughter]?" And my plan changed so many times, 'cause I just didn't feel sure about the places [who to leave my daughter with]. Like, [my husband's] mom wanted her real bad. And it hurts me to tell her no, but I had to 'cause it's not safe for [my daughter]. She's too dramatic and wild. Her and [my husband's brothers and sister] fight all the time. And the place don't feel very safe for [my daughter]. And then she was mad at me. And then the family at church, they called and said they couldn't 'cause the guy had just gotten a second job or something. So, then I went back to [my social worker] again. She kept telling me she was gonna help me find a foster parent. And then, I start talking to [my husband's aunt]. I called her and asked. And then I didn't talk to her for a couple

of weeks, 'cause [my husband's] mom kept texting me that she was gonna try keeping [my daughter] and bla, bla, bla, bla. So, I then got scared and quit calling [my husband's aunt]. And then I was talking to my DHS worker and she said that she would go out there to [my husband's aunt's] with me and tell me what she thought. You know, 'cause she knew what kind of questions to ask. And I felt pretty comfortable. We went out there a couple of more times.

*Did you tell her why you were not contacting her for those weeks?*

Yeah. I told her that.

*What did she say?*

She's like, "Are you crazy. You could talk to me. I knew something was up." I'm glad that all that worked out.

*What was it like to leave the baby with someone who you didn't know everything about?*

It was hard. I mean, I spent a lot of time with [my husband's aunt] the last couple of weeks. She's always wanted to help us.

In preparing for her absence, Ruth struggled to find the proper caretaker and tiptoed around her husband-aunt's offer in fear of losing her daughter. After considering her mother-in-law, a family from her church, and her husband's aunt, she chose to temporarily leave her daughter with her husband's aunt. In the process, Ruth arranged for financial resources, housing, childcare, and decided the safest option. Because women in the community have lost children to temporary caretakers, women in this sample find it extremely difficult to trust prospective caretakers. Rosie lost her three older children to a temporary caretaker. Thus, finding a caretaker for her youngest daughter for her incarcerated period made her extremely nervous—

I was nervous because everybody told me that, "Let the boys go to grandma. It'll be alright. You'll always see them. You will always be a part of their life." And that was such a lie, you know. And I told dad, "While I'm in jail, I don't want you to go take her." And he said, "I'm not my mom." I said, "Alright."

Legally forced into a client/inmate role performance through incarceration and with limited options, Rosie chose her father as the caretaker. In preparation for incarceration, women actively prepared their children's nest for the parent removal period. When faced with father's incarceration, mothers prepare to be single parents on the home stage and keep danger away. When the mother is the one facing incarceration, they invest their energy on finding the proper care for the children for their absence period. Although participants perceive this to be a mother's task, fathers occasionally engage in pre-

incarceration nesting. After a year apart from his two sons, Butch Green, now a 48 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, received a call from his mother-in-law. The mother of his sons relapsed (also a substance/drug user) and abandoned her children. After reuniting with his sons, Butch Green was soon required to turn himself into county jail—

I had them move with their uncle, their mother's brother, until I got out and took them.

*For how long?*

Oh, just 8 months with her brother. I told them, "I did something wrong and I'm going to jail for it. When you're an adult, you will understand the problem."

They're alright with me, alright. I talked to them on the phone, seeing how they were doing, that they were going to school.

Although pre-incarceration nesting is predominantly a mother's task, fathers become occasionally involved when mothers were absent. In attempts to rescue and perform the ideal parent role, women (occasionally men) engage in pre-incarceration nesting, securing resources to meet children's needs during the parental incarceration period. In addition to pre-incarceration nesting, participants filter the information children receive regarding their correctional status to partially perform their ideal parent role.

As participants transition into "doing" parenthood under correctional supervision, they face a dilemma—to tell or not to tell their children about their legally forced client/inmate status? In considering the protecting expectation of their ideal parent role, participants filter information. James had taken the two-sphere approach to parenting while drug dealing. Thus, in collaboration with the mother of his children, he kept his children away from the criminal court during the conviction and sentencing process—

[My wife] was really upset. She was really upset 'cause she had told me. She's always telling me, prior, "Don't be hanging around the wrong people."

*So, was your wife present at the trial?*

Yes.

*Were the kids?*

No. No. She didn't want 'em there 'cause they was too close to me. We didn't want them to see when they took me back, when I got found guilty, handcuffed me. That would've really hurt the kids.

In performing the ideal parent role, James and his wife protected and kept their children away from the painful criminal court procedure. In attempting to perform their ideal parent role, participants chose between telling and not telling. Joseph, now a 28 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, wants to protect his children from learning about his experience in the *fast life* or under correctional supervision. Thus, he prefers not to share information about his correctional status with his children—

*Do the kids know where you're at right now?*

Well, I just tell them the work place. That's it. When I was in jail, I told 'em I was out of town. I don't want them knowing that, even to be around some other kids and, "You know, my dad was in jail." That's not something that's to be bothered with, nothing like that. Like, they never even knew I been in jail as many times as I've been. And I want to keep it like that.

*What happens to kids who know that stuff?*

Some tend to, when they get older, want to go thinking it's a cool place. And they want to be like they dad. Or, even if they don't want to go, the possibility came to where they might, they don't think of it as a big bad idea. "Well, my dad been before, you know." And that's not some place you want to go, for nobody. Go to college and work. That's them places you go. That's it.

In attempts to protect his children, Joseph filters the information the children receive about his correctional status. Also, he is interested in guiding them away from the *fast life*. Thus, he does not want to introduce any positive associations with correctional facilities. In performing their ideal parent role, participants filter the information the children receive with the protecting expectation in mind. Sam has been out of prison and under parole for the past 7 years. During this time, he developed a strong relationship with one of his teenage daughters, daily phone calls, texts, and part of her everyday life. After being sent to the WRC, one year before his parole ends, Sam has chosen not to tell his daughter about his current status within a quasi-incarceration setting to protect her from worrying—

Can't really tell the children that you are half incarcerated. She doesn't know where I'm at. She still thinks I'm in [the same state she is], 'cause she think I'm at work. When I call on the payphone, she thinks that I'm on my lunch break calling from the payphone at work. I feel if I'm gonna tell her the truth about one part of the situation, I might as well tell her all the truth. But she's not gonna understand that. If I tell her that I'm in a work release, that's the truth. But if I continue to speak my mind and let her know what I'm going through, which is the

truth, that's gonna hurt her. You know, "Why they—? Why is my daddy going through that?"

*So, you're trying to spare her—.*

Right, because they not going to understand. I'm only doing this to try to relocate. "Well, why you have to be there?" You know.

To protect his daughter, Sam has chosen to spare his daughter from knowing about his quasi-incarceration. During the initial role construction process, participants identified protecting children as one of their ideal parent role expectations. Also with the protection expectation in mind, another portion of participants chose to tell their children. Mike#1, now a 32 year old African American, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, chose to tell his 10 year old daughter the truth about his correctional status with the protection expectation in mind. Mike#1 and his daughter's mother went through a bitter divorce. Upon his incarceration, he was terrified to the thought of his ex-wife exaggerating the reality. To protect his daughter from confusion and engaging in unnecessary heartache, he chose to tell his daughter the truth—

I explained it to [my daughter]. Well, her mom just said, "Daddy went to jail. He's not coming back." And I didn't want her thinking that I was gone forever. As far as my daughter knew, I could have killed somebody. So, I explained it to her. I wrote and said I was in jail for doing some silly things, messing with guns. I'll be in for about two years and I will be out after that. Her mom is the type of person, she'll just let my daughter think what she wants, think the worse.

While performing their ideal parent role, a portion of participants told the children the truth about their correctional status in attempts to protect them from a painful confusion. In a similar situation, Bobby, now a 39 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, had to face his daughters after his ex-wife exaggerated his correctional status—

What she did say was, "You'll never—, you won't see your dad for at least five years. He's going to the penitentiary and you won't see him, won't talk to him, nothing." But they gave me four months here [at the RCF], so I told them it would be four months and I could talk to 'em. I talk to my kids every day. But they have to sneak around because they can't be honest with their mom and say, "I wanna talk to dad." She's really screwing it up. I've never had an assault charge on anybody, but she would be the one. I don't want to go face-to-face with her 'cause I probably would punch her right on the mouth. I hate to say that, but I would because the way she is doing my kids. I told my girls that I had

gotten in trouble because I was drinking. And I have to go away for like four months, not be able to see them. “I haven’t lied to you yet.” I said, “You just think back to everything that I tell you. I’ll be able to call you and see you on Sundays.”

Bobby chose to tell his daughters the truth because it appeared to be less painful option. In attempts to perform the protecting expectations of their ideal parent role, participants filter the information children receive about their correctional status. Depending on the home stage, participants tell or keep information from their children.

In addition to protecting children, being present and involved are two ideal parent role expectations. Thus, participants filter the information as they prioritize the being present and being involved expectations. Red, now a 38 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, is a strong believer on parental presence and involvement. However, these two ideals become impossible to achieve from the correctional stage without telling the children the truth about parents’ correctional status. Thus, he chose to keep an open communication with his children and prioritize parental presence/involvement—

For the first year, they thought I was just in jail. But after 7 months, I stopped being in jail and I went to federal prison. The big challenge was talking to my kids every day, every time I got on the phone. And when they start crying, my eyes start watering. “Dad, when you coming home?” And you cain’t really give them no honest answer. You really don’t want to lie to ‘em. If you haven’t lied this far, so why start now? Just because you’re in a bad situation, you know what I mean. So, you tell ‘em, “I don’t know when I’m coming, but I’m definitely coming.” Oh, s-h, not a good thing. You *snatched* out their lives, just that quick. You just gotta keep doing what you doing. Be in they life. So, you don’t lie.

To partially perform his ideal parent role during his incarceration, to be involved, he chose to tell his children the truth. With open communication, Red was a long distance involved father throughout his incarceration. To be involved in children’s lives despite incarceration, parents chose to tell their children the truth about their correctional status.

Simon told his daughters about his incarceration—

I wanted them to know where I was, to come and see me. I needed them. But [their mom] didn’t let them. She was real mad for a while, didn’t want me to tell them. And even phone, they don’t want to talk to me.

Although desiring presence and involvement, his ex-wife and children did not respond to the truth and closed the door. Because revealing correctional status does not always conclude with involvement, especially during their prospective reintegration, a portion of participants chose not to tell their children. With future presence and involvement in mind, Susie chose not to tell her children about her current correctional status—

*Do they understand why you're here?*

I didn't wanna tell 'em. You know, 'cause I hadn't seen them in like two years when I got 'em. And then my P.O. [probation officer] called me to say that I had to come in here [RCF]. So, I didn't want to tell 'em, "Well yeah, ya'll gotta go back 'cause I gotta go to jail." 'Cause I didn't want them to tell their aunt. And then she'd try to use that against me when it's time for me to get 'em back. I didn't even let them ride with me to get dropped off. And I told them to call they aunt, to come and get 'em. And they kept lying, saying she wouldn't answer the phone so they wouldn't have to go back. But they went with they aunt.

In a continuous struggle with the caretaker, telling the children about her quasi-incarceration could threaten Susie's future presence and involvement in her children's lives. Thus, she chose to not tell her children about her quasi-incarceration. In prioritizing the presence and involvement expectations of the ideal parent role, participants filtered the information children received. Whether parents chose to tell or not tell their children, they made their decision based on the ideal parent role expectations—protecting, presence, and involvement. And the parents who chose to tell their children the truth faced the difficult task of saying goodbye.

In addition to preparing children's care and filtering the information they receive, participants say goodbye to the children as they transition into "doing" parenthood under corrections. Because the parent role and the client/inmate role both demand presence and involvement, participants are forced to be absent from their children's lives during incarceration. Thus, participants have to say goodbye to their children. Saying goodbye to their children was a difficult experience and a clear transition from *free society* to *convict society*. Rosie was facing incarceration. Thus, she prepared and said goodbye to her 6 year old daughter the morning of her trial—



So, I got an attorney for it. And the attorney looked at the case and said, “This is silly, worst you’ll do 30 days [in jail]. If so, I’ll ask the judge to give you a week to turn yourself in, get yourself together.” [My daughter]’d just started first grade. And I was so excited. And she was going to take the school bus for the first time. And, we were having all sorts of fun [pleasant laughter]. She told me, “I love you.” Oh, I cried. She’s running around her happy little self. I tried to sit her down the night before. Tell her that I might go to jail.

*How do you tell your six year old that?*

I just said, “I want to talk to you. Ready?” She goes, “Ready!” “Mommy made some mistakes and got in trouble. And just like you get grounded, I kind of got grounded.” She cried. And she gives me a drawing with a sad face crying, in her little hand writing. ‘Cause she didn’t know how to write. “I don’t want you to go to jail.” I said, “Don’t worry about it. But you can still come and see me.” And I tucked her in bed that night, knowing that it could be the last night. I told her, “Every night, if I go away, I’m gonna kiss you.” And I said, “Mom’s kisses will always find you. I need you to repeat it 30 times. Mom’s kisses will always what?” She says, “Will always find me.” So, I told her, “Your grandma might pick you up. Don’t be scared.” She cried. She didn’t want to go to school. She’s like, “I want to go with you and talk to the judge.” I told her, “You can’t. It’s grown up stuff” [as she attempts to catch her breath from crying]. She hates it when I say that. So, I hugged her and I watched her go to school. And that was the last time I ever had her. When they booked me, I had \$12 dollars and I called [my step mom]. “Did you get [my daughter] from school?” “Yeah, she’s here.” I asked her, “Is she okay?” “Well, yeah.” She got on the phone and I was trying not to cry [three deep crying breaths as she remembers]. And I’m telling her, still was a mom at this point, “Make sure you do your homework. Don’t give grandma any trouble. And eat your dinner.” And she says, “Mommy, are you crying?” I said, “Well, I just miss you.” At this point she wasn’t too upset because I don’t think she understood it was gonna be as long as it was [five year separation including jail and other correctional programs]. I think she was thinking, “Oh, it’s just an overnight with grandma.”

What appeared to be a 30 day incarceration, turned into 7 months in jail and 5 overall years of parental absence. With limited understanding at the time, Rosie said goodbye to her daughter as she transitioned from parental role performance on the home stage to client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. Other parents, aware of the lengthy sentence, prepare and create memories with their children before their departure. Jason went on the run from the FBI and engaged in intense presence with his daughter before his long term incarceration—

After I got out [pre-trial release], they all started spilling their guts [the associates]. And that’s when they start looking for me [FBI]. [My girlfriend] knew where I was hiding. This pissed me off ‘cause she brings [my daughter].

I'm on the run and she brings [my 2 year old daughter]. And she leaves me with her and [the FBI] is looking for me. We was at my uncle's basement. I'm on the phone with [my girlfriend], "What you doing? Come get [our daughter]?" She like, "No, you stay with her as long as you can. She needs to remember you." It hit me. It hit me right then. So, we built a swing set in the basement, spent four days having fun. We took a lot of pictures, lots. And we went to the park at night, only when dark. But my girl did that. She made sure we took a lot of pictures. She made sure my [daughter] was with me. [My girlfriend] could see what was coming [ten year sentence in federal prison]. She started working when I was on the run.

In preparing for a long term inability to be present in their children's lives, participants say goodbye to the children. In doing so, participants prepare the children for their prospective long absence. Ruth knew her husband was to spend a long-term prison sentence away and she would turn herself into a quasi-incarceration program soon after.

Thus, she made sure her daughter was able to say goodbye to her father in county jail—  
Before he went to prison, like he had a special visit and talk to [our daughter]. I think she knows he is her dad [1 year old girl at the time]. Just the way she's acting with him. She kept putting her hand up to his hand. And she just acted different around him. Like most guys she's around, she's scared of them. When she woke up she goes, "Bye da-dad!" It was good that he saw her 'cause he loves her.

*What did he do when you guys had to leave?*

He cried. He missed a lot, like her learning how to walk and crawl. He wasn't around for the baby. He loves her. She's gonna be a daddy's girl. She will be.

Although participants describe saying goodbye to children as a difficult experience, once children were older and recidivism increased, children become accustomed to saying goodbye. Javier has been in and out of prison throughout his daughter's life. Now as a young woman, she perceives her father's incarceration as part of her everyday life—

[My daughter] knew I was going back. I went and told her. I said, "[Daughter], I'm going back to prison." She says, "I know. How long?" I said, "I'm out before 50." It was a blessing. I'm 51 now. She said, "Alright." Went back for a violation. And she saw that coming too.

*So, did she make peace with it?*

Oh yeah. Absolutely. No matter what I do, [my daughter] will love me. She says, "No matter what you think of yourself as a dad, you are the best dad." Oh, I wasn't. I don't say that.

*But she thinks it?*

And it feels good that she is able to overlook some things. Or maybe to understand where I was and what I was going through, take that into

consideration. I know that [my daughter] loves me unconditionally. And that's reciprocated. I love all my kids, unconditionally, whether I see 'em or not.

Javier's daughter has experienced her father's addiction and repetitious incarceration throughout her life. Thus, saying goodbye to her father has become a normal occurrence. Although parents' experiences with saying goodbye to their children varied, the goodbye marked a clear transition from parent role performance on the home stage to client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage, from presence to absence in children's everyday life.

Overall, with incarceration in the horizon, participants prepare the nest for the children before leaving to perform the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. Legally removed from their children's lives, participants attempt to rescue part of their ideal parent role. In doing so, mothers (occasionally fathers) identify resources to secure children's wellbeing during parental incarceration. Participants filter the information children receive about their correctional status to fulfill the protecting and being present/involved expectations of their ideal parent role, and say goodbye to the children as they transition into physical absence from children's lives. As participants are legally forced into their client/inmate role performance through incarceration on the correctional stage, participants attempt to rescue their ideal parent role and engage in pre-incarceration nesting.

### Conclusion

Since childhood and adolescence, participants have been under the surveillance of conventional family members (the private social-control institution) and the juvenile/criminal justice system (the public social-control institution). Continuously on stage, participants' role performance is continuously under review and institutions of social control remove children and parents from the home stage. First, participants' *inadequate* parent role performance prompts conventional family members and family court to remove children from parents' care through the termination of their parental

rights. Second, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance prompts the juvenile/criminal justice system to remove parents from *free society* and children's lives through incarceration. Caught in role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role, client/inmate role, and ideal parent role, children are removed from participants' care and parents are removed from children's lives.

In the *fast life*, violence easily transitions from the street stage to the home stage. Presenting a tough and violent image on the street stage aids drug dealing participants to ease illicit transactions, prevent victimization, and protect the family. Amongst substance/drug users, participants used violence to respond to and prevent victimization. In performing their delinquent/criminal role alongside family members on the street stage, participants' use of violence easily transitions into the home stage. And although drug dealing participants attempt to practice two-sphere parenting and substance/drug using participants attempt to practice partial parenting, a portion of participants bring violence to their families of procreation, neglect their ideal parent role and expose their children to danger.

With weak boundaries, children become an active audience as participants perform their delinquent/criminal role. Children notice the small changes in family life and become aware of their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance. As the boundaries blur, children witness their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance (especially mothers' delinquent/criminal role performance) and children become an active audience. In attempts to rescue the protecting expectation of their ideal parent role, a portion of substance/drug using participants leaves the home stage. Whether parents know it or want it, children are an active audience and respond to parents' conflicting role performance while "doing" parenthood in the *fast life*.

On the stage, the role conflict between participants' delinquent/criminal role and their ideal parent role prompts conventional family members to remove children from the home stage. In attempts to protect the next generation, the co-parent pushes the

substance/drug using parent out of children's lives and conventional family members accuse participants of child/neglect abuse in family court. Once in court, participants' delinquent/criminal role performance and their *inadequate* parent role performance is used to build a case to terminate their parental rights. With their delinquent/criminal role performance on record and an *inadequate* ideal parent role performance, participants take a defeated approach and go to family court *to lose their children*. In response, conventional family members become caretakers of the next generation.

In a similar fashion, participants are removed from their children's everyday life through incarceration. Focused on their delinquent/criminal role performance, drug dealing participants accumulate a legal fund in attempts to preserve their freedom and presence in their children's lives. However, drug dealing parents bring legal danger into women's lives and threaten children with the removal of both parents. Once arrested, conventional family members initially attempt to aid participants through the legal process. But after becoming more familiar with participants' delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and participants' continuous returns to the correctional stage (recidivism), the aid from conventional family members' decreases. Regardless of the preparation, all participants are convicted for a portion of their delinquent/criminal performance and are legally forced into their client/inmate role performance through various punitive outcomes. If sentenced to incarceration, participants attempt to rescue part of their ideal parent role and engage in pre-incarceration nesting.

During the court procedures and days before they transition into their legally forced client/inmate role performance, participants prepare to transition out of their children's lives and into *convict society*. Once in *convict society*, incarceration or quasi-incarceration, participants are unable to be physically present in their children's everyday lives. Thus, participants engage in an extensive preparation process in attempts to rescue a portion of their ideal parent role. In the process, mothers (and occasionally father) seek and secure resources to meet children's needs during their or the other parents' absence.

In performing their ideal parent role (protecting, being present, and being involved), participants filter the information children receive regarding their correctional status. And as they transition into their client/inmate role performance onto the correctional stage, participants say goodbye to the children.

Trapped in role conflict and continuously under surveillance, institutions of social control remove children from participants' care through termination of parental rights and remove parents from children's lives through incarceration. First, as participants' delinquent/criminal role performance undermines their ideal parent role, their parent role performance is perceived as *inadequate* and children are removed. Whether the delinquent/criminal identity is more hierarchically salient than their parent identity whether is a matter of weak boundaries or limited resources, a significant portion of participants disregard their protecting expectation and neglected/abuse their children. Conventional family members and the family court deem participant's parent role performance *inadequate* and respond to protect the children from their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance. Second, participants' delinquent/criminal role and their client/inmate role are two sides of the same coin. On the street stage, participants fail to hide their delinquent/criminal role performance from juvenile/criminal justice staff and are legally forced into client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. In attempts to rescue their parent role, mothers arrange for children's care (occasionally fathers) and all participants filter the information children receive and say goodbye. On multiple stages, participants fail to adequately perform conflicting roles and the audience responds with parent-child separation.

CHAPTER VIII  
*SNATCHED FROM “DOING” PARENTHOOD*

All participants have experienced incarceration on the correctional stage at some point in their life course. As of August 2011, 47 participants have served jail time, 45 have served prison time, and all 57 participants have served time in quasi-incarceration programs in *Midwest State*. Once on the correctional stage, participants begin to negotiate their parent role with caretakers. In their new situation, the client/inmate role expects participants to be present and involved, and accept the loss of privacy, autonomy, power, and financial resources. In the process, participants acquire criminal justice debt and are court ordered to pay their debt (criminal justice debt and child support debt). Because they have been legally forced to place their client/inmate role above their parent role within their identity salience hierarchy,<sup>84</sup> participants are unable to be physically present in their children’s everyday life and land at the mercy of the children’s caretakers. According to Jason, now a 27 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, every incarcerated parent wants to see their children—

My grandmother and [my daughter’s mother] came faithfully. Now this other girl I was messing with, she started coming too. See one thing about being locked up, it’s different caliber of dudes. You got some guys who needs things like that, needs they family to uplift ‘em. Not me, I was used to being on my own. Letters, cards, I don’t care. Just let me do the time. As long as I had money on my books, I was cool. But my daughter, now that changed a lot. I really needed her.

In light of their new definition of the situation, all participants begin to negotiate for partial access to their parent role from the correctional stage. In the process, participants redefine their romantic relationships with their children’s other parent to access external resources and their children, face obstacles in receiving children’s visits on the correctional stage, and become the audience as others perform the parent role in their

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<sup>84</sup> The transition from the street stage to the correctional stage does not always lead to the end of a delinquent/criminal role performance for all participants. Previous studies have documented delinquent/criminal role performances on the correctional stage (Crewe 2006).

children's lives. On the correctional stage, participants are *snatched* from "doing" parenthood.

In attempts to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage, male participants renegotiate their romantic/spousal role and parent role with their children's other parent. Already in unstable relationships, a significant portion of participants end their romantic relationships soon after incarceration. Unable to reconcile with their children's other parent, incarcerated parents experience a difficult time accessing their parent role performance from the correctional stage. Experiencing a gendered driven placement, fathers' children are predominantly in the care of the mothers and mothers' children are predominantly in the care of extended relatives. In time and after several legally forced client/inmate role performances on the correctional stage, participants come to appreciate the importance of their relationship with their children's other parent. And in addition to negotiation with their children's other parent, participants face additional obstacles to children's visits.

In attempts to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage, a portion of fathers refuse to receive visits from their children on the correctional stage. These fathers avoid children's exposure to the correctional stage to protect the children from the social and physical dangers of the correctional stage, to avoid guiding children towards norm violation, and to protect children from witnessing their degrading client/inmate role performance. When faced with role conflict between the ideal parent role and the client/inmate role, fathers prioritized their ideal parent role.

In addition to unstable relationships and role conflict, geographical distance and correctional policies reinforce the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage. The geographical distance interacts with various family life realities to limit children's visits onto the correctional stage. But as participants transition to closer incarceration facilities, from prisons to quasi-incarceration facilities, participants receive more visits. Furthermore, specific correctional policies reinforce the boundaries



between the home stage and the correctional stage. Overall, unstable relationships with the children's other parent, role conflict between the ideal parent role and the client/inmate role, geographical distance, and correctional policies limits children's visits onto the correctional stage.

*Snatched* from "doing" parenthood, participants become the audience to the caretaker's parent role performance. In the audience from the correctional stage, mothers who engaged in pre-incarceration nesting express a sense of satisfaction with the care their children receive. Although these children are safe and cared for, they complain about their caretakers and mothers feel a sense of powerless while on the correctional stage. And whether it is fathers or mothers on the correctional stage, incarcerated parents are excluded from everyday decisions in their children's everyday lives.

As a powerless audience from the correctional stage, participants also struggle with the protection expectation of their ideal parent role. With children in their mothers' care, male participants discuss their inability to protect their children from other males' presence and exposure to others' delinquent/criminal role performance. And a portion of participants were a powerless audience to others neglecting/abusing their children. On the correctional stage, participants are *snatched* from "doing" parenthood.

### The Caretakers

Whether the participants removed themselves from the home stage, were removed from the home stage due to participants' delinquent/criminal role performance, or were removed from their children's life through incarceration, participants' experiences with caretakers while on the correctional stage are gendered driven experiences. According to a demographical survey conducted during the interview process, children's caretakers varied (see table A20 in Appendix A, page 449). At the time of the interview, 57.7% of participants' children were minors (89/154), 39.3% are adults (61/154), and 3% were diseased (4/154). Of the minor children, 62 were under their mother's care, 22 were

under the care of other conventional family member (great grandparents, grandparents, aunts, and siblings), and only 5 were under the care of the department of social services or adopted. Reconfirming the literature (Travis and Waul 2001; Enos 2001), participants' experience with caretakers was gendered driven throughout their parent role trajectories. For fathers, the majority of their minor children were under the care of the mothers. But when a minority of their children's mothers lost custody, foster care or/and extended relatives took over the caretaker role. As for mothers, their minor children's caretakers were extended family members and social services. In addition to the gendered assignment of childcare, father's romantic relationships with the mother limit their ability to perform the parent role.

Once on the correctional stage, romantic partners/spouses become male participants' most prominent bridge to the home stage and *free society*. Similar to previous studies, the male participants in this sample perceive their relationship with the mother of their child and the child as "a package deal" (Furstenberg 1995; Nurse 2004; Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004). The other parent caring for minor children control participants' ability to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage. Thus, a portion of participants simultaneously renegotiate their romantic/spousal role and parent role with their children's other parent. In the process, a portion of participants end and others re-establish their romantic relationship with their children's other parent.

Participants' ability to partially perform their parent from the correctional stage depends on the collaboration of their children's other parent. Thus, participants begin to recuperate their romantic relationships soon after being legally forced onto the correctional stage. Similar to previous literature (Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004), participants in already unstable relationships experience separation and divorced soon after their arrival onto the correctional stage. And even those in what appeared stabled relationships experience the end of romantic relationships and heartache on the correctional stage. Unable to reconcile with their children's other parent, a significant

portion of participants experience a difficult time accessing the home stage. Thus, participants with previous correctional experience begin to renegotiate their romantic relationships soon after being legally forced onto the correctional stage. In the process, men classified women as *good women* if they successfully perform the single-parent role and allow for the incarcerated father to partially perform his parent role from the correctional stage. Moreover, men perceive women as *good women* if they remain faithful to the incarcerated father. In renegotiation with their romantic partners, participants gain partial access to the home stage from the correctional stage. In addition to objections from their children's other parent, more obstacles challenge participants' ability to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage.

#### Obstacles to Visiting

The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role both expect presence and involvement from participants. Thus, children's visits onto the correctional stage and communication through phones/letters allow participants to be partially present and involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. However, being legally forced into the client/inmate role strengthens the boundaries between the correctional stage and the home stage and limits participants' ability to interact with their children. First, in attempts to partially perform the ideal parent role from the correctional stage, a portion of fathers prioritize guiding and protecting their children over being present in their children's lives through visits. Second, the geographical distance between the home stage and the correctional stage interact with various family life realities and limits children's visits onto the correctional stage. Third, policies governing phone systems and client/inmates interaction with others limit participants' ability to be involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. Role conflict and strengthened boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage limit participants' ability to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage.

“Dad in the Zoo!”

Although the parent role expects presence and involvement, children’s visits onto the correctional stage limit participants’ ability to protect and guide their children. Thus, in attempts to partially perform their ideal parent role, a portion of incarcerated fathers refused to receive visits from their children on the correctional stage.<sup>85</sup> In attempts (i) to protect the children from the social and physical dangers of the correctional stage, (ii) to avoid guiding children towards norm violation, and (iii) to protect children from witnessing their degrading client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage, a portion of the fathers in this study refuse visits from their children.

Participants’ legally forced client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage limits their ability to be physically present on the home stage. To fulfill the presence expectation, participants can have their children visit on the correctional stage. But the correctional stage represents danger to the children. Charlie, now a 43 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, describes the dangers on the correctional stage—

There’s nothing good when you have to come to prison to visit their father [laughter], because there’s other criminals in that room. They hear the profanity, the aggravation, and they know when people are angry. You got a guy sitting out here screaming at his old lady because she’s cheating on him with his dad. And you got a guy over here screaming at his old lady because she’s not tricking [selling sex] to make money for him to send him. I mean, a lot of things going on in those visiting rooms that’s not good for children to hear. You know, when you’re a convict, it doesn’t bother you, you’re immune to it. But, when a child hears this, it’s a whole ‘nother deal for them. I would imagine, you know. They actually get scared. They don’t know what’s going on. They know they’re at a prison.

Charlie describes the social realities and danger children can be exposed to when visiting their parents on the correctional stage. When comparing *Midwest State* and *State B* visiting rooms, Peter, now a 44 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer,

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<sup>85</sup> Similar to the substance/drug using parent in a deep relapse who leaves the home stage to protect the children from the danger they represent (chapter 6).

describes the physical environment and danger children can be exposed to during visits onto the correctional stage—

When you go in [a *State B* maximum security prison], you got big signs in the visiting room, “Please remain seated if shots are fired.” You know. You don’t want ‘em see these things. There is tear gas canisters. They’re hanging from the ceiling in case they have to smoke the visiting room. So, there’s a lot of things. And kids notice this. They ask questions. I remember [my daughter] pointing up and asking me about those canisters hanging from the ceiling. Sitting on a table, hit the switch, dropped them, tear gas flows everywhere, everybody hits the floors and covers their face up. It never happened the whole time I was there, but it could happen. And you know, you try to be honest with ‘em, try to explain to ‘em. But you know, the more they learn, the more it affects ‘em. And then they think, “Wow, wow, that was a rough world.” Here [in *Midwest State*], the visiting rooms are a lot cleaner. They’re a lot quieter and everything else. But at the same time, it’s still a prison.

During his daughter’s visits, Peter exposed his daughter to the realities of the correctional stage. Because of the variety of social and physical danger children can be exposed to, a significant portion of participants chose to refuse their children’s visits while on the correctional stage. Eric, now a 32 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, ends his children’s visits as they get older—

I didn’t like them really coming after the third time [his 3<sup>rd</sup> time in prison]. They was getting older and I didn’t want them to get comfortable in that environment, you know. ‘Cause the more you are there, the more they accept how things are in there. Even listening to people in there and those heavy doors, it’s nothing after a while. So, I kind of limited them coming to see me. So, I didn’t have them come down at all.

*What were you thinking?*

They’re older. And I didn’t want them to think that that was cool. ‘Cause I knew they looked up to me.

As his children got older, Eric became more concerned with the dangers of the correctional stage. Thus, he chose to partially perform his ideal parent role and protect his children, strengthening the boundaries between the parent role and the client/inmate role. In addition to the physical and social dangers on the correctional stage, a portion of participants attempt to protect their children from becoming comfortable with the *fast life*.

Although participants engage in a delinquent/criminal role performance, their ideal parent role expects them to guide their children in a moral-centered world towards conventionality. And receiving visits in prison threatens participants' ability to do so. Thus, a portion of fathers refuse visits from their children in attempts to guide them away from becoming comfortable with their criminal lifestyle. Purple, now a 29 year old

African American father and ex-drug dealer, refused visits from his son —

*As the son of an incarcerated father and now as an incarcerated father, do you recommend that children visit their parents in prison?*

I wouldn't recommend it just because if they look up to you, and you're their father or mother, as they grow older, even though you might turn your life around when you get out, half of us don't, that child is gonna have it in his head that prison is a place to be. Because somebody he loves so much was in there. And eventually that child is gonna turn into a young adult and think that it's cool to go to prison because "my big brother was there, my dad was there," instead of going to school. If my son keeps visiting, even if I tell him this is wrong, it's gonna be in his head that it's okay. That's how I felt. "If the average person now is going to prison, it must be a magical thing." For a lot of us young ghetto boys, that's our college. I wouldn't want anybody's child to go visit unless they had a big sentence, like a life sentence. I wouldn't recommend it.

Participants are to guide their children by example. Thus, having children witness their imprisonment threatens participants' ability to guide their children towards moral-centered conventional behavior. Mike#2, now a 42 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, refused visits to ensure his children's overall well-being—

*Have the visits affected your kids?*

I don't think my incarceration affected them too much because I wouldn't allow them to be involved. Now, if I had allowed them to come see me, and they see me in prison, deal with me, even pictures in prison, they knew where I was. But I wouldn't allow them to.

*What do you think it does to a child when they are allowed in [to visit]?*

It depends on what you're going through. If you're not doing okay in prison, and you're not trying to educate yourself, go to school, stay out of trouble, and do all the right things, I think it can have a big negative effect on 'em. You can't just tell your kids, "This is wrong. This is right." You have to show your kids this is wrong and this is right. Doing time the convict way, you showing 'em how to do wrong. Because of it, I didn't let 'em come see me.

As previously discussed, all participants express a desire of conventional life for their children (see chapter 5). In attempts to guide his children away from the *fast life*, Mike#2 refused visits from his children. Matthew, now a 24 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, refuses to receive visits from his daughter while quasi-incarcerated—

I don't want her to see me locked up in the facility, seeing me here can do damage to her.

*What do you mean?*

I supposed to show her right from wrong. Me being here is just wrong. I don't want to show her wrong. If I was in college, I would bring her, show her. But here, she has no business here.

*So, she has never visited you?*

No. I won't let her visit me down here [WRC]. I don't want no baby to visit me down here. This is a freaking prison [quasi-incarceration]. So, that's why I told [my wife] not to bother to come and see me. I come home and see you [during furloughs or job seeking hours, 12-5pm].

Living in a moral-centered society, participants identified guiding children as an expectation of their ideal parent role. Once on the correctional stage, participants experience role conflict and opted to not receive their children's visits in attempts to not guide them the *wrong direction*. Furthermore, a portion of fathers want to protect their children from witnessing their degrading client/inmate role performance.

On the correctional stage, participants' client/inmate role performance involves the surrendering of individual power and autonomy. To protect the children from watching their father's degradation on the correctional stage, a portion of participants refuse their children's visits. Correctional officers hold the power and the clients/inmates are continuously reminded of their low status. Jerry, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, refuses to accept his son's attempts to visit—

I don't want him to come down here, put up with [points towards the correctional officers]. This is a correctional facility and there are cocky attitudes. I don't want nobody to see me at my most vulnerable state. And being in prison where you ain't got no control, that's as vulnerable as it gets. And I didn't really want see anyone, especially my son. I want to be the epitome of strength to him. So, if he has a weakness, he can look to me for help. So, I don't ever want to see him see me at my weakest point.

The ideal parent role expects participants to protect their children from danger. In attempts to preserve his parent role, Jerry refuses his son's visits and strengthens the boundaries between the correctional stage and the home stage. A significant portion of participants attempt to keep their children from becoming members of the direct audience that witnesses their client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. Ray, now a 38 year old Mexican American father and recovering substance/drug user, never opened the door for his children's visit—

*Were they able to visit you when you were in [prison]?*

I never wanted them to.

*Why?*

I didn't want them to see me that way. It's like going to the zoo. Seeing somebody behind closed—. There's no way that I would allow that. Even if I would've got five years out of it, pictures would be enough for me. For one thing, if it was the other way around, I wouldn't want to see my dad like that. I mean, I think it would hurt them more than it hurt me, just to see a person like that. I can't do it.

Legally captive on the correctional stage, receiving visits means exposing children to their client/inmate role performance. In addition to losing their protector status, witnessing the degradation of a parent can be painful for the children. Thus, Ray refused to accept his children's visits during his stay on the correctional stage. The correctional officers, their commanding voice, the sound of the secured heavy door, the sterile look of the visiting area, the glass in the visiting room, the use of TV monitors to communicate in the county jail, or the constant presence of guards as parents and children attempt to have a private conversation are a constant reminder of the parents' client/inmate status. To avoid this scenario, Eli, now a 33 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, avoids any visit—

I just don't have none of my baby mamas' come see me. I remember one time, [my daughter]'s mom tried to come up there to bring [my daughter] to see me. But luckily, here in [the county jail in the *Midwest State* side], if they name ain't on the list, they ain't getting in. They don't care if they kids or nothing. So, I ain't have her name on there. I mean, it ain't really no way of kind of handling it because you just gotta deal with it, be strong about it. I made the mistake. Why should they have to see me in prison? It hurts them to see me in there. I mean, there ain't a day that go by when I don't think about my kids. It's hard.



In attempts to protect his children from witnessing their father's client/inmate role performance, Eli refuses to accept children's visits. Attempting to protect their children from witnessing their fathers' degradation as clients/inmates, a significant portion of the fathers in the sample reinforce the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage. To do so, they refuse visits from their children onto the correctional stage, prioritizing the protection expectation over the presence expectation of their ideal parent role.

Overall, a significant portion of the fathers in this study refused to accept visits from their children while incarcerated or quasi incarcerated. Although this appears to confirm the image of the careless and absent incarcerated father, the logic behind their decision reflects their desire to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage. They refuse visits from their children in order to protect the children from the social and physical dangers on the correctional stage, to avoid guiding children towards norm violation, and to protect children from witnessing their degrading client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. In addition to the end of romantic relationships with children's other parent and fathers' choice not to receive their children's visits, legal and physical distance between the home stage and the correctional stage limits participants' ability to see their children during incarceration.

#### "It's Too Far!"

In addition to objections from their children's other parent and participants own attempts to protect children from the dangers of the correctional stage, the geographical distance between the home stage and the correctional stage becomes an obstacle to children's visits.<sup>86</sup> The (i) geographical distance interacts with various family life realities and threatens children's visits onto the correctional stage. And (ii) as participants transfer to closer incarceration facilities, from (state or federal) prison to

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<sup>86</sup> Confirming previous literature (Mauer and Chesney-Lind 2002)

quasi-incarceration facilities, (iii) participants receive more visits. The geographical distance between the home stage and the correctional stage keeps participants focused on their client/inmate role performance and away from fulfilling the presence expectation of their ideal parent role.

While performing their client/inmate role on the correctional stage, children's visits allow participants to be present in their children's lives without visits. But the geographical distance between stages interacts with other family realities to threaten children's visits onto the correctional stage. Upon incarceration, Dee, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, had a difficult time receiving visits from her children on the correctional stage. At the time, her four children were in late childhood and pre-adolescence, in foster care and dependent on the social worker to drive them to prison—

*What kind of relationship are you having with your kids [while in prison] at this time?*

I didn't get a lot of visits. I got to [prison] in September. I had two visits while I was there, from September to January. And then in January, they sent me to [another prison]. Now, the ride down there was 8 hours, 4 and a half and 4 and a half. So, that's a day's work [for the social worker]. So, I got one visit that lasted like 10 minutes because she had to get back and clock out. They used all of the time for driving, back and forth. So, I got like 10 minutes, just enough to say, "Hello! How you doing?" And cry a little bit. I went to court and asked the judge for a court visit. And he said no at first. So I said—

"Well, I haven't seen my kids in over a year. I need to see my children."

"Why you haven't seen your children?"

"Cause I'm down here at [long distance prison]. And it's too far away."

"You haven't had but one visit in a year?"

"Yeah. That's it."

"Well, we're gonna see about this. You should be allowed to see your children."

So, he put it for me to have a change of location. That's when they sent me back to [the closer prison]. He told them to send me back immediately. And there was a bus service up, not far away. And they had the case worker to come get them from the house and take 'em to the bus station, a chartered bus. That's how I started getting visits.

*How often did they visit then?*

Well, by this time [my oldest son] was selling dope. So, only some of them came to visit.

During her 6 years of incarceration on the correctional stage, Dee experienced a variety of visit situations depending on the geographical distance and its interaction with the social worker's schedule and eventually her children's interest and ability to come and visit. In interaction with other family situations, geographical distance prevents children's visits onto the correctional stage. Joseph, now a 28 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, has the desire to receive visits from his children. However, he discourages children's visits to prevent the struggle the mother of his children would face on the road with two rowdy toddlers and an uncomfortable pregnancy—

*When you're there [in state prison], how did you do?*

Just call 'em at night time because I didn't get the chance to get no visits in my time down there. So I just called 'em every day.

*If you had a chance to get them to visit, would you have?*

Hell yeah! It's just, like I didn't really want 'cause it's a long way from home. It's about 5-6 hours. And the twins' mom, she was pregnant. I didn't really want her driving all the way, pregnant and being with them. They bad ass in the back [toddlers], you know. 'Cause they run her over completely. They don't listen to her at all.

In considering the long geographical distance and its interaction with the children's age and the mother's pregnancy, Joseph opted to not request his children's visits during his client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. In a similar manner, Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, was eager to receive visits from her baby daughter during this quasi-incarceration. But the geographical distance's interaction with her daughter's developmental stage, visiting hours, and the caretakers' health makes it difficult to receive visits—

They come and see me when [the social service agency] brings my daughter up here. [The social service agency] can bring her for two hours any day of the week. There's visiting Friday and Saturday here, but it's so late. And [my hometown outside the *Metro Area*] is about an hour and 45 minutes from here. So, by the time they got her here and get her back, she's in bed by nine. She's just, every time we have visits, she'll be tired and cranky.

*Does [the caretaker] ever bring her?*

My husband's aunt [caretaker] brought her up last Saturday. And it was nice, but she has bad eye sight and can't drive. When her husband had a day off, that's why they came up on Saturday, 'cause he drove.

The geographical distance in interaction with the caretakers' health, her daughters' age, Ruth's own correctional visiting schedule, and the social service agency's limitations make it difficult to receive visits. In combination with other uncontrollable realities of family life, geographical distance threatens children's visits onto the correctional stage and participants' ability to be present in their children's lives.

While performing their client/inmate role on the correctional stage and without visits, participants are unable to be present in their children's lives. But as participants transitioned from state/federal prison to quasi-incarceration facilities in community based corrections, the geographical distance shortens and being present in their children's lives become more accessible. Joe#2, now a 26 year old Hispanic father and recovering substance/drug user, did not receive visits while in state prison. Now in a quasi-incarceration program, he is able to be present in his daughter—

I haven't been around my kids a whole lot since I've been in prison [located far away from hometown]. And I'd argue with my ex because she didn't bring my daughter and come and see me. And that bothers me 'cause she's my kid and she don't bring my daughter in to see me. But now I love being able to be around my kids all the time now [at the WRC]. She brings her here and I see her every time I go into town. It's important to me, being around my kids.

In addition to visits, Jose#2 visits his daughter during job seeking hours (12pm-5pm), while walking to a treatment meeting, or during earned furloughs.<sup>87</sup> Once participants transitioned from state/federal prison to quasi-incarceration programs in the *Metro Area*, their ability to fulfill the being present expectation becomes more accessible. Eli is now present in his children's everyday life because they live in an apartment building a block from the RCF—

I mean, it affects me [being under correctional supervision] because it keeps me away from dealing and using. I feel that it probably affects them [children] too because they be wanting to see me and they care and everything. You know, like [my son], he be wanting to see me all the time and right now, he can't do it. Luckily, [my daughter] and [son], they stay right over here across the street [apartments parallel to the RCF]. They pretty much see me all the time, walking

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<sup>87</sup> Please keep in mind that visiting children while job seeking is a violation of participants' client/inmate role while at the RCF or WRC.

back from work or going outside to smoke cigarettes. So, they would look out the window and see me. Next thing you know, here they come running across the street. [My other son], I see him from time to time.

Although not the ideal situation and the interactions are very limited due to his legally forced client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage, the geographical proximity allows Eli to see his children every day. When Riley, now a 46 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, moved from federal prison to the WRC, her adult daughter's visits increased—

She was just down yesterday with my stepmom. It was great. We went to Super Target [Riley used a furlough] and my grandbaby is like a year old.

*How was it to see them?*

Oh it was great! It's so great! [My granddaughter] says hi to everybody. "Hi!" It's one of her favorite words. She doesn't talk a lot. And she's a really good kid, for shopping for three hours, you know. She didn't get fuzzy or anything. She started to get tire at the end. My daughter would also come to prison to visit. I think three times since she was born. It's a three hour drive to [the federal prison]. She didn't come that often. But since I've been here, it's the second visit that I get.

Riley's daughter's drive went from 3 hours to 45 minutes, making it a less difficult drive with a baby. For the majority of participants, transferring from prison to a quasi-incarceration community based correctional facility in the *Metro Area* shortened the geographical distance. The geographical distance between the home stage and the correctional stage threatens participants' ability to be present in her children's lives. And once participants transition from state/federal prison to a quasi-incarceration facility in the *Metro Area*, it eases participants' ability to be present in their children's lives.

Overall, the geographical distance between the home stage and the correctional stage is an obstacle to children's visits and participants' ability to fulfill the ideal parent role. Most importantly, the geographical distance interacts with various family life realities to limit children's visits onto the correctional stage. But as participants transfer from prisons to quasi-incarceration facilities in the *Metro Area*, participants receive more visits. The geographical distance reinforced the boundaries between the home stage and

the correctional stage, keeping participants focused on their client/inmate role performance and away from fulfilling the presence expectation of their ideal parent role.

“We’re Both Felons!”

In addition to the objections of their children’s other parent, participants’ attempts to protect children from the dangers of the correctional stage, and the geographical distance, the correctional structure reinforces the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage through policy. When discussing correctional policies that govern clients/inmates’ everyday life on the correctional stage, Sam, now a 35 years old African American father and ex-drug dealer, states—

Every rule that people tell you about, the way your bed looks, who you could talk to or whatever, is there ‘cause someone was being stupid. Something happened. Some idiot did something stupid.

With the purpose of safety, departments of corrections develop policies to govern clients/inmates’ everyday life. In the process, policies governing (i) phone systems and (ii) client/inmates’ interaction with others limit participants’ ability to be involved in their children’s lives from the correctional stage.

When incarcerated, participants use communication systems and visits to become present and involved parents from the correctional stage. However, correctional policies governing these interactions threaten participants’ abilities to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage. Riley identified the phone system<sup>88</sup> as the biggest challenge while attempting to be an involved mother from the correctional stage—

*What has been the greatest challenge?*

Just being able to keep in touch with her [daughter]. The prison phones were set up in a way, where oh gosh, you had a pre-recording with your name in your voice. Then whenever you wanted to use the phone to call out, you had to repeat your name in the same tone. It was terrible. It had to recognize your voice, not just your tone but the words. Sometimes it would take me 5 to 10 minutes to get my name right. And then it gives you three chances and you have to dial all your numbers. So you have to dial your long distance numbers. Then you have to dial

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<sup>88</sup> It is important to keep in mind that each facility differs in communication systems

your pin number, a number assigned to you. And then it will say whether it accepts or denies. It's a process. Then, you have to dial the number over again every time. A most of the times, by the time I'd get through, she wasn't there. So, that was the hardest part.

The phone policies made it difficult for Riley to be involved in her daughter's life from the correctional stage. Although correctional policies vary across facilities, each shapes participants' ability to be involved in their children's live from the correctional stage.

Simon, now a 46 year old African American father and recovering substance/drug user, describes the difference on phone monitoring policies between the *Midwest State* and *State B* correctional facilities—

And the phone screening process here [in *Midwest State*], you can't make collect calls. You gotta have a pre-paid account; unless you have a cell phone [it's against policy to have a cell phone]. But if you get a pre-paid account, you gotta keep that paid up. And then if you get a shitty guard, they'll just disconnect you. And it costs you so much money to keep calling back. You get disconnected every couple of minutes. And it's three dollars to connect. So, yeah, you're paying up the butt.

*What about in the [State B] side. What is it like?*

Over there you make collect calls or you can have prepaid accounts. Actually over there, at the chaplain's office, they'll give you a call every month as needed. You know, just for your child or your wife. They do make a half ass effort to verify it, but they really don't push it too much. But a lot of people take advantage of it and screw it all up for everybody else.

Different correctional policies, with the purpose of ensuring public safety, make it difficult for parents to become involved in their children's everyday life from the correctional stage. Once on the correctional stage, Sam initially experienced a difficult time maintaining open communication with his daughter—

They don't allow cell phones here [at the WRC]. When you come in, they take it away [if coming from *free society*]. People here hide cell phones. But if they find it, [the correctional officer] write you up, take away furloughs [free time to spend in *free society*]. So, the only way to communicate is these pay phones [points to pay phones in the hall]. But people always around [other clients/inmates], not letting you talk to anyone. Like I'm talking to my daughter, and there is all these people around. Man, I got to get out of here.

The policy governing the facility's systems of communication and the location of the pay phones limits Sam's ability to be involved in his daughter's life from the correctional

stage. In this sense, Javier, now a 51 year old white/Irish father and recovering substance/drug user, suggests incarceration means no more parenting—

*So, is the pause parenting for prison?*

Yeah. For me it was. You are not there. You can't talk to them when you want, if you wanted to. At least sometimes I could've when I was high, I chose not to. That's not the case in prison. You may not be able to. The ability to at least reach out to them, it can't be done from prison. I mean, it can be done, but not in the way that if you weren't in prison. You don't know in prison. I may not have money for phone calls. I may not have money for envelopes. In [Midwest State], they're pretty good at not caring about relationships with family. They say they are. They say they do, but they do very little to encourage it. The phone system is a joke. It costs a fortune to call someone. It cost me \$9 to make a phone call, for 15 minutes. No, 20 minutes \$9. And if you have a job, some guys make \$6 in a month. Then, if you go to the health care, it costs you \$3. So, here's [Midwest State] saying, "Hey, this guy works. He makes money. He can buy envelopes. He can make calls." For about \$5 a month and then they take 20% of it [pay check] if you owe anything [criminal justice debt and child support]. They're not very helpful in that respect.

Once on the correctional stage and with no or limited resources, Javier had a difficult time being present or involved in his children's lives from the correctional stage. Within the correctional environment, maintaining presence and involvement from a long distance is expensive for individuals without access to the conventional economy in *free society*. Although policies governing the use of phone systems vary across correctional facilities, they tend to reinforce the boundaries between the correctional stage and home stage. In addition to correctional policies governing phone systems, correctional policies concerned with public safety limit participants' interaction with others.

Although only eleven participants discussed legal limitations when attempting to interact with their minor children (11/57), it is an important structural boundary separating the home stage and the street stage that merits discussion. More specifically, policies concerned with communication between clients/inmates and with child protection limit a minority of participants' ability to be involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. While in state prison, Joseph was legally unable to receive visits from two of his children due to their mother's correctional status—



[My children's mother] couldn't get on the visiting list 'cause she was on probation. Her sisters and them got into a fight one time. And I guess in the midst of her breaking the fight up, a police officer got hit. So they charged her with assaulting a police officer. And so, she was on some unsupervised probation for that. So, they denied her on the visiting list. I couldn't really get no visits.

Because the mother of his children was also under correctional supervision, he was unable to receive visits from his children while on the correctional stage. For public safety purposes, departments of corrections develop policies to limit communication between clients/inmates. Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, is married to the father of her daughter. At the time of the interview, her husband was incarcerated in a state prison and she was quasi-incarcerated at the RCF. Consequently, she was having a difficult time communicating with her husband—

*Does he know where you're at?*

Uh-Huh [Yes]. He's worried about me. He called down here and he spoke to [a staff member] to let her know that he was worried about me. And it's hard for me. I miss my daughter. [The staff member] said, "I heard from [your husband] today. He just wants to make sure you're doing okay." 'Cause we can't write to each other because we're both in a correctional facility. So, the only way he gets to know about [our daughter] is through his family. But they're mad 'cause I didn't leave [our daughter] with them. I don't know what to do.

Both under correctional supervision, Ruth and her husband have a difficult time communicating, limiting her husband's source of information about their daughter. Moreover, correctional policies concerned with children's safety also limit client/inmate's interaction with their children. Charlie discusses differences in visitation policy between correctional facilities in *Midwest State* and *State B*—

*What is the difference between [Midwest State] and [State B]?*

In [State B], you didn't even need a visiting form. You could just show up to prison and visit. They didn't try to restrict your visits and stuff like that. Over here [in *Midwest State*], it's any excuse. Like a lot of these guys, I'm not defending people that have domestics [domestic violence charges], but if you had a domestic in your background, it could be with a totally different woman than the one you're with now, they can give you no contact visits, just across the window. The laws over here are a lot different, like child endangerment laws. Like if you got a child endangerment crime, you can't have contact visits. And child endangerment over here can be that you ran from the cops and there was a kid in the backseat. Or it could be, you smoked a joint in the house and there was kids

sleeping in the other room. These are all child endangerment laws over here. And I'm not saying these are good parenting skills either, but at the same time, you're giving someone extra years for this. And then you tell them that they can't visit with their kid because they made that mistake. But, yeah, they're pretty strict over here [in *Midwest State*], and they don't approve a lot of people to visit, especially children.

Although states differ in correctional policies, policies concerned with children's safety limits participants' ability to be involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. Miguel, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, is the father to a 10 year old girl, but has been convicted for a sex offense (child molestation of a friend's child) and is now legally prohibited from interacting with his daughter without supervision—

I have to take my ex-wife and my daughter to go to the parole officer and sign a chaperon agreement that I never be left alone with her.<sup>89</sup> I don't like that at all. My counselor told me and I wanted to choke her. I did. Honest to God. This is my life. To call my ex-wife and to tell her that, about killed me. 'Cause I have to have her sign this papers. Telling her that—

*What did your ex-wife say?*

She don't believe it, but you know. She's having a hard time accepting to come here and fill out this paper work because that's not right. I'm the kid's father. And these people here, the parole officers, act like this is no big deal, like it's not a problem, it's nothing. You know what it took for me to ask for her to come and do that [nervous laugh that turns into an almost tearful face]? Can't have contact with her. That's what they say.

*How long do you think it'll take?*

I do talk to her on the phone all the time. She calls me at work quite a bit. I'm not supposed to talk to her, but I do. I don't care if they kick me from here. I don't care if they send me to prison because I'm trying to talk to her. I'm gonna talk to her.

In an attempt to prevent further victimization of children, the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections monitors sex offenders' interaction with minors (depending on the sex offense). Thus, Miguel is legally unable to be involved in his daughter's life without supervisions. Although only 11 of the participants discussed correctional policies concerned with public and child safety as an obstacle to being present and involved in

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<sup>89</sup> See Document C1 regarding "Sex Offenders and Chaperon Agreements" in Appendix C, page 461.

children's lives from the correctional stage, these correctional policies reinforce the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage.

In addition to the objections from their children's other parent, participants' attempts to protect children from the dangers of the correctional stage, and the geographical distance, correctional policies reinforces the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage. With the purpose of safety, departments of corrections develop policies to govern clients/inmates everyday life. In the process, policies governing phone systems and client/inmates' interaction with others limit participants' ability to be involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. Overall, correctional policy reinforced the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage.

Overall, in addition to objections from their children's other parent, other obstacles challenge participants' ability to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage. When role conflict forced participants to select between being present/involved over guiding/protecting, a portion of fathers prioritize guiding and protecting their children over being present in their children's lives through visits. Moreover, the geographical distance between the home stage and the correctional stage interacts with various family life realities and limits children's visits onto the correctional stage. Lastly, policies governing phone systems and client/inmates interaction with others limit participants' ability to be present and involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. Legally forced to prioritize their client/inmate role and strengthened boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage limit participants' ability to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage. Moreover, whether able to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage or not, participants' become the audience to others' parent role performance in their children's lives on the home stage.

### Other People Raising the Children

After leaving the home stage, participants become an audience to others' parent role performance in their children's lives. First, mothers who engaged in pre-incarceration nesting express a sense of satisfaction with the care their children receive. But regardless of caretakers' parent role performance, mothers and fathers are displaced and have limited or no say regarding their children's lives. Second, participants under corrections struggle to protect their children from external predators. Male participants discuss their inability to protect their children from other males' presence in their lives and exposure to others' delinquent/criminal role performance. And a portion of participants become audience to others neglecting/abusing their children. On the correctional stage, participants become audience to others performing the parent role in their children's lives.

#### "He's Too Strict!"

As participants transitioned from the home stage to the correctional stage, they become the audience to the caretaker's parent role performance. In the audience from the correctional stage, mothers who engaged in pre-incarceration nesting (i) express a sense of satisfaction with the care their children receive. Although children are safe and cared for, (ii) children complain about their caretakers and mothers feel a sense of powerless while on the correctional stage. And whether it is fathers or mothers on the correctional stage, (iii) they are excluded from decisions regarding their children's everyday lives.

During the pre-incarceration nesting process, a portion of the mothers (occasionally fathers) invested their limited resources in preparing the care of their children for their incarceration or that of the other parent. In doing so, they secured the best caretaker situation they could afford for their children at the time. Thus, a portion of the female participants reported satisfaction with their children's caretakers. Diamond, now a 22 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, gave

birth while incarcerated and immediately began to access her best resources to care for her daughter, her mother and sisters—

My mother, everybody takes care of her. She's loved. And I think it's a blessing, because some people don't have that. My sister, she'll just let her do whatever she wants. She's spoiled. I don't have no problem with how they treat my baby [mother and sisters caring for her daughter since birth]. They treat her good. If she needs a spanking here and there, then they'll spank her. And my sisters be having her so cute. She be having on Apple Bottoms, Roca Wear, Ed Harvey, all those little nice things.

Prior to leaving her daughter in the hospital, she made sure her mother and sisters agreed to care for her daughter. After three years in prison, Diamond continues to be satisfied with her daughter's caretakers. 'Till June, now a 45 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, identified her mother and grandmother as the most appropriate caretakers during her son's childhood and adolescence—

When I got arrested, he was at my great-grandmother only overnight. And when I was in the streets or in prison, my mom took over. My mom, she's sweet, never did anything wrong in her life. I don't believe, all of her life. She's never jaywalk, nothing. She don't drink. She don't do drugs, none of that. And my son, he was the first grandchild, the only grandchild. So she pretty much gave him the world. And he could go wherever he want, as long as he went to school and did what he supposed to do, and clean his room. He had clothes, shoes, and all that.

Today, her son is a 30 year old man and 'Till June continues to praise her grandmother and mother for the care they provided for her son while she was on the street stage or the correctional stage. Jaime, now a 26 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, is satisfied with the care her children have received from her mother—

When I was growing up, my mom never hugged me, never kissed me. I know she loved me. But she's just real rough around the edges type. And she was very protective of me and always wanted me to have things, but she never wanted me to know it. And she's the same way with [my children]. She's very protective of them now. And she doesn't want anybody to hurt them or make them think something that's not true. Like my stepdad spoils them off, buys them new clothes and all that. Their room was like a toy aisle. They really got it good.

In attempts to find her children the appropriate care, Jaime reconnected with her mother. And after two and a half years in state prison, she continues to be satisfied with her

mother's care. When mothers (occasionally fathers) invest in pre-incarceration nesting, they secure the best caretakers they could access at the time.

Although pre-incarceration nesting ensures the children's overall care, participating mothers are no longer on the home stage and temporarily become the audience to the caretaker's parent role performance. As they communicate with their children from the correctional stage, they listen to children's complaints about the caretakers' strict parenting approach and experience a sense of powerlessness. Susie, now a 33 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, has been away from her three children's lives for now 7 years. In the care of their paternal aunt, the children share their dissatisfaction with their mother—

Their aunt is kind of strict too. She really don't wanna 'em to do nothing. They got friends, but she don't really let 'em go anywhere. They really can only play with their cousins. And I guess they feel like they done got kind of older and they need a little freedom. And I give them some kind of freedom when they are with me. I have rules and boundaries. I always told 'em, "When it's dark outside, if we all out together, you have to keep your voice down. There's no yelling and screaming once it gets darker. A lot of people be asleep if they have to go to work tomorrow. With her, once the street lights come on, they have to be in the house. I feel, if it's hot outside and I'm sitting outside, why can't my kids sit outside too? She's—. Last year my son won [baseball] tickets at school. And he brought 'em home and his aunt was like, "Which one do you wanna do? Do you wanna go to the [baseball] game or do you want to go to your cousin's birthday party?" So, he went to his cousin's birthday party and she took her boyfriend to the [baseball] game. Could you believe it?

The children's paternal aunt provides them with housing, stability, food, care and an aunt's love. Moreover, she is persistent about academic achievement and staying away from possibly negative associations. However, Susie listens to her children complain about her strictness and feels displaced. In the audience, incarcerated participants experience a sense of powerless as they listen to their children's complaints about the caretaker's parent role performance. Rosie, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, listens to her daughter—

When I was still living in my apartment [post jail release and pre-RCF], I called her like I always do. And she was just very frustrated. She just cried and said, "I'm trying to be brave. I'm trying to be strong. But I just want to come home.

And I don't want to be here anymore." And that broke my heart. And I talked to her for like an hour. She was fighting with grandma about nothing serious. And then the next time I talked to her I said, "Do you feel better today?" She says, "Yeah." Because kids bounce real fast, but stuff like that always breaks my heart. I know my daughter and I know that she wants to be home.

Rosie's father and stepmother have been caring for her daughter for the past 5 years.

They have provided housing, food, care, and safety, and have encouraged mother-daughter interaction. However, Rosie feels powerless when others discipline her daughter. The incarcerated parent becomes the audience of the caretaker's parent role performance. Erica, now a 41 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, left her children in her father's care. However, he proved to be extremely strict when disciplining his grandchildren—

They had a balcony. And [my daughter] would get to sit out on the balcony. If there was men or boys in the parking lot, she would have to go in the house. She wasn't even allowed to sit outside or go to the mall with her friends. When she was with me for a while, she was 12 and I was letting her go to the mall. I let her hang out in my auntie's house. But when she lived with my dad, my dad don't give her any freedom. She was not allowed to have any friends. She was not allowed to talk on the phone. She was not allowed to go anywhere. All she could do is go to school and come home.

During Erica's long term absence, her parents took over the parent role and cared for her daughter. In her absence, they provided Erica's daughter with all her needs. And today, Erica's daughter is a young adult and recent mother. However, it was painful for Erica to hear her daughter complain about their strict parenting approach. When women engaged in pre-incarceration nesting, they secure their children's care. But once on to the correctional stage, they became the audience to the caretaker's parent role performance.

Since male and female participants leave the home stage, whether they invested in pre-incarceration nesting or not, they are no longer able to fully perform their parent role from the correctional stage. They are displaced and do not take part of the decision making process that shapes their children's everyday life. While incarcerated, Mike#1, now a 32 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, has had no say regarding his daughters—

The biggest challenge was not being part of the decision in their everyday lives, like getting her ear pierced, family pictures or things like that. It might be silly, but when they pierced my daughter's ears, I wish they would've asked me. I mean, I know it's just an ear piercing. But I just felt that they should've asked if it was alright. And [my oldest daughter], from the different mom, they got her on a whole bunch of medicines for like ADD, bi-polar disorder, and I don't know if all that is necessary. But I haven't been there, so I don't know.

*Can you say anything?*

I wish I could. Her mom's side of the family have a long history of needing medicine and things like that. And I just don't know if they are just doing the same thing 'cause they think she needs it or if she really needs it. I mean, I was not there for the doctor's appointments. So, I mean, it's just a lot of medicine.

When Mike#1 left the home stage and his children in their mothers' care. In this process, Mike#1 became the audience to the mothers' parent role performance and was excluded.

In a similar fashion, Joe#1, now a 20 year old African American/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, has been completely excluded from his daughter's care—

*So, when you are in the RCF, are you seeing her?*

I seen her twice. And then my baby's mom went to JobCorp [out of the *Metro Area*], about 4 to 5 hours from here.

*Did you have any say on it?*

Right this second, I don't. I mean, I got my parental rights, but you know. Now, I wouldn't even attempt to say anything, 'cause I can't fend for my damn self, much less fend for her. I just gotta sit here. Just sit here and wait.

Once Joe#1 left the home stage and went onto the correctional stage, he became the passive audience to the mother's parent role performance. Carol, now a 39 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, lost her two daughters in family court due to her delinquent/criminal role performance. In response, her father became their legal guardian and Carol became the audience to his parent role performance—

He's whooped then since they was little and I don't like it. He's very strict with them. Like my baby, she doesn't do anything. She goes to school. She works at [the supermarket] for four hours a week. She goes to church and then home. She doesn't really have a life, a social life. She's a cheer leader at school, but outside of that, she doesn't really have a life. Which, I mean, in a way, I'm glad she's not out there in the streets. But at the same time, she's lonely. She's there by herself. Her friends are not allowed at the house and she's not allowed to go to anybody's house. I think he took them out of guilt for me because he didn't raise me. And he didn't feel like he could raise both of 'em together, so that's how my aunt [dad's sister] ended up with [my oldest daughter]. When we were all together,



they've never stepped in and said, "No, don't do that. No, don't do this."  
They've never did that. But when this started [the transfer of custody], they did whatever they wanted, split children like that.

*And how do you feel about them raising your children now?*

Well, I have issues because they were raised apart. They're night and day and they're not close at all. My oldest daughter is very mean to her little sister. And a lot of that has to do with my baby being chosen to be raised by grandpa and my oldest had to go be raised by her [great] aunt.

*Do they say that out loud?*

My oldest says things like, "Papa does this for her. And papa does that for her. And he won't help me do this. And he won't help me do that." She lets it be known that. My youngest feels that she's better than her because she's raised by papa. It's not that my oldest never wanted for anything, but like he did get her better things because she was in the house with him. I have issues with that because you've created that, you should've took both 'em because that was the agreement.

Once Carol's parental rights were terminated and her father (and aunt) took over her daughters' custody, she became the audience to their parent role performance and has experienced a sense of powerlessness. Although children are well cared for (after pre-incarceration nesting), participants are excluded from decisions affecting their children's everyday life and are a powerless audience from the correctional stage.

Overall, participants on the correctional stage, mothers and fathers, become the audience to the caretakers' parent role performance in their children's lives. Mothers who engaged in pre-incarceration nesting express a sense of satisfaction with the care their children receive. But although children are safe and cared for, children complain about their caretakers and mothers feel a sense of powerless while in the audience from the correctional stage. And whether it is fathers or mothers on the correctional stage, they are excluded from the decision process that governs their children's everyday lives. Furthermore, a portion of participants become a powerless audience to caretakers' *inadequate* parent role performance.

#### "They Were Abused!"

As a powerless audience from the correctional stage, participants also struggle with the protection expectation of the ideal parent role. Participants' ideal parent role

expects them to protect their children from neglect/abuse. In their role construction process, participants discussed protecting children by not becoming a perpetrator and by protecting them from external perpetrators. Once on the correctional stage, the latter becomes a difficult expectation to perform. With children in their mothers' care, male participants discuss their inability to protect their children from (i) other males' presence and (ii) exposure to others' delinquent/criminal role performance. Furthermore, (iii) a portion of participants (mothers and fathers) were audience to others neglecting/abusing their children.<sup>90</sup> Although participants struggle with their overall parent role while on the correctional stage, participants described their failure to fulfill the protecting expectations as the most demoralizing.

At the time of the interview, 62 of the 89 minor children were in the care of the biological mothers. Similar to previous studies, upon the fathers' incarceration, unprepared mothers in *free society* search for support and introduce other males into their children's lives, but simultaneously expose children to neglect/abuse (Braman and Wood 2003; Bourgois 2003). Aware of the dangers of other males presence on their children's lives, fathers in the sample experienced a continuous concern during their incarceration. Simon described being absent as an inability to control his ex-wife's behaviors and the presence of other men in his daughters' lives—

I was kind of scared of all the men that she had dealt in there. Since we've been divorced, she's been married 3 different times. It's kind of weird, because I think as a woman, she's sending the wrong messages to our daughters. She's not a woman that could be out of a relationship. After she gets out of a relationship, she's back in another one real quick. I got locked up December. That week I went to prison, she started writing another guy. By April, she was marrying some guy in prison in [*State B*]. And my daughters are watching all this. And these guys, they're just like me, or worse than me. And the thought of having 'em in my daughters' lives, it just eats me up.

*Is it that you are jealous?*

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<sup>90</sup>Since the age of the 154 children has such a wide range (6 months to 40 years of age) and not all parents were completely aware of their children's everyday life and past experiences, it is possible that children were victimized without participants' knowledge.

Of her being with 'em? No. It's about my daughters. Men are evil and my girls are in danger, surrounded by these men. But, it's my fault, you see. I'm not there. It's paralyzing.

Although his ex-wife cared for their daughters' needs throughout his incarcerations, Simon continues to be concerned for his daughters' safety. Once male participants were on the correctional stage, a portion of their romantic partners moved on with their romantic lives and fathers become concerned with external male predators in their children's lives. In the process, incarcerated fathers began to label the mothers' of their children as *bad women*. Bubbles, now a 45 year old white/Caucasian father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, left his wife to care for their children—

When I was in prison, I was going through issues with the wife. She had gotten a boyfriend. Now, my wife was living in my parents' house with her boyfriend and my kids. And how well do you suppose that went?! It was ridiculous. And I felt horrible. She was using my house and my kids to create her new little family. And this guy was using with her. I mean, I exposed my kids to this, and now this other guy, shit. It was ridiculous.

*Were you jealous?*

Yes I was jealous! I was pissed off, heartbroken. Her messing with other men in my house, in front of my kids, I was pissed. But the worst thing, I failed to protect my kids from me, you know. And then, I was locked up and can't protect my kids from the men she brings home. It was ridiculous.

In addition to neglecting/abusing his children while performing his delinquent/criminal role on the home stage, Bubbles was unable to protect his children from external predators. As fathers join the correctional stage, a significant portion of them become the audience to the mothers' parent role performance and become concerned with other males' presence in their children's lives. Purple chose not to continue his romantic relationship with the mother of his son. However, other men coming into his son's life was a shocking event—

She met him, the guy [outside the *Metro Area*]. My sister, they met him when she used to bring my son down here to visit my sisters and my mother while I was incarcerated. And I ask questions, "Who—? What he look like? What he dress like?" 'Cause how a man dress tells you a lot about who they are. What kind of car he drives. Things like that. "How was he acting around ya'll? Like how was he treating my son?" My little sister, she's real blunt. She used to tell me, "He's a thug. He's not where it's at. I honestly don't see what she see in him, but that's her business. Brother, if you meet him, you wouldn't even want him to be around

your son. Stop being worthless and get on the road.” It’s like, “Get outta here ‘cause I know I wouldn’t stand for that.” I haven’t met the dude yet and she’s still with him. You know. That’s why I don’t talk to her really no more. ‘Cause she wonder why I don’t like talking to her. I call her, ask for my son and talk to him for about 20 minutes. And my son starts telling me he pushes him around. I don’t know. I’m a get him soon as I get out of here.

While on the correctional stage, a significant portion of male participants become concerned for their children as the caretaking mothers introduce other males into their children’s lives. In the role constructing process, participants identified protecting children from child neglect and abuse as an expectation of their ideal parent role. Once on the correctional stage, participants have a difficult time protecting their children from external predators, including other males their children’s mothers bring to the home stage and others’ delinquent/criminal role performance.

Upon their transition from the home stage to the correctional stage, the majority of the fathers left their minor children in their mothers’ care. Without much pre-incarceration nesting, male participants also become concerned with their children’s exposure to others’ delinquent/criminal role performance. Anthony, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, left his daughters in their mothers’ care. In attempts to supplement the loss of support, she recruited her family’s help to care for the children—

They was innocent babies when I left. And now I see some of the things they picked up just from being around other people, you know.

*Like what?*

Like they attitudes, you know. The other day, they mom told ‘em to stop and they didn’t. And I don’t have to hit ‘em. I just look at ‘em. They were like, “Well, daddy not playing.” You know. Kids pick up what they hear and see.

*Are they spending time with people that you wouldn’t want them to?*

Not no more. I’m home. I’m home now [quasi-free]. They mom come from alcoholic family, so they all alcoholics. So, I don’t like them around that. I don’t like ‘em around cigarettes, none of that. They’re not around people that drug dealers or nothing like that. It’s just, I’m real picky when it comes to my kids.

During his incarceration, Anthony had no control over who was involved in his daughters’ lives. As a powerless audience from the correctional stage, male participants become concerned with their children’s exposure to others’ delinquent/criminal role

performance. Sam has never approved of his son's mother performing her delinquent/criminal role around their son. While incarcerated, he had no control over her behavior and his son's life —

His mothers, she runs the streets. She's a big reason why he is the way he is now [a delinquent]. I constantly get on her, "Your children are a reflection of you." You know, 'cause she doesn't parent. I think a parent shouldn't expose all their business to their child, to the children. And she is one of those parents that doesn't hold anything back. She doing her thing in front of her kids. And my son grew up like that.

Throughout his son's existence, Sam has been under correctional supervision and has never been able to fully perform the parent role in his son's life. And throughout this time, he has been the audience to her delinquent/criminal role performance in front of their son. From the correctional stage, male participants become concerned with their children being exposed to others' delinquent/criminal role performance. Mike#2 conceived two children with two substance/drug using mothers. While incarcerated, he became concerned with his children's exposure to their mothers' and others' delinquent/criminal role performance—

They mothers smoked, you know what I mean. I kept thinking about my sons. And I called and there be people there all the time. All those people around, doing what they wanted in my house without a care for my kids. I don't know. I'd be mad. Let me say, I did the same thing when I was there. But there was something about me being gone and not being able to make sure my kids were alright, you know. It scared me. But I did that. I let that into they lives.

From the correctional stage, Mike#2 became an audience member and gained a different perspective as his children's mothers and others engaging in their delinquent/criminal role performance around his children. According to Wildeman (2010), having a social father<sup>91</sup> during a father's incarceration increases children's physical aggression (5 year-old children). And for a portion of participating mothers and fathers, this concern becomes a demoralizing reality.

Whether it was an incarcerated mother or father, their absence meant an inability to protect their children from external predators. In this context, children and adolescents

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<sup>91</sup> Other male presence in children's lives

are most vulnerable to violence and other victimization (Macmillan 2001). And similar to participants' childhood experiences (see chapter 4), a portion of their children experiences neglect/abuse during participants' incarceration. Although concentrated in the older substance/drug using participants in the sample and only 13/57 participants were audience to their children's victimization from (from simple neglect to child molestation) the correctional stage, it is an important phenomenon to discuss.<sup>92</sup> Susie has four children. Her oldest daughter is currently living with her biological father and her three younger children are currently living with their parental aunt and the aunt's boyfriend. In both cases, Susie thinks her children are being neglected/abused—

When I seen [my oldest daughter], she still had the same shoes I had bought her from like the two years prior. [Her father] is spending his money on his new kid. So I end up giving her my shoes. I feel, "You're a teenager, at school." And he wouldn't buy her new clothes or anything. He didn't even buy her a winter coat. My mom bought her a coat. My mom sends her money just about every month. *What about the other kids [son and two daughters with paternal aunt]?*

I only have one son and that's why I'm trying to hurry up and get my stuff together. He was saying he didn't want to go back because their aunt's boyfriend keep telling him he's not a boy, he's a little girl. And I keep telling him, "Don't tell my son he's a girl. I have a lot of fags in my family already. If you keep telling a kid when they was little this is what they is, that's what they grow up to be. That's the only son I got. I got three daughters. I don't need four. Don't keep trying to tell him that." He tell him his name is not [John], his name is [Joanna]. I'm like, that's not the type of environment they need. They need somebody like my boyfriend. He's a big sports fan. He's out trying to teach my son how to play football. Something they aunt and her boyfriend should be doing, instead of letting him tell him he's a girl. He keeps telling my son every year he's gonna sign him up to football, but hasn't done it yet.

Susie suggests her oldest daughter's father is materially neglecting their daughter and focusing on his new child, while her son is being psychologically abused by his aunt's boyfriend. Currently, Susie is an audience to others neglecting/abusing her children and she is pushing herself to return to the home stage. Mary, now a 59 year old African

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<sup>92</sup> Older participants have been in and out of prison more times and for longer periods of time. Although only a minority, it is an important theme to discuss. And as participants are reintegrated into their children's lives (see chapter 11 on "doing" parenthood in the aftermath), children become more comfortable revealing if they have been neglected/abuse

American mother and recovering substance/drug user, became the audience to others' neglecting/abusing her children in the early 1980s *State B* foster care system—

Like when the case worker brought [my daughter to a prison visit], we had a family picnic at the Y. I noticed that [my youngest daughter], she was about 6 at the time, she wasn't playing with the rest of the kids. She was off to herself on the other side of the yard near the water fountain. The case worker was sitting at the table talking. My daughter was sitting on a bench, with a small piece of tissue. And she was wiping off her shoes. I walked over there and I asked her why she wasn't playing. She was like, "I gotta get these shoes cleaned because she's gonna beat me. I can't get dirt on my shoes." So, I told her, "Stop for a minute." She's like, "No. I gotta get that spot off. I got some mud on my shoes." And I asked her to stop and I said, "Does [your foster mother] beat you?" And she said, "Yeah. She beats me." I said, "With what? Where?" She said, "On my back." So, she had on a pony tail. It was in the summer time. And I could see like a little bruise right here [upper back]. I lifted up her shirt and she had bruises on her back. I took her back to the case worker and I told the case worker what she had just told me and I lifted up her shirt so she's seen the scars. At first I was thinking about seriously trying to escape. I was gonna escape, kill the woman and come back, turn myself in. And thank God that didn't happen. But anyway, they got 'em. And that's when the process started for her to be moved.

Without access to conventional family members and deep into relapse, Mary did not engage in pre-incarceration nesting and her children were placed into the *State B* foster care system. In the 1980s-overloaded foster care system in *State B*, her young daughter was physically abused. In a similar situation, only a few years apart in *State B*, Dee faced the neglect/abuse of her children during incarceration—

Well, my kids were in foster care [mid 1980s]. They were abused at foster care. They sort of slipped through the cracks in the system. The lady that had them, she was eventually charged for abusing not only my children, but other children. My daughter was put in a basement on a mattress. My two boys ran away, ended up in the streets, selling drugs to survive. And my youngest, she was the one that was most being affected, by being so young. From there they went to peoples that were not really my relatives, but that were like my adopted family [after being a run away during her youth in the streets and becoming a substance abuser; the family caretakers also substance users]. When the two boys took off, that's where they went. And, it was a place where they could stay, but she made it clear that she wouldn't be responsible for "raising" them. The system never got in contact with her. She never received food stamps, money or anything for taking care of them. They make their home visits maybe once or twice a year [social workers'] visits to foster homes in [*State B*]. Can you imagine what could happen in between that time? I understand that the state has a whole load of cases. And they're not able to get to everyone and stay up on top of everything. But the ones

that do work, like the case worker that came and brought my kids to me that day, she should've known what was going on with [my daughter]. I think they go to the house, they sit with the foster care people, and they don't get with the children to ask them questions.

While incarcerated, Dee had no control over her children's lives and was unable to protect them from child neglect/abuse. As parents hear about their children's victimization, they begin to make plans. Eric, now a 32 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, just received terrifying news and plans to respond immediately—

Honestly, I just found out. [The sister of my son's mother] called my phone personally. The dude [my son's mother] with now, he really ain't what's up. He ain't no good male. He's beating on my son. He's beating on her and the children. Figure I should be around her and her other two kids, 'cause she got two kids now in addition to my son. I am in the process of trying to get my son, permanently. I'm in the process of setting up an appointment with the state worker down at the aid office, child protective services. I probably have to turn my rights over to my sister, 'cause she is in a better shape financially than I am. Once we go in front of the judge, I think he'll go for that.

*What about his mom? Do you think she'll be—?*

Yeah, she's gonna be upset. But at the same time, it's hard for me to say that she don't want him to be with me, but then me not wanting to be with her, she still holding that against me. She gonna be highly upset. But I just think that this is going to be the best thing for my son and me.

*What about him growing up away from his siblings?*

Well, I wouldn't take him away from his mom and sisters. Believe me, I would let him go visit her, but I just want him to be with me. I wanna raise him instead of having him around some other dude that ain't his dad. From what I heard, she already got in some trouble with child protective services over this dude, him beating on her and the kids.

In his way out of the correctional stage, Eric begins to plan the removal of his son from his mother's care. During the role construction process, prior to the children's birth, participants identified protecting their children from neglect/abuse as a priority of their ideal parent role. But as an audience from the correctional stage, a portion of participants experience the neglect/abuse of their children.

As a powerless audience from the correctional stage, participants struggle with the protection expectation of their ideal parent role. Once on the correctional stage, it becomes difficult to protect children from external predators. With children in their



mothers' care, male participants discuss their inability to protect their children from other males' presence in their lives and exposure to others' delinquent/criminal role performance. And while on the correctional stage, a portion of participants (13/57) were audience to others neglecting/abusing their children. Although participants struggle with their overall parent role while on the correctional stage, participants describe their failure to fulfill the protecting task as the most demoralizing.

Overall, after leaving the home stage, participants become an audience to caretakers' parent role performance in their children's lives. First, mothers who engaged in pre-incarceration nesting express a sense of satisfaction with the care their children receive. But regardless of the caretakers' parent role performance, mothers and fathers were displaced and had limited or no say regarding their children's lives. Second, participants on the correctional stage struggle to protect their children from external predators. Male participants discuss their inability to protect their children from other males' presence and exposure to others' delinquent/criminal role performance. And a portion of participants were audience to others neglecting/abusing their children. On the correctional stage, participants become an audience to others performing the parent role in their children's lives.

### Conclusion

On the correctional stage, participants are *snatched* from "doing" parenthood. Whether in jail, state prison, federal prison, or a quasi-incarceration facility, participants struggle to partially perform their ideal parent role and become the audience to caretakers' parent role performance in their children's lives. Because they have been legally forced to place their client/inmate role above their parent role, participants are unable to be physically present in their children's everyday life and land at the mercy of their children's caretakers. In light of their new definition of the situation, all participants begin to negotiate partial access to their parent role. In the process, participants redefine

their romantic relationships with their children's other parent to access external resources and their children, face obstacles in receiving children's visits onto the correctional stage, and become the audience as others perform the parent role in their children's lives.

In attempts to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage, male participants renegotiate their romantic/spousal role and parent role with their children's other parent. Already in unstable relationships, a significant portion of participants end their romantic relationships soon after incarceration. Unable to reconcile with their children's other parent, incarcerated parents experience a difficult time accessing their parent role from the correctional stage. In a gendered driven placement, fathers' children are predominantly in the care of the mothers and mothers' children are predominantly in the care of extended relative. In time and after several legally forced client/inmate role performances on the correctional stage, participants come to appreciate the importance of their relationship with their children's other parent. And in addition to negotiation with their children's other parent, participants face additional obstacles to children's visits.

In attempts to partially perform their ideal parent role, a portion of the fathers in the sample refuse to receive visits from their children on the correctional stage. In doing so, they attempt to protect the children from the social and physical dangers of the correctional stage, avoid guiding children towards norm violation, and protect children from witnessing their degrading client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. When having to choose between presence/involvement and protecting/guiding from the correctional stage, participants chose to protect their children and to guide them away from norm violation.

In addition to unstable relationships and the dangers on the correctional stage, geographical distance and correctional policies reinforce the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage. The geographical distance interacts with various family life realities to limit children's visits onto the correctional stage. And as participants transition to closer quasi-incarceration facilities in the *Metro Area*,

participants receive more visits. Moreover, correctional policies protecting the public and children reinforce the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage.

*Snatched* from “doing” parenthood, participants become the audience to the caretaker’s parent role performance in their children’s lives. In the audience from the correctional stage, mothers who engaged in pre-incarceration nesting express a sense of satisfaction with the care their children receive. Although children are safe and cared for, children complain about their caretakers and mothers express a sense of powerless while on the correctional stage. And whether it is fathers or mothers on the correctional stage, they are excluded from the decision process that shapes their children’s everyday lives.

As a powerless audience from the correctional stage, participants struggle with the protection expectation of the ideal parent role. With children in their mothers’ care, male participants discuss their inability to protect their children from other males’ presence in their lives and exposure to others’ delinquent/criminal role performance. And a portion of participants were audience to others neglecting/abusing their children. On the correctional stage, participants are *snatched* from “doing” parenthood.

Overall, family life is continuously constructed through everyday interaction. In attempts to not become wallpaper, participants negotiate family roles from the correctional stage. Legally unable to leave the correctional stage, participants aim at being partially present and involved. To do so, they negotiate for access to their parent role with their children’s caretakers. Although legally forced to prioritize their client/inmate role over their parent role, fathers chose to protect and guide their children over receiving visits. Most importantly, the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage are continuously reinforced with geographical distance and correctional policy. And regardless of how much access parents have to the home stage, they are legal captives on the correctional stage and become the audience to others parent role performance in their children’s lives. Furthermore, once granted access, role conflict

shapes participants' attempt to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage.

## CHAPTER IX

### “DOING” PARENTHOOD UNDER CORRECTIONS

Incarcerated and quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, participants experience role conflict between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role. The client/inmate role expects presence, involvement, the loss of autonomy and privacy, and payment of correctional expenses and court ordered debt (fines, court cost, and child support) on the correctional stage. And the ideal parent role expects participants to be present, be involved, protect, guide, provide, and create/maintain a parent-child relationship on the home stage. In a punitive response to their delinquent/criminal role performance, all participants are legally forced onto the correctional stage to perform their client/inmate role. In doing so, participants are forced to prioritize and invest their limited resources (time, energy, and financial resources) on their client/inmate role. Role conflict shapes participants' attempts to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage.

Legally forced to focus on their client/inmate role performance, participants are unable to fulfill the being present and being involved expectations of their ideal parent role on the home stage. Instead, participants face the realities of missing their children's everyday life and experience an emotional struggle when unable to fulfill their ideal parent role from the correctional stage. Moreover, participants who had been intensely present and involved in their children's everyday lives prior to incarceration experience a continuous worry. To compensate for their inability to be present, a portion of the drug dealing participants (with financial resources) become involved in their children's everyday lives from the correctional stage.

In attempts to partially fulfill the presence expectations of their ideal parent role, a portion of participants accept their children's visits on the correctional stage. After overcoming numerous obstacles, conventional family members, caretakers, and others facilitate minor children's visits onto the correctional stage. But children are in the

premises, the dangerous physical and social realities of the correctional stage become more prominent for participants. In attempt to enjoy their visit, a portion of participants attempt to push the correctional environment to the background and focus on their children. But as they interact with their children, participants notice the weight of their absence in children's discomfort and overall interaction. Moreover, a portion of participants meet their children for the first time on the correctional stage. And in the visiting process, all visits come to an end and participants must always say goodbye. And although participants prepare themselves to say goodbye, each goodbye is a heartbreaking event and a reminder of their client/inmate status.

Once participants transition from full-incarceration to quasi-incarceration, visits become more accessible. But *inadequate* client/inmate role performance threatens participants' ability to be quasi-present in their children's lives. And when having to choose between the client/inmate role and the parent role, the majority of participants risk their quasi-freedom and prioritize the parent role. Quasi-incarcerated, with one leg on the correctional stage and another on the home stage, participants continuously struggle with role conflict.

In addition to being legally forced to invest their time and energy, participants are legally forced to invest their limited financial resources in their client/inmate role performance. The financial punitive outcomes involve the accumulation of criminal justice debt (court cost, fines, and child support). And while incarcerated (in jail, state prison, and/or federal prison), participants' client/inmate role performance involves limited or no access to financial resources and daily financial expenses. Participants transition onto the quasi-incarceration correctional stage provides participants with access to the conventional (mostly low-wage) labor market, but it becomes more financially demanding (correctional cost is higher). Thus, participants perceive their client/inmate role on the quasi-incarceration correctional stage as *all about money* and struggle to perform the financial expectations.

The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role compete for participants' limited financial resources. Although the client/inmate role performance involved the payment of backed court ordered child support, participants' conventional financial resources are too limited to fully fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. When in good standing with their children's caretaker, a portion of participants are not placed on child support. Instead, they request financial aid directly from other family members. And in participants' absence, caretakers use social services to supplement children's financial needs and other extended family members become involved in childcare to reduce the childcare cost. When able to choose between their client/inmate role and their parent role, drug-dealing participants (with financial resources) find ways to provide while on the quasi-incarceration correctional stage.

And as participants begin to think about reintegration, a minority of participants finds it necessary to socially distance their selves from their ideal parent role and focus on their client/inmate role performance to make release possible. And once the release date approaches, participants actively negotiate with their children. In this negotiation, children request that participants avoid delinquent/criminal role performance upon their return. Consequently, participants identify children as their motivation to reintegrate into conventional society and begin to make plans to prioritize their parent role. Invested children actively include themselves in participants' reintegration plans. Role conflict shapes participants' ability to perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage.

#### To Be Present and Involved

Once participants are incarcerated or quasi-incarcerated, participants experience role conflict on the correctional stage. Legally forced to invest all their time and energy on their client/inmate role, participants struggle to be present and involved in their children's life. First, participants on the correctional stage face the realities of missing their children's everyday life, experience an emotional struggle, and continuously worry

about their children's whereabouts. Unable to be present, a portion of the drug dealing participants (with financial resources) manage to become partially involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. Second, in attempts to be partially present in their children's lives, a portion of participants receive their children's visits onto the correctional stage. Once children are on the correctional stage, the dangerous physical and social realities of the correctional stage become more prominent, participants feel the weight of their absence, a portion of participants meet their children for the first time, and all must say goodbye. Lastly, in participants' transition from full incarceration to quasi-incarceration, participants have to continuously choose between their client/inmate role and their parent role (being present and involved in their children's lives). But once participants violate their client/inmate role expectations, they are pushed back onto full incarceration. On the correctional stage, participants have a difficult time being present and involved in their children's lives.

#### "I'm Not There!"

The client/inmate role on the correctional stage and the parent role on the home stage both expect presence and involvement. Legally forced to focus on their client/inmate role performance, participants are unable to fulfill the being present and involved expectations of their ideal parent role on the home stage. On the correctional stage, participants (i) face the realities of missing their children's everyday life and (ii) experience an emotional struggle when unable to fulfill their ideal parent role. Moreover, (iii) participants who had been intensely present and involved in their children's lives prior to incarceration experienced continuous worry. To compensate for their inability to be present, (iv) a portion of drug dealing participants (with financial resources) become



involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage.<sup>93</sup> Legally forced onto the correctional stage, participants become absent parents.

Legally forced onto the correctional stage, participants become absent parents on the home stage. While performing their client/inmate role, unable to be present or involved, participants miss children's everyday life. TR, now a 38 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, identified this as the biggest challenge—

For me was just not being there for them, growing up. Even though I was there financially, I wasn't there for daily type things like, "Go to bed. You're grounded. Eat this. Don't eat that. Boy I told you go cut that grass." That's a big challenge for me as a parent. I let 'em down. And I always promised 'em I wouldn't let 'em down. The disappointment is the big thing for me, as a parent.

Whether the child or the parent was removed from the home stage, participants become absent parents. Unable to be present in their children's everyday life, participants differentiate between presence and involvement. Red, now a 38 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, highlights the lack of presence in his children's lives—

*What was one of the most difficult things as a parent going through this?*

Not being there. Even though they have me to talk to, to write to, to send cards to, to send them presents, but all that is a byproduct of me being actually [in prison]. Okay, that stuff is good to let them know that I'm still breathing, but it's nothing compared them seeing me. That's what really hurt me the most, not being actually there. The incarceration thing really broke me down as far as my relationship with my kids 'cause I'm not there physically. I talk to 'em every other day. They know who I am. Even though I was locked up for seven years, they still know that when I say something, that's exactly what it means, even though they're not around me. Like before I got locked up, they was around me 24 hours, like every day. Then when I go in, when I got locked up, it was like I was *snatched* away. The mental relationship is still intact. But the physical relationship, being able to walk up and just put their hand around me or sit on my lap, gone. We could go in the game room in my house, battle on the game, and say, "I'm the best." And whoever wins has bragging rights for the day and chooses what they want to do for that day. All that was *snatched* away when I got *snatched* away, you know what I mean.

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<sup>93</sup> As participants discuss their presence and involvement in their children's lives while incarcerated, the lack of funds or accessibility to funds become an issue. It is important to note that substance/drug users express more difficulty in regards to access to funds than drug dealing participants.

Although continuously involved in his children's lives from the correctional stage through various means of communication, Red was unable to be physically present in his children's lives. Unable to fulfill the presence expectation of their ideal parent role, a portion of participants begin to self identify as *bad parents*. Joe#1, now a 20 year old African American/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, has not been present or involved in his daughter's life. Thus, he considers himself a *bad parent*—

I just think about that. I'm not a good dad. That's mainly what I think about. 'Cause good dads are always there. And I'm not there. I'm here. Her mom is doing everything for her. And that just doesn't sit right with me. Her mom like talks all this shit about that all the time.

*What does she say?*

"You're no good ass dad. And you can't buy baby diapers." And all that shit. She just gives me the guilt trip and makes me feel like shit. My daughter is just, "Dad! Dad!" That's as much as she could say, "Dad!" But you know, this is the punishment, you can't be there.

Joe#1 self identifies as a *bad father*, continuously on the correctional stage and not present in his daughter's life. Legally forced onto the correctional stage to perform their client/inmate role, participants are unable to fulfill the presence expectation of their ideal parent role. In the process, they miss children's everyday lives.

In response to their own parents' absence, participants added presence to their ideal parent role (see chapter 4). Unable to fulfill their own expectations, participants experience an emotional struggle while on the correctional stage. Anthony, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, was unable to fulfill the presence expectation—

It was painful. 'Cause I couldn't be there with 'em, couldn't get 'em dressed for school, couldn't provide for them, couldn't really talk to them. It was painful. They were kids. They missed me, but didn't know. But I knew, I promised I would never leave 'em. But I did.

*How did you feel?*

Guilty, I failed 'em, you know.

Disappointed with their inability to fulfill the presence expectation of their ideal parent role, participants discuss an emotional struggle on the correctional stage. Riley, now a 46

year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, missed her daughter's everyday life and major life transitions—

The worst-worst part of it was that during the three years that I was in, my daughter got married. She met a guy. I still have not met her husband. She got married 2008, right after I got to prison. And then she got pregnant. She had her baby. I have a year old granddaughter. So, I missed all that. I felt as, that I could not be there for her as a parent. I mean, she had her husband. They had been together for like a year, lived together. They got married justice of the peace. She goes, "When you get out mom, we're gonna have the wedding. She has her wedding dress and everything. And I don't know that she'll ever go through with that. 'Cause now it's just all about the baby. And that's great. And it was nice that she thought, 'cause she hated the fact that I wasn't there for that. She wasn't mad at me or anything. It was just that, she wanted to hold it off. She didn't want me to feel bad. But I was really happy that she found somebody that made her happy. The baby, she was so happy, great time. But going through that, it was like, she had a lot of questions. And you always kind of fear the delivery, you know. And you don't know how that's gonna be. But my stepmom was with her, and her husband. And she got through that really well. She did have a support system. I have a pretty close family.

*How did you feel during all this?*

Guilty, real guilty 'cause I should've been there for her. I shouldn't 've been gone. Like her postponing the wedding, she did it 'cause she was worried about me. But she shouldn't 've worry about me. I should worry about her, not her about me. I couldn't really be her mother from in there.

Legally forced onto the correctional stage, Riley missed her daughter's everyday life and major life course transitions. In the process, Riley experienced continuous guilt, watching her daughter postpone part of her life on her account. Diamond, now a 22 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, regrets the absence of both parents from her daughter's life—

And her father is locked up in [state prison]. She didn't have either one of us. That really made me sad that she didn't have nobody. She just had my sisters and my mother. She didn't have a mom or a dad. I used to think like, "Okay, I know my daughter is loved. But she probably don't feel that motherly love. She probably know they're not her mother. And they don't probably treat her like they're her mother." So, I knew she was missing out on that. So, it hurted me, like she don't feel that comfort. Like when I see her, she held me so tight and kissed me, and tell me she loved me.

Unable to fulfill the presence expectation of her ideal parent role, Diamond experiences a difficult emotional struggle on the correctional stage. In addition to missing children's

everyday life, participants' inability to fulfill the presence expectations prompts an emotional struggle on the correctional stage. While missing children's everyday life and experiencing an emotional struggle over it, a portion of participants continuously worry.

A significant portion of participating mothers and fathers were in charge of children's everyday life prior to their arrest, from the time they wake up to the time they went to bed. Once on the correctional stage, regardless of their pre-incarceration nesting activities, these participants continuously worried about their children's everyday life.

Rosie, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, was her daughter's primary parent prior to her incarceration—

I did 134 days [in jail]. It was terrible because my daughter, never gone anywhere, never been with my dad, never been with my grandma. Since day one, it's been me and her 'cause I didn't need any help. And then I was in jail, worried to death about her. Was she going to school, doing her homework? Was she eating right? Was she sad? I just couldn't stop. It's just that me and her never been apart. And I was just fearful. How was she getting along out there without me, you know.

In charge of her daughter's everyday life prior to incarceration, Rosie has a difficult time in county jail, continuously worrying about her daughter's daily whereabouts. As participants transitioned from being involved in their children's everyday lives to complete absence, participants continuously worried about their children's daily activities. Joseph, now a 28 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, was a present and involved father who practiced two-sphere parenting prior to incarceration.

Once on the correctional stage, he could not stop thinking about his daughters—

I been missing 'em now. I'd just be sitting back thinking, "What are they doing?" Yeah. I miss 'em. I'm like, "Shit!" I start thinking about them. I'm wondering about all what they need. I mean, they have they mamas, but what about when they go to work. I don't trust nobody. And now my babies are with someone else. And I'm like, "Shit. What are they doing now?" I just keep worrying.

Because Joseph was in his children's everyday life prior to his incarceration, caring for their every need while their mothers were at work, he worries continuously. In his absence, the children are being cared by various extended family members and Joseph finds it difficult to stop worrying. Anthony was present and involved father on the home

stage prior to incarceration. Legally forced onto the correctional stage, he was continuously worried about his children—

Then there was constantly the burden of what's going on with your kids. Relationships come and go, but having children, you gotta always be there for your kids, you know. Just the thought of, "Are they hungry? Are they dressed well? Are they grown? Are they going to school? Anybody trying to hurt 'em?" That leaves you emotionally scarred.

*So, when it comes to emotions, how was it being separate?*

At times I couldn't sleep, couldn't eat, just sit there. I thought more when I was locked in that cell, at night time. But if you weak minded, you can go crazy in there. But if you're strong will, one day you gonna be free. You gotta be strong minded.

Because Anthony had been intensively present and involved in his children's everyday life prior to incarceration, he spent his time on the correctional stage continuously worried about his children's everyday life. To survive, he had to become *strong minded* and distract himself with books and sports. Once on the correctional stage, participants who transition from intense presence and involvement to complete absence experience continuous worry about their children's everyday life.

With numerous and strong boundaries between the correctional stage and the home stage, participants experience difficulties being involved in their children's lives. Although drug dealing and substance/drug using participants both experience difficulties, only a portion of the drug dealing fathers in the sample have the external financial resources to be involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. Although Red was continuously moved from facility to facility as a federal inmate, he stayed involved in his children's lives from the correctional stage—

*How did you manage parenting and 7 years in random prisons [federal inmate]?*

Constant contact, constant letters, remembering their birthdays. When they do good in school, you can send money. Like if my daughter, if her mother tells me that she has a really good report card, I can take money out of my account in prison and send that money to a store. And then tell her mother to go to that store and get what she want from that store for her. I can do that. I mean, all these guys are in prison, doesn't mean that they don't love their kids. So, when I'm sitting in prison and I'm like, "Hey man, what should I get? My daughter's birthday coming up." "Hey man, how old is she?" This is a lifer, a man that has

no problem taking a metal pipe out of the weight room and just “bam!” beat somebody in the head with it—

“Hey, how old is your daughter?”

“She just turned seven.”

“Man, check this here. Her birthday is [next month]. Here’s what you do. Go buy the leather and thread, and we gonna make her a little purse, a little hat, and some sandals.”

It’s cool. That’s like, see a seven year old little girl having a little bitty purse with the little hat, and some leather sandals. It takes me about three months to make it, and it’s all handcrafted by dad. I send it to her and it’s cool. And it all came from this dude that everybody say he don’t care about nothing ‘cause he is a killer.

This is his idea. This is my partner now. This is my friend now. The only difference between men like him and me is that they been through more hell than I’ve been through. I’ve been hardened. But once you push past that hard exterior, they got a heart just like you got a heart. They cry just like you cry. But they just don’t want nobody to see that, because of their situation and the environment that they’re in.

To stay involved in his children’s lives, Red used his resources and talked with his children, was always aware of their likes and dislikes, stayed up to date with their activities, rewarded good behavior, and never forgot a birthday. Although Peter, now a 44 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, was never fully invested in his parent role performance, his daughter began to search for him and he began investing his energy on his parent role performance from the correctional stage—

I think the challenge came more when I was over there in [*State B* prison] trying to keep [my daughter] interested and communicating. So, I learned all her favorite things that she likes. I learned how to draw and I started drawing for her all the time, all the Looney tune characters and everything else. I did her princesses, the snow white series. And I took time and paid people to get me computer printouts of these things off their computer systems from their families. They have them mailed them in. They’d bring it to my cell so I learn how to draw this stuff. So I could draw for her all the time. And I must’ve drew her a thousand pictures over the years, sent ‘em to her. She’s got a lot of art everywhere in her house. I sold off stuff to help her while I was in prison and everything. I’ve done everything I could afford. You know, under the circumstances, we have a good relationship.

Although not initially an involved parent, Peter invested his energy and resources on becoming an involved parent from the correctional stage. Today, his daughter is a young married woman and mother of two toddlers who is living in Peter’s house. Throughout her life, Peter has been involved in his daughter’s everyday life from the correctional

stage. For Jason, now a 27 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, staying involved in his daughter's life meant standing in line more than once to use the phone—

When she started getting older, she could talk to me now. She can answer the phone. So I made it my business to go get her a phone. So, I'd call her. Every time she come home from school, she wanted me to call her. But we couldn't talk that long [phone policy], so she'd want me to hang up and call her right back. "Hang up daddy, call me right back." I'm like, "There's people in line waiting on the phone." She like, "Okay, but call me back though." She would wait 'cause—, and I'll call her back and we'll talk. Me and my daughter's relationship is real close.

Unable to be physically present in his daughter's life, Jason became involved in her everyday life through daily phone conversations. Although the majority of participants was interested in being involved from the correctional stage, it was only a portion of the drug dealing participants who were able to financially afford involvement activities.

The client/inmate role on the correctional stage and the parent role on the home stage both expect presence and involvement. Legally forced to perform their client/inmate role on the correctional stage, participants are unable to fulfill the being present expectations of their ideal parent role on the home stage. In the process, participants face the realities of missing their children's everyday life and experience an emotional struggle. Moreover, participants who had been intensely present and involved in children's lives prior to incarceration experienced continuous worry. To compensate for their absence, a portion of drug dealing participants invests their financial resources to continue being involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. And in attempts to be partially present in their children's lives, a portion of participants agree to receive their children's visits onto the correctional stage.

#### "They Gotta Go and I Gotta Stay!"

The role conflict between participants' ideal parent role and client/inmate role is rooted in participants' limited resources (time, energy and financial resources) and being legally forced to invest it all in performing the client/inmate role on the correctional

stage. In attempts to partially fulfill the presence expectations of their ideal parent role, a portion of participants receive their children's visits onto the correctional stage. After overcoming numerous obstacles, conventional family members, caretakers, and others (i) facilitate minor children's visits onto the correctional stage. But once children are in the premises, (ii) the physical and social realities of the correctional stage become more prominent for participants. In attempt to enjoy their visit, (iii) participants push the correctional environment to the background and focus on their children. But as they interact with their children, participants (iv) feel the weight of their absence in children's discomfort. Moreover, (v) a portion of participants meet their children for the first time on the correctional stage. But all, visits come to an end and all participants (vi) must always say goodbye. And although (vii) participants prepare to say goodbye, each goodbye is a heartbreaking event. Unable to be present in children's everyday life on the home stage, a child's visit onto the correctional stage is the vehicle to be partially present in children's lives.

Participants, their children's other parent, and the correctional structure reinforce the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage. But despite numerous obstacles, a significant portion of participants receive visits from their children on the correctional stage. The children's mothers facilitate children's visits to their father and extended relatives facilitate children's visits to their mothers and fathers. Joseph received visits from the mother of his daughter with their daughter. Although the mother of his daughter found herself in the need to move out of state, she continued to facilitate their daughter's visits—

[My daughter's mother] would always bring her. But like during the time that I was locked up, my mom end up getting [my first daughter] and keeping her for like a year and a half. Her mom was moving out of town. So, my mom didn't wanna be away from her either. And she wanted to keep her in my life. So, my mom ends up getting her.

*And her mom was okay with it?*

Yeah. She has another—, an older son. My mom kept her and still brought her to visit me.



Although geographical distance became an obstacle, the mother of Joseph's daughter collaborated with his mother and made it possible for him to continue with visits from his daughter. Despite numerous obstacles, a portion of participants received their children's visits. Jason chose not to *snitch* during his criminal trial. While in the federal correctional system, constantly transferred from one state to another, an associate from the street stage ensured Jason's ex-girlfriend had the resources to visit Jason with their daughter regardless of his geographical location—

[My daughter's mother] made sure that I see my daughter, no matter what. I seen her a lot because the guy that the feds wanted me to tell on, everywhere I went [different states], he made sure she was there. He looked at me more of a—, because I never snitched. [My girlfriend] said, "It was something that he liked about you." I mean, he never knew of her before. It ain't like I introduced him to her. He never knew me like that. The first time we met, I was with [my other associate]. I didn't even get out the car. The second time I came, he made me get out the car. He wanted to meet me. So, I'm not sure. But see, for most guys with the feds, it's hard 'cause you're all over.

Although Jason's relationship with the mother of his daughter ended and the geographical distance reinforced the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage, his ex-associate facilitated his daughter's visits onto the correctional stage for almost eight and a half years. Regardless of aid, it is family members who carry the responsibility of bringing children to visit their incarcerated parents. And as conventional family members grow tired of participants' recidivism or a long term sentence, the obstacles become more prominent and their investment on children's visits diminish. Diamond was arrested along with her cousin. During the first months, her aunt's visits made it possible for Diamond to see her daughter on regular bases—

At first I was seeing her like every other week, because my cousin that got me sent to prison, her mom was coming every other week. But then my cousin got out. After, my mom and sisters would try to bring her once a month. And it was the saddest thing ever, especially when I couldn't see her until she was six months. And then when she was a year old, then she was 18 months, you know. It was not fast enough.

During the first few months of her child's life, Diamond was able to monitor her development during bi-weekly visits. As her aunt's visits stopped, her mother and sisters

were only able to facilitate visits once a month and eventually less often. And although family members continuously invest on parent-child interaction through visits, the investment diminished as the incarcerations continues. Carol, now a 35 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, left her daughters in her father's care—

My first time in prison, my family brought 'em like every weekend. But every time after that, it's been no visits. They're just like, "You keep going back!" It's just, didn't feel like.

*The first time when they would come and visit you, how did you feel at that point?*  
I didn't feel like I was in prison, because I called every day even though I was gone for almost three years. I had visits every weekend. I was in college the whole time I was there. So, it was like I was away at college. You know, my kids were okay. But after that, it was empty and lonely. I missed my kids. I just couldn't go see 'em if I wanted to, talk to 'em if I wanted to. It has been so different.

The longer participants continue to perform their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and their client/inmate role on the correctional stage, the more families bend to the obstacles and limit children's visits. But when families overcome the obstacles, mothers take their children to visit their fathers and extended family members take the children to visit their fathers and mothers. Although a highly desired event, participants face the realities of receiving visits from their children on the correctional stage.

Once children arrive, participants face the reality of interacting with their children within the correctional environment. The correctional environment, the physical character and policies officers enforce during visits, becomes more prominent for participants once the children are on the correctional stage. Peter, now a 44 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, describes the *State B* high security prison environment his children were exposed to during their visits—

When my daughter started coming to visit me, I started to see everything a different way.

*What do you mean?*

Like, I saw her little face looking around. And it just hit me, she was in a prison to visit me. I mean, she's 24 now and she's used to it. But back then, it was really something, and not something good. See, when she was there, looking around, I started thinking about how it looked to her. Here is her dad, locked up.

She's around all these people she shouldn't be. She hears the sound of doors opening and closing, the officer, you know. When she first came, I start looking around myself. Like here, didn't you see the doors [heavy doors and semi-alarm sounds when it opens]? Remember I've been in and out since I was a kid [11 years old]. To me, it don't matter. But to her—, it was all new. And I didn't like that. But by now, it's nothing to her. It's just part of seeing her dad.

Peter has been performing his client/inmate role since adolescence and the correctional stage has been his primary home. But his daughter's initial visits brought forward a world that had been his background. Although the correctional characteristics vary across correctional facilities, participants become more aware of their correctional environment during their children's visits. Rosie describes the visiting environment in a county jail and her disappointment—

The first time, I was really happy she was coming to visit. But it was hard. Why? What happened?

[In county jail], you go in this room, like a box. It kind of looks like a pay phone with a TV screen on it and a phone. And the visitors are downstairs, in another part of the building. It's almost like a webcam. You're talking to them on the phone, but you're seeing them on TV. I didn't even get to see her in person, you know. She came to visit, but I really didn't get to see her. I was in jail, really in jail. She kept trying to touch the screen. Even when we were in the same building, we couldn't see each other, you know. I didn't think about it until she was there. I was in jail. It like, it became more real. I couldn't believe it. [My daughter] came to see me. But even seeing her like that was better than nothing. I just wanted to see her. But it kind of made it more real for me.

Rosie continuously requested her daughter's visits. Although she was happy to finally see her daughter, Rosie became more aware of her correctional environment during her visit. The visiting environment varies across correctional facilities, but children's presence on the correctional stage makes the environment more prominent. Simon, now a 46 year old African American father and recovering substance/drug user, describes the difference between *Midwest State* and *State B*—

The guards are very, any reason to cancel your visit, a kid cries too much, kids throws a toy, visits are cancelled. They're children. You know, you get a three year old throws a car, "Oh, he's out of here. You gotta go." It's a toy. And kids do these things. So, it's any excuse over here. In [*State B*], they'll allow a fist fight. They don't care. In [*State B*], I mean, they're not gonna let you go home to visit your kids. But if your kid wants to come down, it's fine. But here, your kids make any noise in the visiting room, cries or anything like it, they'll ask you to leave. In [*State B*], man them visiting rooms are like a mad houses. You walk up

in there, you don't know what's going on. You got kids all in there, big play areas for 'em. They try to cater to the children. They even have a diaper dispenser, free diapers for kids. 'Cause, you get a lot of 8 hour visits in [*State B*]. And here, you're lucky to have a three hour visit.

*How was it for you?*

My kids never visit me in [*State B*]. It's rough there. Here [in *Midwest State*], they come see me. Umm, it's alright. But you know, I don't mind the place. But you know, people in places like here [looks at correctional officers across the glass], they don't leave it alone. And my kids, they see me in here, you know, a prisoner. I can handle it, no problem. But they, you know what I'm saying. I don't want people to be saying anything to my kids.

Simon can handle the correctional stage, but he finds it difficult to have his children interact with correctional officers during their visit. Although correctional facilities vary, children's visits onto the correctional stage highlight the correctional environment for participants. The details of the correctional stage they had grown accustomed to become more prominent during children's visits.

Eager to interact with their children, participants attempt to ignore the correctional environment and focus on children's visits. But the correctional stage is not conducive to family intimacy. Purple, now a 29 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, was eager to see his son and tried to ignore the correctional environment—

It was kind of embarrassing. I was ashamed more than anything, because I never did want to have my son see me back in a prison. It just kind of opened my eyes. I was spooked because I didn't like my son coming down there to see me when I was in prison. But if that's what it took for him to know who I was and show him that I did care, with the little hug, then okay. I blocked my embarrassment. I blocked everyone out, guards and all. I could hold him throughout the whole visit and everything. So, yeah, it was nice. It was a beautiful day, it really was. But it was prison, prison.

During his third incarceration after becoming a father, Purple blocked out the correctional environment and focused on his son during his visits. But blocking out the correctional environment is a difficult task and participants struggle as they attempted interact with their children during visits. Families in *free society* interact in a private environment, but the correctional stage is a public and hipper monitored setting. Joseph received his children's visits during his incarceration, and although he wanted to focus on his children, it was difficult to ignore the correctional environment—

*What about their mom?*

We still friends. We stayed in contact, writing, phone, and visits once I end up getting to prison. I mean, that helped me a lot, a lot, a lot, a lot. 'Cause I was locked up and I wasn't in [my daughter's] life for all those years. But at the same time I felt like, I was still in her life. What I didn't like was to watch her grow up throughout the visits. I didn't like that shit. She'd come down like twice a month.

*How did it feel to hold your baby while you were in prison?*

I mean, I was happy. But, I didn't like the environment that I was in. I felt like when I was holding her, I just wanted to be somewhere to where it could just be us. Just to get a little bonding time.

*And that wasn't possible there?*

I don't think so, just because it's just so many people around. It feels a little uncomfortable. So, I had to fight that back a little bit.

The correctional stage facilitates family interaction during visits, but does not foster family intimacy. In order to continue to see his children throughout his incarceration, Joseph has to push through the discomfort and continue to accept his children's visits onto the correctional stage. However, not all participants were able to ignore the correctional environment. Doug, now a 31 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, decided to receive his children's visit once and stopped visits thereafter<sup>94</sup>—

*How was it seeing the baby while you were there [county jail]?*

Oh, it kind of sucked. I mean, they have a big window in front of the unit. It's a bay, a huge room. And then on one side of the wall, there's bunks. And on the far walls, there's huge ass windows, one in the middle and one on each side. And there's a control booth, right in the middle, where the cops just hang out and see everybody through the big windows. And there's a hallway in between there. And that's where the visitors come and sit down in the window and they got phones. So, they just sit there and everybody could just see everything.

*Can you touch your son?*

No. It was kind of sad. He just hanged at the window all the time, snapping the window. He wasn't even one yet, a little baby. It was heartbreaking. I couldn't have him visit again. It was sad, couldn't do nothing to protect him in there. I told his mom I couldn't have him over anymore.

*What about your daughter?*

In 2000, I went to jail for a warrant, and [my daughter's] mom brought [my daughter] up there to see me. And you know, she was like acting crazy, crying having a fit, talking about, "Daddy, daddy!" Hitting on the little glass thing,

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<sup>94</sup> Similar to participants who chose not to receive their children's visits in chapter 7 (*Snatched* from "Doing" Parenthood).

trying to get at me. After that I didn't want to see none of my kids while I was in jail.

After seeing his son and daughter on the correctional stage, Doug could not ignore the correctional environment and chose not to accept anymore visits. Wanting to see their children, a significant portion of participants attempt to push the correctional environment aside and focus on the children during visits. However, seeing children on the correctional stage is a difficult experience for participants, especially when they come to notice their own absence.

The client/inmate role and the parent role both demand participants' presence. Legally forced to be present on the correctional stage and unable to be present on the home stage, the mothers and a portion of the fathers in the sample began to notice their own absence in their children's lives during visits. Liz, now a 23 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, felt rejected as she attempted to hug her son during a visit—

And my mom, she used to bring him. He used to cry a lot. I don't know if it was because he realized that I was locked up or he just was crying at that time [son was 6 months]. I used to cry because I would say, "Mom, why don't he wanna go to me?" And my mom says, "You know, kids are bi-polar. One minute they this way, the next minute they that way." She says, "So, don't take it personal. He does the same thing to me." And I tried to do it again, and he didn't want to come. And I started crying and my mom was crying. And she was like, "It'll be alright." You know, my feelings was hurt.

Legally forced to perform her client/inmate role, Liz was unable to be present in her son's life. In attempting to bond with him during a visit, she was rejected and sensed her own absence from her son's life. Unable to be present in their children's everyday lives, participants become very aware of their absence during children's visits. After only a few weeks of absence, Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, is afraid of the consequences—

I kind of felt different the first time she came [2 year old daughter]. Like, I was just trying to watch her reactions. Like if she's still comfortable with me. Like when [my husband's aunt] came, 'cause now she takes care of her over there, and it kind of hurt my feelings 'cause she goes out to her. But she's a little kid. She's

not trying to hurt my feelings or anything. It's just, that's who she's used to seeing everyday now.

Eager to see her daughter, Ruth is simultaneously pleased and heartbroken during her daughter's visits. She watches her baby daughter reach for her caretaker and notices her own absence. The highly desired visits showcase participants' absence from their children's everyday life. Rosie was grateful to her father for caring for her daughter, but she has noticed her own absence during visits—

So, I saw her, and the first thing I thought was, "Oh, he didn't brush your hair right." And I'm trying not to cry. And she's rattling off a couple of things, "Look at what grandpa got me today. And we did this." And she was fine without me, you know.

Parents attempt to make the best of their interaction with the children, but are very aware of their own absence and the diminishing comfort. Miguel, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, missed the first 5 years of his daughter's life. Although aware of his absence from his daughter's life, he tried to make the best of visits—

*How were your interactions with your daughter?*

I would express that I loved her. And I loved her mother very much. I mean, it was, you couldn't really hold your kid like you would want to, hug them. You could hug them when they came and when they leave. That's it. You could color a picture with them. But you couldn't hold her and tell her how good she was doing. I mean, as much as you want to, 'cause you're not around them like you would be if you were out. And it hurts, 'cause I didn't really develop a relationship with her until I got home.

Not in her everyday life, the father-daughter comfort was not (and is not) accessible during her visits. And as the children become adults, a portion continues to visit their incarcerated parent on the correctional stage. And once a portion of participants begin to receive visits from their grandchildren, they continue to see the impact their absence has on their now adult children. Peter has been in and out of prison throughout his daughter's life course, and she continues visits him during his incarcerations and brings her daughter—

*So, do you want your children to visit?*

I think it's more beneficial for [my daughter]. She's the only one that ever came to see me. [My son] came to see me for like 5 or 6 times when I was in prison in

[*State B*]. That's the only time he ever came, 'cause his mother brought him. But after that, his mother didn't bring either one of 'em. And then my sister was bringing [my daughter] down to see me in [*State B*]. And that's why I got to see her so much. And then when I came to prison here, she just came on her own. She young, had cars and was able to do it. I was surprised she came here every month to see me. But she started bringing [my granddaughter] when she was a baby. And I would sit there and get to hold her. And in her mind, she was [my granddaughter], you know. [My granddaughter] was her. And we talked about a lot of different things. And she got a little emotional about some things. And she's like, "Do you remember holding me when you were in prison, when I was a baby." I say, "Yeah, I remember that." So, it was just like a recurring feeling, because I've been to jail a lot. I wasn't in her life then, and she sees the same thing now with my grandkids.

Now as a grandfather, Peter continues to feel his absence from his daughter's life during her visits. With limited resources (time and energy) and legally forced to dedicate all resources to their client/inmate role performance, participants become absent parents. And as parents interact with their children during visits, they notice their own absence. And a portion of participants meet their children for the first time.

Sitting still on the correctional stage, a portion of male participants meet their children for the first time in the visiting room. Participants conceived their children in unstable relationships, where paternity was contested and/or the participant was incarcerated during the pregnancy process. Thus, meeting children for the first time during visits on the correctional stage was a common experience for absent fathers. In meeting their child for the first time, participants realize that they have missed their children's life course to date. Miguel was incarcerated during his daughter's birth and met her in the visiting room for the first time—

She was six months old the first time I seen her. I had got pictures, birthday cards from her mother. Her mom came to see me and brought her with her. The first time I seen her, I was esstatic. I was excited. I cried. I realized what I missed in those 6 months, and when I had weekly visitations, watching her growing through the weekends. I could see them three times a month. That's what the limitations were. And you know, just that one week that you missed, you missed so much.

When meeting his daughter for the first time, Miguel realizes he missed her first months and is missing her first years of life. In addition to fathers who experienced the birth process on the correctional stage, fathers heavily invested in their delinquent/criminal



role on the street stage were absent fathers. Finally in a stable location, older children use the department of corrections to locate and meet their absent fathers for the first time. LA, now a 46 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, prioritized his delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and has been legally forced to perform his client/inmate role on the correctional stage numerous times. In the process, he ignored his parent role on the home stage. Now a teen, his son began to search for his father and found LA on the correctional stage—

My son, now that he is old enough, grown up, my son come to prison to meet me. Now, he goes out of his way to find me.

*So, you met him in prison for the first time?*

Well, no. I knew him, but he didn't know me. I had not seen him since he was a baby. Now he's all grown up and he wanted to see me. But it was like meeting 'cause we didn't really know each other. We talk all the time. But it's more him than me. You know what I'm saying. It's more him. Now he's telling his mom, "I want to be with dad. My dad's gonna get his place so I can go live with him." He wants to come and live with me. It's more him than me. It's about what he wants to do. It's him that's pushing that.

Continuously invested in his delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and legally forced onto the correctional stage numerous times, LA was an absent father. Finally sitting still on the correctional stage, his teenage son searched for him and socially meets him (not physically) for the first time. As children get older, especially as boys transition into manhood, they search for their fathers. Jordan, now a 31 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, invested in his delinquent/criminal role and ignored his girlfriend's pregnancy during his teen years. In response, she left the state and kept Jordan out of their son's life. But as their son became a teenager, he searched for Jordan and found him on the correctional stage—

He looked me up. When I go to prison this time, [my son and his mother] come down and see me. They come and drive 5 hours one way to come and see me. So they would come like once a month. They would drive on Friday and came to visit on Saturday and Sundays.

*What changed her mind [son's mother]?*

Now my son is 14, you know. And she says, "He's really gonna need you. I can't do nothing with him now. I did my part. He's 14, going into manhood. Now he needs you. He really needs you now." That's how she put it. They was

in my life while I was in prison. I missed his kid years, but they're really in my life now.

Focused on his delinquent/criminal role performance, Jordan ignored his girlfriend's pregnancy and was an absent father for the first 14 years of his son's life. While on the correctional stage, his son comes to visit and they meet for the first time. Whether participants were incarcerated during the birth process or absent parents throughout their children's early years, children visit the correctional stage to meet participants for the first time. On the correctional stage, all visits come to an end and goodbyes are inevitable.

Legally forced to be present on the correctional stage, participants must say goodbye to their children. Jerry, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, refused visits after this painful experience—

It hurts to see 'em go and you can't leave with 'em. It's fun. But when it's time to go, they gotta go and you gotta stay. It's just, it's a little emotional. So, I decided to just not have him come in at all. So, it was phone calls and letters.

Having to say goodbye is a vivid reminder of participants' correctional status and their inability to leave the correctional stage. Although participants experience the pain of seeing their children leave the visiting room, they recognized it as part of their

delinquent/criminal role. Miguel had to face his daughter's goodbyes during visits—

When you went to the visiting room and it was time for them to leave, it—, when she turns, it hurts more than anything, especially when she got old enough to talk and know who I was. It really hurts. It was weird, but it was part of it, the life style that I was living at the time. I hated it. And I couldn't—, there's nothing I could change at this point. I think it was when she was old enough to talk and comprehend, it got hard.

Aware of the association between his delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role, Miguel recognizes this painful experience as part of his *life style* and saying goodbye to his daughter became a painful part of every visit. And regardless of the correctional facility, incarceration or quasi-incarceration, saying goodbye is a painful experience and a reminder of their correctional status. Rosie engaged in visits through a telecommunication system in a county jail—

She's talking about all these stuff and the timer comes on, "You have five minutes left. You have five minutes left." "What's wrong?" "I gotta go." And then she didn't want to go. "Why? Why? Why do you have to go?" And I said "Well, you know. Other people gotta be downstairs." All along I'm crying. It was rough. I just remember her face and telling her I love her. And I watched her as she hung up the phone. And her face is something I'll never forget. It was just, I realized then how much I let her down.

Rosie eventually transferred from county jail to a quasi-incarceration facility (RCF). In this new correctional environment, Rosie had a low-wage job in the community and was allowed two hour furloughs to visit her daughter (assuming she was up to date with her rent, other debt, and had no policy violations). Although allowed to leave the correctional stage to visit her daughter onto the home stage, it was a much more difficult place to say goodbye—

We were playing and two hours go fast [at my father's home], because [the RCF staff] don't count travel time. They're half hour away. And my dad came in and he said, "Well girl, it's about time to go." And she didn't say anything. She's been real quiet. I said, "What's wrong." "This is the second Christmas in a row mom." She was pissed. It was the first time I seen her angry. She don't cry. *Is she mad at you? Or she's just mad?*

I think she's just mad. I don't know if she realizes that this is my fault, that I did this. I did this. I was locked due to the choices that I made. I don't know if she sees it that way. But I think she just sees it, "She doesn't want me with her." But I explained to her, "If I could stay, I would. It's not that I don't want to." Because I never want her to think, I just came for an hour and had better things to do. And my dad told her that too. She just didn't care at that point. "I don't care if you gotta go. I want you here, two birthdays, two Christmases, two Thanksgivings." She's sad, disappointed. I gave her a hug and I said, "You want to come out to drop me off [at the RCF]?" She's like, "No." She didn't care. My dad dropped me off and I cried the whole way here [RCF]. He just said, "Well, just remember that when you are tempted to do the wrong thing. Remember that this is why you shouldn't. And you have to do the right thing."

Even when she was legally allowed to visit her daughter onto the home stage while quasi-incarcerated, the goodbyes reminded Rosie and her family of her client/inmate status and it became more difficult to explain to her daughter the need to return to the correctional stage. Unable to legally abandon their client/inmate role on the correctional stage, participants struggle with the presence expectation of their ideal parent role. And the

goodbyes during children's visits are a clear reminder of their inability to perform the parent role performance.

And as incarceration continues and children continue to come onto the correctional stage for visits, participants attempt to prepare for the painful goodbyes. But regardless of the preparation, each goodbye is heartbreaking. Eric, now a 32 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, initially chose not to receive his children's visits. But after his children's mothers insistence, Eric caved into receiving children's visits and prepared himself for the torturous goodbyes—

*So, how was it to see your kids while you were incarcerated?*

It was kind of like torturing because I never couldn't leave with 'em. Every time they got ready to leave, it just ached me up inside to see them leave. But as time went by, I kind of got used to like preparing myself before they got ready to leave. That way it made me feel a little bit better once they were gone.

*How did you prepare?*

You know, just trying to block out the pain mentally. You know it's coming, so the punch hurts less.

*Did it work?*

Kind of, not really. It hurts no matter what.

Aware of his legally forced client/inmate role on the correctional stage, Eric prepares himself to receive his children's visits and say goodbye. But regardless of how much preparation participants engage in, they continue to feel the pain. James, now a 49 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, was the father of two young children during his first incarceration. Although he prepared for the goodbyes, each visit continued to hurt as much as the first—

*When you were in [prison], they used to come and see you twice a week?*

Yeah. It was, sometimes I was really depressed because they had to see me in that way, you know. They would come and ask, "Are you coming home dad?" It really hurts me. "I can't come. Dad did something bad and hanging around with the wrong crowd. And you don't understand, but I love you. I'll be home soon." But that went on for two years, almost. I tried to prepare for every visit, but you know, every time my heart would just drop. It was really hurting.

With young children, James was continuously forced to explain his legally forced client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. And although he tried to prepare for these visits, goodbyes were painful each time. In a quasi-incarceration

facility and mother of a two year old, Ruth visits her daughter with earned furlough (two free hours) at a social service facility in the *Metro Area*. But regardless of her preparation, Ruth continues to experience the painful goodbyes—

Before they bring her [from out of town to [the *Metro Area*], I know it's gonna be hard. So, I tell myself that this will end soon. I tell myself to calm down and this will be over soon. But it's hard when I see her and then I have to leave [the social service site back to the RCF]. I tell her that I'm at work, "Your mommy is going back to work." It's hard, but they tell me that kids adjust a lot better than we do. But I'm just afraid she'll forget me. And then like, she's mad at me. I don't want to be like my mom.<sup>95</sup> I want to be around. Right now, I'm being like my mom.

Legally unable to be present in her daughter's everyday life, Ruth is afraid that her daughter will forget her. And regardless of how much she prepares, saying goodbye is heartbreaking during every visit. Although participants attempted to prepare for the goodbye, watching their children leave the correctional stage (or having to return to the correctional stage when quasi-incarcerated) is a reminder of their legally forced correctional status.

After overcoming numerous obstacles, a significant portion of participants received their children's visits onto the correctional stage. Family members facilitated minor children's visits; however, participants' recidivism and long periods of time on the correctional stage threatens families' investments (time, energy, and other resources) on children's visits. Moreover, children's presence on the correctional stage makes participants more aware of the physical and social realities of the correctional stage. Desperately wanting to see their children, a portion of participants attempt to push the correctional environment to the background and focus on the children. But as the interaction occurs, incarcerated parents begin to notice their own absence from children's everyday life. Also, a portion of participants meet their children for the first time on the correctional stage and realize they have missed their children's life course up to the meeting date. Furthermore, one of the most painful experiences when "doing"

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<sup>95</sup> Mother is an alcoholic who abandoned Ruth and her brother, and their father raised them (he overcame alcoholism to care for them).

parenthood under correctional supervision is saying goodbye to the children at the end of visits. And regardless of how much participants prepare, each goodbye is a heartbreaking event. Legally forced onto the correctional stage, children's visits are the only vehicle to be partially present in their children's lives. And in addition to the painful visits, participants find other ways to be partially present and involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage.

“We're in Limbo!”

Once participants transition from full incarceration (from federal prison, state prison, or jail) to quasi-incarceration (to the WRC or the RCF), the boundaries separating the correctional stage and the home stage are weakened and facilitate participants' presence and involvement in children's lives. But *inadequate* client/inmate role performance reinforces the boundaries and pushes participants back onto the full-incarceration correctional stage. Similar to Moe and Ferraro (2006), participants in this sample perceive community based corrections as threatening to their parent role performance. In the quasi-incarcerated correctional stage, the client/inmate role performance involves the acquisition of conventional (mostly low-wage) employment in *free society*, submission to all correctional policies at the RCF or WRC, and the maintenance of a paid account. Amongst participants, *inadequate* client/inmate role performance while quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage includes the possession of cell phones, cigarettes or alcohol, not being in the assigned location in *free society* to which furloughs were granted, and/or not staying up-to-date with their account (accumulation of criminal justice debt, child support, and living expenses at RCF or WRC). In this context, participants struggle with role conflict. While quasi-incarcerated, (i) a portion of participants attempt to be present and involved in their children's lives. But soon after, (ii) earned furloughs are removed and participants are unable to be partially present and involved in their children's lives. When having to choose between the client/inmate role

and the parent role, (iii) a significant portion of participants risk their quasi-freedom and prioritize the parent role. Quasi-incarcerated, with one leg on the correctional stage and another on the home stage, participants struggle to with role conflict.

In transition from incarceration to quasi-incarceration, the boundaries between the correctional stage and the home stage become weaker and participants attempt to become present and involved in their children's lives. However, *inadequate* client/inmate role performance reinforces the boundaries. Larry, now a 35 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, is currently attempting to use his time at the WRC to build his presence and become involved in his children's lives —

*How have those months been [2 months at WRC]?*

I mean, it's not bad and it's not good either. 'Cause you can't really just leave when you want to. You still got somebody telling you what to do. I mean, it's not cool. But I can get out from time to time during the day. I'm grateful for that. I've seen 'em almost every day. Their mom is here with her grandma [in the *Metro Area*]. Her grandma is real sick, so. I'm back in they lives. It's just, like now I can't leave 'cause I got a write-up.

Although the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage have become more flexible and Larry has become present in his children's lives, *inadequate* client/inmate role performance (write-up for a violation) just reinforced the boundaries and he is to focus on his client/inmate role performance. Aware of boundaries reinforced, participants become creative and work around policy to become present and involved in their children's lives. Eli, now a 33 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, wanted to see his son—

I went to go see him a couple of times. And his mom came and picked me up to go job seeking [12:00-5:00pm] and he be with her. And like, sometimes when I work, I call her, have her come pick me up. And she just brings him with her. Or like, about 3 weeks ago, they came up there to my job and ate. My manager, he's pretty cool. He let me go on break to spend some time with my son. I mean, like really didn't even miss nothing, 'cause come to find out, we both just the same. We like the same kind of movies and always loved to play video games. All we do is really talk about how we gonna kick each other's asses on Halo [videogames]. He calls up here every now and then, talk to him. But he probably call more than I thought. But these people up here [the residents] be acting funny with the phones. 'Cause somebody call for you and they won't even tell you. All the residents, shit, they be acting like assholes on the payphone. So, I done got in

trouble twice for that [2 write-ups for cell phones]. Can't have no cell phones here.

Unable to acquire furloughs to visit his son, Eli uses his job seeking and employment release to become present and involved in his son's life. Although furloughs are used to reward clients/inmates who have secured conventional employment and are up-to-date with their debt, removal of furloughs are used to punish *inadequate* client/inmate role performance. Charlie, now a 43 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, is too familiar with the experience—

I'm institutionalized. I'm a career criminal. I'm not gonna sit here and tell you, "I'm never gonna commit no crime." I probably committed six felonies since I've been out of prison and been here. And not deliberate ones, just the fact that I'll go see someone when I'm not supposed to. It's all violations. But I've gotta go see family members and they make it impossible to deal with them here [correctional staff]. They're not real sympathetic here with like getting you out for furloughs. And they use any reason to take the furloughs away. I think some of the rules are restricting people from certain things, sure. But to take furloughs from some of these guys for a pack of cigarettes, you gonna say he can't visit his kids for 2 weeks? I think that's pretty extreme. Once they get to this point, they should have the opportunity to spend as much time as possible with their children.

Although the transition from incarceration to quasi-incarceration weakens the boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage and allows participants to become quasi-present and involved in their children's lives, *inadequate* client/inmate role performance reinforce the boundaries and legally forces participants back onto the correctional stage. Quasi-incarcerated, with one leg on the correctional stage and another on the home stage, *inadequate* client/inmate role performance threatens participants' ability to be present and involved in their children's lives.

With an *inadequate* client/inmate role performance on record, punitive outcomes range from return to fulltime incarceration to the removal of furloughs. Pushed back onto the correctional stage to focus on their client/inmate role performance, participants face difficulties being present and involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. Joe#2, now a 26 year old Hispanic father and recovering substance/drug user, is



continuously written-up and experiences furlough removal, limiting his ability to be present and involved in his children's lives—

I mean, it's a challenge by itself just to find it possible to be with my kids. Because there's a lot of people that won't drive 40 minutes to come and get me so I can be with my kids [caretakers will not drive to WRC]. I mean, everyday is a different challenge. And then sometimes can be three different challenges. And then you feel the pressure when you have to tell your kid that you're not gonna be able to see her that day, just because you couldn't find a ride or just because these people [correctional officers] are irritated and take your furlough away.

*How does that make you feel? How do you handle that?*

I don't know. The only way I can handle this is just be with my kids, try to stay calm. I mean, there's only so many ways these people [correctional officers] kill my pride and pollute my mind. I'm trying not to freak out.

Pushed back onto the correctional stage, Joe#2 struggles with the inability to be present

and involved in his children's lives. Quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage,

participants are continuously threatened with furlough removal. Matthew, now a 24 year

old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, finds himself

continuously tiptoeing—

'Cause these people here [correctional officers], they don't try to help me like the people in the prison were. It's just a job for them. All they do is try to hold you back all the time. If you were here on a daily basis, you would see the abuses. All these guys [correctional officers] talk to us, they shouldn't be able to talk to us like that. They are always disrespectful. And it's not all of them. It's just some of them. It's just stupid! They should be able to help us instead of adding stuff on. They're taking me to where you blow up and run out the door. I don't understand why they would put themselves in a position to hurt people more than try to help them. If you go to ask them something and they are having a bad day, they yell at you and tell you to go to your room. And just stupid shit like that. I mean, there's been times that I was late coming back from a furlough, and I called them and told them that I was gonna be late because of the snow, and just because the [correctional officer] was in a bad mood, she wrote me a report when I got back then. I lost my furlough and wasn't able to be with my daughter like I was supposed to [visits with a social service program and visiting his oldest daughter in *free society*].

Quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, participants are continuously under threats of write-ups and furlough removals. With *inadequate* client/inmate role performance on record, participants are pushed back onto the correctional stage to focus on their

client/inmate role performance and are unable to be present and involved in their children's lives.

Quasi-incarcerated, without earned furloughs or upon removal of earned furlough, participants find themselves having to choose between the client/inmate role and the parent role. When having to make a choice, participants violate the client/inmate role expectations to partially perform their parent role. Jerry fathered his son at 14 years of age and reconnected with him 14 years later. Thus, an out of state visit from his son took priority over his client/inmate role performance in the quasi-incarceration facility—

I really couldn't hang out too much because I have no furlough time. I don't have a job yet. I basically was out, job seeking [12:00-5:00pm] and I broke the rules [voice nervously shook on "rules"]. I had to though. I had to see him. It had been a long time. I went to my sister's house and hung out with him for a while, sit there and talked [an out of placement violation]. And I let him know I'm out to stay this time.

Without furlough time to spend with his son, Jerry chose to violate his client/inmate role and leave job seeking activities to partially perform his parent role. Only legally allowed off the correctional stage to job seek, participants become creative to see their children.

Purple became a father while incarcerated. Upon his stay on the quasi-incarcerated correctional stage, he violated his client/inmate role expectations to meet his son—

She came back August of last year [son was born 2004]. Eventually I had, she had brought him back down here to visit a couple of times. And I ended up going to meet him, which I wasn't supposed to. But I went up there during job seeking hours and stayed for a couple hours. I needed to meet him. And these people [correctional officers] were not going to let me anyway. So, I just left [out of placement violation].

Aware of the ease with which the boundaries between the correctional stage and the home stage can be reinforced, Purple chose to quietly violate his client/inmate role and meet his son. When having to choose between the client/inmate role and parent role, the parent role takes priority. Doug became a teen father while quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage. Although allowed to leave the RCF to work and attend school, he was not awarded furloughs to see his son—

Uh, I had about 4 more months [at the RCF when my son was born].

*How was it being at the RCF and your kids?*

I wasn't allowed to go see him. I went to high school from 7am to 3pm. And then from 3pm to midnight I was working every day. And then I never got furloughs, never got to leave to go see him. But on Wednesday I got off school at 1:30pm. They didn't know that [correctional staff]. So, I just went home from 1:30-3:00pm and seen him every week, every Wednesday for four months [out of placement violation]. And then the day I graduated, I was supposed to leave the RCF 2 days later, but they found out about Wednesday 'cause they got my school schedule. They found out that I was pulling one over their heads. So, they were pretty upset about that.

*Why didn't you get a furlough?*

I asked, but I wasn't allowed to because either rent had to be paid, some report, had no time, or just little something like that. They were pretty strict on it. Yeah, I didn't like it there at all [currently at WRC].

*So they arrested you because you lied to them?*

Well, first they had said that I had to start the program over [6+ months program]. That was crap. So, I was supposed to leave in two days and they made me started over. And that lasted about a month. I got caught all over again [going to see his son] and went back to court two minutes later. I got home, they took me to jail that morning. I just graduated. I just turned 18, just graduated of high school and the judge just gave me six months in jail.

Eagerly wanting to perform his parent role, being present and involved in his son's life, Doug violated his client/inmate role expectations. Once staff on the correctional stage became aware of his *inadequate* client/inmate role performance, he was returned to full incarceration. When furloughs are not granted or revoked, a portion of the participants violate correctional policy to partially perform their ideal parent role.

Once participants transition from full incarceration to quasi-incarceration, the boundaries separating the correctional stage and the home stage are weakened. While quasi-incarcerated, participants attempt to be present and involved in their children's lives. But soon after, earned furloughs are removed and participants are unable to be partially present and involved on the home stage. When having to choose between the client/inmate role and the parent role, a significant portion of participants risk their quasi-freedom and prioritize the parent role. Quasi-incarcerated, with one leg on the correctional stage and another on the home stage, participants struggle to with role conflict.

Overall, once participants are incarcerated or quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, they experience role conflict. Legally forced to invest all their time and energy on their client/inmate role, participants struggle to be present and involved in their children's life. Participants on the correctional stage face the realities of missing their children's everyday life, experience an emotional struggle, and continuously worry about their children's whereabouts. Unable to be present, a portion of drug dealing participants (with financial resources) manage to become partially involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage. In attempts to be partially present in their children's lives, a significant portion of participants receive their children's visits onto the correctional stage. Once children are on the correctional stage, the physical and social realities of the correctional environment become more prominent for participants, participants feel the weight of their absence, a portion of participants meet their children for the first time, but all must say goodbye. In participants' transition from full incarceration to quasi-incarceration, participants continuously have to choose between their client/inmate role and their parent role (being present and involved in their children's lives). But once participants violate their client/inmate role expectations, they are pushed back onto the full-incarceration correctional stage. On the correctional stage, participants have a difficult time being present and involved in their children's lives. Furthermore, the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the parent role continue as participants attempts to provide for their children.

#### Limited Financial Resources

Although conflicting roles can coexist in a self, participants' limited resources foster role conflict. The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role both expect participants to use their limited financial resources to meet their expectations.<sup>96</sup> The

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<sup>96</sup> In regards to drug dealing profits, participants' discussions confirm previous literature (MacCoun and Reuter 1999). Although drug dealing participants discussed their financial profits, once they take into account the numerous hours on the street stage, their periods of incarceration, and criminal justice debt, participants' profits are similar or lower to conventional minimum wage.

client/inmate role expects participants to pay correctional cost and court ordered debt (criminal justice debt, child support, and living cost while quasi-incarcerated at the RCF or WRC), while the ideal parent role expects participants to financially provide for their children's needs. Competing over participants' limited financial resources, the client/inmate role limits participant's ability to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role.

“It's All about Money!”

In addition to legally forcing participants to be present and involved on the correctional stage, the client/inmate role expects participants to live in financial scarcity. The punitive outcomes involve the accumulation of criminal justice debt (involving court cost and fines). Incarcerated on the correctional stage (jail, state prison, and federal prison), participants' client/inmate role performance involved limited or no financial resources and daily financial expenses. Once participants transition onto the quasi-incarceration correctional stage (the WRC or the RCF), the client/inmate role provides participants with access to the conventional (mostly low-wage) labor market, but becomes more financially demanding. Because the client/inmate role on the quasi-incarceration correctional stage is financially demanding, participants perceive it as *all about money* and struggle to perform the financial expectations of their client/inmate role.

In the punitive process, the 57 participants acquired thousands of dollars in criminal justice debt (not including correctional cost). According to the *Midwest State*<sup>97</sup> records, the 57 participants have accrued a total of \$907,846.20 in *criminal justice debt* (court cost, fines, sub-charges, restitution, and other cost), an average of \$15,927.13 per participant and a range of \$1,311.76 to \$83,884.42.<sup>98</sup> The participants have paid a total of \$513,978.8, and average of \$9,017.17 per participant and a range of \$119.26 to

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<sup>97</sup> As of August, 2011 (*Midwest State Courts Online*)

<sup>98</sup> It is important to note that this total does not include correctional cost, such as the monthly rent participants have to pay at the WRC or RCF.

\$78,199.69. Fifty-two participants continue to have criminal justice debt for a total of \$425,368.6, an average of \$7,462.6 per participant and a range of 0 to \$30,319.98. The average participant goes onto the correctional stage indebted to the criminal justice system. In addition to criminal justice debt, participants accrued correctional cost.

Fully incarcerated on the correctional stage (jail, state prison, and federal prison), participants client/inmate role performance involved living in financial scarcity. To support their financial needs, participants use their limited financial resources, seek out external financial resources, and work in the prison system. If the participants acquire conventional work in the prison system, a portion of his/her limited income is deducted to pay court ordered debt (criminal justice debt and child support). And once participants' transition from full incarceration (jail, state prison, or federal prison) into quasi-incarceration (the WRC or the RCF), it provides them with access to the conventional (mostly low-wage) labor market, but the client/inmate role on the quasi-incarceration correctional stage is more financially demanding. On the quasi-incarceration correctional stage, the client/inmate role expects participants to acquire conventional employment. And once participants acquire employment, the client/inmate role expects participants to not reject any conventional earning opportunities and submit their income checks directly to the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections. With their low income check, participants pay correctional cost (rent and other daily expenses at the WRC and RCF), criminal justice debt, child support and receive a modest allowance to survive when allowed out in *free society*. To successfully complete their stay on the quasi-incarceration correctional stage, participants are to keep a paid bill. Those unable to perform their client/inmate role are legally forced on the correctional stage for longer periods of time, sent to a different correctional facility, and occasionally allowed out but expected to continue with the financial expectation of their client/inmate role. Thus, participants perceive the quasi-incarceration correctional stage as *all about money*. And

participants' client/inmate role is in direct competition with participants' ability to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role.

“I'm Tangled in Here!”

The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role are both financially demanding. As just established, the client/inmate role offers no or limited conventional financial resources and drains every penny participants acquire. Although the client/inmate role performance involved the payment of backed court ordered child support, (i) participants' conventional financial resources are too limited to fully fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role.<sup>99</sup> When in good standing with their children's caretaker and the caretaker is aware of the client/inmate role's financial expectations, (ii) a significant portion of participants are not placed on child support.<sup>100</sup> Trapped in role conflict, (iii) a significant portion of participants directly request financial aid from non-caretaking-conventional family members to aid with children's needs. In their absence, (iv) caretakers use social services to supplement children's financial needs and other extended family members become involved in childcare to reduce the childcare cost. When able to choose between their client/inmate role and their parent role, (v) a portion of drug dealing participants (with financial resources) find ways to provide while quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage. Caught in role conflict, participants struggle to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role from the correctional stage.

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<sup>99</sup> Griswold and Pearson (2005) recommend that agencies dealing with child support employment and criminal justice need to “adopt more effective policies with incarcerated parents, including transitional job programs that guarantee immediate, subsidized employment upon release, child support guidelines that adjust for low earnings, and better training and education opportunities during incarceration” (1).

<sup>100</sup> Because participants have multiple children with different romantic partners and with different caretakers, the majority (43/57) are legally responsible for child support for at least one child and another majority (38/57) is not legally responsible for child support for at least one child. Thus, one participant can be legally forced to provide child support for one child and not for another child.

The client/inmate role's financial expectations are in conflict with the ideal parent role' providing expectations. When participants simultaneously perform the client/inmate role and ideal parent role, they face a difficult time meeting the financial expectations of both roles. Because children's needs do not pause during participants' incarceration, a significant portion of participants (43/57) are placed on court ordered child support for at least one of their child. Louis, now a 33 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, makes it clear—

I can't send money, have no money, but they still need help. They still need things. My daughter is talking about going to college. She's looking at possible scholarships for school right now. The 19 year old has 2 children, which she needs help with. I don't even know how many kids my son has. And my ten year old, he's a straight A student too. They're gonna need help with school and stuff like that. They are all almost adults and I still owe their mamas child support.

While Louis spends his time, energy and resources fulfilling his client/inmate role, his children continue to need his financial support and now they need assistance in their transition into adulthood. Children's needs do not pause and a portion of the caretakers use the law to acquire child support and access participants' limited financial resources. Joe#1 had just been released from state prison to the WRC and was job seeking during the interview. His daughter was born while he was in prison and he has been unable to financially support her—

*Do you have to pay child support?*

Oh God! Wait 'til them people get hold of me! She put me on child support while I was in prison. They didn't take no money while I was in there [did not work]. They told me that they were gonna wait 'till I get a job. Then they're gonna rape my ass.

Because Joe#1 has not been employed throughout his incarceration, he has not been able to pay child support. But as soon as he gains conventional employment, the correctional facility will collect his check, send 50% of it to child support, and leave the rest for his correctional cost and other criminal justice debt. In this manner, his stay at the quasi-incarceration correctional stage will be longer than expected. Because children's needs



do not pause, a portion of caretakers use the law to acquire child support from participants. Susie, now a 33 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, left her three children in the care of her sister-in-law. Soon after, her sister-in-law filed for custody without Susie's knowledge, she requested child support from her and the father of the children. Today, Susie relinquishes her check to the correctional facility, which sends 50% of it to pay part of her backup child support—

*Are you paying child support?*

Uh-huh [yes]. Yep. When she did that, she didn't tell me I had to be at court. Her brother [father of the children] went through the paper work and he seen that I had to be in court. So, he called me and told me, "You gotta be at court tomorrow." And it was the last moment. I didn't know it was child support court, so I had left my ID. And since I didn't have an ID, they forfeited me. And they just gave me the max amount of child support they could give me. And I'm like, at the time I was working at [a restaurant], when they started issuing it. I'm like, "I'm only making \$3.09 an hour. How the hell am I gonna pay nine hundred dollars a month?" And they was like, there is nothing they could do about it 'cause I didn't have an ID or anything. So, I owe \$47,000 for child support.

*Why was their dad in prison [the father of her children]?*

Selling drugs. And she started receiving benefits for the kids [paternal aunt]. But she was telling him, he had to still buy their school clothes, shoes, pay for daycare, even though she was getting the money for it. He had to wash they clothes and all that. And I was like, "Well, why you calling us, asking us for money, if you're getting money. I love my kids, but I'm not gonna give you everything I got and you getting money for them. So, how am I supposed to get myself stable if I'm giving everything to you?" But I do. I send them money. But, if their mom or their dad giving them money, they supposed to be able to buy a pair of shoes or toys. They should be able to spend their money on what they wanna spend it on. She had like a little utility closet and tried to make all the toys fit and if they didn't fit, she would throw it in the garbage. And I'm like, "I'm, not gonna go spend 50-60 dollars on toys just so you could throw 'em in the garbage. I work hard. I'm paying child support, \$900 a month to you. And this is what you do. I can't do that." So, I told my kids, "When you with me, I can buy what you want. But I'm not gonna buy you stuff and send it to you, so she can trash it."

*How do you manage \$900 a month?*

I'm not. It's automatically taken out of my check. Last week, my check was \$457. After child support, my check was \$217 and I had to turn that whole check in to 'em here [correctional staff]. You don't get to cash your check or anything. You bring the check and the check stub to them, and just hand it over. You don't have to sign it or anything. You just hand it over. I'm like stuck between a rock and a hard place. And here, I can't pay my rent in full every month. So, I've

been here for over 6 months. And the program supposed to be 3 to 4 months. I can't win nowhere.

As she surrenders her minimum wage check to the correctional facility, the staff uses her income to pay backup child support, backup rent (correctional cost), and other criminal justice debt. However, the amount sent for child support payment does not make a dent on Susie's \$47,000 child support debt. Because children's financial needs do not pause, a significant portion of participants, mothers and fathers, have child support debt. With limited or no financial resources, these two roles conflict and participants' experience role conflict between their ideal parent role and their client/inmate role.

When in good standing with the children's caretakers, a portion of the male participants (38/57) were not legally forced to pay child support (for at least one child) and were allowed to financially focus on their client/inmate role performance. Scott, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, has been able to keep the court out of enforcing the providing expectation. In the negotiation, he has secured family resources to financially support his children during his client/inmate role performance—

We've never gone to the courts for child support. The initial years of my son's life, we were estranged because she didn't really want me around, but I really couldn't ask for a better relationship with his mother now. If she needs money, she lets me know and I give her money.

*Where do you get the money?*

From my family. They know I can't provide for him right now. So, they make sure he has what he needs.

*Do they also help you in here?*

With money? No. They make sure he has what he needs so I can put everything I earn to getting out of here.

To keep the court out and focus on his client/inmate role performance, Scott uses his family resources to aid with his son's financial needs. When able to negotiate with the children's caretaker, participants stay out of family court and completion of their

client/inmate role performance becomes more manageable. Star, now a 27 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, was never legally pressured to provide—

When they was born, I start being a plumber. Everything I earned was for them. I always had kept a little job 'til I was sent to prison.

*Did she put you on child support?*

No. She knew, if I could, I would make sure my kids had everything they needed. So, I guess she say, “No matter what, I’m a take care of my kids anyway.” If she wanted to put me on it, they’re my kids. They deserve the world. So, it wouldn’t matter. But she know I have to get out of here. And these people here [looks towards correctional officers], they gonna get they money before I leave.

Aware of Star’s dedication to providing when in *free society*, the mother of his children allows him to focus on fulfilling the financial expectations of his client/inmate role while on the correctional stage. The portion of participants in good standing with their children’s caretakers was not legally forced to pay for child support and was able to focus on their client/inmate role performance. When James was imprisoned, his wife searched for other resources and allowed him to focus on his client/inmate role performance—

She’s dealt with this many times. She knows how it works here. Anything I make has to go to rent and whatever else they stick me with. So, she provides for [my children] when I’m in here. Never put me on child support. And her family just helping her out with all the kids. She always focus on the kids.

Aware of the financial expectations of the client/inmate role, Jame’s wife performs the single parent role and allows him to focus on his client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. When in good standing with their children’s caretaker, a portion of the male participants is not legally forced to provide (court ordered child support) and focus on their client/inmate role performance.

Whether participants were legally forced to pay child support or negotiated with the children’s caretaker, participants are socially still pressured to at least partially fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role from the correctional stage. Caught in role conflict, a portion of participants seek financial aid from none caretaking family

members to provide for their children while on the correctional stage.<sup>101</sup> Mike#1 seeks his parents' support—

*What about financially?*

I wasn't able to give them money. I called my parents and they would help out. But there is nothing I can do for them, as far as money. In prison, I couldn't get a job. And now, everything I make goes to them [looks at correctional officers].

*What do your parents think?*

My parents, they don't like it. But they love my kid. And they want to make sure he's okay, that he has what he needs.

Although not pleased with their son's inability to fulfill the providing expectation of his ideal parent role, his parents financially aid their grandchild on Mike#1's behalf. In attempting to simultaneously perform the client/inmate role and the parent role, the family becomes a key resource to provide for children's financial needs. Ruth struggled to find a proper caretaker. But in the search, she found financial resources to care for her daughter's needs during her quasi-incarceration—

[My daughter's caretaker] gets state, like \$500. And that's not very much. And she's on title 19.<sup>102</sup> And then my dad and my brother help out. They always check, make sure she has diapers, food, and everything she needs.

*Did you ask them to help?*

No. My dad knows how it is [recovered alcoholic]. So, he just know. And he tells my brother to check on her [brother lives in same town as caretaker].

Aware of the role conflict, Ruth's father attempts to supplement his granddaughter's financial care. While participants perform their client/inmate role on the correctional stage, family members becomes the supplemental financial resources to care for the children. While LA was incarcerated, the mother of his son focuses on providing and uses family resources—

Well, she works more nights [stripper] and she got money from her family. We the same. She knew.

*What do you mean?*

She knows that if money is good, she gets it for my son. But now, money ain't good. And if she puts me on child support, it takes me longer to get up out of

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<sup>101</sup> Similar to "All My Kin" (Stack 1975)

<sup>102</sup> In the *Midwest State*, Medicaid is a program that pays for medical and health care costs of people who qualify. The Medicaid program is funded by federal and state governments and is managed by the *Midwest State* Department of Human Services.

here. So, she cares for my son now. She knows when money gets good, she'll get my son's moneys. Right now, she getting help from her family.

*What about your side of the family? Do they help?*

My [28 year old] daughter, she buys her little brother things he needs. Sometimes I ask her to check up on him, but most times she sees what he needs. She makes sure he's not needing things.

In LA's case, both parents are aware of the role conflict between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role. Thus, they both use external financial resources to provide while LA focuses on his client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. With limited or no financial resources while on the correctional stage and still socially pressured to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role, a portion of participants use none caretaking family members to financially provide for their children.

In addition to direct financial aid, non-caretaking-conventional family members become involved in childcare to reduce the childcare cost and caretakers use social services to supplement children's needs. Jerry kept in contact with his cousin's girlfriend to help with his son's care—

I also kept contact with my cousin's girlfriend, because she actually helped me with my son. If he need something, I sent her the money. She would take him out, get him what he needed, school clothes, school shopping, things like that. If my son can't go to his mother with something, he can't contact me, he can always take it to her. Like he wanted to go to the Little League World Series. Since their team didn't make it, she helped me get some tickets. His mom was busy working. So, she took him to the Little League World Series.

Concerned with his son's care needs, Jerry requested the help of an extended family member. In addition to requesting financial aid, extended family members become involved in the care of the children to help the primary caretaker. Adjusting to Joseph's incarceration, his wife used family resources for childcare—

She started taking 'em to—, the twins have been going to their aunt. And [my other daughter], her uncle been staying at the house watching her. They work, but need extra help and get food stamps and money for the kids.

To replace Joseph's financial resources and daily childcare, the children's mothers used social services and extended family members' help. To supplement children's financial needs and reduce childcare cost, caretakers use external resources. Diamond's family

adjusted their lives to care for her daughter while she performed her client/inmate role on the correctional stage—

My mom takes care of my daughter. She gets food stamps and FIB<sup>103</sup> ‘cause she qualifies, ‘cause they’re not that fortunate. My mom was getting unemployment, ‘cause she got laid off her job. And my sister was sending me money. And my sister takes care of my daughter too. And she’ll buy her clothes, shoes, everything she wants, she buys it for her.

*So, your mom is the one who takes care of your daughter on a daily basis?*

Yeah, but when she needs to go to the doctor or something, my sisters care for my daughter. We pay for no babysitter. They always make sure she’s cared for.

Diamond’s mother searched for social services to help provide for her granddaughter and Diamond’s sisters help their mother with childcare to reduce childcare cost. Although a minority, a portion of caretakers chose not to use social services. While Dee was incarcerated, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, her children were under the care of a street friend—

She just took care of the whole house the best they could, so far as cleaning and bills. But she just wasn’t the type to go ask for help [to social services]. She expected them to come to her. She said, “I got your kids. Your kids are in my care. They took them out of a foster home, how come they hadn’t been here to see me and talk to me? Nobody called, offer me nothing [child removal occurred in *State B* in the 1980s]. And I’m not going down there, begging them for no money.” So, she did without.

*How long were they with her?*

Two years. It was a 13 room house. And in that house, everybody was crack addict or alcoholic. She’s the type of woman, don’t see no wrong on nobody. Anybody need a place to stay, she take strayed dogs. She wasn’t the best caretaker in the word. Really wasn’t. There was no hot water. A lot of times there was no heat.

Without the aid of extended family members or social services, Dee’s children had to fend for themselves during her client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. But in the majority of cases, participants discuss caretaker’s use of social services to supplement other financial resources and childcare from extended family members to reduce childcare cost. In the process, only a minority of caregivers chose not to search

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<sup>103</sup> FIB refers to the Family Investment Bureau, an administrative unit within the Department of Social Services responsible for programs that provide families and individuals with temporary and emergency financial assistance.

for aid and the children suffered.<sup>104</sup> Regardless of the resources used, participants continue to be responsible for the providing expectation of their ideal parent role.

In addition to having to pay court-ordered child support, having an understanding with the caretaker, using extended family members to fulfill the providing expectation, or caretakers' use of social services and childcare from none-caretaking family members, a portion of drug dealing participants (with financial resources) find ways to provide while on the quasi-incarceration correctional stage.<sup>105</sup> Once on the quasi-incarceration correctional stage, Jake, now a 26 year old Mexican American father and ex-drug dealer, found conventional employment. With a check in hand, he prioritized the providing expectation of his ideal parent role over the financial expectations of his client/inmate role—

Ever since I got a job, I ain't paid my rent here [did not turn check in]. I got [my son's mother] and my son an Explorer [car] just so they could have a better car than what they did. I work 40-hour weeks. Working hard really doesn't bother me none really, because it gets me out of here. I got a place to sleep, you know, three meals a day. So, it's all right. I stay to myself mostly. I just got in trouble not too long ago because I ain't turning in my check and ain't been coming back right away from work. I can't do that no more. Most of the time I was working, and the other times I would go over there with her and my son.

After 5 years in state prison and absent from his son's everyday life, Jake had been unable to fulfill the providing expectation of his ideal parent role. After arriving onto the quasi-incarcerated correctional stage, he prioritized the providing expectation of his ideal parent role and neglected his client/inmate role performance, refusing to submit his checks and being out of place (both policy violations). With the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role in conflict, a portion of participants maneuver their financial resources to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. Joseph was

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<sup>104</sup> See chapter 11 ("Doing" Parenthood in the Aftermath) for consequences for children

<sup>105</sup> During the consent process, participants were discouraged from discussing any present illicit activities. Thus, no participants discussed their use of for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance to provide while quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage. However, participants did discuss other individuals' use of for-profit illicit activities to meet the financial expectations of their client/inmate role and parent role while quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage.

released from state prison 4 months prior to the interview. Upon his arrival onto the quasi-incarceration correctional stage, he struggled to gain conventional employment. With pre-incarceration funds, he has been able to support his children throughout his stay—

I mean, don't get me wrong. I'm not rich or nothing like that. But I still got a little old money. And I ain't the type of person that really just goes out, splurging money, and wasting money on a lot of bull shit. The kids get all my money, for real. Man, they expensive, man. Got a buy 'em a Dora movie every day. They probably got all of them. They love Dora. I don't know where that shit came from, but they love Dora, Dora sun glasses, Dora purses, little fake Dora press on nails. I can get them what they need.

Although still searching for conventional employment and not able to play correctional cost or criminal justice debt, Joseph invests his limited pre-incarceration financial resources to partially provide from the correctional stage. Caught in role conflict, a portion of participants prioritize the parent role over the client/inmate role and use their limited financial resources to provide for their children. Red practiced two-sphere parenting and was a continuous provider throughout his time on the street stage and during a portion of his time on the correctional stage. At the time of the interview, quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, he searches for conventional employment and uses pre-incarceration funds to partially perform his parent role—

Since the money is not under my name, nor [my children's] name, the only way they could trace that money back to me is if I told 'em about it. And I'm not stupid enough to tell 'em about the money. When they need anything, I make sure they get it.

*Like what?*

Stuff for school or they mamas needing money for rent, whatever they need.

*Have you ever used it to pay your things here?*

No. I need that for my kids. If they knew, they would leave my kids with nothing. I'm job seeking to pay 'em here.

Maneuvering around his client/inmate role, Red uses his pre-incarceration funds to partially provide for his children while on the correctional stage. Caught in role conflict, a significant portion of drug dealing participants (with financial resource) prioritizes the



providing expectations of their ideal parent role over the financial expectations of their client/inmate role.

The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role are both financially demanding. The client/inmate role offers no or limited conventional financial resources and makes use of every penny to pay correctional cost, court ordered child support, and acquired criminal justice debt. Although the client/inmate role performance involved the payment of backed court ordered child support, participants' conventional financial resources are too limited to fully fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. When in good standing with their children's caretakers, a significant portion of participants are not placed on court ordered child support. Instead, participants directly request financial aid from none-caretaking conventional family members. In their absence, caretakers use social services to supplement children's financial needs and other extended family members become involved in childcare to reduce the childcare cost. When able to choose between their client/inmate role and their ideal parent role, a portion of drug dealing participants (with financial resources) find ways to provide while on the correctional stage. Caught in role conflict, participants struggle to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role from the correctional stage.

#### Prepare to Reintegrate

In competition for participants' limited resources (time, energy, and financial resources), the client/inmate role and the parent role are in continuous conflict. Incarcerated or quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, participants begin to prepare for their return to the home stage. While the majority of participants struggle with role conflict until their release, a minority of participants chose to ignore their parent role and

focus exclusively on their client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage to make release and reintegration possible. But as the release date approaches, participants begin to prepare the home stage to reintegrate into their children's lives.

“Just Do the Time!”

Attempting to simultaneously perform the client/inmate role on the correctional stage and partially perform the ideal parent role from the correctional stage is conflicting and stressful. As participants begin to think about reintegration, a minority finds it necessary to distance socially from their parent role and focus on their client/inmate role performance to make release and reintegration possible. Dee, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, found herself continuously struggling with role conflict. Defeated, she chose to focus on her client/inmate role while on the correctional stage—

I had to make a choice, because it was driving me crazy. It's like I was living two lives. Every time I would get on the phone and talk to [my daughter], “When you coming home? You coming tonight? I stand at the window and I'm looking for your car to pull up, you know.” She's looking for my car to pull up. “And you don't ever come. Are you coming?” So, I threw myself off into crocheting stuff and sending it out for sale. And then we [Dee and other prisoners] would take the money that we made, sent it out. We said we were gonna send underwear money out one month. Next month we'd send sock money out. You know, just little change. I made up my mind. I couldn't live in two places at one time. You know, it was too painful to live out there [community with her children], to deal with this situation. And then jump back to what I was feeling on the inside [in prison]. So, I just kind of cut myself off. I began to do a lot of praying. I threw myself off into school and what I was doing in there. I left the rest up to God, because I couldn't change it. I couldn't do nothing about it. You know what I mean. Every idea I came up with, it didn't go nowhere. I just said, “Oh Lord, as long as they're alive, they eating, they got a roof over their heads, not the best, but it's gonna have to do until I get out.” And that's all I could do. I'll deal with the rest when I get home, you know.

Continuously in contact with her children and learning about their troubles in *free society*, Dee became overwhelmed with her inability to perform her ideal parent role from the correctional stage. Although still attempting to partially provide, she chose to focus on her client/inmate role performance to make release possible. Caught in role conflict, a

small portion of participants chose their client/inmate role over their parent role. As his release neared, Purple chose to focus on his client/inmate role performance—

It was hard because every father has that feeling and concern about their child when they are not present. I just felt like, in due time, I knew I was gonna have to get out and explain it to my son. I tried my hardest not to think about it, because you don't really want to be in there thinking about them things like that. It is hurtful. It's a hurtful feeling and it's a bad way to really get through your time. The harder you make things on yourself, it makes it harder to do your time. So, I used to just try to stay focused on what I need to do in there, to better myself and become a better father to my son. But I would stayed in touch, kept it brief, call every day. But I had to stop doing that too, because it became a habit. And sometimes when I didn't have money, it used to really hurt me that I couldn't call. So, it's all a mind game when you're doing time. You can either make it hard for yourself or you can make it easy. And the easy way for me to do my time was to try to like worry about what I needed to, be concerned about in there to get myself together, to get through treatment, so I could come home to my child. But it was hard though. It was real hard. I don't think any man or any woman that has kids, will ever get used to not being with their child. But it was just a temporary thing. And that's what I kept in mind too. And I think that's what got me through it.

To focus on his client/inmate role performance, Purple chose to limit his attempts to partially perform his ideal parent role from the correctional stage. Participants describe *doing time* as a *mind game*, and attempts to perform the conflicting roles while on the correctional stage made *doing time* more difficult. Thus, a portion of participants chose focus on their client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage to make release and reintegration possible. Jerry chose to focus on his client/inmate role performance and prepare to reintegrate—

Most of the times [in prison], my family wrote me and came to see me. But this time, when I went to prison, I cut off complete contact. This time I really want to change. I want something better for myself. And I wanna see something better for our relationship [father-son relationship]. I cut off everybody. Didn't write nobody, didn't call nobody. I did almost 4 years, didn't make a phone call until just a couple of months ago. The whole thing was, I needed to punish myself, gain discipline. Like my birthday, my sister would write me and send me some money. I'd send it back. I tell her, "If I can't work to get it, I don't need it. I don't deserve it. Save your money. You got a daughter. You got things you gotta take care of." Same with my grandmother. That's why I know I can be a great parent. 'Cause I took the time to learn how to do it, really on myself.

Wanting to focus on his client/inmate role performance and prepare for his reintegration into conventional society, Jerry isolates himself from *free society*. As participants attempt to perform their client/inmate role on the correctional stage and partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage, they face continuous role conflict. With limited resources, a small portion of participants find it necessary to focus on their client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage to make release possible. Although focusing on *doing time*, participants hope to be part of their children's lives upon release.

“You Gotta Change Dad!”

Participants continuously engage in a negotiation process with other family members to construct family life. Similar to previous literature (Bourgois 2003; Nurse 2004; Carlson, et al. 2006), participants use their children as a motivation to press forward towards reintegration. And as the release date approaches, participants begin to prepare the home stage for their return. In doing so, (i) children request that participants avoid their delinquent/criminal role performance upon their return. Participants (ii) identify children as their motivation to reintegrate into conventional society and (iii) begin to make plans to prioritize their parent role. Moreover, (iv) invested children include themselves in participants' reintegration plans. In preparation for release, participants renegotiate with their children.

Children push participants to avoid their delinquent/criminal role performance and perform their client/inmate role to secure a long term return. Larry, now a 36 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, has performed his delinquent/criminal role on the street stage since childhood and his client/inmate role on the correctional stage since adolescence. During this legally forced client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage, his son requests a change in priorities—

I told my son, “You can't cut corners, look at me. I'm the epitome of trying to cut corners. And look where I am. Look where I always end up.” And he asked me

one day, “If you tell me all these things to do right, how come you don’t use ‘em?” And I told him that I just wasn’t ready to grow up. And he told me what if he did all the right things, would it keep me from committing crimes and going to prison. And I told him, “I promise you, if you do good by your mother, do good by the law, you do good by your woman, you do good by yourself, I’ll change.” He was mature enough to actually talk to me, discipline me. And, I knew from right then and there that it had to be something different I gotta do. There’s a million one ways to make money than doing it illegally.

*How did it feel to hear that from your son?*

It felt like I was talking to a grown man. It felt like I had missed so much of his life, that he’s already teaching me things. And it amazed me and partly hurt me too because there is things I supposed to be teaching him. Not the other way around. And that’s mainly the reason why I’m doing what I’m doing here [trying to reintegrate into conventional society]. It hurts to hear that you’re doing something wrong from anybody, but hearing it from your seed that you’re doing something wrong, man!

As Larry attempted to guide his son, his son guided him towards reintegration into conventional society. Family life is continuously constructed through negotiation and children play an active role as participants’ prepare to reintegrate. As Rosie got closer to completing her quasi-incarceration, her eight year old daughter pushed her to adequately perform her client/inmate role to ensure release—

My daughter, she’s like, “Stay out of trouble and pay your fines. I’ll do my homework and you make sure you get out.” And I said, “That’s probably very good advice. I promise.” So, I hope she’s kind of seeing. But at the same time, she’s only 8. Half of the time I don’t fuck up is because of her. Every time I think how I wanna tell these people where to—, I don’t want to work, or I don’t want to do this and that, I always go back to her. So, that’s really what’s kept me here.

Rosie and her daughter engage in a continuous negotiation, and her daughter presses Rosie to avoid her delinquent/criminal role performance and focus on her client/inmate role on the correctional stage to ensure release. As participants interact with their children from the correctional stage, children become active agents in constructing family life. During a phone conversation with his children, James’ daughter reminded him to focus and reintegrate—

She like, “Dad, listen to mom. She told you not to hang out with the wrong people.” She doesn’t want me to mess up. Can’t mess up no more. I’ve got to get back and stop coming back.

As participants prepare for reintegration, their children become active agents and negotiate with their parents. In doing so, children request for parents to focus on their client/inmate role and avoid their delinquent/criminal role to ensure reintegration. Most importantly, children become participants' motivation to reintegrate and become involved in reintegration plans.

Similar to previous studies (Nurse 2004; Bourgois 2003; Enos 2001), participants identify children as their motivation to reintegrate into conventional society. Eric becomes motivated to stay away from his delinquent/criminal role and avoid being legally forced onto the correctional stage in the future—

I gotta stop coming to places like this. That's not a way to bring my son into the world. And as he gets older, I do know I gotta explain that's not where it's at. But deep inside, I just felt like I would take this experience and use it to my advantage. And show him that there's more in life than making decisions that would land you in prison. I have to get up to show him how to be a man.

After experiencing role conflict on the street stage and role conflict on the correctional stage, participants use their children as motivation to identify what they want upon their release. As his release date approaches, Joseph has identified what he does not want—

And I ain't trying to be steady bouncing in and out of her life, bad enough the relationship that we got is long distance. So, I didn't want to make that no worst. I want to be free. Be able to do what I want. I don't like people telling me what to do. I want to be her father, be in her life for whatever she needs. I can't do that life no more.

Joseph uses his children as inspiration to avoid his delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role. And regardless of children's age, they continue to motivate participants to reintegrate. Mary, now a 59 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, has been absent from her children's lives throughout their childhood and adolescence. However, she continues to hope they will allow her back in their lives—

It might sound ridiculous to you 'cause I've been gone so long and my kids are adults, but I want to be a good parent. I want to be a good grandmother to my grandkids. If you ever become a mother, you'll see that no matter what, you are a mom 'till you die. My kids and my grandkids motivate me to get better.

Although Mary has been in and out of her children's lives in sync with her recovery-relapse cycle, her children and grandchildren continue to motivate her to reach towards reintegration. While participants perform their client/inmate role on the correctional stage, their children become the inspiration to reintegrate into conventional society. And as participants and children prepare the home stage for participants' release, both make plans.

In negotiation with their children and motivated to reintegrate, participants actively make plans to focus on their ideal parent role and avoid their delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role upon release. Joe#2 wants to make changes in his life—

My plan is to stay out of trouble and not screw up. Not like I did last time, hanging around with the wrong people. There's nothing I can do now [nervous smile], but try to make me better for myself and my family. That's really all I can do to be a good parent. You know, stay away from—, get a good place to live, and be with my kids and my girlfriend. That's really all I care about.

*When did you start controlling your behavior [anger management problems]?*

A little bit in prison, but I was always angry in prison because it was stupid. But I was always helping people while I was in there. With the flood of '08,<sup>106</sup> they had us, the prison helped with the sand bags and stuffing them. It was fun. I liked it, but I just wanted to be with my kids. Now, after I got out I started to try to do things different with me and [my daughter's mother].<sup>107</sup> 'Cause I want to be with her. She wants to be with me, but if we can't even exist together, then we don't need to be together.

With plans to reintegrate, Joe#2 hopes to avoid his delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and home stage, and any subsequent legally forced client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. After experiencing role conflict on the street stage and the correctional stage, participants are motivated to make a change. Purple has changed his priorities—

Parenthood has changed a lot from the time he was born. When he was born I looked at it like, "Okay, I'm a father. I gotta get out here and take care of my business like a real man [for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance]." I went about it in the wrong manner. I got out of prison, I was doing what I was doing and got in problems selling dope. This time [currently just returning from prison], I just want to make sure that I think of the future, not just thinking for the

<sup>106</sup> In the summer of 2008, *Midwest State* suffered a major flood.

<sup>107</sup> The couple had previously experienced domestic violence on the home stage.

moment or only myself. I don't want to be selfish by making decisions that benefit me, like selling dope. I gotta think for my son now too. When I do make the decisions, he gotta be part of the decisions I make. I want to be the father my son needs. I want to be the man that shows him everything. I want to be a good role model for him. I want to make sure he has a nice future, a better future than a lot of kids get.

With previous failed reintegration attempts on his record, Purple chooses to change his priorities. To succeed, he plans to avoid his delinquent/criminal role and focus on his ideal parent role upon release. Joe#1 expresses a desire to focus on his parent role performance—

My dad wasn't never there for me [father was a substance/drug user], and I don't wanna be like my dad. I want to be there for my daughter, so she knows she got a dad, you know. My dad didn't do shit for me, never, in his whole life! So, I don't want to be that same person. I want to be different. I'm gonna try my best to get out of here and be around as much as possible. Not stupid shit I was doing out here before, just take care of her, you know. Do what dad do!

Joe#1 uses the foundation of his ideal parent role to make plans for his reintegration. In doing so, Joe#1 wants to avoid his delinquent/criminal role performance and focus on his ideal parent role. Motivated to reintegrate, participants make plans to avoid their delinquent/criminal role and their client/inmate role in the future and focus on their ideal parent role. And just as the participants, a portion of their children become actively invested in participants' return to *free society*.

As the release date approaches, invested children become actively involved in participants' release and include themselves in participants' reintegration plans. After reconnecting during this last incarceration, LA's son becomes actively involved in his reintegrating plans—

As he hears my plans [home design business], he's like, "Wow dad! I like that! You think you and I can do the same stuff?" Like, "Yeah. Yeah." You know. So basically, I see a way out now [buying and remodeling houses for sale]. I see it. And is something that I love. I always love real-estate. But now, I see it that I can really get into it. And he's excited about it. And he plans to be part of it.

Eager to be part of his father's life, LA's son begins to integrate himself into his father's reintegration plan. In the process, invested children are the motivation and part of the



reintegration plan. Susie has been away from her daughter for seven years. As they increased their communication, they began to make plans—

My oldest [daughter] calls me here a lot [oldest daughter currently lives with her father, step mom, and siblings]. She's ready for me to get out, 'cause she's really ready to be with me. 'Cause her dad done had three more kids by somebody else. She's like the built-in baby sitter. Then he started telling her she couldn't hang with her cousins because one of 'em end up having a baby. I'm like, "You're not giving her no freedom. I understand you want to be protective, but you can't be over-protective." She like, "Mom, I'm moving out there with you."

In hopes of reintegrating into their parents' daily lives upon release, children become actively involved in the plans. In the process, participants with minor children and previous failed reintegration attempts become cautious.<sup>108</sup> Rosie began talking with her daughter about her release and reintegration—

I think they [caretakers] try to prepare her the best that they can. I told her, "We are going to get our own house again." And she says, "Well, papa said that it might not be for a while." They are not trying to get her hopes up. I don't want her to get the idea that I'm gonna walk out the door and she's just gonna pack up all of her things. So, what it really comes down to is that my dad knows that I've done good, in this program. Like, he knows that I've kept a job and I haven't gone to prison, but from here to getting a safe place for my daughter is going to be a few months. I think the real test is if I'm out and still doing the same thing, going to work and keeping the same place. He's gonna be comfortable. She's worried about stuff she shouldn't be worried about. She's worried that if I get out and I get my own place again and I want her to come home, that she'll hurt her grandma and grandpa. She's a people pleaser. She doesn't want to hurt anybody, doesn't want to make anybody mad. When my family brought her up to visit, she's talking to me about technicalities. "If I go from grandma's to your house, can I bring my toys? And how will we get 'em all there?" I said, "Oh, you don't have to worry about that right now. We will make sure it's done right. I'm not just gonna pick you up one day. We will do it slow and you will always see your grandma and papa."

As her minor daughter makes plans, Rosie and her family are cautious and attempt to slow down the planning to ensure a successful reintegration. But once active children become adults, they gain more control over how much to be involved in participants' reintegration process. During Peter's latest attempt to reintegrate, his adult daughter is persistently involved—

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<sup>108</sup> Although participants and children begin to make plans, the ultimate say belongs to the caretaker of minor children (see chapter 10 on Reintegration into "Doing" Parenthood).

I love [my daughter] to death, but she gets a little annoying, trust me. I'm eight blocks from her house [at the WRC] and I have to write her every week. I have to talk to her on the phone every day. Every morning when I got to work, I'm supposed to stop and say hi [he laughs]. She'll get up every morning at 5 o'clock and fix me breakfast, so I always show up at her house. I go over there and if I don't show up, she's mad. She's really just aggravated at me. She'll call, she'll blow my cell phone up like all day long leaving me death threats. She throws a fit if I don't show up. But I show up over there and everything, and she always fix breakfast for me. We sit there and we talk. And I drop all my laundry off over there and everything. It's like a washing machine system, me dropping stuff off. She is so persistent about everything. She's always communicating, that's a big deal with her. And when I was in prison, when I made parole, she knew about it before I did. And soon as I'm out of here, I'm moving into the camper in the back yard.

Although Peter's description involves numerous violations of his client/inmate role, his daughter is actively involved in his current life and makes plan for his full reintegration. In addition to being active negotiations and becoming participants' motivation, children become actively involved and include themselves in the reintegration plans.

Overall, as the release date approaches, participants begin to prepare the home stage for their return. In doing so, participants negotiate with their children and begin to construct their prospective family life. In this negotiation, children request that participants avoid delinquent/criminal role then and upon their return, and participants identify children as their motivation to reintegrate into conventional society. In the process, participants begin to make plans to prioritize their parent role upon their release and invested children include themselves in participants' reintegration plans.

### Conclusion

Incarcerated and quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, participants experience role conflict between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role. Although role conflicts can co-exist in a self, limited resources foster role conflict (Stryker 2002). The client/inmate role expects presence, involvement, loss of autonomy and privacy, and payment of correctional expenses and court ordered debt (criminal justice debt and child support) on the correctional stage. And the ideal parent role

expects participants to be present, be involved, protect, guide, provide, and create/maintain a parent-child relationship on the home stage. Legally forced onto the correctional stage to perform their client/inmate role, participants are forced to prioritize and invest their limited resources (time, energy, and financial resources) on their client/inmate role. In the process, role conflict shapes participants' attempts to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage.

The client/inmate role on the correctional stage and the parent role on the home stage both expect presence and involvement. Legally forced to focus on their client/inmate role performance, participants are unable to fulfill the being present and involved expectations of their ideal parent role on the home stage. On the correctional stage, participants face the realities of missing their children's everyday life and experience an emotional struggle. Moreover, participants who had been intensely present and involved in children's lives prior to incarceration experienced a continuous worry. To compensate for their inability to be present, a portion of the drug dealing participants (with financial funds) maintain involvement in their children's lives from the correctional stage.

Legally forced onto the correctional stage, participants are unable to fulfill the being present expectation of their ideal parent role. In attempts to partially fulfill the presence expectations, a portion of participants receive their children's visits onto the correctional stage. After overcoming numerous obstacles, conventional family members, caretakers, and others facilitated minor children's visits onto the correctional stage. Once children are in the premises, the physical and social realities of the correctional stage become more prominent for participants. In attempt to enjoy their visit, a portion of participants attempt to push the correctional environment to the background and focus on their children. But as they interact with their children, participants feel the weight of their absence in children's discomfort. Moreover, a portion of participants meet their

children for the first time on the correctional stage. In the process, all visits come to a heartbreaking end and participants must always say goodbye.

Once participants transition from full-incarceration to quasi-incarceration, visits become more accessible, but *inadequate* client/inmate role performance threatens participants' ability to be present in their children's lives. And when having to choose between the client/inmate role and the ideal parent role, a portion of participants risk their quasi-freedom and prioritize being present and involved in their children's lives. Quasi-incarcerated, with one leg on the correctional stage and another on the home stage, participants struggle with role conflict.

In addition to being legally forced to invest their time and energy, participants are legally forced to invest their limited financial resources on their client/inmate role. The punitive outcomes involve the accumulation of court ordered debt (criminal justice debt and child support). Also, incarcerated on the correctional stage (jail, state prison, and federal prison), participants' client/inmate role performance involved limited or no financial resources and daily financial scarcity. And once participants transition onto the quasi-incarcerated correctional stage, the client/inmate role provides participants with access to the conventional labor market. However, it becomes more financially demanding (higher correctional cost), participants perceive it as *all about money* and struggle to perform the financial expectations of their client/inmate role.

The client/inmate role and the ideal parent role compete for participants' limited financial resources. Although the client/inmate role performance involved the payment of backed court ordered child support, participants' conventional financial resources are too limited to fully fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. When in good standing with their children's caretaker, participants are not placed on child support. Trapped in role conflict, a portion of participants directly request financial aid from none caretaking family members. And in participants' absence, caretakers use social services to supplement children's financial needs and other extended family members become

involved in childcare to reduce the childcare cost. And when able to choose between their client/inmate role and their parent role, a portion of drug-dealing participants (with financial funds) find ways to provide while quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage.

As participants begin to think about reintegration, a minority finds it necessary to distance socially from their parent role and focus on their client/inmate role performance to make release and reintegration possible. And once the release date approaches, participants negotiate with their children. In this negotiation, children request that participants avoid delinquent/criminal role performance upon their return and participants identify children as their motivation to reintegrate into conventional society, begin to make plans to prioritize their ideal parent role over other roles, and invested children include themselves in participants' reintegration plans.

In a theoretical consideration, identity salience theory and the role acquisition process are relevant in the "doing" parenthood under corrections process (Stryker 1968, 1980, 2002). The role acquisition process involves the crediting and acceptance of a role. And once the individual possesses multiple roles, individuals invest their resources on the role they prioritize in their *identity salience hierarchy*. In the case of "doing" parenthood under correctional supervision, participants were legally forced to prioritize their client/inmate role over their parent role and delinquent/criminal role. Thus, participants did not have the opportunity to freely accept the client/inmate role nor willingly prioritized it. And when having the slight opportunity to make a choice, they chose to prioritize their partial parent role performance from the correctional stage over their client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. The only exception was a minority of participants choosing to focus on their client/inmate role over the parent role as their release date approached. Legally forced to perform their client/inmate role and with limited resources, role conflict shaped participants' attempts to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage. Furthermore, regardless of the reintegration

plans participants and their children make, caretakers of minor children hold the key to the home stage.

## CHAPTER X

### REINTEGRATION INTO “DOING” PARENTHOOD

To leave the correctional stage and return to *free society* is a difficult process. Miguel, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, describes the initial experience—

I was scared to be out. I didn't want to go in the stores. I didn't want to be around people. I thought that I looked suspicious, like an outcast. And I didn't like going to restaurants to eat. I mean, it was weird. I didn't like going places and doing things like a family. It wasn't that I was ashamed of my family. I was just scared.

During past and this reintegration attempts, participants return from the correctional stage and slowly reintegrate into *free society*. Once there, participants return to the street stage<sup>109</sup> or struggle to reintegrate into conventional life with limited resources. Those under parole, probation, or other community based correctional programs are expected to maintain conventional employment and stable housing to ensure their freedom. Most importantly, participants' reintegration process involves an attempt to gain access to the home stage and their children's everyday life. During previous and this reintegration attempts, participants negotiate with caretakers and construct their post-incarceration family life.

During the reintegration process, the caretaking parent (of minor children) holds the key to the home stage. In this negotiation, reconciliation in the romantic relationship with the caretaking parent (predominantly the caretaking mother) has become the most convenient road to accessing children. But whether reconciliation occurs or not, the caretaking parents consider the additional burden of the reintegration process, children's wellbeing, the returning parents' ability to fulfill the providing expectation, and reward previous parent role performance (predominantly drug dealers) from the correctional stage. Other participants without this option negotiate with child protective services.

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<sup>109</sup>A portion of participants have used illicit funds to pay criminal justice system debt, child support, housing expenses, and at times to buy their way into children's lives.

A significant portion of participants lost their parental rights in the past or currently have open cases in family court during the interview. During previous reintegration attempts, participants have experienced success and failure in recovering children from child protective services. And although a difficult process for quasi-incarcerated participants on the correctional stage, a small portion currently attempt to and make plans to recover their children during this reintegration attempt, while other participants have been defeated and have accepted a reintegration process without parental rights. Regardless of the stage, the lack of parental rights is part of the integration process.

And when both parents lost their parental rights and conventional family members became the caretakers, participants walk on eggshells to negotiate for access to their children's lives during the reintegration process. With the legal and family support, caretakers limit participants' presence and involvement in their children's lives. With high hopes, participants give the caretakers time to accept and include them into children's lives. And when participants manage to gain partial access to their children's lives, their parent role performance is hyper monitored and the threat of removal is constant.

Furthermore, participants who manage to gain access, begin to negotiate with their children for access. Anticipating this moment since on the correctional stage, participants have developed a fantasy image of what the family reunion would be like. Once on the home stage, a portion of fathers meet children for the first time and other participants are shocked to see their children all grownup. But children's responses vary with participants' accumulation of reintegration attempts.

Although parents have a rosy image about their reintegration into the children's everyday lives, children's responses vary. Invested children eagerly welcome their parents and take the authoritative role to push participants towards conventional reintegration, but lower their investment as parents' attempts to reintegrate accrue.



Nevertheless, a portion of the older children use *the leave the past is in the past* to make a parent-child relationship possible. Overall, participants engage in a complex and active negotiation to access the home stage and children's lives during the reintegration process.

### Boundaries

When approaching the family for access to their children, reintegrating participants face complex family dynamics. And although the family can appear approachable to the outsider, family dynamics can be rather threatening for the family outcast. After several years on the streets of the *Metro Area*, Carol, now a 35 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, gave birth to two daughters during her twenties, who were soon removed and placed under their grandfather's care. In her several attempts to reintegrate, she has not been able to gain full access—

I didn't feel like I could ever get 'em back. Because the way my family is, you know, I didn't feel as though I could go up against my dad in court and win, because I had been to prison and I had a drug problem. "What's the point of taking them from their grandparent and give them to their crack headed prison mom?" I didn't want to go through that, because that would've been more pain, to hear a judge say, "Your rights are terminated." I didn't think I could deal with that. That would've just been shit. I just knew I couldn't get them back.

With the exception of participants with children in the care of their delinquent/criminal other parent, reintegrating participants struggle to gain access to their children through the family and must tiptoe around the family dynamics.<sup>110</sup> In the reintegration process, participants negotiate with the children's other parent (mostly mothers), child protective services, and conventional family members. First, participants attempt to gain access to the home stage through their children's other parent (mostly mothers), but the other parent has a lot to consider. Second, attempts to recover custody of their children from child protective services are part of the reintegration process. And third, once both

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<sup>110</sup> Only 4 male participants in the sample discuss 5 reintegration attempts in which they had no difficulty accessing their children because the children were in the care of their addicted mother at the time. Thus, their reintegration into the home stage was welcomed without protest.

parents lost their parental rights and the children are under the care of conventional family members, participants walk on eggshells to gain access. In reintegrating onto the home stage and children's lives, the returning participants actively negotiate with family members and construct their post-incarceration family life.

#### "I Rely on Her"

Family members construct family life through interaction and continuous negotiation. During the reintegration process, participants negotiate for access to the home stage with their children's other parent (caretakers predominantly being mothers). Similar to previous studies and during the transition from the street stage to the correctional stage, the male participants in this sample perceive their relationship with the mother of their child and the child as a *package deal* (Furstenberg 1995; Nurse 2004; Edin, Nelson, and Paranal 2004; see chapter 7). Furthermore, returning fathers struggle to access their children through the mother when women have become more independent, when women threaten with reporting parole violations, or when women have become romantically aligned with a different male (Travis and Waul 2003; Goffman 2009; Bourgeois 2003; Nurse 2004). In this negotiation, the (i) maintenance or reconciliation of the romantic relationship with the caretaking parent becomes the most convenient road to accessing children. But whether reconciliation occurs or not, the caretaking parents consider (ii) the additional burden of the reintegration process, (iii) children's wellbeing, (iv) the returning parents' ability to fulfill the providing expectation, and (v) reward previous parent role performance from the correctional stage. During the reintegration process, the children's other parents (mostly mothers) are the prominent gatekeepers of the home stage.

Previous studies suggest that new boyfriends threaten young fathers' reintegration into their children's lives and reconciliation with their children's mothers provides the most access (Nurse 2004; Bourgeois 2003). In a similar manner, participants identify the

maintenance or reconciliation of a romantic relationship with the caretaking parent as the most convenient road to accessing the home stage and becoming present and involved in their children's everyday life. Thus, a portion of reintegrating parents re-establish relationships or/and make commitments as part of their reintegration process. But whether participants reconciled with the children's other parent or not, the caretaking parent is a prominent gatekeeper and has plenty to consider prior to granting access.

The caretaking parent is not only considering whether to grant the returning parent access to the children, but also considers the additional burden of the reintegration process. Family provides a place to live, money for necessities, transportation, food, a listening ear, connection to job opportunities, and a host of short-term needs until they become financially independent (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001; Travis and Waul 2003). In a similar manner, participants in this study are returning to *free society* with limited or no resources. Thus, participants are not only negotiating access to the home stage and their children's everyday lives, but are also expecting support from the children's other parent (predominantly from mothers). This support can include and is not limited to housing, financial funds, transportation, and job search aid. And in addition to the resources the caretaking parent is to invest in the reintegration process, they also take into consideration children's wellbeing.

When considering granting access to the home stage, a significant portion of caretaking parents maintain a distance between the children and the reintegrating parent to protect children's wellbeing. Not all returning parents are interested in conventional reintegration and/or have previously failed at genuine attempts to reintegrate into their children's lives. Thus, caretaking parents take extra steps to protect the children from exposure to the returning parents' deviant/criminal role performance. Mike#2, now a 42 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, has been an addict throughout his adult life. And the mothers of his children are careful—

My kids live in the same city. My mom communicates with all of them, now she does. When I was really getting high, going through a lot with their mothers, their mothers wouldn't bring the kids around my mom's too much, because I would be in and out of my mom's house. When I'd get out [of jail or state prison], I be with my mom. So, I was living there half of the time. My mom didn't get a chance to see the kids as much when I was there. They didn't want me around, couldn't see my kids.

*Did you try to get in contact with them?*

Some of the times, when I thought I was gonna quit. But then I couldn't quit. They tired of it.

Aware of Mike#2's delinquent/criminal role performance, the possibility of relapse, and high recidivism, the mothers of his children were cautious during his previous reintegration attempts. Attempts to reintegrate are continuous and the caretaking parents give several opportunities to the parent during various reintegration processes. Erica, now a 41 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, has two children with her first husband—

*What did you think about him being in and out [of prison]?*

After a while, I got tired of it, you know. And he end up having another baby on him. I was just tired of it. I moved here and left him there [from a neighboring major urban city in *State B* to the *Metro Area*]. And after a while, we thought about it. And when he got out of prison], he came here [to the *Metro Area*]. But he started being an alcoholic and I couldn't deal with that. "I didn't mind the alcoholic part. It's just the part that you can't respect me when you get drunk and you want to argue and fight with me. I'm not gonna go through this again. You knew what I went through with my parents [her parents used violence in the home]. I'm not gonna go through this again. Our children, you don't think about our children. All that drinking and fighting, them watching. They see everything. No, no more." I had to leave him alone. So, he went to prison in [county jail in the *Metro Area, Midwest State* side]. And when he got out, he paroled and wanted to be back with me and my kids. But I couldn't. So, he went back home [to the neighboring major urban city in *State B*].

*What about the kids?*

They stayed with me. He couldn't care for them.

Tired of the continuous reintegration attempts and concerned for her children's well-being, Erica chose not to grant her returning husband access to the home stage. In considering the returning parents' previous failed reintegration attempts and delinquent/criminal role performance, the caretaking parents are cautious. TR, now a 38 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, has

been an addict throughout his adult life. After a few years of conventional life, marriage, and three children, he relapsed. In his last attempt to reintegrate, his ex-wife moved to *Midwest State* with their children and he soon returned to the street stage. During this reintegration attempt, his ex-wife is being careful in managing their teen son's eagerness to bond with his father—

I'm trying to get [my son] up here. He's 16 [have not seen him since he was 2]. I want to show him a different me. He doesn't even know who I really am. All he knows is, "Hey, my dad was a drug addict. He never did nothing for me." Yeah, I sent the money, but I think he would've rather had me. He doesn't know me. He only knows the person that I used to be.

*What is the difference between the new person and the old person?*

Well, I don't do the same things. I changed my attitude. I don't run the streets no more. It's not because I'm in here neither [at WRC]. He is [not in the *Metro Area*]. My son wants to come down here and stay with me right now, but his mom is scared to send him down here because of my pattern. I stayed clean for so long and then I go back out there [on the street stage]. I stay clean so long, and then I go back out there. So, she's like, "Well, you gotta show me that you're responsible to take care of your son." And [my son] is like, "Mama, I can take care of myself!" I'm like, "Calm down. It's all right. We'll get it together this summer." She told me that she'll try to let him come up this summer, spend a couple of months with me and see how that goes. We'll take it from there.

Considering TR's previous delinquent/criminal role performance and failed reintegration attempts, his ex-wife is being careful before granting his full access to the home stage.

Aware of the struggle between presence in children's lives and children's safety, young parents make plans. Ruth is thinking about what she will allow during her drug addicted husband's return from prison—

He probably thinks he's gonna move in with me when he gets out. But if I'm not with him, I can't fall [she engages in delinquent/criminal role performance when she's around him]. He needs to get a job and prove to me that he's gonna change. He's gonna have a year and if he still has a job and he's still good, clean, then I'll move in with him. But I'm serious this time, 'cause we have a daughter. I have to think about her, you know. It's not just me anymore.

*How are you going to do that?*

I don't have to do it. I mean, 'cause it's so easy for me to get sucked back in. I can't be like that anymore. I gotta stick up for myself, work on healthy relationships and friendships with people who are clean people. And, people that control it. That's my focus, my goal here. So, he has to prove himself before I let him be with me and [our daughter].

In considering her husband's prospective return from the correctional stage (state prison), Ruth defines the conditions under which she will grant him access to the home stage. Overall, the returning parents' previous delinquent/criminal role performances, failed past attempts to reintegrate, and the concern for children's well-being is part of the negotiation. In this process, the caretaking parents have become cautious and consider children's wellbeing before granting the returning parent access to the home stage and children's everyday life.

In addition to considering the resources the caretaking parent is to invest in the reintegration process and the children's wellbeing, the caretaking parent struggles with the returning parents' inability to fully fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. With limited or no financial resources during incarceration and reintegration, the majority of participants are unable to fully fulfill the providing expectation. During their absence, the caretaking parents have had to play the single parent role and have been financially responsible for supporting the children. Thus, the moment reintegrating parents begin to request access to their children, a significant portion of the caretaking parents begin to make financial demands. Jake, now a 26 year old Mexican American father and ex-drug dealer, belongs to a drug dealing family, where incarceration is part of everyday life. During family members' stay on the correctional stage, other family members financially support the incarcerated individual and their children. Jake's girlfriend gave birth to his son while he was on the correctional stage and the family did not provide the expected support, hindering his access to the home stage upon his return—

We seen each other when I got out. But she didn't really like how my family treated her when I was gone, because she figured that they helped everybody else but her. She was mad because of that. But I tried to make up for it, buying her a car. But it didn't work. She wanted more, but I was written-up here. I couldn't give her more. And she pissed off, not letting me see my son.

Although Jake attempted to quasi-provide during this reintegration attempt, the caretaking mother's resentment and Jake's inability to fully provide limited his access to the

home stage. In the reintegration process, the returning parent's inability to fully provide is used to deny access to the home stage. Seven years ago, after eight years in federal imprisonment for the distribution of illicit substances, Sam, now a 35 years old African American father and ex-drug dealer, attempted to reintegrate into the home stage. Due to his inability to fulfill the providing expectation, his daughter's mother refused to grant him access to the home stage—

Her mom didn't like the fact that we wasn't together. And then, the fact that I got locked up, it was just more. When I got out, she thought I was gonna be the same person, out in the streets making money. 'Cause she didn't understand that, "Okay, I don't have no money. I have to work. So, I don't have no money to give you." Well, she wouldn't believe that. She didn't want to comprehend that. So, child support comes into the picture. I'm not in child support for none of my other kids. And I wasn't on child support for her until I got out. She didn't believe I had no money, so she put me on child support and I didn't even have a job. And because I couldn't pay her, she wouldn't let me see my daughter. She just thought I was gonna get her money once I was out, back in the streets. But I didn't want to go back to prison, you know what I mean.

Seven years ago, Sam's inability to fulfill the providing expectation threatened his access to the home stage during his reintegration attempt. In the negotiation to reintegrate into the home stage, a significant portion of the caretaking parents take into account the returning parents' inability to fully provide financially. Ángel, now a 26 year old African American/Mexican American father and recovering substance/drug user, is tired of the constant insults—

*Have you tried to talk to them this time?*

I tried, but she just makes me feel bad 'cause she knows I can't do nothing for my kids. She knows it makes me mad that she says things like that about me. It makes me mad at myself. It's just nothing but like anger. I get pissed off so fast. Come on now, somebody just calling you out of nowhere, talking about, "You worthless piece of shit dad. You're not gonna see your kids." And all this shit. My kids ain't seen me. They don't even know who I am. They talk to me over the phone, a little bit. So, I mean, that's what makes me feel bad. I don't know my own kids.

The lack of financial support removes the reintegrating parents' negotiation power, limiting their access to the children. And as children get older, the caretaking parent's approach against the reintegrating parent will eventually be reflected in children's

behaviors. Rick, now a 31 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, is the father of four children with four different women. Although three of the mothers have foster his relationships with the children, one of the mothers decided to focus on his inability to fulfill his providing expectation—

My daughter [lives outside of the *Metro Area* and is now 16]. I talk to her every blue moon. The relationship is not so good because her mother used my incarceration against us. By me not being around, she took that and ran with it. So, my daughter really just never knew me. So, when I got out, my daughter was 8 years old. I never saw her in the 8 years I was in prison. And when I got out, her mother would not let me see her without me giving her money. But then she looked at me and was like, “Okay, I finally got a babysitter.” So she was forcing my daughter on me. And my daughter didn’t know me. So, she didn’t want to be around me. So, she started hating me because she didn’t have a choice but to be around me. She wasn’t getting mad at her mom about it, when it was her mom that was making her stay with me. I constantly told her mom, “She don’t like being around me. All my other kids love to be around me, because they know me.” Right. So, the older that she got, I started telling her, “You know, in the beginning I blamed a lot of stuff on your mom. But the older that you get, you’re able to make your own decisions, be held accountable for your actions as far as me and you. I’m not perfect myself as far as me and you.” It got to the point where the only time I heard from her was when it’s time to receive presents. “You never call me just to talk. The only time I ever hear from you is when you want or need something. You don’t ever want to come around me.” My relationship with her was not as good as it supposed to be, due to the money issue. With her and her mother, it’s all about money.

The lack of interaction during his time away, the fights about money between him and the caretaking mother, and the forced babysitting has tainted Ricks’ interaction with his daughter. In the negotiation for access to the home stage, the caretaking parent uses participants’ inability to fully fulfill the providing expectation against the returning parents and have a difficult time accessing the home stage and become part of their children’s everyday life.

In addition to considering the resources the caretaking parent is to invest in the reintegration process, the children’s wellbeing, and the returning parents’ inability to fully fulfill the providing expectation, the caretaker considers the returning parents’ past efforts to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage (predominantly



drug dealing fathers). Red, now a 38 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, has not been in a relationship with the mothers of his children. But he has managed to reintegrate into the home stage—

I talk to my kids every day. I pick ‘em up and take ‘em everywhere.

*What about their moms?*

They cool. I mean, it’s not always been easy, but we now manage. They live they lives and I live mine. But they know, I’m always there for my kids. “You there and my kids here.” Two different things. I mean, I don’t mess with them.

*How did you manage access?*

At first, the times I went to jail, they be mad. But when I went to prison, I made sure to be in my kids’ lives. I never stopped caring for them, trying to—, parenting ‘em. And they knew it. So, they couldn’t keep me from ‘em.

During Red’s initial incarcerations in county jail, it was difficult for him to partially perform the parent role. During his federal incarceration, Red partially performed his parent role from the correctional stage. Thus, the mothers of his children were more welcoming to his reintegration into the home stage. Once the caretaking parent witnessed participants’ partial parent role performance from the correctional stage, they grant access. Although in a younger relationship, Jason, now a 27 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, is taking a similar approach. When convicted and sentenced to 10 years in federal prison, his girlfriend’s intentions were to wait for him. However, she soon discovered he had been unfaithful and ended the relationship while he was in prison. Despite this event, Jason pushed through the difficulty and continued to invest on his partial parent role performance from the correctional stage—

I knew that once she caught me cheating on her, our relationship was ended. In other words, no more trust. She didn’t trust me at all. And still to this day, if I call her right now, she would probably bring the girls’ names up. She hurted. I don’t know. She’s gonna have another baby now [not his child]. She’s done with me. And I know that. I understand that. But now that she’s settled, we’re friends. And things started getting easier for me and [my daughter]. She’s good with me seeing my daughter.

*Was she not before?*

Not when she wanted to kill me. But I never stopped being a father to my daughter. And she knows that. I called her, provided for her even when I was incarcerated. She knows I will always care for my daughter.

Despite the painful experience, the mother of Jason's daughter rewards his past attempts to partially perform the parent role from the correctional stage and grants him access during this reintegration attempt. As time passes and children get older, their children reward parents' efforts to perform the parent role from the correctional stage with access during reintegration. Peter, now a 44 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, fathered two children with his ex-wife. After years of struggling with Peter's continuous incarceration, the co-parents are now able to co-exist as they interact with their 28 year old daughter and grandchildren—

Yeah, her mother is the greatest woman I ever known in my life. We don't communicate any more. But at the same time, when we do see each other, when we bump into each other over at my daughter's house, she's always pleasant to me. You know.

*So, now it's your daughter who lets you in her life?*

Yeah. [Her mother] has no more control over what [my daughter] wants. [My daughter] knows I've tried to be her dad. I'm not a good dad. But she knows I've tried.

Since his daughter showed interest, Peter has invested on his partial parent role performance from the correctional stage. Upon his reintegration attempts, his daughter grants him access to her everyday life. During the reintegration process, caretaking parents and adult children reward participants' attempts to partially perform their parent role from the correctional stage.

Overall, participants negotiate for access to the home stage with their children's other parent (caretakers predominantly being mothers). In this family situation, the caretaking parent has been performing the single parent role on the home stage while the other parent was performing the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. In this reintegrating negotiation, the maintenance or reconciliation of the romantic relationship with the caretaking parent becomes the most convenient road to accessing children. But whether reconciliation occurs or not, the caretaking parents consider the additional burden of the reintegration process, children's wellbeing, the returning parents' ability to fully fulfill the providing expectation, and reward (drug dealing fathers') previous parent

role performance from the correctional stage. Overall, caretaking parents take into account the reintegrating parents' ability to perform the parent role when considering their request for access to the home stage. Although negotiation with their children's other parent is tough, participants without parental rights face much more difficult obstacles during their reintegration process.

“I Have No Parental Rights!”<sup>111</sup>

Whether parental rights were removed while the participant was on the street stage or the correctional stage, the lack of parental rights becomes an obstacle during the reintegration process. Returning parents struggle with stigma in the social work system, are challenged in convincing child service workers that they have become responsible adults who are capable of providing *adequate* care for their children, and are under constant threat of having children removed again (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001; Travis and Waul 2003; Carlson, et al. 2006). During participants' previous reintegration attempts, (i) a portion of the older participants experienced success and failure in attempts to recuperate children from child protective services. And although a difficult process for quasi-incarcerated participants on the correctional stage, (ii) a portion of participants attempt to and make plans to recuperate their children during this reintegration attempt. While (iii) others have been defeated and have accepted a reintegration process without parental rights. The lack of parental rights is part of participants' reintegration process.

In their previous attempts to reintegrate into their children's lives, older participants have failed and succeeded at recuperating their children from child protective services. During a previous reintegration attempt (early 2000s), Louis, now a 33 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, made it his goal to recuperate his daughter from child protective services—

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<sup>111</sup>Participants' ability to recover children from Child Protective Services during the reintegration process depends on changes in policy. The 1997 Adoption and Safe Family Act has increased the termination of parental rights in cases of incarcerated parents (Smith and Young 2003)

I had really gotten real close to get her back. I was doing everything. But they kept telling me, “Well, you’re never gonna get your daughter back. You’re not gonna get her back anyway.” So, I was like, “Well, why in the hell am I doing this?” I’m going to parenting classes, going to visit her on visitation day, in drug court, doing awesome, working 2 jobs, going to meetings, doing my parenting group. And it’s like, then the lady, I’ll never forget [the social worker]. I could never ever in my life see that lady walking down the street because I’ll go to prison for life. She is a dirty person and I pray for her. She did not want me or my baby’s mama to get our daughter back. Like I told the judge, “I’m jumping through all these hoops and I don’t think you guys are gonna give me my daughter anyway.” The judge just looked at me, ‘cause they knew me from drug court. And the first thing she says, “Well, how is drug court going?” And I’m like, “Well, drug court doesn’t have no bearing in here. This is a family court thing. But drug court’s going good anyway.” It seemed like they were just against us getting our daughter back. And then my mom tried to get her. And they told my mom, “Well, no because you’re too old. And you don’t really know her.” And then my mom’s like, “How are you gonna tell me I don’t know my granddaughter?” You know. I was pissed off about that. I just wanted to strangle people’s necks. They sent my daughter to the behavioral center. Talk about her behaviors, I mean all crazy. I don’t like what’s happening with my daughter. But when I get her back, believe you me, if she tells me any kind abuse happened to her while she was in that foster care, there’s gonna be some hurt fucking people. And you can take that to the paper. I don’t give a fuck. That’s my last little seed!

Regardless of how many challenges Louis overcame, the court’s knowledge of his delinquent/criminal role performance overruled his efforts and his request for custody was denied. And at the time of the interview, his daughter continued to be in foster care. In previous reintegration attempts, a portion of participants struggled to keep their parental rights and some have been more successful at recuperating children from child protection services. Javier, now a 51 year old white/Irish father and recovering substance/drug user, received a letter from his sister while in prison. His ex-wife had returned to substance/drug use and child protective services had removed their two children—

Prior to getting out, the kids were taken away from [my ex-wife] ‘cause she was back to partying. She used to pay the babysitter in cocaine and then come back to give her some more. Somebody called DHS [*State B*]. So, I petitioned the court before I got out to get custody [as he was released from state prison]. It took nine months after I got out to get custody. I was surprised, ‘cause I had a record. *So, how did you get them back [mid 1990s]?*

I jumped through a thousand hoops, a thousand of ‘em. But I wanted my kids. I didn’t want ‘em in foster care. I had every test known to man. Went to every

class known to man. Some of 'em I think they made up. I did probably more than anybody else. I think they believed that I wouldn't even try it. [Their mother] didn't even try. I think they believed the judge wouldn't grant me custody of my kids because of my record. But I got 'em right before Christmas.

During one of his previous reintegration attempts, Javier managed to recuperate his children from child protective services and became a full time father. During previous reintegration attempts, a portion of participants succeed and failed at recuperating their children in family court. And older participants in the sample encourage young parents to press forward and recuperate their children. Dee, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, has lost and recuperated her children from child protective services in the past. Today, she encourages parents to be accountable—

I hear these young women here, blaming the world, complaining about their social workers, but really, they need to take responsibility. “It was you who brought them to your home. It was you who was getting high. Be accountable, get up, and go get your children. I did!” When they came to get my children, it was not because I was being a great mother. I was roaming the streets for my next high. It was me who did this.

To push younger parents out of the defeated approach, Dee encourages them to be accountable, take responsibility for their delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and their *inadequate* parent role performance on the home stage. And during this attempt to reintegrate, a portion of younger participants are attempting to recuperate their children from child protective services.

Already outside of prison during the interview, the participants were still quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage. Although their current correctional status does not limit their desire to recuperate their children, it does make it difficult to recuperate the children from child protective services. Joe#2, now a 26 year old Hispanic father and recovering substance/drug user, is currently attempting to recuperate his daughter from child protective services. With a court order to appear at the hearing, the WRC approved a furlough (permission to leave the premises) for him to attend the hearing. However, he missed a phone call from work and failed to respond to the work request, behavior that constitutes a violation of his client/inmate role. The morning of the interview, a

correctional officer informed him that all his furloughs have been revoked; thus, he will be unable to attend the court hearing regarding his daughter's custody—

*Does [your girlfriend] know that you can't go?*

My girlfriend is really mad, really mad. It's important I'm there in court for my daughter. And I don't know what's going on. I need to talk to the lawyer. They're not letting me know. And I've been good [at the WRC]. I haven't gotten in trouble at all in almost four months. And the phone message wasn't my fault. I've been working. I got all my rent paid. And I still can't leave. And there's other people here that owe \$600 on rent and are leaving in a couple of days. I don't understand why they're letting them leave but not me. I gotta talk to them [WRC staff] when I'm done talking to you. I'll see what these people say. I rather do time in prison than be here. I'm gonna freak out if they don't let me go. I'm gonna hurt somebody. I really am. Because I've been working my butt off. The boss here, he authorized me to go to court. He's the one that told me I could. But now they are telling me that I can't.

Because recovering children while quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage is difficult, attempts to recover the children must be carefully planned. Aware of the limitations, participants begin to plan early on. Liz, now a 23 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, managed to access her children during her last reintegration attempt. Her great aunt took care of the children during her last relapse, and Liz pushed towards recovery and managed to gain her great aunt's trust. A few months after the children returned to her care, Liz's probation officer revoked her probation for a technical violation and she was required to complete a quasi-incarceration sentence on the correctional stage at the RCF. Liz then asked the children to return to their great aunt's care—

So, my kids end up telling her she had to come and get 'em. When she gave them back last time, she said that if I didn't care for them, we was going to court next time. I didn't talk to her this time. She hasn't said anything about me being in here. And I don't talk to her about it. But my son told me she filed something. She told the social worker I abandoned my kids. And she's trying to get custody. So, I have to go to family this time.

*If you go to court, you think that's gonna come up [her correctional status]?*

It probably will. I'm gonna be honest. A lot of people make mistakes in they life. I did. I made a lot of mistakes. But when we go to court, I'm a fight to get them back. I'm not using any more. My only problem was housing at the beginning. And I'm working my way out of here.

Silently recuperating, Liz prepares to fight for her children once she is free to fully reintegrate into the home stage. While quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, participants have a difficult time recuperating children from child protective services. Thus, they make plans to recuperate their children once they are completely free and ready to reintegrate onto the home stage. Scott, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, was in prison while his girlfriend lost custody of their son and is currently planning his next move—

When I get out of here and I'm off papers [off parole], I'm a take custody of him. 'Cause she doesn't know what she's doing. She never has him. He's with my uncle.

*Why does he have him?*

'Cause she had gone wrong [substance/drug use] and they were glad to take him. And I was glad that they have him, 'cause she always wants to party, bars. She's 10 times worse than I was [both substance/drug users]. She just lost him. She's obviously messing up to the point where DHS has come in and take him. But as soon as I'm out I will get him back.

*Do you see him?*

Yeah, my aunt brings him. When I get out, I will see him more.

While quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, one step into the reintegration process, participants with open cases in family court desire to recuperate their children from child protective services. But recuperating children while quasi-incarcerated is a difficult process. Thus, participants make plans for once they are fully free and able to reintegrate into the home stage. But not all are as hopeful.

A different portion of the sample begins the reintegration process already defeated. Instead of making plans to recuperate their children, these participants begin this reintegration attempt by accepting their loss, facing the realities of their lack of parental rights and waiting for their children to search for them. Ten years ago, Louis violated the *do not keep merchandise in your family home* rule. Thus, both parents were charged with child endangerment and their parental rights were terminated in family court. Although his mother attempted to regain custody, the state rejected her as a possible guardian and granted parental rights to a woman who lived in their

neighborhood. During this attempt to reintegrate, Louis has visited his now teenage daughter, who has been raised and adopted by the neighbor who welcomes her daughter's biological family—

She is fine. My mom has been able to see her while I was gone. She was not allowed to visit me, but when she got older we started writing. I don't know about her mom [mother went back onto the street stage], but we see each other, and I know I can keep seeing her. I am not going back [to prison], so I will be in her life. It's not going to be the same as before. I mean, I never beat my daughter or nothing like that, but I was not really thinking right. But that's not me no more. I'm a be around her forever.

Louis has accepted the loss of his parental rights, adjusted his perspective and plays a different role in his daughter's life during this reintegration attempt. In accepting their loss, these participants begin to acknowledge their part in the removal of the children and prioritize the children's wellbeing. Jake, lost his children during his previous stay in *free society*. The children were placed in a foster home in the neighborhood. During this reintegration attempt, he accepts the loss of his parental rights and waits—

Me and my family got a lawyer to try to get the kids. But you know, with all our backgrounds and the things that we all been through [family involved in for-profit crime], they just figured that it was suitable for the kids to go.

*What did you think about it?*

My kids would always be taken care of. They would always be watched over. You know, bathed, fed, and all that. We just chose to make money in a different way than other people did. We are not bad people. We just don't have legal jobs. We all love each other and everything.

*So, what do you think of it now?*

Since I've been in prison, it was hard. I basically put my pictures away and I accepted that they were gone. And you know, realized that they're in a good place. I just noticed from people telling me, you know. Their kids go to the same school that my kids go to, where they live and stuff. They're gonna be taken care of. They're gonna have a good education, you know. I know where they're at. I just never chose to go see them and put myself in a predicament to where they might say, "Hey, we don't want you around, this and that." I want to wait a while, until I get settled, get a job, get my own place, to see if they would even let me talk to them or something.

No longer able to recover his parental rights, Jake hopes his children will want to know about him in the future and the new legal guardians will allow him to see them. In addition to acknowledging the children's current stability and safety, this portion of



participants begin to acknowledge the damage they have caused to the children. TR recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, lost his seven year old daughter while on the correctional stage and now hopes his daughter forgives him—

Seeing her disappointed didn't do anything because I was so fogged out [addiction]. I was so drugged up, and alcoholized up, that I didn't really care. Now that I came out of that world, it actually really hurts me. If I wouldn't have chose drugs or alcohol over her, then she wouldn't ever be in the predicament [under child protective services] she was in. I don't know what happened to her. And when you got a kid that goes from foster care and come out, 99% of the time, if you can't get 'em when they're still little, you can't teach them. You can't tell them, "You can be a kid. You can be a 10 year old." She went in when she was 7. She was a kid, a baby. And she's 10 now and she ain't been around us. But we wasn't ready. Her mom did the best she could do without my help and things got overwhelming. So, I don't blame her. So, that's my most disappointing thing with her. I did this and she had to grow up too fast! Too fast! She's a 10 year old, but not a 10 year old. She is grownup. I really hope she forgives me one day.

During this reintegration attempt, TR accepts his loss and acknowledges the damage he has inflicted on his daughter. Although parents desire to recuperate their children, a portion of the participants have begun to accept their status as parents without parental rights. During this reintegration attempt, this portion of participants begin to navigate within the boundaries as the biological parent who would like to eventually become a part of his/her children's lives.

Participants' lack of parental rights is an obstacle during the reintegration process. During previous reintegration attempts, a portion of older participants experienced success and failure in recuperating children from child protective services. Although a difficult process while quasi-incarcerated on the correctional stage, a portion attempts to and makes plans to recuperate their children during this reintegration attempt. Other participants have been defeated and accept a reintegration process without parental rights. The lack of parental right is part of the reintegration process. And once both parents have formally (or informally) lost parental rights and conventional family members have

become caretakers, a significant portion of participants negotiate with extended family members to access the home stage.

“Walking on Shells!”

During the reintegration process, a portion of participants negotiate with extended family members to access their children’s everyday life. When child protective services came into the picture, Jaime, now a 26 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, arranged for her mother to care for her children—

I gave them temporarily custody to enroll them in school and take them to the doctor. When I feel in the position [to return], I will tell the court I want them to come live with me. And then they’ll go to my mom, “Well, what do you think?” The easiest route would be, if as a family we all agree that it’s time for them to come back. So, everything is up to my mom right now.

Although family court came into the picture, Jaime’s mother is the caretaker and will have an influence on when and how Jaime will be reintegrated onto the home stage.

When both parents formally (or informally) lost their parental rights and conventional family members are the caretakers, the reintegrating participant negotiates with family members for access to the home stage and children’s everyday life. However, participants’ status as the family outcast threatens the possibility of access. Previous literature has found the reintegrating father struggle with the mothers’ reciprocal kinship networks because the young mother’s extended family became invested in raising the child during the father’s incarceration and influence father’s access to and involvement with his child (Nurse 2004; Stack 1970; Bourgois 2003; Travis and Waul 2003). In this study, male and female participants struggle to access their children when extended family members have become children’s primary caretakers. With legal and/or family support, (i) caretakers limit the parents’ presence and involvement in their children’s lives. With high hopes, (ii) participants give the caretaker time to include them into the children’s lives. And when a significant portion of participant eventually manages to gain partial access to their children’s lives, (iii) their parent role performance is hyper

monitored and the threat of removal is constant. During the reintegration process, a significant portion of participants tiptoe over egg shells as they negotiate with conventional family members to access their children's lives.

Since childhood/adolescence, conventional family members have attempted to control participants' delinquent/criminal role performance. During the reintegration process, participants return to an ongoing negotiation with conventional family members to access their minor children. Doug, now a 31 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, lost his son during his time on the correctional stage and his grandmother became the legal guardian. Upon his return to *free society*, he soon learned the realities of his new status as a parent without parental rights—

After they took my son, it was really hard from the beginning. And then when I came back—, because my grandma—, you think that is family, that it wouldn't be so controlled. But my relationship with him, it's under control. And, I have to make appointments. I have to call ahead of time and say, "Can I come over at 3 o'clock Monday to see [my son]?" They did the same with my mom when they took me. She used to pawn her jewelry to get formula 'cause we were flat broke. And they just cut her off, like nothing, like she was nothing.

*So, this happened when you came back [from prison]?*

I was thinking she was gonna let me see my son soon I was out. But she didn't. I couldn't believe it. And he's my kid, you know. To her, I'm just the screw-up and won't trust me with my own kid.

Doug returns to *free society* and reintegrates into an ongoing negotiation with his grandmother to access his son. In this continuous negotiation, returning participants discuss a sense of powerlessness. Rosie lost her three sons in family court due to her delinquent/criminal role performance and an inability to financially support the children. Since her parents were not appropriate candidates to care for the children (both substance/drug using parents at the time), her paternal grandmother responded to the crisis and became the legal guardian. Once removed, Rosie was not only excluded from her children's lives, but was being erased from their young memories. During a previous reintegration attempt, Rosie struggled to access her sons—

One day I went over. Everyone was in the garage [her three sons and grandmother]. They were cleaning the garage and [my first son] said, "Are you

thirsty?” I said, “Yeah, I’m thirsty.” He went in the kitchen and I heard him, “Can me and [Rosie] get something to drink?” I thought, “[Rosie]?! I’m his mom!?” After that, it got harder, harder and harder to go over there. And [my first son], I was closer because I had him more time [crying]. When he was about five, he just happened to give me a big hug, and I don’t think he ever knew who I was by then. He just knew we had this bond and he didn’t know why. And he told her, “Mom?” Because that’s what she had them call her, mom, mom [states with distaste]. He’s like, “I love [Rosie]. Who is she?” Grandma said, “How about a really nice cousin” [painful cry followed by nervously laughs]. That was the last time I tried going to my grandma’s house. It just got too hard. So, she just moved out of town and I didn’t have a car. She thinks I’m just like my mom. And she really doesn’t like my mom.<sup>112</sup> She’ll never change her mind.

Once her parental rights were terminated, Rosie’s grandmother became legally responsible to protect the children. With this legal and family responsibility, and aware of participants’ previous delinquent/criminal role performance, conventional family members become careful in including participants and initiate an ongoing negotiation for access. Carol legally released the custody of her children to her father while invested on her delinquent/criminal role. Upon every return from prison, her attempts to reintegrate into the home stage have met constant resistance—

A lot of times I questioned myself. I mean, if they were so important to me, I would stay out and get my shit together, be a mom. But my family is, they’re different kind of people. They hindered me from getting my kids. Like the first time I got out, got a job, you know. I could’ve took my kids, and they didn’t let me [father and aunt]. I sit back and think, maybe I wouldn’t ‘ve made all those trips to prison. Because without my girls, I had too much free time. Not enough responsibility. You know, just seeing them on the weekend isn’t a responsibility, you know, just fun times. I didn’t get up and see them, send ‘em to school, and you know, having the responsibility to take care of them. You know, gave me the free will to just keep doing me. I didn’t have nothing to look for. If I was getting high or drinking, then I’d drink more, binge more because of the pain, crack, drinking, marijuana. But drugs only last so long. So, I would have to feed my addiction more, because the pain would become more, the guilt would become more, the remorse would become more. And so, I would have to use more to try to cope with that pain, you know. So, it really made my addiction out of this world because of the depth of the pain. I not only have pain from being left [mother abandoned her], but from losing them [her daughters].

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<sup>112</sup> Rosie is the product of an illicit relationship between her drug addicted adult mother and teen father (at the time of conception).

During her various reintegration attempts, Carol was met with continuous resistance and now years later her children build a new barrier of resistance (see chapter 11). Whether they lost their parental rights formally or informally, while on the street stage or the correctional stage, negotiating for access with conventional family members is part of the reintegration process. As the family outcast, participants express a sense of powerlessness when their parent status and role is so easily erased. Regardless of the obstacle, a portion of participants wait patiently for the opportunity to slowly gain access to their children.

While excluded from the home stage, a portion of participants gives the caretakers time to accept and include them into their children's lives. Aware of the delicate family dynamics, they continue to foster hopes and prepare to eventually become part of their children's lives. Eli, now a 33 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, has been kept from his son and patiently waits for the appropriate moment to fully reintegrate into his life —

I have to be patient. Given 'em time to accept me again. My son's grandmother is not eager, you know. But my patience is off the charts right now. I got nothing but patience, you know. So, I never gonna hurry into anything. I'm not gonna try to force nothing. So, I'm not gonna, "Well, I want to see you this weekend. Come on down! Come on down!" I'm not gonna press the issue on his [maternal] grandma to get him down here. I'm just, be patient and be more understanding of their situation. Because I know I can't always have it my way.

Aware of the situation, Eli is being careful not to disrupt his son's current caretaker and giving his son's grandmother time to include him into his son's life. To ease the transition process, participants are careful and work to become presentable. Ángel, now a 26 year old African American/Mexican American father and recovering substance/drug user, took a few months before attempting reintegration into his son's life—

I'm not gonna go back all raggedy. When I go back, I'm going straight, working, something for my son. I can't show up empty handed. My son needs things, diapers, formula, toys, everything. And my aunt is not gonna let me forget it. So, I rather see—, be in his life when she's happy with me, not have her scream at me.

To prevent rejection, Ángel has chosen to take his time and prepare before attempting to become part of his son's life. Reintegration is a slow process that requires preparation and patience; thus, participants attempt to return slowly and not disturb family dynamics. Aware of the delicate power balance between the parent and caretaker, Ruth, now a 28 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, plans to reintegrate slowly —

I'm gonna go back and stay with [my daughter's caretaker] when I get out of here for a little while, so that [my daughter] gets used to me being around again. I don't want [my daughter] to be scared or [the caretaker] to think I'm just going to yank [my daughter] out of her life. I know they love each other. I see it when they visit. I mean, it hurts me but it's my fault. You know, it's scary to think that she loves her so much. 'Cause [the caretaker] could just, you know, want to keep her. So, I have to be careful when I go back.

Aware of the emotional attachment her daughter and caretaker have for each other, Ruth is planning a careful reintegration. Continuing with their desire to reintegrate, aware of the power caretakers carry in the process, the reintegrating participants prepare a slow return. And even in the most difficult cases, patience pays off and parents begin to slowly reintegrate onto the home stage and their children's everyday life.

When the returning participants finally manage to gain partial access to their children on the home stage, they are unable to freely perform their ideal parent role.<sup>113</sup> Their parent role performances are hyper monitored and participants find themselves walking over egg shells. Matthew, now a 24 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, became a parent and substance/drug user during his teenage years. The mother of his child found herself in the same situation and left their daughter in the care of his parents. His parents' attempts to help him recover have proved *inadequate*. Seven years later, Matthew is now in his most recent attempt to reintegrate and his parents cautiously grant him partial access to his daughter's everyday life—

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<sup>113</sup> Because fathers' children are predominantly in the care of mothers, gaining partial access is predominantly a mother phenomenon in the sample.

It's hard because they take over everything. And I'm not really a parent. My dad always pulls me aside and tells me what my daughter needs, "She needs cupcakes. Do this and that." The final say is always up to them. I have to be like, "Hey, me and [my daughter] are gonna walk up to the park. Is that okay?" They never tell me no, but it's expected I ask.

When granted partial access to his daughter, Matthew is carefully monitored. Cautious and concerned for children's wellbeing, caretakers' quickly respond to a possible threat. Rosie asked her father to care for her daughter while she performed her client/inmate role on the correctional stage (jail). Upon release, Rosie found herself homeless and her father invited her into his home until she could find employment and housing. What Rosie, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, considered ideal soon turn into turmoil—

We have different ideas about kids. Like one of their rules is, if they give you dinner and you don't eat it, you have to go to bed. I don't agree with that. So that was a problem. [My daughter] knows how I parent. So, she is looking at me like, "Mom, help me! Mom, I'm not hungry! Mom!" She would cry [her voice breaks as she recalls the situation]. And I told him, "She's not hungry anymore." Then they're talking, "You can't argue with us about her in front of her because then she's gonna try to run all over us." So, what they say goes and I couldn't save her, if you will. I couldn't fix anything. It was hard. And we got in so many fights there, me and my dad, and my stepmom. And they asked me to leave. They were just a lot more hard on her than I was. I think it's good that she's got boundaries. I didn't always give her enough boundaries. I let her do what she wanted, to an extent. I mean, I always kept her safe, made her go to school. But if she wasn't hungry, I didn't make her eat. "Can I please wait until I finish this game to take a bath?" I said, "Okay." And they're more just like, "No! Now!" I'm just more lenient with her. When I got to my dad's home, they didn't want me to be that way. And I was like, "Well, I've always been that way. Why do I have to change now?" We really butt heads on that.

On her father's home stage, Rosie is unable to fully perform her parent role and must stay at the margins. Unable to do so, she was removed from her daughter's life. At times, children are kept in the dark about their origins and parents' lives. When granted partial access, the returning participants must tiptoe around the boundaries of fact and fiction. And as children get older, this becomes a more dangerous dance. For Jaime, the legal removal of her children (placed in her mother's care) also meant the inability to talk with the children about their fathers—

And it's forbidden for me to ever sit down with any of my kids and talk about their fathers. They all have a lot of questions. [My son], I don't think he's at the age where he really cares. But [my daughter], she even said, "Do I have a dad? What's his name? What does he look like?" They were always coming with these questions and I was answering them. And it caused a lot of friction in my mom's house. My mom said, "If you're gonna sit and talk to the kids about this stuff, you can find a new place to live." And I was like, "That's so unfair." So, I had to learn to keep my mouth locked. When I was with [my daughter], I couldn't really say much about anything, just listen. And she would tell me, "I hate her. She's so bad to me." And I was really heartbroken, because as a mom, I just wanted to be like, "Look, you're done with them. She doesn't want you. And I'm gonna take my kids." I didn't know what I was gonna do with her, but I wanted to fix it. I couldn't fix it. I just stuck up for her as much as I could. My mom is looking at me like, "Oh now you wanna help? Now you wanna say something?" So, that was hard.

*How do you feel about her putting those boundaries?*

I hate it. I think it's wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong. And I hope my kids come to see that's wrong.

When caretakers grant partial access, they hyper monitor the returning participants' parent role performance. Without full parental privileges, participants are threatened with removal when they cross boundaries. Susie, now a 33 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, lost her parental rights to her children's paternal aunt. During a previous reintegration attempt, she crossed the boundaries and was threatened with criminal charges—

And then I got 'em, I brought 'em up here [from a major city in *State B* to the *Metro Area*]. And they said they didn't wanna go back with [their paternal aunt]. "You don't have to go back." And she called the police down here and said I kidnapped 'em. And I was like, "How did I kidnap 'em when I got their clothes?" And she was like, "I broke in her house and stole their clothes." So the police here told me I had 'till six o'clock to have them at the police station, or they was charging me with kidnapping and each count was from 5 to 15 years.

*Where is their dad?*

When they dad was staying with her, trying to get the information to get our kids back, she ended up putting him out. And then she's telling them that I don't want them back. That when I ever I tell her I want 'em back, she'll give them back. [Father has been in and out of prison throughout his life]. She don't ever take 'em around their dad either.

In attempts to reintegrate, Susie crossed the boundaries and the caretaker threatened to use law to reinforce the boundaries between Susie and the home stage. When granted partial access, participants are hyper monitored. And when the reintegrating parent



missteps, they are easily removed (from a simple reprimand to the use of law) and the reintegration process must begin again. Under these conditions, participants learn to carefully maneuver around the caregivers' boundaries.

After the formal (and/or informal) loss of parental rights and conventional family members became the caretakers, the reintegrating participant negotiates with conventional family members for access to the home stage and children's everyday life. With legal and family support, caretakers limit the parents' presence and involvement in their children's lives. With high hopes, a portion of these participants give the caretaker time to accept and include the reintegrating parent into children's lives. And when participants (predominantly mothers) manage to gain partial access to their children's lives, their parent role performance is hyper monitored and the threat of removal is constant.

Overall, participants negotiate with the children's other parent (mostly mothers), social services, and conventional family members during the reintegration process. First, male participants attempt to gain access to the home stage through their children's mother. But whether they reconcile or not, the mothers have a lot to consider. The caretaking parents (mostly mothers) consider the additional burden of the reintegration process, children's wellbeing, and the returning parents' ability to fulfill the providing expectation. Moreover, the caretaking parent rewards previous parent role performance from the correctional stage (predominantly drug dealing fathers). Second, attempts to recover children from child proactive services are part of the reintegration process. During previous reintegration attempts, a portion of the older participants experienced success and failure in attempts to recuperate children from child protective services. And although a difficult process for quasi-incarcerated participants on the correctional stage, a portion of participants with open cases attempt to and make plans to recuperate their children during this reintegration attempt, while a different portion of participants have been defeated and accept a reintegration process without parental rights. Third, once

both parents lost their parental rights and the children are under the care of conventional family members, participants walk over eggshells to gain access. With the legal and family support, caretakers limit reintegrating participants' presence and involvement in their children's lives. With high hopes, participants give the caretaker time to accept and include the reintegrating parent into children's lives. And when participants manage to gain partial access to their children's lives (predominantly mothers), their parent role performance is hyper monitored and the threat of removal is constant. In reintegrating onto the home stage and children's lives, the returning participants actively negotiate with family members and construct their post-incarceration family life. Furthermore, the returning participants negotiate for access with their children.

#### Facing the Children

Once caretakers grant access, participants begin to reintegrate into their children's everyday lives. In response to how the parents' "drug life" has made the caretaker's life and their living arrangements increasingly unpleasant, children's interest in their incarcerated parents diminished (Braman and Wood 2003). Children's experiences conflicting emotions, joy/excitement combined with ambivalence/skepticism and anger/hurt (Carlson, et al. 2006). More importantly, children wonder and hope this time will be different (Carlson, et al. 2006). In this sample, participants' experience with their children depends on their number of reintegration attempts. First, participants' experience with their children varied. While on the correctional stage, participants develop a fantasy image of what the family reunion will be like. And once on the home stage, a portion of participants meet their children for the first time, while others are shocked to see their children all grownup. Second, children's response varies in sync with participants' accumulation of reintegration attempts. Invested children eagerly welcome their parents and take the authoritative role to push participants towards conventional reintegration. But as participants accumulate reintegration attempts,

children lower their investment. And when desiring a parent-child relationship, a portion of the older children attempt to *leave the past in the past*. Although initially a rosy picture, the accumulation of reintegration attempts shapes children's repose during the reintegration process.

#### “Pie in the Sky”

Once caretakers grant access, participants begin to reintegrate into their children's lives. Anticipating this moment since on the correctional stage, (i) participants develop a fantasy image of what the family reunion will be like. Once on the home stage, (ii) a portion of fathers meet children for the first time and (iii) other participants are shocked to see their children age in seconds. Since on the correctional stage, participants fantasize about how their return to the home stage will soon be.

Similar to previous research (Nurse 2004), participants sitting in the sterile correctional stage begin to fanaticize about what it will be like to reintegrate into their children's everyday lives on the home stage. TR conceived a daughter with his ex-wife during an attempt to reintegrate 10 years ago. During this reintegration attempt while on the quasi-incarceration correctional stage, he is making plans to meet his daughter for the first time—

I have not met my daughter. I only got pictures of her. And she keeps getting older. I'm actually gonna go this year to meet her. She can't wait. She's nervous and I'm nervous. When we decided to do this, she cried and I cried a little bit. It's just a blessing how God is working in my life right now. When she opens that door and looks at me, she gonna look at me like I'm a stranger. And it's gonna kill me, but [deep breath]—. It's just gonna be like a Maury Show type of episode, when people meet their parent for the first time. I mean, it's like, “Wow!” She's gonna look at me and know who I am 'cause she looks just like me. My kids are the beautiful version of me.

Although not sure how the event will occur, TR imagines the moment and is preparing to meet his daughter for the first time. Similar to previous literature (Enos 2001; Nurse 2004), parents on the correctional stage fantasize about how reintegrating into their children's lives will be. When Mike#1 left Texas, now a 32 year old African American

father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, he did so to avoid the mother of his child. She had accused his father of molesting their infant daughter, but the police investigation found the accusations groundless. As a result, Mike#1 experienced severe anger. Today, after 10 years of absence, he plans to reintegrate into his daughter's life—  
 For about 10 years, there wasn't anything. But I started calling and writing [to my daughter]. We write letters back and forth, without her mom filtering it out. I should've been there for my daughter. But with my daughter comes her mom. And I probably would have hurt her. But I think it's time. As soon as I'm off papers [off parole], I will go meet her. I'm really wanting to see her. It's gonna be great. We've been talking about it. We'll be happy.

Although Mike#1 recalls his daughter as an infant and has not seen her in 10 years, he fantasizes about a wonderful family reunification. But regardless of how participants imagine this event, the reality is much more difficult. According to Dee, parents do not truly understand the upcoming storm—

*When we first started talking, you said “rejection” was the word.*

Well, like before I got arrested, it was just me and them [children]. I was a heroin addict and my [extended] family lived [out east] and I lived in [a major urban city in *State B*]. It was just me that had moved away, to get away totally from drugs, but it caught up with me. It was just me and the kids, and we were very close. And then when I did what I did to get arrested [substance/drug use], I went away for six years. While I was incarcerated, I had this *pie in the sky idea* about how great everything is gonna be when I got out. They would receive me very well; just pick up where we left off at. But that wasn't the case! They resented me, polite but distant. I didn't get the blowup until much later.

On the correctional stage, participants daydream about their reunification with their children. But regardless of how they imagine their reintegration to be, it will be a tough reality. Once granted access to the home stage, participants meet children for the first time and/or after long periods of absence.

Invested in their delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage and/or unable to receive visits on the correctional stage, a portion of the returning meet fathers their children for the first time during the reintegration process. Sam, now a 35 years old African American father and ex-drug dealer, conceived his four children during his teenage years with four different teenage girls while focused on his delinquent/criminal

role performance. Although three of the young mothers informed him of the birth of his children, the mother of one of his sons hid his paternity because she was already in a relationship with Sam's business associate. But during a previous reintegration attempt, she granted him access and Sam met his son for the first time—

My other son, Wow! He's my identical twin. His mother made this other guy believe he was the father. But he looks just like me. It was one of those, "Such and such had a baby. She saying it's yours. Nobody knows if it really is yours." This is going on, all the way to the point when I got locked up. Well, I been gone 8 years [incarcerated in federal prison]. The boy is grown up. The more he's getting grown up, the more he's getting my features. And everybody's telling me, "That boy is your son!" So, it's time for me to get released. And the first time I seen him, he's 8 years old. I'll never forget it. I went to their house. I knocked on their door and he was the one that answered the door. It was like I looked into the mirror. So, it was right then and there, no more questions.

Sam met his 8 year old son for the first time during one of his previous reintegration attempts. Just as children's visits onto the correctional stage, the reintegration process gives participants the opportunity to meet their children for the first time. Jerry, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, unexpectedly met his son during one of his previous reintegration attempts—

It actually took me a long time to even know I had a son. He was probably like 13 and I was 25 when I met him.<sup>114</sup> I was kind of surprised. When I got locked up in the juvenile facility, his mother had moved away and stayed gone for almost 10 years [she was pregnant and he was in juvenile detention]. And one day I was out at the mall and he just walked up to me. He was out with his mother and she finally told him about me. He just came up in front of me, "You're my dad." I was like, he was taller than me, "Are you sure?" He looked like he was almost my age. She had moved back before I actually met him. And her brother came and confronted me one time. Like, "I'm hearing rumors that you got a son by my sister. Is it true?" I was like, "I don't know. You gotta ask your sister." So, then she finally gave in and told him about me and told me about him. And since that day at the mall, from then 'til now, we been good. I missed helping him learn how to walk and that kind of stuff. And missing hurts, you know. It does.

*What did you think after you confirmed that he was yours?*

I was excited actually. I would've preferred being in his life years earlier, you know. 'Cause what better way for a man to carry on his name, to find out he got a son. And that probably would've mellowed me out a lot sooner, made me grow

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<sup>114</sup> There is a small error in Jerry's statement regarding his or his son's age. He conceived his son at 14 years of age; thus, Jerry was 27 when he first met his son.

up a lot quicker. That's actually what I needed. I needed grounding when I was younger running wild. It made me take my life a lot more serious.

Unexpectedly, the mother of Jerry's son finally granted him access and he meets him for the first time during a previous reintegration attempt. While focused on the street stage or/and the correctional stage, a portion of participants missed out on their children's existence and met them during the reintegration process. LA, now a 46 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, confirmed the existence of his teenage daughter during one of his previous reintegration attempts—

I was 15, still in high school, and I didn't know she was my daughter until my second time in prison. When I got out, that's when I found out. Her mother told me, just busted down and told me. I said, "Okay." You know. No big deal. I mean, it didn't change nothing. I know it sounds kind of cold. I mean, I was mad. I was mad at her because she didn't tell me. I was 15 years old when we got together. And she was pregnant in like less than 2 months, so. I knew she was pregnant but she said it was somebody else's. She said it wasn't mine. My sisters tell me, "That's your daughter!" Yeah! She's my daughter. I always thought, always did, but I never said anything 'cause never been around. But that time, that's when I met my daughter.

Just as on the correctional stage, LA met his daughter for the first time during one of his previous reintegration attempts. Whether prepared or not, meeting their children for the first time is part of the reintegration experience for a significant portion of participants. Although a portion of participants meet children for the first time, the most prominent experience is seeing children after long incarceration periods.

During the reintegration process, a portion of the participants see their children after extended periods of absence and are shocked to see how much their children have grown up. When on the correctional stage and with no or limited access to their children, participants are hungry for images of their children. Diamond, now a 22 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, recalls wanting more and more pictures—

I was getting pictures, but it didn't come as frequently as I wanted it to. I wanted to get pictures every day of my daughter. Every step of the way, I wanted pictures of her. But I probably got 'em once a month. It never was like every day, or every week. It was always a month or three months at a time. When I used to get my pictures, my heart used to be pounding so fast. And I used to be

like, “Oh my God, look at my baby. She is so big. She is getting big.” And I used to cry ‘cause I couldn’t be there and she was growing up without me.

After years on the street stage and on the correctional stage without contact with their children, a significant portion of participants reintegrating into their children’s lives is shocked when they see their children after release. Simon, now a 46 year old African American father and recovering substance/drug user, was imprisoned and divorced the same year, leaving three little girls behind (6, 9, and 10 year olds). Unable to work out any arrangements with his ex-wife, Simon did not see his daughters for five years. And during this reintegration attempt, Simon experienced a shock—

Five years ago, I had little girls. I went to prison with a picture of my little girls. And all these years when I thought of them, this is how I pictured them, little girls. I had not seen them or any pictures of them. Then I get out and they’re young women.<sup>115</sup> They have developed so much, in 5 years. They look so much grown up. You see them differently, getting older, started to change, and developing like women. My mom had seen them, and she didn’t know her own granddaughters. When we got divorced, I didn’t fight for anything. I was going to prison and didn’t feel I could fight for anything, right. And when I see the years I missed, I wish I would’ve fought for them. I lost my girls. I lost their kid years. And no one can go back, you know.

Without access to his children throughout his stay on the correctional stage, Simon was shocked to see his little girls transform into young women within seconds. When participants had limited or no access to their children during their stay on the correctional stage, seeing their children after long periods of absence is a shocking experience.

Anthony was sent to prison for defending his girlfriend’s honor. Soon after his incarceration, the mother of his two baby daughters broke off the relationship and moved out of state. Not knowing where to search for his little girls, he spent his 3 years in prison with an outdated picture. During this reintegration attempt, seeing his daughters for the first time was a memorable event—

*So they remembered you when they saw you.*

Uh, huh [yes]. Yep. They tall. I took pictures with me of them as babies.

*Did you see like updated pictures?*

No.

*So, how was it seeing them?*

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<sup>115</sup>See Figure B2 in Appendix B, page 458.

Oh man! My babies ain't babies no more! A lot happens in three years. Seeing them was emotional. I'm crying. And they remember stuff that happened three years ago. I'm like, "Dang, ya'll smart." They so smart.

*Did you recognize them?*

Yeah. But, they tall. I took pictures with me of them when I went in, but I didn't have any more pictures in three and a half years. My babies ain't babies no more! A lot happens in three years. But that's not happening again. I am never missing anything ever again.

In participants' absence, children continue in their development and returning participants are shocked to see their children so grownup. And even years after reintegration, parents continue to feel the missing years. Rick was sent to federal prison at 19 years of age, where he served an 8 year sentence and lost all contact with his children. Six years ago, he was reintegrated into his teenage daughter's life and continues to be mesmerized by the missing years—

It's kind of weird, because my oldest daughter, she's driving now. I had to do 500 hours of driving with her before I came here [from parole to quasi-incarceration]. I can remember that easy, you know, 16 years ago when she was one. It's just like it was yesterday. And here she is! She's driving me around. It's just a real weird feeling. Even though I've been out for 4 years, it still just feels funny that there's 8 years tacked onto her age now.

Parents without access to their children while on the street stage or the correctional stage are awestruck when seeing their children for the first time after a long absence. While on the correctional stage, a portion of participants continue to imagine their children as they left them, but soon come to the realization that children's development does not wait for their return.

Overall, once on the home stage, participants begin to reintegrate into their children's lives. Anticipating this moment since on the correctional stage, participants develop a fantasy image of what the family reunion will be like. And on the home stage, a portion of fathers meet children for the first time and other participants are shocked to see their children age in seconds. But whether parents meet or re-unite with their children, children's response to their return varies in sync with participants' accumulation of reintegration attempts.



“Dad, You’re Here!”

Although parents have a rosy image about their reintegration into the children’s everyday life, children’s response varies. Invested children (i) eagerly welcome their parents, (ii) take the authoritative role and push participants towards conventional reintegration, (iii) but lower their investment as participants’ attempts to reintegrate accrue. But when desiring a parent-child relationship, (iv) a portion of the older children use the *leave the past in the past* philosophy to cope with participants’ recidivism. Children’s response to participants’ return varies in sync with participants’ accumulation of reintegration attempts.

Upon participants’ initial reintegration attempts, invested children eagerly welcome their parents into their everyday life. Jason, now a 27 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, just returned from an 8 year stay on the federal correctional stage. Feeling left out during his return, his 10 year old daughter ensures she becomes part of his reintegration—

My daughter’s more closer to me than to her mother. Like the day I got out, she was mad because I didn’t have her come get me. She was mad. I mean she was an outraged little girl. But we done seen each other. We been to all types of places. I done took her shopping. Well, she basically took me shopping, basically. I mean she wanted buy me some shoes. That’s all she said, “Well daddy, I wanna buy you a pair of shoes.” I guess she was saving some money up and she bought me some shoes.

Wanting to be part of her father’s reintegration, Jason’s daughter made sure he was aware of her eagerness to welcome him. When keenly welcomed, participants recall the details of the first moment they feel welcomed. During a previous reintegration attempt, TR had an unforgettable experience—

When I got out, my daughter walked to me. She didn’t walk until she was 15 months. That’s how long I had not seen her for [was in jail when she was born]. When I got to the bus station, her mom came down, put her on the floor. She started crawling, pulled herself up and was walking. She just stood up, like she knew who I was! I just started crying. It was so much joy in me. At that time, I had fooled myself into believing that I had turned into a different person [8 years ago]. But I really hadn’t, you know. And she came down to spend time with me. I kept her the whole summer, the whole summer. So, we just had a blast [laughs]!

During his first reintegration attempt, after the birth of his daughter, TR was welcomed with open arms by his toddler. During participants' initial reintegration attempts, invested children are eagerly welcoming and invested in the reintegration process. The first time Rosie was *snatched* away from her daughter's life (county jail), her daughter was shocked. To help her cope, Rosie included her in the waiting process—

I told her, "Oh, it's three more days, two days, one day." I was so excited. The day I got out, my stepmom picked me up and I had to go right to my probation officer. She didn't bring her. I had never even been to my dad's house before that. We're driving down the road. And my stepmom is like, "Well, this is our house." "Alright." I had one little bag, with like a tooth brush and some letters in it. It had been five months since I last saw the outside. I lost my permit, my credit card, and I only got a sleeping bag. I had no sense of security. I walked into my dad's house, had to go up upstairs into the room and my daughter was standing on top the stairs. "Mom, M-o-m!" She was so happy. She was laughing. And I hugged her. I don't even know how long I hugged her. She just keep on laughing. She looked really good. They definitely took care of her. She was dressed really cute, hair was done and everything.

After a long term absence, Rosie's daughter welcomes her into her life. During initial reintegration attempts, invested children are hungry for parental presence and welcome participants with open arms. Furthermore, the invested children become involved in the reintegration process.

In addition to eagerly welcoming participants, invested children encourage participants to progress in their reintegration process. In doing so, children and parents switch roles. Invested children take the authoritative role in the parent-child relationship and push participants towards conventional reintegration. James, now a 49 years old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, recalls his children's response to a previous reintegration attempt—

When I got out, they made a statement like, "Dad, you are not going back to that place, are you?" And that really hurt me. I said, "No. I'm a do my best not to." They're like, "You should listen dad. I don't know if you're going back there again, but you can't be with the wrong people. Go to work and come straight home." [My daughter] was telling me what to do. It shouldn't be like that, but it was.

Jame's children were invested in his reintegration attempt and took the authoritative role to push him towards conventional behavior during a previous reintegration attempt.

Invested children switch roles with their parents and take over the authoritative role.

During this reintegration attempt, TR's daughter presses him to invest in a conventional life—

She was like, "But dad, you need to get a place." I've never had my own house, none of that. And she's like, "Get a place!" My goal is to get out of here. My number two goal is to get all the material stuff, the house, the car, and all that stuff. My number three goal is to go see my baby daughter.

As part of their reintegration process, the client/inmate role on the quasi-incarcerated correctional stage expects them to establish conventional employment and housing.

Thus, TR's daughter encourages him to fulfill his client/inmate role and move towards reintegration into conventional society. Larry, now a 36 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, recalls his son's excitement and continuous advice during this reintegration attempt—

He was excited. He's a big kid. He hugged me and he didn't even wanna let me go, like I was gonna disappear again. I was excited, but I was kind of hurt too. 'Cause he was used to me disappearing, used to me not being here. I've been missing a lot of things with him, a lot of experience with him, the little things. And every time we talk, he remind me of our deal. He's doing good. I have to do good. I have to stay in a straight path, just like he is. He's a good kid.

To pull Larry off the correctional stage, his son made an agreement with his father. Now in the reintegration process, Larry's son continues to remind his father of their agreement and pushes him towards conventional behavior. Invested on participants' reintegration process, children take the authoritative role on the parent-child relationship and push participants towards conventional reintegration. But as participants' recidivism continues, children reduce their investment and keep a distance during the reintegration process.

Once participants' attempts to reintegrate accrue, children lower their investment and maintain a safe distance from the reintegrating parent. Averaging 24 criminal cases

and 11 year prison sentences (and 701 days in jail)<sup>116</sup> per participant, children have experienced participants' numerous attempts to reintegrate. Peter, now a 44 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, has been devoted to his delinquent/criminal role, legally forced to perform the client/inmate role numerous times, and in and out of his children's lives. Peter's son welcomes his father, but maintains an emotional distance—

[My son], I love him to death. Me and him will sit around and talk. When I get out of prison, he'll come over the house, bring some weed over, you know. I smoked a few blunts with him, kicked it with him. This is not very good parenting. But he knew that was my life. He knew that I always been in the dope game. I've always been a criminal. And he accepts that part of it. Because he's a lot like me, you know, unfortunately. But there's no bond, no real bond between us. If I fell over dead from a heart attack or something, I don't even know if he'd show up for the funeral. If he fell over, of course it'd hurt me. I don't think it would matter to him one way or the other. I think he is bitter, because he felt abandoned so many times. He comes around when I come back, but he keeps away.

Although Peter's son is not explicit about his perspective, Peter is aware of his son's distance and lack of investment in his returns. Aware of participants' continuous returns onto the correctional stage, whether it is because of additional delinquent/criminal role performance or other probation/parole violations, disenchanted children keep their distance. After numerous reintegration attempts, Carol's children developed low expectations and now maintain a distance upon her returns—

My [youngest daughter] is too busy with school, church and all that. So, I don't get to really see her like I want to. She puts me to the side, not really caring when I come back. I ask her, "How's school?" She hold back, as far as trusting that this time is gonna be different. But she's more, just enjoy the moment. She's not like she used to be, where she just always wanted to be around me. She's growing up and she has a life of her own now, you know. I'm okay with that, but she respects me, regardless, you know. [My oldest daughter] is direct, holds nothing back. Telling me what she thinks. I was supposed to get out of here and I got caught with a cell phone [against policy to have a cell phone at the WRC]. So, that made me have to stay an extra 30 days. She was disappointed because I'm not following the rules in here. So, she said it's probably a matter of time for

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<sup>116</sup> Not taking into account suspended sentences or time spent on probation and /or parole (*Midwest State Court Online*, August 2011).

me to go back to prison. That's how it's been all her life. I get out for a couple of months and go back. So, she thinks it's the same.

As Carol's attempts to reintegrate repetitively fail, her children become distant and uninterested in her reintegration process. Children's response to participants' reintegration process varies as their reintegration attempts accrue. Jaime cannot get her children involved in this attempt to reintegrate—

This time, I call my son from work and I keep telling him, "I'm almost out. He's like, "Yeah, s-u-r-e mom." I mean, that's how he acts, "Oh, that's g-r-e-a-t" [sarcastic tone]. He's not excited and really does not believe it until he sees it.

With numerous returns to the correctional stage and reintegration attempts, children become uninterested in participants' reintegration process. And in addition to negotiating access through caretakers, participants begin to negotiate access with the children. And once the interest on a parent-child relationship overrules participants' recidivism, children become willing to move on.

As time passes and children get older, the emotional resentment from the past can block any prospective parent-child relationship. Thus, a portion of the older children begin to take participants' reintegration attempts one-at-a-time and try to *leave the past in the past*. Red is currently reintegrating into his children's life. To improve the probabilities of success, his children keep their eyes on the future—

I need to reconnect with my children. I'm not trying to make up for lost time. You don't want to do that. You don't. Just take it one day at a time. You both *leave the past in the past*, and just go live. I'm just gonna, "Hey, you know, this is just how it is. I'm here, you know. And I want to be part of your life. Let's keep it simple. Let's go from now."

*What do the kids think?*

At first, it was fine. I wasn't gone for long. It didn't matter. Then my son, he started getting mad. But now, this time they all with me, leave the past in the past.

To maintain a possibility of reintegration, even after numerous previous attempts, participants and a portion of their older children adapt the *leave the past in the past* philosophy and move forward with their lives. 'Till June, now a 45 year old African

American mother and recovering substance/drug user, and her 30 year old son make use of this approach—

He tells me, “What’s the past? We’re not gonna dwell on the past. We’re gonna go from now into the future.” Because, now he has kids. Now he’s like, “Well, we just need to look within.” So, that’s just him.

*Did he always feel that way?*

My son has always been very mature and educated. So, when he was like a teenage, I talked to him about it. He was like, “Well, ma, you can’t change the past of what you did and how you did it. But I can’t really complain either, because it wasn’t like you just left me out there in the streets, with no food and no shelter. You left me with grandma.” And his father has always been in his life, always. I mean, his father and I didn’t work together, but his father has always been on his side. I mean, my son is 30 years old and has his own kids. So, he prefers we do not talk about it. Leave it in the past and we focus on his kids now.

Accumulating reintegration attempts since his childhood and now accumulating reintegrating attempts along her son’s side, ‘Till June and her son have chosen to *keep the past in the past*. And although the approach is used at some point in most older participants’ various reintegration attempts, *leaving the past in the past* has proven to be difficult to achieve. Mike#2 is aware of this upcoming difficulty—

I talk to my kids now. And they expecting for me to come back. So, I don’t know how all that’s gonna work out. When we talk, we don’t have much to say. I think I owe them a lot. The only way to make that lost time is to get in their lives now. My daughter has two kids. So, of course I’m a granddad now. When we talk, we don’t talk about the past. We make plans for the future. But I’m sure they have questions that will come up sooner or later. I’m sure of that.

Although his children are currently pushing to *leave the past in the past*, Mike#2 is very aware of the difficulty of this approach. But regardless, a portion of the older children attempt to *leave past the past* and become part of participants’ latest reintegration attempts to make a parent-child relationship possible.

Although participants have a rosy image about their reintegration into the children’s everyday life, children’s response varies in sync with participants’ recidivism. Invested children eagerly welcome their parents and take the authoritative role in the parent-child relationship to push participants towards conventional reintegration. But as participants’ attempts to reintegrate accrue, children lower their investment. As time

passes and when desiring a parent-child relationship, older children use *the leave the past in the past* philosophy to cope with participants' recidivism. Children's response varies in sync with participants' accumulation of reintegration attempts.

Overall, once granted access, participants begin to reintegrate into their children's everyday lives during the reintegration process. While on the correctional stage, participants develop a fantasy image of what the family reunion will be like. And once on the home stage, a portion of participants meet their children for the first time and others are shocked to see how much their children have grown up. Moreover, children's response varies in sync with participants' accumulation of reintegration attempts. Invested children eagerly welcome their parents and take the authoritative role to push participants towards conventional reintegration. But as participants accumulate reintegration attempts, children lower their investment. And when desiring a parent-child relationship, older children attempt to *leave the past is in the past*. Although initially a rosy picture, the accumulation of reintegration attempts shape children's repose during the reintegration process.

### Conclusion

Although gaining access through the family can appear manageable, it becomes a difficult and complex task for the family outcast. During the reintegration process, participants must jump hurdles to access their children and actively negotiate with their children. To access children, participants negotiate with their children's other parent (mostly mothers), with social services, and with conventional family members. Once granted access, children's response varies in sync with participants' accumulation of reintegration attempts. During the reintegration process, participants, caretakers, and the children reconstruct their family life through an ongoing and complex negotiation.

During the reintegration process, the caretaking parent holds the key to the home stage and minor children. In this negotiation, reconciliation of the romantic relationship

with the caretaking parent (predominantly the caretaking mother) becomes the most convenient road to accessing children. But whether reconciliation occurs or not, the caretaking parents consider the additional burden of the reintegration process, children's wellbeing, the returning parents' ability to fulfill the providing expectation, and reward previous parent role performance (predominantly of drug dealing fathers) from the correctional stage.

A different portion of participants lost their parental rights in the past or had open cases in family court during the interview. During previous reintegration attempts, a portion of participants experienced success and failure in recovering their children from child protective services. Although a difficult process for quasi-incarcerated participants on the correctional stage, parents with open cases attempt to and make plans to recuperate their children during this reintegration attempt. While others participants have been defeated and have accepted a reintegration process without parental rights. Regardless of the stage, the lack of parental right is part of their integration process.

And when both parents formally (and/or informally) lost their parental rights and conventional family members are the caretakers, participants walk over eggshells. With legal and family support, caretakers limit the returning parents' presence and involvement in their children's lives. With high hopes, participants give the caretaker time to accept and include them into children's lives. And when participants manage to gain partial access (mostly mothers) to their children's lives, their parent role performance is hyper monitored and the threat of removal is constant. In addition to negotiating with caretakers, participants begin to negotiate with their children.

Once caretakers grant access, participants begin to reintegrate into their children's lives. Anticipating this moment since on the correctional stage, participants develop a fantasy image of what the family reunion will be like. Once on the home stage, a portion of fathers meet their children for the first time and other participants are shocked to see



their children all grownup. But children's reposes vary in sync with participants' accumulation of reintegration attempts.

Invested children eagerly welcome their parents, take the authoritative role to push participants towards conventional reintegration, but lower their investment as parents' attempts to reintegrate accrue. Nevertheless, older children use the *leave the past in the past* philosophy when desiring a parent-child relationship. Overall, participants engage in a complex and active negotiation to access the home stage and children's lives during the reintegration process.

According to symbolic interactionism, individuals continuously construct family life in an active negotiation process (Stryker 2002). This active construction of family life is especially present during participants' reintegration attempts. Upon release, participants renegotiate with children's caretakers and their children. Indirectly, participants' previous delinquent/criminal role performance and client/inmate role performance weaken their negotiation power. Although initially welcoming, participants' recidivism makes caretakers and children hesitant to openly welcome just released participants onto the home stage. And although a portion of children want to *leave the past in the past*, once parents begin to "do" parenthood in the aftermath, children will leave nothing in the past.

## CHAPTER XI

### “DOING” PARENTHOOD IN THE AFTERMATH

“Doing” parenthood is a lifelong and cross-generational process. At an early age, participants acquire three conflicting roles— the parent role on the home stage, the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. Already performing the delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role when becoming parents, role conflict continuously shapes participants’ parent role performance. And although the boat shakes throughout this process, parents press forward to “do” parenthood in the aftermath. Like other parents, Rosie, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian mother and recovering substance/drug user, does not want to lose being part of her children’s lives any longer—

I’m pretty sure I’m not gonna have any more kids. I don’t want to. I’ve already wasted years now dealing with this crap. I want to be a mom.

During past reintegration attempts, the majority of participants have managed to gain access to their children. And their returns to the home have varied in length, from a few days to several years. Although the younger participants have previously returned home, only 32 older participants (31 to 59 years of age), with previous long-term returns to their adolescent and adult children who actively negotiate on the home stage, have fully experienced the generational consequences of “doing” parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision. Thus, the findings presented in this chapter are predominantly past reintegration experiences of older participants. Reintegration into the parent role is a difficult and stressful process. And although children can motivate recovery, reintegration into children’s lives is also a source of stress (Carlson, et al. 2006; Gion 2007; also see Codd 2007 for a review of reintegration and the family). While “doing” parenthood in the aftermath, participants witness the consequences of their role conflict in their children’s lives and across generations.

After negotiating for access with caretakers and once granted access to their children’s lives, participants attempt to perform their ideal parent role. They begin with

rebuilding their presence and involvement in their children's everyday life and invest on rebuilding/maintaining the parent-child relationship. In doing so, participants first prioritize rebuilding presence and follow with involvement in children's everyday lives. And although in their children's lives, participants have a difficult time establishing the traditional parent-child relationship and the majority (except one mother and one father in the sample) become their children's friend instead. Furthermore, participants struggle with the temptation of buying their children's acceptance with presents.

In addition to being present, being involved and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship, their ideal parent role expects participants to guide their children through a moral-centered society. Without authority, participants attempt to use their past experience on the street stage and the correctional stage to help children understand the possible consequences of deviant/delinquent behavior. In response, resentful children use participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit participants' advice. Without authority and discredited, participants employ creative discipline techniques. And in addition to the lack of authority, participants face children's heightened resentment.

On the home stage, children begin to express their resentment and participants identify their previous inability to perform the parent role as the root of children's resentment. Resentful and with conventional caretakers, a significant portion of the older children reject participants' lifestyle and embraces conventional life. At the opposite side, older children are especially resentful with participants' past inability to protect them from child neglect/abuse and embrace the delinquent/criminal role. Furthermore, the latter become antagonistic towards the returning participant and make the participant feel their pain. In response, participants attempt to aid their children recuperate from their victimization and deviant/criminal behavior, but it is a difficult process and does not go without consequences for participants.

Living linked lives, a portion of the older children (23/154 children of 17/57 participants) face legally forced client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage (arrest, probation, and incarceration). Of the 23 children, 10 sons and 1 daughter have experienced incarceration (federal, state, or teen detention center). With more time to communicate and share everyday life, incarceration can be a refuge for parents and children to renew their parent-child relationship. Although children's incarceration is part of the older participants' experience, young participants discourage the idealization of prison and encourage children to avoid the delinquent/criminal role. Furthermore, participants are caught in a continuous process across generations and this far an endless cycle.

Participants' narratives showcase a role conflict that shapes participants' life course within a cross-generational process. When reflecting over their life course and that of their children, participants struggle with the similarities between their parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and their up-to-date inability to successfully perform their ideal parent role. And older participants (predominantly grandmothers) encourage their children avoid *inadequate* parent role performance. Participants are caught in a role conflict that shapes the life course of various generations.

Lastly, participants' parent role performance varies in sync with their returns to the home stage, the street stage, and the correctional stage. Participants are continuously re-incarcerated because of a combination of new offences and technical violations. And as of August 2011, a year after the interview, 35 participants (61% of the sample) have accrued technical violations and have been convicted for new offence. In addition to being caught in a cross-generational process, participants' lives shift on and off the home stage, the street stage, and the correctional stage. Overall, older participants have come face to face with the consequences of their *inadequate* parent role performance.

### In Children's Lives

After gaining access and eager to become part of their children's lives, the real work begins. When constructing their ideal parent role, participants expected to be present and involved in children's lives, create/maintain a parent-child relationship, and guide children in a moral-centered society. And once granted access to their children's lives, participants attempt to perform their ideal parent role. First, participants rebuild their presence, involvement, and a parent-child relationship. Second, participants attempt to correct children's deviant/delinquent behaviors and guide them towards conventionality without parental authority. Once on the home stage, participants struggle to perform their ideal parent role.

### “We're Friends!”

While on the correctional stage, participants identified *the not being present in their children's everyday life* as the most challenging part of incarceration. And once granted access into their children's lives, participants attempt to perform their ideal parent role. In doing so, young and older participants (i) prioritize rebuilding presence and (ii) become involved in children's everyday lives. Although in their children's lives, (iii) older participants have experienced a difficult time establishing the traditional parent-child relationship and become friends with their children.<sup>117</sup> Furthermore, (iv) younger and older participants struggle in keeping themselves from making amends with their children through purchases. Eager to perform their parent role, participants attempt to become part of their children's everyday lives.

Regardless of participants' attempts to be involved from the correctional stage, the inability to be present in children's everyday lives was identified as one of the most difficult aspects of being incarcerated. Once younger and older participants gain access

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<sup>117</sup>Younger participants have not had long enough returns onto the home stage and/or children have been too young to engage in the renegotiation of the parent-child relationship.

to the home stage, they prioritize rebuilding presence in children's lives. Red, now a 38 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, identified building physical presence as a priority—

Now I'm here [back from federal prison]. I'm trying to rebuild what once was without having to look over my shoulder or fear being *snatched* away again. I'm trying to rebuild the physical part of the relationship. The mental was never destroyed, 'cause we was always able to stay in contact, whether I'm calling or they're writing. But as far as the physical contact, I don't have, you know, "You don't have to fear nothing 'cause dad is right here." Before I was *snatched*, whatever they had to deal with, they always knew I was there, period. When I was gone, they like, "I'm dealing with it by myself." But there ain't none of that no more. So, it's all about rebuilding.

Although able to be partially involved from the correctional stage, Red was not present in his children's lives for the past 8 years. During this reintegration attempt, he focuses on rebuilding presence in his children's lives. After granted access, participants prioritize becoming present in their children's lives. During this reintegration attempt, Anthony, now a 33 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, prioritizes being present in his children's lives and rejects the possibility of prospective absences—

I'm never leaving 'em out here alone again, like that by theyself. I'm going to raise them to be respectful young women, teach 'em not to settle for less. I am their father, not their daddy. It's a big difference.

*What is the difference?*

A daddy is somebody that, just 'cause you call 'im dad, it don't mean he's a father. Sometimes daddy ain't around, but a father gonna be there through thick and thin. He's gonna stand up and be accounted for his actions. And he's gonna be a man.

*So, what's your interaction like with the girls now?*

Man, we got snow ball fights. We do homework. I'm like, "Dang, ya'll smart." They so smart. We go to stores. I cook for 'em. They climb on me. Anything.

Upon this reintegration attempt, Anthony has managed to access his daughters and become present in their everyday lives. In response to the greatest challenge of incarceration, returning parents with access to their children prioritize presence. Jordan, now a 31 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, identifies presence as the initial reintegration element—

The first step, being in they lives, like everyday 'cause my kids had not been around me for years. Because they not used to me, being around me, they get

used to me again. I can't be their father if I'm not around them. I like taking 'em out to the park, take 'em to school. Can't do anything else without being in they lives.

With access to the home stage, participants begin to prioritize being present in their children's lives. Although a portion managed to be involved in their children's lives from the correctional stage (predominantly drug dealing fathers), presence in children's everyday lives can only be achieved in *free society*. With access to their children's everyday lives, participants prioritize presence and become involved.

Being present allows younger and older participants to become involved in children's everyday lives, from sharing daily activities to aiding during difficult times. Jake, now a 26 year old Mexican American father and ex-drug dealer, returns to *free society* with the intention of forming a household with his son's mother. Within a few weeks, it became evident it was not going to be possible. Thus, he now is focusing on being involved in his son's life—

I take my furloughs to go see him. He calls me, "Dad." He's a good boy. It's cool. I like it. I mean, we got a lot of making up to do. I take him out to the park, play with him, make him food. He's little, but every chance I get, he's with me. I just be around him. He's my son, a little part of me.

Although not being able to be present and involved on a daily basis, Jake becomes involved in his son's life every opportunity he has. In their long absence, participants missed their children's everyday lives. With access, participants become involved.

Joe#2, now a 26 year old Hispanic father and recovering substance/drug user, describes his involvement in his daughter's everyday life during this reintegration attempt—

We play play-station. She's actually pretty smart for her age. I mean, she could play play-station by herself [5 year old daughter]. I'm happy when I see her. It just makes my day a lot better when I get to see my daughter, be with my daughter. I love her and she loves me.

Now in her everyday life, Joe#2 becomes involved and derives emotional satisfaction from their interactions. Participants' involvement in their children's lives varies with children's age. Sam, now a 35 years old African American father and ex-drug dealer, has been involved in his teenage children's lives for seven years now—

My oldest daughter, the one I'm closest with now, in the beginning we wasn't that close 'cause her mom. But right now, it's good. Before I came here [from *free society* to the quasi-incarceration correctional stage], there wasn't a day that went by when she didn't text me. That's just how much communication is between me and her. I get birthday cakes, father's day gifts, she calls me to see what I'm doing. We in each other's lives, part of each other's lives, do things together every day.

Once participants are present in their children's everyday lives, they become involved in children's daily activities. Their involvement varies with children's age, but participants discuss it as being part of each others' daily lives. Although interested participants with access can manage to be present and involved in their children's lives, the children determine how participants will be involved in their lives.

The ideal parent role expects participants to create and maintain a parent-child relationship with their children. Older participants have had the opportunity to return home for extensive periods of time with adolescent and adult children who can respond to participants' attempts to recreate the parent-child relationship. But because participants have been absent for extended periods of time, this expectation is difficult to achieve. Initially, participants develop friendships with their children. Rick, now a 31 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, describes his limitation—

I been gone so long that I couldn't really play the traditional father role. He didn't see me like that.

*How did you know?*

He told me. He wasn't a kid anymore; you know what I'm saying. So, I decided to just be like a friend that's gonna guide him in the right direction. And if he need any help or anything, he can always contact me. He can always talk to him. If he is having problems with his mother, he can always come find me. I think the relationship worked out pretty good and he turned out to be a great kid. He plays baseball and they gave him a scholarship. And he's doing great. I'm proud of him.

Unable to create/maintain the traditional parent-child relationship, Rick is happy to be his son's confidant. This friendship allows participants to recreate and carry honest relationships with their children. Javier, now a 51 year old white/Irish father and recovering substance/drug user, has been able to recreate and maintain a friendship with his daughter during previous returns—



[My daughter] and I have a good relationship. I have always been honest with her. The only thing that [my daughter] never told me was the first time she had sex. She told her mom instead of me. Other than that, she's open, honest. She's my daughter. I'm her father. But more than that, we are friends.

*Which one is it?*

We've been more friends. You gotta look at it, fathers tend to tell their kids what to do. I'd tell her what to do, but she didn't listen. And then she became a teenage girl, smart mouth. Couldn't tell her nothing. If you think of it like that, more friends. And now, we're very good friends. I was never like a father was. I was gone so long, so much. We couldn't really have that father-daughter—, you know. We're friends. The other day, my daughter went to see her mom and she comes back, "Dad, you know, mom still talks about you." Now, mind you, we're friendly. She said I'm just going back to prison and I'm this and "he's that." And I said, "What do you tell her?" She says, "You know what I remember growing up?! Dad! It's dad who was there for me!" It pissed her off.

Although he has been in and out of his daughter's life, Javier manages to rebuild and maintain an honest friendship with his daughter upon each of his various returns. Unable to create/maintain a traditional parent-child relationship, participants invest on friendships with their children. Peter, now a 44 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, considers himself lucky to have a close friendship with his daughter—

I'm always welcome in her life. If I called her right now and told her to come over here, she'd be right here in a heartbeat. I call her and I tell her, "Go to [my friend's] house, pick up some money, come back and get my truck, [and] go fill it up for me." She'll do that. I mean, she loves doing that kind of stuff for me. She's my kid and she knows that I love her. But I'm still a little distanced from time to time. She's bold and outspoken with me. I can see myself hanging out with her a lot. She just—, she can get annoying, bossy. But we're friends. Every time I'm out, she's there for me.

Although Peter never had a traditional parent-child relationship with his daughter, they have created and maintained an honest friendship. As participants rebuild their presence and involvement in their children's lives, it is difficult to manage the parent-child relationship. Thus, older participants have rebuild and maintain honest friendships with their children during returns to the home stage.

In becoming present/involved and building friendships with their children, younger and older participants desire to be careful and genuinely earn their children's cooperation and love. But similar to the divorced parents (Menning 2008), returning

participants struggle with guilt and make amends with their children through gifts.

During this return onto the home stage, Miguel, now a 29 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, has limited financial resources, but is unable to deny his daughter's request—

She told me she's on the skating team and she wants to go to the skating fair. Her mom doesn't want to pay for it, \$250. I promised that I'll get it for her. I know in my heart, in my own mind, that I can't buy her love or buy her back. I can't make up by buying her things. You know, I have to actually spend time with her. But I can't help it and then I wonder why I fall for it so easy. It's the guilt, the guilt gets me every time.

Although Miguel is aware of his inability to buy his daughter's love, he still feels the need to please her. With the combination of wanting to be in their children's lives and guilt of their previous neglect, a portion of the participants have a difficult time not buying their children's attention. During a previous reintegration attempt, Ray, now a 38 year old Mexican-American father and recovering substance/drug user, bought his way back—

I'd try to buy their love back. I'd take 'em out to the movies, take 'em shopping. I know it was wrong, but that's the only way that I could show my affection. And it worked, especially for my daughter and wife. For me, it worked at the time, but looking back it wasn't, because you can't buy anybody. Deep down inside there's still that misery, that I and they were feeling inside, because you can't buy back that time that I was gone. That's just basically putting up a shield for me to look good. I'm not doing that this time.

In attempts to be part of his children's lives, Ray struggled with his guilty and bought his way into their lives. And although it can appear as if the participant can control the situation, a portion of the children take advantage of it. Dee, now a 57 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, was eager to become part of her children's lives. In the process, she worked to financially meet her children's need and was surprised to hear her daughter's confession a few years after her returned—

[My oldest daughter] admitted that at first she thought she could get back by using me. I bought her a car when I got out. I gave her money. She was just using me. She came to me and she said, "Mom, I'm learning how to deal with our situation. At first, I thought I could just get whatever I wanted out of you. But, I want it behind me. Because I believe that it's doing me more harm than good." She's very intelligent and we talk. But it still, she still got her issues. It's a process.

Eager to be part of her children's lives, Dee overcompensated with purchases for her children. Upon their return and with access to the children, participants become present/involved and rebuild parent-child relationships. But in the eagerness do wanting to be part of their children's everyday lives and struggling with the guilt of having been absent for long periods of time, participants struggle with the tendency to buy their way back into children's lives.

Participants' return to the home stage is a challenging process. In this process, younger and older participants prioritize rebuilding presence in children's lives. Present in their children's lives, participants become involved in their everyday lives. And although older participants have had the opportunity to rebuild the parent-child relationship, they have a difficult time establishing the traditional parent-child relationship and become friends with their children. Moreover, young and older participants struggle with guilt and make amends with their children with presents. Eager to perform their parent role, participants become part of their children's everyday lives. And as parents attempt to guide their children in a moral-centered society, participants face a true struggle.

“Don't Try it Now!”<sup>118</sup>

In addition to being present, being involved and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship, participants' ideal parent role expects them to guide their children through a moral-centered society. Unlike presence and involvement in the previous section, only older participants have had the opportunity to attempt to fulfill the guiding

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<sup>118</sup>Because the original focus of the study was correctional supervision, the survey did not include a question regarding children's deviant/delinquent behavior (only children's correctional experience; see table A21 in Appendix A page 450 and the “Doing Time with Children” theme in page 400). Thus, the discussion of children's deviant/delinquent behavior is based on participants' narratives. Please keep in mind that the majority of the children are too young and/or the participants might not have complete information about their children's deviant/criminal behavior. From the narratives, children's deviance/delinquent behavior is a dominant theme, but children with “good” caretakers, especially those living with their other parent, have taken conventional paths during previous reintegration attempts.

expectation during the aftermath.<sup>119</sup> In doing so, this portion of older participants have attempted to correct children's deviant/delinquent behaviors and guide them towards conventionality.<sup>120</sup> Similar to previous findings, reintegrating parents experience a difficult time re-establishing bonds with their children and their authority over children (Travis and Waul 2003). Carlson and colleagues (2006) found returning mothers' guilt and shame limited their ability to set limits with their children and the leniency or lack of structure was intended to serve as compensation for their previous poor parenting behaviors. In this sample, participants identify children's rejection as their primary obstacle in re-establishing their (i) authority over their children. But with limited or no authority, a portion of participants continue to press forward and attempt to (ii) use their past experience on the street stage and correctional stage to help children understand the possible consequences. In response, (iii) a portion of the children uses participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit their advice. Without authority and discredited, (iv) a portion of participants continue forward and employ creative discipline techniques. In children's lives, participants struggle to guide them in a moral-centered society.

During their transition into parenthood, participants identify guiding as part of their ideal parent role. But in their absence and with an active delinquent/criminal role performance in their past, the majority of participants lost the authoritative parent role in their children's lives. Thus, a portion of the children do not always welcome participants' advice. Ray is aware of his loss—

I think I lost my authority about that [morality]. I don't tell them what to do because I'm afraid of what they're gonna tell me. Kids at that age get really rebellious [teens and young adults]. If I said to my son, "Don't be doing this. Don't be doing that. Don't drink." I'd just be more scared of, him coming back and saying, "Oh, you don't have room to talk. You went through it. So, I'm just experimenting with it." Or stuff like that. As a parent, yeah, I have every right,

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<sup>119</sup>Younger participants have not returned home for an extensive stay and/or children were too young.

<sup>120</sup> Interestingly, all participants discuss the desire to guide children towards conventional behavior. But because of participants' delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role, it is an extremely difficult expectation to achieve.

but I would be a hypocrite. He drinks and I know it's gonna have to be done. I don't want him to go to [college] thinking this is okay. There is a lot of drinking in [that college town]. And that's what scares me, 'cause there's a lot of pressure on a kid.

Aware of his loss of moral authority, Ray is afraid of addressing his son's alcohol consumption. Although aware of the possible rejection, older participants face their children and attempt to guide them in a moral-centered world. Simon, now a 46 year old African American father and recovering substance/drug user, is very aware of his loss of authority—

My daughter, we're close, but there's like at a distance all the time. And she throws it in my face once in a while. When I tell her, "You shouldn't really do that." She says, "You wasn't here before. Don't try it now." She just checks me.

With no authority, Simon's advice is immediately rejected. Children actively let their parents know they no longer have the authority to guide them through a moral-centered society. And when parents are not aware of their loss of authority, children make sure they come to know it. TR, now a 38 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, recalls his son's disdain for his advice—

I know [my son] holds some kind of resentments towards me.

*Does he tell you?*

No, not in so many words, you know. But I could tell, like when I try to tell him something. And then he will—, "Well, how do you know?!" In that sarcastic tone and I'll like—, "Well, I've been down that road." "Well, you ain't showed me! I don't even want to hear it." He won't listen! There's some kind of resentment.

When TR attempts to guide his son, his son quickly reminds TR of his lack of authority.

In the loss of authority, children reject parental advice and push parents to the side.

Regardless, participants continue in their attempt to perform their parent role and guide their children in the moral-centered world.

In returning to the home stage, participants want to perform the parent role. Thus, a portion of older participants press forward without parental authority and use their past delinquent/criminal and client/inmate role performances in attempts to guide their children away from deviant/delinquent behavior. Jerry, now a 33 year old African

American father and ex-drug dealer, has developed a friendship with his son and has been successfully using his past experience to guide his son—

Because I wasn't there [did not know about son for 14 years], his mother did all the disciplinary work. I didn't really meet him until he was already walking into his manhood stage. Therefore, I had to take another approach. And actually, I think it works better for our situation. I don't think he'll be disrespectful or nothing like, because he respects me as a person rather than as dad. Sometimes people feel like they have to respect their parents. He feels he don't have to respect me. He chooses to respect me. And that gives me a lot more to maneuver and opens it for me to teach things. He will ask me questions that I would never even think of asking my parents.

*Like what?*

Like about sex, drugs, fighting. He even comes to me, "Man, I'm having problems with this guy. What you think I should do." And I cherish that more than anything, him being able to talk to me. That's amazing. I take the role of understanding more, but I'm a let him know what's wrong, let him know the consequences. There was a big fight at one of the school ball games. They got suspended. It wasn't real serious, but it could have been. I told him, "It can start from a fight and it can go downhill from there. Fighting, it was probably like a simple childhood argument. You punch somebody, he falls, he hits the ground, and now he's dead. And now you looking at some real serious stuff. You can't protect your friends, especially when you're putting your life in jeopardy." I tell my son the truth, you know. I didn't sugar code it either. "I didn't sell drugs because I needed to. I felt like I had to make this persona. I need to live up to this reputation, a lie. Ain't no truth in being a thug or running the streets. It ain't no truth in that. And it ain't no honor in it either. And this is what you get for it [being in prison]. All these guys around selling drugs, oh they got nice shiny automobiles, clothes, jewelry, spending money and having fun with it. Give yourself ten years and you could have all that, and can't nobody take it away from you. But these boys right here, they'll lose it tomorrow. They won't have nothing and they gotta start all the way over, doing the same thing that they got taken in for, but you'll have yours. You have a strong foundation. You'll own a house. You'll own your own car. Which one would you rather have? Something today that can be *snatched* from you tomorrow? Or would you rather work to build that, and keep it?"

Jerry uses his past delinquent/criminal role performance and client/inmate role performance to guide his son towards conventional behavior. Although not always as successful, a significant portion of the older participants attempt to use their past experience to guide their children in a moral-centered world. When Rick returned to his son's life after a five year absence, and he attempted to use his experience to teach his son about the consequences of deviant behavior, he faced a difficult task—

I talk to him. My uncle talked to him. My mom talked to him. Everybody talked to him. It wasn't even probably a week later and he was suspended from school again. And I can't even tell you how many times he's been suspended. I told him, "I couldn't tell you how many times I've been arrested in my life. And that sound kind of stupid, don't it?" He's like, "Yeah." I asked him, "How many times, pre-k 'till now, have you been suspended?" He's not even in high school and I'm asking him this. He couldn't even tell me. "That's even more dumbmer than me couldn't tell you how many times I been arrested. You still got a whole, a whole, a whole life in front of you. And if you don't wanna listen to your own father, somebody that's telling you what you gonna go through, I don't know what else to say or do." And basically, my efforts that used to be there, they're not really there no more because as a grown man I'm still trying to get myself together.

Rick uses his past experience to warn his son of the consequences, but has a difficult time guiding his son towards conventional behavior and eventually stops trying. Whether successful or not, a significant portion of older participants use their past experience on the street stage and correctional stage to shift children's behavior towards conventional society. Sam recalls his struggle in disciplining his son—

I could look into my past like it was just yesterday. And I could put myself in my sons' shoes, just as quick. And I keep telling them, "Anything that you think you're gonna get away with, you're not. So, you can't think of a lie to me?! Everything that you claim that you do in school, that all the teachers are out to get you, that's bullshit. I used to say the same thing. It's none of the teachers to get you." They just a real problem. When I was their age, I didn't have no father. So, therefore, I know good and well, couldn't nobody tell me nothing. So, I know he ain't trying to listen to me. "You just have to find out on your own, life experiences. Everything that I went through, you gonna have to find on your own."

Sam uses his past experience in attempts to guide his children away from deviant behavior, but find guiding to be a difficult expectation to fulfill. Although participants initially attempted to use their past delinquent/criminal role performance and client/inmate role performance to guide their children away from deviant/delinquent behavior, the majority of the children who are already engaging in this behavior do not respond. Moreover, children use participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit their advice.

In addition to losing their parental authority and unsuccessfully using their past experience to guide their children, children use participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit participants' advice. During one of his previous returns eleven years ago, Javier tried to set boundaries for his children and faced a difficult challenge—

My son had some shirt on, very inappropriate to wear to school. I said he couldn't wear it for two reasons. One, it's just inappropriate. Two, my dad is the superintendent of the schools. "You are not wearing that shirt to school." He said, "It's a free country." I said, "You know what, I'm not taking that. You go take that shirt off. If you think you're wearing it to school and I find out you did, I'm spanking your ass." He's all mad. He comes home from school and he's got that shirt on. I said "[Son]!" He says, "I told you it was a free country." I said, "That's it. I'm spanking you." Right. And he takes off running down the hall. Now I'm in a position, I need to spank him, not to hurt him, but to maybe humiliate him a little. Or teach him some humility. Something, because I said I would. So, he's trying to run into his room and as he's shutting the door, I get there and I push the door open. I grab a hold of him, and he's not in the position for me to spank him. I'm trying to turn him around and [my daughter] jumps on my back. We all fall on the bed, break the bed. I get [my daughter] off me. I spank [my son], give him a couple of good ones. And they're both screaming and yelling, like I don't know what. Now I gotta go see [my daughter] about attacking me. I track [her] down in the kitchen and I said, "[Daughter]!" She says, "You have no right. You lost your chance to tell us what to do a long time ago. You chose your high and then come all mighty to tell us what to do. You was getting high all the time, and now you think you can tell us what to do. I'm running away." I opened the door and said, "I'm here for you, but there you go." And I shut the door, sat down and watched TV. [My son] stayed in his room. He didn't come out the rest of the night. I tell you, you might want to forget what you've done, but kids never forget. And they tell you the truth! At about 9pm, I look and [my daughter] is sitting on the steps, still. I went out and I said, "Look, if you're leaving, you probably better come get some clothes. If you're not, you got 10 minutes to get in this house, 'cause I'm locking the doors." And she sulked on in and went to bed. I told 'em, "Whatever I did before, it's none of your business. And I'm not taking attitude. Don't do it."

After his return, the children test the boundaries and use his past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit him. But as the sole caretaker, Javier asserts his authority.

Whether able to reassert their authority or not, participants continuously struggle and children use participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit their advice. Carol, now a 35 year old African American mother and recovering



substance/drug user, feels devastated and powerless as she witness her daughter move towards the street stage—

She's just me all over again. I can't tell her how to deal with it because she don't wanna hear nothing I be saying. She said to me, "You crazy too, a hoe on the street. You're nobody to tell me nothing about my life." And it hurts, but I just wanna hug her and comfort her, try to make things better for her. But she's still resisting to me. I can't reach her, you know. I don't know what to do. How do I fight for her? It's as if she was about to fall off the ladder, and I couldn't catch her. I see it coming. She doesn't want to hear what I got to say. I'm scared for her.

With a long history of delinquent/criminal role performance, Carol is unable to guide her daughter off the street stage. And even when participants have accepted their children's delinquent/criminal status and try to advice them about their role performance, children

resist. Peter is not requesting his son to leave the street stage—

My son, I can't condemn him. I can't tell him he's wrong when I've committed hundreds of crimes in my life. And the things I've done was not very nice. So I can't sit there and hate him, really kill him for it. And he knows that. He's told me before. And I won't. We're passed that. But I tried to tell him, "Just slow down and enjoy life, because you don't want to be like me." I mean, he just did a rip. You know, he did 4 years [in state prison]. Again, not good parenting skills, sometimes I love the way he is. And other times, is like, "Man, you're stupid!" Because I see myself so much in him. But he don't care and I tell him, "Dude, you're gonna get life one of these days. You're gonna get 25 and you're gonna wind up sitting in this prison cell for 12, 13 years of your life. Man and it ain't gonna be nothing nice." He doesn't see that. He just did four years on a dime [served 4 years in state prison for a 10 year sentence], and he's not comprehending the fact that the next time around he's getting 25 ongoing criminal activity. This ain't his first time in trouble or anything like that. And he doesn't understand the total consequences yet. The more time you do in prison, the more it affects you mentally. You become anti-social, so withdrawn that they're just worthless.

With an extensive history of delinquent/criminal role performance, Peter and his son are aware of his inability to advise his son. Instead, Peter uses his past delinquent/criminal and client/inmate role performance in attempts to slowdown his son's delinquent/criminal role performance. Whether participants are attempting to control children's deviant behavior or slow down their delinquent/criminal role performance, their children use

participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit their advice and limit their ability to guide their children in a moral-centered world.

After losing their authority and unable to guide their children a portion of the older participants continue to press forward and use creative discipline techniques to guide their children towards conventional behavior. This creative discipline occurs on the home stage and at times pushes the boundaries. Bubbles' creative work, now a 45 year old white/Caucasian father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, was confined to the home stage—

Within the first month, [my daughter] is off on some kick about not having clothes. It irritated me. I said, "You know what [daughter], go pack up everything in your room. Only keep what you've got on and your bed stuff." "What do you mean?" I said, "Pack it up. I'm locking it up in the car." She said, "You can't do that." I said, "Get out of the way." I packed everything she thought she owned and locked it in the car [laugh emerging]. She says, "What 'm I gonna do for clothes tomorrow?" I said, "I'll go out and get you something." "Well, I want this and that!" "No, I'll get you something." Right. That lasted about three days and she changed her mind. The same things happened with the dishes. They didn't want to do the dishes. I said, "You know what, I'm gonna give you a fork, a spoon, a knife, a bowl, a plate, and a glass. I left one set for everybody and locked the rest in the car. That lasted about a week, 'cause they wouldn't wash it. I'd wash mine and I put 'em up. They eventually gave up and washed their plate.

Limited, Bubbles becomes creative and asserts his authority on the home stage. In a creative response, participants attempt to teach children proper behavior. And after several attempts, parents push the boundaries outside the home stage. After meeting his son upon release, Rick became fully present and involved in his youngest son's everyday life. In doing so, he faced the task of attempting to correct his son's deviant behavior.

After several failed attempts, he became creative—

Every time he was getting in trouble, I was up to his school. There was one time, his mom had put them [son and his brother] on school bus early in the morning. Like I said, I was working second shift, so I was always asleep during the day. She calling me, calling, calling. I finally, "What's going on?" She said, "After I put him on the bus this morning, I looked under [our son's] mattress and found like a week's worth of unfinished homework that wasn't turned in." Now, this is like after many times I've been to the school. And here I am, going back to the school again. Across the school there's a gas station. Well, I go into the gas

station to buy something to wake me up, and I got this pamphlet. I think the pamphlet was about what type of gas they was using at the gas station, but it was a pamphlet. So, I go to the school, and the principal, *always happy to see me* [sarcastic]. This is how hard headed my son is. So, I told her what my plan was and she was down with it. "I'm gonna call him down here." And I was always got on him about just walking in a closed room without knocking. And there it is, he's doing it again, I'm in the principal's office, and he just rolls right on in. So, I had to get on him, right then and there about that. So, the principal leaves and I had him sit down. Whether he robbed a bank or steals a dollar, he's not gonna lie to me. He's kind of scared of me. I asked, "What you think I'm up here for now?" He really didn't know. "Well, your mom found all your homework under your mattress. Why didn't you even do it?" And he just really told me he wanted to hurry up, go outside and play. "Well, your mom, she's tired. She's done. She don't know what to do with you no more. I don't know what to do. So, you're going to go live with your grandmother [from *State B* to out of state]." Boy, he just breaks down crying. I was like, "Sign this real quick [the pamphlet]." So, he signed it. I put it back in my pocket. So, I'm talking to him some more, he's still crying. "You got two choices. Either you can go stay with your grandmother or you going to the boys' home." He was like, "What you mean the boys' home?" I was like, "The pamphlet you just signed, that was your signature, freely agreeing that you're gonna go to the boys' home." He just lost it. The following weekend I was going to see my mom. So, right then I just thought fast. "You're gonna do one of 'em. I ain't gonna let you go boys' home but you gonna stay with your grandmother. And we're gonna go next weekend." So, I told his mom the whole plan. Pack his bags up. To make a long story short, that didn't work. He came right back, and it probably wasn't even a week.

After several school visits and attempts to correct his son's deviant behavior, Rick used threat to help his son understand the consequences of his actions. Although he never intended to leave his son with his grandmother, his son's experience was real.

Unfortunately, not everything can be solved on the home stage, and external intervention becomes vital. As Dee attempted to correct and control her teen daughter's behavior, she was unable to maintain her own freedom—

There was an incident with me and [my second daughter] and I hit her because she was drinking, not going to school, and she ran out of the house, ran up the street. And they called the police on me [the neighbors]. The police officer say, "What are you gonna do if I leave her here?" I said, "I'm a whoop her ass. Shit, I gotta go to work and I gotta go to school. All I wanted is for her to go to school and obey the house rules. That's not asking too much." And they said, "Well, we're not able to deal with that because they said you hit her." They took her upstairs and checked her out, seeing that she didn't have any bruises or anything on her. "Well, if I leave her here, what are you gonna do?" I said, "I'm whoop her ass if she don't listen to me. We black. We beat our kids." Oh, why did I say

that for?! He locked me up. “Stand up Ms. [Dee]. You’re going to jail. You just threatened her.” I’m like, “Whatever!”

After numerous attempts to control her daughter’s deviant/delinquent behavior, Dee ran out of options and was arrested for threatening her daughter with violence. In attempting to discipline their children despite their loss of authority, participants use creative discipline techniques on and off the home stage. Even though participants have no authority and are continuously discredited, they press forward to fulfill the guiding expectation of their ideal parent role.

Participants’ ideal parent role expects them to guide their children in a moral-centered world. During previous returns onto the home stage and into their children’s everyday lives, older participants attempt to correct children’s deviant/delinquent behaviors and guide them towards conventionality. But participants have limited or no authority over their children. Although without authority, a portion of participants continue to press forward and use their past experience on the street stage and correctional stage to help children understand the possible consequences. In response, children use participants’ past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit their advice. Without authority and discredited, participants continue to press forward and employ creative discipline techniques on the home stage. In children’s lives, participants struggle to guide them in a moral-centered world.

Overall, when constructing their ideal parent role, participants expected to be present and involved in children’s lives, create/maintain a parent-child relationship, and guide children in a moral-centered world. And once granted access to their children’s lives, participants attempt to perform their ideal parent role. Younger and older participants have had the opportunity to rebuild their presence and involvement in their children’s lives. But only older participants have had the opportunity to attempt to rebuild their parent-child relationship. Moreover, older participants have had the opportunity to attempt to correct children’s deviant/delinquent behaviors and guide them

towards conventionality without parental authority. Upon their return onto the home stage, all participants struggle to perform their ideal parent role. Furthermore, participants face the consequences of their past inability to protect their children.

### Linked Lives

In addition to becoming present, becoming involved, rebuilding a parent-child relationship, and guiding children, the returning participant comes face to face with the consequences of their past inability to protect their children from child neglect and abuse. While on the street stage and the correctional stage, participants have a limited understanding of their children's everyday life in others' care. And it is not until the honeymoon fades that parents powerlessly witness the cross-generational consequences. First, older participants in the sample face their children's resentment.<sup>121</sup> Resentful because of participants' past inability to perform their ideal parent role, a portion of the children with conventional caretakers become their parents' antithesis and a different portion of children with a victimization history embrace the delinquent/criminal role. After experiencing the consequences of their children's victimization, participants become invested in guiding their children through recovery. Second, a small portion of the older participants experience children's incarceration. In the process, participants and their children renew their parent-child relationship. Aware, young participants discourage the idealization of prison and encourage children to avoid the delinquent/criminal role. Living linked lives, participants struggle with children's resentment and its consequences.

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<sup>121</sup>Similar to rebuilding parent-child relationships and guiding, the older portion of the sample has had the opportunity to return onto the home stage for extensive periods of time and children have been old enough to see the consequences of their *inadequate* parent role performance.

“She’s So Angry!”

Children’s resentment is a concern for all participants. Participants with young children are warned about the resentment their children will soon feel. Miguel is currently feeling the pressure to increase presence and involvement in his daughter’s life to prevent future resentment—

[My ex-wife] was telling me, “Hey, your daughter is still young. You get involved in her life now while you can, before she gets much older.” With her, she’s gonna start resenting me and when she’s grown up— [thoughtful silence]. But I wouldn’t like her to. I heard that she’s been in her room crying, missing me, and wishing things could be different. So, she’s already thinking that way. So, it’s a matter of time.

Although young participants are warned about children’s resentment, it is older participants who have previously faced children’s resentment. This is especially evident as children express their festering resentment against the returning parents in the sample. Once older participants are on the home stage with their older children, (i) children begin to express their resentment and (ii) participants identify their previous inability to perform the parent role as the root of children’s resentment.<sup>122</sup> With conventional caretakers, (iii) a portion of the children resents participants’ general inability to perform the parent role and embraces conventional life (antithesis of parents’ behavior). Another portion of the children becomes especially resentful with (iv) participants’ inability to protect them from child neglect/abuse and embrace the delinquent/criminal role, and (v) become antagonistic against the participants and makes participants feel their pain. In response, participants (vi) attempt to aid their children through recovery, but (vii) it is a difficult process with a variety of consequences for participants. Because of participants’ past *inadequate* parent role performance, children express resentment towards participants during the aftermath.

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<sup>122</sup>Similar to previous research, there appears to be an interaction between the parent’s gender, children’s gender, and children’s expression of resentment (Wildeman 2010). To fully explore this phenomenon, more gendered specific data will be collected in the future.

Whether welcoming or maintaining their distance, the majority of the children did not express their true feelings until the returning participant had spent an extended amount of time with them on the home stage. Once children were comfortable, participants faced children's resentment on the home stage. During a previous return, Louis, now a 33 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealer, felt the resentment from his son—

My son harbors all the anger. I don't want him to get so angry at me to where he won't talk to me. Last time, I heard the most hurtful things. My daughters, they're like, "I love you dad." But my son, there is resentment there. The boys always tend to fall for they mom anyway. I'm like that with my mom. And then my girls, they just all fall in with me. But my son, he's just mad.

*Why is he so mad?*

A boy needs his father. And I've failed him.

*How was it the last time you were home?*

It was great at first. We were finally together, like a family should be. But then he started acting out, telling me how horrible I was. I'd walk in the room and feel his anger, you know, how people act when they're mad. He was resentful. That's why I'm being careful this time.

Initially, Louis' son was distantly welcoming. But as soon as the family regained its comfort, he expressed his resentment towards Louis. Post honeymoon, returning participants come face to face with their children's resentment. After her return, Mary, now a 59 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, sensed something was wrong—

[My sons] were off doing their thing [adolescents on the street stage]. I was like running behind them, but they didn't really wanna be bothered with me. I would drive into the city, take food. I would give them my bank card to go get money, but that closeness just wasn't there. My daughters, they were just out, indifferent. I could feel something was lingering, but none of 'em said anything. So, I called this family meeting and said, "I just wanna talk. I'm not gonna try to defend myself. I just wanna know what's going on. What happened?" Some of the stuff my sons told me, man! All the resentment came out. I had never seen so much anger in a room.

After numerous failed attempts to perform her parent role, Mary confronted her teenage children and faced their resentment. Once all the pleasantries have passed, children become honest about their feelings and resentment barges onto the home stage. Michael,

now a 49 year old African American father, recovering substance/drug user and ex-drug dealers, was unable to escape his children's resentment—

*How was it last time you were home?*

It was really something. But you know, young people here, they think it's gonna be great coming home. And sure, it is, but it's not easy. At first it is, but not when things settle.

*What do you mean?*

Not this last time, but when they were teenagers, they were living with their [maternal] grandmother. It took a few months, but I got an apartment for us to live together. They were all excited about it. But you know, when you're home, you have to deal with everybody's feelings. [My youngest], she was just hurt, would cry every time we talk about me being in prison and them being alone with their [maternal] grandma. [My son]—, [my son] was different. He was angry, angry all the time. Couldn't tell him nothing. But [my oldest daughter], she would tell me—, she speaks her mind.

*What would she say?*

I failed them. And she remind me of it every time she got a chance. I don't want to talk about the details, but it was not easy. And these young people here, they don't know what it really is gonna be like.

Although his children are initially polite, Michael eventually faced their resentment in their new home. Whether welcoming or distant, children are initially polite. But once the returning parent is on the home stage and the honeymoon ends, children begin to express their resentment. And with time, participants identify the root of children's resentment.

After the honeymoon, children express their resentment. And once the dust settles, participants identify their previous inability to *adequately* perform their ideal parent role as root of the problem. Mike#2, now a 42 year old African American father, ex-drug dealer and recovering substance/drug user, discusses his first experience with his children's resentment—

I wanted them to understand that it wasn't their fault [imprisonment]. I tried to talk to 'em, to tell me the way they felt. I didn't want 'em to keep it bottled in and try to find ways, unhealthy, to deal with how they felt about me being gone. But at first, it didn't work. They would say they weren't mad, that they just enjoyed being with me. But I knew they had to be feeling resentful, 'cause I've been there [father abandoned him]. And I'm paying for it now.

*Where they okay?*

No, they eventually told me just how they felt. They were real angry at me. They said they were hurt, had no father when they needed one. They went without



‘cause I wasn’t there. They were forced to depend on people that had no love for them. I damaged their lives. When I left, I wanted to protect them,<sup>123</sup> but I hurt them. I hurt them without wanting to.

Once his children were past the honeymoon, Mike#2 became aware of his children’s painful experiences during his absence and become aware of the consequences of his previous inability to perform the parent role. On the home stage and passed the niceties, participants previous failed attempts to perform their parent role is at the root of children’s resentment. Perry, now a 42 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, discussed his son’s resentment—

My son was with his mother. I failed my son [lowers his head]. And I’m not gonna say it was all her fault either, but we both failed him.

*What do you mean?*

Last time, my son was in a real tough age [teenager at the time]. He was real angry, pissed at me most of the time. His mother was gone [also a substance/drug user]. We got in some heated arguments over what he was doing and he told me [his mother’s boyfriend] would beat him, punish him, not feed him. And now, his mother was gone. I about died when he told me. I never liked that guy, never did. I wanted to find him and kill him. But I couldn’t do that. I failed him, supposed to be there for him. I was not around, trying not to show him how I was [substance/drug user], but he end up seeing it anyway. And he got beaten by a man who’s not his father. That’s why, he was always angry.

*How is it now?*

We’re trying, trying to leave the past in the past. But it ain’t no walk on the park. He has his own kid now.

Perry identified his failure to protect his son as the root of his son’s resentfulness.

Children’s discussions with their parents highlight participants’ past *inadequate* parent role performance as the root of the children’s resentment. Dee faced the realities of her absence—

[My kids], I found out they were resentful toward me because of things that they went through, not having school supplies, not having winter coats, having to wear the same pair of shoes with holes in ‘em. They just didn’t understand why nobody reached to help them. They didn’t have money. When they told me, they cried with anger. It made me sick to my stomach.

During Dee’s absence, the children went without a conventional caretaker and suffered through 5 years of neglect. And years after Dee’s first return, her children continue to

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<sup>123</sup>In the *fast life* as substance/drug users, Louis had previously voluntarily left the home stage to protect the children from exposure to his delinquent/criminal role performance.

feel the resentment. Resentful, participants' children take conventional and/or deviant/criminal paths. A portion of the children (the minority) embrace the delinquent/criminal role to cope with their victimization and a different portion of the children (the majority) who had conventional caretakers embrace conventional life.

Resentful towards participants, the majority of the children had conventional caretakers and primarily resent participants' past overall inability to perform the parent role. In response to their experience, children embrace a conventional life style

(antithesis to participants' behavior). Carol is proud of her younger daughter—

She's resentful, she is. When she was little, she loved spending time with me. But now, she has experienced so much. I put her through so much. She doesn't like it that I have not been there for her, be her mother. But she has my dad. She has everything with him. And she hates my lifestyle. Just from her seeing me and her sister go through it, she's not gonna go there. I don't foresee her. She's not a street girl. She's very shy. She doesn't trust people. She's reserved. She's in high school and wants to go away to college. She goes to church. She is resentful, but she's not a *street girl*. She loves me, but she keeps her distance from me. She's careful, doesn't want to be around me. And definitely doesn't want to be anything like me.

Under her grandfather's care and resentful towards her mother for an *inadequate* parent role performance, Carol's younger daughter avoids the street stage and embraces conventional life. Under the care of conventional caretakers and after seeing their parents' delinquent/criminal role performance and client/inmate role performance, the majority of the children embrace conventional life. Ray identifies his ex-wife's parent role performance and his drinking as a deterrent for his children—

I think them being at that age now [1 teen and 2 young adults], if they were gonna do it, they would've already done it. To me, high school and your first year that you're off to college, those are the years to worry. My son, the first year he really couldn't get a major [currently an undergraduate student]. "What are you gonna major in?" The counselor told me that if he don't know, that's normal. That's when they're trying find themselves, freedom. I trust them more than I trust myself, so. I worry, but they are all college students. I never really sat down and told them that I did have a problem with alcohol. I wish I would have. They're at the point now, grown. They know right from wrong. One thing I did do is, I wrote 'em a note when I was at the treatment center. I told them I did have a drinking problem. And that I was getting help for it. And if they had any questions about that, in college there is a lot of peer pressure, any time they

wanted to talk to me, not to hesitate. I was more than glad to talk to them about it. And I can see that they stay away from it. Probably because they know the kind of life that I went through. They saw me put their mom through hell and resent me. They don't want to be like me. And their mom, she was always there when I wasn't. And they know how she feels about me. So, they won't do it. They won't disappoint her like that.

With a loving mother and resentful towards Ray, his children reject the delinquent/criminal status and embrace conventional life. In the care of conventional caretakers, children resent their parents' past delinquent/criminal role performance, become participants' antithesis and embrace conventional life. Michael is proud of his son's approach to life—

*Do you have a relationship with him?*

He doesn't like what I do. He talks to me when he sees me, but he's not goin' out of his way to see me or nothing. He grew up with his mother. And she wouldn't let him have much to do with me.

*How is he doing?*

My son, he's a good guy. His mom sent him to Job Corp. He was expecting a child, and he had no skills. And he got his officer's degree. And then he got out, came back, and him and the mother of his child hooked up. They have five girls. Now he's raising all five of 'em by his self.

*What happened to their mother?*

He put her out. Now he drives busses. He's also working as a janitor. Plus he has a landscaping business, part ownership. He's done well.

With a conventional mother, Michael rejects his father's delinquent/criminal role and embraces a conventional lifestyle. Children with conventional caretakers who resent their parents reject the delinquent/criminal role and embrace conventional life. But not all children take the conventional path, and participants begin to understand the interaction between their children's victimization and delinquent/criminal role performance.

While participants performed their delinquent/criminal role and client/inmate role, children become especially resentful with participants' inability to protect them from child neglect/abuse. Once on the home stage, older participants in the sample came face to face with a wide range of child neglect/abuse, from lack of socialization to sexual

abuse.<sup>124</sup> Erica, now a 41 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, found her daughter lacking basic socialization—

[My daughter] did not have a concept of months, weeks, days, years. She was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade with a second grade education. She had just slipped through the cracks in school. She couldn't read. She didn't know how to take care of her personal hygiene. And she was just like raised by wolves. It took me a while before she would let me even wash her hair. She wasn't used to having her hair washed and done. She had to be taught to eat with a spoon. My boss took us out to lunch, and she was eating with her fingers. But I was just thankful that she was alive. She was in a horrible condition. And come find out, she was raped. No matter what I do, she's just always gonna be mad at me. One thing is having your kids mad 'cause you were not there. Another thing is for your kid to be mad at you because you let this happen to her. I'm always mad at me for not protecting my daughter. I didn't protect her.

Erica realized she had failed to protect her daughter from neglect and abuse. And although children do not always fully discuss their experiences with child neglect/abuse, children's resentment and deviant behavior opens the door for participants to face their past inability to protect their children. LA, now a 46 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, failed to protect his daughter from her mother's neglect—

When she was a teenager [now an adult woman], she didn't want to live with her mom. She kept telling her mom that she wanted to come live with me. Her mom liked to party a lot, still does. She likes to be gone all the time. There was an incident with my daughter. When she was little, she set her mom on fire because she wasn't paying her enough attention.

*What do you mean?*

Yeah, my daughter put her bed on fire when she was sleeping. It's just, my daughter wanted attention. I mean, she was 5 years old. She hates her mom. I don't know why she hates her mom so much, but she's resentful. Her mom is a really big drinker. She drinks and parties all the time. She's resentful because of her mom.

*What about you?*

She never told me she's mad at me. But she's distant and I know she doesn't like me being around. We've mainly talked about my son [young toddler]. You know, it's part of the life. I wasn't there, but it's part of life. She asked me to come live with me, but I wouldn't. She resents me for it.

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<sup>124</sup> Participants predominantly discussed their children's victimization when children do not have proper care in their absence, when the other parent was also focused on his/her own delinquent/criminal role performance, or other *inadequate* care.

During her childhood, LA's daughter openly expressed resentment towards her mother through deviant behavior. Today, she maintains her distance and LA senses resentfulness because of his inability to protect her from child neglect/abuse. Of participants' *inadequate* role performance, children predominantly resent their inability to protect them from child neglect/abuse. Carol attempts to understand her daughter's deviant/delinquent behavior—

And then, I don't know where she got into the older men at. I always had a fear that she had been molested. I still feel that way. I don't know if she'll ever tell me. But a little girl doesn't just grow up and start messing with grown men and skips her age group. That's not normal. I've been molested and I've been around enough molested women to know that you don't just grow up and the first person you have sex with is a grown man. She's got an older man now, he's 27 [she's 16], who is controlling her. She's got so many issues. And no matter what I do, she's resentful, resentful to me 'cause I wasn't there to protect her. She tells me, "You wasn't here for me before. What you gonna do now?" I didn't protect her from my father [handed her off to his sister], from the streets. She hates me.

In her absence, Carol was unable to protect her daughter from neglect and possibly abuse. Today, she is continuously faced with her daughter's resentment. As parents become part of children's everyday life, they become aware of their children's realities during their absence. At the core of children's resentment is participants' past inability to perform the ideal parent, especially participants' past failure to protect the children from child neglect/abuse.

In understanding children's resentment, participants begin to connect their children's victimization and deviant/criminal behavior. Mary is petrified when her children tell her what they faced in her absence—

My kids did not have any food, school stuff or winter coats. They be laying in the park at night, sleeping on the park benches. Different people seeing them walking the streets, they'd know me, they wouldn't invite 'em in for a meal. It was three of us, used to do drugs, and we had said that if anything happen to anyone, we would take care of each other's kids. One of my friends, she let 'em stay for like a week and then her husband put them out on the street. And the only thing they knew to do was to walk. People saw them and no one helped. But one of the dope dealers in the neighborhood used to give my oldest boy money. And then he bought him some shoes and gave him money for school supplies. And then he told him, "Well, now you gotta work for this money. I just can't keep giving you

handouts.” So, he became a runner [pre-adolescent selling crack cocaine on the street stage]. And that’s what he did. He took care of the other kids with the money. He did that ‘cause I wasn’t there. No one was there.

It is then that Mary begins to develop an understanding about the interaction between her children’s victimization and deviant/delinquent behavior. In facing children’s resentment, participants begin to understand the interaction between their children’s victimization and deviant/delinquent behavior in their children’s lives. Dee discovers her daughter’s experience with sexual abuse and continues to struggle with the consequences today—

She was always sleeping in two or three pair of panties, long underwear and pants. I could not get this girl to take her clothes off. I had to rock her and sing to her to get her to trust me to take her clothes off so I can give her a bath. And when she finally did snap in, that’s when she went berserk, started acting out, drinking and hooking. I was like, “I can’t do nothing with her. I can’t sit here and watch her all the time.” I get a call from [county] police in [*State B*], “She over there, peed on herself.” Dude says she’s sitting on a corner on a curb, drunk. I go over there and get her, bring her back. “[Daughter], what’s the matter?” “I don’t know. I don’t know. I don’t know. I just don’t want to be here. I don’t know-o-o-o.” I say, “Well, you not going back to [caretaker]’s house. You’re not going back.” “I don’t want that. I don’t know what I want to do. I don’t know. I can’t be like the other kids. I’m not smart. I’m dumb. I don’t want to be black. Uh-uh [I don’t know]!” I was just, “Uhhhh! Man! I don’t know what to do with this girl.” So, [my boyfriend] was like, “Maybe she just needs to go away for a while.” They put her in another shelter, ran away from there. And then they put her all the way up [outside the *Metro Area*] and that’s when they hooked us up with family therapy. So, she told her roommate about what had happened to her. And her roommate told the staff. So, they called me and asked me if I could come up. “Yeah. What’s the emergency?” “Yeah, she’s okay, but we need to talk to you about something.” “Well, what is it?” “We’ll tell you when you get here.” When I got there, she didn’t know I was coming. They told me what happened and said, “When you get with her, don’t show no emotions. Don’t let her see that you’re angry, because that’s her main concern. She don’t want to see you upset, ‘cause she know how you is. She’s afraid you’ll kill this man. She’s afraid that you’ll go back in jail, for life this time. So, just act like you’re taking it all in. Like, if you want to scream, holler, whatever, do it later. But while she’s talking, just listen. Don’t say nothing.” So, that’s what I did. I maintained my composure in front of her. Real hard. In the ride back to [the *Metro Area*], my mind was out the window. I was just mad at everybody. I was mad at the system. I was just pissed off at everything. The second place they went to [substance/drug user caretaker], that’s where she was molested at, repeatedly by this guy that was staying in the house [house of crack users]. And she didn’t want me to know about it because she wanted me to stay home [not return to prison]. Nobody knew

what was wrong with her. Everybody was like [her siblings], “What is your problem? You got everything. We got more than we ever had. Why are you not going to school? Why are you playing up? Why are you drinking?” I couldn’t deal with it. I called up there, talked to [substance/drug user caretaker], told her, and she told me that she didn’t know anything about it. I guess she confronted him. He would go to the store for her, run errands and stuff, while my kids was staying there. He was a distant cousin of [her] father. And come to find out, somebody tipped him off, the guy, about what happened. When they went looking for him, he left. But, they arrested him, ‘cause he had also did some things to his sister’s kids. My daughter, she still deals with this, you know.

As Dee struggled with her daughter’s deviant/delinquent behavior, it was difficult for her to understand the roots of her daughter’s behavior. It was her continuous presence and involvement that eventually helped Dee understand her daughter’s behavior. And although falling victim to the streets’ dangers is a common experience for children without conventional caretakers during their parents’ absence, children’s response to the abandonment can also be harmful. Mike#2 recalls his daughter’s response to his and her mother’s absence—

When I moved here [to the *Metro Area*], [my daughter] came to live with me for a little while. After a while, we’d be talking about issues. “What is the problem?” “Dad, I never wanted kids.” “Well, why did you get pregnant?” “You ‘member before you got arrested, they used to ask me to come outside all the time? And you would always tell ‘em no.” “Yeah.” “Well, you know that boy that liked me. When you got gone [to prison], I got with him [the boy was a drug dealer].” “Why did you do that?” “I was lonely. I was just lonely dad. I just didn’t have nobody. He was like ‘Baby, I’m a take care of you. And yada-yada-yada.’ Then I got pregnant and realized I made a mistake. He wasn’t what I wanted out of life. I didn’t want a drug dealer for a husband.” “Why you didn’t tell me this before?” “I didn’t want you to look at me as being weak.” “What makes you think that I would? Ya’ll need to stop trying to get in my head. You don’t know how I think. At the time you were 16. I was an adult. You don’t know what’s going on in my mind. [Your sister] thought that when she got pregnant, I was gonna snap on her. Where’d you get that from? I never even hit you! You never got a whooping. What do you mean I’m a snap on you ‘cause you get pregnant? No.”

From Mike#2’s perspective, his daughter’s need for affection, with both parents absent, led her to search for affection in the wrong place. For the past four years, he has been able to help her raised her son. After becoming aware of children’s experiences with child neglect/abuse, parents begin to understand their children’s deviant/delinquent behavior. And as parents untangle the relationship between child neglect/abuse and

deviant/delinquent behavior, parents begin to see the consequences of their past *inadequate* parent role performance.

Resentful, a portion of the children become antagonistic towards the parent. Although parenthood has been associated with wellbeing (especially for mothers, see Teachman 2010), children maltreating their parents is a stressor and reduces parents' wellbeing (Umberson, Pudrovska, and Reczek 2010). Aware of participants' likes and dislikes, children express their resentment in ways to make participants feel their pain.

During her previous reintegration attempt, Carol felt her older daughter's pain—

She found out last year about me smoking crack. I never told her that. People in the street told her because everybody knows me. And now she is a street person. So, now she's around people and when she says who her mom is, now she hears stories. She called me one day on my answering machine and called me all kinds of crack heads, ahhhh! [She places her hand over her chest with emotional heart pain]. It was horrible. It was horrible. She don't wanna listen to me. I pray every night that she don't progress in her addiction. That she don't run into no man that tries to pimp her out. 'Cause once you're in the streets, that's what you have to do to survive. It's about survival out there. And she's not street smart. She's still a little girl [currently 16 years old]. While she was out there, she was sleeping with all these men. They talked bad about her. I had to tell 'em, "Look, hold on. That's my baby." She won't let me help her. I can't reach her. I told her, "I know exactly how you feel. There's nobody else out there who know how you feel. I know how you feel. I grew up feeling that way." Last week she called me and said that all I was good for was going back and forth to prison, using, and getting money from niggas, and maybe she oughta start selling dope. And maybe I could be one of her team, and all this and all that. And I just told her, "You could say what you wanna say, but I still love you. And I'll be there for you." You know.

Carol was abandoned by her mother and took the streets as a refuge to express her pain and resentment. While on the street stage and the correctional stage, Carol abandoned her daughters. Today, her oldest teenage daughter uses her own deviant/delinquent role performance to express resentment towards Carol. Once parent and child are simultaneously on the street stage, children find new ways to express their resentment. Charlie, now a 43 year old white/Caucasian father and ex-drug dealer, is very aware that his son's decision to join the opposing crew was an expression of his resentment—



My son went to prison and did a lot of time here in [*Midwest State*] for fire-bombing low-rider cars. Yeah, he and some of the guys [from the crew] fire bombed cars up there, here in [the *Metro Area*]. Within any mob, there's leadership. And a lot of the young people coming up in the streets, they always want that authority. They might not admit it, but when you join a mob, someone's gonna be running the show at all times. Not everybody's in charge. And everyone always got a responsibility. And I think that's what kind of lured [my son] into it. Because he thought [this crew] was the greatest thing. I knew my son's [associate], the regional founders of [this crew], and all the crew. I run with a whole another crew and [my son] knows my crew. I don't know how he went that direction, but now he's saying he's got a swastika on his chest. His head is shaved bald. I don't want that for him, but shit. The people I run with is multi-racial and everything else, you know. And I don't practice racism of any type. But he does. And it was like a slap in the face. He's just a shit talker. But he's a fighter. I respect him. My daughter said that [my ex-wife] thinks [our son] did rebel. He said he couldn't stand me or the people that was a part of my life. My crew was beefing with them, way back when they were just starting. And he knew, so he went with them.

Knowing Charlie's values and associations, his son joins the competing crew and embraces values his father does not embrace. While Charlie accepts his son's approach to life, he perceives his son's actions as directly antagonistic against him. A portion of the children become antagonistic and use participants' likes and dislikes to express their resentfulness. Mary quietly recounts her daughter's resentment<sup>125</sup>—

Prior to incarceration, Mary spent years exposing her children to substance/drug use. In the streets, the children started using the illicit labor market to survive, aiding the distribution of illicit substances. One of her sons was incarcerated prior to her last sentence. And another son joined her during this last incarceration. Her daughter, who was raped in her presence by the boyfriend, is now in the streets of [the *Metro Area*] working the illicit sex industry as a young prostitute. As she discussed these events, her voice became lower and lower, to the point where that the recorder was unable to pickup her voice and I had to move forward to listen. Her hands cover her face as she attempts to control the flood of tears. Under her breath, she blames herself. Mary just met a new boyfriend while in the facility [WRC] and her daughter just accused him of making inappropriate sexual advances towards her. In response, Mary doubts her daughter and is confused about what to do next. She describes her daughter as resentful, vengeful, and an attention seeker. She is confused, but is leaning towards siding with her boyfriend who denies the allegation because she thinks her daughter is doing it to get under her skin (Campos-Holland, *Field Notes*, 2010).

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<sup>125</sup> The recorder gave up during Mary's interview. Thus, I took detail notes right after the interview.

Throughout her life, Mary has exposed her daughter to her delinquent/criminal role performance and has neglected and allowed her to be abused in her presence. In response, her daughter performs her delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and accuses her mother's new boyfriend of attempting to become sexually involved with her. True or not, Mary perceived it as an expression of resentment and antagonistic behavior. A portion of resentful children become antagonistic and use participants' likes and dislikes to express their resentment.

Similar to Bourgois' documentation of Candy's response to her 12-year-old daughter's gang rape (2003), older participants in this sample have attempted to aid their children to recuperate from their victimization and deviant/delinquent behavior. In doing so, these participants search for external resources, encourage children to use the resources, and attempt to lead by example. Mike#2 recalls his last attempt to help his daughter—

[My daughter] got introduced to marijuana, drinking [sight], gangbangers at school and just got mixed in the wrong crowd. She left home at 15, dropped out of school when I was in prison last time. She called her mom, was in a hotel room. She was crying and saying she's gonna kill herself. Her mom went and picked her up. I just thought, "I gotta get out of here and save my baby." I called my sponsor, told him, "I need to get his help." I got out and got her therapy. We had family therapy.

*Did it work?*

It's not magic. It's taking a while, but she's better.

Mike#2 responded to his daughter's deviant/delinquent role performance with concern and searched for resources to help her recuperate. Other parents have a difficult time convincing their children to get help, but press forward. Dee tried to help her daughter after discovering she has been molested during her absence—

[My daughter] is still in denial. She, when she got out of the treatment center, she was pregnant. And they sent her to an independent living program. She didn't want to come back home. She wanted her own place. She wanted to be with her boyfriend. And she knew she couldn't do it in my house. So, she went through independent living. She had the baby. And she was supposed to go to therapy, but she wouldn't show up a lot of times. She told me she didn't trust white people. "And they all on your side, anyway. And they like you. And you know everybody. And I don't think they can help me." So, she would blow it off,

treatment. And I told her, “Now you paying for it, because that devil didn’t go away. You didn’t sleigh that dragon.” She’s suffering. I told her, “[Daughter], you’re clinically depressed.” Her judgment is off, she either an alcoholic or she is headed that way, very fast.

Concerned for her daughter’s wellbeing, Dee encourages her daughter to continue with therapy. Although it was a struggle to find the resource, the current hurdle is convincing her to continue with the therapy. Other parents push their children to recover from their victimization and deviant/delinquent role performance by leading by example. Erica pressed to stay out of the street stage and correctional stage for long periods of time and inspired her children—

[My youngest son] began to see that I wasn’t going back to the streets. That I was working. I wasn’t using. And I think that was attractive to him, because I had been in it so long. He wanted to know how I was doing it. He said, “Ma, you know, you did this and did that [delinquent/criminal role performance], and here you are. How you feel?” I’m like, “Man, I feel good. I’m working. I have accomplished some stuff.” Like I got my GED while I was locked up, went to college, got my degree in culinary arts. I said, “I dropped out in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. I thought I was gonna die a dope fiend. But I didn’t, by the grace of God.” At this time I was heavily off into the church and the Bible. But [my oldest son] was selling. And he got to be a lieutenant, moved up in the ranks to where as he was selling drugs for them and him. That’s how he hooked [my youngest son] up, his brother. He turned his package over to [my youngest son]. So, [my youngest son] was selling. He told me, “Ma, I did some stuff, real bad.” And I said, “I don’t care. You ain’t gotta go in particulars with me about it.” He said, “When you were gone, I didn’t have a choice. We would go down to the Salvation Army and eat dinner. I would ask for leftovers, just in case we wanted to eat again before we went to bed.” And he told me about how he got off into the crack [as a seller]. He would get [my daughter] up every morning for school, take her to school, then he go to school. And he just got so tired that he put it in his mind that they were his family [3 minor siblings at the time] and he had to do what he had to do. You know, to take care of them. So I told him, “You know what, I’m really proud of you for doing that.” I said, “I’m sorry that you had to do it that way, but that’s all there was there for you at the time. So, you took advantage of it. And you looked out for your family. And I’m really proud of you.” I told him, “Now, it’s time for you to take care of you.” He then expressed to me that he wanted to come down here and get a job. But he didn’t know how he was gonna get out of the gang. But by this time he had got in tight with some people that had rank. And he just told ‘em that he wanted out. And he said they just let him go. He showed up one night at my house and said that they had let him go. They didn’t beat him out or nothing. They just let him go. So he came down here [to the *Metro Area*], left [the major urban city in *State B*] and got himself two jobs

here. And he was liking it. He say, “This is the first time I made any real money that I worked for.” He was really happy about it.

Although Erica’s son intended to reintegrate into conventional society, his first attempt ended with a return to the street stage after being laid off. Since then, he has attempted reintegration into conventional life several times. Aware of children’s victimization and its consequences, participants press forward and attempt to help their children recuperate. And while attempting to reintegrate, “doing” parenthood in the afternoon is taxing on participants.

Facing children’s resentment, their perceptions of their past parent role performance, and past victimization and its consequence is a difficult struggle. In addition to helping children recover, participants are also working on their own reintegration process. Thus, a portion of these participants attempts to move forward, from pressing children to take accountability to being careful during the next reintegration attempt. Javier, now a 51 year old white/Irish father and recovering substance/drug user, recognizes how his *inadequate* parent role performance has damaged his children’s life. His now adult daughter and son are substance/drug users (daughter was in treatment and son was in prison during the interview). Attempting to move forward, he presses his son to be accountable for his behavior—

[My son] is in prison right now. I’m watching [my son] do, it’s my responsibility. I accept that. When he was 16 I said, “Okay [my son], you’re right. Everything that has happened to you, it’s my fault. And now that you know it, it no longer is. So, what are you gonna do about it? That’s the question.” You know. But he didn’t do anything about it. It’s still my fault. I’m not buying into that. I do accept responsibility because I made not good choices that they saw me make, that they may not have known were not good choices, like getting high. And they both get high. [My daughter] is in a place right now, a recovering place. But, they don’t want to hear it. It’s all my fault. But I tell them, take responsibility too.

Javier takes responsibility for his *inadequate* parent role performance, but also presses his children to begin to take responsibility for their choices. In pressing children to move forward, a portion of participants are unable to separate themselves from their children’s

behavior and internalize their children's pain to the point of relapse. Carol recalls her last attempt to move forward—

I can accept the way [my youngest daughter] treats me [from a distance], but I would not ever expect [my oldest daughter] to be the way she is towards me, disrespectful and vengeful. I didn't really get all that until this last time when I was out. When I came out, she was gone. She had run away from home, had been gone three weeks. And I was out in [the *Metro Area*], knocking, kicking and banging on people's doors looking for my baby. And when I finally put word out on the street that I was out and that I wanted to see her, she contacted me. I asked her what I could do to help her. And she said, "I just wanna to be with you." So God blessed me with a good job. I was financially able to provide a home for her, but that's when all the disrespecting came.

*At this point she's 15, right?*

Yeah, still running away from home, not wanting to go to school, and having the school call me. It was like she wanted to punish me. She wanted to torture me. I mean, it was bad. I worked 6 days a week. I went to [recovery] meetings six days a week. I provided clothing and food, shelter for her. Trying to be responsible for once in my life with my kid and it was bad. I didn't know how to deal with all that. It brought back all my animosity that I have toward my birth mother [abandoned her]. I couldn't handle it. We would always be fighting, fighting, and fighting. I kept telling her we need to move passed this, but she kept going back to the same thing. And one night I just couldn't take it and had to get high. I went back to prison that same week [parole violation].

In a fragile stage of her recovery-relapse process, Carol was unable to help her daughter move forward nor cope with her resentment, and returned to substance/drug use instead.

Although participants press their children to move forward, it is a difficult process and has consequences for the reintegrating participant. Aware of the realities of "doing"

parenthood in the aftermath, Perry is fearful of another relapse—

The biggest challenge has been just knowing that my actions has contributed to the poor behavior that they show. Like, my daughter kind of had an unstable life, she moves here and there. And she's with her mom and then with my parents, then she's with me. Even though I was drinking for a lot of the time that she was home, it was a lot more stable than she's ever had. So, I feel guilty that she doesn't have that stable home. But it didn't work out last time [during a previous reintegration attempt]. It was too much for me to handle. She has too many issue. But I also know that I gotta do things, take things slowly because if I don't, I can be in the same situation that I was in before with her, where there's too much to handle.

Because of his previous difficult reintegration attempt, Perry is being careful during this reintegration attempt. Participants attempt to move forward, but it is a difficult process

for them and their children. Thus, participants aware of the realities of “doing” parenthood in the aftermath are being careful during this reintegration attempt.

Overall, during previous reintegration attempts, older participants have had a fuller experience and have come face to face with children’s resentment. After the honeymoon, children begin to express their resentment and participants identify their previous *inadequate* parent role performance as the root of children’s resentment. With conventional caretakers, a portion of participants’ children (the majority) embraces conventional life (participants’ antithesis). At the opposite side, children become especially resentful with participants’ inability to protect them from child neglect/abuse and embrace the delinquent/criminal role. Resentful, these children become antagonistic towards the parent and make participants feel their pain. In response, a portion of participants attempt to aid their children in recuperating from their victimization and deviant/criminal role performance. But it is a difficult process and affects participants’ reintegration process. And just as a portion of the children acquired and performed a delinquent/criminal role, a portion of these children were legally forced for perform a client/inmate role.

#### “Doing Time with my Son”<sup>126</sup>

Living linked lives, a portion of older participants’ children have been legally forced to perform the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. According to the literature, incarcerated individuals who are single parents, use illegal drugs regularly, whose children’s other parent has also been incarcerated, and/or who have more than one child, are more likely to experience their children’s incarceration (Dallaire 2007). Participants in this sample who were unable to place their children in the hands of a “good” caretaker during their time on the street stage or correctional stage, and whose

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<sup>126</sup> Although able to review a portion of children’s criminal records (public), I found it methodologically unethical to include them in this text without their consent. Thus, the data concerning children’s client/inmate role is based on participants’ survey and narratives.

children expressed resentment through their deviant/delinquent role performance on the street stage, have experienced children's legally forced client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. Moreover, portion of these participants have experienced simultaneous incarceration on the correctional stage. Mike#2 abandoned his son in attempts to protect him from exposure to his delinquent/criminal role performance—

[My oldest son], he's the only one I haven't talked to. I haven't spoken with him in almost 6 years. Actually, he's incarcerated. I think he's incarcerated for theft. Yeah, he had a shoplifting problem. And my mom communicates with him a lot. He calls my mom from prison. We were doing time at the same time but in different prisons.

Similar to previous literature (Dallaire 2007), (i) 17/57 participants have experience with their children being under correctional supervision. With more time to communicate and share everyday life, (ii) incarceration can be a refuge for parents and children to renew their parent-child relationship. Although children's incarceration is part of the older participants' experience, young participants (iii) discourage the idealization of prison and (iv) encourage children to avoid the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage. For a portion of the older participants, children's incarceration is part of "doing" parenthood in the aftermath.

Seventeen participants (12/45 fathers and 5/12 mothers) report at least one of their children under correctional supervision, for a total of 23/154 children under correctional supervision at some point in their lives (see table A21 in Appendix A, page 450).<sup>127</sup> The children's most punitive outcomes include 1 son in federal prison, 8 sons and 1 daughter in state prison, 1 son in a teen detention center, 3 sons and 7 daughters under probation, and 1 son and 1 daughter arrested (see table A21 in Appendix A, page 450). Similar to the Dallaire (2007) findings, participants' gender is associated with their children's incarceration, 5/45 fathers (11%) experienced the incarceration of 6 sons and 3/12 mothers (25%) experienced the incarceration of 4 sons and 1 daughter. Although only a

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<sup>127</sup> It is important to keep in mind that participants might not have full access to information about their children's correctional experiences, creating an underreporting or inaccuracy problem. Also, the majority of the children are minors (97/154 children and adolescents).

minority of participants (29%) has experience with their children's correctional supervision, it is a strong theme amongst older participants.

Without the stress of delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage, with more time to communicate and share everyday life, incarceration can be a refuge for families to renew their parent-child relationship.<sup>128</sup> For Charlie, incarceration with his son changed the family dynamics and made it possible for son and father to interact more than when on the street stage—

As a matter fact, we were in the same prison together for a little while. And he's a good boy though, you know, in my opinion. It'd be hard for me to say he's bad, with the life I've led. He's just his own character. We were at [state prison] together.

*How was that? Being with him there?*

It was a little differently because there, our mobs kind of clicked [in the streets they are in conflicting gangs]. We socialized a whole lot more. He spent a lot of more time tracking me down and hanging out with me at prison [something that never happens in the streets]. It was prison environment, you know. It was easy to be father and son there. But in the streets, not so easy for us, you know.

*Why? Why is there that different?*

Like he's set in his way now and I'm set in my way. And we clash on a lot of things. He's a skin head. I'm not [both laugh]. Prison is just a whole a lot different things going on between me and him.

In the racially segregated prison context, the conflicting gangs merge into the white/Caucasian group, making it possible for son and father to carry out a parent-child relationship on the correctional stage. Although not all families are able to carry a close everyday relationship, incarceration gives individuals a need to reach out. Thus, incarcerated participants find ways to communicate with their incarcerated children and create/maintain a parent-child relationship. 'Till June, now a 45 year old African American mother and recovering substance/drug user, ensured her son received news from her everyday—

During the year I was in prison, my son was in juvenile detention himself. I got arrested for drug stuff, possession with intent to deliver. I was facing four charges on me and I plead guilty for two of the charges, went to prison, and thought they would dismiss the other two charges. So, I wasn't aware I had two 10 year

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<sup>128</sup> This is opposite to the parent being in prison and the child in *free society* (ch 8-9). In this case, parent and child are both incarcerated during the same period of time and experience a need to reconnect.



sentences that they run concurrently. My son was at a boys' institutions, juvenile institution. It was like in prison.

*How were you feeling those years?*

It was hard because I couldn't really talk to him like I really wanted to. And I couldn't see him at all, because they aren't gonna take me from one place and him a different one to see me. I couldn't talk to him, to hear his voice, only letters. And we did that. I received letters and I made sure he received letters from me at least two-three times a week. But it was still hard because I couldn't see him. So I felt like, I had let him down again. And he said that he felt like he had let me down. We both called my mom everyday and leave messages for each other with her too. I mean, it was hard, but we made sure we communicated.

*How does your relationship work?*

Pretty much, like an equal, but he knows that I'm mom. And he knows that if I'm really serious, "Mom ain't playing. I got to do this and do that."

*How is it being here together?*<sup>129</sup>

It's nice. We both just got out of prison. He has his own kids now and needs to care for them. So, I'm glad I was here with him to get him through it.

Not previously on the same facility, 'Till June and her son invested on nurturing the parent-child relationship through letters and other means of communication. At the time of the interview, mother and son were quasi-incarcerated on the same correctional stage (WRC) and helped each other perform the client/inmate role to soon return to the home stage. Facing everyday life together on a correctional stage allows participants to focus on their parent-child relationships. And sometimes it becomes a refuge from the stress and dangers of the street stage. Upon her release, one of Dee's sons was legally forced onto the correctional stage for life—

To hear a judge say to your son that he will be in prison for life, oh, it broke my heart, toured my heart out. And seeing him shackled, I fell on my knees.

*When you figured out that he was gonna go in for life, what did you think?*

Uhsss [sigh of emotional pain]. Of course it was guilt. 'Cause I was gone—, I told him, "If I wasn't in the streets, you would have never ever got into drugs." I told him that, "No way you'd of been out there if I had been home." So, of course guilt—. But he wrote me this beautiful letter, and he told me, uh, that he knew that I was feeling guilty, but I shouldn't.

*Did you visit?*

Yes, but I couldn't stand it. The worst things is knowing what it's like to do time. If I didn't know, it would be different. And men's prisons, it's worse. I can't ask him to not do some things. I know he has to do some things to survive, and I

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<sup>129</sup>During the interview, mother and son were at the WRC together. Son was released within a few days after my arrival, while the mother stayed behind for a few more months.

can't ask him not to do them. I can't visit him now [both on the correctional stage], but my daughters send him letters from me. He needs me. And I let him know he will always have his mother, no matter what. For people in this life, having kids in prison is not that strange. Like, in [a public housing development], there was this one girl. She was 15 and was constantly abused by the foster dad. And she would run away, and the police would go get her and bring her back to the same place. And finally she got pregnant by him. So of course, the foster mom puts her out. She's homeless, pregnant, and her mom was incarcerated with me. She [the mother] was like distraught, because she didn't know where to reach her at or how she was doing in the streets. Then, she caught a case because she hooked up with some guys on the street and they committed a robbery, a murder at a gas station. She got 30 years and ended up in there with her mom. Thirty years. Yeah. And they took her baby. So, you know, stuff like that happens all the time.

Although a painful experience and currently limited, Dee attempts to maintain her parent-child relationship through letters. During children's incarceration, older participants focus on creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship. And as the generational wheel turns, incarceration changes the family dynamics and parents and children find refuge with each other while both on the correctional stage.

And although children's incarceration is part of everyday life for a portion of the older participants in the sample, young parents press for a parent role performance free of children's incarceration. Thus, they discourage the idealization of prison life. Purple, now a 29 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, recalls visiting his father in prison and perceiving prison as the place to go. Thus, he discourages children from romanticizing imprisonment—

*What would you say to the children?*

“If you have a family member or a loved one that's incarcerated, it's okay to wanna see 'em and miss 'em. That's normal. But you must understand that prison is not a place to go. It's not a place you wanna land yourself into. It's just not okay to live this lifestyle. Stay in school. Write your loved one a letter and draw 'em a picture. If you do go visit, don't get comfortable with what's going on in prison, because there's nothing cool in prison. A lot of bad things happen in prison, things that you could never change.” For me, the biggest challenge was trying to explain to [my son] what it's like to do time, where I been at, and where I'm at now. It's a challenge because I don't want him to get to start thinking that this is what it's all about. Just 'cause I'm here, 'cause that's what I got caught up in. My dad didn't have to explain it to me. I caught on. You can't tell 'em too much. But, honestly, it's not like they don't know what's going on anyway. I

knew what was going on. I knew what prison was from watching TV and just got to putting two and two together. But, my dad in prison, that's where I want to go. Kids talk about prison.

*What do you say to your son then?*

“Daddy did go to prison. I made some bad choices. But, I love you and want to make sure you don't make those bad decisions and go to prison too. It's not a cool place. What makes you cool is going to school, believing in yourself.”

Living linked lives, Purple is attempting to press his son towards a conventional path.

Thus, he is currently struggling to figure out how to share information about his legally forced client/inmate role performance without making it desirable. Although children's incarceration is part of everyday life for the older participants, young participants are attempting to press their children towards conventional lifestyle. Jerry wants

incarceration not to be part of his children's lives—

When I think about my son, I think about the stuff that I've been through, and it's nothing I want him to be a part of. I don't want to lie to him, but I also don't want him to look up to me, “My dad did this. My dad sold drugs. My dad was in a gang, this and that.” I don't want him to be proud of that. So, I know the time will come for that talk. I could just let him know the things that me, my mom, my dad all went through. He'll actually see that, “Well, look, this is where your grandpa is at [prison]. This is where I've been [prison].” And hopefully he'll realize, be a little scared and not want to be part of that.

Jerry plans to share the negative aspect of his client/inmate role with his son in hopes to discourage him from idealizing incarceration. Knowing the realities of imprisonment, young participants attempt to discourage children from idealizing it and avoid the correctional stage. Larry maintains a close relationship with his son and hopes to protect him from ever facing imprisonment—

I think my first couple of stays [on the correctional stage], it made me to become smarter at what I did. And it didn't change me to do nothing positive. It just changed me to be smarter at the criminal act that I was committing. But this time, I really wanted to do something legit and advance, you know, progress. And I used to always say, “I sell dope before I starve.” Right now, I'm willing to starve. In there, you got three meals a day. They feed you in there, but that's all you got. You ain't got no freedom. You ain't got no say so, missing from people's lives, you know.

*What about your parenting, did it influence your parenting at all?*

It did because I never wanted my son to experience it ever. Because to me, prison is the bottom of the world. It's even worse than being homeless. Prison is the bottom because it's not just evil, but just madness. And I never want him to see

that. You know. You've got tough guys, men that supposed to be men's men, having relationships with other men. I never wanted my son to see nothing like that you know. Never. That's how it changed my parenting. And even though he's older now [young teen], I still want to go back to the basics with him. You know, go fishing. I want to go through some experiences with my son, and basically live.

Aware of the realities of incarceration, Larry hopes to prevent his son's incarceration.

Although children's incarceration is part of everyday life for a portion of the older participants, young participants hope to discourage their children from idealizing incarceration. Moreover, young participants hope to encourage their children to take a conventional path.

As part of discouraging imprisonment, young participants aim at guiding their children away from the street stage. Joseph, now a 28 year old African American father and ex-drug dealer, encourages his children to learn from his mistakes—

I tell my kids, "Never let yourself just settle. You gotta just really think about what you want out of life and just really want it. You definitely don't want to be a follower. Just learn from other people's mistakes, my mistakes." They need not mess with no drugs or nothing. They're good kids. They won't have nothing to do with this [points around the facility].

Desiring a different life for his children, Joseph encourages them to learn from his mistakes and embrace conventional life. Attempting to guide children away from the street stage and the correctional stage, and towards embracing conventional life, participants warn their children. Doug, now a 31 year old white/Caucasian father and recovering substance/drug user, warns his children—

It sneaks up on you. I didn't want to be like this [substance/drug user], but before I knew it, here I was. I tell my kids, "Keep your head straight. Keep your eyes open. Things can happen in an instant." I didn't plan on going to prison. I didn't plan on me and these guys fighting. All I did was turn the block and he was there, so. Two years down the drain of my life that I'll never get back, in a snap of your fingers. That's all it takes. It's not fun. Stay in school. Do your homework.

Hoping his children will not embrace the delinquent/criminal role, Doug warns them about the consequences and guides them towards a conventional path. In attempts to keep their children off the street stage and correctional stage, young participants attempt to guide their children towards a conventional path. Jake is the third generation on the

street stage and correctional stage. He attempts to guide his children away from embracing the delinquent/criminal role—

*Would you want your kids to have the life you had?*

Hell no! You don't want that! No! I wouldn't want 'em to follow my path. I would want 'em to go to school, get a good trade. Then can be a good parent one day, a good parent. I tell my children, "No one got an excuse for the things that they do. They know right from wrong. They know what the consequences would be. And people do make choices, because out of love, they think that it was the right thing to do. And they don't know no better, sometimes. And it just depends." I tell them not to hate me or their mom. I tell 'em, "People were mentally abused, physically or emotionally abused. And they make choices on impulse sometimes, but they know it's their fault. They think about other people too. Who they're gonna hurt? Who they're gonna affect?" They will have a choice. And I want to make sure they don't chose this life.

As the third generation on the street stage, Jake attempts to guide his children to reject the delinquent/criminal role and embrace conventional life. Young participants express a desire to keep their children away from the street stage and the correctional stage. With that in mind, a portion of young participants actively guide their children towards conventional life.

Living linked lives, the possibilities of children becoming legally forced to perform the client/inmate role on the correctional stage is a concern for young and older participants. For the older portion of the sample whose children express resentment with a delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage, 17/57 participants have experienced children's correctional supervision. With more time to communicate and share everyday life, incarceration can be a refuge for parents and children to renew their parent-child relationship. Although children's incarceration is part of the older participants' experience, young participants discourage the idealization of prison and encourage children to avoid the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage.

Overall, while on the street stage and the correctional stage, participants have a limited understanding of their children's everyday life. It is not until the honeymoon of the participants' return fades that parents powerlessly witness the cross-generational consequences. Older participants in the sample face their children's resentment.

Resentful because of participants' past inability to perform the parent role, children with conventional caretakers become their parents' antithesis and victimized children embrace the delinquent/criminal role. After experiencing their children's pain, this portion of participants become invested in guiding their children through recovery. Also, a portion of the older participants experience children's incarceration. In the process, participants and their children renew their parent-child relationship. Aware, young participants discourage the idealization of prison and encourage children to avoid the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage. Living linked lives, participants struggle with children's resentment and its consequences. Furthermore, participants are caught in a continuous process.

#### A Continuous Process

Participants' narratives showcase a role conflict that shapes participants' life course within a cross-generational process. When reflecting over their life course and that of their children, (i) participants struggle with the similarities between their parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and their up-to-date inability to successfully perform their ideal parent role. And (ii) older participants (predominantly grandmothers) encourage their children to avoid *inadequate* parent role performance. Lastly, (iii) participants are caught in a cross-generational and continuous process. Participants are caught in a role conflict that shapes the life course of various generations.

Participants constructed an ideal parent role and expected themselves to be present and involved in their children's lives, to protect their children from neglect/abuse, to financially provide for their children, to guide their children in a moral-centered world, and to develop and maintain a parent-child relationship. When reflecting over their life course and that of their children, participants struggle with the similarities they find between their parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and their up-to-date inability to successfully perform their ideal parent role. Miguel was raised in a household with a

substance/drug using mother and promised to himself that his children would not experience his childhood—

Sometimes I wonder why I want to put my daughter through the things that I did knowing that I hated alcohol because of the way my mom was [substance/drug user]. She was a manic depressive. She would be real happy when she was drinking, and other moments she would be really depressed, a lot of drinking and using. She wasn't a hateful person, but she would get down and up. It was a rollercoaster ride as a kid. I didn't want [my daughter] to grow up like that. I hated that. I hated it with a passion. I hated the way she acted. And now, my daughter has seen me do the same thing. Not the mental problems, but I sure had the drug problem. And she knows it! Why did I do that?! Why?!

Reflecting over his life course, Miguel has a difficult time understanding the incongruity between his desire to perform the ideal parent role and his up-to-date *inadequate* parent role performance. Partially based on their childhood experience, participants constructed their ideal parent role. And in comparing their childhood with that of their children, participants are disappointed to find similarities. Carol was abandoned when her mother chose to focus on her delinquent/criminal role performance on the street stage. Unable to recuperate from the abandonment, she promised to herself that her daughters would never feel the emptiness—

I thought that it would be different, that I would never leave them, and that I would always be there for them. I thought they wouldn't feel the feelings that I felt growing up, that abandonment. I feel angry at myself. I feel sad for them. I feel a lot of guilt, a lot of disappointment. It just kills me because I wasn't there to protect her. And like, I feel like I left [my oldest daughter] in a situation that fucked her up for the rest of her life.

In reflecting over her life course and that of her daughter, Carol is disappointed to have not yet successfully performed her ideal parent role. Participants struggle with the similarities they find between their parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and their up-to-date inability to successfully perform their ideal parent role. In this reflection, participants acknowledge the cross-generational process. Although Red has been able to provide, he is not satisfied with his parent role performance—

My kids have not been abused. My kids are fine. When I'm not home, they're with their mothers. But I promised they never do without, and I've given them everything they need, materially, you know what I'm saying. But I didn't think, I didn't think about what it do to 'em to be with no father. I've spent too much

time in prison, and kids need they father. That I didn't think about. That's not what I wanted. I'm going straight now, make sure never leave my kids without a father. 'Cause no money is worth missing your children's lives. You could send presents, but not being there when they wake up, it's not good.

Although Red perceived his parent role performance only partially *inadequate*, he was attempting to redirect his limited resources to eliminate the incongruity between his ideal parent role and his parent role performance. When reflecting over their life course and that of their children, participants struggle with the similarities they find between their parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and their up-to-date inability to successfully perform their ideal parent role. Furthermore, this generational process is reflected on older participants' grand-parenting experiences.

Living linked lives, the majority of older participants are grandparents. Previous scholarship suggests that life course transitions of family members influence the parent-child bond (Aquilino 2006; Bucx and Wei 2008). Now as grandparents, attempting to perform their parent role and concerned for their grandchildren, a portion of these older participants (predominantly grandmothers) encourage their children to perform their parent role. Peter perceives his son as a younger version of himself. His son actively performs a delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, has been legally forced to perform the client/inmate role on the correctional stage numerous times, and has been neglecting his parent role performance on the home stage. Unable to return to the past, Peter urges his son not to make the same mistakes in regards to his parent role—

[My son] got a daughter. And she's beautiful. And he's just like me though. He's not being a father. He's dedicated to the streets. Since I've been out, I've spent more time with his daughter than he has probably. He won't even go visit her.

*You visit her?*

[My daughter] will go get her and bring her over to the house so I can see her. I'm just now getting to know her. And she still looks at me like I'm crazy, but she calls me grandpa. When I first met her, she was like, "Who are you? Grandpa is dead." My son told his daughter I was dead. She is still a little wary of me. And I don't blame her at all. When she see me, she always asks about her dad. And I'm like, "I don't know what to tell you. He'll be over when he wants to." I think that's real sad, but at the same token, that's the way he was raised. So, I blame myself there, when it comes to being a bad father figure. I do feel



sorry for my granddaughter. It's just the bad decisions I made in life are staring at me. I tell him to go see her, but you know he won't listen to anything I say. I tell him, "That little girl needs a father. Don't be like me. Be her father." But he won't listen.

Peter acknowledges his *inadequate* parent role performance and the impact on his son's *inadequate* parent role performance. Although he encourages his son to properly perform the parent role, Peter is having a difficult time accessing his son. Aside from acknowledging their *inadequate* parent role performance, some participants performed a more involved grandparent role, releasing their children from their parent role. Dee was faced with her daughter's pregnancy while incarcerated. In addition to the pregnancy announcement, her 16 year old daughter shared her interest in an abortion. Raised in her grandmother's Christian home and experiencing a renewed Christianity while in prison, Dee demanded that her daughter keep the baby, a decision that would marinate her daughter's resentment. Upon her release, Dee released her daughter from the parent role and became her grandson's primary caretaker—

My daughter, who was a straight A student, she had to drop out of school when she was 16. She blamed me because she had wanted to be a lawyer, but she had to drop out of school to take care of her son. Well, she got pregnant first of all, and she blamed me for that. I asked her not to have an abortion, because I was a Christian and I didn't believe in abortion. And I told her I would take the baby when I got out. So, I said, "You can continue with your education then." She went to be with her grandmother [Dee's abusive mother]. And her grandmother put her out, because she didn't have an abortion. So, she went to stay with my grandmother [Dee's caretaker], took her in. In the meantime, she was just very resentful. I mean, she was just like moving around. I introduced her to a lady that I was incarcerated with that I thought I could trust, but come to find out, this lady was very abusive towards my daughter. When I got home, I took care of her son. I set him up in private school. I moved to [the *Metro Area*]. My daughter came to live with me because she didn't have nowhere to go, not for him. She didn't want to be a mother, wasn't ready. She said, "If you make me do it when I don't wanna do it, it's not gonna be good for him." I agreed and I took care of him like I promised. He was sent to the best schools I could afford. But she was mad, always irritated, and just lashed out at me every chance she got. She went into the army. I told her to go into the army so she could get money for school. She end up working for [an airline company]. She got tickets to anywhere, been everywhere. On her off day, she be on a plane. Bang, she's gone! Then she came to me when [my grandson] was 15, "Ma, I think I'm ready to settle down with [my son]. I'm a go ahead and do this." So, I got her a job and a car. She's

like, “Why you do that for?” Oh my goodness! She took off and was gone for 2 months. I don’t get a call, nothing.

*Where was she?*

She was traveling. She punked out. It was like, “Have you seen [my oldest daughter]? Why she ain’t calling her son? Why she ain’t calling me?” By this time I’m pissed off. I’m like, “You wait ‘till I get my hands on her.” Then she end up next door to her brother in [a major urban city in *State B*, 3 hours away from the *Metro Area*]. I went down there and we get into it. I mean, we get into it! Violence! We yelling!

*Where was [your grandson]?*

[My grandson], her son was with me [15 years old at the time]. He saw. I said, “I tell you what, I want you to come get your stuff out of my house and take your son. No more running. You’re gonna do this.” So, she follows me back. She left with [my grandson]. And wrote this long letter, that she was motherless, she would never speak to me again, and she hated me. But she got over that in about two years. It was tough mother love. I left her to do her thing for 15 years. She needed to be a mother to [my grandson].

*How was she with him?*

She smoked marijuana with him, everyday! She supplies him with marijuana, cigarettes, buys him clothes. But she don’t want him up close. She’s a mother-friend. So, he now has a substance abuse problem with marijuana. And he doesn’t realize it, because she says there’s nothing wrong with marijuana. I told him, “This is why you can’t concentrate, the bad migraines, you know, not motivated. You doing stuff as an addict that I never did. I hustled the streets but never lied to get money out of my grand-mama like you.” You can’t believe nothing this boy say, nothing. So, I got him and sent him to [a private school] when he was 17. It’s a military school. He was one class short of getting his GED, but she went and got him out, took him home with her. He plays the *my mom abandoned me* card till this very day [currently 23 years old] and she falls for it. He uses that as an excuse not to get a job, not to finish school, and to get high. I said, “Boy you need to get over it. You’re grown now. You’re 23. Every day you put off doing this, you’re getting older. You’re not getting no younger. It’s over. What’s done is done.” He comes, “Grand-mama, I’m a put you in a big ‘ol house.” I mean, delusions of grandeur from the streets. My daughter is ready to put him out. She says she’s putting him on a bus Friday after I get home. I said, “He don’t have no home.” She said, “Well, he getting out of here.”

In attempts to perform her parent role after her release, she released her daughter from her parent role and became her grandsons’ primary caretaker. In performing her parent role fifteen years later, Dee forced her daughter to perform the parent role. During the interview, Dee continues in her attempts to guide her daughter towards performing a parent role. Older participants see the cross-generational effects and encourage their children to perform their parent role. Mary encourages her daughter to be a mother—

[My second daughter] got her high school diploma and got her CNA license. But now, she [doesn't] got the skills to take care of her children [two teen girls]. I've been raising them. Her kids are going through the same thing that I went through when I was a kid, no affection. And they're like, "Why every time I try to hug her she won't hug me back? She just pushes me away." She shows no affection to her children. And she knows that's what gets me. That's how my mom was and I never did that to them. They always knew I love them, always. And she's still angry, mad. I don't know if that's gonna change one day. But she can't do that, withhold love from her children. It's not right for any child. When she's not working, she's asleep all day. If not, she's going into the clubs to drink. She don't feed 'em, don't do their hair. She doesn't care for 'em unless somebody is coming around, like her brother or sister comes to town. Go to their house right now, dishes everywhere. "You see that you're doing to them what my mom did to me when I was little." I tried to talk to [my granddaughter], tell her that her mom have problems. She's like, "I hate her. She don't like me. She don't want me. She don't do nothing for me." I said, "Well, she's still your mother. You respect her. She needs something, you help her." And she had said that she's gonna run away when I came here. And I told her, "Please don't do that. Just hold on. It's gonna be alright."

Aware of her daughter's victimization and concerned for her grandchildren, Mary encourages her grandchildren to not hate their mother and to avoid the street stage. In addition to helping children recuperate from their victimization and deviant/delinquent behavior, a portion of the older participants (predominantly grandmothers) press their children to perform their parent role. At the time of the interview, Carol was feeling the pressure of a teen daughter on the street stage and a grandson under child protective services—

When I was in prison this last time, I was going crazy. I got full gray hair just worrying about her, because when I left she was pregnant. And she was alone. I don't know. She had a baby, but DHS took her son. Once again, this is just how my family works. She left the baby for two days and they [family] called DHS on her. So now the baby's in the system [she begins to cry]. She's trying to get him back, but she's still that little girl. He's with my aunt right now, the same aunt that took her. But if my daughter doesn't get him back, he's going to my dad's. At this point, if [my daughter] doesn't get [my grandson] back, my dad and my stepmom are taking him, versus letting him go to the state. They're in their 60s and 50s. My dad is getting ready to retire and my stepmom works. And if the baby stays with my dad, she's fucked because she disrespects my dad and treats [her sister] like shit. My dad is not gonna put up with it. She's fucked. And I already know. She's gonna go crazy. She wants the baby back, but she's not emotionally focused. I mean, she says she wants [her son] back and she tries to do the things that she needs to do to get him. Like, she went and got her GED,

got her CNA license, a job at a nursing home, but she got fired. Now she's trying to get another nursing home job. She went today for a second interview and they told her that they had to do a background check on her. Well, she has a resisting [arrest] on the record. She's gonna be fucked. And she's still angry and thinks everybody is against her. I couldn't even get him, because of my criminal history. I can't get him. And she's mad at [my father] right now, because he knows that I need a place to stay to get [my grandson back], but he won't get me a place. If he gets a place for her, he's like, "She gonna lose the job and she can't pay the rent. Then what?" She's my disciple. So, he's already given up on her. And she feels that. So, not only she got fucked up abandonment feelings from me and her dad, her grandpa too. But her grandpa is over here taking care of her sister. That's what's eating her up alive. And I know it! And I tell her, "But don't ever think that I gave up on you or that I don't want you." At this point, all I can do is try to be there for [my grandson] and pray that I can break the cycle for him, for me and his mom. Because I don't feel as though me and [my daughter] will ever have that. I think I hurt her. Hopefully I stay clean and sober this time. Maybe she'll see me living a different life and maybe that will inspire her.

Because they are not adequate candidates to become her grandson's caretaker (a delinquent/criminal role performance on the record and an *inadequate* parent role), Carol and her daughter were disqualified and custody was ultimately granted to Carol's father. After his wife's abandonment, Carol's father raised Carol, then his granddaughters, and now his great-grandson. Living linked lives, the older participants are grandparents and a portion of these older participants (predominantly grandmothers) encourage their children to perform their parent role.

Participants' parent role performance varies in sync with their returns to the street stage and correctional stage. As previously documented in the literature, reintegration into conventional society and shedding the delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role is a difficult process (Adler 1992). In addition to being caught in a cross-generational process, participants' lives shift on and off the home stage, the street stage, and the correctional stage. Although it is difficult to determine how many of the 57 participants will successfully reintegrate into conventional society or/and their home stage during this attempt, their life histories suggest that it will be a difficult process. As of August 2011, a year after the interview, 35 participants (61% of the participants) have accrued a total of 172 technical violations (probation and parole violations) and 102 new

criminal charges. The technical violations include being fugitive from justice, failure to register in the sex offender registry, violation of a no contact or protective order, possession of contraband in a correctional facility, and debt to the criminal justice system (refusal or failure to pay a fine or other court cost). And new offenses also varied, including the possession of illicit substances and distribution charges. Although unable to determine their current location, these 35 participants have acquired new criminal charges. Participants' parent role performance varies in sync with their returns to the street stage and correctional stage.

Overall, participants are caught in a cross-generational and continuous process throughout their life course. Participants' narratives showcase a role conflict that shapes participants' life course within a cross-generational process. When reflecting over their life course and that of their children, participants struggle with the similarities between their parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and their up-to-date inability to successfully perform their ideal parent role. And older participants (predominantly grandmothers) encourage their children to avoid *inadequate* parent role performance. Participants are caught in role conflict that shapes the life courses of various generations their parents, theirs, their children, and their grandchildren. Also, participants' parent role performance varies in sync with their returns to the street stage and correctional stage. Throughout their and their children's life course, participants have been in and out of the home stage, street stage, and correctional stage. And as of August 2011, a year after the interview, 35 participants (61% of the sample) have accrued additional technical violations and have been convicted for new offence. Participants' ability to perform their parent role is a product of a cross-generational process and continuous role conflict.

### Conclusion

“Doing” parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision is a continuous cross-generational process. At an early age, participants acquire three

conflicting roles— the parent role on the home stage, the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and the client/inmate role on the correctional stage. During past reintegration attempts, the majority of participants have managed to gain partial and full access to their children. And their returns to the home have varied in length, from a few days to several years. During these times on the home stage, participants have witnessed the generational consequences of their past *inadequate* parent role performance in their children's lives.

After the struggle with children's caretakers and once granted access to their children's lives, participants attempt to perform their ideal parent role. Younger and older participants prioritized rebuilding presence and becoming involved in children's everyday lives. Although in their children's lives, only older participants have had the opportunity to attempt to re-establishing the traditional parent-child relationship, but only manage to become friends with their children. Furthermore, younger and older participants struggle with the temptation of buying their children's acceptance with presents.

In addition to being present, being involved and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship, their ideal parent role expects participants to guide their children through a moral-centered world. Similar to re-establishing the parent-child relationship, only the older portion of the sample has had the opportunity to attempt to guide their children after their return from the correctional stage. Without authority, portion of participants attempt to use their past experience on the street stage and correctional stage to help children understand the possible consequences. In response, children use participants' past delinquent/criminal role performance to discredit their parents' advice. Without authority and discredited, these participants employ creative discipline techniques. In children's lives, participants struggle to guide them in a moral-centered society.

Although young participants are warned about children's resentment, it is older participants who have previously returned to the home stage for long periods of time and faced children's resentment. On the home stage, children begin to express their resentment and participants identify their previous inability to perform the parent role as the root of children's resentment. Resentful and with conventional caretakers, a portion of participants' children (the majority) embraces conventional life (antithesis of parents' delinquent/criminal role performance). At the opposite side, a different portion of the children (the minority) become especially resentful with participants' inability to protect them from child neglect/abuse and embrace the deviant/delinquent role to express their resentment. Furthermore, the latter becomes antagonistic towards participants and uses participants' likes and dislike to make participants feel their pain. In response, these participants attempt to aid their children's recuperation from their victimization and deviant/criminal behavior, but it is a difficult process and does not go without consequences for participants.

Living linked lives, 23 children of 17 older participants face legally forced client/inmate role performance on the correctional stage. With more time to communicate and sharing everyday life, incarceration can be a refuge for parents and children to renew their parent-child relationship. Although children's incarceration is part of the older participants' experience, young participants discourage the idealization of prison and encourage children to avoid the delinquent/criminal role on the street stage. Furthermore, participants are caught in a continuous role conflict process across generations.

Participants' narratives showcase a role conflict that shapes participants' life course within a cross-generational process. When reflecting over their life course and that of their children, participants struggle with the similarities between their parents' *inadequate* parent role performance and their up-to-date inability to successfully perform their ideal parent role. And older participants (predominantly grandmothers) encourage

their children to avoid *inadequate* parent role performance. Participants are caught in role conflict that shapes the life courses of various generations.

Lastly, participants' parent role performance varies in sync with their returns to the street stage and correctional stage. Participants are continuously re-incarcerated because of a combination of new offences and technical violations. And as of August 2011, a year after the interview, 35 participants (61% of the sample) have accrued new technical violations and have been convicted for new offence. In addition to being caught in a cross-generational process, participants' lives shift on and off the home stage, the street stage, and the correctional stage in a continuous process.

Since participants' role acquisition process during childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood, they have been struggling with the role conflict between their ideal parent role, delinquent/criminal role, and client/inmate role. With limited resources, blurred boundaries, and conflicting expectations, participants' parent role trajectories have been continuously under threat. More importantly, participants' role conflict has shaped their life course, their children's life course, and their grandchildren's life course. More specifically, participants' role conflict sets in motion the life course of the next generations. Dee was conceived in an incestuous relationship (daughter of her teen mother and grandfather) and neglected/abused by a teenage mother, driving her to the streets during preadolescence. Living on the street stage, she soon acquired a delinquent/criminal role, a client/inmate role, and a parent role. As a single young mother, unable to control her addiction, she was soon imprisoned and her children were left to care for themselves. In her absence, her two pre-adolescent sons are forced to join the illicit labor market as runners, her oldest daughter becomes a teen mother, and her youngest daughter was molested. Today, her grandchildren are experiencing issues of abandonment, parental imprisonment, emotional detachment, and face the temptations of the *fast life*. Based on Dee's narrative, the cycle of victimization and pressures to join the *fast life* begins with her mother and travels across four generations—Dee's mother, Dee,



Dee's children, and now Dee's grandchildren. Generations are hunted by neglect/abuse, are pushed towards the *fast life* and live under correctional supervision. Living linked lives, generations struggle to perform their parent role while also performing their delinquent/criminal role on the street stage and their client/inmate role on correctional stage.

## CHAPTER XII

### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Parenthood varies across time, places, social locations, historical periods, and cultural circumstances. Although participants continuously press towards their ideal parent role, role conflict between the parent role, the delinquent/criminal role, and the client/inmate role threatens their parent role performance throughout their life course and across generations. To conclude, this chapter will briefly summarize parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision, provide an overview of the theoretical findings, identify the study's contributions, and discuss the study's limitations and future research, and policy implications.

#### Parenthood in the *Fast Life* and under Corrections

This study moves criminology and the sociology of punishment towards a holistic and in-depth understanding of the complexities involved in “doing” parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision. First, with the exception of Wilkinson and colleagues (2009), criminology has been primarily concerned with understanding the criminal culture and parenthood in criminal culture has been an afterthought (see Short, Strodbeck, and Cartwright 1962; Anderson 1999; Bourgois 2003). Second, the study of parenthood and incarceration is limited to the Enos (2001) study on mothering from prison and the recent use of the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study data to explore the impact incarceration has on fathers' parent role performance (Swisher and Waller 2008; Woldoff and Washington 2008). This study moves these literatures forward and explores how parents perform the parent role while prioritizing the delinquent/criminal role and/or the client/inmate role throughout the life course and across generations. First, it illustrates how participants initially construct (role-make) their ideal parent role, and acquire (role-take) their delinquent/criminal role and their client/inmate role, during childhood and adolescence through a cross-generational

process (chapter 4). Second, it illustrates how the delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role shape participants' initiation into their parent role trajectories, including conception, pregnancy, and the birth processes (chapter 5). Third, it illustrates how participants' role conflict between the delinquent/criminal role and the ideal parent role shapes their parent role performance while in the streets, substance/drug users' partial parent role performance and drug dealers' two-sphere parenting (chapter 6). Fourth, it illustrates how institutions of social control (conventional family members and the juvenile/criminal justice system) respond to participants' *inadequate* parent role performance and delinquent/criminal role performance, respectively removing children and parents from the home stage (see chapter 7). Fifth, it illustrates how participants negotiate with children's caretakers for access, and how a portion of the male participants deny their children access to visits in attempts to partially perform their parent role, from the correctional stage (chapter 8). Sixth, it illustrates how participants manage their limited resources (time, energy, and money) to partially perform their ideal parent role from the correctional stage (chapter 9). Seventh, it illustrates how participants negotiate with caretakers and their children for access to the home stage and an opportunity to perform their parent role upon their return. Lastly, it illustrates how participants perform their parent role after gaining access to their home stage post-incarceration. Living linked lives, the consequences of role conflict are cross-generational and continuous (including participants' parents, participants, participants' children, and participants' grandchildren). This study has brought parenthood to the center of inquiry in criminology and the sociology of punishment. Furthermore, this study moves criminology and the sociology of punishment towards a holistic and in-depth understanding of the complexities involved in "doing" parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision throughout the life course and across generations.

### Theoretical Findings

Living linked lives; participants acquire and begin to perform their parent role, delinquent/criminal role, and client/inmate role at a young age through a cross-generational process. Although conflicting roles (roles with conflicting expectations) can coexist in the self, limited resources (time, energy, and money) and weak (or impenetrable) boundaries between social situations bring role conflict to the center of role performance (Stryker 2002; Goffman 1959). In this case, the role conflict between participants' ideal parent role on the home stage, delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and client/inmate role on the correctional stage shapes participants' parent role performance throughout their life course.

Conflicting role expectations, limited resources, and weak (or impenetrable) boundaries between social situations threaten participants' parent role performance (see tables A26-A27 in Appendix A, pages 455-456; also see figure B3 in Appendix B, page 459). On the home stage, the *parent role* expects participants to be present and involved in their children's everyday life, protect children from child neglect/abuse, guide children in a moral-centered world, create and maintain a parent-child relationship, and financially provide (including formal child support) for children's everyday needs. On the street stage, the *delinquent/criminal role* expects participants to be present and involved in the *fast life* (drug dealing and/or substance/drug use), present a tough and violent image to prevent victimization and ease transactions, avoid spousal commitment, practice male promiscuity, and enjoy freedom. Specific to participants' status within the criminal culture, drug dealers are also expected to distribute illicit drugs/substances for profit and invest on a legal fund, and substance/drug users are expected to purchase and use illicit substance/drugs and lose all control. And on the correctional stage, the *client/inmate role* expects participants to be present and involved in correctional programs (probation, jail, prison, community based correctional facilities, and/or parole), lose all privacy, autonomy, power, and financial resources, and pay criminal justice debt (including

formal child support) and correctional debt. Although these three conflicting roles can co-exist in a self, limited resources (time, energy, and money) and weak (or impenetrable) boundaries across social situations threaten participants' parent role performance.

The role conflict between the *parent role* and the *delinquent/criminal role* thrives with conflicting expectations, limited resources, and weak boundaries between the home stage and the street stage, and threatens participants' parent role performance. First, the delinquent/criminal role expects males to avoid commitment, be promiscuous, and enjoy freedom, prompting the initiation of parent role trajectories in *fragile families*. Second, in attempts to avoid victimization on the street stage and fulfill the protection expectation of their ideal parent role on the home stage, participants *front* a tough and violent image on the street stage. But with weak boundaries between the street stage and the home stage, violence and delinquent/criminal role performance fluidly transition onto the home stage and threatens participants' ability to protect their children from child neglect/abuse. Third, the delinquent/criminal role and the parent role both demand presence and involvement, compete for participants' limited resources (time and energy), and participants come to prioritize their delinquent/criminal role performance and neglect their parent role. Fourth, although unstable, the for-profit delinquent/criminal role performance (drug dealing) temporarily aids participants' ability to fulfill the providing expectations of the ideal parent role. But the consumer delinquent/criminal role performance (substance/drug use) threatens the providing expectation. Fifth, substance/drug users' loss of control threatens their overall ability to perform the parent role. Lastly, the parent role expects participants to guide children in a moral-centered world, but their delinquent/criminal role performance and client/inmate role performance removes participants' credibility and authority. With conflicting expectations, limited resources, and weak boundaries, participants prioritize the delinquent/criminal role and only partially perform their parent role.

In a similar manner, the role conflict between the *parent role* and the *client/inmate role* thrives with conflicting expectations and limited resources (time, energy, and money). But unlike the weak boundaries between the home stage and the street stage, the impenetrable boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage threatens participants' parent role performance. Most importantly, participants are legally forced to prioritize the client/inmate role over the parent role. First, the parent role and the client/inmate role both expect presence and involvement, competing for participants' limited resources (time and energy). The impenetrable boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage and being legally forced to prioritize the client/inmate role, makes participants absent parents and experience difficulties staying involved, protecting children and creating/maintaining a parent-child relationship from the correctional stage. Second, these two roles both have financial expectations and compete for participants limited financial resources. The parent role expects participants to invest in providing (including formal child support) and the client/inmate role expects participants to pay criminal justice debt (court cost, fines, and formal child support) and correctional debt (living expenses and fees). With the exception of the formal child support, these two roles compete over participants' limited financial resources. But legally forced to prioritize the client/inmate role performance, participants have no option but neglect the providing expectation. Furthermore, the client/inmate role threatens participants' illicit and conventional income, depleting the already limited financial resources. The impenetrable boundaries between the home stage and the correctional stage, limited resources (time, energy and money), and being legally forced to perform the client/inmate role, force participants to only partially perform the parent role while under correctional supervision.

Continuously conflicting with the delinquent/criminal role and the client/inmate role, participants have a difficult time performing the parent role while in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision. On and off the home stage, correctional stage, and street

stage throughout their life course, participants' parent role performance is continuously interrupted. In addition to being prominent throughout participants' life course, this role conflict reaches beyond participants, and becomes a generational phenomenon. "Doing" parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision is a continuous generational matter.

### Contributions

The sociology of families and marriages defines parenthood as a social construct (role) that changes across time, places, social locations, historical periods, and cultural circumstances (Gatrell 2005; Furstenberg 2011; Morgan 2011; Glassman and Eisikovits 2006; Datta 2007; Berkowitz and Marsiglio 2007). In attempts to contribute to and connect criminology, sociology of punishment, and sociology of families and marriages, this study examined parenthood practices in the *fast life* and under mass correctional supervision. Specifically, this study explores how family life, criminal culture, and punishment interact to shape individuals' parent role trajectories. In the process, this study makes specific contributions to the literature and expands our understanding of (i) individuals' construction of *fragile families*, (ii) parent role expectations in the delinquent/criminal population, the importance of (iii) kin networks for males and females, the importance of (iv) romantic relationships for males, the struggle of (v) providing while under correctional supervision and (vi) parental reintegration, (vii) the consequences of child neglect /abuse, and (viii) methodological issues.

First, similar to the sociology of families and marriages, criminology, and sociology of punishment, participants ***constructed their fragile families*** in unstable relationships. The literature documents children being born to teen parents, to unmarried couples, to parents with children in multiple households, to ambiguous relationships (pregnancy occurs short after the initiation of a romantic relationship), and only a few pregnancies are planned (Ellwood and Jencks 2004; Cherlin 2011; England, McClintock,

and Shafer 2011; Edin, Nelson, and Reed 2011; Forste 2002; McLanahan 2011). In a similar fashion, participants in this sample conceived their children in *puppy love* relationships, in at times illicit adolescent-adult sexual relationships, in undefined/uncommitted relationships, and through casual-sex encounters. This study confirms previous findings and illustrates how these unstable-relationship contexts threaten participants' ability to transition from expectations into parent role performance.

Second, the sociology of families and marriages has documented *parent role expectations* for mothers and fathers (Gatrell 2005; Christiansen and Palkovitz 2001; Suderland 2000; Carlson and England 2011) and Wilkinson and colleagues (2009) in the criminology literature capture the father role expectations of young fathers in criminal culture. The fathers in the latter sample expect themselves to be financial providers, take care of the child's basic needs, be a protector and/or moral teacher, take the child on outings, spend the time with the child and family, ensure the child *knows who father is*, set goals for the future, help the next generation to do better than he did, and acknowledge the need for personal change for the child's well-being (Wilkinson, et al. 2009). Very similar, the fathers and mothers in this study expect themselves to protect their children from neglect and abuse, be present and involved in their children's lives, financially provide, guide children in a moral-centered world, and create/maintain a parent-child relationship. Furthermore, the Wilkinson and colleagues (2009) sample and participants in this study both struggle with transitioning from expectations to performance. Wilkinson and colleagues (2009) find that early procreation, dispersed family kin networks, no father role models in their family of orientation, not residing with the children, not being romantically involved with the mother, and having low human and social capital limited their ability to perform the father role. This study takes these findings further and illustrates how parents struggle with the demands of the criminal culture and correctional supervision while attempting to perform the parent role. These obstacles continuously change in strength throughout their life course. Throughout their



children's lives, participants have intermittently performed two-sphere parenthood and partial parenthood on the street stage, correctional stage, and home stage.

Third, to survive in poverty, the streets, and under correctional supervision, male and female participants (especially mothers) in this study use their *kin networks* for support in their attempts to perform the parent role (similar to Stack 1970; Hamer and Marchioro 2002). In this sample, kin networks include *street* and conventional (*decent*) family members, *decent* people being conventional, recovered, and rehabilitated family members.<sup>130</sup> Kin networks are especially useful when participants choose to prioritize their delinquent/criminal role or are legally forced to prioritize their client/inmate role. Just as in Stack (1970), the use of the kin network is much gendered. When participants (especially women) cannot rely on their children's other parent, they use the kin network members as caretakers in their absence and as a support system throughout their parenting attempts during the recovery and reintegration process. Women's kin networks involve their relatives, such as grandparents, parents, aunts, and siblings. As for men, because they rely much more on the mothers of their children for caretaking purposes (similar to Nesmith and Ruhland 2008), they use their kin networks to support the caretaking mother in *free society* and rely on the mother for support throughout their time in the street stage and correctional stage. This study confirms the importance of the kin networks and illustrates how kin networks make parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision possible.

Fourth, as Hairston (2003) in the sociology of punishment previously established, male prisoners' family structures are complex and involved various female households. Although not every male or female participant had children with multiple partners, it was a dominant theme for the majority. Unlike females, male participants used their female *romantic partners* as resources to survive in the streets and while incarcerated. And just

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<sup>130</sup> Similar to Anderson (1999), individuals in this sample can be *decent* and *street* during different social situations or time periods.

as Edin and colleagues (2004) and Swisher and Waller (2008) have established, the rupture of a romantic relationship denied male participants access to resources from *free society* and to their children during incarceration. Thus, male participants in this sample perceived children and their mothers as a *package deal* (similar to Furstenberg 1995 and Nurse 2004). And as male participants age and accumulate returns to jail/prison, they learn to appreciate their romantic ties to the mothers of their children and attempt to reconnect/maintain a romantic tie while incarcerated. As for female participants, although under correctional supervision and incarcerated, they have been the resource to their incarcerated male romantic partners throughout their romantic history. In discussing incarceration and reintegration, female participants discuss how the fathers of their children request support and access to their children. Much more interesting, because it is predominantly the mother's kin network that is caring for the children during the mother's incarceration, the female participants in this sample hold the key to access the children even when she is also incarcerated. Although previous studies had highlighted the importance of the romantic connection with the mother of the child for the father, this study illustrates how male participants (and the romantic partners of female participants) manage their romantic relationships to access their children while in *free society* and *convict society*.

Fifth, the sociology of punishment documents how parental incarceration exhausts the kin network's *limited financial resources*, including the loss of parental income (loss of child support payments), reduction of caretakers' work-hours to meet childcare needs, and the development of new costly family roles revolving around the offender's needs as s/he navigates the criminal justice system (Condry 2007; Braman 2002; Hairston 1998, 2002, 2003; Braman and Wood 2003; Travis and Waul 2003; Mumola 2000; Glaze and Maruschak 2008; Thompson 2007; Jeffries, Menghraj, and Hairston 2002; Bloom 1995). This study moves this literature forward and explores how participants manage the limited financial resources to meet their criminal justice debt (fines, court cost, child

support, and correctional cost) and prove for their children. According to the *Midwest State*<sup>131</sup> records, the 57 participants have accrued a total of \$907,846.20 in *criminal justice debt* (court cost, fines, sub-charges, restitution, and other cost), an average of \$15,927.13 per participant and a range of \$1,311.76 to \$83,884.42.<sup>132</sup> In addition to fines and court cost, participants accrue correctional cost, involving the cost of living while in jail, prison, and/or a quasi-incarceration facility. Although the client/inmate role performance involved the payment of backed court ordered child support, participants' conventional financial resources are too limited to fully fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role. When in good standing with their children's caretaker and the caretaker is aware of the client/inmate role's financial expectations, a significant portion of participants are not placed on child support. Trapped in role conflict, a significant portion of participants directly request financial aid from their non-caretaking kin network members to aid with children's needs. In their absence, caretakers use social services to supplement children's financial needs and other kin network members become involved in childcare to reduce the childcare cost. And when able to choose between their client/inmate role and their parent role, a portion of drug dealing participants (with financial resources) find ways to provide while quasi-incarcerated. This study moves this literature forward and illustrates how participants struggle to fulfill the providing expectation of their ideal parent role from the correctional stage.

Sixth, the sociology of punishment has briefly discussed incarcerated *parents'* *struggle to reintegrate*, especially struggle to access children and their parent role, their heightened guilt, desire to spend time with their family, and fantasies about the activities they will engage in with children upon their return (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001; Nurse 2004). In this process, incarcerated parents use their children as motivation to complete

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<sup>131</sup> As of August, 2011 (*Midwest State Courts Online*)

<sup>132</sup> It is important to note that this total does not include correctional cost, such as the monthly rent participants have to pay at the WRC or RCF.

correctional/rehabilitation programs and attempt to reintegrate into conventional society (Nurse 2004; Enos 2001). And although parents use children as motivation towards recovery, reunification with children is a source of stress and reintegrating parents struggle to parent (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001; Carlson, et al. 2006; Herman and Wasserman 2001; Travis and Waul 2003) and children do not motivate parents to stay in *free society* (Braman and Wood 2003; Robbins, Martin and Surratt 2009; Brown and Bloom 2009). This study confirms previous findings, moves the reintegration literature forward, and illustrates how parents negotiate with caretakers (the children's other parent, social services, and relative caretakers) and their children for access to the parent role. Kin networks and the children play an active role in the returning parents' ability to access and reintegrate into parent role through a continuous negotiation. It is important to remember that parents are not initiating a negotiation with caretakers and children post-release, but are returning to an on-going negotiation that constructs family life.

Seventh, the criminology literature has partially documented how delinquent/criminal parents ***expose their children to violence and neglect/abuse*** (Enos 2001; Mckeganey, Barnard and McIntosh 2002; Bourgois 2003; Mallett, Rosenthal, and Keys 2005; Haight, Carter-Black, and Sheridan 2009). According to Anderson (1999), children in *street families* come-up-hard, experience neglect/abuse, and are exposed to violence. This study moves this literature forward and explores how delinquent/criminal parents prioritize protecting children from neglect and abuse, how they expose their children to their delinquent/criminal role performance (especially substance/drug users) and violence (both substance/drug users and drug dealers), how they leave the home stage in attempts to protect the children from further exposure, how conventional family members (private social-control institution) and family court (public social-control institution) respond with removal, and how participants powerlessly witness the neglect/abuse of their children in the hands of others from jail/prison. Furthermore, previous sociology of punishment literature has established the relationships between

parental incarceration and children's *antisocial behavior* (Hairston 2001, 2002, 2008a, 2008b; Phillips and Gleeson 2007; Kampfner 1995; Hanlon, Carswell, and Rose 2007; Bouchet 2008; Davies, et al. 2008; Geller and Garfinkel 2008; Thompson 2007; Eddy and Reid 2003). When "doing" parenthood in the aftermath, older participants who have returned to children's lives for long periods of time faced children's resentment because of their past inability to protect them from child neglect/abuse, children's deviant/delinquent behavior, and children's antagonism against participants. In response, participants attempt to aid their children through recovery/rehabilitation, but it is a difficult process with predominantly setbacks for participants' own recovery and rehabilitation. The victimization and deviant/delinquent behavior of children while the parent prioritizes the delinquent/criminal role or the client/inmate role is a dominant theme amongst the older participants in this study.

Lastly, this study has made specific *methodological contributions*. First, methodologically speaking, this study has joined Goffman (2009) and encourages the sociology of punishment to expand its empirical inquiry from the mass imprisonment era to the mass correctional supervision era. There is a difference between imprisonment and probation, but populations under correctional supervision are continuously transitioning from one correctional program to the other. Second, the human experience is complex and it is empirically limiting to separately study parenthood in the criminal culture and parenthood under correctional supervision. In attempts to connect these fragmented literatures, this study took a holistic approach and attempted to understand how *fragile family life*, criminal culture, and being under correctional supervision are interconnected. Third, human lives are embedded within kin social relationships across the life course in a cross-generational process (Elder 1994). To contribute to the recent interest in the generation transmission of parenthood, criminal behavior, and being under correctional supervision, this study attempted to understand participants' parenthood experiences in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision within a cross-generational process.

Parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision is a complex social phenomenon.

### Limitations and Future Research

This project is the beginning of an extensive research agenda. And future research will attempt to address this study's limitations. First, the criminology literature takes pride in its criminal culture studies within natural settings (such as Bourgois 2003, Maher 1997, and Anderson 1999). Because the original focus was parenthood under correctional supervision, the data collection occurred in a correctional setting. And although correctional staff did not have audio access at the WRC, nor audio and visual access at the RCF, the correctional setting could have influenced participants' discussion of their criminal lifestyle (Noaks and Wincup 2004). To eliminate this limitation, future research on parenthood in the *fast life* will benefit if conducted in the natural setting. Second, parenthood is differentially evaluated by the performer (participants), the recipients (participants' children), and the audience (family members and others). Thus, this study is only a fragment of the full story and must be complemented with the child's perspective, caretaker's perspective, and the perspective of all others involved. To continue with this inquiry and fully capture parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision, I will follow-up with interviews with children and caretakers. Third, similar to previous literatures, this study relies on the parents' retrospective reporting on their own behavior (G2), as well as the behaviors of their parents (G1), children (G3) and grandchildren (G4). Methodologically, the most appropriate data to study the intergenerational transmission of parenthood, crime, and correctional experiences is longitudinal data surveying multiple generations (Thornberry, et al. 2003). To better capture the magnitude of the relationships across generations, this research project needs to move beyond participants (G2) and include additional sources of data. To improve this project, I will interview participants' children (G3) and grandchildren

(G4) in the near future. But because it is a methodological issue, I also encourage other scholars to collect longitudinal data surveying multiple generations about parenthood in the *fast life* and under correctional supervision. The research setting, the absent perspectives, and a onetime retrospective perspective of one generation limit this study, but future research will move the literature forward.

### Policy Implications

The mass correctional supervision of *fragile families* is a uniquely American experience. One of the wealthiest nations in the world is creating and maintaining a *criminal class* under continuous mass correctional supervision across generations. These findings prompt a few policy recommendations. First, victimization, criminal behavior, and *fragile family* life are interconnected across generations. The effect of childhood victimization within a family of orientation threatens the individual's family of procreation and the next generations. Thus, resources should be invested in victim's care/treatment within the family context. Second, in addition to state and federal funds, the mass correctional supervision era depends on clients/inmates' empty wallets. Already living in poverty, the correctional financial expectations (court cost, fines, correctional living expenses, treatment cost, and the loss of legal and illicit income) encourage the use of illicit means to pay criminal justice debt and threatens parents' ability to provide for their children. If a society does not want to exacerbate poverty in *fragile families*, keep individuals under correctional supervision throughout the life course because of criminal justice debt, or be dependent on unstable and at times illicit funds, correctional expansion needs to be within budget. Third, although alternative sentencing (such as probation) appears lenient, revocation due to technical violations (such as loss of employment or housing) continuously threatens already *fragile families*. Thus, it is important for individuals new to the criminal justice system to be informed about the realities of alternative sentencing prior to plea agreements. Fourth, because children cannot wait

until the parent prioritizes the parent role over the delinquent/criminal role or are legally released from the client/inmate role, stable/good caretakers and protection from child neglect/abuse are vital ingredients to ensure children's wellbeing. And although stable/good caretakers will make a difference in children's lives, healthy parental presence and involvement are important for children's wellbeing. Thus, it is important for society to support the caretaker and a *healthy parent-caretaker relationship*. Fifth, substance/drug use continuously threatens already *fragile families*. To fight this threat, society needs to invest on substance/drug treatment within a family context. The criminal culture and mass correctional supervision continuously threatens already fragile American families.



## APPENDIX A. TABLES

Table A1. U.S.A Leading in Mass Imprisonment

| Prisoner population rate per 100,000 of the national population |       |
|---|-------|
| United States of America  | 756   |
| Russia  | 629   |
| Rwanda  | 604   |
| St Kitts & Nevis  | 588   |
| Cuba  | c.531 |
| U.S. Virgin Islands   | 512   |
| British Virgin Islands  | 488   |
| Palau   | 478   |
| Belarus   | 468   |
| Belize  | 455   |
| Bahamas   | 422   |

Notes: The USA rate was calculated from Bureau of Justice Statistics March 06, 2004 data, including a national population of 296.07 million residents and a prison population of 2,186,230 (no. in penal institutions including pre-trial detainees). In the world, 9.8 million people are held under penal institutions, and the United States leads this trend, while 59% of the countries in the world rates below 150 per 100,000 residents; Source is Wallmsley, Roy (January 2009), "World Prison Population List," International Center for Prison Studies, King's College London.

Table A2. Rates of Sentenced Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons, 1980-2009

| 1980s |      | 1990s |      | 2000s |      |
|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Year  | Rate | Year  | Rate | Year  | Rate |
| 1980  | 139  | 1990  | 297  | 2000  | 478  |
| 1981  | 154  | 1991  | 313  | 2001  | 470  |
| 1982  | 171  | 1992  | 332  | 2002  | 476  |
| 1983  | 179  | 1993  | 359  | 2003  | 482  |
| 1984  | 188  | 1994  | 389  | 2004  | 486  |
| 1985  | 202  | 1995  | 411  | 2005  | 491  |
| 1986  | 217  | 1996  | 427  | 2006  | 501  |
| 1987  | 231  | 1997  | 444  | 2007  | 506  |
| 1988  | 247  | 1998  | 461  | 2008  | 504  |
| 1989  | 276  | 1999  | 476  | 2009  | 502  |

Notes: The Source is "Correctional Populations in the United States, 2009 and Prisoners in 2009" by William Sabol and Heather West; date of version is 12/08/09; sentenced prisoners per every 100,000 people.

Table A3. Adults on Probation, in Jail or Prison, and on Parole (U.S. 1980-2009)

| Year  | Total/a/  | Probation | Jail    | Prison    | Parole  |
|---|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| 1980  | 1,840,400 | 1,118,097 | 182,288 | 319,598   | 220,438 |
| 1985  | 3,011,500 | 1,968,712 | 254,986 | 487,593   | 300,203 |
| 1990  | 4,350,300 | 2,670,234 | 405,320 | 743,382   | 531,407 |
| 1991  | 4,535,600 | 2,728,472 | 424,129 | 792,535   | 590,442 |
| 1995  | 5,342,900 | 3,077,861 | 507,044 | 1,078,542 | 679,421 |
| 2000  | 6,445,100 | 3,826,209 | 621,149 | 1,316,333 | 723,898 |
| 2005  | 7,045,100 | 4,166,757 | 740,770 | 1,448,344 | 780,616 |
| 2009  | 7,225,800 | 4,203,967 | 760,400 | 1,524,513 | 819,308 |
| Average annual percent change from 2000 to 2008 |           |           |         |           |         |
|   | 1.5%      | 1.3%      | 3%      | 1.8%      | 1.6%    |

Notes: /a/ population under Correctional. The sources are the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Correctional Populations in the United States, 1994, NCJ-160091, Table 1.1; 1995, NCJ-163916, Table 1.1; 2009, Bulletin NCJ 231681, Table 1; U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Probation and Parole in 1999, Press Release NCJ 183508 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, July 2000), p. 3, Table 1; U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Probation and Parole in the United States, 2002, Bulletin NCJ 201135, p. 1; 2004, Bulletin NCJ 210676, p. 1; 2008, Bulletin NCJ 228230, p. 3 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice); and data provided by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Table A4. Parents under Correctional Supervision and their Children (2002)

|  | Parent    | Children  |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Community corrections                    | 2,575,700 | 5,062,800 |
| State probation (1995)                   | 2,152,000 | 4,182,400 |
| State parole (1997)                      | 371,400   | 765,600   |
| Federal parole (1997)                    | 52,300    | 114,800   |
| Incarcerated                             | 1,150,200 | 2,413,700 |
| Local jails (1996)                       | 384,300   | 822,100   |
| State prison (1997)                      | 670,300   | 1,381,900 |
| Federal prison (1997)                    | 95,600    | 209,700   |
| Total under any correctional supervision | 3,725,900 | 7,476,500 |

Notes: Source is Mumola, Christopher J. (2006), "Parents Under Correctional Supervision: Past Estimates, New Measures," Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, presented at the NIDA Research Meeting, North Bethesda, MD - November 6, 2006.

Table A5. 2000/2010 General Population Profile (USA, SB, &amp; MS)

|                         | USA         |             | State B (SB) <sup>133</sup> |            | Midwest State (MS) |           |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------|
|                         | 2000        | 2010        | 2000                        | 2010       | 2000               | 2010      |
| Population              | 281,421,906 | 308,745,538 | 12,419,293                  | 12,830,632 | 2,926,324          | 3,046,355 |
| SEX                     |             |             |                             |            |                    |           |
| Male                    | 49.1        | 49.2        | 49.0                        | 49.0       | 49.1               | 49.5      |
| Female                  | 50.9        | 50.8        | 51.0                        | 51.0       | 50.9               | 50.5      |
| AGE                     |             |             |                             |            |                    |           |
| Under 5 years           | 06.8        | 06.5        | 07.1                        | 06.5       | 06.4               | 06.6      |
| 5 to 9 years            | 07.3        | 06.6        | 07.5                        | 06.7       | 06.9               | 06.6      |
| 10 to 14 years          | 07.3        | 06.7        | 07.3                        | 06.9       | 07.2               | 06.6      |
| 15 to 19 years          | 07.2        | 07.1        | 07.2                        | 07.2       | 07.7               | 07.1      |
| 20 to 24 years          | 06.7        | 07.0        | 06.9                        | 06.9       | 07.0               | 07.0      |
| 25 to 34 years          | 14.2        | 13.3        | 14.6                        | 13.8       | 12.4               | 12.6      |
| 35 to 44 years          | 16.0        | 13.3        | 16.0                        | 13.5       | 15.2               | 12.0      |
| 45 to 54 years          | 13.4        | 14.6        | 13.1                        | 14.6       | 13.4               | 14.4      |
| 55 to 59 years          | 04.8        | 6.40        | 04.7                        | 06.3       | 04.8               | 06.7      |
| 60 to 64 years          | 03.8        | 5.40        | 03.7                        | 05.2       | 04.0               | 05.5      |
| 65 to 74 years          | 06.5        | 07.0        | 06.2                        | 06.6       | 07.2               | 07.4      |
| 75 to 84 years          | 04.4        | 04.3        | 04.3                        | 04.1       | 05.4               | 05.0      |
| 85 years and over       | 01.5        | 01.8        | 01.5                        | 01.8       | 02.2               | 02.5      |
| RACE/ETHNICITY          |             |             |                             |            |                    |           |
| One Race                | 97.6        | 97.1        | 98.1                        | 97.7       | 98.9               | 98.2      |
| Two or More Races       | 02.4        | 02.9        | 01.9                        | 02.3       | 01.1               | 01.8      |
| White                   | 75.1        | 72.4        | 73.5                        | 71.5       | 93.9               | 91.3      |
| African American        | 12.3        | 12.6        | 15.1                        | 14.5       | 02.1               | 02.9      |
| Hispanic (any race)     | 12.5        | 16.3        | 12.3                        | 15.8       | 02.8               | 05.0      |
| HOUSEHOLDS              |             |             |                             |            |                    |           |
| In households           | 97.2        | 97.4        | 97.4                        | 97.6       | 96.4               | 96.8      |
| In group quarters       | 02.8        | 02.6        | 02.6                        | 02.4       | 03.6               | 03.2      |
| Family households       | 68.1        | 66.4        | 67.6                        | 65.8       | 67.0               | 64.7      |
| Nonfamily households    | 31.9        | 33.6        | 32.4                        | 34.2       | 33.0               | 35.3      |
| With indiv. under 18yrs | 36.0        | 33.4        | 36.2                        | 33.5       | 33.3               | 30.6      |
| With indiv. 65+ yrs     | 23.4        | 24.9        | 23.2                        | 24.2       | 25.4               | 25.5      |
| OCCUPANCY               |             |             |                             |            |                    |           |
| Occupied housing        | 91.0        | 88.6        | 94.0                        | 91.3       | 93.2               | 91.4      |
| Vacant housing          | 09.0        | 11.4        | 06.0                        | 08.7       | 06.8               | 08.6      |

Notes: The information in this table is a summary of the data from DP-1 (Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 & 2000) in the 2000 & 2010 Demographic Profile SF, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and 2000 Census (downloaded July 21, 2011).

<sup>133</sup> State B is a pseudo name for the neighboring state

Table A6. 2000/2010 General Population Profile (2 MS and 1 SB Counties)

|                           | <i>State B (SB)</i> |         | <i>Midwest State (MS)</i> |        |           |         |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------|---------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|
|                           | County I            |         | County II                 |        | County II |         |
|                           | 2000                | 2010    | 2000                      | 2010   | 2000      | 2010    |
| Population                | 149,374             | 147,546 | 41,722                    | 42,745 | 158,668   | 165,224 |
| <b>SEX</b>                |                     |         |                           |        |           |         |
| Male                      | 48.6                | 49.1    | 49.5                      | 49.7   | 48.9      | 49.0    |
| Female                    | 51.4                | 50.9    | 50.5                      | 50.3   | 51.1      | 51.0    |
| <b>AGE</b>                |                     |         |                           |        |           |         |
| Under 5 years             | 06.4                | 06.4    | 06.9                      | 07.2   | 06.9      | 06.8    |
| 5 to 9 years              | 06.4                | 06.1    | 07.7                      | 07.2   | 07.3      | 06.9    |
| 10 to 14 years            | 06.8                | 06.2    | 07.5                      | 07.3   | 07.7      | 06.7    |
| 15 to 19 years            | 07.4                | 06.6    | 07.4                      | 07.0   | 07.4      | 06.7    |
| 20 to 24 years            | 06.8                | 06.4    | 05.9                      | 05.4   | 06.5      | 06.4    |
| 25 to 34 years            | 12.3                | 12.5    | 12.9                      | 12.1   | 13.7      | 13.4    |
| 35 to 44 years            | 15.0                | 11.8    | 15.9                      | 12.7   | 15.7      | 12.7    |
| 45 to 54 years            | 14.1                | 14.6    | 13.9                      | 14.9   | 14.3      | 14.8    |
| 55 to 59 years            | 05.3                | 07.1    | 04.9                      | 06.8   | 04.9      | 06.9    |
| 60 to 64 years            | 04.4                | 06.1    | 04.0                      | 05.7   | 03.8      | 05.7    |
| 65 to 74 years            | 07.6                | 08.2    | 06.5                      | 07.2   | 06.1      | 06.9    |
| 75 to 84 years            | 05.5                | 05.4    | 04.6                      | 04.4   | 04.2      | 04.1    |
| 85 years and over         | 02.0                | 02.5    | 01.9                      | 02.1   | 01.5      | 02.0    |
| <b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>     |                     |         |                           |        |           |         |
| One Race                  | 98.1                | 97.0    | 98.6                      | 98.1   | 98.2      | 97.0    |
| Two or More Races         | 01.9                | 03.0    | 01.4                      | 01.9   | 01.8      | 03.0    |
| White                     | 85.5                | 81.6    | 90.7                      | 89.0   | 88.5      | 86.1    |
| Black or African American | 07.5                | 9.00    | 00.7                      | 01.4   | 06.1      | 07.1    |
| Hispanic                  | 08.6                | 11.6    | 11.9                      | 15.9   | 04.1      | 05.6    |
| <b>RELATIONSHIP</b>       |                     |         |                           |        |           |         |
| In households             | 96.9                | 97.1    | 98.3                      | 98.7   | 97.9      | 98.0    |
| In group quarters         | 03.1                | 02.9    | 01.7                      | 01.3   | 02.1      | 02.0    |
| <b>HOUSEHOLDS</b>         |                     |         |                           |        |           |         |
| Family households         | 64.5                | 62.6    | 71.2                      | 69.8   | 67.2      | 64.6    |
| Nonfamily households      | 35.5                | 37.4    | 28.8                      | 30.2   | 32.8      | 35.4    |
| With indiv. under 18 yrs  | 31.7                | 29.0    | 37.4                      | 34.7   | 35.7      | 32.0    |
| With indiv. 65+ yrs       | 26.5                | 28.2    | 23.1                      | 24.7   | 20.9      | 23.1    |
| <b>HOUSING OCCUPANCY</b>  |                     |         |                           |        |           |         |
| Occupied housing units    | 94.1                | 93.2    | 94.4                      | 91.6   | 95.0      | 92.9    |
| Vacant housing units      | 05.9                | 06.8    | 05.6                      | 08.4   | 05.0      | 07.1    |

Notes: The information in this table is a summary of the data from DP-1 (Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 & 2000) in the 2000 & 2010 Demographic Profile SF, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and 2000 Census (downloaded July 21, 2011).

Table A7. 2000/2005-2007 SES Demographic (2 MS and 1 SB Counties)

|   | County I (SB) |         | County II (MS) |         | County III (MS) |         |
|---|---------------|---------|----------------|---------|-----------------|---------|
|   | '00           | '05-'07 | '00            | '05-'07 | '00             | '05-'07 |
| Population                                  | 149,374       | 146,820 | 158,668        | 161,533 | 41,722          | 42,241  |
| Immigration                                 |               |         |                |         |                 |         |
| Foreign Born                                | 04.6          | 05.6    | 03.1           | 03.6    | 05.9            | 06.0    |
| Speak a language other than English at Home | 08.4          | 09.8    | 05.6           | 06.5    | 11.7            | n/a     |
| Housing Units                               |               |         |                |         |                 |         |
| Owner-Occupied                              | 69.7          | --      | 70.6           | 72.1    | 75.4            | 77.2    |
| Rented-Occupied                             | 30.3          | --      | 29.4           | 27.9    | 24.6            | 22.8    |
| Vacant                                      | 05.9          | --      | 05.0           | 07.8    | 05.6            | 08.0    |
| Education (25+ Yrs)                         |               |         |                |         |                 |         |
| H.S. & Higher                               | 82.6          | 85.9    | 86.3           | 89.3    | 80.3            | 85.4    |
| B.A. & Higher                               | 17.1          | 19.9    | 24.9           | 30.0    | 17.2            | 27.0    |
| Economy                                     |               |         |                |         |                 |         |
| In Labor Force (16+)                        | 64.5          | 63.3    | 69.0           | 68.6    | 68.0            | 68.9    |
| Family Below Poverty                        | 08.1          | 10.4    | 07.7           | 08.3    | 06.3            | 09.1    |
| Indvs. Below Poverty                        | 10.7          | 14.0    | 10.5           | 11.8    | 08.9            | 11.7    |

Notes: 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates; Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights, American Fact Finder, US Census, <<http://factfinder.census.gov>> accessed February 2009.

Table A8. City Demographics (5 Cities in the Metro Area)

|   | <i>Midwest State (MS)</i> |         |          | <i>State B (MB)</i> |        |
|---|---------------------------|---------|----------|---------------------|--------|
|   | City I                    | City II | City III | City IV             | City V |
| Population  | 4,328                     | 30,286  | 98,359   | 22,300              | 39,684 |
| Gender  |                           |         |          |                     |        |
| Male  | 50.4                      | 49.0    | 48.6     | 48.1                | 47.0   |
| Female  | 49.6                      | 51.0    | 51.4     | 51.9                | 53.0   |
| Age   |                           |         |          |                     |        |
| Under 5 Years                                     | 07.1                      | 07.1    | 07.4     | 06.9                | 06.4   |
| 18 Years & Over                                   | 71.0                      | 73.0    | 73.8     | 75.4                | 77.0   |
| 65 Years & Over                                   | 12.9                      | 13.0    | 12.1     | 16.5                | 16.0   |
| Race/Ethnicity                                    |                           |         |          |                     |        |
| White   | 74.3                      | 92.0    | 83.7     | 81.5                | 77.0   |
| African American                                  | 00.3                      | 00.9    | 09.2     | 06.8                | 17.0   |
| Hispanic/Latino                                   | 31.6                      | 10.0    | 05.4     | 13.9                | 05.9   |
| Immigration                                       |                           |         |          |                     |        |
| Foreign Born                                      | 20.0                      | 04.6    | 03.7     | 07.1                | 03.2   |
| Speak a language<br>other than English<br>at Home | 31.0                      | 10.0    | 06.5     | 11.7                | 17.0   |
| Housing Units                                     |                           |         |          |                     |        |
| Owner-Occupied                                    | 70.6                      | 75.0    | 65.2     | 66.0                | 65.0   |
| Rented-Occupied                                   | 29.4                      | 25.0    | 34.8     | 34.0                | 35.0   |
| Vacant  | 29.4                      | 05.6    | 05.4     | 00.5                | 07.9   |
| Education (Pop 25 Yrs & Over)                     |                           |         |          |                     |        |
| H.S. & Higher                                     | 73.6                      | 80.0    | 83.4     | 81.6                | 83.0   |
| B.A. & Higher                                     | 16.3                      | 18.0    | 13.9     | 15.4                | 19.0   |
| Economy   |                           |         |          |                     |        |
| In Labor Force (16+)                              | 68.0                      | 67.0    | 67.4     | 62.9                | 63.0   |
| Fam. Below Poverty                                | 04.1                      | 07.2    | 10.5     | 11.0                | --     |
| Indv. Below Poverty                               | 07.2                      | 09.9    | 14.1     | 13.4                | --     |

Notes: 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates; Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights, American Fact Finder, US Census, <  
<http://factfinder.census.gov>> accessed February 2009.

| Table A9. 2007 Rates of Arrests*           | Midwest State | State B   |
|--|---------------|-----------|
| 2007 Estimated Population                  | 2,567,706     | 2,980,147 |
| 2007 Arrests                               | 4,471         | 6,418     |
| Substances/Drugs/Gambling                  |               |           |
| Drug Abuse Violations                      | 343           | 1849      |
| Driving Under the Influence                | 511           | 188       |
| Liquor Laws                                | 329           | 56        |
| Disorderly Conduct                         | 253           | 747       |
| Violence                                   |               |           |
| Violence                                   | 155           | 294       |
| Aggravated Assault                         | 135           | 167       |
| Other Assaults                             | 399           | 924       |
| Weapons; Carrying, Possessing, etc.        | 18            | 125       |
| Murder and No Negligent                    | 1             | 12        |
| Crime for Profit                           |               |           |
| Property                                   | 523           | 740       |
| Larceny-theft                              | 414           | 466       |
| Vandalism                                  | 127           | 183       |
| Motor Vehicle Theft                        | 22            | 172       |
| Fraud                                      | 39            | 44        |
| Forgery and Counterfeiting                 | 26            | 16        |
| Embezzlement                               | 3             | 0         |
| Burglary                                   | 81            | 98        |
| Robbery                                    | 14            | 96        |
| Prostitution and Commercialized Vice       | 5             | 135       |
| Offenses Against the Family and Children   | 32            | 14        |
| 2003 Adults Under Correctional Supervision |               |           |
| Under Correctional Supervision             | 36,200        | 244,400   |
| Per every 100,000 adult residents          | 1,638         | 2,609     |
| Population incarcerated (%)                | 33.7          | 26.6      |

Notes: \*per 100,000 people using 2007 population estimates; The source is table 69, "Arrests by State, 2007," Crimes in the United States, Uniform Crime Report, Criminal Justice Information Services Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice; Counts were rounded to the nearest 100. Jail counts by State were estimated using the average daily population from Deaths in Custody, 2002 and the Annual Survey of Jails, 2003; /a/ Excludes 25,497 probationers held in jail and 11,872 probationers held in prison; /b/ Based on the estimated number of adult State residents on Dec. 31, 2003 using the 2000 Census of Population and Housing and adjusting for population change since April 2000; Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Probation and Parole in the United States, 2003, Bulletin NCJ 205336 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, July 2004), p. 7.



Table A10. 2005 Mid-Year *Midwest State* Offender's Most Serious Offense

| Community Based Corrections |                  |      |                 |      |                 |      |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|
|                             | All<br>30,281    |      | Males<br>22,752 |      | Female<br>7,476 |      |
|                             | No.              | %    | No.             | %    | No.             | %    |
| Property                    | 7812             | 25.8 | 5,119           | 22.5 | 2,676           | 35.8 |
| Drug                        | 8,842            | 29.2 | 6,575           | 28.9 | 2,287           | 30.6 |
| Alcohol                     | 0214             | 00.7 | 00161           | 00.7 | 0040            | 00.5 |
| OWI                         | 7,146            | 23.6 | 5,756           | 25.3 | 1,360           | 18.2 |
| Violent                     | 3936             | 13.0 | 3,276           | 14.4 | 0657            | 08.8 |
| Other                       | 2,331            | 07.7 | 1,865           | 08.2 | 0456            | 06.1 |
| Prisons                     |                  |      |                 |      |                 |      |
|                             | All (a)<br>8,578 |      | Males<br>7,648  |      | Female<br>718   |      |
|                             | No.              | %    | No.             | %    | No.             | %    |
| Property                    | 1,852            | 21.6 | 1,583           | 20.7 | 218             | 30.4 |
| Drug                        | 2,307            | 26.9 | 2,003           | 26.2 | 247             | 34.5 |
| Alcohol                     | 0003             | 00.2 | 0010            | 00.2 | 005             | 00.4 |
| OWI                         | 0283             | 03.3 | 0244            | 03.2 | 028             | 04.0 |
| Violent                     | 3,499            | 40.8 | 3,235           | 42.3 | 177             | 24.7 |
| Other                       | 0634             | 07.4 | 0573            | 07.5 | 043             | 06.0 |

Notes: (a) 53 subjects do not have a sex identifier; this table is a product of the data presented in the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections Report to the Board of Corrections on "Substance Abuse", first in a series of reports highlighting issues contributing to corrections population growth, March 2006, *Midwest State* DOC director.

Table A11. Three Decades of *Midwest State's* Correctional Supervision

| June 30 <sup>th</sup>    | 1985   |      | 1995   |      | 2005   |      |
|--------------------------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|
| Correctional Populations | 17,625 |      | 24,579 |      | 38,859 |      |
|                          | No.    | %    | No.    | %    | No.    | %    |
| Field Services           | 14,505 | 82.3 | 17,868 | 72.7 | 2,828  | 72.8 |
| CBC Residential          | 485    | 02.7 | 1,019  | 04.1 | 1,981  | 05.1 |
| Prison                   | 2,635  | 15.0 | 5,692  | 23.2 | 8,587  | 22.1 |
| Gender                   |        |      |        |      |        |      |
| Male                     | 16,920 | 96.0 | 22,858 | 93.0 | 35,361 | 91.0 |
| Female                   | 705    | 04.0 | 1,720  | 07.0 | 3,497  | 09.0 |
| Age (years)              |        |      |        |      |        |      |
| 20 or younger            | 2,291  | 13.0 | 2,212  | 09.0 | 2,331  | 06.0 |
| 21-30                    | 9,165  | 52.0 | 10,323 | 42.0 | 14,377 | 37.0 |
| 31-50                    | 5,463  | 31.0 | 10,814 | 44.0 | 19,040 | 49.0 |
| 51 and older             | 706    | 04.0 | 1,230  | 05.0 | 3,111  | 08.0 |

Notes: This table is a product of the data presented in the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections Report to the Board of Corrections on "Population Growth", last in a series of five reports highlighting issues contributing to corrections population growth, July 2006, *Midwest State* DOC director.

| Educational Level, Age, & Children          |      | No.                                     | %           |
|---|------|---|-------------|
| Average Education (years)                   | 11.6 |   |             |
| Average Reading Level (grade)               | 09.4 |   |             |
| Average Age (years)                         | 35.0 |   |             |
| Average Dependents per offender who Visited | 02.2 |   |             |
|   |      | Race/Ethnicity (N=8705)                 |             |
|   |      | White/Caucasian                         | 5,684 65.29 |
|   |      | African American                        | 2,228 25.59 |
|   |      | Hispanic                                | 572 06.57   |
|   |      | Other                                   | 222 02.55   |
|   |      | Sentences in Years (N=8,694)            |             |
|   |      | < 3 yrs                                 | 351 04.37   |
|   |      | 3 to < 5 years                          | 117 01.34   |
|   |      | 5 to < 10 years                         | 1,694 19.48 |
|   |      | 10 to < 20 years                        | 2,958 34.02 |
|   |      | 20 to < 40 years                        | 1,993 22.92 |
|   |      | 40+ years                               | 679 07.09   |
|   |      | Life                                    | 624 07.17   |
|   |      | Unknown                                 | 278 03.19   |
|   |      | No. of Sentences Per Offender (N=8,604) |             |
|   |      | 1                                       | 3,235 37.59 |
|   |      | 2                                       | 2,502 29.07 |
|   |      | 3                                       | 1,270 14.76 |
|   |      | 4                                       | 727 08.44   |
|   |      | 5                                       | 363 04.21   |
|   |      | 6                                       | 207 02.40   |
|   |      | 7                                       | 107 01.24   |
|   |      | 8                                       | 66 00.76    |
|   |      | 9+                                      | 127 01.47   |

Notes: The data presented is based on the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections institutionalized (prisons) population on 2/2/2009, used during a presentation made by director (February 2009) to Justice Appropriations Subcommittee.

Table A13. Top Five Needs of MS's CBC Offenders and Prisoners

| CBC Offenders' Top Five Needs |        | Institution Offenders Top 5 Needs |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Alcohol/Drugs                 | 77.30% | Alcohol/Drug Problem              | 74.90% |
| Attitudes/Orientation         | 52.9%  | Attitudes/Orientation             | 68.70% |
| Emotional/Personal            | 36.90% | Emotional/Personal                | 54.10% |
| Employment                    | 35.40% | Employment                        | 37.30% |
| Companions                    | 28.70% | Education                         | 34.1%  |

Notes: The data presented is based on the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections institutionalized (prisons) population on 2/2/2009, used during a presentation made by the *Midwest State* DOC director (February 2009) to Justice Appropriations Subcommittee.

Table A14. Revocation of Probation that Leads to Imprisonment\*

|                      | 2007 (N=1288) |       | 2008 (N=1178) |       |
|----------------------|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|
|                      | No.           | %     | No.           | %     |
| New Felony           | 597           | 46.35 | 488           | 41.42 |
| Other New Conviction | 293           | 22.74 | 281           | 23.8  |
| New Charge           | 184           | 14.28 | 189           | 16.04 |
| Other Violation      | 214           | 16.61 | 220           | 18.67 |

Notes: \* by Violation Type; the data presented is based on the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections institutionalized (prisons) population on 2/2/2009, used during a presentation made by the *Midwest State* DOC director (February 2009) to Justice Appropriations Subcommittee.

Table A15. Offender's Substance/Drug History in *Midwest State's* Prisons

|   | 7,571 (b) |      | 3851 (c) |      | 462 (c) |      |
|---|-----------|------|----------|------|---------|------|
|   | No.       | %    | No.      | %    | No.     | %    |
| Alcohol & Drug Problem                                | 4,504     | 59.5 |          |      |         |      |
| No Problem  | 0757      | 10.0 |          |      |         |      |
| Alcohol Problem                                       | 0659      | 08.7 |          |      |         |      |
| Drug Problem  | 1651      | 21.8 |          |      |         |      |
| Inmates with Drug Problems Ever (Top Three Drugs) (d) |           |      |          |      |         |      |
| Meth Use  |           |      | 1,933    | 50.2 | 242     | 52.4 |
| Marijuana Use   |           |      | 2,460    | 63.9 | 188     | 40.9 |
| Crack/Cocaine Use                                     |           |      | 943      | 24.5 | 164     | 35.7 |

Notes: (b) in regards to *Midwest State's* prison population, information concerning offenders' alcohol and drug problems were available in LSI-R risk assessments for 7,571 offenders, or approximately 90% of the 8,401 non-Federal inmates incarcerated in *Midwest State's* prison system on June 30, 2005 (Missing cases = 830); (c) Information on substances used or abused was available for 4,313 or about 70% of the 6,156 offenders who had ever had a drug problem; (d) Offenders who use more than one drug are counted twice and the total percentage does not add up to 100%; This table is a product of the data presented in the *Midwest State* Department of Corrections Report to the Board of Corrections on "Substance Abuse", first in a series of reports highlighting issues contributing to corrections population growth, March 2006, *Midwest State* DOC director.

Table A16. Sample Demographics (N=57)

|  | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative % |
|--|-----------|---------|--------------|
| <b>Parents' Current Correctional Program</b> |           |         |              |
| RCF  | 14        | 24.56   | 024.56       |
| WRC  | 43        | 75.44   | 100.00       |
| <b>Parents' Race/Ethnicity</b>               |           |         |              |
| Hispanic/Latino                              | 04        | 07.10   | 007.10       |
| African American                             | 30        | 52.60   | 059.70       |
| White/Caucasian                              | 21        | 36.80   | 096.50       |
| Multi-racial                                 | 02        | 03.50   | 100.00       |
| <b>Sex</b>                                   |           |         |              |
| Female                                       | 12        | 21.00   | 021.00       |
| Males  | 45        | 89.00   | 100.00       |
| <b>Age</b>                                   |           |         |              |
| Average                                      | 36        |         |              |
| Range  | 20-66     |         |              |
| 20-30 years of age                           | 19        | 33.33   | 033.33       |
| 31-40 years of age                           | 18        | 31.57   | 064.90       |
| 41-50 years of age                           | 15        | 26.32   | 091.22       |
| 51-59 years of age                           | 05        | 08.78   | 100.00       |
| <b>Education</b>                             |           |         |              |
| Less than High School                        | 31        | 54.39   | 054.39       |
| High School Diploma/GED                      | 20        | 35.08   | 089.47       |
| Some College                                 | 05        | 08.78   | 098.25       |
| MA   | 01        | 01.75   | 100.00       |
| <b>Marital Status Prior to Arrest</b>        |           |         |              |
| Single                                       | 29        | 50.87   | 050.87       |
| Married                                      | 15        | 26.32   | 077.19       |
| Divorced/Separated                           | 13        | 22.81   | 100.00       |
| <b>Current Marital Status</b>                |           |         |              |
| Single                                       | 29        | 50.87   | 050.87       |
| Married                                      | 07        | 12.29   | 063.16       |
| Divorced/Separated                           | 21        | 36.84   | 100.00       |
| <b>Age at Birth of First Child</b>           |           |         |              |
| 14-17  | 18        | 31.6    | 031.60       |
| 18-21  | 22        | 38.6    | 070.20       |
| 22-25  | 11        | 19.3    | 089.50       |
| 26-30  | 05        | 08.7    | 098.20       |
| 31-34  | 01        | 01.8    | 100.00       |
| <b>Activities in Illicit Drug Market</b>     |           |         |              |
| Ex-Drug Dealing                              | 17        | 29.82   | 029.82       |
| Recovering Substance/Drug Use                | 29        | 50.87   | 080.69       |
| Both   | 11        | 19.31   | 100.00       |

Notes: The sample consists of 57 parents currently under correctional supervision.

Table A17. Participants' Pseudo Names (N=57)

| Drug Dealers Fathers (n=17)   | Recovering Substance/Drug Users (n=29) |
|---|--|
| Anthony, 33 , African American                                      | <i>~Fathers (n=17)</i>                 |
| Charlie, 43, white/Caucasian  | Ángel, 26, Afri. Ame./Mex. Ame.        |
| Jake, 26, Mexican American  | Bobby, 39, white/Caucasian             |
| Jason, 27, African American   | Donovan, 37, white/Caucasian           |
| Jerry, 33, African American   | Doug, 31, white/Caucasian              |
| Jordan, 31, African American  | Javier, 51, white/Irish                |
| Joseph, 28, African American  | Jimmy, 21, white/Caucasian             |
| LA, 46, African American  | Joe#1, 20, Afri. Ame./white            |
| Larry, 36, African American   | Joe#2, 26, Hispanic                    |
| Mason, 41, African American   | Juan, 53, Mexican American             |
| Peter, 44, white/Caucasian  | Matthew, 24, white/Caucasian           |
| Purple, 29, African American  | Miguel, 29, white/Caucasian            |
| Red, 38, African American   | Perry, 42, white/Caucasian             |
| Rick, 31, African American  | Ray, 38, Mexican-American              |
| Sam, 35, African American   | Scott, 29, white/Caucasian             |
| Taylor, 25, white/Caucasian   | Simon, 46, African American            |
| Terry, 35, African American   | Star, 27, white/Caucasian              |
| Ex-Drug Dealers & Recovering<br>Substance/Drug Users Fathers (n=11) | Tommy, 54, white/Caucasian             |
| Bubbles, 45, white/Caucasian  | <i>~Mothers (n=12)</i>                 |
| Butch Green, 48, white/Caucasian                                    | Carol, 35, African American            |
| Chester, 20, white/Caucasian  | Dee, 57, African American              |
| Eli, 33, African American   | Diamond, 22, African American          |
| Eric, 32, African American  | Erica, 41, African American            |
| James, 49, African American   | Jaime, 26, white/Caucasian             |
| Louis, 33, African American   | Liz, 23, African American              |
| Michael, 49, African American                                       | Mary, 59, African American             |
| Mike#1, 32, African American  | Riley, 46, white/Caucasian             |
| Mike#2, 42 year old Afri. American                                  | Rosie, 29, white/Caucasian             |
| TR, 38, African American  | Ruth, 28, white/Caucasian              |
|   | Susie, 33, African American            |
|   | 'Till June, 45, African American       |

Note: After the consent process, each participant selected a pseudo name. The purpose of the pseudo names is to protect participants' identity.

Table A18. Participants' Self-Reported Childhood Experience w/ Family Problems

| Living Arrangements | Parental Behavioral Problem during Participants' Childhood |              |                    |                   | TOTAL |
|---------------------|--|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------|
|                     | None   | Drug Dealing | Substance/Drug Use | Domestic Violence |       |
| Both                | 2  | 2            | 7                  | 1                 | 12    |
| Single              | 1  | 5            | 16                 | 4                 | 26    |
| Interval            | 0  | 1            | 11                 | 0                 | 12    |
| None                | 0  | 0            | 7                  | 0                 | 7     |
| TOTAL               | 3  | 8            | 41                 | 5                 | 57    |

Note: Participants identified their living arrangements during childhood in regards to their parents and the dominant family problem. In regards to living arrangements, *both* parents refers to mother and father being continuously in the care of the child in a single household; *single* parenting includes those who experienced continuous the presence and care of one (mother of father) parent; *interval parenting* refers to both parents parenting during separate periods, such as 5 years with one parent and the next 8 years with the other parent; and none refers to individuals who were raised by someone else other than their parents. In regards to the dominant family problem, participants identified the parental behavior that influenced their childhood the most (with parent).

Table A19. Participants' Self-Reported Correctional Experiences (N=57)

|                | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|
| Arrested       | 57        | 100.00  |
| Jail Time      | 57        | 100.00  |
| Probation      | 48        | 84.21   |
| State Prison   | 48        | 84.21   |
| Federal Prison | 08        | 14.03   |
| RCF            | 43        | 74.57   |
| Work Release   | 48        | 84.21   |
| Parole         | 35        | 61.40   |

Notes: This table is a product of the demographic survey (confirmed with public records). Offenders who have experienced more than one correctional program have been counted more than once; thus, the total percentage surpasses 100%.

Table A20. Participants' Children

|                                      | Frequency    | Percent | Cumulative % |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| <b>Number of Children</b>            |              |         |              |
| Sample's Total No. of Children       | 154          | --      | --           |
| Range No. of Children                | 1-9          | --      | --           |
| Average No. of Children per Parent   | 2.7          | --      | --           |
| <b>Children's Sex</b>                |              |         |              |
| Female                               | 89           | 57.70   | 057.70       |
| Male                                 | 65           | 42.30   | 100.00       |
| <b>Parents' Age at Child's Birth</b> |              |         |              |
| 14-17                                | 18           | 11.7    | 011.7        |
| 18-21                                | 46           | 29.9    | 041.6        |
| 22-25                                | 41           | 26.6    | 068.2        |
| 26-29                                | 24           | 15.5    | 083.7        |
| 30-33                                | 16           | 10.4    | 094.1        |
| 34-37                                | 04           | 02.6    | 096.7        |
| 38-44                                | 05           | 03.3    | 100.0        |
| <b>Children's Age</b>                |              |         |              |
| Average Age of Children              | 14.7 years   | --      | --           |
| Range of Children's Age              | 0.5-40 years | --      | --           |
| Infants (less than 1 year of age)    | 04           | 02.60   | 002.60       |
| Toddlers (1-3 years of age)          | 21           | 13.63   | 016.23       |
| Pre-Schoolers (4-5 years of age)     | 05           | 03.24   | 019.47       |
| School-Age (6-13 years of age)       | 44           | 28.57   | 048.04       |
| Adolescents (14-17 years of age)     | 23           | 14.96   | 063.00       |
| Young Adults (18-25 years of age)    | 36           | 23.37   | 086.37       |
| Adults (26 years of age and older)   | 21           | 13.63   | 100.00       |
| <b>Children's Caretakers</b>         |              |         |              |
| Mother                               | 62           | 40.20   | 040.20       |
| Aunts                                | 05           | 03.30   | 043.50       |
| Great Grandparents or Grandparents   | 13           | 08.40   | 51.90        |
| DHS/Adopted                          | 05           | 03.30   | 052.20       |
| Sibling                              | 04           | 02.60   | 057.80       |
| Adults                               | 61           | 39.60   | 097.40       |
| Deceased                             | 04           | 02.60   | 100.00       |

Notes: The 57 parents have 154 children they discussed during the in-depth interviews. The information in this table is based on parents' perspective, keeping in mind that some parents have very limited knowledge about their children.

Table A21. Children's Correctional Experience (N=57 Parents &amp; their 154 Children)

|                  | Fathers (12/45)        |   |                                   | Mothers (5/12)                    | N=17/57     |
|------------------|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
|                  | Ex-Drug Dealers (n=17) | Ex-Drug Dealers & Recovery Subst./Drug Users (n=11) | Recovery Subst./Drug Users (n=17) | Recovery Subst./Drug Users (n=12) | Total       |
| <b>SONS</b>      |                        |   |                                   |                                   |             |
| -Incarceration   |                        |   |                                   |                                   |             |
| *Federal         | 0                      | 0   | 0                                 | 1adult                            | 1           |
| *State           | 2adults                | 2adults   | 1adult                            | 3adults                           | 8           |
| *TeenDetention   | 0                      | 1teen   | 0                                 | 0                                 | 1           |
| -Probation       | 2teens                 | 0   | 1adult                            | 0                                 | 3           |
| -Arrest          | 1teen                  | 0   | 0                                 | 0                                 | 1           |
| -Subtotals       | 5                      | 3   | 2                                 | 4                                 | n=14        |
| <b>DAUGHTERS</b> |                        |   |                                   |                                   |             |
| -Incarceration   |                        |   |                                   |                                   |             |
| *Federal         | 0                      | 0   | 0                                 | 0                                 | 0           |
| *State           | 0                      | 0   | 0                                 | 1adult                            | 1           |
| *TeenDetention   | 0                      | 0   | 0                                 | 0                                 | 0           |
| -Probation       | 1adult                 | 2adults   | 1adult/1teen                      | 2teens                            | 7           |
| -Arrest          | 0                      | 0   | 1teen                             | 0                                 | 1           |
| -Subtotals       | 1                      | 2   | 3                                 | 3                                 | n=9         |
| <b>Total</b>     | 6                      | 5   | 5                                 | 7                                 | <b>N=23</b> |

Notes: This table is based on participants' report of their children's most punitive correctional experience. When reading this table, it is important to keep in mind that participants might not have full access to information about their children's correctional experiences, creating an underreporting or inaccuracy problem. Also, the majority of the children are minors (97/154 children and adolescents). But overall, seventeen participants (12/45 fathers and 5/12 mothers=17/57 parents) report at least one of their child under correctional supervision, for a total of 23 children under correctional supervision at some point in their lives. Similar to the Dallaire (2007) findings, participant's gender is associated with children's incarceration (5/45 fathers (11%) experienced the incarceration of 6 sons; 3/12 mothers (25%) experienced the incarceration of 4 sons and 1 daughter).



Table A22. Criminal Charges against the 57 Participants in the *Midwest State*

|  | No. of<br>Participants | Percent of<br>Participants | No. of<br>Charges | Mean of<br>Charges | Range<br>of<br>Charges |
|--|------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| No. Cases                                  | —                      | —                          | 1400              | 24.56              | 2—60                   |
| Criminal Charges                           | 57                     | 100%                       | 1957              | 34.33              | 4—100                  |
| TRAFFIC                                    |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| General Traffic                            |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Citations <sup>1</sup>                     | 47                     | 82%                        | 337               | 05.91              | 0—25                   |
| ALCOHOL CRIMES                             |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| OWI  |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Traffic/Open<br>Container                  | 12                     | 20%                        | 12                | 00.20              | 0—1                    |
| Traffic/Suspended<br>Licenses              |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Public Intoxication                        | 12                     | 20%                        | 17                | 00.30              | 0—2                    |
| Sub-Total                                  | 26                     | 66%                        | 260               | 04.56              | 1-26                   |
| DRUG CRIMES                                |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Drug Distribution                          |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Drug Possession                            | 29                     | 51%                        | 148               | 02.59              | 0—21                   |
| Drug Paraphernalia                         |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Sub-Total                                  | 29                     | 51%                        | 208               | 03.64              | 0-24                   |
| VIOLENT CRIMES                             |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Violent Behavior <sup>2</sup>              |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Domestic Violence                          | 32                     | 56%                        | 79                | 01.38              | 1—7                    |
| Sub-Total                                  | 42                     | 74%                        | 236               | 04.14              | 1-24                   |
| SEX CRIMES                                 |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Prostitution                               |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Sexual Abuse                               | 4                      | 78%                        | 10                | 00.17              | 0—4                    |
| Sub-Total                                  | 7                      | 13%                        | 20                | 00.35              | 0-6                    |
| PROPERTY CRIMES                            |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Debt (Money<br>Judgments)                  |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Property <sup>3</sup>                      | 42                     | 74%                        | 267               | 04.69              | 0—30                   |
| Sub-Total                                  | 45                     | 79%                        | 302               | 05.29              | 0-30                   |
| CORRECT. STATUS<br>CRIMES                  |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Correctional Status<br>Crimes <sup>a</sup> |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |
| Debt (CJS) <sup>o</sup>                    | 13                     | 23%                        | 44                | 00.77              | 0—4                    |
| Sub-Total                                  | 35                     | 61%                        | 172               | 03.01              | 0-15                   |
| CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN                    |                        |                            |                   |                    |                        |

|                                   |           |            |            |              |             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| Child Endangerment <sup>j</sup>   | 9         | 15%        | 35         | 00.61        | 0—5         |
| Recruitment <sup>r</sup>          | 7         | 13%        | 19         | 00.33        | 0—2         |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>                  | <b>12</b> | <b>20%</b> | <b>54</b>  | <b>00.94</b> | <b>0-7</b>  |
| <b>OTHER</b>                      |           |            |            |              |             |
| Order <sup>w</sup>                | 20        | 36%        | 45         | 00.79        | 0—6         |
| Criminal Mischief                 | 19        | 33%        | 31         | 00.53        | 0—3         |
| Law Obstruction <sup>y</sup>      | 32        | 56%        | 111        | 01.94        | 0—13        |
| Crime in Association <sup>d</sup> | 10        | 18%        | 17         | 00.30        | 0—4         |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>                  | <b>47</b> | <b>82%</b> | <b>204</b> | <b>03.57</b> | <b>0-20</b> |
| <b>DELINQUENCY<sup>p</sup></b>    |           |            |            |              |             |
| Alcohol/Tobacco/Drugs             | 10        | 18%        | 29         | 00.51        | 0—6         |
| Curfew                            | 7         | 13%        | 20         | 00.35        | 0—6         |
| Property                          | 10        | 18%        | 52         | 00.84        | 0—13        |
| Law Obstruction                   | 8         | 15%        | 17         | 00.30        | 0—6         |
| Traffic Crimes                    | 6         | 10%        | 6          | 00.10        | 0—1         |
| Violence                          | 4         | 8%         | 28         | 00.48        | 0—9         |
| Mischief                          | 6         | 10%        | 12         | 00.20        | 0—5         |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>                  | <b>16</b> | <b>28%</b> | <b>164</b> | <b>02.87</b> | <b>0-7</b>  |

Notes: (1) General traffic citations include no insurance, no registration, no license, handicap parking, beyond speed limit, no safety belts, did not stop, no turn signals, failed to maintain control, headlights, or illuminated plates; (2) Violence includes assault, harassment, armed with intent to harm, and intent to cause injury; (3) Properties include theft, robbery, burglary, unauthorized use of credit card, possession of stolen property, possession of burglar's tools, and forgery; (a) Correctional Status Crimes include violation of probation/parole, fugitive from justice, fail to register in sex offender registry, violation of no contact or protective order, or possession of contraband in correctional facility; (0) Debt to the criminal justice system (CJS) refers to refusal or failure to payment of fine or court cost; (j) Child endangerment include failure to secure child's seat belt or child endangerment with or without injury; (r) recruitment include using/soliciting minor to commit an offence, contributing to minor's delinquency, or supplying alcohol or control substances to minors; (w) order refers to disorderly conduct, obstruction of emergency communications, loitering, or vehicle radio noise; (y) Law obstruction refers to tampering with juror or witness, intervene with official acts, contempt, harassing public officer, false reports to law officials, or interfering or resisting arrests; (d) Crime in association refers to gathering for substance/drug use, criminal gang participation, or conspiracy to commit felony; (p) and delinquent behavior was processed in *Midwest State's* juvenile courts. The data source is *Midwest State Courts Online* court data, including "Case Search" available to all users and advanced search for registered users, accessed August 2011.

Table A23. Participants' *Midwest State* Legal Outcomes (N=57)

|                  | No.<br>of<br>Part. | Percent<br>of Part. | No. of Charges | Mean of<br>Charges | Range of<br>Charges |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| No. Cases        | —                  | —                   | 1400           | 24.56              | 2—60                |
| Criminal Charges | —                  | —                   | 1957           | 34.33              | 4—100               |
| Handled By Clerk | 36                 | 64%                 | 228 (11.60%)   | 04.00              | 0—21                |
| Plea Bargain     |                    |                     |                |                    |                     |
| Guilty           | 57                 | 100%                | 965 (49.30%)   | 16.92              | 1—49                |
| Dismissed        | 45                 | 79%                 | 303 (15.48%)   | 05.30              | 0—31                |
| Trial            |                    |                     |                |                    |                     |
| Guilty           | 23                 | 41%                 | 058 (02.96%)   | 01.02              | 0—5                 |
| Innocent         | 4                  | 8%                  | 006 (00.30%)   | 00.10              | 0—2                 |
| Thrown Out       |                    |                     |                |                    |                     |
| Dismissed        | 49                 | 87%                 | 341 (17.42%)   | 05.97              | 0—23                |
| Transferred      | 16                 | 28%                 | 056 (02.86%)   | 00.58              | 0—5                 |

Notes: The data source is *Midwest State* Courts Online, trial court data, including “Case Search” available to all users and advanced search for registered users, accessed August 2011.

Table A24. Participants' *Midwest State* Punitive Outcomes (N=57)

|                                   | No. of<br>Part. | %t of<br>Part. | No. of<br>Charges | Mean of<br>Charges | Range of<br>Charges |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| No. Cases                         | —               | —              | 1400              | 24.56              | 2—60                |
| Criminal Charges                  | —               | —              | 1957              | 34.33              | 4—100               |
| Fines                             |                 |                |                   |                    |                     |
| No. Fines (yes=1)                 | 57              | 100%           | 835               | 14.64              | 1—48                |
| No. Susp. Fines (yes=1)           | 23              | 41%            | 34                | 00.58              | 0—3                 |
| Jail                              |                 |                |                   |                    |                     |
| Jail (days)                       | 47              | 82%            | 39,976            | 701.33             | 0—4004              |
| No. of Visits Jail (yes=1)        | 47              | 82%            | 390               | 06.84              | 0—31                |
| Suspended Jail (days)             | 38              | 66%            | 21,081            | 369.84             | 0—1810              |
| No. Susp.JailSents. (yes=1)       | 38              | 66%            | 184               | 03.23              | 0—26                |
| Probation                         |                 |                |                   |                    |                     |
| Probation (years)                 | 45              | 79%            | 300               | 05.25              | 0—33                |
| No. Probations (yes=1)            | 45              | 79%            | 225               | 03.94              | 0—29                |
| Prison                            |                 |                |                   |                    |                     |
| Imprisonment (years)              | 45              | 79%            | 672               | 11.79              | 0—48                |
| No. of Imprison. (yes=1)          | 45              | 79%            | 156               | 02.74              | 0—13                |
| Suspended Prison (years)          | 18              | 30%            | 165               | 02.89              | 0—19                |
| No. of PrisonSusp. (yes=1)        | 16              | 28%            | 29                | 00.51              | 0—4                 |
| Community Service                 |                 |                |                   |                    |                     |
| Community Service (hrs)           | 10              | 18%            | 2,049             | 35.94              | 0—400               |
| No.Comm.Ser.Orders(yes=1)         | 10              | 18%            | 26                | 00.46              | 0—8                 |
| Other                             |                 |                |                   |                    |                     |
| CBC Facilities (1=yes)            | 23              | 41%            | 56                | 00.97              | 0—10                |
| Seized Property Orders<br>(Yes=1) | 12              | 20%            | 13                | 00.23              | 0—4                 |

Notes: The data source is *Midwest State* Courts Online, trial court data, including “Case Search” available to all users and advanced search for registered users, accessed August 2011.

Table A25. Participants' *Midwest State* Criminal Justice Cost (N=57)

|                  | N  | %     | \$ Total | \$ Mean  | Range of Fine      |
|------------------|----|-------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| No. Cases        | —  | —     | 1400     | 24.56    | 2 - 60             |
| Criminal Charges | —  | —     | 1957     | 34.33    | 4 - 100            |
| Original         | 57 | 100 % | 907846.2 | 15927.13 | 1311.76 - 83884.42 |
| Paid             | 57 | 100 % | 513978.8 | 9017.17  | 119.26 - 78199.69  |
| Due              | 52 | 92%   | 425368.6 | 7462.6   | 0 - 30319.98       |

Notes: The financial cost participants acquired during their criminal procedures that include court costs, fines, sub-charges, restitution, and other; the data source is *Midwest State Courts Online*, trial court data, including "Case Search" available to all users and advanced search for registered users, accessed August 2011.

Table A26. Ideal Parent Role, Delinquent/Criminal Role &amp; Client/Inmate Role

| Ideal Parent Role            | Delinquent/Criminal Role  | Client/Inmate Role     |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Home Stage                   | Street Stage  | Correctional Stage     |
| Be Present                   | Be Present  | Be Present             |
| Be Involved                  | Be Involved   | Be Involved            |
| Protect                      | Need to Front a Tough/Violent Image   | Loss of Privacy        |
| Guide                        | Avoid Commitment/Enjoy Freedom  | No Power/Autonomy      |
| Create/Maintain Relationship | Male Promiscuity  | No Financial Resources |
| Provide                      | <u>Drug Dealer:</u><br>For Profit Distribution of Illicit Subst.<br>Invest on a Legal Fund<br><u>Substance/Drug User:</u><br>Purchase and Use of Illicit Sub/Drugs<br>Loss of Control | Criminal Justice Debt  |

Note: Although conflicting roles (roles with conflicting expectations) can coexist in the self, limited resources (time, energy and money) and blurred boundaries (between social situations) bring forth role conflict to the center of role performance. In this case, role conflict between participants' (i) ideal parent role on the home stage, (ii) delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and (iii) client/inmate role on the correctional stage shapes participants' parent role performance throughout their life course.

Table A27. “Doing” Parenthood

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| The Ideal Parent Role<br>The Delinquent/Criminal Role<br>The Client/Inmate Role   | Emerging<br>Conflicting Roles<br>during Childhood | Ch 4: “Doing”<br>Parenthood within<br>Linked Lives     |
| Conception, Pregnancy & Childbirth<br>Preventing Paternity Fraud<br>Providing, Guiding & the Parent/Child<br>Relationship         | Initial Role Conflict                             | Ch 5: Transition into<br>“Doing” Parenthood            |
| Delinquent/Criminal Role Performance<br>Drug Dealing & Two-Sphere Parenthood<br>Substance/Drug Use & Partial Parenthood           | Delinquent/Criminal<br>Role vs. Parent Role       | Ch 6: “Doing”<br>Parenthood in the<br><i>Fast life</i> |
| Violence, Home & Children<br>Children Witness Participants'<br>Delinquency/Crime  | Remove Children                                   | Ch 7: “Doing”<br>Parenthood under<br>Surveillance      |
| Parental Arrest<br>Preparing Children for Parental Removal  | Removing Parents                                  |  |
| The Caretakers<br>Obstacles to Parental Presence<br>Other People Raising the Children   | Renegotiating Parent<br>Role from Jail/Prison     | Ch 8: <i>Snatched</i> from<br>“Doing” Parenthood       |
| Inability to Be Present<br>Inability to Be Involved<br>Inability to Provide<br>Prepare to Reintegrate                             | Parent Role vs.<br>Client/Inmate Role             | Ch 9: “Doing”<br>Parenthood under<br>Corrections       |
| Fathers Renegotiate w/ Children's Mothers<br>No Parental Rights<br>Renegotiate w/ Relative Caretakers<br>Renegotiate w/ Children  | Reintegration into<br>Parent Role                 | Ch 10: Reintegration<br>into “Doing”<br>Parenthood     |
| Returning, but Limited Presence<br>Returning, but Limited Involvement<br>Returning, but Limited Guiding                           | In Children’s Lives                               |  |
| Children's Resentment<br>Children's Conventionality<br>Children’s Victimization & Deviance<br>Children's Correctional Experiences | Linked Lives                                      | Ch 11: “Doing”<br>Parenthood in the<br>Aftermath       |
| A Generational Matter<br>Recidivism   | A Continuous<br>Process                           |  |

Note: Using a grounded theory approach to analyze the data (open coding, selective coding, theoretical coding, memoing, sorting, and connecting the overall ideas and theoretical abstractions), the findings suggest participants struggle with role conflict between the parent role, the delinquent/criminal role, and the client/inmate role throughout their life course in a cross-generational process (see Glaser and Strauss 1967).

## APPENDIX B. FIGURES

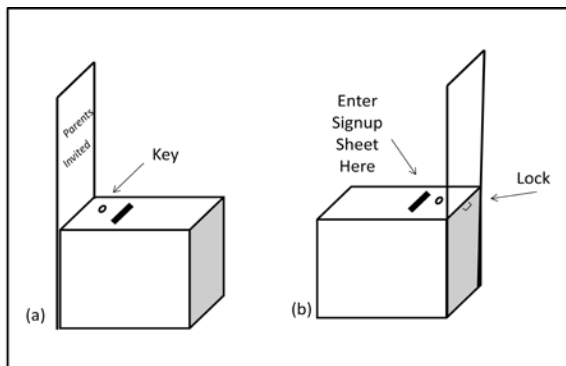


Figure B1. Safe Boxes Used during Initial Recruitment

Notes: These safe boxes were placed at the front desk (control desk) for interest individuals to turn in their signup sheet. The boxes provided the prospective participant privacy from other residents and the staff. Only the researcher had key to the boxes.

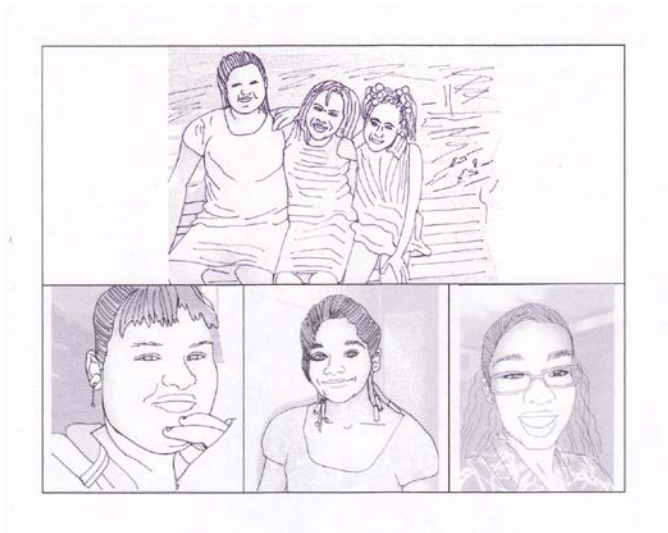


Figure B2. “From Little Girls to Young Women!”

Notes: When parents in the *fast life* or under correctional supervision lose contact with their children, children continue to develop. And as parents reintegrate into “doing” parenthood, they watch their children age years in seconds, from little girls to young women.



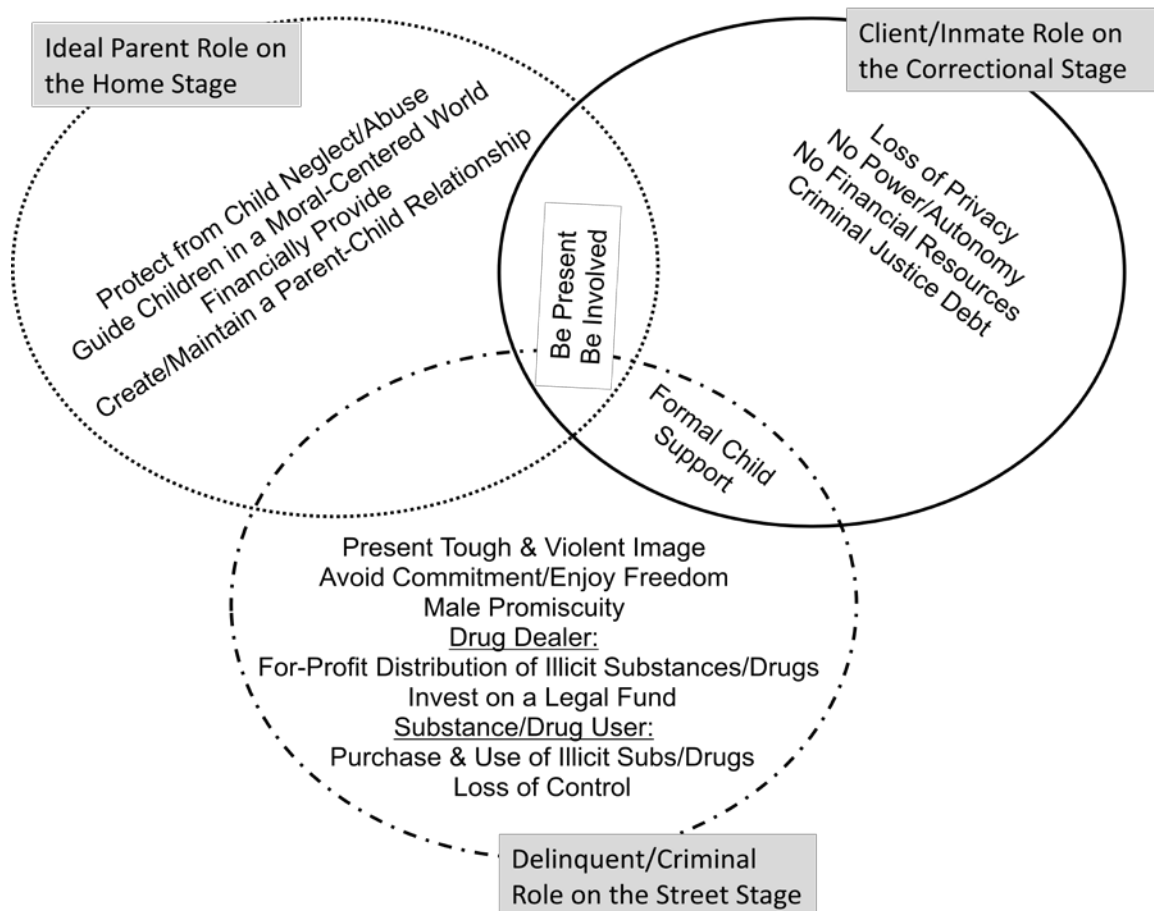


Figure B3. Three Conflicting Roles

Notes: Although conflicting roles (roles with conflicting expectations) can coexist in the self, limited resources (time, energy and money) and blurred boundaries (between social situations) bring forth role conflict to the center of role performance. In this case, role conflict between participants' (i) ideal parent role on the home stage, (ii) delinquent/criminal role on the street stage, and (iii) client/inmate role on the correctional stage shapes participants' parent role performance throughout their life course.

APPENDIX C. DOCUMENTS

## Document C1. Sex Offenders and the Chaperon Agreement

Source: *Midwest State* Department of Corrections Staff

The policies and procedures regarding sex offenders are highly dependent on the victim, such as whether s/he was an adult, a child, or a relative. For sex offenders with minor children, if the department of corrections perceives that the offender's children are at risk of victimization, they will require a Chaperon Agreement prior to the offender having contact with his/her minor children. To receive a Chaperon Agreement, the prospective chaperon is required to attend a meeting with a correctional counselor, the offender, and his/her parole/probation officer. During the meeting, the officer and counselor provide the prospective chaperon with the details of the sex offence—police reports, victims' statements, and other details—because the offender is not always clear about the details with family members. The prospective chaperon is presented with the detail to ensure s/he is aware of the possible risk. Once the prospective chaperon is informed of the details, the offender answers any questions the prospective chaperon might have. One of the counselors in the WRC described the meeting as a calm and non-confrontational discussion, not meant to *rub the offender's face in it*. DOC staff state that outcomes tend to be positive, where the families like to know and be involved, *eliminating the elephant in the room*. Offenders have described it as a positive experience, *like flushing the toilet*. There are a few cases where the prospective chaperon knows about the accusations and conviction, but refuses to believe that the offender engaged in such behavior. In these cases, Chaperon Agreement is not granted because the prospective chaperon would not be capable of protecting the child. Some leave without a chaperon agreement and return a few months later with a different perspective to request it. The child's wellbeing is the priority.

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