

WOMEN'S DESCENT INTO CRIME

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The rate of criminal involvement of women has historically been lower than that of men; however, that is changing. Changes in societal norms and progress toward gender equality have broadened the scope of female behaviors, and modified traditional female responsibilities and roles in the home potentially influencing their participation in the crime market. However, the bulk of research on criminal activity is based on the male experience. Thus, less is known about female criminals and their motivations. A closer look at women's trajectories into crime therefore will likely yield important insights.

This study investigates the descent into drugs and crime from the perspective of women who have previously been charged with crimes beyond simple possession of illegal substances. The key interest lies in shedding light on the experiences that set these women on the path to criminal activity. Specifically, this project aims to explore what the women themselves perceive as precursors to their criminal experience.

Our findings suggest that female descent into crime may run contrary to many widely held beliefs, such as: that criminal careers begin in adolescence; that women become participants in crime through the influence of significant others; and that criminals come from lower class households.

Robert Aponte, Ph.D., Chair

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INTRODUCTION

In 2015, Indianapolis was ranked tenth in murder rates among cities nationwide for 2014 (McQuaid 2015; Rizzo 2015). Those who commit such violent crime do not just begin with murder. There is typically a triggering event, where individuals are initially introduced to criminal behavior and begin down the path of crime. Quite often, the descent into crime is coupled with the use of illegal substances. Accordingly, Indianapolis is not just battling rising crime rates, but it is also battling an ongoing drug epidemic, affecting both men and women. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, Indiana saw a 28% increase in Drug overdose deaths from 2016-2017 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2017).

Rising crime and drug rates greatly affect every aspect of life in a large city. Not only do they increase the chance of victimization, but they can also deter city growth. Companies are less likely to come to Indianapolis if they can go to another city with lower crime rates (Mustard 2010). The punitive tactics currently in use against criminal and drug activity are not working. If we can investigate the circumstances surrounding the beginning of criminal and drug activity, new methods to combat this activity can be developed. New directions for research efforts may be warranted.

The rate of criminal involvement of women has been historically lower than that of men; however, that is changing. Currently and historically, the majority of criminals are or have been male. However, the number of female criminals began to rise when women entered the labor market in large proportions (Campaniello 2014). Changes in societal norms and progress towards gender equality may have broadened the scope of female behaviors, and modified traditional female responsibilities and roles in the home,

increasing their participation in both the labor market and the crime market (Campaniello 2014). However, the bulk of research on criminal activity is based on the male experience. Thus, less is known about female criminals and their motivations. A closer look at women's trajectories into crime therefore will likely yield important insights. This study intends to investigate the descent into drugs and crime from the perspective of women who have previously been charged with crimes beyond mere possession of illegal substances. The key interest is on shedding light on the women's experiences that set them on the path leading to engaging in criminal activities. Specifically, this project aims to explore what the women themselves perceive as precursors to their criminal experience.

PRIOR RESEARCH AND SIGNIFICANCE

Criminal activity is not a new topic in social history: for as long as there have been societies, there have been criminals. Historically, the majority of criminal offenders have been male, but with the changes in social norms and the evolution of gender equality, the tides are changing. While men still comprise the vast majority of those in the criminal population, the number of women offenders is on the rise. To date, not enough is known about the reasons behind the trends in the criminal gender gap, or the reasons behind differences in criminal behavior. The female prison population makes up just under 10% of the prison population in the United States (World Prison Brief 2015). Research shows that women tend to commit fewer crimes than men, and that their crimes are less violent and less severe, but the factors driving these differences have yet to be identified. In the 1980's, boys were four times more likely than girls to be arrested; today they are only two times as likely to be arrested as girls (Cauffman 2008). Female contact with the criminal justice system is on the rise (Carrington 2013; Javadani, Sadeh et al. 2011; McIvor 2010; Puzzanchera, 2009; Shepherd, Luebbers, and Dolan 2013; Solinas-Saunders and Stacer 2017).

There are some hypotheses about the differences of criminal activity between male and female offenders. For instance, some theorize that women's entrance into the labor force can be linked to the rise of female offending; others theorize that males and females experience different types of strain which contribute to their varying criminal behaviors; yet others theorize that shifting modes of social control and policing methods have expanded the breadth of activities considered criminal, thereby ensnaring more females. (Campaniello 2014)

One hypothesis holds that the rise in the number of women committing crimes can be linked to the entrance of women into the labor force (Campaniello 2014; World Prison Brief 2014). It posits that as women entered the work force their responsibilities in the home were lessened, giving them more freedom outside the home. However, research supports the existence of the second shift: women, after working their wage-earning jobs, come home to take on the household duties of cleaning, cooking, and attending to children (Hochschild and Machung 2003). This could mitigate the hypothesized relationship between increased labor force participation and increased crime.

Another hypothesis focuses on the General Strain Theory. The General Strain theory discusses the different types of strain that males and females tend to experience. Males are more likely to experience strain related to the failure of achieving material success and life experiences; in other words, failure to get something they want. Females tend to experience strain related to relationships where they are treated badly. These strains include physical and emotional abuse, and having parents who are incarcerated or drug dependent. The General Strain Theory states that men are more likely to experience strain that leads them toward crime such as property damage or violent crimes, where women are more likely to experience strain that leads them towards self-destructive behaviors, like drug abuse and crimes that are typically committed to support substance abuse habits. (Solinas-Saunders and Stacer 2017)

Yet another theory holds that the increase in female offending can be linked to new methods of social control and policing methods. This theory attributes the rise in female offending to a method of social control called “up-crimming”. This involves the criminalization of less serious forms of female behavioral disorders, like occupying

public space, expressing sexuality, and being unruly or disobedient. In the past, such instances would not lead to formal charges.

This theory also suggests that female violence is thought to be less serious on the scale of aggression as compared to that of their male counterparts (Carrington 2013). However, there are lower limits for intervening when females act in aggressive manners than when males do so, meaning that female violence generates a larger social reaction than male violence. In addition, women are now more likely to contribute to youth sub-cultures where they are more vulnerable to criminalization, while in the past they were more likely to spend their time with their girlfriends in the privacy of a personal residence (Carrington 2013).

Information about women's criminal enterprises is fundamentally essential to criminological theory (Block et al. 2010); without further investigation and information, previous theories remain inconclusive. But, most of research on crime has focused on male criminality. Still, this research has been used to create risk assessments used on incarcerated persons of both sexes that may not accurately assess the female incarcerated population. For instance, some of the existing risk assessments fail to consider women's economic disadvantages and the prevalence of prior experiences of victimization (Reisig, Holtfreter, and Morash 2006). This becomes a problem because women sometimes are thought to become offenders as a result of a survival strategy (Nuytiens and Christianens 2016). Young women sometimes run away from home in an attempt to remove themselves from dangerous situations of abuse (DeHart et al. 2013). Running away puts them at risk for homelessness and behaviors like prostitution and drug abuse leading them up a pathway to crime in adulthood. It is critical to emphasize that girls are

currently more likely to enter the juvenile justice system because of status offense charges than boys (Block et al. 2010; Snyder 2005). A status offense is a behavior that minors can be arrested for but not adults, like running away or underage drinking (Javdani, Sadeh, and Verona 2011). To the extent that the slightest blemish on someone's record will predispose them to receiving harsher sanctions for subsequent, even minor, offenses, then girls are especially disadvantaged by the expansion of the criminalization of status offenses. In addition to the 'anchoring' of their names in the 'record books,' the 'labeling' may itself facilitate the girls' furtherance in deviant activities (Javdani et al. 2011). Status offenses can become the start of a criminal record creating an ongoing and unwarranted relationship with the police. Once a criminal record is started it can lead to additional offenses.

While women represent a small percentage of the criminal population, ignoring their offenses may pose a high cost to society. Because women traditionally are the primary caretakers for children, the elderly, and the disabled (Block et al. 2010), the incarceration of this population can precipitate secondary societal burdens not often taken into consideration. Mandated minimum sentences may affect women more than their male counterparts because women are more likely to have dependent children or relatives sharing their home (McIvor 2010). However, these responsibilities may also be a source of financial strain, and motivation for women to enter the crime market, as a means to provide for their family and friends (Cobbina 2009). With crime becoming an enterprise involving both men and women, it is important to investigate what distinguishes female criminal behavior from that of men, and to determine whether policy recommendations to reduce criminal activity should vary by sex or gender (Campaniello 2014).

Investigating the gender gap in terms of the crime market and its progression, and isolating its main causes, may generate information useful to help deter crime (Campaniello 2014). The labor market is widely thought to have an influential relationship with the criminal market for both men and women. It is widely assumed that people who cannot obtain adequate hours at a suitable wage are at higher risk of supplementing their income through illegal means. Although research on the topic has suffered a persistent gap between theory and empirical evidence, recent studies are showing support for the idea (Mustard 2010). This suggests another dimension to the relationship of women and crime, and how their lower earning capacity influences their entrance into the criminal market. According to the Women's Bureau in the U.S. Department of Labor, in 2014, women who worked full time year-round earned on average 79% of men's median annual earnings. If women make less than men, and often have the added responsibility of caring for dependents at home, how does that influence them in regards to supplementing their income illegally?

However, a large percentage of the research findings pertaining to labor markets and crime use data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports; these reports are compiled from reported offenses for seven felonies including murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and auto theft (Mustard 2010). Because most of the research uses these reports as sources of aggregate data, we know little about how the labor market affects other types of crime because these reports do not track other offenses like drug dealing, embezzlement, tax evasion, prostitution and money laundering, thus giving an incomplete picture of any possible relationship.

Most of the research on delinquent behavior also exclusively utilizes data from official records, with far fewer studies utilizing data from self-reports alone or in tandem with official conviction data (Ahonen et al. 2017). While previous research has found female offending to be less prevalent and less violent than that of their male counterparts, recent statistics have shown an alarming increase in their activity. Crime arrest data for the United States for simple assault by young women rose 10% from 1998 - 2007, while the corresponding rates for young men decreased by 4% (Puzzanchera 2009). Additionally, detention rates of young female offenders rose in the United States by 98% between 1991 and 2003 (Shepherd et al. 2013). In 2008, national arrest data showed a surge in crime across several categories for females during a period when arrests for males either decreased or remained the same; this shift decreased the gap between male and female arrests (Javdani et al. 2011). Surges and trends like these emphasize the need for investigation into the underlying social factors that are contributing to increased contact with law enforcement for girls and women.

It is widely accepted that for every known committed crime there is some number of unknown crimes that have also been committed. The unknown crimes, in conjunction with the overlapping category of under reported crime, are referred to as the “dark figures” of crime. These estimates are formed by comparing self-reported crimes to those in official records. Studies on the dark figure of male delinquency show that the majority of males, in some studies showing percentages as high as 82%, report delinquency during adolescence. By contrast, official records showed that only 35% of all the boys were detected within the juvenile delinquency justice system (Ahonen et al. 2017). Likewise, for every female offender between the ages of 12 and 17 who has received a charge by

the police, there were about 3 self-reported offenders who were undetected by the juvenile justice system (Ahonen et al. 2017).

The Ahonen et al.'s (2017) previous study uses both self-reporting and official statistics to investigate the dark figure of crime. While this study looks exclusively at juvenile delinquency, other studies provide evidence that criminal activity may actually start in adulthood. However, deficits in recall and knowledge of the law by respondents may easily account for discrepancies. Technically, truancy is an arrestable offense; but how many juveniles would themselves consider this a crime? On the other hand, if the official statistics are counting status offenses like truancy as a criminal offense, then the official statistics could also be misleading.

A study by Block et al. examining the long-term patterns of female offenders, findings were reported that contradict widely accepted beliefs about offending. For instance, the study reported evidence contradicting the widely accepted belief that the first known offense is typically self-reported to have occurred between the ages of 8 and 14. This study found that a significant percentage of women begin offending in adulthood. With in-depth interviews, it may be possible to shed some light on findings like these to increase understanding about beginning criminal trajectories and may prompt further research.

If the root causes of criminal behaviors between genders can be established, specifically, if significant differences can be found in the factors behind the onset of criminal behaviors in males and females, these findings could have an enormous impact on deterrence research and practice. For example, young women who self-report delinquent behaviors are more likely to be strongly encouraged in these behaviors by

their current romantic partners (Cauffman 2008). Gender-neutral sentencing laws fail to recognize and account for the distinctions between major and minor players in drug organizations; female couriers face federally mandated sentences of 15 years to life for a first felony conviction regardless of how responsible they were, or whether or not involvement came from coercion or threats against themselves and or their families (McIvor 2010). Investigating these influences might well have profound positive consequences for the research surrounding young women and their criminal trajectories.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Using an Interpretivist perspective and qualitative research design, this study will explore the experiences of women previously convicted with criminal actions in regards to their descent into drugs and crime. This will be done by interviewing participants who have been convicted of crimes other than illicit drug possession, but not excluding possession. The participants should have convictions other than (or in addition to) possession, to indicate an enduring criminal history and be at least 18 years or older. A qualitative design is best suited to this project because it allows insight into the topic from the perspective of the women involved in the criminal activities. Using qualitative methods will allow insight into the process of becoming a criminal, and stimulate insight into the participants' frame of reference.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity refers to the influence the researchers themselves have on the study. Reflexivity is important in qualitative research because it assists the researcher in recognizing how their social background, personality, and assumptions can affect the research. The researchers, along with the participants, are a product of society with different beliefs, points of view, and experiences. This background forms a large part of how we understand the world around us. (Hesse-Biber and L. Yaiser 2004)

The quality of the findings was improved by researcher reflexivity and taking detailed notes. Conducting interviews female-to-female encourages participants to open up without feeling the need to present a tough persona or the need to be defensive.

Sample Design and Recruitment

The sample consists of 5 women previously convicted with crimes beyond illicit drug possession charges and currently are not being monitored by correction services (probation, work release, parole). Participants' age range from 21 to 47 years old.

Recruitment flyers were hung up on public posting boards at grocery stores, libraries, and coffee shops. Recruitment posts were also made on the social media sites Facebook and Instagram, and recruitment emails were sent out on Sociology department listserv. Copies of the recruitment materials can be found in Appendix A.

Research Instruments and Content

Upon receiving messages of interest by the participants, via phone or email, I responded to confirm their interest in participating in this study. All participants were asked three preliminary prescreening questions to establish eligibility in participating. Potential applicants will be asked: 1) Are you at least 18 years old? 2) Have you been arrested for non-drug offenses? 3) Are you being monitored by any correctional programs like work release, parole, or probation? To be eligible to participate in the study the potential participants must answer yes to the first two questions and no to the final question. If a participant did not clear the prescreening process, their information was destroyed and they were thanked for their interest.

Once through the prescreening process, the participant received a copy of the study information sheet via email within 24 hours of the prescreening. Upon consent to participate in the study; a date, time, and place was selected to conduct the interview no sooner than the following week. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured

format; this format was chosen to allow for deviation from the guide if relevant topics emerged during the interview, permitting the interviewer to follow that topic. The interview guide consisted of 10 main questions; each main question included 2-8 probing and follow up questions, to guide the interview if necessary. The 8 main questions were: 1) What was it like growing up in your family? 2) What was your educational experience like? 3) Do you remember the first time you were exposed to an illegal drug substance or a legal substance used in an illegal manor to obtain a high? 4) Did ___ ever become a craving? If so when did ___ become a craving? 5) Do you remember the first time you broke the law? 6) Can you tell me about the first time you were arrested? 7) What is your arrest record like? 8) Have you ever been affiliated with a gang or known someone who was? 9) Have you ever taken time for someone else? 10) Do you have any regrets?

Upon conclusion of the semi-structured interview, the participants were asked: Is there anything else you would like to share about this topic that I may have missed? A copy of the complete interview guide can be found in Appendix B.

INTERVIEWS AND ANALYSIS

Interviews were held in a mutually beneficial location for both the participant and the interviewer. Participants were compensated for their time with a \$10 Visa gift card. To assist in confidentiality, participants were not asked for identifying information during the recorded interview process. Interviews lasted between 14 and 46 minutes and were audio recorded for later transcription using the Olympus Digital Voice Recorder WS-100. Interviews focused on the participants' experiences with drugs and crime. Semi-structured interviews explored the participants' past experiences, including family, environmental, and educational background, initial exposure to drugs and other criminal behaviors, criminal records, gang affiliation, and regrets. After the interviews were completed they were uploaded to a Google Drive Business account on an encrypted and password secured laptop and removed from the audio recorder. After transcription, the interviews were examined in tandem with the audio recording to check for errors. Next, the transcripts were cleaned and coded to be analyzed for recurring themes and patterns. These themes and patterns were then sorted and organized into corresponding memos.

Quality of the Findings

Several strategies were used to help improve the quality of this study. All interviews were audio recorded with the consent of the participant. After the interview was concluded, the audio recordings were downloaded to an encrypted and password protected laptop, and saved to a Google Drive Business account, and then removed from the audio recorder. Each interview was transcribed using verbatim transcription to accurately document the words of the participants.

Human Subjects

In this study, precautions were adopted to protect the participants. Each participant was given the choice to choose or be issued a pseudonym to protect confidentiality. Interviews were administered in private areas within public settings, which included a brief introduction to the purpose of the study, and the reading of the informed consent form. The participants were provided the opportunity to ask questions before the interview started. During the audio recorded interview, no identifying information was collected. All files that may be linked to the participants were named using the pseudonym selected and all emails and contact information that could be linked to the participant was deleted. Overall, there was little risk associated with this study for the participants. However, there was a slight risk of emotional distress to participants resulting from recalling past circumstances or behavior, or in recalling details of events not previously explored. There was virtually zero risk of potential loss of confidentiality. Unadjudicated serious crimes disclosed during the interview would not have been reported to the authorities unless child abuse or neglect was suspected; participants were made explicitly aware of this possible risk.

FINDINGS

Five interviews were completed during a two month time span, between April and June 2018. The participants included three White women, one African American woman, and one Asian American woman. During the course of the interviews, a number of similarities and common themes emerged.

Family Circumstances

When asked about the circumstances of their family and upbringing, two participants, Anastasia and Norma, both described their families as “perfect.” Two participants reported experiencing abuse during childhood, Michelle and Alexandra. While Crystal reported her environment as safe, she also recalled that she experienced difficulties stemming from the need to adapt to both cultures in her bicultural family:

Growing up I had a father who is an immigrant. I was raised in a religion which was very Islam, which is very difficult to do as a first generation of an immigrant’s daughter. I’m not sure how’d you say that; but, that was very difficult. It was very difficult because my father was very strict. And that caused some problems with him not really understanding how to raise American daughters.

Only one participant, Michelle, reported her childhood as being “awful” and elaborated:

I was an only child until I was about 14. And my mom was very, very, very religious. Less spiritual, just very about rules and regulations. So, there was physical abuse. I can identify it as such now. I’m sure it wouldn’t have been seen as such back then because there is nothing wrong with whipping your kids with a belt or extension cord. But you know, anytime you leave a mark its abuse. Yeah it was pretty dicey.

Even though Anastasia and Norma both reported having perfect family situations, both have drastically different family traditions and routines. Anastasia talked about family dinners and spending time together, “We would just always spend time together before,

when my parents were still married.” Norma elaborated a little more about her “non-traditional” family routines:

We were pretty laid back. Like if you don’t want to show up for dinner, like, you can eat cereal later then, or make yourself some left overs or whatever. We did Christmas on Christmas Eve because my mom always did that as a kid. But like, we didn’t go to church; they would take me to church, like if my friends were going there. But they didn’t force us to go to church. Or ask us to, even, which I liked. And uh, honestly not very traditional. I played high school softball and my parents didn’t show up for most of my games because, first of all, it made me very nervous. And second of all, I wasn’t going to be upset about it if they didn’t, you know what I mean? We were a pretty normal family.

Economic Comfort

When asked about the levels of economic comfort, all participants reported being raised in a middle-class household for most of their youth. The economic status varied, from almost upper class to working class, during other times of the participants’ youth. Despite some periods of income insecurity, all participants remembered having most of their basic needs met. One participant, Norma, reflected on a time of adjustment when one parent lost a job and the family adjusted to new financial limits:

Ummm [our family was] like, upper middle class. Probably almost upper class until my mom lost her job, when I was like 12. And then it was just my dad working from then on and it was kinda hard. Like realizing, oooh, probably not going to be able to go and buy me these \$150 pair of basketball shoes now. Like we kinda reeled in it, a little bit. We kinda struggled to stay in the same house as when my mom was working. They do still live there.

Crystal talked about her father’s ability to provide for the family and the kind of lifestyle they had:

My dad’s biggest fear was that we would know the poverty that he did. When he came over here he made a vow between him and God that we would never want for anything. And we never did. We were probably... we are not overly wealthy... we did have a lot of perks through the fact that he made, roughly I would say about \$250,000 a year. And he was

very good with money; he would have like an ability, he would invest in real estate and that kind of thing. He would have an ability to, like, never go through poverty again... Dad and mom both taught until my brother was born. Then she stayed home. But we definitely had a lifestyle; we went on vacations; I flew many times to different places.

Michelle spoke briefly about her mother's ability to provide:

[We were] maybe middle class. I don't ever remember feeling like I didn't have basic needs met. The things I wanted were the things other kids had, like umm, pants and make-up. Those things I didn't have because there was some lack of... umm... [it was] against the religion.

Alexandra also experienced a time of financial adjustment after her parents divorced:

I'd say we were probably lower middle class. Before the divorce my father worked and my mother was a stay-at-home mom. After the divorce, we would probably be considered more towards lower class, or working class. We always had what we needed, but not a lot of bells and whistles to go along with it. Our clothes and shoes were from Walmart and we had the food we needed but none of the popular snack items that other people had like fruit roll ups and junk food.

Discrimination

When the participants were asked about any discrimination they encountered, all except for one participant reported facing discrimination. Anastasia reported no recollection of being discriminated against. Alexandra reported minor instances of discrimination based on her gender: "The only discrimination I've ever really noticed is just for being a woman. Pretty standard stuff, like assuming I don't know anything about cars and stuff like that." Norma reported discrimination based on her sexual orientation "All my friends dropped me when they found that I was gay, and didn't even talk to me anymore. Just overnight. I didn't really have any friends anymore after that. Which was fine, that's why I graduated early. One day I was like, I just can't do this. They worked

my schedule out so I could graduate six months early.” Michelle and Crystal both have recollections of discrimination. Michelle recalls discrimination based on her religion:

The discrimination wasn't sparked by race, it was sparked by religion. My mom had told me not to fight, so everybody fought me. I got beat up every single day, every single day. And every single day my mom would take me to whoever person's house it was and talk to their mom. And it was not effective, because the very next day someone else would beat me up. It was awful, it was awful.

Crystal reported discrimination based on race. She elaborated:

Unfortunately growing up in the country in a small school in-town, there was a lot of racism. There was very much a large impact on all of us. There was a word we heard a lot especially my brother, for some reason they were harder on him. I love school and learning and I always did well; socially it was hellish. And I ended up, all of all, us my brother and sisters did, transferring out of our school system to another one of the city schools, which was more integrated. We did that in high school... It's hard to understand why people would hold something against you that you have no control over. All of us are visibly mixed because my dad is Islamic and has African in him. And so, it was very confusing to a child as to why someone would hold something against us we have no control over.

In Summary, four of the five participants reported experiencing discrimination, but the basis of the bias differed for each of them.

Illegal Substance Exposure

When asked about exposure to illegal substances only one participant, Crystal, reported having no exposure at all, “Oh, no, I didn't do drugs. Drugs are not a problem for me.” Alexandra elaborated on having been introduced but never partaking in the substance use:

I've never actually done any drugs. I have always known they were around and knew enough people who dabbled. But I wasn't ever directly exposed until I was an adult. But everyone always respected my decision not to be involved. I'd go out to lunch with coworkers and they would get high while I waited outside before we went to lunch. One of my coworkers thought it was funny that I had never seen weed before so she took it upon herself to show me.

Michelle reports using one time but not continuing the use:

As an adult, the first time... like, I knew there were drugs. But I think I thought there was only one drug. Because you heard, back in the 80's it was cocaine... cocaine, cocaine or crack cocaine. I didn't know there were all these drugs, I just thought there was one. I remember people saying if you do it even one time, even to try it, you're addicted. So, I just never was like, oooh, I wonder, oh, it would never happen to me... I was never like that about drugs. Then maybe when I was 20, 21 I had my own place. There were these people that lived around me in the apartment building and they smoked marijuana all the time. I don't remember, I don't think I said, oooh, let me try that. I wasn't really adventurous like that. So, I think they offered it to me, and I was like, well it can't be too bad. These people are normal. Umm, I remember I had heard about it, like people saying it gives you the munchies, and you have all this energy. That wasn't my experience. I was sleepy and I had a two year old. And I was like okay, I won't be doing this again. I have a baby; I can't be sleepy. That was the end of that for me.

Two participants, Anastasia and Norma, report having a period of time where they frequently used illegal substances. Anastasia: "When I lived in Anderson, I was dating this guy. And we just went downhill really quickly. Like quickly progressing, I guess, to harder drugs and luckily that's when I went to jail. And that's when I stopped all of that."

Norma elaborated further on her experience:

[I was] 15 probably. My friend been smoking weed for a while; and it was a couple days before school started in the summer. And I think she was like smoking a pipe and I hit it one time and I coughed so hard that I cried for like 20 minutes. And I didn't do it again for like a year and a half. But I did start drinking, like, a year and a half later, in high school, at parties. It was stupid; because what kids can get their hands on is like, half gallons of cheap vodka. I was friends with some party animals in high school. I was probably one of them to actually, honestly... when I was 21. Like from 19 to 20 I got pretty addicted to painkillers for like, almost a year. I probably spent like \$70 a day on it. I could take enough in a day that could like, kill some people. I had to take two weeks off of work. My bosses even knew, and said I needed some time off. I took two weeks off of work and spent like 12 hours a day sweating it out and playing Skyrim in my bedroom by myself. And I haven't touched them since. And that's good because like, everyone I know, well not everyone I know, like, a lot of people I used to go to high school with are addicted to heroin and painkillers and stuff now. So I'm glad, because like, heroin wasn't a thing ten years ago; to me at least. I didn't know about it.

Age of Criminal Behavior Onset

Out of all the participants only two, Alexandra and Michelle, reported limited criminal activity as young children. Michelle did not remember many details but she did recall, "I don't remember the first time, but I remember there was a first time, and I remember it was a store and I remember it was something edible. Like a candy bar or gum. I just don't remember exactly what it was. But I remember I was young, like really young, like still living with my mom. Alexandra remembered fairly clearly and elaborated on what she remembered from the first time she offended:

When I was pretty young... I don't remember how old I was.. sometime between 4th and 6th grade, I hung out with a girl in the neighborhood that I wasn't supposed to be hanging out with. We would walk down to Walmart and we stole things a couple times. I was pretty young, I must've been in elementary school still or maybe right between elementary and middle school.

Anastasia's first offense was as a teenager, a freshman in high school: "I don't know where exactly, or who from, but I got almost caught. Or, well I guess I did get caught, but they just made me pay for it instead of arresting me. Stealing from a Claire's when I was, like, a freshman." The other two participants reported their first offenses occurring in adulthood. Norma elaborated on the circumstances surrounding her first offense:

I stole an Xbox 360 controller and like, one game. I was just going to go return it for store credit so I can go get my cat food, cat litter and maybe some food for us or something. And I got caught. I didn't leave the store with anything. Like, they caught me at the front door, there were no cops involved.

Crystal also committed her first offense as an adult, "My son needed a shirt for a college interview and I walked out of the store with it. I was caught for that first time. I didn't go to jail because it was a first offense but I had a year of unsupervised probation. And so that was the first time.

Motivation for Criminal Behavior

One participant, Alexandra, reported acting on opportunity for her criminal offenses as an adult:

I worked at several jewelry stores before this one and never even considered stealing before. This one was just managed so poorly, there were always mistakes in the diamond count and everyone overlooked it, assuming it would correct itself the next day. I guess I just saw an opportunity, and I guess somewhere I wanted to test the limits.

Three participants, Crystal, Norma, and Michelle talked about having financial difficulties before committing illegal acts. Michelle even “felt desperate.” She elaborates:

My gas bill was getting ready to be turned off or disconnected. You know the situation wasn't desperate, I could've let my gas be disconnected. I mean that's happen before and people survive. You know in hindsight. Obviously now I can look at in that manner. So, my gas would've been off, I would've been okay. But I didn't feel like it in the moment.

Crystal talked about ongoing financial issues that her family was experiencing at the time, “My husband and I, we have some financial problems because of being young and stupid, we had our kids in college and got a lot of credit card debt.” Crystal also talked about the effects of medication on her actions “I was on a drug for seizures, because I've had seizures on and off all my life. That has been known to cause impulsive behavior. And when I started, it's called Trileptal, and what I was on, and I started shopping a lot. And I love to shop but I got even more so. I do think the medicine had something to do with it, but it was my own choices. Because if I lied to myself about it, would be so much easier to justify it again.” Norma's financial issues stemmed from moving to a new town and not being able to find work. Norma elaborates:

[My girlfriend] and I moved to [a new town] for like, a fresh start, and were trying to get away from the addiction. Like, we didn't want to know where we could even find them, which I don't think was actually a very smart idea in the long run. But it sounded fun at the time. I was like, 23. And we move down to [a college town] and didn't really realize that it was May, and it's a ghost town, and the summer. And no restaurants are hiring;

that's where we've always worked. Nothing was hiring because everybody's out of school. And one night, I think we need to cat litter and cat food and stuff. That's not exactly something you can just walk out the front door with at Walmart, and it's still going to cost me 40 bucks. So, I stole an Xbox 360 controller and like, one game. I was just going to go return it for store credit so I can go get my cat food, cat litter and maybe some food for us or something.

Criminal Influence

Two participants, Anastasia and Alexandra, linked their criminal behaviors to intimate relationships. Anastasia seemed reluctant to admit to being influenced by another individual, "I don't want to say for sure, because I make my own decisions. But I'm pretty confident that had I not dated the guy I was dating at the time that I wouldn't have A) been arrested and then B) failed my probation. But I don't want to say that for sure." Alexandra also admitted to being influenced by other individuals:

Initially it was the girl in the neighborhood, but then as an adult I was seeing a guy at the time. He had a friend who was a security guard, who was taking stuff from the places he was patrolling at night. He was having the guy I was seeing meet him there so he could pick up the items. Sometimes I would ride along. I think that is what got me thinking about it. I really liked this guy and I wanted to prove I was cool or capable or badass, or something, I guess.

Norma seemed to initially want to say that she was influenced by another person, but decided they did not influence her to commit the offense, "Maybe [my girlfriend], just because she was too scared to do it herself and one of us needed to. But not really, no. I wouldn't call it her or anybody's fault. It was just me being an idiot." Crystal and Michelle both said they were not influenced by anyone else to commit their illegal acts. Crystal admitted that she "came up with it all on her own." She went on to say with sarcasm, "It was totally my own brilliant idea. You know, it just tells you in the end, it was a pride thing too. I had so much pride, thinking I was so much better or whatever."

Michelle was even questioned by the police about other peoples' involvement; she elaborates:

They told me, I guess, they had already been investigating me. Because they were wanting me to give them the name of somebody who was doing this with me. And I was like no, I'm not a part of some like, credit card ring. I just did this and then started paying it back because I felt bad. And he said, yeah, that's what we heard about you, that you would never do something like this. The person we talked to thought we had the wrong person, because you would never do something like this.

Habitual Criminal Activity

Michelle reported having been arrested just one time and was "never incarcerated". Alexandra also reported only having one criminal charge, but admitted to have additional arrestable offenses, "[My boyfriend had a] friend who was a security guard [and] was taking stuff from the places he was patrolling at night. He was having [my boyfriend] meet him there so he could pick up the items. Sometimes I would ride along." This would have made Alexandra an accessory. Alexandra also admitted, "I had been stealing from the department for a while, though." This could also have resulted in several additional charges. Anastasia had been arrested twice; once for possession and once for theft. Though she denies involvement beyond accessory; Anastasia elaborates:

That's where it really [complicated]. Well... I know I was wrong in being there, but I was sitting in the back of my friend's car and they were getting out and car hopping. So like getting in somebody else's car, if it's unlocked and taking valuable stuff out of it. And I knew that I didn't want to do that, and like, I didn't feel comfortable stealing from people, but I was still in the car and they got caught. And I still got the same charge they did.

Crystal also had been arrested more than once, but both arrests were for shoplifting. She elaborated:

The second time was about a year after the first time. And I think that the consequences just must not have been severe enough. And one of my kids

needed something, and so I shoplifted a shirt and some summer clothes for them. And again I was caught right away. Which was probably a good thing. And when I was caught it was a year, because it was the second time.

Norma reported multiple arrests for a variety of charges, “[Shoplifting,] DUI, [and] disorderly conduct; I called a cop a dick. She elaborated:

I called a cop a dick. We called the cops on one of our neighbors. The dude used to beat the crap out of his girl and one night it was really bad, so we called the cops. When they got there he was already gone so they wouldn't do anything to help her. It was bullshit, you could see how badly he beat her, she was really messed up. They wouldn't even wait for him to come back, and take him just for overnight. So I told him he was being a dick and he didn't like that. [Other than that] I got a few speeding tickets and stuff, but [those are the only times I've been arrested]. For the DUI I was on probation; I was sentenced to six months but it ended up doing nine because it took nine to complete the alcohol classes I was mandated to complete. [I've never gone to jail long term] just probation, and jail time waiting to be bailed out. I asked my public defender [if] I could fight it? And he said yes, will you please, I never get to fight cases. I just [didn't] want to take the risk of even spending a day in jail [he said that I would]. And I was like no, I'd rather just say that I'm guilty. It was \$300, I didn't get bailed out for that one, I just waited for the 48 hours. They charged me 300 bucks and court costs, and that was it. And the judge even asked me, too, are you sure you don't want to fight this? Because it was kind of sketchy. Even the other cops on the scene were like, we're sorry, honey, he's in charge.

Regrets

All participants reported regretting criminal behaviors. Anastasia “definitely” regretted her behaviors but she mostly regretted “ever getting into hard drugs, it kinda helped me get arrested and what not. It was immediate; once we started dating, it was like oh, try Xanax, oh try this, oh then this, and it just... I dunno. I regret [not having the] power to say no.” Alexandra regretted everything; she said “I never wanted to become a criminal.” Norma also regretted “all of it.” She said she was, “... embarrassed. Literally just embarrassed. Like, oh god, I thought that was okay.” Michelle also talked about

embarrassment: “I feel bad and ashamed. And just like, god, what I was I thinking? Like, when I think about it, it’s like, so morbid really, somebody died and I did that to them, it’s awful. Like I feel ashamed too, but I mean, I’m just glad I got through it. Crystal elaborated on her regrets:

It was just the point where I feel ashamed, but I owned it. There’s no excuse for it. Is just something that I have to live with, and I have to realize that I have to go forward. Next year will be five years, which is significant because it’s the year that I can have it dropped. And the second one, because I shoplifted a second time, will be able to be cleared from my record in 2021. So, I will be able to be a law-abiding citizen... I do think the medicine had something to do with it, but it was my own choices... It nearly destroyed my family. My oldest son, we are only now just getting our relationship really back... It was never worth the pain I caused myself and others; not at all. It was the most hellish stupid thing I have ever done.

Taking Time

Alexandra, Crystal, and Norma all responded with a straight “no” when asked if anyone else had approached them, or asked them to take on an additional charge for them. Michelle also responded with a no, but elaborated on her feelings about the topic:

No, I have not. And let me tell you, that has got to be the dumbest thing I can ever think of somebody doing, ever. That is the dumbest thing ever. I cannot wrap my mind around that. I have children, I have children who would do that. Because they... for them... I have two sons that are like, very anti-snitch. I mean to the point that they say they would take time for somebody else. Now, one son is really brilliant and so he’s like yeah, I would say I did it but I wouldn’t do no time, because I know the legal system. In other words he’s saying that it wouldn’t be so bad for him, because he would be able to get out of it. But he would take the charge. And I told him I thought he was stupid. I would never, ever do that. I just can’t wrap my head around that, I know that there’s people that do that, I just cannot wrap my head around that. Could you imagine being locked up for even a week, for something you DID do, and then you’re going to do that for something you didn’t do? Girl, please.

Only one participant, Anastasia, reported an instance of someone else wanting them to take the time for their charge. While she said “no” initially, she went on to say, “They

didn't voice asking me to, but then they seemed upset when I didn't." Anastasia elaborated further:

Me and my friend got pulled over and the cop was like "Oh, it smells in here," and he searched the car and he found weed, and it was in the glove box and I was in the passenger seat, and he was on the fence because she was saying it wasn't hers, and that leaves it in my arm span. So, it was really confusing then. [She wanted me to take the blame] cause I already had a criminal record, so like, why not? But there's like a three strikes rule, and like, I not... But it's her car, so since it wasn't mine it would go to her. But I was upset because I'm not gonna... I don't know... I don't even want to take the fall if I do it, but I will, but I'm not going to if somebody else did it.

DISCUSSION

Historically, majority of criminal offenders have been male; however, with changes in social norms and the evolution of gender equality, that is changing. Not enough is known about the trends in the criminal gender gap, or the reasons behind different types of criminal activity for males and females, but it is widely accepted that female crime tends to be less violent and less severe.

The General Strain Theory surmises that females experience different types of strain than males. It holds that males experience strain related to failure in achieving material success, or in attaining life experiences; in other words, failure to get something they want. This strain is thought to incline men toward crimes of property damage, or toward violent crimes. For females, this theory states that females experience strain related to relationships where they are treated badly. These strains include physical and emotional abuse, and having parents who are incarcerated or drug dependent. These types of strains lead women towards more self-destructive behaviors, such as drug abuse, or crimes that are typically committed to support substance abuse habits. This perspective seems consistent with the experiences of Anastasia and Norma.

The criminalization of female behaviors, referred to as up-crimming, refers to using a method of social control that criminalizes less serious female behaviors. This essentially lowers the threshold for intervening with females, as compared to males, when they are acting in aggressive manners. This means that female violence generates a larger social reaction than male violence. This perspective seems consistent with the experiences of Norma.

The labor market is widely thought to influence the criminal activity of both men and women. It is generally assumed that people who cannot obtain adequate hours at a suitable wage are at higher risk of supplementing their income through illegal means. This potentially applies more to women than men because of gender pay discrepancies. This perspective seems consistent with the experiences of Crystal, Michelle, and Norma.

The expectations of behavior from the literature did not apply to all the participants, but did apply to some. None seemed to apply to Alexandra, while most simultaneously applied to Norma's experiences. However, despite the limitations of the study, the data is valuable. Of the five participants, four of them started their criminal careers as adults, which is contrary to the accepted belief that criminal careers start in adolescence. Only two of the participants were influenced by significant others, which is also contrary to the belief that women become participants in crime through the influence of significant others. All the participants were raised in middle class households which, again, runs contrary to the belief that criminals come from lower class households. Many of these observations suggest interesting implications that might be explored further in future research.

LIMITATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES

This study was not without its limitations. Data collection occurred during a brief time period in which it was difficult to recruit participants, resulting in a small sample size. Some of the interviews were very short, which limited the amount of data collected. In addition, the findings generated a number of interesting questions this study was not designed to answer. Did recruiting restrictions influence the type of individual that volunteered for the study? In particular, how would the results have differed with participants drawn from current incarcerated individuals or from repeat offenders? How did the age range of participants, both at the time of arrest and at the time of the interview, affect their experience? Did time elapsed since arrest affect the participants' level of insight into the experience with law enforcement? Did family composition at the time of arrest play a role in the participants' views of their history? These factors all bear strongly on the instigation of criminal behavior.

Given some of the unexpected results of this study, future studies might be designed to delve more deeply into these demographics, and other aspects of the criminal experiences of one time offenders, to shed some light on issues pertaining to recidivism. Insights gathered from such work could drive policy change recommendations on an interesting array of levels in our criminal justice system, from work with at-risk populations, to sentencing practices, and even refining efforts with education offered during incarceration. Improvements in any of these areas would benefit not only those individuals who have learned from their mistakes, but their families as well, especially children reunited with their parents, and brought up in environments that encouraged

respect for the law, for the lives and property of others, and ultimately, for themselves.

The benefit to all of society from reforms like these cannot be overstated.

APPENDIX A

Recruitment Email

Sent to Possible Participants

The following message is being sent out on behalf of the researcher.

Hello,

My name is Allison Pierce, I am a graduate student at IUPUI in the Sociology Department. I am currently working on my Master's Thesis project. I plan to interview women with non-drug related charges about their experiences with drugs and crime. Participants with additional drug related charges will not be disqualified. Topics will include family, environment, educational background, first exposure to illegal substances, and onset of criminal behaviors. Participants will meet with me one-on-one for a 45-60 minute audio recorded interview. The interviews are private and confidential; no identifying information will be included in the project. As a token of appreciation, participants will receive a \$10 Visa gift card for their time.

If you are interested in participating and would like to discuss the project in more detail, you can contact me via email at pierceab@iu.edu or by phone/text at [REDACTED]. I would like to ask a few questions to verify that you qualify to participate for the study.

If you know anyone else who may be interested in participating, please feel free to provide them with my contact information. It would be greatly appreciated!

Thank you,

Allison Pierce

Sociology Graduate Student



RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED



- ✦ Are you a woman?
- ✦ Are you a at least 18 years old?
- ✦ Are you fluent in the English language?
- ✦ Have you previously been convicted for non-drug related behaviors?



If you have answered yes to the above questions, I may want to interview you for 45 minutes to an hour for my thesis study exploring how young women first become involved with drugs and crime.

Your participation is **voluntary** and your responses are **confidential**. In appreciation for your time, you will receive compensation for your participation. If you think you are eligible and want to participate, please contact me via email at pierceab@iu.edu or phone at [REDACTED]. I would like to ask a few questions to verify that you qualify to participate for the study.

Thank you, and I look forward to speaking with you!

This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Indiana University Purdue University- Indianapolis (IUPUI). The IUPUI IRB has reviewed this study in order to ensure that the researcher treats the participants in an ethical manner.

[REDACTED] Allison Pierce
pierceab@umail.iu.edu

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[REDACTED] Allison Pierce
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[REDACTED] Allison Pierce
pierceab@umail.iu.edu

Facebook Recruitment

My name is Allison Pierce; I am a graduate student at IUPUI in the Sociology Department. I am currently working on my Master's Thesis project. I am interviewing women with non-drug related charges about their experiences with drugs and crime. Participants with additional drug related charges will not be disqualified. Topics will include family, environment, educational background, first exposure to illegal substances, and onset of criminal behaviors. Participants will meet with me one-on-one for a 45-60 minute audio recorded interview. The interviews are private and confidential; no identifying information will be included in the project. As a token of appreciation, participants will receive a \$10 Visa gift card for their time.

If you are interested in participating and would like to discuss the project in more detail, you can contact me via email at pierceab@iu.edu or by phone/text at [REDACTED]. I would like to ask a few questions to verify that you qualify to participate for the study.

Sharing and reposting this information would be very much appreciated.

APPENDIX B

PRE-SCREENING INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The interview process will begin when a potential participant contacts me about the project by telephone or email. After a brief introduction, I will conduct a telephone/email screening interview to establish that the potential interviewee meets the project's eligibility requirements. If eligible, I will schedule the interview.

1. Introduction

Thank you for responding to my email or flyer. Well, as indicated, I am looking for participants who have previously been convicted of a crime. If you fit this description, I would like to talk to you about your experiences with drugs and crime. Your participation would involve meeting with me for a one-on-one private interview where I would ask you about your experiences concerning drugs and crime. I will be audio recording interviews for my own information. Audio recording may be sent to a third party transcription agency, however, no identifying information will be recorded. Everything you share with me will be kept very strictly private and confidential and I will not use your name on anything. You will receive small compensation for your time. Does this sound like something that you might be interested in participating in?

2. Prescreening Questions

Okay. I need to ask you a series of questions to determine whether you are eligible to participate in this project. Do you have any questions for me before we proceed? All right.

| Screening Interview Questions | Participant must answer the following for eligibility |
|--|---|
| 1) Are you at least 18 years old? | Yes |
| 2) Have you been arrested for non-drug related activities? | Yes |
| 3) Are you currently being monitored by correctional services like parole, work release, or probation? | No |

3. Schedule Interview

Wonderful! You are eligible for the project [if not eligible, politely let them know]. Can we schedule an interview? When would be a good time for you? I can reserve a room here on campus at IUPUI. Or, if you have another place in mind, it is possible that we could do the interview there. Also, if it is all right with you, I will give you a reminder call (or send you a reminder e-mail) the day before the interview.

Qualitative Interview Guide

Introduction: Thank you for taking the time to talk to me today. I really appreciate your willingness to help me out with this interview. Have you ever been interviewed before? Well, the main reason why I would like to interview you is to learn about your experiences with drug use and criminal activities.

Findings from this project will be used in a Master's thesis project and submitted for publication.

Interviewee Role: I want you to feel that this is *your* interview. I am here to listen to what you have to say. I am very interested in your experiences and feelings, so please feel free to share anything that comes to mind. My job is to listen to you so that I can better understand these experiences.

Explain Audio Recording Procedures: As I explained when we talked on the phone/email, I will record our conversation so that I do not have to take notes and so I can get your complete answer. This also helps me guarantee that my report will accurately reflect your experiences. Shortly after the interview the audio recording will be transcribed and the audio will be erased; no identifying information will be transcribed. Is this okay with you?

Assure Interviewee of Confidentiality: Please feel free to speak openly with me.

Maintaining your privacy is the most important thing to me and anything you say during this interview will be kept private and confidential. I will not include your name or any other unique information that could identify you in my report. Also, if I ask you any questions that you do not want to answer, you can just say, “pass” and we will skip those questions.

Time Frame of Interview: The interview will last about 45-60 minutes. If you need a break at any time, just let me know.

Obtain Informed Consent: Before we begin the interview, I would like to go over the project’s information sheet, which describes the nature of the project, your role in the project, the steps taken to maintain your confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of the project. You can take this form with you (Wait for the participant to read the information). Do you have any questions about the project or the information you read? If not, do you give your permission to participate in the project by being interviewed? (If the participant agrees, then start the interview). Ok thank you for your help with the project. Do you have any more questions before we start?

Gain Verbal Consent and Start Interview: Ok, then I will begin recording the interview now.

Start recorder and record verbal consent prior to asking any interview questions: “We are now recording. Today is (date) 2017. My name is Allison Pierce I am a graduate student

at Indiana University Indianapolis. I would like to ask your permission to record this interview which I will have transcribed and to use the recording and the transcription for project and research purposes”. If verbal consent is given and audio recorded, proceed with the interview.

Questions: Let us begin with some background questions so that I can get to know more about you before we talk about your experiences. I already asked you some of these questions when I spoke to you on the phone about your eligibility, but I need to ask them again to make sure that I record your answers for the project. I will use the answers to these questions for an overall description of who participated in the project.

Background Questions:

How old are you?

How do you describe your racial/ethnic background?

How many times have you been arrested?

How many times have you been incarcerated?

Okay, during the rest of the interview I would like to focus on your experiences with drugs and crime.

| | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| <p><i>Family</i></p> | <p><i>What was it like growing up in your family?</i></p> | <p><i>What kind of relationship did you have with your parents/siblings as a child?</i></p> <p><i>What kind of life style did your family have? (Did you have to worry about food, clothing etc.)</i></p> <p><i>What kind of traditions or routines did your family have? (Eating dinner together)</i></p> <p><i>What was your neighborhood like?</i></p> <p><i>What was your school experience like?</i></p> <p><i>Instances of discrimination?</i></p> |
|----------------------|---|--|

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| | | <p><i>Urban vs. rural</i></p> <p><i>What are those relationships like now?</i></p> |
| <i>Education</i> | <p><i>What was your educational experience like?</i></p> | <p><i>How many years did you attend school?</i></p> <p><i>Did you enjoy school?</i></p> <p><i>Where you encouraged to do well in school by your family and/or teachers?</i></p> |
| <i>Initial Exposure</i> | <p><i>Do you remember the first time you were exposed to an illegal drug substance or a legal substance used in an illegal manor to obtain a high?</i></p> | <p><i>Can you tell me what happened?</i></p> <p><i>How old were you?</i></p> <p><i>Who exposed you to the substance?</i></p> <p><i>How did you feel about the exposure at the time?</i></p> |

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| | | <i>How do you feel about that situation now?</i> |
| <i>Habit Formation</i> | <i>Did ___ ever become a craving? If so when did ___ become a craving?</i> | <p><i>How did you learn where to buy ___?</i></p> <p><i>How readily available was ___?</i></p> <p><i>How often did you use ___?</i></p> <p><i>Do you ever feel you've had a problem or an addiction?</i></p> |
| <i>Becoming a criminal</i> | <i>Do you remember the first time you broke the law?</i> | <p><i>Did you get caught?</i></p> <p><i>Can you tell me what happened?</i></p> <p><i>How did that make you feel?</i></p> |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | | <i>How do you feel about that situation now?</i> |
| <i>Obtaining official criminal status</i> | <i>Can you tell me about the first time you were arrested?</i> | <i>How old were you?</i> <i>What did you do?</i> <i>What was your motivation?</i> <i>How long was it before you were caught?</i> <i>How did you feel about the situation?</i> |
| <i>Habitual criminal activity</i> | <i>What is your arrest record like?</i> | <i>How many times have you been arrested?</i> <i>How many times have you been convicted?</i> <i>Incarcerated?</i> |

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| <p><i>Gang Activity</i></p> | <p><i>Have you ever been affiliated with a gang or known someone who was?</i></p> <p><i>If no- do you know anyone affiliated in gang activity?</i></p> | <p><i>Can you tell me about how you came to be involved in this gang?</i></p> <p><i>How long were you involved in gang activity?</i></p> <p><i>Do you still maintain gang related relationships?</i></p> <p><i>With who?</i></p> <p><i>How important are these relationships to you?</i></p> |
| <p><i>Borrowing Time</i></p> | <p><i>Have you ever taken time for someone else?</i></p> | <p><i>Can you tell me about what happened?</i></p> <p><i>Who was it?</i></p> <p><i>Why did you take the blame?</i></p> |
| <p><i>Regrets</i></p> | <p><i>Do you have any regrets?</i></p> | |

Closing questions:

We are almost finished, thank you again for participating. I have two final questions.

1. Is there anything else you would like to share?
2. Is there anything I should have asked about your experiences with this topic that I did not ask?

Compensation:

Thank you again for taking the time out to come and talk to me about your experiences.

Here is a \$10 Visa gift card as a way of saying thank you for taking the time to participate.

Thank you:

Thank you! The information you have shared with me has been very helpful. If you have any additional questions or just want to talk about the interview experience, please feel free to give me a call or email me.

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CURRICULUM VITAE
Allison Bianca Pierce

Education

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| M.A. Sociology Indiana University | October 2018 |
| B.A. Sociology Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis | May 2014 |
| B.A. Psychology Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis | May 2014 |
| A.A Psychology Kellogg Community College | May 2007 |

Work

Manager **April 2008 - Present**
Arni's Restaurant

- Staffed and managed 4 departments totaling a 40-50 person staff to successfully run the store front of a restaurant.
- Coached/ scheduled Servers, Bartenders, Hosts, and Bussers to maximum levels of performance.
- Assisted in purchasing and controlling inventory for the bar and restaurant.
- Promoted from Server to Manager based on exemplary job performance.

Research

Master's Thesis **August 2017 – October 2018**
"Women's Descent into Drugs and Crime"

Committee Chair:

Robert Aponte, PhD, Associate Professor Sociology, Department of Sociology, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

Committee Members:

Carrie E. Foote, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

Linda G. Bell, PhD, Professor of Communication Studies and Sociology, IUPUI
Professor Emerita of Psychology and Family Therapy, U of Houston-Clear Lake,
Department of Sociology, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

Presentations

Panel Oral Presentations

Allison Pierce, Scott Hall. "How Emerging Adults Define and Represent Death." Indiana Academy of the Social Sciences 88th Annual Meeting, October 2017, Wabash College, Crawfordsville, IN

Professional Organization Memberships

Indiana Academy of Social Sciences

2017-Current

Awards and Honors

Suzanne K. Steinmentz Scholarship

April 2017-April 2018

Department of Sociology, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

Dean's List, Indiana University-Purdue University- Indianapolis

2013-2017

Service

Teacher- Indianapolis Women's Prison

January 2016 - Current

- Support effective re-entry by strengthening family relationships through understanding of family patterns, and teaching effective skills for marital and family communication and parenting
- Teaching to incarcerated individuals. The things that are learned in the course can be used before and after re-entry to strengthen relationships, which could possible slow recidivism rates

Publications

Blinn-Pike, L., Hall, S.D., Harsin, A., **Pierce, A.B.**, Zoeller, A.N. (2017) How Emerging Adults Define and Represent Death. *Emerging Adults*. Under Review