

elements of change

highlighting trends and issues in the criminal justice system

vol. 2 / no. 1

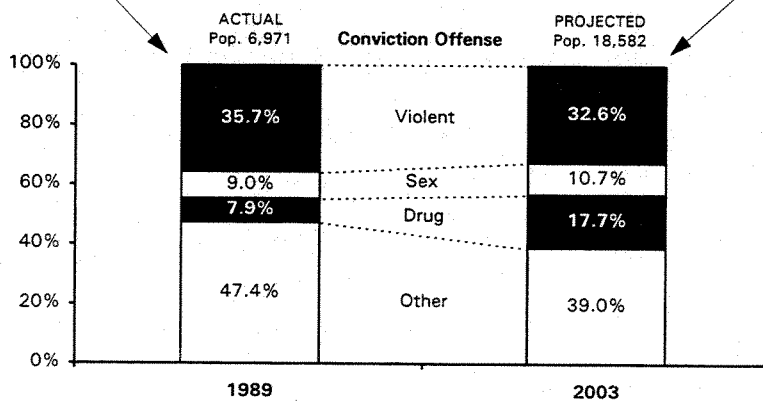
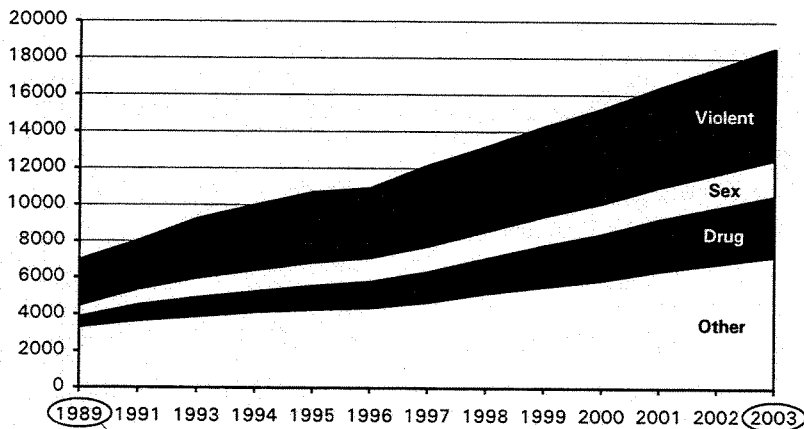
Colorado's Inmate Population Expected to Increase More Than 50% During the Next Six Years

The Division of Criminal Justice's Fall 1996 prison population projections indicate expected prison growth of 6,402 between January 1, 1997 and January 1, 2003 (from 12,180 in 1997 to 18,582 in 2003).

in this issue:

- ❶ Prison Population Projections
- ❷ Plea Practices of Drug Arrestees
- ❸ Drug Use of Denver Arrestees
- ❹ New Internet Training

**Total Colorado Prison Population:
 By Most Serious Conviction Offense -- Cumulative View**
 Actual Numbers 1989-1996 / Projected Numbers 1997-2003*



Looking at the Drug Population

☞ In 1989, drug offenders made up 7.9% of the Colorado prison population.

☞ In 2003, drug offenders are projected to make up 17.7% of the prison population -- more than double the 1989 percentage.

* See page 2 of this newsletter for the complete Fall 1996 projection numbers.
 Source: *The Division of Criminal Justice Fall 1996 Prison and Parole Projections*, prepared by the Office of Research and Statistics.

What Accounts for the Recent Prison Population Growth in Colorado?

Between November 1995 and November 1996, the Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) prison population grew 11.5%. This growth can be primarily attributed to two factors: 1) unprecedented increases in the number of prisoners committed to DOC during fiscal year (FY) 1996, and 2) lower parole release rates.

INCREASE IN PRISON COMMITMENTS

Commitments increased by an average of over 100 per month during the first half of 1996. The average number of commitments to DOC during FY 1995 was 396 per month. By comparison, in 1996, DOC received an average of 500 commitments per month between February and June and an average of 467 commitments per month between July and November.

DCJ and DOC analysts discussed the recent growth in admissions and agreed that this increase seems to be a trend rather than an anomaly. A portion of this growth appears linked to an inadequate number of diversion community corrections beds. Without expansion of community alternatives, commitments to prison will continue to grow.

Another possible factor contributing to elevated prison commitments is an increase in the number of drug cases¹ processed in the Denver District Court. Since July 1, 1994, when the Denver Drug Court was activated, cases for which drugs were the most serious charge grew from 1260 (FY 94) to 2661 (FY 95), an increase of 111%. Offenders committed to prison from Denver for whom a drug offense was the most serious conviction crime grew from 233 (FY 94) to 354 (FY 95), an increase of 52%.

DECREASE IN RELEASE OF PAROLE ELIGIBLE INMATES

In addition to increased commitments, the parole release rate appears to be decreasing. The proportion of parole eligible prisoners released during FY 1996 was lower than it has been during the past five years.² In FY 1995, 9.9% of offenders who fell under the mandatory parole provision³ served their entire prison sentence before being released to parole. (Note: Even under the mandatory parole provision, the parole board has release discretion). In FY 1996, 19.5% of offenders who fell under the mandatory parole provision served their entire prison sentence. This indicates that parole board members may have held certain offenders for a longer proportion of their prison sentences in FY 1996 compared to FY 1995, knowing that under HB93-1302 a parole period is certain regardless of time served in prison.

DCJ Fall 1996 Prison Population Projections: Jan 1997 to Jan 2003

Month/ Year	Male	Female	TOTAL
JAN 1997	11,343	837	12,180
APR 1997	11,522	870	12,393
JUL 1997	11,709	901	12,610
OCT 1997	11,950	937	12,887
JAN 1998	12,214	970	13,184
APR 1998	12,420	999	13,419
JUL 1998	12,633	1,027	13,660
OCT 1998	12,910	1,058	13,968
JAN 1999	13,212	1,087	14,299
APR 1999	13,389	1,117	14,506
JUL 1999	13,573	1,146	14,718
OCT 1999	13,811	1,178	14,989
JAN 2000	14,071	1,208	15,279
APR 2000	14,283	1,239	15,522
JUL 2000	14,503	1,268	15,771
OCT 2000	14,788	1,301	16,089
JAN 2001	15,100	1,331	16,431
APR 2001	15,293	1,361	16,655
JUL 2001	15,494	1,389	16,883
OCT 2001	15,754	1,421	17,176
JAN 2002	16,039	1,451	17,490
APR 2002	16,238	1,483	17,721
JUL 2002	16,445	1,512	17,957
OCT 2002	16,712	1,546	18,258
JAN 2003	17,005	1,577	18,582

Source: *The Division of Criminal Justice Fall 1996 Prison and Parole Projections*, prepared by the Office of Research and Statistics.

Footnotes:

1 Drug offenses: Unlawful distribution, manufacturing, dispensing, sale, or possession of any scheduled drug or marijuana.

2 The parole board's decisions to release offenders to parole between FY 1992 and FY 1996 were as follows: FY 92, 44%; FY 93, 43.3%; FY 94, 35.4%; FY 95, 33.2%; FY 96, 30.1%.

3 In 1993, the passage of HB 1302 required that all offenders sentenced to prison also receive a *separate* sentence to parole (previous to HB 1302, parole was treated as *part* of the prison sentence). The length of mandatory parole is determined by the felony class of the offense of conviction.

STATE by STATE Prison Population and Incarceration Rate

REGION / JURISDICTION	TOTAL PRISON POPULATION			% INCREASE or DECREASE 1994-1995	INCARCERATION RATE*	
	12/31/80	12/31/94	12/31/95		1994	1995
U.S. Total	328695	1055073	1127132	6.8 %	387	409
Federal Institutions	24363	95034	100250	5.5	30	32
State Institutions	304332	960039	1026882	7.0	356	378
NORTHEAST	45920	153072	161815	5.7	285	301
Connecticut	4308	14380	14801	2.9	321	318
Maine	829	1471	1447	-1.8	118	111
Massachusetts	3268	11293	11619	2.9	171	175
New Hampshire	326	2021	2014	-0.3	177	174
New Jersey	5884	24632	27066	9.9	310	340
New York	21829	66760	68484	2.6	367	378
Pennsylvania	8182	28302	32410	14.5	235	268
Rhode Island	814	2919	2902	-0.6	186	186
Vermont	480	1301	1072	-17.6	168	143
MIDWEST	66041	184508	193325	4.8	297	310
Illinois	11899	36531	37658	3.1	310	317
Indiana	6683	15014	16125	7.4	258	276
Iowa	2513	5437	5906	8.8	192	207
Kansas	2494	6371	7054	10.7	249	274
Michigan	15124	40631	41112	1.2	428	429
Minnesota	2001	4575	4963	6.3	100	105
Missouri	5524	17898	19139	6.9	338	358
Nebraska	1446	2711	3113	14.8	159	185
North Dakota	253	536	608	13.4	78	85
Ohio	13489	43074	44677	3.7	377	400
South Dakota	635	1708	1871	9.5	240	256
Wisconsin	3980	10022	11199	11.7	187	201
SOUTH	144958	422455	455143	7.7	451	478
Alabama	5961	19573	20718	5.8	450	471
Arkansas	2925	8643	9401	8.8	353	360
Delaware	1474	4466	4802	7.5	393	413
District of Columbia	3145	10949	9800	-10.5	1583	1650
Florida	20735	57168	63879	11.7	406	447
Georgia	12210	33425	34288	2.5	456	470
Kentucky	3608	11065	12060	9.0	288	311
Louisiana	8889	24063	25427	5.7	530	588
Maryland	7731	20998	21453	2.2	395	404
Mississippi	3374	10930	13008	19.0	408	464
North Carolina	15382	23648	29374	24.2	322	382
Oklahoma	4571	16631	18151	9.1	508	552
South Carolina	4862	18999	19611	3.2	494	515
Tennessee	7022	14401	15206	5.6	277	287
Texas	29892	118195	127766	8.1	636	653
Virginia	8920	26968	27710	2.8	395	414
West Virginia	1257	2332	2511	7.7	106	136
WEST	47413	200004	216599	8.3	333	357
Alaska	822	3292	3505	6.5	317	339
Arizona	4372	19746	21341	8.1	459	473
California	24569	125605	135646	8.0	384	416
COLORADO	2792	10717	11063	3.2	289	292
Hawaii	985	3333	3560	6.8	202	217
Idaho	817	2811	3328	18.4	258	283
Montana	738	1754	1788	1.4	194	204
Nevada	1839	8993	7826	11.9	460	482
New Mexico	1461	3712	4195	13.0	220	231
Oregon	3170	6936	7886	13.7	175	206
Utah	932	3045	3448	13.2	155	173
Washington	4382	10833	11608	7.2	201	212
Wyoming	534	1217	1405	15.4	254	291

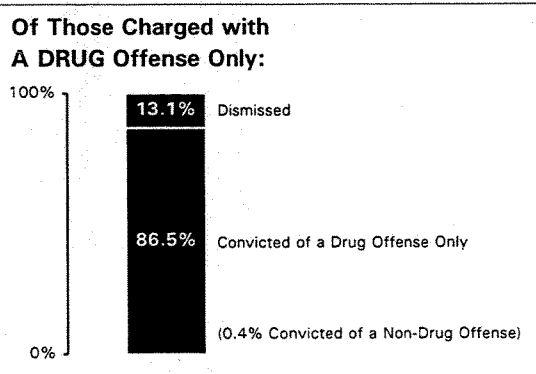
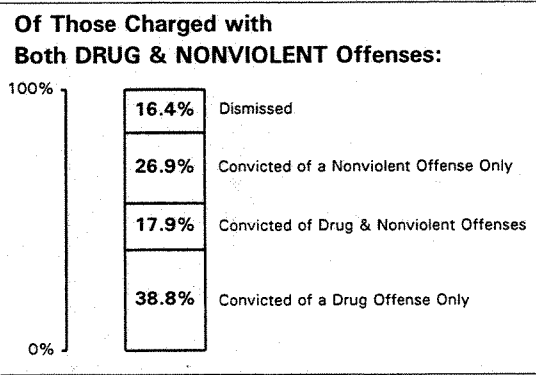
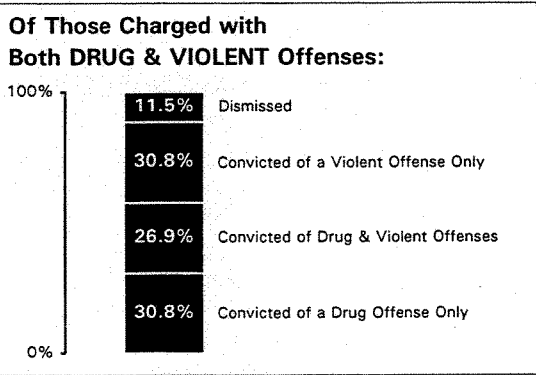
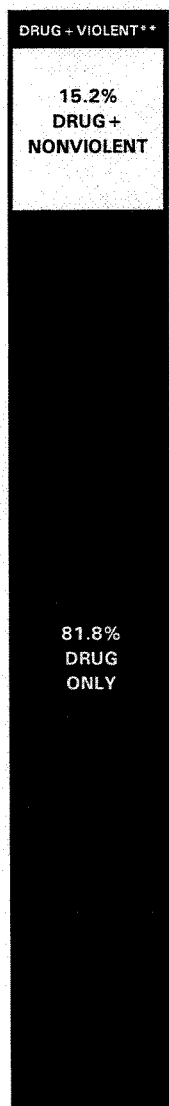
* The incarceration rate per 100,000 resident population is based on prisoners with sentences greater than 1 year.

Data Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1981. Prisoners at Mid-year, 1981; 1996. Prison and Jail Inmates, 1995. U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.
Reprinted from *Overcrowded Times*, October 1996.

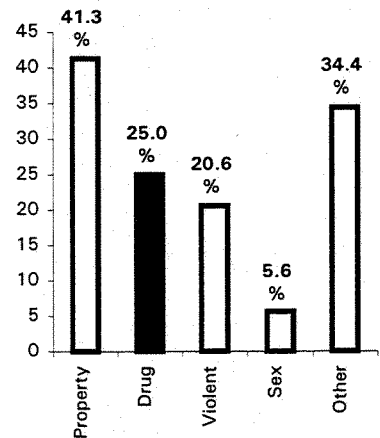
In 1994, 81% of Persons Charged with A Drug Crime Were Convicted of A Drug Crime*

The Division of Criminal Justice's court database contains the three most serious offense charges filed for each arrestees in a sample of cases filed in Colorado (see **Source** below for a description of the sample). Seriousness is determined first by felony class and second by offense type. ■ The graph below and to the right represents, by offense category, the three most serious offense charges filed for each person in the 1994 court sample. Because we record the three most serious offenses, each offense category in the graph is not mutually exclusive. For example, a person charged with both a drug crime and a property crime would be represented twice. ■ The illustration below shows, for persons in the sample charged with felony drug offenses, what proportion were convicted of a drug offense, and what proportion were not.

DRUG OFFENSES CHARGED



Charges Filed in Colorado, 1994 (Offense categories not mutually exclusive)



* The 19% NOT convicted of a drug crime represent cases pled to other offense categories and cases dismissed.

** The Drug + Violent category represents 3.0% of the drug offenses charged in 1994.

Source: DCJ's 1994 court database. Annually, DCJ collects data on-site from a 20% sample of court cases filed in nine of the state's 22 judicial districts. The nine judicial districts represented in the court database are: 1st (Jefferson County), 2nd (Denver County), 4th (El Paso County), 8th (Larimer County), 10th (Pueblo County), 17th (Adams County), 18th (Arapahoe County), 19th (Weld County), and the 21st (Mesa County). These jurisdictions represent approximately 80% of Colorado's population.

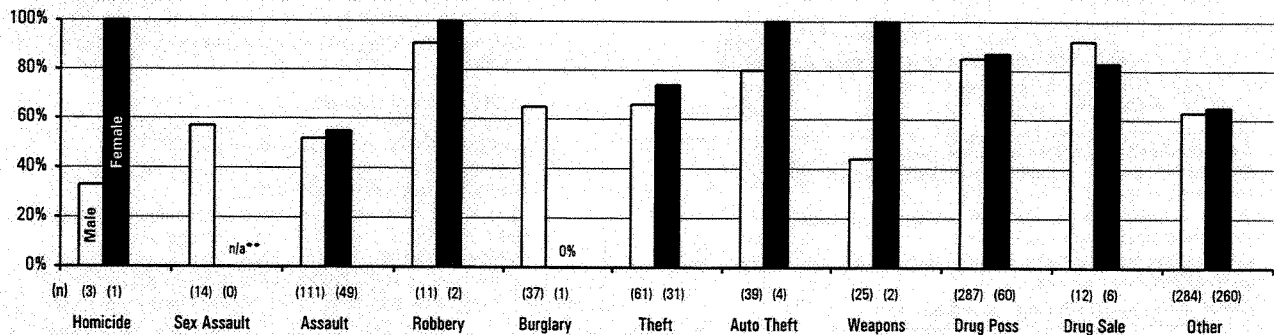
Note: Violent = assault, vehicular assault, menacing, extortion, reckless endangerment, homicide, kidnapping, robbery.
Property = burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, forgery, fraud.

For more information: Contact Susan Colling at the Division of Criminal Justice, 303-239-4664.

DENVER DUF UPDATE Arrestee Drug Use by Most Serious Charge

The DUF (Drug Use Forecasting) data are collected quarterly by the Division of Criminal Justice staff at the Denver Pre-Arrestment Detention Facility and the Phillip Gilliam Youth Services Center. Over a period of 14 to 21 consecutive days, anonymous interview information and urine specimens are collected from recently arrested adults and detained juveniles. All participants must be interviewed within 48 hours of arrest, so any illegal drugs consumed just prior to arrest will still be present in their systems.

Percentage of 1996 Denver Adult Male & Female Arrestees Who Tested Positive for Any Drug* by Most Serious Charge



1996 DENVER ARRESTEES: DRUG USE by MOST SERIOUS CHARGE

For Each Charge -- What Percentage of Arrestees Tested Positive for Each Drug?***

Most Serious Charge	ADULT MALES -- % Positive					ADULT FEMALES -- % Positive					JUVENILE MALES -- % Positive				
	(n)	Cocaine	Marij	Opiates	Any Drug*	(n)	Cocaine	Marij	Opiates	Any Drug*	(n)	Cocaine	Marij	Opiates	Any Drug*
Homicide	3	0	33	0	33	1	0	100	0	100	3	0	33	0	33
Sex Assault	14	43	43	0	57	0	n/a**	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	0	75	0	75
Assault	111	24	36	4	52	49	41	27	2	55	13	0	54	0	54
Robbery	11	46	55	18	91	2	0	100	0	100	20	10	55	0	55
Burglary	37	38	35	11	65	1	0	0	0	0	10	0	50	0	50
Theft	61	38	41	5	66	31	48	36	3	74	2	0	100	0	100
Motor Vehicle Theft	39	41	56	0	80	4	50	75	0	100	26	19	69	0	69
Weapons	25	12	44	0	44	2	100	0	50	100	25	8	64	4	64
Drug Possession	287	63	46	8	85	60	78	25	12	87	7	29	71	0	86
Drug Sale	12	58	42	0	92	6	67	33	17	83	0	n/a**	n/a	n/a	n/a
Other	284	36	38	4	63	260	50	25	4	65	108	5	57	0	56

* Any Drug = All drugs tested for in the DUF sample (cocaine, PCP, opiates, Marijuana, amphetamines, methadone, valium, darvon, quaaludes, and barbiturates).

** N/A indicates that no members of this age/gender group in the sample were charged with this crime.

*** Rows will not total 100%: An arrestee may test positive for more than one drug. Not all drugs tested for in the DUF sample are shown in these tables.

Note: Juvenile Female data not shown due to the small number of juvenile females arrested.

Source: Denver Drug Use Forecasting quarterly data, 1996. Colorado Division of Criminal Justice. For more information, contact Chris Webster at 303-239-4455.

dcj notes

*Announcing:

Girls E.T.C. (Equitable Treatment Coalition) Workshop

Adolescent girls in the juvenile justice system are not receiving adequate services. Gender differences need to be addressed because programs designed for boys are not always effective for girls.

This Girls E.T.C. workshop is intended to help you assess the gender appropriateness of your juvenile justice programs and set a plan of action if adjustments are needed. The workshop is designed for anyone interested in program services for girls in the juvenile justice system.

The workshop will be held at several sites (act quickly, registration deadlines precede each event): Fort Collins, February 18; Grand Junction, February 25; Alamosa, March 11; and Pueblo, March 18. The cost is \$10.00.

For more information about the workshop or Girls E.T.C., contact:
Anna Espinoza at the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice
ph 303-239-5705 fx 303-239-4491

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*Announcing:

NEW Internet Training

The Division of Criminal Justice will be hosting another internet workshop within the next six months. Check out the next issue of *Elements of Change* for a specific date. The workshop will cover all the basics of net use: What is the internet; how to get connected; hardware/software requirements; the World Wide Web; searching the net for criminal justice information; and much more. Contact Chris Webster at 303-239-4455 for more information.

*dcj Projects in Progress:

DUF Challenge

This project will expand the DUF (Drug Use Forecasting) questionnaire by asking arrestees additional questions related to personal history and neighborhood risk factors for the purpose of developing crime intervention and prevention strategies.

Drug Court Evaluation

This evaluation project will analyze the Denver Drug Court's impact on district-wide case processing.

Sex Offender Assessment

This two year project undertaken on behalf of the Colorado Sex Offender Treatment Board will study adult sex offenders sentenced to probation, diversion community corrections, prison, and parole to develop a risk classification tool.



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