2009

An analysis of state-by-state variations in African American incarceration rates

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AN ANALYSIS OF STATE-BY-STATE VARIATIONS IN AFRICAN AMERCIAN INCARCERATION RATES

A Thesis

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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University of Northern Iowa

December 2009

This study by: Kristen Johnson

Entitled: Analysis of State-by-State Variations in African American Incarceration Rates

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the

Degree of Masters of Arts

9/11/09
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9/11/09
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11/18/09
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee: Dr. Joe Gorton, Dr. Keith Crew, and Dr. Richard Featherstone for all of their support, assistance, and guidance, not only during my work on this thesis project, but throughout my entire graduate experience. I would like to thank Dr. Crew for helping me resolve many of the statistical issues that came up during this project. I am especially grateful to Dr. Gorton for chairing my thesis committee. His oversight, criticism, and encouragement were vital to my completion of this research. Finally, I reserve my deepest thanks for my parents, Bill and Jo Johnson, whose love and support have been invaluable throughout my undergraduate and graduate education.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

A great deal of social scientific research has examined the overrepresentation of African Americans in the American criminal justice system. Many of these analyses have focused on racial disparities in sentencing, and the disproportionate confinement of African Americans in jails and prisons. While the overrepresentation of African Americans in the criminal justice system is indisputable, explanations for this condition are often complex and controversial.

In July of 2007 The Sentencing Project published "Uneven Justice: State Rates of Incarceration By Race and Ethnicity" by Marc Mauer and Ryan S. King. The report examined the increasing rates of incarceration in the United States with an emphasis on the overrepresentation of African Americans in jails and prisons. Mauer and King (2007) reported that overall, African Americans are incarcerated at 5.6 times the rate of whites in the U.S. The report also revealed striking state-by-state variations in black incarceration rates. Black incarceration rates ranged from a low of 851 per every 100,000 in the population in Hawaii, to a high of 4,710 per every 100,000 in the population in South Dakota. Moreover, they found that even the lowest black incarceration rate was greater than the highest white incarceration rate.

Surprisingly, the highest black-to-white incarceration ratios were not in southern states that have lengthy histories of racist policies against African Americans. Instead, the states with the highest ratios were concentrated primarily in the Northeast and Midwest

regions of the country. For example, the three states with the highest black-to-white ratios include Iowa (13.5), Vermont (12.5), and New Jersey (12.4), compared to some of the lowest ratios in Georgia (3.3), Mississippi (3.5), and Alabama (3.5) (Mauer and King 2007: 10). While the report offers various recommendations for reducing the overrepresentation of African Americans in the U.S. criminal justice system, the authors did not speculate as to why black incarceration rates vary so dramatically between states.

Some researchers have asserted that high black incarceration rates may be indicative of racial discrimination in state criminal justice agencies (Johnson 2002; Gordon 1990). Others have argued that institutionalized biases reflected in contemporary drug law enforcement contribute to the overrepresentation of African Americans in jails and prisons (Chambliss 1995). Explanations for high rates of black incarceration however, have also attempted to account for factors beyond racial discrimination in the criminal justice system. Some researchers have pointed out that the disproportionate confinement of African Americans can be largely explained by their disproportionate involvement in felony crimes which are punishable by lengthy prison sentences. LaFree (1998) for example, points to Uniform Crime Report statistics which show that African Americans are disproportionately arrested for felony crimes (i.e. murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft) that are punishable by lengthy prison sentences (50). While LaFree's analysis utilizes 1990 Uniform Crime Report data, an examination of the most recent Uniform Crime Report statistics reveals that this trend prevails today (Department of Justice 2008).

Some have argued that racial disparities in crime rates, such as those reported above, are the product of institutionalized racism in the U.S. criminal justice system (Johnson 2002; Skolnick and Fyfe 1993), and a ubiquitous pattern of discriminatory law enforcement (Chambliss 1995). In contrast, Blumstein's (1983) analysis of racial disparity in the American prison population led him to conclude that "even if the relatively large racial differences in handling these offenses were totally eliminated, however, that would not result in a major shift in the racial mix of prison populations" (1281). This suggests that the overrepresentation of African Americans in U.S. jails in prisons is largely attributable to African Americans' disproportionate involvement in felony crimes punishable by lengthy prison sentences. Similarly, Langan's (1985) analysis of victimization data led him to conclude that "the disproportionate involvement of blacks in crime explains most of the racial disparity in incarceration" (cited in Pettit and Western 2004: 152). Pettit and Western's (2004) review of literature related to racial disparities in the U.S. prison population concluded that "most of the racial disparity in imprisonment is attributed to high black crime rates for imprisonable offenses" (153).

Of course, to assert that African Americans are overrepresented in U.S. jail and prison populations, in part, because they are disproportionately involved in felony crimes, is not to say their disproportionate involvement in felony crimes can be explained by race. On the contrary, if African American involvement in felony crime contributes to their overrepresentation in U.S. jails and prisons, it is logical to investigate the social factors that might contribute to racial disparities in criminal involvement. An important example of this approach is Sampson and Wilson's (1995) racial invariance hypothesis.

which posits that "racial differences in involvement in criminal deviance are caused by differential exposure to community-level causes of crime" (Byrne, Hummer, and Taxman 2008:33).

In regard to black incarceration rates, the racial invariance hypothesis might posit that high rates of black incarceration can be attributed, at least in part, to the concentration of blacks in urban areas where criminogenic conditions are more likely to exist. In other words, one might expect that crime rates will be relatively high in urban areas, and that this condition will be contribute to high incarceration rates. Therefore, the hypothesis would posit that to the extent those areas are populated by African Americans, that black crime rates and consequently black incarceration rates will be relatively high. Similarly, the hypothesis would predict that large numbers of whites residing in urban areas will produce relatively high white crime rates, and therefore relatively high rates of white incarceration. Such findings would support the notion that high rates of black incarceration might be attributable, at least in part, to the relatively criminogenic structural conditions that characterize many urban areas.

This research evaluates the applicability of Sampson and Wilson's (1995) racial invariance hypothesis as a means for explaining some of the state-by-state variation in the black incarceration rates reported by Mauer and King. Specifically, this analysis examines the influence of the size and racial composition of urban populations on states' black and white incarceration rates. This influence was evaluated while accounting for the effect of other variables such as race-specific crime rates, per capita income, political culture, and variables related to sentencing policies within each state.

The policy implications of this analysis are potentially important. For example, if the overrepresentation of African Americans in U.S. jails and prisons is significantly influenced by racial discrimination, as some have argued, it would be appropriate to implement programs and policies that serve to address racial and ethnic discrimination by officials in the criminal justice system. Examples of such policies might involve minimizing the discretion of criminal justice officials or efforts to educate criminal justice officials on racial and ethnic diversity. If however, the findings suggest that relatively high black incarceration rates can be partially attributed to structural conditions found in urban areas, policies might better, or at least additionally, be aimed addressing the criminogenic conditions within those areas.

Research Question and Hypothesis

Mauer and King's analysis of state incarceration rates produced at least one unexpected finding. They found relatively high black incarceration rates in several Northeast and Midwestern states. Surprisingly, those rates were higher than the black incarceration rates found in states that have America's worst histories of racial injustice. Notably absent from Mauer and King's analysis was any discussion of this particular variation in state incarceration rates.

The racial invariance hypothesis suggests a possible explanation for the comparatively low rates of black incarceration found in states such as South Carolina. Mississippi, and Alabama. Specifically, it might be the case that high black incarceration rates are partially attributable to a concentration of African Americans in urban areas where criminogenic conditions are more likely to exist. If this hypothesis is correct, then

southern states that have relatively low percentages of their black population residing in urban areas would be expected to have relatively low rates of black incarceration.

This research seeks to evaluate the applicability of Sampson and Wilson's racial invariance hypothesis as a means for explaining some of the state-by-state variation in black incarceration rates. Specifically, It was hypothesized that as the proportion of states' black population living in urban areas increases, black crime rates, and consequently black incarceration rates, will increase as well. In order to account for the possible influence that other related variables might have on black incarceration rates, the analysis includes several other variables (e.g. political culture, race specific crime rates, per capita income, and variables related to state sentencing policies.)

Literature Review

It was hypothesized that black incarceration rates will be, in part, influenced by the proportion of African Americans residing in urban areas where criminogenic conditions are more likely to exist. The following literature review therefore focuses heavily on research relevant to the relationship between urban conditions and crime. The analysis is especially concerned with the racial invariance hypothesis, which posits that "racial differences in involvement in criminal deviance are caused by differential exposure to community-level causes of crime" (Byrne et al. 2008:33).

Perhaps most pertinent to the racial invariance hypothesis, as well as this research, are two core propositions. First, the hypothesis presumes that crime is caused by structural community-level conditions. Second, the hypothesis posits that racial differences in criminal involvement can be attributed to differential exposure to those

conditions. While the racial invariance hypothesis was initially proposed by Sampson and Wilson (1995), related research findings were produced more than seventy years ago. The work of Shaw and McKay in the late 1920s, for example, has been frequently cited in literature related to the racial invariance hypothesis, and can be viewed as lending support to its main arguments (Sampson and Wilson 1995).

More recent social scientific research has focused on the relationship between structural conditions within urban areas and the relatively high levels of crime often found within these areas (i.e. Wilson 1987; Hagan 1994). Much of this research has additionally considered racial differences in criminal involvement within urban areas. A number of structural conditions often found within urban areas have been identified as contributive to high crime rates. Examples of such structural variables include suburbanization, poverty, economic inequality, social isolation, and racial segregation. (Wilson 1987; Harer and Steffensmeier 1992; Peterson and Krivo 1993; Shihadeh and Flynn 1996; Shihadeh and Ousey 1996; Parker and McCall 1999).

Wilson (1987) for example, argues that the contemporary transformation of inner cities has led to the disproportionate concentration of African Americans in urban areas that "are plagued by massive joblessness, flagrant and open lawlessness, and low achieving schools" (58). In contrast to those who propose a culture of poverty explanation for such conditions, Wilson argues that many of the social problems found in impoverished urban neighborhoods are largely the product of population shifts, economic conditions, and the labor market structure. He argues that the out-migration of middle class black families from urban areas and long term joblessness created by economic

disruptions have led to a disproportionate concentration of blacks living in "depressed, unstable, and socially isolated" inner-city areas (58). It is these conditions, not a culture of poverty, argues Wilson, that are directly linked to urban problems such as crime and drug addiction.

Shihadeh and Ousey's (1996) research on the effects of suburbanization on black center-city crime supports Wilson's propositions. Using data for 136 U.S. cities in 1980, they examined the relationship between suburbanization and race-specific center-city crime. They found that suburbanization had a positive effect on black center city crime, but did not affect white center-city crime. According to Shihadeh and Ousey, this finding supports the notion that suburbanization increases "black center-city crime rates by socially isolating black communities and engendering a variety of social problems" (649).

Building from Wilson's (1987) analysis, Hagan (1994) argues that structural changes in the American economy during the 1980s led to capital disinvestment processes that have intensified crime in low income urban areas. According to Hagan, the interrelated disinvestment processes of residential segregation, race-linked inequalities, and concentration of poverty within urban areas led to the formation of what he refers to as "deviance service centers" and "ethnic vice industries." Hagan describes these conditions as central to understanding crime in America's urban cities. Deviance service centers and ethnic vice industries refer to areas where criminal enterprises, such as drug trafficking, fencing of stolen property, and prostitution are permitted to flourish. These adaptations, he argues, are in effect, efforts to recapitalize urban areas that have been hard hit by economic disruptions during the 1980s and 1990s.

Individuals involved in deviance service industries may obtain short-term financial capital, and such industries can serve to bring financial capital into the disadvantaged communities from which they stem. This is particularly true when they serve a clientele outside of the disadvantaged communities (78). However, any economic success resulting from deviance service industries are typically short-term, and such industries are inevitably disruptive to the community. For example, he points to the emergence of crack cocaine markets as especially "violent, exploitive, and disruptive" of social relations (99). Additionally, such industries often end up stigmatizing the individuals involved. Involvement in deviance service industries often results in criminal justice sanctioning, which further disrupts families and therefore the communities in which they reside. Punitive sanctions imposed by the criminal justice system stigmatize individuals, and further limit their access to legitimate employment opportunities. This can also result in individual and sub-cultural attitudes of resentment and feelings of distrust toward authorities and members of majority groups, particularly when law enforcement efforts and criminal justice sanctioning are seen as disproportionately focused on suppressing the behavior of those who live in disadvantaged communities. All of these factors can perpetuate social disorganization within disadvantaged communities, and increase the likelihood that individuals within these communities will engage in criminal activity.

Several researchers have examined the influence of structural conditions on crime within distressed minority communities (Sampson 1987; Gordon 1990; Moore 1991; Padilla 1992). Hagan's (1994) analysis concluded however that it remains unclear

whether distressed minority communities differed from distressed white communities in terms of crime problems. Sampson and Wilson's racial invariance hypothesis sought to test the proposition that similarly distressed communities would produce similar crime rates, independent of their racial composition. If the racial invariance hypothesis is correct, then high concentrations of a particular population in distressed urban areas should result in relatively high crime rates, and consequently higher incarceration rates for that population.

In 1995, Sampson and Wilson collaborated in the development of what has come to be known as the racial invariance hypothesis. They contend that social scientists are often hesitant to discuss the relationship between race and violent crime, describing contemporary academic discourse on race-crime relationship as "an unproductive mix of controversy and silence" (37). They contend that scholars avoid discussing the relationship between race and violence out of fear of being misunderstood, labeled racist, or accused of blaming the victim. They argue that when the race-crime relationship is addressed in academic discourse, discussions have been reduced to an elementary debate over whether the relationship between race and crime can better be explained by structural or cultural factors. In a nutshell, they explain that "structuralists argue for the primacy of 'relative deprivation' to understand black crime," while "cultural theorists tend to focus on an indigenous culture of violence in black ghettos" (38). Still others, they assert, "engage in subterfuge, denying race-related differentials in violence and focusing instead on police bias and the alleged invalidity of official crime statistics" (38).

Given the shortcomings of previous academic discourse on the race-crime relationship, Sampson and Wilson put forth "a theoretical strategy that incorporates both structural and cultural arguments regarding race, crime, and urban inequality" (52). They concluded that community level variables, such as concentration of poverty, racial segregation, residential mobility, and family disruption are key in explaining urban violence. Their basic thesis, they explain, is that "macro-social patterns of residential inequality give rise to the social isolation and ecological concentration of the truly disadvantage, which in turn leads to structural barriers and cultural adaptations that undermine social organization hence the control of crime" (38). Most importantly, they argued that black crime rates vary in accordance with ecological factors just as do white crime rates. This hypothesis has come to be known as the racial invariance hypothesis.

Only a few studies have explicitly or implicitly sought to test the racial invariance hypothesis. Overall, research that evaluates Sampson and Wilson's hypothesis has produced mixed findings. Sampson's (1987) research utilized data from more than 150 U.S. cities to examine the relationships among race-specific male unemployment, family disruption, and crime. Sampson found that within black communities, increased rates of unemployment among black men influenced increases in the number of female headed households, which led to increased black murder and robbery rates, particularly among juveniles. Consistent with the racial invariance hypothesis, a similar effect of family disruption on violence was evident among whites. Based on these findings, Sampson concluded, "there is nothing inherent in black culture that is conducive to crime. Rather, persistently high rates of black crime appear to stem from structural linkages among

unemployment, economic deprivation, and family disruption in urban black communities" (348).

Krivo and Peterson's (1996) analysis of the effect of neighborhood disadvantage on violent crime utilized 1990 data for 148 neighborhoods in Columbus, Ohio. Neighborhoods in the study were classified as either predominately black or predominately white. Consistent with the racial invariance hypothesis, they found that racially distinct, but structurally similar, neighborhoods had similar levels of violence, and that "the effect of disadvantage on violent crime does not differ significantly between black and white communities" (as cited in Peterson and Krivo 2005: 339).

McNulty's (2001) research examined the relationship between race-specific neighborhood disadvantage and race-specific violent crime. Utilizing 1990 data from Atlanta neighborhoods, McNulty found that neighborhood disadvantage had a positive effect on crime regardless of the neighborhoods' racial composition. Racially distinct neighborhoods with comparable scores on a disadvantage index produced similar rates of violent crime.

Others have found less support for the racial invariance hypothesis. Ousey (1999) for example, utilized 1990 data from 125 U.S. cities to examine the relationship between race-specific socioeconomic deprivation and race-specific homicide rates. The analysis included several measures of socioeconomic deprivation including poverty, unemployment, income inequality, female-headed households, and a deprivation index. Ousey found that socioeconomic deprivation was a predictor of homicide for both black and white populations. While this finding seems to support the racial invariance

hypothesis, Ousey also found that the relationships between homicide and the measures of socio-economic deprivation listed above were stronger among white populations than they were among black populations. He argued that these results contradict the core arguments of the racial invariance hypothesis (405).

Other research endeavors testing the racial invariance assumption have found that the effect of structural conditions on crime rates is greater for whites than for blacks. Harer and Steffensmeirer (1992) for example, examine the relationships among economic inequality, poverty, and race-specific rates of violent crime using data for the 125 largest U.S. cities in 1980. They found that the effects of inequality differed significantly for white and black rates of violent crime. Like Ousey (1999), Harer and Steffensmeirer (1992) found the effect of inequality on violent crime was significantly stronger for whites than for blacks (1035). While some assert that such results are inconsistent with the racial invariance hypothesis (e.g. Ousey 1999), others have insisted that this is not the case (Krivo and Peterson 2000; McNulty 2001).

The mixed findings related to the racial invariance assumption might be partially attributable to the fact that researchers have used a wide variety of variables to measure structural conditions. In other words, within the extant research, the independent variables selected as measures of criminogenic conditions vary considerably across studies, and produce varying levels of support for the racial invariance hypothesis. Taking for example the studies described above, independent variables included unemployment, female-headed households, family disruption, residential instability,

income inequality, suburbanization, and neighborhood disadvantage measured in a variety of different ways.

While this may be a partial explanation for the mixed findings related to the racial invariance hypothesis, researchers have found inconsistent results even in studies that utilize the similar measures of structural conditions. For example, Ousey (1999) points out that both Smith (1992) and Harer and Steffensmeier (1992) sought to compare the impact of poverty on homicide in structurally similar, but racially distinct areas. While Harer and Steffensmeier (1992) found that "the effect of poverty on homicide is nearly identical among blacks and whites," Smith (1992) found that the effect of poverty on homicide among whites was almost three times greater than that among blacks (Ousey 1999: 407). Hence, the mixed findings related to the racial invariance hypothesis cannot be entirely explained by the fact that different studies focus on different structural conditions.

As mentioned above, a number of studies that tested the racial invariance hypothesis have found the effect of structural conditions on crime rates to be greater for whites than for blacks (Ousey 1999; Harer and Steffensmeier 1992). However, some researchers have concluded that such findings are not in contradiction of racial invariance arguments. McNulty (2001) for example, argues that such outcomes result from the "problem of restricted distributions." He explains that within much of the research that evaluates the racial invariance hypothesis, blacks tend to be distributed in neighborhoods that experience higher levels of disadvantage than whites. McNulty (2001) discusses Ousey's (1999) research as an example of the problem of restricted distributions. He

points out that within Ousey's analysis, "the mean black poverty rate is twice that of the white rate, black unemployment is 2.5 times that of whites, and the percentage of black families headed by females is nearly 3.5 times the corresponding mean level among whites" (McNulty 2001: 469). He suggests that "when levels of disadvantage start out high, additional increases may increase violence at a lower rate compared with when levels of disadvantage start out lower" (469-470). According to McNulty (2001), findings that indicate that structural disadvantage has a greater effect on white crime rates than on black crime rates might then be attributable to blacks being more likely than whites to be concentrated in extremely disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Krivo and Peterson (2000) examined the effect of neighborhood disadvantage on black and white homicide rates. Consistent with McNulty's (2001) conclusions, they found that while the effect of neighborhood disadvantage was stronger on white homicide rates than on black homicide rates, the effect of disadvantage on blacks and whites is similar when levels of disadvantage are similar, that is, when levels of disadvantage are low. Krivo and Peterson's (2005) interpretation of their findings is similar to McNulty's critique of the problem of redistribution. They assert that:

> Theoretically important structural factors may have weaker effects on violent crime when disadvantage is particularly widespread because further increases, above already high levels, may not appreciably differentiate communities. For, example, going from a 40% to a 50% poverty rate may have much less influence on social organization and, in turn crime than going from a 10% to a 20% rate. If so, racial differences in the effects of structural conditions may be found because blacks and whites are observed in different portions of the disadvantage distribution (340).

This interpretation suggests that findings such as those produced by Ousey's (1999) analysis are not necessarily inconsistent with the racial invariance hypothesis.

Rather, they are attributable to methodological issues related to measures of neighborhood disadvantage.

Sampson and Wilson (1995) argue that "in not one city over 100,000 in the United States do blacks live in ecological equality with whites," and that "racial differences in poverty and family disruption are so strong that the 'worst' urban contexts in which whites reside are considerably better than the average context of black communities" (42). They suggest that it may be impossible to reproduce in white communities the structural circumstances found within many impoverished urban black communities (39).

To summarize, the racial invariance hypothesis has its scientific origins in Shaw and McKay's analysis of Chicago crime rates (Sampson and Wilson 1995). Since then, various studies have found evidence of a relationship between urban structural conditions and urban crime rates that is independent of the racial/ethnic composition of urban communities. The extant research generally supports the notion that there exists a relationship between structural conditions within urban areas and the relatively high levels of crime often found within these areas. Much of this research has additionally considered and the processes that lead to residential segregation and the concentration of African Americans in impoverished urban areas that are particularly conducive to criminal involvement.

Less research has sought specifically to evaluate the racial invariance hypothesis, and this research has produced mixed results. Various studies have found that the structural conditions have a similar effect on white crime and black crime, lending

support to the racial invariance hypothesis. However, others have found less support for the hypothesized relationship between urbanization, race, and crime. For example, a number of studies have found that certain structural conditions seem to have a stronger effect on white crime than on black crime. While some insist that such findings are inconsistent with the racial invariance hypothesis, others have argued that this is not the case. In any event, the totality of research on this issue seems to consistently illustrate that criminogenic urban conditions have a positive effect on crime regardless of race. These findings point to the possibility that relatively high black incarceration rates may be partially influenced by large proportions of African Americans residing in urban areas where criminogenic conditions are more likely to exist.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Analytical Procedures

Quantitative data analysis was used to examine the relationship between states' race-specific incarceration rates and the racial composition of urban areas while controlling for the influence of other variables. Specifically, it was hypothesized that states' black incarceration rates would be directly and significantly influenced by the proportion of African American residents living in urban areas. Because the racial invariance hypothesis suggests that criminogenic conditions will affect different races similarly, I also examined the relationship between states' white incarceration rates and the proportion of white residents living in urban areas. The data for this analysis was collected from secondary sources, and entered into an SPSS data file. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression was used to assess the effects of independent and control variables on variations in race-specific incarceration rates.

Variables

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables for this study include: (1) total incarceration rates, (2) black incarceration rates, (3) white incarceration rates, and (4) the black-to-white incarceration rate ratio for each state. Data on incarceration rates was obtained from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and pertained to 2005 incarceration rates at mid-year in U.S. jails and prisons (BJS 2006). Data on New Mexico and Wyoming was excluded from the

analysis due to a lack of data on the race and ethnicity of inmates incarcerated in those states.

The total incarceration rate simply refers to the number of individuals confined in state and federal prisons, as well as local jails, for every 100,000 people in each state's population. The black incarceration rate for each state refers to the number of African Americans incarcerated in jails and state prisons for every 100,000 African Americans residing in a particular state. Similarly, the white incarceration rate refers to the number of whites incarcerated in jails and state prisons for every 100,000 whites in each state's total population in 2005. The fourth dependent variable, the 2005 black-to-white incarceration ratio, was calculated by simply dividing the black incarceration rate by the white incarceration rate. Hence, the higher the black-to-white ratio, the greater the extent to which blacks are incarcerated at higher rates than whites. If a state has a black-to-white ratio of 1, this means that blacks and whites are incarcerated at exactly the same rate. A ratio above 1 means blacks are incarcerated at a higher rate than whites, while a ratio below 1 would mean that whites are incarcerated at a higher rate than blacks.

Independent Variables

The independent variables for this study fit into three categories. The first category is comprised of demographic variables, the second pertains to race specific crime rates, and the third involves the political culture of each state. Demographic variables include, for each state, the percent of all state residents who reside in urban areas, percent of blacks living in urban areas, percent of whites living in urban areas, the percent of all state residents who reside in rural areas, percent of blacks living in rural

areas, percent of whites living in rural areas, race-specific poverty rates within each state, and the race-specific average per capita income within each state. Data on these variables was obtained electronically from the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau Statistics. The title and URL location of each of the tables from which this data was gathered is listed in the References section.

Urban variables. The 2000 Census distinguishes between urban areas, urbanized areas, urban clusters, central places within urbanized areas, and central places within urban clusters. Race-specific data on the populations of all of these urban environments was collected for this analysis. This was done to test the hypothesis that perhaps more densely populated urban environments might contribute to higher crime rates and that this would contribute to higher incarceration rates. If this were the case, a high percent of African Americans residing in the more densely settled urban environments, such as the central places within urban areas, might contribute to relatively high black incarceration rates.

The 2000 Census defines "urban" as "all territory, population, and housing units located within an urbanized area (UA) or an urban cluster (UC)" (Census 2000, Appendix A: Geographic Terms and Concepts). Urbanized areas and urban clusters generally consist of: (1) "a cluster of one or more block groups or census blocks each of which has a population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile," (2) "surrounding block groups and census blocks each of which has a population density of at least 500 people per square mile," and (3) "less densely settled blocks that form enclaves or indentations, or are used to connect discontiguous areas with qualifying densities" (Census 2000,

Appendix A: Geographic Terms and Concepts). Urbanized areas have a census population of at least 50,000, while urban clusters have census populations between 2,500 and 49,999. Central places within urbanized areas and urban clusters are essentially the most populated, and frequently the centermost, areas within these localities. Urbanized areas and urban clusters sometimes have multiple central places.

For each of these categories, I determined the percent of African Americans that reside in these urban locations within each state. More specifically, the total *number* of African Americans residing in "urban areas" was divided by the states' total population of African Americans to determine the *percent* of African Americans residing in urban areas. This same procedure was performed for urbanized areas, urban clusters, and central places within urbanized areas and urban clusters in order to determine the percent of each states' African Americans residing in these settings. The same procedures were carried out to determine the percent of Caucasians residing in these urban environments for each state.

Rural variables. Similar procedures were used to calculate the percent of African Americans living in rural areas, as well as the percent of Caucasians living in rural areas. A rural area is defined by the 2000 Census as "all territory, population, and housing units located outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters" (2000 Census, Appendix A: Geographic Terms and Concepts). Recall that it was hypothesized that relatively high percents of African Americans residing in urban areas would contribute to relatively high black incarceration rates. Similarly, one might expect that higher percents of African

Americans residing in rural areas will contribute to lower black crime rates, and therefore lower black incarceration rates.

For each of these urban and rural areas, a variable was created representing the extent to which blacks are concentrated within these areas at higher rates than whites. For example, the percent of blacks residing in urban areas was divided by the percent of whites residing in urban areas to obtain the black-to-white urban ratio. A state's score on this variable can be interpreted in a way similar to the above described black-to-white incarceration rate ratio. A black-to-white urban ratio above 1 indicates that blacks are concentrated in urban areas at higher rates than whites, while a score below 1 indicates that whites are concentrated in urban areas at higher rates than blacks. A score of 1 would mean that blacks and whites reside in urban areas at exactly the same rate.

Crime rates. The second category of data pertains to race-specific crime rates within each state. The crime rates for each state are expected to be an intervening variable which should have a direct and significant influence on incarceration rates. Data for these variables was collected from Uniform Crime Reports for type I felony offenses. The race-specific crime rate variables were constructed by calculating the average arrest rate for type one felony offenses for a five year period ranging from 2000 to 2004. The period ranging from 2000 to 2004 was chosen because it represents the five years prior to the 2005 incarceration rates which make up the dependent variables for this analysis. Official arrest data has its limitations. For example, as is often the case with crime rate data, official arrest records fail to account for crimes that go unreported or unsolved. Additionally, arrest data is often criticized as being overly influenced by law enforcement

arrest practices. Nevertheless, the Uniform Crime Report arrest data appear to be the best available indicator of states' overall crime rates.

Political culture. The third category of independent variables is intended to measure and control for the possible effect of each states' political culture. It is possible that the political culture of a state might influence incarceration rates in general, regardless of race, and might also influence the extent to which blacks are incarcerated at higher rates than whites. For example, previous researchers have argued that a liberal political culture is more likely to be supportive of rehabilitation interventions and less supportive of "tough on crime" policies (Walker 2006: 24). In contrast, conservative political cultures tend to support harsher punishments for criminal offenders (Merlo and Benekos 2004). One might then expect both black and white incarceration rates to be higher in states with a conservative political culture.

It is also plausible that a states' political culture might influence the black-to-white incarceration ratio, that is, the extent to which blacks are incarcerated at higher rates than whites. For example, one might expect that a conservative political culture would contribute to relatively high black-to-white incarceration ratios considering that contemporary American conservatives have generally been less supportive of civil rights legislation, affirmative action, and other policy issues that have a direct bearing on African American life.

Recall that The Sentencing Project report stated that the highest black incarceration rates tended to be concentrated in the Northeast and Midwest. Many of the highest black incarceration rates were in states that have relatively liberal political

climates when compared to the somewhat conservative states in the deep south, which often reported relatively low black incarceration rates, and yet have America's worst histories of racial injustices. It is expected that the influence of the above discussed demographic variables might explain these counterintuitive variations in black incarceration rates. That is, perhaps the concentration of blacks in urban criminogenic environments contributes to the surprisingly high black incarceration rates in Midwestern and northeastern regions of the U.S., and might help explain why conservative southern states have comparatively low black incarceration rates.

Political variables were therefore included in the analysis to determine if the proportion of blacks living in urban areas has a significant impact on black incarceration rates after one controls for political culture. Including such variables additionally allows one to examine the impact of a states' political culture on black incarceration rates, white incarceration rates, and the extent to which blacks are incarcerated at higher rates than whites.

A variable measuring the dominant political ideology within each state was constructed using data published by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL 2004). For each state, I constructed a numeric value that represents the conservatism of the state's legislative chamber. A higher score on this variable indicates a more conservative political culture, while a lower score reflects a less conservative culture. The data used to construct this variable included the NCSL's calculations of the partisan composition of each states' legislative chamber from 1984 to 2004. The percent of Democrats elected to each states' legislative house and senate was obtained for each state

for this 21 year period. These percentages represent each state's post election data for each two-year election cycle. For each state, the 20 year average percent of Democrats elected to the state legislature was determined, for both the house and the senate. This was done by first adding the percent of Democrats elected to the house for the years 1984 to 2004. The number obtained was then divided by eleven, the total number of legislative election cycles. This yielded the average percent of Democrats elected to the house over the 21 year period. The same procedure was then used to determine the average percent of Democrats elected to the senate. The two figures were then averaged together to determine the average percent of Democrats elected to each states' legislature for the 21 year period. Finally, the average percent of Democrats was then subtracted from 100 to determine the average percent of Republicans elected to each states' legislature. The average percent of Republicans elected to each states' legislature for the 21 year period is the numeric value used to measure the conservatism of each states' political culture. Therefore, the higher the value, the more conservative the state.

Sentencing Policy Variables. Sentencing guidelines and sentencing commissions often to seek to mitigate unjust racial disparities in sentencing, and might therefore be expected to influence variations in the dependent variables in this analysis. For this reason, several variables pertaining to states' sentencing policies were constructed.

A dichotomous variable indicating whether each state employs sentencing guidelines was constructed using data published by the National Center for State Courts (Kauder and Ostrom 2008). Each state was assigned either a one or a zero indicating whether the state had, or did not have, sentencing guidelines in place.

For the states that employed sentencing guidelines, Kauder and Ostrom (2008) created a continuum indicating the extent to which guidelines were voluntary or mandatory. This data was used to construct a variable that measures the extent to which guidelines impose mandatory constraints on judicial sentencing discretion. In creating the continuum, Kauder and Ostrom (2008) assigned a value of zero, one, or two based on the answers to six questions related to the use of the states' guidelines. The questions included;

> Is there an enforceable rule related to guideline use?
> Is the completion of a worksheet or structured scoring form required?
> Does a Sentencing Commission regularly report on guideline compliance?
> Are compelling and substantial reasons required for departures?
> Are written reasons required for departures?
> Is there appellate review of defendant-based challenges related to sentencing guidelines? (Kauder and Ostrom 2008).

Zero represents an answer of "no or unlikely," a value of one represents "possible or moderate," and a value of two is assigned for questions answered as "yes or likely." For each state, the total value is calculated with the result that each is assigned a value between one and twelve on the sentencing guidelines variable. States that score comparatively low have sentencing guidelines that are relatively voluntary, while a high score on the continuum indicates that the state's sentencing guidelines are more mandatory.

Finally, a variable indicating whether states have an active sentencing commission is included in this analysis. Kauder and Ostrom (2008) found that sentencing commissions "play a critical role in designing guidelines, assessing whether guidelines are working as intended, and identifying how needed adjustments might best be made"

(3). While Kauder and Ostrom's (2008) assertion refers specifically to sentencing commissions within states that employ sentencing guidelines, several states that do not employ sentencing guidelines nevertheless have sentencing commissions. It is possible that a sentencing commission might serve to mitigate unjust disparities in the sentencing of offenders even in the absence of sentencing guidelines. Therefore, the sentencing commission variable in this analysis includes all states, regardless of whether a state employs sentencing guidelines. The data for this variable was obtained from a 2006 Bureau of Justice Statistics report entitled "State Court Organization 2004." For the purposes of this study, states that do not have a commission were coded as a one, while states with a commission received a value of two.

After all of the above described data was collected it was entered into an SPSS file. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression was then used to assess the effects of independent and control variables on variations in race-specific incarceration rates. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, including the range, mean, and standard deviation, for each of the variables included in this analysis.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Range	Mean	S.D.
Total Incarceration Rate (Per 100,00 Residents)	273 - 1138	630	204
Black Incarceration Rate (Per 100,000 African American Residents)	851 - 4710	2573	781
White Incarceration Rate (Per 100,000 Caucasian Residents)	174 - 740	415	143

(Table Continues)

Variable	Range	Mean	S.D.
Black-to-White Incarceration Rate Ratio (Black Incarceration Rate/ White Incarceration Rate)	1.88 - 13.59	6.85	2.75
Urban Total (Percent of Total Population Residing in Urban Areas)	8 - 94	71.7	14.9
Urban Black (Percent of Black Population Residing Urban Areas)	58 - 99	89.8	10.8
Urban White (Percent of White Population Residing in Urban Areas)	38 - 93	69.3	15.0
Black-to-White Urban Ratio (Urban Black/Urban White)	1.02 - 1.80	1.334	.212
Total in Central Places w/in Urbanized Areas (Percent of Total Population)	6 - 76	32.1	14.1
Black in Central Places w/in Urbanized Areas (Percent of Black Population)	18 - 91	58.6	20.4
White in Central Places w/in Urbanized Areas (Percent of White Population)	6 - 73	28.2	14.1
Black-to-White Ratio in Central Places w/in Urbanized Areas (Black in Central Places/White in Central Places)	.92 – 4.77	2.347	.874
Rural Total (Percent of Total Population Residing in Rural Areas)	6 - 62	28.3	14.9
Rural Black (Percent of Black Population Residing in Rural Areas)	1 - 42	10.2	10.8
Rural White (Percent of White Population Residing in Rural Areas)	7 - 62	30.7	15
Black-to-White Rural Ratio (Rural Black/Rural White)	.04 - .97	.290	.213

(Table Continues)

Variable	Range	Mean	S.D.
Black Poverty Rates (Percent of Black Population Below Poverty Line)	7 - 35	21.9	5.64
White Poverty Rates (Percent of White Population Below Poverty Line)	5 - 17	9.00	2.39
Total Poverty Rates (Percent of Total Population Below Poverty Line)	6-19	11.6	3.04
Average Black Per Capita Income	10,042 – 19,151	14,560	2,242
Average White Per Capita Income	16,613 – 31,505	22,769	3,542
Average Total Per Capita Income	15,853 – 28,766	20,767	2,849
Total Crime Rate (Total Number of Arrests per 100,000 Residents)	13 - 83	42.1	17.5
Black Crime Rate (Total Number of Blacks Arrested per 100,000 Black Residents)	66 - 384	166	75.8
White Crime Rate (Total Number of Whites Arrested per 100,000 White Residents)	10-88	36.9	17.3
Black-to-White Crime Rate Ratio (Black Crime Rate/White Crime Rate)	2.25 – 12.7	5.08	2.48
Political Conservatism (Closer to 0= Relatively Liberal Closer to 100= Relatively Conservative)	16.8 – 75.6	45.1	14.6
Sentencing Guidelines 1=no 2=yes	1 - 2	1.40	.495
Sentencing Guidelines Continuum Low score=Guidelines are relatively voluntary/ High score= Guidelines are relatively mandatory	1 - 12	6.40	3.33
Sentencing Commission 1=no 2=yes	1 - 2	1.46	.503

CHAPTER 3

FINDINGS

The following section discusses the correlations between most of the variable in this analysis. This is followed by a section discussing the regression models that were utilized in this analysis and their implications.

Correlations

Crime Rates

Crime rates were expected to function as an intervening variable. An intervening variable is one that is influenced *by* an independent variable, and then has a subsequent impact on the dependent variable. In this case, it was expected that when a particular population is concentrated at relatively high rates in criminogenic urban environments, this would contribute to relatively high crime rates, and that high crime rates would subsequently contribute to high incarceration rates. Thus, crime rates for each state were expected to have a direct and significant influence on the dependent variables—incarceration rates. The correlations between crime rates and incarceration rates are consistent with this expectation. Bivariate correlations do not allow the researcher to control for the influence of other variables, nor can bivariate correlations help determine time-order between variables. Nevertheless, the positive and statistically significant bivariate correlations between crime rates and incarceration rates are consistent with the expectation that crime rates would have a positive influence on incarceration rates.

Black crime rates are positively correlated with black incarceration rates (.524**), and this correlation is statistically significant at the .001 level. Similarly, white crime

rates are positively correlated with white incarceration rates (.323*) at the .05 level. Total crime rates are positively correlated with total incarceration rates (.425**) at the .01 level. Finally, the black-to-white crime rate ratio is positively and strongly correlated with the black-to-whiteincarceration rate ratio (.584**) at the .001 level.

Table 2: Correlations between Crime Rates and Incarceration Rates

		Black Crime Rate	White Crime Rate	Total Crime Rate	Black-to-White Crime Rate Ratio
Black Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	.524**	.092	-.019	.469*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.546	.899	.001
	N	45	45	48	45
White Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	.045	.323*	.395*	-.295*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.767	.030	.005	.049
	N	45	45	48	45
Total Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	-.198	.268	.425**	-.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.182	.068	.002	.001
	N	47	47	50	47
Black-to-White Incarceration Rate Ratio	Pearson Correlation	.292	-.251	-.367*	.584**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.052	.096	.010	.001
	N	45	45	48	45

Demographic Variables

Central Places within Urbanized Areas. Among the demographic variables in this analysis, the concentration of populations in central places within urbanized areas appears to have the strongest influence on the dependent variables. Central places are the most populated, and frequently the centermost, areas within urbanized areas. The correlations consistently demonstrate that as the proportion of a race-specific population residing in

central places within urbanized areas increases, so too does that population's crime rate and incarceration rate.

Table 3: Correlations between Dependent Variables And Populations in Central Places

		Percent of Blacks	Percent of Whites	Percent of Total Population	Black-to-White Ratio
Black Crime Rate	Pearson Correlation	.440**	.398**	.329*	-.019
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.006	.024	.900
	N	47	47	47	47
White Crime Rate	Pearson Correlation	.279	.656**	.624**	-.377**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.058	.001	.001	.009
	N	47	47	47	47
Total Crime Rate	Pearson Correlation	.212	.473**	.479**	-.253
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.139	.001	.001	.077
	N	50	50	50	50
Black-to-White Crime Rate Ratio	Pearson Correlation	.170	-.136	-.171	.263
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.254	.363	.249	.074
	N	47	47	47	47
Black Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	.266	.196	.103	.105
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.068	.181	.485	.479
	N	48	48	48	48
White Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	-.056	.296*	.226	-.379**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.705	.041	.122	.008
	N	48	48	48	48
Total Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	-.140	.118	.142	-.258
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.333	.415	.324	.070
	N	50	50	50	50
Black-to-White Incarceration Rate Ratio	Pearson Correlation	.238	-.122	-.114	.418**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.103	.409	.440	.003
	N	48	48	48	48

These correlations lend support for the main hypotheses of this analysis—that states' black incarceration rates are influenced by the proportion of African Americans

residing in urban areas. Because the racial invariance hypothesis suggests that criminogenic conditions will affect different races similarly, it was also expected that states' white incarceration rates and total incarceration rates would also be affected by the proportion of these populations that reside in urban areas. Table 3 shows the bivariate correlations between the concentration of race-specific populations in central places within urbanized areas and crime rates, as well as incarceration rates.

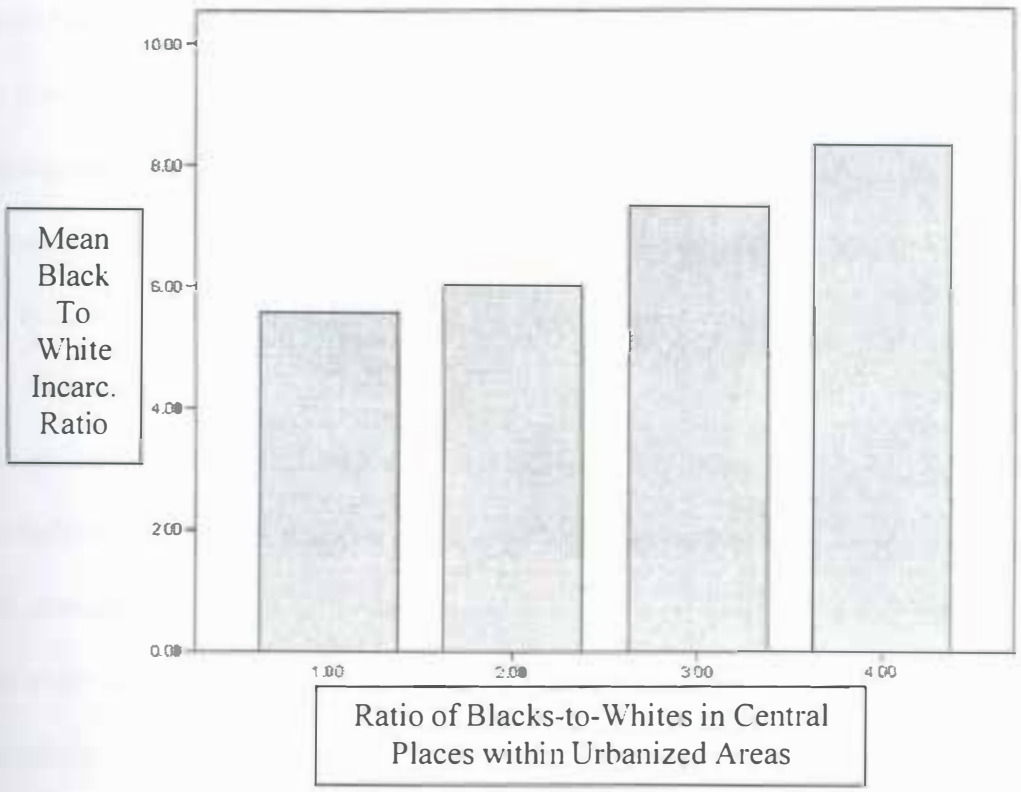
Black crime rates are positively correlated with the percent of blacks residing in central places within urbanized areas (.440**), and this correlation is significant at the .01 level. Similarly, black *incarceration* rates are positively correlated with the proportion of blacks residing in central places within urbanized areas (.266), however this correlation does not quite attain statistical significance (.068). These positive correlations between crime rates, incarceration rates, and urban populations are consistent with white populations, the total population, and the black-to-white ratios within each state. More specifically, the proportion of *whites* residing in central places within urbanized areas is positively correlated with white crime rates (.656**), as well as white incarceration rates (.296*). Both correlations are statistically significant at the .01 and .05 levels. The proportion of each states' *total* population that residing in these central places is positively correlated with total crime rates (.479**), and this correlation is significant at the .001 level. However, the correlation between total *incarceration* rates and the proportion of the total population residing in central places is not statistically significant.

The ratio of blacks-to-whites residing in these central places is also positively correlated with the black-to-white crime rate ratio (.263), as well as the black-to-white

incarceration ratio (.418**). While the correlation with the incarceration ratio is statistically significant at the .001 level, the correlation with the *crime* ratio is not quite statistically significant (.074).

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the black-to-white incarceration ratio and the ratio of blacks-to-whites in central places within urbanized areas. The horizontal axis represents the ratio of blacks-to-whites residing in central places within urbanized areas.

Figure 1: Race-Specific Populations in Central Places And Incarceration Rates



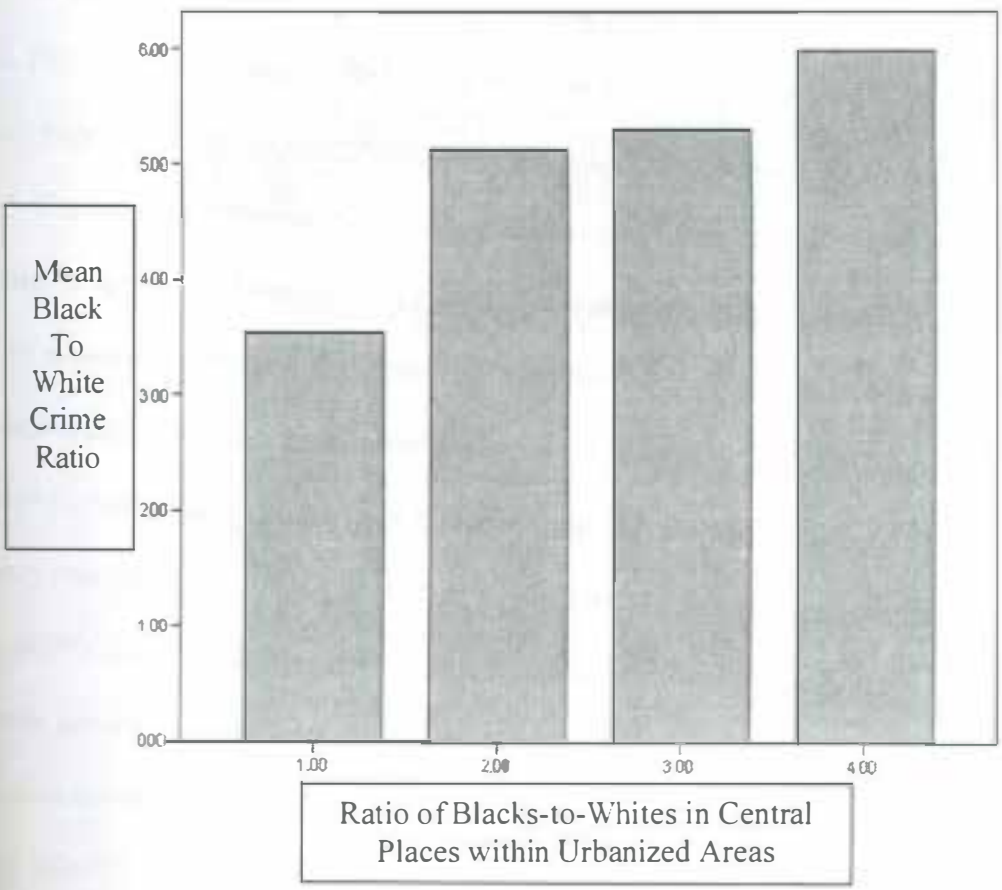
The fifty cases (states) were sorted in ascending order based on their scores on the variable representing the ratio of blacks-to-whites in central urbanized areas. The states were then separated into four quartiles; two including twelve states and two including thirteen states. Each bar therefore represents either twelve or thirteen states. The first quartile, represented by the first bar, includes the twelve states with the lowest black-to-white urban ratio, while the fourth bar includes the thirteen states with the highest black-to-white urban ratio. The vertical axis represents the mean black-to-white incarceration ratio for each quartile on the horizontal axis.

The twelve states with the lowest ratio of blacks-to-whites in central places within urbanized areas also have the lowest mean on the black-to-white incarceration ratio. The mean black-to-white incarceration ratio increases with each quartile increase in the black-to-white urban ratio. The bar chart illustrates that as the extent to which blacks are concentrated in urban central places at greater rates than whites increases, so too does the extent to which blacks are incarcerated at greater rates than whites.

Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between the ratio of blacks-to-whites in central places with urbanized areas and the black-to-white *crime* ratio. Like the previous chart, the horizontal axis represents the ratio of blacks-to-whites residing in central places within urbanized areas. Again, the first quartile, represented by the first bar, includes the twelve states with the lowest black-to-white urban ratio, while the fourth bar includes the thirteen states with the highest black-to-white urban ratio. Just as the twelve states with the lowest ratio of blacks-to-whites in central places within urbanized areas have the lowest mean score on the black-to-white incarceration ratio, these twelve states also have

the lowest mean score on the black-to-white *crime* ratio. Figure 1, which compared the urban variable with the incarceration variable, illustrated that the mean black-to-white incarceration ratio increases with each quartile increase in the black-to-white urban ratio. Similarly, Figure 2 reveals that the mean black-to-white *crime* ratio increases with each quartile increase in the black-to-white urban ratio.

Figure 2: Race-Specific Populations in Central Places And Crime Rates



Urban Areas. Table 4 shows the correlations between urban populations and crime rates, as well as incarceration rates. These urban variables differ from the previously discussed urban variables in that they refer more broadly to populations residing in any area classified as "urban," while the above discussed correlations refer specifically to areas defined as *central places* within urbanized areas. The relationships between the dependent variables in this analysis and the race-specific populations residing in urban areas are not as strong as the relationships between the dependent variables and the race-specific populations residing in *central places* within urbanized areas. This is to be expected since central places in urbanized areas tend to be the most densely populated areas in state. Nevertheless, some of the correlations are noteworthy.

The correlations between urban populations and incarceration rates are not statistically significant. However, the correlations between urban populations and *crime* rates are positive, significant, and consistent with the core hypotheses in this analysis. The black crime rate is positively correlated with the proportion of the black population residing in urban areas at the .05 level (.348*). Similarly, the white crime rate is positively correlated with the proportion of whites residing in urban areas at the .001 level (.491**). The total crime rate is positively correlated with the proportion of the total population residing in urban areas at the .01 level (.418**). And finally, the black-to-white crime rate ratio is positively correlated with the black-to-white urban ratio at the .01 level (.426**).

Table 4: Correlations between Dependent Variables
And Populations in Urban Areas

		Urban Black	Urban White	Urban Total	Black-to-White Urban Ratio
Black Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	.126	-.085	-.156	.233
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.395	.568	.290	.111
	N	48	48	48	48
White Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	-.143	-.097	-.086	-.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.331	.514	.559	.948
	N	48	48	48	48
Total Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	-.213	.004	.056	-.251
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.138	.979	.697	.078
	N	50	50	50	50
Black-to-White Incarceration Rate Ratio	Pearson Correlation	.238	.071	.013	.135
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.103	.631	.930	.361
	N	48	48	48	48
Black Crime Rate	Pearson Correlation	.348*	.219	.169	-.016
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	.138	.255	.914
	N	47	47	47	47
White Crime Rate	Pearson Correlation	.196	.491**	.468**	-.507**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.188	.000	.001	.001
	N	47	47	47	47
Total Crime Rate	Pearson Correlation	.202	.401**	.418**	-.410**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.159	.004	.003	.003
	N	50	50	50	50
Black-to-White Crime Rate Ratio	Pearson Correlation	.167	-.203	-.241	.426**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.261	.171	.102	.003
	N	47	47	47	47

Rural Variables. The correlations between the rural variables and black and white incarceration rates alone were not statistically significant. However, the black-to-white rural ratio was negatively correlated with the black-to-white incarceration ratio (-.357*) at the .05 level. Furthermore, the relationships between rural variables and race-specific *crime* rates are strong, significant, and consistent with the core hypotheses in this

analysis. Black crime rates are negatively correlated with the percent of blacks living in rural areas (-.348*) at the .05 level. Similarly, white crime rates are negatively correlated with the percent of whites residing in rural areas (-.491**) at the .001 level. Total crime rates are negatively correlated with the percent of all state residents living in rural areas (.418**) at the .01 level, and the black-to-white crime ratio is negatively correlated with the black-to-white rural ratio (-.363*) at the .05 level.

Economic Variables

Table 5 shows the correlations between economic variables and incarceration rates, as well as crime rates. White poverty rates and the average white per capita income are both significantly correlated with white incarceration rates. As might be expected, white poverty rates are positively correlated with white incarceration rates (.464**), and the average white per capita income is negatively correlated with white incarceration rates (-.345*). Similarly, *total* incarceration rates (not shown in correlation matrix) are positively correlated with total poverty rates (.547**), and negatively correlated with the average per capita income for the total population (-.290*). Black poverty rates and black per capita income, however, were not significantly correlated with black incarceration rates. This finding is consistent with previous research findings that the effect of economic disadvantage on crime rates is greater for whites than for blacks (e.g. Ousey 1999; Harer and Steffensmeier 1992).

It is also interesting to note that while poverty rates and the average per capita income correlated significantly with incarceration rates for whites and for total populations, these variables did not have significant correlations with *crime* rates. One

possible explanation for this might be that class mediates sentencing outcomes but has less influence on criminal behavior.

Table 5: Correlations between Dependent Variables And Economic Variables

		Black Poverty Rate	White Poverty Rate	Avg. Black Income	Avg. White Income
Black Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	.004	.067	-.123	-.360*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.979	.652	.404	.012
	N	48	48	48	48
White Incarceration Rate	Pearson Correlation	.059	.464*	-.158	-.345*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.688	.001	.284	.016
	N	48	48	48	48
Black Crime Rate	Pearson Correlation	-.215	-.211	.198	-.008
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.147	.155	.182	.959
	N	47	47	47	47
White Crime Rate	Pearson Correlation	-.241	.042	.348*	.209
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.102	.780	.016	.159
	N	47	47	47	47

Political Conservatism

While some of the demographic variables in this analysis correlated strongly with the dependent variables as hypothesized, the variable that exhibited the strongest correlation to black incarceration rates was political conservatism (.589**), and this correlation was significant at the .001 level. One might expect political conservatism to correlate positively with incarceration rates in general, and not just *black* incarceration rates. However, this was not the case. Political conservatism did not exhibit significant correlations with white incarceration rates or with total incarceration rates. Furthermore,

conservatism correlated positively and significantly with the black-to-white incarceration rate ratio (.340*). That is, as conservatism increased, so too did the extent to which blacks are incarcerated at higher rates than whites. Additionally, political conservatism correlated positively with black crime rates and the black-to-white crime ratio (.321* and .333*), but did not correlated significantly with white crime rates or total crime rates. These findings suggest that political conservatism may have a direct and positive influence on the extent to which blacks are arrested and incarcerated at higher rates than whites.

Sentencing Policy

It was expected that sentencing policies might affect the dependent variables—incarceration rates. The sentencing policy variables included whether a state employs a sentencing commission, as well as whether a state employs sentencing guidelines. Additionally, for the states that do employ sentencing guidelines, a variable was created to represent the extent to which those guidelines were voluntary or mandatory. None of these variables related to sentencing policy correlated significantly with the dependent variables in this analysis.

OLS Regression

OLS regression was used to assess the impact of independent variables on incarceration rates, as well as crime rates. Six regression models are shown in Tables 6 through Table 11. The independent variables for the models are those that exhibited strong and significant correlations with the crime rates and incarceration rates. Tables 6 and 7 illustrate the impact of independent variables on total crime rates and total

incarceration rates. Tables 8 and 9 show the impact of independent variables on *black* crime rates and black incarceration rates. Finally, Tables 10 and 11 illustrate the impact of the independent variables on *white* crime rates and white incarceration rates.

Table 6: Dependent Variable: Total Crime Rate

Model	Beta Coefficient	t	Significance
(Constant)		4.289	.001
Central Places (Total)	.479	3.776	.001
(Constant)		1.538	.131
Central Places (Total)	.483	3.640	.001
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.018	-.132	.895
(Constant)		1.781	.082
Central Places (Total)	.497	3.718	.001
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.017	-.128	.899
Conservatism	-.124	-.965	.340

The total crime rate was entered as the dependent variable in the regression model presented in Table 6. Three independent variables were entered into the equation sequentially, which included: the percent of the total population that resides in central places within urbanized areas, the average per capita income for the total population, and political conservatism. This model yields an R square of .245, meaning that the independent variables in the equation collectively explain roughly 25 percent of the variance in total crime rates. Entering the independent variables separately into the equation makes it possible to examine the precise impact that each variable has on the beta coefficients of the other variables in the model. According to R square, approximately 23 percent of the variance in total crime rates can be explained by the

percent of each state's total population that resides in central places within urbanized areas. This relationship is positive and significant with a beta coefficient of .497**. This positive relationship indicates that when the percent of a state's total population residing in central places increases, this contributes to an increase in crime rates. Neither average per capita income nor political conservatism have a significant impact on total crime rates.

A second regression model was run replacing the percent of each state's total population residing in central places with the percent each state's total population residing *rural* areas. The model yielded an R square of .216. Roughly 17 percent of the variance in total crime rates can be explained by the percent of rural residents within the state population. The beta coefficient was negative (-.571**) and statistically significant at the .001 level. This finding indicates that increases in the percent of a state's population residing in rural areas contributes to a decline in total crime rates. Like the model presented in Table 6, neither per capita income nor political conservatism had a significant influence on total crime rates. This model can be viewed in Appendix A.

Total incarceration rate is entered as the dependent variable in the model presented in Table 7. Like the regression model presented in Table 6, the three independent variables included: the percent of the total population residing in central places within urbanized areas, the average per capita income for the total population, and political conservatism. The model yielded an R square of .152, meaning that approximately 15 percent of the variation in total incarceration rates is explained by the independent variables in the model. The relationship between the percent of a state's total

population residing in central places within urbanized areas and total incarceration rates is positive (.249). but does not quite reach the .05 standard of statistical significance (.085). This may be due to a rather small sample size. Unfortunately. this sample size cannot be increased since the sample includes the entire *population* of states. However. when the percent of state's total population residing central places is replaced with the percent of a state's total population residing in rural areas. the rural variable does in fact have a negative and significant influence on total incarceration rates. This model can be viewed in Appendix A.

When average per capita income is entered into the model presented in Table 7. the explained variance increases from .02 to .135. This finding indicates that nearly 12 percent of the variance in total incarceration rates can be explained by variations in the average per capita income. The beta coefficient is negative (-.351**) and statistically significant at the .01 level. Political conservatism did not have a significant influence on total incarceration rates.

Table 7: Dependent Variable: Total Incarceration Rate

Model	Beta Coefficients	t	Significance
(Constant)		7.896	.001
Central Places (Total)	.142	.997	.324
(Constant)		5.128	.001
Central Places (Total)	.235	1.673	.101
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.352	-2.502	.016
(Constant)		5.124	.001
Central Places (Total)	.249	1.761	.085
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.351	-2.495	.016
Conservatism	-.130	-.952	.346

Adding crime rates as an independent variable into this model, increased R square from .152 to .301. This finding indicates that approximately 15 percent of the variance in total incarceration rates can be explained by total crime rates. This model can be viewed in Appendix B. Crime rates are not controlled for in the original model presented above in Table 7 because crime rates were expected to function as an intervening variable. That is, the concentration of populations in densely settled urban areas was expected have a positive influence on crime rates, and that crime rates would then have a positive influence on incarceration rates. Including an intervening variable (i.e., crime rates) in the model creates a misleading impression that the other independent variables in the model do not have a significant influence on incarceration rates.

It is not surprising that of all the independent variables in the model, crime rates have the strongest impact on incarceration rates. The relationship is positive (.443**) and significant at the .01 level. The regression models discussed here, which examined total non-race specific populations, add support for the hypothesis that the concentration of populations in densely settled urban areas drive crime rates up, and that high crime rates subsequently contribute to high incarceration rates. These regression models also illustrate that while income does not have a significant influence on total crime rates, it does have a negative and significant impact on total *incarceration* rates. Political conservatism did not have a significant influence on total crime rates or incarceration rates. The regression models presented in Tables 8 and 9 measure the influence of independent variables on *black* crime rates and black incarceration rates.

Table 8: Dependent Variable: Black Crime Rate

Model	Beta Coefficients	T	Significance
(Constant)		2.237	.030
Central Places (Black)	.440	3.288	.002
(Constant)		.539	.593
Central Places (Black)	.419	2.953	.005
Per Capita Income (Black)	.070	.492	.625
(Constant)		.398	.693
Central Places (Black)	.390	2.784	.008
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.008	-.051	.959
Conservatism	.238	1.663	.104

Table 8 shows the results of a model in which the independent variables are regressed on black crime rates. The three independent variables included in the model are: the percent of the black population that resides in central places within urbanized areas, the average per capita income for the black population, and political conservatism. The R square of .247 produced by this model indicates that the independent variables explain approximately 25 percent of the variance in black crime rates. Approximately 19 percent of the variation in black crime rates is attributable to the percent of blacks residing in central places within urbanized areas. The relationship is positive and significant at the .01 level with a beta coefficient of .390**. This positive relationship suggests that increases in the percent of a state's black population residing in central places contributes an increase in black crime rates. Neither black income nor political conservatism produced a significant impact on black crime rates.

Appendix A shows a similar regression model wherein the urban central places variable is replaced with the percent of the black population residing in rural areas.

Consistent with the relationship between *total* crime rates the percent of the total population residing in rural areas, the percent of the black population residing in rural areas has a negative influence on black crime rates (-.299). However, this relationship does not quite reach the .05 standard of statistical significance (.071).

Table 9: Dependent Variable: Black Incarceration Rate

Model	Beta Coefficients	t	Significance
(Constant)		5.923	.001
Central Places (Black)	.266	1.869	.068
(Constant)		4.029	.001
Central Places (Black)	.322	2.207	.032
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.210	-1.437	.158
(Constant)		3.858	.001
Central Places (Black)	.171	1.423	.162
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.313	-2.644	.011
Conservatism	.612	5.137	.001

Table 9 shows the results of a regression model with black *incarceration* rate as the dependent variable. Like the model presented in Table 8, which utilized black *crime* rates as the dependent variable, independent variables in this model include: the percent of the black population residing in central places within urbanized areas, the average per capita income for the black population, and political conservatism. According to R square, the independent variables in this model explain approximately 44 percent of the variance in black incarceration rates. Political conservatism explains an astounding 33 percent of the variance in black incarceration rates. Conservatism has a strong and positive influence on black incarceration rates (.612**), and the relationship is statistically significant at the .001 level. This finding indicates that increases in political

conservatism contribute significantly to increases in black incarceration rates. The percent of the black population residing in central places within urbanized areas explains approximately 7 of the variance in black incarceration rates. The relationship is positive (.171) but is not statistically significant. Approximately 4 percent of the variance in black incarceration rates is attributable to black income. Black income has a negative influence on black incarceration rates (.313**). and the relationship is statistically significant at the .01 level.

When black crime rates were entered into this model as an independent variable, R square increases to .516. This model can be viewed in Appendix A. Black crime rates explain 13 percent of the variation in black incarceration rates. This relationship is positive (.412**) and statistically significant at the .01 level. This finding indicates that increases in black crime rates contribute an increase in black incarceration rates. Together the models presented in Tables 8 and 9 indicate that the percent of the black population residing in densely populated urban areas has a positive influence on black crime rates, which in turn have a positive influence on black incarceration rates. As is the case with total crime and incarceration rates, black income does not have a significant impact on black crime rates, but it does have a negative and significant influence on black *incarceration* rates. Political conservatism has a positive, strong, and statistically significant influence on black incarceration rates.

Table 10 displays the results of a regression model that examines the influence of the percent of the white population that resides in central places within urbanized areas, the average per capita income for the white population, and political conservatism on

white crime rates. This model yields an R square of .443. Therefore, the independent variables in the model explain 44 percent of the variance in white crime rates. The extent to which white populations are concentrated in central places within urbanized areas explains 43 percent of the variance in white crime rates. The beta coefficient is a strong and positive .663**. and this relationship is significant at the .001 level.

Table 10: Dependent Variable: White Crime Rate

Model	Beta Coefficients	t	Significance
(Constant)		3.578	.001
Central Places (White)	.656	5.827	.001
(Constant)		.660	.513
Central Places (White)	.642	5.506	.001
Per Capita Income (White)	.062	.533	.597
(Constant)		.990	.328
Central Places (White)	.663	5.540	.001
Per Capita Income (White)	.047	.398	.693
Conservatism	-.098	-.840	.406

When the percent of whites residing in central places is replaced with the percent of whites residing in rural areas. the model yields an R square of .280 (see Appendix A). In this model, roughly 24 percent of the variance in white crime rates is explained by the percent of whites residing in rural areas. The beta coefficient is positive (.688**) and statistically significant at the .001 level. White per capita income and political conservatism did not have a significant influence on white crime rates in either model. These findings indicate that increases in the percent of the white population residing in central places contributes to increases in white crime rates. Furthermore, when the

percent of the white population residing in *rural* areas increases, this influences a *decrease* in white crime rates.

Table 11 shows the results of a regression model which examines the influence of the percent of the white population residing in central places within urbanized areas, the average white per capita income, and political conservatism on white incarceration rates. This model yields an R square of .286. White per capita income and the percent of the white population residing in central places both have a significant influence on white incarceration rates.

The percent of the white population residing in central places explains roughly 9 percent of the variance in white incarceration rates. The relationship is positive (.437**) and statistically significant at the .001 level. White per capita income explains 19 percent of the variance in white incarceration rates. This relationship is negative (-.470**) and statistically significant at the .001 level. Political conservatism did not have a significant impact on white incarceration rates. When white crime rates are entered into this model the explained variance increases to 37 percent. Approximately 5 percent of the variance in white incarceration rates is attributable to white crime rates. The relationship is positive (.301) but does not quite reach the .05 standard of statistical significance (.084). This model can be viewed in Appendix B.

As was the case with total populations and black populations, these findings lend support to the hypothesis that the concentration of populations in densely settled urban environments contributes to high crime rates, and that this condition subsequently contributes to high incarceration rates. The regression models also indicate that in terms

of white populations, income has a significant influence on incarceration rates, but not crime rates, and that political conservatism has no significant influence on crime rates or incarceration rates.

Table 11: Dependent Variable: White Incarceration Rate

Model	Beta Coefficients	t	Significance
(Constant)		7.473	.001
Central Places (White)	.296	2.103	.041
(Constant)		6.053	.001
Central Places (White)	.412	3.144	.003
Per Capita Income (White)	-.451	-3.440	.001
(Constant)		5.486	.001
Central Places (White)	.437	3.204	.003
Per Capita Income (White)	-.470	-3.494	.001
Conservatism	-.094	-.710	.482

The following chapter discusses these findings as they relate to the purpose and hypotheses of this analysis. Policy implications and suggestions for future research will also be discussed.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

This research tests the hypothesis that state-by-state variations in race-specific incarceration rates are partially attributable to the proportion of race-specific populations residing in densely settled urban environments. This hypothesis is built upon racial invariance arguments which state that conditions of structured disadvantage affect different racial population similarly. It was expected that states with a large percent of their black population residing in densely populated urban areas would consequently have relatively high black crime rates, and that this would contribute to high black incarceration rates. Likewise, it was expected that large proportions of white populations residing in densely settled urban areas would contribute to relatively high rates of white crime, and high rates of white incarceration.

The bivariate correlations and linear regression models provide support for these hypotheses. Of all the demographic variables in this analysis, the concentration of populations in central places within urbanized areas appears to have the strongest influence on crime rates and incarceration rates. Recall that the central places within urbanized areas tend to be the most densely populated, and frequently the centermost locations, within urbanized areas. The bivariate correlations demonstrate that the proportion of race-specific populations that reside in central places within urbanized areas is positively and significantly correlated with race-specific crime rates and race-specific incarceration rates. For example, the percent of states' black populations residing in central places in urbanized areas is positively correlated with black crime rates and

black incarceration rates. This holds true for white populations, and total populations. These findings provide support for the core hypotheses of this analysis. Additionally, these findings provide support for racial invariance argument that the structural conditions associated with urban life have a direct influence on crime rates independent of race.

The results of the regression analysis demonstrate that when other variables are controlled for, the extent to which race-specific populations are concentrated in central places within urbanized areas has a positive and significant influence on the corresponding race-specific crime rates, and that crime rates subsequently have a positive and significant influence on incarceration rates. These findings from the regression models also support the racial invariance hypothesis, for the influence of urbanization on crime rates, and consequently incarceration rates, was similar for black populations, white populations, and states' total populations.

The state of Iowa exemplifies the relationship between race-specific urbanization, crime, and incarceration rates. Following the 2007 Sentencing Project report, Iowa became somewhat notorious for having the highest black-to-white incarceration rate ratio in the U.S. This means that the extent to which blacks are incarcerated at higher rates than whites is greater in Iowa than in any other state. At the time of the report, Iowa's black incarceration rate was well above the national average (4,200 per 100,000 African Americans compared to the national average of 2,573), and Iowa's white incarceration rate was below the national average (309 compared to the national average of 415). Together, high black incarceration rates, and low white incarceration rate, contribute to

Iowa's high black-to-white incarceration rate ratio. The distribution of both blacks and whites inside and outside of densely populated urban areas may help to explain Iowa's high black-to-white incarceration rate ratio.

For example, in Iowa, 74 percent of the black population resides in central places within urbanized areas. This is well above the national average, which is approximately 59 percent. On the other hand, only 25 percent of the white population resides in central places within urbanized areas. This is below the national average of 28.2 percent. This helps to explain why the black crime rate in Iowa is well above the national average (345 arrests per 100,000 African Americans, compared to the national average of 166), and why Iowa's white crime rate is below the national average (33 arrests per 100,000 whites, compared to a national average of approximately 37). Given Iowa's high black crime rates, and low white crime rates, it is not surprising that Iowa's black incarceration rate is quite high, while Iowa's white incarceration rate is rather low.

Income also had an influence on some of the dependent variables in this analysis. More specifically, incarceration rates were negatively and significantly influenced by per capita income for blacks, whites, and states' total populations. Interestingly, income did not have a significant effect on crime rates for any of these populations. One possible explanation for this may be that income mediates sentencing outcomes but has less influence on criminal behavior. This is consistent with a wealth of research suggesting that individuals of lower socioeconomic status are at significant disadvantages when navigating the criminal justice system. Reiman (1998) points out for example that for the same criminal behavior, the poor "if arrested, they are more likely to be charged; if

charged, more likely to be convicted; if convicted, more likely to be sentenced to prison; and if sentenced, more likely to be given longer prison terms than members of the middle and upper classes" (101).

Reiman argues that at each stage within the criminal justices system (i.e. arrest, charging, convicting, and sentencing), the wealthy are weeded out of the system, while the poor are at a distinct disadvantage. These conditions, he argues, contributes to the disproportionate confinement of persons of relatively low socioeconomic status. This may help to explain why income did not affect crime rates, but had a significant influence on incarceration rates. These conditions may also help to explain why the concentration of race-specific populations within densely settled urban environments appears to have a stronger and more significant impact on crime rates than it does on incarceration rates. That is, densely settled urban environments are conducive to higher crime rates, but income serves to mediate sentencing outcomes for those of higher socioeconomic status.

It was expected that sentencing policies might affect variations in incarceration rates. However, none of the variables related to sentencing policy had a significant influence on incarceration rates. Political conservatism however, had a strong and significant influence on black incarceration rates. Given that political conservatism has been widely associated with "tough on crime" policies (Walker 2006), one might expect political conservatism to have a positive influence on incarceration rates in general. This was however, not the case as political conservatism had no significant influence on white incarceration rates, or total incarceration rates.

It is important to note that political conservatism did not have a significant influence on black *crime* rates. The fact that conservatism had a positive influence on black incarceration rates in the absence of any significant influence on crime rates suggests that the components of conservative culture that contribute to increases in black incarceration rates likely exist in the courts (e.g., sentencing decisions) rather than in enforcement efforts (e.g., arrest practices). Turning again to Iowa, the state scored a 49.8 on the political conservatism scale, which is higher than the national average of 45.1. This may help to further explain the high black incarceration rates found in Iowa.

The totality of the findings are consistent with the predictions of the racial invariance hypothesis. After controlling for per capita income and political conservatism, urbanization had a direct and significant impact on crime rates regardless of race.

The findings also shed light on issues regarding the black-to-white incarceration ratios reported by The Sentencing Project in 2007. The report revealed that several states in the Midwest (e.g., Iowa) and Northeast had higher black-to-white incarceration ratios than southern states that have long histories of racist oppression directed against African Americans. Among other things, The Sentencing Project report led to speculation that the criminal justice system in states such as Iowa might be engaged in systematic discrimination against African Americans.

Building upon the racial invariance hypothesis, an alternative explanation is that relatively high proportions of blacks residing in urban areas contributes to high black crime rates which in turn leads to high black incarceration rates. The data for this analysis revealed that approximately 74 percent of Iowa's black population resides in central

places within urbanized areas. By contrast the proportion of blacks residing in central urban areas of the following Southern states was relatively low: Mississippi—18 percent; South Carolina—19 percent; Georgia—32 percent; North Carolina—42 percent; Alabama—45 percent; Louisiana—49 percent; Virginia—50 percent; and Florida—50 percent. These examples lend further support to the notion that the high percentage of Iowa's black population residing in urban areas is a major reason why Iowa has a higher black incarceration rate than southern states that have long histories of racial oppression.

Limitations, Suggestions for Future Research, and Policy Implications

One limitation of this analysis involves the data used to construct crime rate variables. Crime rate variables were constructed using data from the Uniform Crime Report (UCR). The UCR compiles data submitted by law enforcement agencies throughout the country. It should be noted that the submission of such data by law enforcement agencies however, is not mandatory. The crime rate patterns inferred based on UCR data may not be entirely accurate.

Furthermore, all official arrest data has its limitations. For example, official arrest records fail to account for crimes that go unreported or unsolved. Additionally, arrest data is often criticized as being overly influenced by law enforcement arrest practices. While the Uniform Crime Report arrest data appears to be perhaps the best available indicator of a states' overall crime rates, using this data leaves unclear whether, and the extent to which, the inferred race-specific crime rates and patterns are influenced by discriminatory arrest practices on the part of law enforcement.

The fact that political conservatism has a positive, strong, and significant influence on black incarceration rates, but not white incarceration rates or total incarceration rates, is certainly worth further examination in future research. American conservatives have tended to be less supportive of civil rights legislation, affirmative action, and other policy issues that have a direct bearing on African American life. The positive relationship between political conservatism and black incarceration rates does not necessarily imply that racial discrimination is somehow at play in politically conservative cultures. But it does beg the question: In what ways does political conservatism influence increases in black incarceration rates? The current analysis does not address this question.

The relationship between political conservatism and black incarceration rates may have nothing to do with racial discrimination. African Americans tend to be disproportionately involved in felony crimes (i.e., murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft) that are punishable by lengthy prison sentences (Lafree 1998: 50). It may be that politically conservative states tend to impose more punitive sanctions on all criminal offenders, and that this affects African American populations disproportionately because African Americans are disproportionately involved in felony crime. Future research might utilize smaller units of analysis (e.g. cities) to examine how political cultures and their respective policies contribute to relatively high black incarceration rates. Interviews and surveys might also be utilized to examine the relationship between political affiliation and racial discrimination.

If the overrepresentation of African Americans in U.S. jails and prisons is partially influenced by racial discrimination, it would be appropriate to implement programs and policies that serve to address problems of racial and ethnic discrimination by officials in the criminal justice system. Examples of such policies might involve minimizing the discretion of criminal justice officials or efforts to educate criminal justice officials on racial and ethnic diversity.

The current research found support for the hypothesis that state-by-state variations in race-specific incarceration rates are partially attributable to the proportion of race-specific populations residing in densely settled, criminogenic, urban areas. This research does not however, identify specifically the factors that make densely settled urban areas prone to crime. Future research might be aimed at identifying precisely the factors that make densely settled urban areas particularly prone to criminal activity. It might then be appropriate to develop policies that address the criminogenic conditions within densely settled urbanized areas. Policy makers might also be well advised to take into consideration the processes and conditions that lead to the segregation of minorities in densely settled urban environments.

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APPENDIX A

REGRESSION MODELS WITH RURAL VARIABLE

Dependent Variable: Total Crime Rate

Model	Beta Coefficient	t	Significance
(Constant)		11.394	.001
Rural (Total)	-.418	-3.184	.003
(Constant)		3.699	.001
Rural (Total)	-.573	-3.452	.001
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.248	-1.497	.141
(Constant)		3.681	.001
Rural (Total)	-.571	-3.410	.001
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.245	-1.463	.150
Conservatism	-.063	-.481	.633

Dependent Variable: Total Incarceration Rate

Model	Beta Coefficient	t	Significance
(Constant)		10.363	.001
Rural (Total)	-.059	-.407	.686
(Constant)		5.288	.001
Rural (Total)	-.394	-2.325	.024
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.536	-3.164	.003
(Constant)		5.287	.001
Rural (Total)	-.391	-2.293	.026
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.531	-3.114	.003
Conservatism	-.097	-.730	.469

Dependent Variable: Black Crime Rate

Model	Beta Coefficient	t	Significance
(Constant)		13.233	.001
Rural (Black)	-.348	-2.486	.017
(Constant)		1.908	.063
Rural (Black)	-.333	-2.029	.049
Per Capita Income (Black)	.029	.177	.860
(Constant)		1.659	.104
Rural (Black)	-.299	-1.849	.071
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.046	-.274	.785
Conservatism	.253	1.693	.098

Dependent Variable: White Crime Rate

Model	Beta Coefficient	t	Significance
(Constant)		10.489	.001
Rural (White)	-.491	-3.782	.001
(Constant)		3.526	.001
Rural (White)	-.652	-3.706	.001
Per Capita Income (White)	-.236	-1.343	.186
(Constant)		3.386	.002
Rural (White)	-.688	-3.741	.001
Per Capita Income (White)	-.271	-1.477	.147
Conservatism	-.097	-.716	.478

APPENDIX B

REGRESSION MODELS WITH CRIME RATES INCLUDED

Dependent Variable: Total Incarceration Rates

Model	Beta Coefficient	t	Significance
(Constant)		7.896	.001
Central Places (Total)	.142	.997	.324
(Constant)		5.128	.001
Central Places (Total)	.235	1.673	.101
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.352	-2.502	.016
(Constant)		5.124	.001
Central Places (Total)	.249	1.761	.085
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.351	-2.495	.016
Conservatism	-.130	-.952	.346
(Constant)		4.612	.001
Central Places (Total)	.029	.196	.846
Per Capita Income (Total)	-.344	-2.658	.011
Conservatism	-.075	-.591	.557
Crime Rate (Total)	.443	3.091	.003

Dependent Variable: Black Incarceration Rates

Model	Beta Coefficient	t	Significance
(Constant)		6.142	.001
Central Places (Black)	.233	1.568	.124
(Constant)		3.214	.003
Central Places (Black)	.261	1.652	.106
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.088	-.557	.581
(Constant)		3.375	.002
Central Places (Black)	.170	1.305	.199
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.273	-2.019	.050
Conservatism	.616	4.670	.001
(Constant)		3.513	.001
Central Places (Black)	.006	.044	.965
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.269	-2.214	.033
Conservatism	.529	4.357	.001
Crime Rate (Black)	.412	3.267	.002

Dependent Variable: White Incarceration Rates

Model	Beta Coefficient	t	Significance
(Constant)		7.335	.001
Central Places (Black)	.281	1.916	.062
(Constant)		6.358	.001
Central Places (Black)	.399	3.043	004
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.502	-3.827	.001
(Constant)		5.770	.001
Central Places (Black)	.419	3.068	.004
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.513	-3.840	.001
Conservatism	-.077	-.579	.566
(Constant)		5.580	.001
Central Places (Black)	.216	1.227	.227
Per Capita Income (Black)	-.530	-4.056	.001
Conservatism	-.037	-.285	.777
Crime Rate (Black)	.301	1.771	.084