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WEST COAST:
1622 Folsom Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-621-5661 • Fax: 415-621-5466

EAST COAST:
2208 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave., S.E.
Washington, DC 20020
202-678-9282 • Fax: 202-678-9321

Drug Use and Justice:

An Examination of California Drug Policy Enforcement

**MIKE MALES, PHD,
DANIEL MACALLAIR, MPA,
CHERYL RIOS AND
DEBORAH VARGAS**



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Introduction

During the past two decades California experienced a 25-fold increase in the number of drug offenders sentenced to state prison. As a result of this increase California led the nation in drug offender incarceration with a rate of 115 per 100,000 of the population - *2.5 times the national average* (45 per 100,000 population for 36 reporting states) in 1996 (Table 1). By 1999, California's drug imprisonment rate rose to 132 per 100,000.

This unprecedented imprisonment increase is partly attributable to escalating drug arrests. These escalating drug arrests result from harsher sentencing statutes that have expanded the pool of prison-eligible offenders and promoted incarceration as a primary response to illicit drug use (Maxwell, 1999; Tonry, 1999).

Table 1. California's arrest and imprisonment rates for drug offenses are much higher than the national average

Arrest rate for drug offenses per 100,000 population, 1998:

	1980	1998	Change
California:	553.6	811.1	+ 46.5%
U.S.:	256.0	596.2	+132.9%

Drug imprisonment rate per 100,000 population, 37 reporting states, 1996:

CA	114.6	TN	62.4	WA	37.5	IA	20.6
LA	106.6	NV	59.1	UT	35.4	ND	14.6
NJ	85.3	OH	55.8	FL	34.7	MN	10.6
NY	80.8	MO	54.5	CO	32.8	HI	10.6
NC	76.7	KY	54.3	AR	28.3	NH	9.7
IL	73.3	OR	53.3	SD	27.6	WV	7.6
SC	71.0	VA	52.7	MI	27.2	ME	5.2
MD	68.3	TX	48.7	WI	26.1		
MS	68.3	AL	48.5	NB	25.9		
GA	64.5	OK	44.4	PA	23.3	Avg, other states	44.6

Sources: *Crime & Delinquency in California*, 1998, Tables 33 and 36; FBI, *Uniform Crime Reports*, 1998, Table 38; Data Analysis Unit, California Department of Corrections, 1999; Justice Policy Institute (2000), *Poor Prescription: The Cost of Imprisoning Drug Offenders in the United States*, <http://www.cjcj.org/drug>

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California's uniquely harsher approach to drug crime is founded on deterrence and incapacitation theory. Deterrence and incapacitation theory promotes increased arrests, prosecutions, and prison sentences as the primary means to dissuade drug use and reduce street crime by removing the drug-involved offender from the community. The theory also holds that stricter sanctions targeting low level and first time drug offenders further reduces drug-related crime by increasing the personal costs of drug use among incipient users (Maxwell 1999; Tonry 1999; Henham 1999). The theory subscribes to the belief that failure to strictly enforce drug laws promotes other forms of crime as undeterred drug users seek money to supply their drug needs (Lurigio & Swartz, 1999).

Supporters of deterrence and incapacitation theory associate the recent declines in California crime rates as a testament to these policies (Jones 1999). Opponents argue that this theory is misguided and ineffective because simple punishment does not address the underlying causes of drug use and addiction (Sentencing Project, 1998). In addition, national statistics show that crime rates are declining across the nation regardless of individual state law enforcement policies (Tonry 1999).

As the nation's leader in drug law enforcement, California presents an unusual opportunity to examine the impact of arrest and incarceration drug control policies. As California drug arrests doubled from 131,000 in 1980 to 265,000 in 1998, major variations developed. In the 1980s, two-thirds of the state's drug arrest increases were high level felonies such as illegal drug manufacture, sale, or possession in large quantity. However, in the 1990s, nearly all drug arrest increases were for low level possession offenses.

These variations in arrest patterns are reflected in imprisonment rates (Table 2, illustrated in Figure 1). In 1980, only 379 Californians were sent to prison for drug possession offenses compared to 12,749 in 1999, a population-adjusted rate increase over 20-fold (2,244%). The per capita imprisonment growth rate for all drug offenses was 1,473%, while the per capita growth rate in prison commitments for sale/manufacture drug offenders was 1,048%. By the late 1990s, in a radical departure from the past, more than half of Californians imprisoned for drugs are locked up for possession (Table 2).

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Table 2. California, new drug imprisonments and rates per 100,000 population, 1980-99

	<u>Rate per 100,000 population</u>			<u>Numbers</u>			
	All	Sale/ manuf*	Possess	All	Sale/ manuf *	Possess*	% Poss
1980	4.5	2.9	1.6	1,076	697	379	35.2%
81	5.1	3.2	1.9	1,224	777	447	36.5%
82	6.1	4.1	2.0	1,498	1,005	493	32.9%
83	9.0	5.9	3.0	2,250	1,488	762	33.9%
84	10.8	6.8	4.0	2,767	1,747	1,020	36.9%
1985	16.1	10.1	6.0	4,210	2,634	1,576	37.4%
86	24.2	14.9	9.2	6,460	3,988	2,472	38.3%
87	33.8	20.5	13.3	9,255	5,603	3,652	39.5%
88	46.1	28.2	18.0	12,945	7,903	5,042	38.9%
89	58.2	35.1	23.1	16,750	10,101	6,649	39.7%
1990	61.7	37.1	24.6	18,243	10,974	7,269	39.8%
91	55.8	34.7	21.2	17,113	10,627	6,486	37.9%
92	57.7	35.1	22.6	18,063	10,983	7,080	39.2%
93	62.7	38.0	24.7	19,902	12,075	7,827	39.3%
94	61.3	34.8	26.5	19,692	11,185	8,507	43.2%
1995	70.1	36.9	33.2	22,472	11,816	10,656	47.4%
96	72.6	38.1	34.5	23,510	12,354	11,156	47.5%
97	75.1	36.4	38.7	24,748	11,984	12,764	51.6%
98	75.1	35.7	39.4	25,152	11,949	13,203	52.5%
99	70.8	33.3	37.5	24,092	11,343	12,749	52.9%
<u>Five-year averages</u>							
80-84	7.2	4.6	2.5				34.7%
85-89	36.2	22.1	14.1				39.0%
90-94	59.9	35.9	23.9				39.9%
95-99	72.7	36.0	36.7				50.5%
<u>Change, 1995-99 rate vs rate in:</u>							
80-84	+914%	+675%	+1355%				
85-89	+101%	+63%	+160%				
90-94	+21%	0%	+54%				

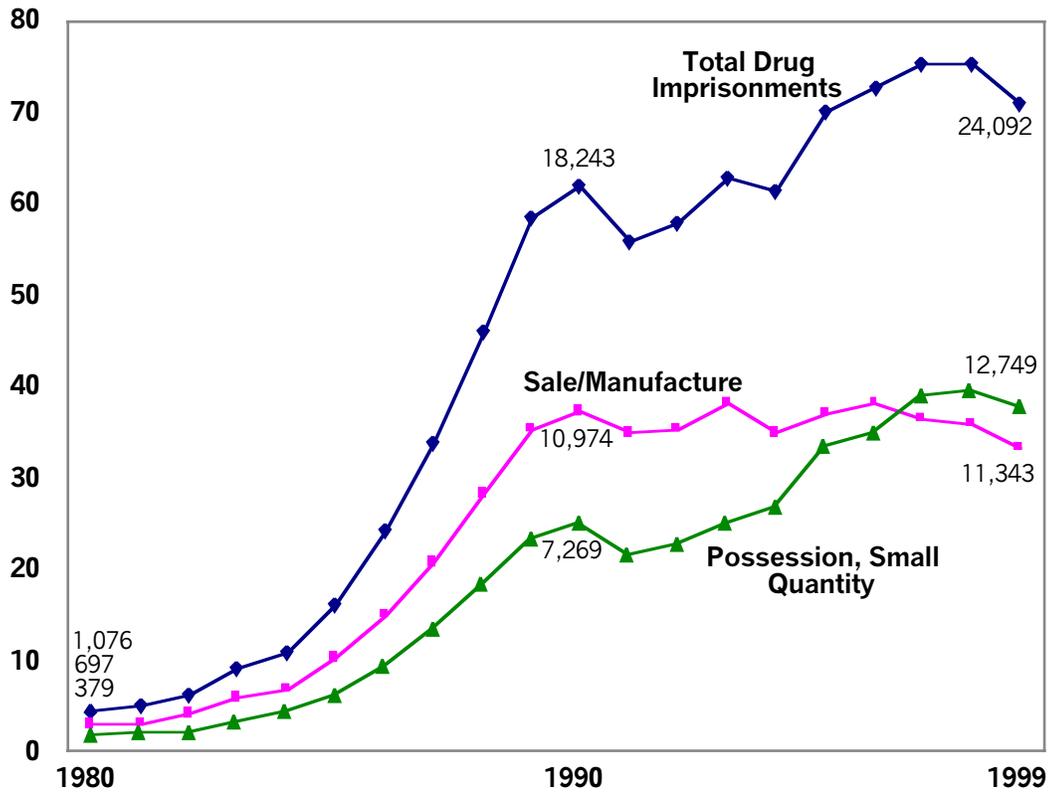
* "Sale/manuf" refers to high-level drug offenses (drug sale, manufacture, or possession in quantity large enough to presume intent to sell). "Possess" refers to low-level possession of drugs in small quantity for personal use.

Source: Data Analysis Unit, California Department of Corrections (imprisonments); Demographic Research Unit, California Department of Finance (populations used to calculate rates).

This dramatic rise in drug offender imprisonment throughout California is not uniform, as jurisdictions show wide variations in policy and practice. While many counties adopted strict doctrinaire enforcement policies that targeted serious and low level offenders, others opted to target more serious and chronic offenders. To determine the impact of differential enforcement policies, this study examines the state's 12 largest counties, which account for three-fourths of the state's population (25 million) and four-fifths of

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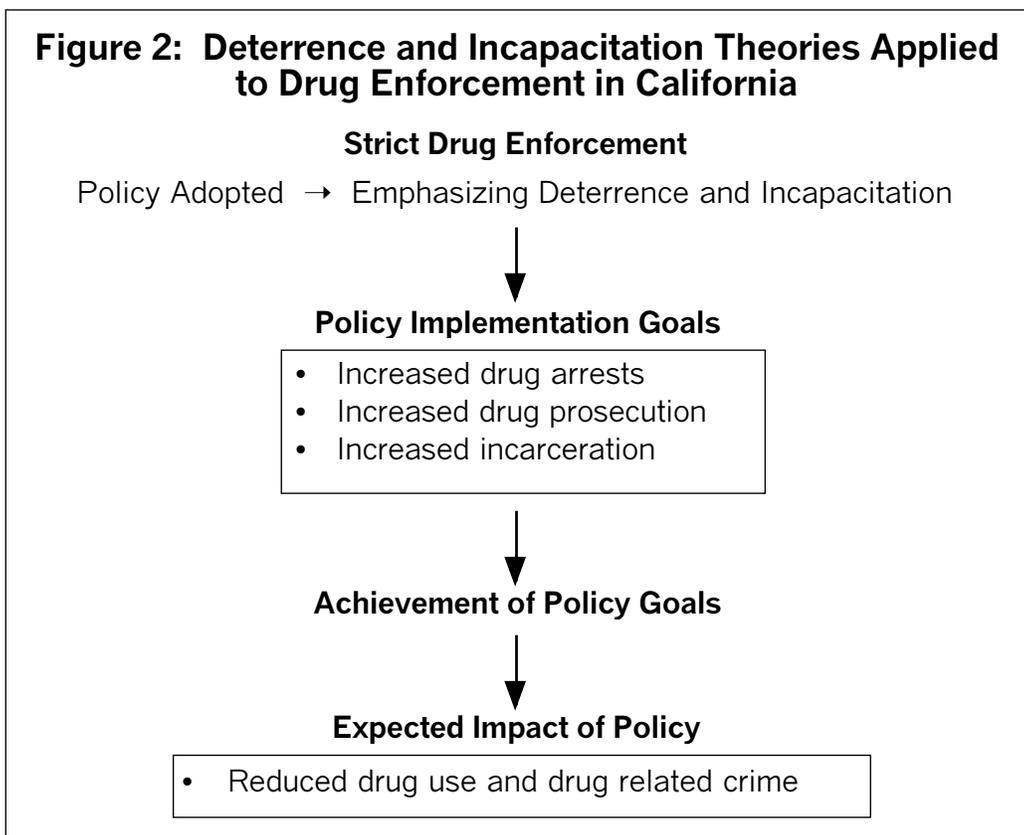
Figure 1: California Drug Imprisonments, 1980-99



the state's drug arrests. This research analyzes the impact of strict drug law enforcement on violent crime, property crime, and drug abuse rates from 1980-98. According to deterrence and incapacitation theory, the counties that adopted strict enforcement approaches should show the greatest declines in drug-related crime and drug abuse (see figure 2).

Summary of Findings

An examination of the 1990s drug law arrest and imprisonment patterns shows a distinct pattern shift from the 1980s and prior decades. During the 1990s California drug enforcement targeted an ever-increasing pool of marginal drug users, with possession accounting for virtually all the increase in drug-related imprisonments. From 1989 to 1999, imprisonment for drug possession nearly doubled while felony drug imprisonment for manufacturing and trafficking remained steady. In a radical departure from past drug enforcement, more Californians were imprisoned in the last three years for simple drug possession (38,716) than for sale or manufacturing drug offenses (35,276). Even



more surprising, while a drug dealer or manufacturer was much more likely to be imprisoned than a drug possession offender in the 1980s and before, today an offender arrested for low-level drug possession is considerably more likely to be imprisoned than one arrested for felony drug manufacture or sale. Further, 6,191 Californians were imprisoned in 1999 for possession of a small amount of drugs with no prior offense for violent or serious offenses and no other current offenses. These drug users comprise the state's fastest-growing inmate population and constitute 11% of those sent to prison for all offenses in 1999.

In summary, the imprisonment increases for California drug law violators during the past two decades are the result of harsher sentencing of lower level drug users. This pattern suggests that incarceration has become the primary intervention tool for state drug prevention policy.

Although California laws are established by the state legislature, arrest, prosecution and sentencing decisions are county functions. Because California counties pursued

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drug policy enforcement in sharply different ways, wide variations exist on how laws are implemented at the county level. Most county police and district attorney offices vigorously pursued new harsh enforcement statutes and significantly increased drug arrests and imprisonment for all forms of drug offenses including misdemeanors. However, some counties like San Francisco, increased drug arrests and prosecutions for dealers and manufacturers but minimized severe penalties for drug possession. Although, overall, crime in California is down in the past eight years, data show that stricter drug enforcement is not associated with declines in crime rates or drug use:

- Over the last two decades, counties that sharply increased their imprisonment rates for drug offenses showed significantly slower decreases in the most serious Part I felony offenses, especially property offenses, than counties with more lenient approaches.
- Similarly, counties that energetically prosecuted and imprisoned more people for drug possession did not experience greater reductions in serious crime.
- Conversely, counties that adopted more balanced approaches, with less emphasis on arresting and imprisoning low-level drug users, showed significantly larger declines in property crime and larger (though not statistically significant) declines in violent crime as well.

These patterns remain consistent when a variety of crime measures and time periods are compared. The absence of differential effects between counties with strict drug enforcement policies and counties with more lenient drug enforcement policies does not support the deterrence and incapacitation arguments of drug enforcement advocates.

Methodology

State and county arrest data for six categories of drug offenses for the study period 1980 through 1998 are available in *Crime & Delinquency in California* and its supplement, *California Criminal Justice Profiles*. These reports are published annually by the California Department of Justice's Criminal Justice Statistics Center (CJSC). These data include four categories of felony offenses (manufacture/sale/possession in large quantity of dangerous drugs, narcotics, marijuana, and other drugs) and two misdemeanor categories (simple possession of marijuana, and of other drugs).

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The CJSC also provides detailed yearly index offenses as reported by law enforcement agencies in each county. Index offenses, as designated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, consist of four violent felonies (murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault) and four property felonies (burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, arson).

Prisoner statistics were obtained from the California Department of Corrections' (CDC) Data Analysis Unit. The CDC's annual reports and special data retrievals for this study offer detailed information on prisoners and prison admittees by year, county, age, sex, race, offense, average term served, and cost of imprisonment. These statistics are among the most comprehensive prisoner statistics available nationwide.

County population data was obtained from the California Department of Finance's Demographic Research Unit. County drug arrest rates per 100,000 are determined by the following formula:

$$\text{(Drug arrests/county population)} \times 100,000$$

Crimes reported to law enforcement agencies likewise are divided by the population of each county for each year to produce an annual crime index for violent and property offenses.

Drug abuse is measured by rates of county drug-related deaths. Drug-related deaths, those from chronic drug abuse and from poisoning by drug overdose (accident, suicide, and undetermined as to intent), are available from the Center for Health Statistics, California Department of Health Services. Drug abuse death rates for 1996 through 1998 are shown by county.

Correlational analysis is used to determine the relationship between increased rates of arrest and imprisonments for drugs and crime and drug abuse death rates by county. A negative correlation (i.e., more drug arrests are associated with less crime) would support claims that increased drug law enforcement reduces crime. Conversely, a positive correlation (more drug arrests are associated with more crime) would not support the deterrence and incapacitation theory of strict drug enforcement advocates.

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Results

County Drug Arrests, Imprisonment, and Crime Trends: 1980-1998

Comparing the most recent years for which statistics are available (1995-98) with those of the early 1980s period (1980-84) before the “war on drugs” was initiated, drug arrest rates increased in 11 of the 12 counties studied, ranging from a 162% increase in Sacramento to an 11% decrease in Los Angeles. Felony arrests increased in all 12 counties, ranging from a rise of 186% in Sacramento to 15% in Los Angeles. Eight of 12 counties showed increases in misdemeanor drug arrests, from 131% in Fresno to a decline of 56% in San Francisco (Table 3).

Misdemeanor drug arrest rates more than doubled in Fresno and Sacramento while falling sharply in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Alameda counties. San Francisco presents the most extreme divergence: the state’s highest arrest rate for drug felonies and its lowest for drug misdemeanors (see Table 4).¹

Counties also showed distinctly varying rates and trends in drug offender imprisonment. In all 12 counties, the rate of drug

Table 3. Counties ranked by changes in drug arrest rates, 1980-98

Change in arrest rates for all drug offenses, 1980-98

Sacramento	162%
Fresno	143%
San Bernardino	106%
Contra Costa	74%
Ventura	67%
Riverside	64%
Santa Clara	44%
Orange	31%
San Francisco	25%
San Diego	12%
Alameda	5%
<u>Los Angeles</u>	<u>-11%</u>
State	22%

Change in felony drug arrest rates, 1980-98

Sacramento	186%
Fresno	157%
San Bernardino	137%
Contra Costa	103%
Riverside	89%
San Francisco	88%
Ventura	60%
San Diego	57%
Santa Clara	55%
Orange	55%
Alameda	42%
<u>Los Angeles</u>	<u>15%</u>
State	45%

Change in misdemeanor drug arrest rates, 1980-98

Fresno	131%
Sacramento	123%
San Bernardino	80%
Ventura	69%
Riverside	41%
Contra Costa	40%
Santa Clara	35%
Orange	14%
San Diego	-9%
Alameda	-23%
Los Angeles	-33%
<u>San Francisco</u>	<u>-56%</u>
State	3%

¹ A disproportionately high number of arrest charges in San Francisco are reduced in the early stages of court processing. This reflects a historical pattern of inflated charging policy by the SF police department.

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imprisonment escalated dramatically, primarily due to harsher sentencing for drug possession. Riverside's absolute increase in drug imprisonment was the State's highest at 93.9 new annual drug prisoners per 100,000 population, while Contra Costa's was the lowest, at 22.6. Los Angeles recorded the largest increase in imprisonment for drug possession (48.8 per 100,000 population) while Contra Costa (9.8) and San Francisco (9.9) showed the smallest increases (see Table 5).

Table 4. Counties ranked by drug arrest rates, 1995-98

Annual rate of arrest for all drug offenses, 1995-98

San Francisco	1,389.2
San Bernardino	1,061.7
Alameda	959.8
Fresno	909.5
San Diego	874.2
Santa Clara	851.1
Ventura	827.7
Los Angeles	822.0
Riverside	773.9
Orange	741.9
Sacramento	701.2
<u>Contra Costa</u>	<u>645.7</u>
State	811.3

Annual felony drug arrest rate, 1995-98

San Francisco	1,173.0
Alameda	568.2
San Bernardino	564.2
Los Angeles	494.7
Sacramento	472.2
Fresno	441.4
Riverside	430.2
Contra Costa	410.0
Santa Clara	401.2
San Diego	398.1
Orange	360.6
<u>Ventura</u>	<u>228.4</u>
State	440.1

Annual misdemeanor drug arrest rate, 1995-98

Ventura	599.3
San Bernardino	497.5
San Diego	476.1
Fresno	468.1
Santa Clara	449.9
Alameda	391.7
Orange	381.3
Riverside	343.7
Los Angeles	327.4
Contra Costa	235.7
Sacramento	229.0
<u>San Francisco</u>	<u>216.3</u>
State	371.3

During this period, violent crime rates rose in nine of 12 counties, ranging from a 33% increase in Fresno to a 26% decline in San Francisco. Property offenses declined in all counties, ranging from an 11% decrease in Fresno to a 48% drop in Santa Clara. In 15 of the 18 separate comparisons, ***increased rates of drug arrests and imprisonment coincided with crime increases or slower crime decreases*** (Table 6 and Figure 3). In three of the 18 comparisons these associations were statistically significant.

Increased drug arrest rates were significantly correlated with *slower* declines in property crime ($r = .64$, $p < .03$), a result which held true when absolute changes in drug arrests and crime were substituted for percentage changes ($r = .62$, $p < .04$). Larger increases in felony drug arrests were strongly associated

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with slower declines in property crime ($r = .73, p < .01$) and larger increases in misdemeanor drug arrests were associated with *increases* in violent crime ($r = .63, p < .03$). Rising rates of drug imprisonment were not associated with changes in crime rates. In six of the nine comparisons (including all the comparisons for violent crime), increased rates of drug imprisonment were associated in a nonsignificant fashion with increased rates of crime. The associations for violent crime were the strongest ($r = .20$ to $.30, p > .05$), but all the others were near zero.

Table 5. Counties ranked by absolute change in drug imprisonment rates, 1999 minus 1980

Absolute change in all drug-offense imprisonments, 1999 minus 1980

Riverside	93.9
San Bernardino	91.6
Los Angeles	86.2
Orange	73.6
San Diego	67.7
Sacramento	63.4
Fresno	63.0
Alameda	37.2
Santa Clara	36.2
San Francisco	35.3
Ventura	33.4
<u>Contra Costa</u>	<u>22.6</u>
State	65.6

Absolute change in imprisonment rates for simple drug possession, 1999 minus 1980

Los Angeles	48.8
Riverside	46.1
Orange	44.9
San Bernardino	36.6
San Diego	29.6
Fresno	29.5
Sacramento	29.4
Ventura	21.2
Santa Clara	16.0
Alameda	11.7
San Francisco	9.9
<u>Contra Costa</u>	<u>9.8</u>
State	34.2

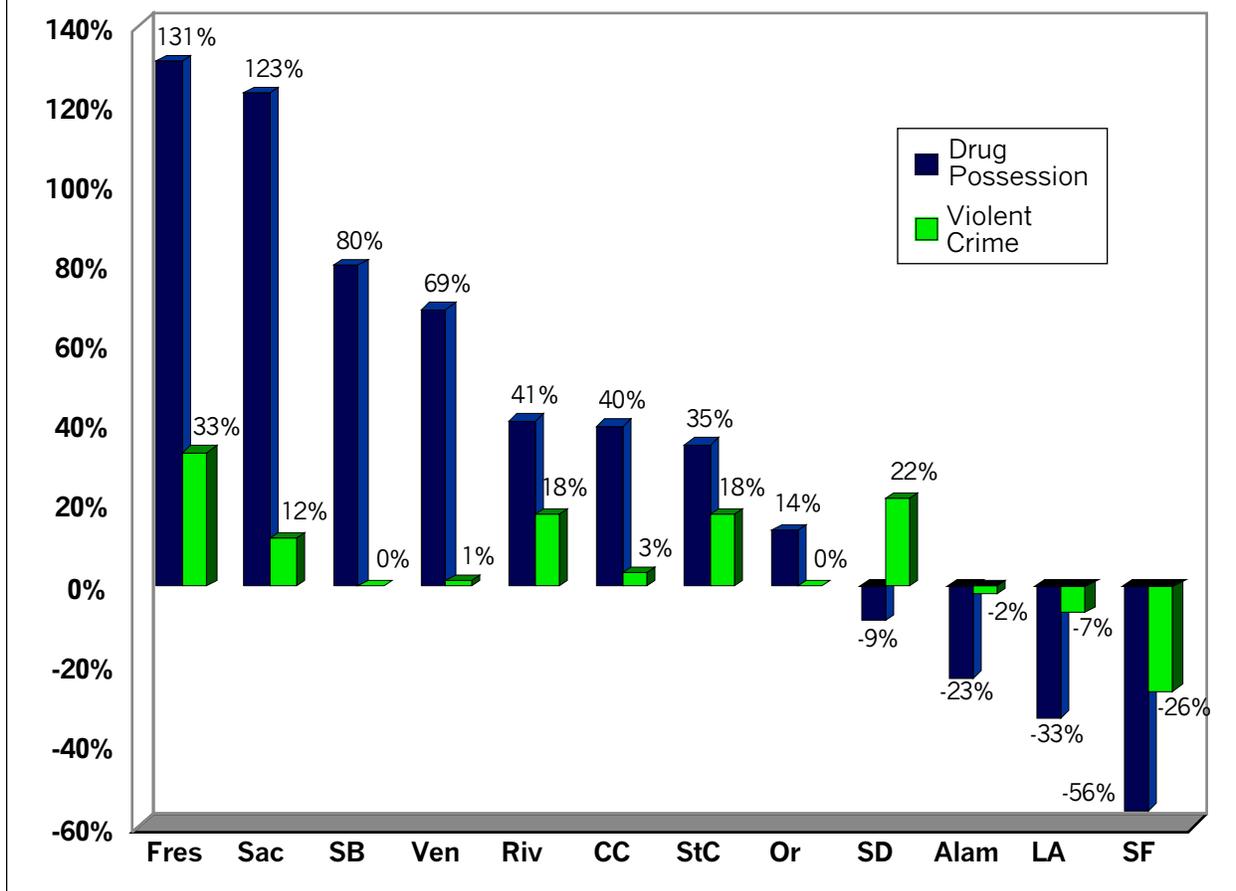
Several additional comparisons of drug arrest and imprisonment policies were examined to determine their relationships to crime reductions. Counties that (a) made fewer drug arrests and (b) concentrated their enforcement efforts on felony manufacture or sale rather than on simple-possession drug offenses were significantly more likely to experience declines in

Table 6. Counties with the biggest increases in drug arrests did not show biggest declines in other types of serious (Part I) crime, 1995-98 vs 1980-84

Counties*	<u>Change in drug arrest rate</u>		<u>Change in crime rates</u>	
	<u>All</u>	<u>Misd</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Violent</u>
Sacramento	162%	123%	-20%	12%
Fresno	143%	131%	-7%	33%
San Bernardino	106%	80%	-23%	0%
Contra Costa	74%	40%	-26%	3%
Ventura	67%	69%	-29%	1%
Riverside	64%	41%	-33%	18%
Santa Clara	44%	35%	-44%	18%
Orange	31%	14%	-40%	0%
San Francisco	25%	-56%	-27%	-26%
San Diego	12%	-9%	-27%	22%
Alameda	5%	-23%	-24%	-2%
Los Angeles	-11%	-33%	-37%	-7%

*Ranked by highest to lowest changes in total drug arrest rates.

Figure 3: Counties where low-level drug arrests rose faster had slower violence decline



violent crime ($r = -.63, p < .03$). Those counties also experienced bigger reductions in property crime rates, though the results were not significant ($r = -.31, p > .05$).

This pattern also held true for drug imprisonment. Counties that rarely imprisoned low-level drug offenders showed the largest reductions in violent and property crime ($r = -.53, p < .05$).

County Drug Arrest and Imprisonment Levels and Crime Rates

As with drug imprisonment trends, counties differ radically in their rates of imprisoning drug offenders. For example, Riverside County residents are imprisoned for drug offenses at four times the rate of Contra Costa County residents. Los Angeles County residents are imprisoned for low-level drug possession at nearly five times the rate of San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa residents (see Table 7).

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Table 7. Counties ranked by drug imprisonment rates, 1995-99

<u>Imprisonment rate for all drug offenses, 1995-99</u>	
Riverside	100.7
San Bernardino	98.2
Los Angeles	95.2
Orange	79.2
Fresno	73.1
San Diego	71.1
Sacramento	68.5
Santa Clara	46.8
San Francisco	45.8
Alameda	42.3
Ventura	37.3
<u>Contra Costa</u>	<u>25.5</u>
State	72.7
<u>Imprisonment rate for low-level drug possession, 1995-99</u>	
Los Angeles	51.7
Riverside	48.4
Orange	46.8
San Bernardino	39.0
Sacramento	31.7
Fresno	31.5
San Diego	31.2
Ventura	22.2
Santa Clara	20.4
San Francisco	14.3
Alameda	13.9
<u>Contra Costa</u>	<u>10.8</u>
State	36.7

Finally, the Department of Corrections provided a special tabulation for the years 1997-99 of persons imprisoned for low-level drug possession with no prior violent or serious offense and no drug or other offenses. Again, counties differed radically in their rates of sending low-level drug offenders to prison (Table 8).

Orange and Los Angeles counties imprisoned drug possessors at levels five to seven times higher than in San Francisco Bay Area counties. Although detailed data are not available for 1980, the small number of drug possessors imprisoned at that time further demonstrates the drastic changes in drug sentencing policies over the past two decades.

Table 8. Counties ranked by rates of drug imprisonment for low-level drug possession with no violent or other serious prior offense and no other current offense, 1997-99

Orange	28.1
Los Angeles	26.0
Riverside	15.8
San Bernardino	14.9
Fresno	14.8
Sacramento	11.7
Ventura	11.4
San Diego	10.4
Alameda	8.0
Santa Clara	6.9
San Francisco	6.5
<u>Contra Costa</u>	<u>3.1</u>
State	17.9

The recent large increases in imprisonment for drug offenses show no discernible impact on crime rates. Rather, the pattern is a random one, with most high-incarceration counties showing no reduction in violent or property crime categories relative to low-incarceration counties. Riverside

and Contra Costa counties, as seen, differ by 400% in drug imprisonment levels (Table 12) and by 500% in imprisonment for low-level drug offenses, but Contra Costa's violent crime rate is 30% lower than, and its total crime index rate virtually the same as, Riverside's (see Table 9).

The correlations between drug arrests and drug abuse rates (measured by drug-related death rates) produce a similar pattern (Table 10). Counties with higher rates of felony drug arrests are nearly always those with higher

rates of drug abuse ($r = .938, p < .0001$). However, higher rates of misdemeanor arrests do not affect drug abuse rates ($r = -.454$, not significant).

Table 9. Counties ranked by index crime rate and by violent crime rate, 1995-98

<u>Annual average crime index rate, 1995-98</u>	
Fresno	7457.5
San Francisco	7209.6
Sacramento	7057.7
Alameda	6892.0
San Bernardino	5436.1
Riverside	5332.4
Los Angeles	5116.6
Contra Costa	5108.9
San Diego	4455.3
Santa Clara	3769.3
Orange	3745.9
Ventura	3152.9
<u>Annual average property crime rate, 1995-98</u>	
San Francisco	1201.0
Los Angeles	1189.2
Fresno	1000.1
Alameda	987.9
Riverside	812.2
Sacramento	793.6
San Bernardino	751.9
San Diego	682.3
Contra Costa	623.4
Santa Clara	546.2
Orange	428.1
Ventura	376.0

Table 10. Counties ranked by annual drug abuse death rates, 1996-98

San Francisco	23.23 ²
Alameda	8.22
San Diego	7.64
Sacramento	7.41
Los Angeles	7.15
San Bernardino	5.96
Ventura	5.80
Fresno	5.62
Orange	5.28
Riverside	5.14
Contra Costa	4.59
<u>Santa Clara</u>	<u>4.46</u>
State	6.78

Removing San Francisco, the most extreme county (in mathematical terms, an outlier that exerts excessive influence on correlation coefficients), yields weaker though similar results: felony drug arrests remain tied to local rates of drug abuse, while misdemeanor drug arrests are unrelated to drug abuse. This suggests that increased policing of felony drug

² San Francisco's high threshold numbers relative to other counties are the result of its unique demographic distinction as a densely populated urban county. If San Francisco were compared to the cities of Los Angeles or San Jose (instead of their counties), its numbers would not appear exceptional except for drug abuse deaths (five times the state average). However, San Francisco compares favorably with the rest of the state in recording the largest decline in violent crime of any county, a moderate rate of decline in property crime, and a larger than average decline in total index crime.

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offenses is a response to high rates of drug abuse, but misdemeanor drug arrests appear to have no relationship to, and no impact on, either crime or drug abuse.

Discussion

As in other areas of crime control, during the past 20 years California implemented an unprecedented social experiment in its attempt to suppress illicit drug use. By emphasizing law enforcement strategies based on deterrence and incapacitation theories, the state's drug-offender prison population rose from 1,778 in 1980 to 45,455 in 1999. However, these policies were not adopted uniformly across the state, as shown by distinct county-by-county variations.

Since 1990, many counties placed increased emphasis on the prosecution and imprisonment of low level drug offenders, especially for drug possession offenses. For example, in 1980, only seven people from San Diego County were sentenced to prison for low-level drug possession, while in 1999 the county sent 1,002 drug possession offenders to state prison. Los Angeles sentenced only 145 drug possession offenders to prison in 1980, yet sentenced 5,109 in 1999.

In addition, the data in Table 6 show the six counties that increased their imprisonment rates the most for low level drug possession actually experienced greater increases in violent crime rates from 1980 to 1999 (up 11%, on average) than the six most lenient counties (up 1%). Further, no major differences emerged in violent or property crime rates between strict-enforcing counties and more lenient or balanced counties. Increased drug arrests and imprisonment are not correlated with decreases in violent and property crime (in fact, they are more likely to be associated with increases), and high levels of drug arrests and imprisonment are not associated with lower rates of crime (the results are entirely random).

A conclusion that fits all the facts, then, suggests that some counties chose to combat their drug abuse and crime problems by making more felony and misdemeanor drug arrests, while other counties made fewer drug arrests and/or concentrated only on the worst (felony) drug offenses (manufacturing and trafficking). The latter group of counties

had considerably more success in reducing crime regardless of the dimensions of their drug abuse and crime problems. Finally, counties that imposed high rates of imprisonment for drug violations generally experienced SLOWER declines in index felony offenses than low-imprisonment counties, though the results were not statistically significant.

A major reason for these outcome differences appears to be that simple possession drug offenses are not associated with high rates of crime or drug abuse – with correlations close to zero. Therefore, increasing arrests for low level drug possession does nothing to control crime and may drain resources away from more productive strategies.

A second reason for the outcome differences is that felony drug offenses appear to reflect, rather than control, higher rates of drug abuse and crime. As shown, counties that stepped up felony drug arrest rates did not show the most impressive improvements in violent and property crime rates (although the San Francisco exception indicates that areas with extremely high rates of drug abuse may benefit from policing of the worst drug offenses). For most jurisdictions, however, increasing felony drug arrests is a very limited strategy to control rising drug abuse and crime.

Finally, counties that reduced misdemeanor drug arrests and switched to judicious enforcement of felony drug laws enjoyed the healthiest reductions in violent and property crime. Taken together, these findings strongly suggest that (a) strong enforcement of drug possession laws is ineffective in reducing crime, and (b) felony drug arrest is a strategy that should be used sparingly and carefully targeted.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

Conclusion

After a decade and a half of skyrocketing drug arrests and imprisonment rates at a cost of billions of dollars, California (and the United States) now suffer the highest rates of drug abuse deaths in our history, and no discernible impact on California crime rates is observed. This finding confirms a recent United States Department of Justice drug policy study that concluded:

Higher rates of arrests, stricter laws, and more aggressive sentencing policies do not deter many drug users exposed to these penalties. This leads to a revolving door scenario in which drug-involved offenders appear repeatedly before the courts. One study found 60 percent of opiate-dependent Federal parolees were reincarcerated within 6 months of release – virtually all for narcotics-related crime – at an incarceration cost of more than \$27,000 per person, per year.

United States. Justice Department research also concluded that drug treatment is effective even with the most hardened addicts. Studies show that concerted efforts towards treatment can reduce drug use and drug related crime by over 40 percent (Harell, Cavanaugh, & Roman, 2000).

Given the continued emphasis in California on law enforcement strategies despite the dearth of evidence showing effectiveness, future drug policy research should examine the political basis of current approaches. Questions to examine are whether current policies are better designed to accommodate vested interest groups and political agendas than to serve as a reasonable solution to the legitimate social issue of drug abuse.

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County analysis: ALAMEDA

Alameda County experienced one of the slowest growths in drug arrests and now has among the lowest rates of incarceration for drug offenses of any county.

Trend in drug enforcement: Alameda showed one of the smallest increases in drug arrests and imprisonments of any county over the 1980-99 period. However, imprisonments for possession offenses rose five-fold. As a result, a person arrested for simple drug possession today is nearly nine times more likely to be sentenced to prison than one arrested two decades ago. In 1980, Alameda County sent only 21 persons to prison for simple possession of drugs; in 1999, 216.

Trend in felony crime: Alameda experienced a larger than average decline in violent offenses and a smaller than average decline in property offenses over the period.

Drug-related death rate: Alameda suffers a drug death rate 21% above the state average, one of the state's highest. Overdoses of heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens comprise only one-fourth of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Despite large increases, Alameda County imprisons persons arrested for drugs only half as often, and drug possession offenders only one-third as often, as the state average. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$14.6 million to imprison Alameda County drug offenders, including \$4.7 million for prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 727% and 550%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison Alameda County drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

ALAMEDA COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Alameda change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	11th	+ 5%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	11th	+42%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	10th	-23%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	8th	up 37.2	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	10th	up 11.7	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	3rd	-2%	-1%
Property crime, pct	8th	-27%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Alameda rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	3rd	959.9	811.3
Felony drug arrests	2nd	568.2	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	6th	391.7	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	10th	42.3	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	11th	13.9	36.7
Violent crime rate	4th	987.9	816.6
Property crime rate	4th	5,904.1	4,196.4
Drug death rate	2nd	8.2	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	9th	8.0	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Possess</u>
1980-84	5.1	3.0	2.1
1985-89	36.0	22.1	14.0
1990-94	46.0	32.1	13.9
1995-99	<u>42.3</u>	<u>28.4</u>	<u>13.9</u>
Change, 95-99 vs 80-84	728%	855%	550%
Net change***	-18%	+23%	-55%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	912.5	400.9	511.6
1985-89	1,393.9	840.7	553.3
1990-94	1,283.0	812.0	470.9
1995-98	<u>959.8</u>	<u>568.2</u>	<u>391.7</u>
Change, 95-98 vs 80-84	5%	42%	-23%
Net change***	-14%	-2%	-25%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	9,112.6	1,006.1	8,106.5
1985-89	8,426.3	939.0	7,487.3
1990-94	8,013.7	1,176.3	6,837.4
1995-98	<u>6,892.0</u>	<u>987.9</u>	<u>5,904.1</u>
Change, 95-98 vs 80-84	-24%	-2%	-27%
Net change***	+10%	-1%	+12%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: CONTRA COSTA

Contra Costa County shows the slowest growth in drug imprisonment and now has the lowest rates of drug arrests and of drug imprisonment of any county.

Trend in drug enforcement: Contra Costa showed considerably greater increases in drug arrests and imprisonments than other counties over the 1980-99 period. From very low rates in the early 1980s, imprisonments for sale/manufacturing offenses rose 600% and for possession offenses rose 1,000%. In 1980, the county sent only four people to prison for low-level possession of drugs; in 1999, 65.

Trend in felony crime: Contra Costa experienced an average decline in violent and property offenses over the last two decades.

Drug-related death rate: Contra Costa has a drug death rate 32% below the state average, the second lowest among the 12 major counties. Overdoses of heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens comprise half of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Despite large increases, Contra Costa County imprisons persons arrested for drugs only half as often, and drug possession offenders only one-third as often, as does the state as a whole. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$4.4 million to imprison Contra Costa County drug offenders, including \$1.4 million for prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 637% and 1,042%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison Contra Costa County drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>C.Costa change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	4th	+74%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	4th	+103%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	6th	+40%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	12th	up 22.6	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	12th	up 9.8	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	6th	+3%	-1%
Property crime, pct	6th	-28%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>C.Costa rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	12th	645.7	811.3
Felony drug arrests	8th	410.0	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	10th	235.7	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	12th	25.5	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	12th	10.8	36.7
Violent crime rate	9th	623.4	816.6
Property crime rate	7th	4,485.5	4,196.4
Drug death rate	11th	4.6	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	12th	3.1	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>All prison</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	2.9	2.0	0.9
1985-89	10.3	7.8	2.5
1990-94	17.7	11.4	6.3
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>25.5</u>	<u>14.8</u>	<u>10.8</u>
Change	767%	637%	1,042%
Net change***	-15%	-5%	-21%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	370.5	201.6	168.9
1985-89	496.7	346.1	150.7
1990-94	575.5	399.6	175.9
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>645.7</u>	<u>410.0</u>	<u>235.7</u>
Change	74%	103%	40%
Net change***	43%	40%	36%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	6,864.9	607.4	6,257.4
1985-89	6,582.0	744.6	5,837.4
1990-94	6,005.2	805.0	5,200.2
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>5,109.0</u>	<u>623.4</u>	<u>4,485.5</u>
Change	-26%	3%	-28%
Net change***	8%	3%	10%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: FRESNO

Fresno County has one of the highest rates of drug arrest and the highest rate of arrest for simple drug possession of any county.

Trend in drug enforcement: Fresno showed considerably faster increases in drug arrests and imprisonments than other counties over the 1980-99 period. From low rates in the early 1980s, imprisonments for sales/manufacturing offenses rose 400% and possession offenses leaped 1,500%. In 1980, the county sent only four people to prison for low-level possession of drugs; in 1999, 247.

Trend in felony crime: Fresno experienced the smallest declines in violent and property offenses of any county over the last two decades.

Drug-related death rate: Fresno has a drug death rate 18% below the state average, the fifth lowest among the 12 major counties. Overdoses of heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens comprise 56% of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Fresno County imprisons persons arrested for drugs at about the same rate as the state as a whole. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$11.4 million to imprison Fresno County drug offenders, including \$5.4 million to imprison drug possessors. These represent increases of 415% and 1,485%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison Fresno County drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

FRESNO COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Fresno change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	2nd	+143%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	2nd	+157%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	1st	+131%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	7th	up 63.0	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	6th	up 29.5	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	12th	+33%	-1%
Property crime, pct	12th	-11%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Fresno rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	4th	909.5	811.3
Felony drug arrests	6th	441.4	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	4th	468.1	371.3
Drug possession imprisonments	5th	73.1	72.7
Misdemeanor drug imprisonments	6th	31.5	36.7
Violent crime rate	3rd	1,000.1	816.6
Property crime rate	1st	6,457.4	4,196.4
Drug death rate	8th	5.6	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	5th	14.8	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>All prison</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	10.1	8.1	2.0
1985-89	38.7	26.9	11.8
1990-94	65.3	45.9	19.4
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>73.1</u>	<u>41.5</u>	<u>31.5</u>
Change	626%	415%	1,485%
Net change***	-28%	-34%	9%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	374.1	171.6	202.5
1985-89	845.0	332.9	512.1
1990-94	791.3	358.6	432.6
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>909.5</u>	<u>441.4</u>	<u>468.1</u>
Change	143%	157%	131%
Net change***	99%	78%	125%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	8,046.8	752.2	7,294.6
1985-89	8,284.6	920.0	7,364.6
1990-94	8,671.8	1,084.9	7,586.9
1995-98	7,457.5	1,000.1	6,457.4
Change	-7%	33%	-11%
Net change***	34%	34%	36%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles arrests fewer, but imprisons far more, people for low-level drug possession than any other county. L.A. is the only county with a decrease in drug arrests, but it has the fastest growing and highest rate of drug-possession imprisonments.

Trend in drug enforcement: Drug felony arrests increased slightly but drug misdemeanor arrests declined 33% over the last 20 years, making L.A. the only county with an overall decline in drug arrests. However, L.A.'s rate of drug imprisonments soared. In the early 1980s, fewer than 1% of those arrested for drugs were imprisoned, rising to 12% by the late 1990s. Curiously, 16% of L.A.'s low-level drug-possession arrestees wound up in prison, compared to only 9% of those arrested for sale/manufacture of drugs. In 1980, the county sent 145 people to prison for low-level possession of drugs; in 1999, 5,109.

Trend in felony crime: Los Angeles experienced the 2nd most rapid declines in both violent and property offenses over the last two decades.

Drug-related death rate: Los Angeles has a drug death rate 5% above the state average. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprise 43% of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Los Angeles's rate of imprisonment for drugs is among the highest, 30% above the state average for all drug offenders and 40% higher for drug possession offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$183 million to imprison Los Angeles County drug offenders, most of which (\$111 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 950% and 1,600%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison L.A. drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

LOS ANGELES COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>L.A. change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	12th	-11%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	12th	+15%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	11th	-33%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	3rd	up 86.2	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	1st	up 48.8	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	2nd	-7%	-1%
Property crime, pct	2nd	-43%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>L.A. rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	8th	822.0	811.3
Felony drug arrests	4th	494.7	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	9th	327.4	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	3rd	95.2	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	1st	51.7	36.7
Violent crime rate	2nd	1,189.2	816.6
Property crime rate	8th	3,927.4	4,196.4
Drug death rate	5th	7.2	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	2nd	26.0	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	9.0	6.1	3.0
1985-89	58.0	35.7	22.3
1990-94	84.5	50.0	34.5
1995-98	95.2	43.5	51.7
Change	953%	618%	1,630%
Net change***	4%	-7%	19%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	920.4	428.8	491.6
1985-89	1,262.0	734.4	527.6
1990-94	796.4	516.9	279.5
1995-98	822.0	494.7	327.4
Change	-11%	15%	-33%
Net change***	-27%	-20%	-35%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	8,132.8	1,273.4	6,859.4
1985-89	7,287.0	1,394.2	5,892.8
1990-94	7,299.4	1,705.9	5,593.5
1995-98	5,116.6	1,189.2	3,927.4
Change	-37%	-7%	-43%
Net change***	-9%	-6%	-12%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: ORANGE

Orange County has one of the lowest rates of growth in drug arrests, yet one of the highest rates of sending people to prison for drug violations, of any county.

Trend in drug enforcement: Drug felony arrests increased by 55% and misdemeanor arrests increased by 14% over the last 20 years, slower increases than the state average. However, Orange County's rate of drug imprisonments soared, especially for simple possession. In the early 1980s, fewer than 1% of those arrested for drugs were imprisoned, rising to 11% by the late 1990s. Curiously, 12% of Orange's simple drug possession arrestees wound up in prison, compared to only 11% of sales/manufacturing drug arrestees. In 1980, the county sent 50 people to prison for low-level possession of drugs; in 1999, 1,172. Orange County has the state's highest rate of imprisoning people convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior serious offenses and no other offense in conjunction with their drug violation.

Trend in felony crime: Orange County experienced the 3rd largest declines in both violent and property offenses over the last two decades.

Drug-related death rate: Orange County has a drug death rate 22% below the state average, the 3rd lowest. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprise half of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Orange County's rate of imprisonment for drugs is 10% below the state average for sales/manufacturing offenses and 30% higher for possession offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$42.4 million to imprison Orange County drug offenders, 60% of which (\$25.4 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 1,300% and 2,350%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison Orange County's drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

ORANGE COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>O.C. change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	8th	+31%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	10th	+55%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	8th	+14%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	4th	up 73.6	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	3rd	up 44.9	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	3rd	-0%	-1%
Property crime, pct	3rd	-43%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>O.C. rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	10th	741.9	811.3
Felony drug arrests	11th	360.6	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	7th	381.3	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	4th	79.2	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	3rd	46.8	36.7
Violent crime rate	11th	428.1	816.6
Property crime rate	10th	3,317.8	4,196.4
Drug death rate	9th	5.3	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	1st	28.1	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	5.7	3.7	1.9
1985-89	15.9	9.8	6.1
1990-94	45.2	26.2	19.0
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>79.2</u>	<u>32.4</u>	<u>46.8</u>
Change	1,300%	764%	2,350%
Net change***	38%	11%	68%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	568.3	233.3	335.0
1985-89	760.9	334.8	426.1
1990-94	692.2	354.3	338.0
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>741.9</u>	<u>360.6</u>	<u>381.3</u>
Change	31%	55%	14%
Net change***	7%	7%	11%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	6,208.8	429.7	5,779.0
1985-89	5,893.5	451.3	5,442.3
1990-94	5,556.5	538.1	5,018.5
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>3,745.8</u>	<u>428.1</u>	<u>3,317.8</u>
Change	-40%	-0%	-43%
Net change***	-12%	0%	-12%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: RIVERSIDE

Riverside County shows the most rapid increase in drug imprisonments over the last two decades and now has the highest rate of imprisonment for drugs of any county.

Trend in drug enforcement: Drug felony arrests increased by 89% and misdemeanor arrests increased by 41% over the last 20 years, both much larger increases than the state average. Riverside's rate of drug imprisonments soared faster than for any other county, especially for simple possession. In the early 1980s, fewer than 1% of those arrested for drugs were sent to prison, rising to 13% by the late 1990s. As in other counties, more Riverside drug-possession arrestees (14%) wound up in prison than drug sales/manufacturing arrestees (12%). In 1980, the county sent 12 people to prison for low-level possession of drugs; in 1999, 676.

Trend in felony crime: Riverside experienced a higher than average increase in violent crime and slightly higher than average decrease in property crime.

Drug-related death rate: Riverside County has a drug death rate 24% below the state average, the 2nd lowest level. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprise 41% of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Riverside County's rate of imprisonment for drugs is 45% above the state average for sale/manufacturing and 30% higher for misdemeanor offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$30.9 million to imprison Riverside County drug offenders, half of which (\$14.7 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 1,400% and 1,950%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison Riverside County's drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

RIVERSIDE COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Riv. change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	6th	+64%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	5th	+89%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	5th	+41%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	1st	up 93.9	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	2nd	up 46.1	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	9th	+18%	-1%
Property crime, pct	4th	-37%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Riv. rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	9th	773.9	811.3
Felony drug arrests	7th	430.2	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	8th	343.7	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	1st	100.7	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	2nd	48.4	36.7
Violent crime rate	5th	812.2	816.6
Property crime rate	6th	4,520.2	4,196.4
Drug death rate	10th	5.1	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	3rd	15.8	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	6.7	4.4	2.4
1985-89	34.1	20.3	13.8
1990-94	66.2	35.6	30.6
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>100.7</u>	<u>52.2</u>	<u>48.4</u>
Change	1,394%	1,092%	1,955%
Net change***	47%	54%	41%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	472.4	228.0	244.4
1985-89	943.4	466.1	477.3
1990-94	727.5	404.8	322.6
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>773.9</u>	<u>430.2</u>	<u>343.7</u>
Change	64%	89%	41%
Net change***	34%	30%	37%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	7,906.7	690.5	7,216.2
1985-89	7,815.5	976.9	6,838.6
1990-94	7,458.2	1,044.5	6,413.7
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>5,332.3</u>	<u>812.2</u>	<u>4,520.2</u>
Change	-33%	18%	-37%
Net change***	-2%	19%	-4%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: SACRAMENTO

Sacramento County showed the most rapid increase in drug arrests over the last two decades of any county, yet, due to a low rate of imprisoning drug arrestees, displays average rates of drug imprisonment.

Trend in drug enforcement: Drug felony arrests increased by 186% and misdemeanor arrests increased by 123% over the last 20 years, the most rapid increases of any county. Sacramento's rate of drug imprisonments, however, increased at only an average pace. In the early 1980s, 2% of those arrested for drugs were sent to prison, rising to 9% by the late 1990s. Curiously, far more Sacramento low-level drug-possession arrestees (14%) wound up in prison than felony drug arrestees (8%). In 1980, the county sent 12 people to prison for simple possession of drugs; in 1999, 443.

Trend in felony crime: Sacramento experienced smaller decreases in violent and property crime than the state average over the past two decades.

Drug-related death rate: Sacramento County has a drug death rate 9% above the state average, the 4th highest level. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprise one-third of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Sacramento County's rate of imprisonment for drugs is 2% above the state average for sale/manufacturing and 6% lower for possession offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$19.1 million to imprison Sacramento County drug offenders, half of which (\$9.6 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 1,230% and 1,300%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison Sacramento County's drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

SACRAMENTO COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Sac. change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	1st	+162%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	1st	+186%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	2nd	+123%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	6th	up 63.4	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	7th	up 29.4	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	7th	+12%	-1%
Property crime, pct	11th	-23%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Sac. rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	11th	701.2	811.3
Felony drug arrests	5th	472.2	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	11th	229.0	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	7th	68.5	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	5th	31.7	36.7
Violent crime rate	6th	793.6	816.6
Property crime rate	2nd	6,264.1	4,196.4
Drug death rate	4th	7.4	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	6th	11.7	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	5.1	2.8	2.3
1985-89	30.3	20.4	10.0
1990-94	69.4	42.0	27.3
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>68.5</u>	<u>36.9</u>	<u>31.7</u>
Change	1,234%	1,194%	1,283%
Net change***	31%	67%	-5%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	267.8	164.9	102.8
1985-89	541.5	365.1	176.4
1990-94	628.4	457.7	170.7
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>701.2</u>	<u>472.2</u>	<u>229.0</u>
Change	162%	186%	123%
Net change***	115%	98%	117%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	8,862.0	706.3	8,155.7
1985-89	8,047.4	778.4	7,269.0
1990-94	7,676.6	895.1	6,781.6
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>7,057.7</u>	<u>793.6</u>	<u>6,264.1</u>
Change	-20%	12%	-23%
Net change***	16%	13%	18%

**"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

***"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

****"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: SAN BERNARDINO

San Bernardino County ranks near the top for increases in drug arrests and imprisonments over the last two decades and for rates of drug arrest and imprisonment today.

Trend in drug enforcement: Drug felony arrests increased by 137% and misdemeanor arrests increased by 80% over the last 20 years, the third most rapid increases among the major counties. San Bernardino's rate of drug imprisonments also rose at a higher than average clip. In the early 1980s, 1% of those arrested for drugs were sent to prison, rising to 9% by the late 1990s. San Bernardino is one of the few counties where drug possession arrestees (8%) are less likely to be sent to prison than drug sales/manufacturing arrestees (10%). In 1980, the county sent 19 people to prison for simple possession of drugs; in 1999, 738.

Trend in felony crime: San Bernardino experienced slightly slower decreases in violent and property crime than the state average over the past two decades.

Drug-related death rate: San Bernardino County has a drug death rate 12% below the state average. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprised only 11% of its drug deaths due to the coroner practice of classifying many such deaths as chronic abuse, not overdose.

Drug imprisonment costs: San Bernardino County's rate of imprisonment for drugs is 64% above the state average for sale/manufacturing and 6% higher for possession offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$39.2 million to imprison San Bernardino County drug offenders, 40% of which (\$16.0 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 1,400% and 1,600%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison San Bernardino County's drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>S.B. change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	3rd	+106%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	3rd	+137%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	3rd	+80%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	2nd	up 91.6	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	4th	up 36.6	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	4th	+0%	-1%
Property crime, pct	9th	-26%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>S.B. rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	2nd	1,061.7	811.3
Felony drug arrests	3rd	564.2	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	2nd	497.5	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	2nd	98.2	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	4th	39.0	36.7
Violent crime rate	7th	751.9	816.6
Property crime rate	5th	4,684.2	4,196.4
Drug death rate	6th	6.0	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	4th	14.9	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	6.6	4.3	2.3
1985-89	25.2	15.3	9.9
1990-94	50.5	31.1	19.4
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>98.2</u>	<u>59.2</u>	<u>39.0</u>
Change	1,383%	1,279%	1,577%
Net change***	46%	78%	15%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	514.7	238.2	276.5
1985-89	952.4	507.0	445.3
1990-94	900.5	508.2	392.3
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>1,061.7</u>	<u>564.2</u>	<u>497.5</u>
Change	106%	137%	80%
Net change***	69%	64%	75%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	7,078.8	754.9	6,323.9
1985-89	7,108.1	967.8	6,140.3
1990-94	6,909.4	1,008.7	5,900.7
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>5,436.1</u>	<u>751.9</u>	<u>4,684.2</u>
Change	-23%	-0%	-26%
Net change***	11%	0%	14%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: SAN DIEGO

San Diego County had one of the smallest increases in drug arrests over the last two decades. However, its rate of imprisonment for low-level drug possession offenses soared even as misdemeanor arrests dropped.

Trend in drug enforcement: Drug felony arrests increased by 57% but misdemeanor arrests declined by 9% over the last 20 years, an overall increase in drug arrests ranking third from the bottom among major counties. However, San Diego's rate of drug imprisonments rose slightly faster than average. In the early 1980s, just one-half of 1% of those arrested for drugs were sent to prison, rising to 8% by the late 1990s. San Diego is one of the few counties where simple drug possession arrestees (6.5%) are less likely to be sent to prison than drug sales/manufacturing arrestees (10%). In 1980, the county sent only seven people to prison for simple possession of drugs; in 1999, more than 1,000.

Trend in felony crime: San Diego experienced a substantial increase in violent crime and an average decline in property crime compared to the state average over the past two decades.

Drug-related death rate: San Diego County has a drug death rate 13% above the state average. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprised half of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: San Diego County's rate of imprisonment for drugs is 10% above the state average for sale/manufacturing but 15% lower for low-level possession offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$47.7 million to imprison San Diego County drug offenders, 45% of which (\$21.7 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for simple drug possession. These represent increases of 2,000% and 1,900%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison San Diego County's drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

SAN DIEGO COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>S.D. change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	10th	+12%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	8th	+57%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	9th	- 9%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	5th	up 67.7	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	5th	up 29.6	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	11th	+22%	-1%
Property crime, pct	7th	-32%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>S.D. rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	5th	874.2	811.3
Felony drug arrests	10th	398.1	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	3rd	476.1	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	6th	71.1	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	7th	31.2	36.7
Violent crime rate	8th	682.3	816.6
Property crime rate	9th	3,733.0	4,196.4
Drug death rate	3rd	7.6	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	7th	10.4	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	3.3	1.8	1.6
1985-89	16.5	10.0	6.5
1990-94	54.6	34.1	20.5
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>71.1</u>	<u>39.9</u>	<u>31.2</u>
Change	2,027%	2,158%	1,880%
Net change***	110%	191%	36%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	778.0	253.9	524.0
1985-89	1,110.9	474.8	636.1
1990-94	962.0	459.0	503.0
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>874.2</u>	<u>398.1</u>	<u>476.1</u>
Change	12%	57%	-9%
Net change***	-8%	8%	-12%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	6,126.2	560.4	5,565.8
1985-89	6,911.6	693.6	6,218.0
1990-94	6,462.5	899.1	5,563.4
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>4,455.3</u>	<u>682.3</u>	<u>3,773.0</u>
Change	-27%	22%	-32%
Net change***	5%	23%	4%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco County, partly because it is the only county wholly comprised of a city, displays huge extremes, led by the state's most pronounced emphasis on felony (as opposed to misdemeanor) drug arrests. It displayed the lowest increase in and lowest rates of misdemeanor drug arrests over the last two decades, but higher than average increases for and by far the state's highest rate of felony drug arrests. Its rate of imprisonment for drug offenses increased more slowly than other counties'. In 1999, taxpayers spent less per capita to imprison drug offenders in San Francisco than in any other county. San Francisco's high felony arrest rate is partly attributed to the police department policy of charging the highest charge possible. As a result, large numbers of felony charges are later reduced by the District Attorney's office following review of the evidence.

Trend in drug enforcement: Countering the state trend, drug felony arrests increased by 88% but misdemeanor arrests declined by 56% over the last 20 years. The result is that misdemeanor arrests dropped from 38% of the county's total in 1980 to 18% in 1998. San Francisco's rate of drug imprisonments rose far more slowly than the state average, especially for misdemeanors. In the early 1980s, 0.9% of those arrested for drugs were sent to prison, rising only marginally to 3.3% by the late 1990s. Though San Francisco sends fewer to prison per capita than any major county, drug possession arrestees (6.6%) are far more likely to be sent to prison than drug sales/manufacturing arrestees (2.7%) – a fact tempered by the county's very low arrest rate for misdemeanor drug offenses. In 1980, the county sent 22 people to prison for simple possession of drugs; in 1999, 76.

Trend in felony crime: San Francisco experienced the largest decrease in violent crime of any county and a smaller decline in property crime compared to the state average over the past two decades.

Drug-related death rate: San Francisco County has by far the state's highest drug death rate, 243% above the state average. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprised 40% of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: San Francisco's rate of imprisonment for drugs is 12% below the state average for sale/manufacturing and 61% lower for low-level possession offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$5.6 million to imprison San Francisco County drug offenders, 29% of which (\$1.6 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for simple drug possession. These represent increases of 340% and 220%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison San Francisco County's drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>S.F. change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	9th	+25%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	6th	+88%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	12th	-56%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	10th	up 35.3	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	11th	up 9.9	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	1st	-26%	-1%
Property crime, pct	7th	-27%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>S.F. rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	1st	1,389.2	811.3
Felony drug arrests	1st	1,173.0	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	12th	216.3	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	9th	45.8	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	10th	14.3	36.7
Violent crime rate	1st	1,201.0	816.6
Property crime rate	3rd	6,008.6	4,196.4
Drug death rate	1st	23.2	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	11th	6.5	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	10.5	6.1	4.4
1985-89	73.7	42.8	30.9
1990-94	106.5	66.5	40.0
1995-98	<u>45.8</u>	<u>31.5</u>	<u>14.3</u>
Change	337%	420%	223%
Net change***	-57%	-33%	-78%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	1,114.4	625.3	489.2
1985-89	1,659.4	1,227.0	432.4
1990-94	1,341.5	1,096.1	245.4
1995-98	<u>1,389.2</u>	<u>1,173.0</u>	<u>216.3</u>
Change	25%	88%	-56%
Net change***	2%	30%	-57%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	9,854.2	1,628.4	8,225.8
1985-89	8,674.1	1,333.4	7,340.7
1990-94	9,721.2	1,709.9	8,011.3
1995-98	<u>7,209.6</u>	<u>1,201.0</u>	<u>6,008.6</u>
Change	-27%	-26%	-27%
Net change***	6%	-26%	12%

***"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

***"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: SANTA CLARA

Santa Clara County had smaller than average increases in drug arrests and imprisonments over the last two decades, as well as low rates of drug arrest, imprisonment, and deaths today.

Trend in drug enforcement: Drug felony arrests increased by 55% and misdemeanor arrests increased by 35% over the last 20 years, more slowly than the state average. Santa Clara's rate of drug imprisonments also rose more slowly than the state average. In the early 1980s, 1% of those arrested for drugs were sent to prison, rising to 5.5% by the late 1990s. Unlike most counties, Santa Clara drug possession arrestees (4.5%) are less likely to be sent to prison than drug sale/manufacturing arrestees (6.6%). In 1980, the county sent 15 people to prison for low-level possession of drugs; in 1999, 359.

Trend in felony crime: Santa Clara experienced an increase in violent crime considerably above the state average but the largest decline in property crime of any county over the past two decades.

Drug-related death rate: Santa Clara County has the lowest drug death rate, 34% below the state average. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprised 45% of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Santa Clara County's rate of imprisonment for drugs is 12% below the state average for sale/manufacturing and 61% lower for possession offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$19.6 million to imprison Santa Clara County drug offenders, 40% of which (\$7.8 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 340% and 370%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison Santa Clara County's drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

SANTA CLARA COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>S.Cl. change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	7th	+44%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	9th	+55%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	7th	+35%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	9th	up 36.2	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	9th	up 16.0	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	8th	+18%	-1%
Property crime, pct	1st	-48%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>S.Cl. rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	6th	851.1	811.3
Felony drug arrests	9th	401.2	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	5th	449.9	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	8th	46.8	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	9th	20.4	36.7
Violent crime rate	10th	546.2	816.6
Property crime rate	11th	3,223.1	4,196.4
Drug death rate	12th	4.7	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	10th	6.9	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	10.7	6.3	4.4
1985-89	37.8	17.7	20.0
1990-94	47.7	29.0	18.7
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>46.8</u>	<u>26.5</u>	<u>20.4</u>
Change	338%	319%	365%
Net change***	-57%	-46%	-68%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	592.1	258.2	333.8
1985-89	1,005.2	417.5	587.7
1990-94	778.0	358.7	419.3
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>851.1</u>	<u>401.2</u>	<u>449.9</u>
Change	44%	55%	35%
Net change***	18%	7%	31%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	6,694.5	461.5	6,233.0
1985-89	5,086.1	478.5	4,607.6
1990-94	4,712.7	524.3	4,188.5
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>3,769.3</u>	<u>546.2</u>	<u>3,223.1</u>
Change	-44%	18%	-48%
Net change***	-18%	19%	-21%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period

County analysis: VENTURA

Ventura County, in a pattern opposite to San Francisco's, has the lowest rate of felony drug arrest and the highest rate of misdemeanor drug arrest of any county. The county's rate of drug imprisonment is considerably below the state average, though it sends more people to prison for low-level possession than for sales/manufacturing offenses.

Trend in drug enforcement: Drug felony arrests increased by 60% and misdemeanor arrests increased by 69% over the last 20 years, considerably more rapid than the state average. However, Ventura's rate of drug imprisonments rose more slowly than the state average. In the early 1980s, fewer than 1% of those arrested for drugs were sent to prison, rising to 4.5% by the late 1990s. Ventura drug-possession arrestees (3.7%) are less likely to be sent to prison than drug sales/manufacturing arrestees (6.6%) – but, because Ventura arrests many more people for misdemeanors, it winds up imprisoning more people for drug possession than for drug felonies. In 1980, the county sent just three people to prison for simple possession of drugs; in 1999, 170.

Trend in felony crime: Ventura's trends in violent and property crime are similar to the state average over the last two decades. Today, Ventura has the lowest rates of violent and of property crime of any major county.

Drug-related death rate: Ventura County has a drug death rate 14% below the state average. Overdoses of the four most-used illegal drugs – heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens – comprise 46% of its drug deaths.

Drug imprisonment costs: Ventura County's rate of imprisonment for drugs is 60% below the state average for sales/manufacturing and 40% lower for possession offenders. In 1999, taxpayers spent \$5.8 million to imprison Ventura County drug offenders, nearly two-thirds of which (\$3.7 million) was spent on prisoners sentenced for low-level drug possession. These represent increases of 840% and 2,045%, respectively, over costs in constant dollars to imprison Ventura County's drug offenders in 1980.

DRUG USE AND JUSTICE

VENTURA COUNTY rankings among 12 major counties

<u>Changes in rates, 1995-98 v 80-84</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Ventura change</u>	<u>State change</u>
Total drug arrests, pct	5th	+67%	+22%
Felony drug arrests, pct	7th	+60%	+45%
Misdemeanor drug arrests, pct	4th	+69%	+3%
Total drug imprisonments/100,000 pop	11th	up 33.4	up 65.6
Drug poss. imprisonments/100,000 pop	8th	up 21.2	up 34.2
Violent crime, pct	5th	+1%	-1%
Property crime, pct	4th	-32%	-35%

<u>Current rates/100,000 population*</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Ventura rate</u>	<u>State rate</u>
Total drug arrests	6th	827.7	811.3
Felony drug arrests	9th	228.4	440.1
Misdemeanor drug arrests	5th	599.3	371.3
Total drug imprisonments	8th	37.3	72.7
Drug possession imprisonments	9th	22.2	36.7
Violent crime rate	10th	376.0	816.6
Property crime rate	11th	2,776.9	4,196.4
Drug death rate	12th	5.8	6.8
Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments**	8th	6.9	17.1

<u>Drug imprisonment rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sale/mfg</u>	<u>Poss</u>
1980-84	4.0	2.9	1.0
1985-89	11.2	7.1	4.1
1990-94	23.4	13.1	10.3
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>37.3</u>	<u>15.1</u>	<u>22.2</u>
Change	843%	418%	2045%
Net change***	-7%	-33%	47%

<u>Drug arrest rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misd</u>
1980-84	497.0	142.4	354.6
1985-89	757.2	195.7	561.5
1990-94	721.4	208.8	512.5
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>827.7</u>	<u>228.4</u>	<u>599.3</u>
Change	67%	60%	69%
Net change***	37%	11%	65%

<u>Felony crime rate</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Violent</u>	<u>Property</u>
1980-84	4,469.6	374.1	4,095.5
1985-89	4,031.2	406.7	3,624.6
1990-94	4,071.9	492.2	3,579.7
<u>1995-98</u>	<u>3,153.0</u>	<u>376.0</u>	<u>2,776.9</u>
Change	-29%	1%	-32%
Net change***	2%	1%	4%

*"Current rate" is the average annual rate for 1995-98 for drug arrests, violent crime, and property crime; 1995-99 for drug imprisonments; and 1996-98 for drug deaths

**"Non-criminal poss. drug imprisonments" refers to persons convicted of simple drug possession who have no prior violent or serious criminal offenses and who were convicted of no other offenses in conjunction with their current drug offense

***"Net change" is change in county rate vs change in state rate. Rate is per 100,000 population by period