

# SAN FRANCISCO'S DISPROPORTIONATE ARREST OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN PERSISTS



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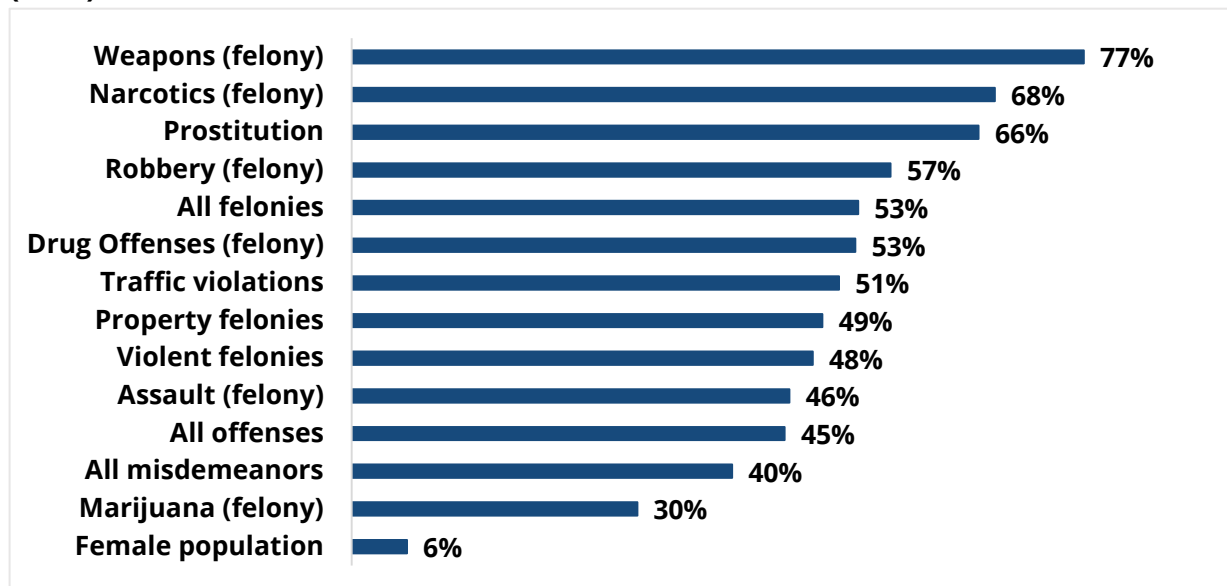
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Fact Sheet

San Francisco's uniquely large disparities in the arrest rates of African Americans versus other races have been repeatedly reported to the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, Board of Supervisors, Police Commission and other agencies (ACLU, 2002; CJCJ, 2004; 2004a; 2005; 2012, 2012a). Yet while the issue has been broadly acknowledged, little has been done. New figures show these disparities have worsened in recent years. Today, black women — 6 percent of San Francisco's female population — constitute nearly half of all female arrests, and are arrested at rates 13 times higher than women of other races.

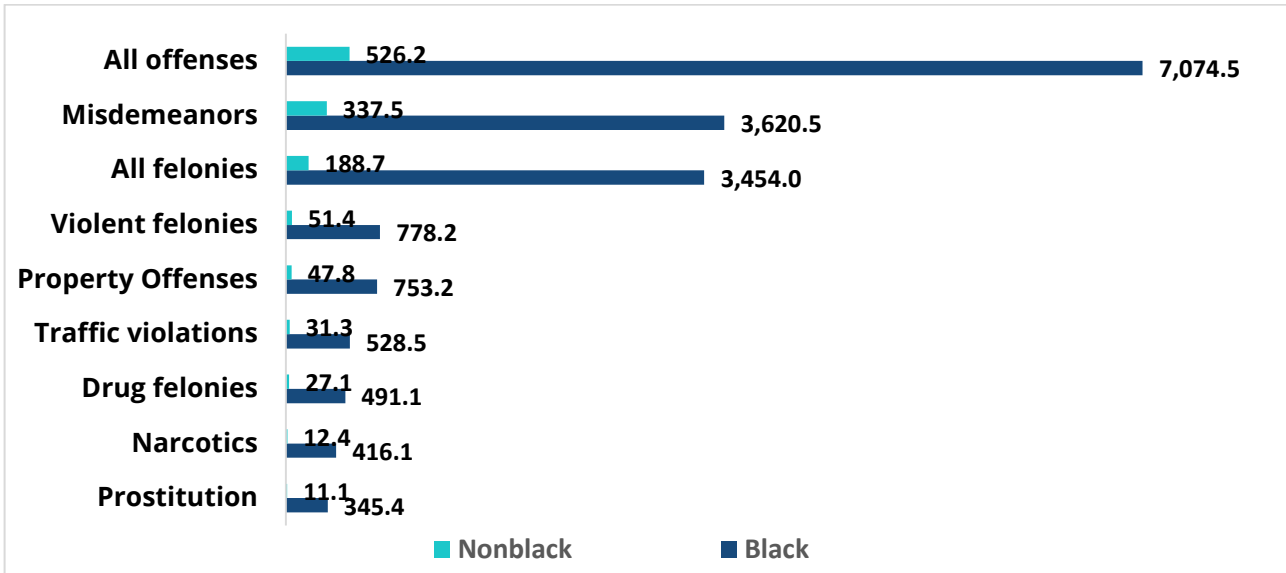
African American women, 5.8 percent of San Francisco's total female population, constituted 45.5 percent of all female arrests in 2013, including 68 percent of arrests for narcotics, 57 percent for robbery, 53 percent for all drugs, and 51 percent for traffic violations (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. San Francisco female arrestees, percent composed of African American women (2013)**



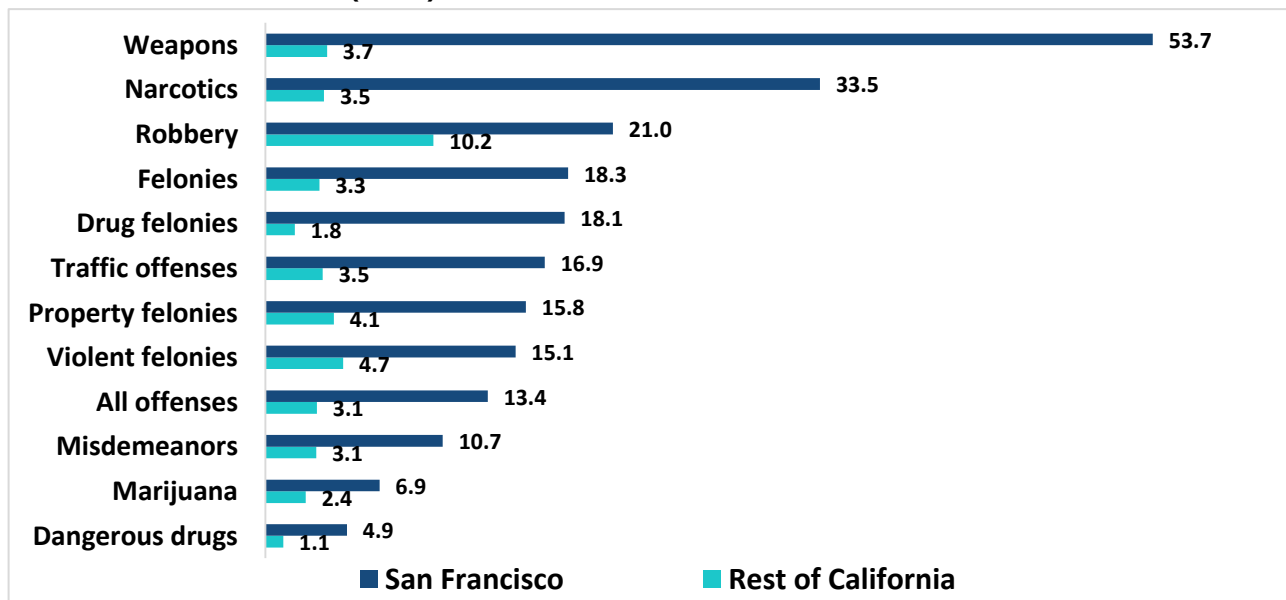
African American women were arrested in San Francisco at a per capita rate 13.4 times higher than women of other races, including 34 times higher for narcotics, and 31 times higher for prostitution (Figure 2, Appendix Table 1). Given African American women in San Francisco were arrested at a rate 17 times higher for traffic violations (Figure 2), and represented 51 percent of female arrestees for traffic violations (Figure 1), this could explain concerns on discriminatory “driving while black” arrest patterns in San Francisco (ACLU, 2002).

**Figure 2. San Francisco female arrest rates per 100,000 population, African American women v. women of all other races (2013)**



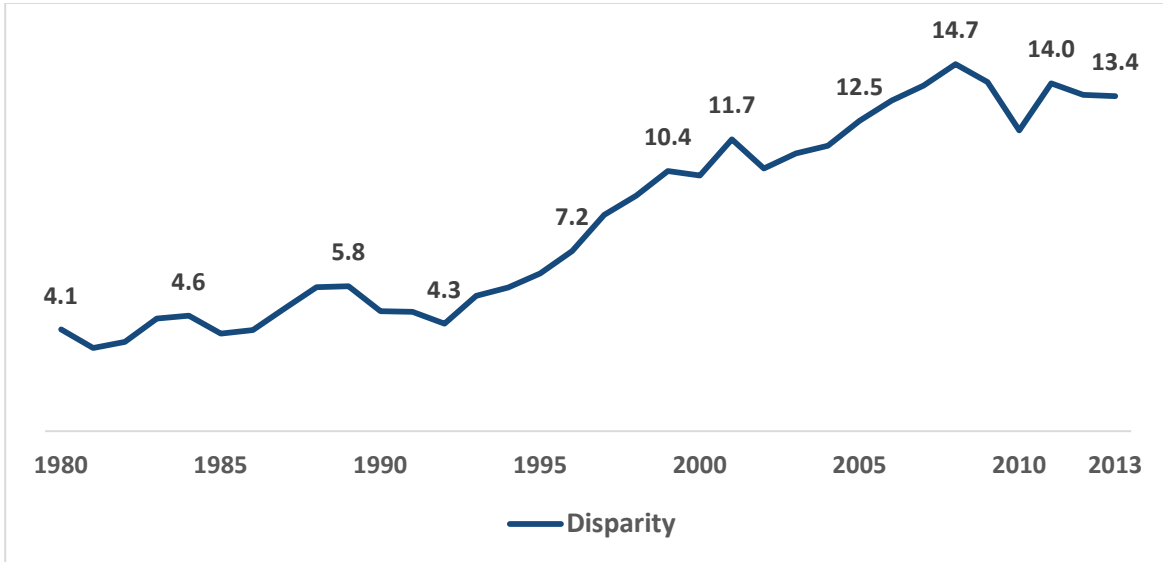
San Francisco’s racial disparities in female arrest rates were four times worse than the already pronounced racial disparities elsewhere in California (Figure 3, Appendix Table 2).

**Figure 3. Disparity in female black-vs-nonblack arrest rates, San Francisco versus elsewhere in California (2013)**



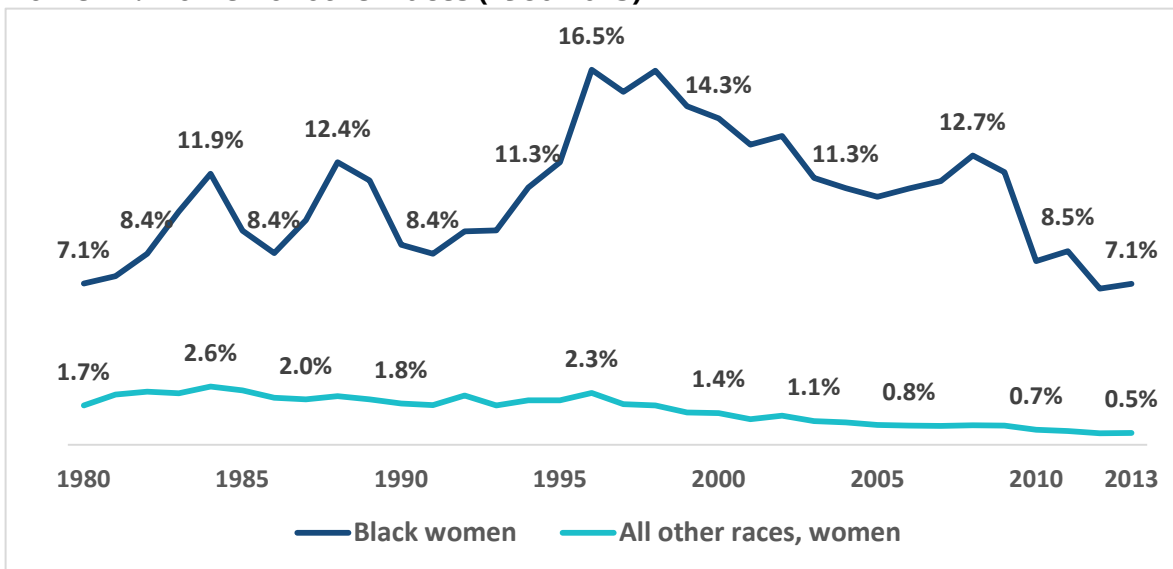
The disparity in arrest rates for African American women versus women of other races in San Francisco has risen sharply over the last 35 years. In 1980, black women were 4.1 times more likely to be arrested than women of other races; less than one-third of 2013's racial disparity (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Disparity in San Francisco arrests as a percent of female population, African American women v. women of other races (1980-2013)**



Increasing racial disparities in arrest rates are not due to increased crime by African Americans. In fact, 2012 arrest rates for the city's African American women were lower than at any time in the last 30 years and represent a historic nadir (Figure 5).

**Figure 5. San Francisco female arrests as a percent of female population, African American women v. women of other races (1980-2013)**



Sources for all figures: CJSC (2014), DRU (2015).

## References

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**Please note:** Each year, every county submits their data to the official statewide databases maintained by appointed governmental bodies. While every effort is made to review data for accuracy and to correct information upon revision, CJCJ is not responsible for data reporting errors made by the county or state.

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**Appendix Table 1. San Francisco female arrests, African American as a percent of all arrests, and disparity (ratio) in arrest rate of black vs. nonblack women, 2013**

<b>Female arrests (all ages), 2013, offenses ranked by percent comprised of black females</b>	<b>Black female arrests as percent of all female arrests</b>	<b>Ratio, arrest rate Black vs. nonblack</b>
Black as percent of female population	5.8%	1.0
Black female arrests as percent of all female arrests by offense:		
Arson	80.0%	64.4
Weapons (felony)	76.9%	53.7
Weapons (misd)	75.0%	48.3
Narcotics(felony)	67.6%	33.5
Kidnapping	66.7%	32.2
Prostitution (misd)	65.9%	31.1
Other Drugs (felony)	62.2%	26.5
Other Felonies	59.8%	23.9
Other Offenses (felonies)	58.7%	22.9
Robbery	56.6%	21.0
Theft	54.6%	19.4
All felonies	53.2%	18.3
Drug felonies	52.9%	18.1
Burglary	51.6%	17.1
Selected Traffic Violations	51.2%	16.9
Malicious Mischief	50.0%	16.1
Dangerous Drugs (felony)	50.0%	16.1
Liquor Laws	50.0%	16.1
Failure to Appear Non-Traffic	49.8%	16.0
Property felonies	49.5%	15.8
Forgery / Checks / Access Cards	48.6%	15.2
Violent felonies	48.4%	15.1
Assault (felony)	46.0%	13.7
All offenses	45.5%	13.4
Other Misdemeanors	44.2%	12.7
All misdemeanors	40.0%	10.7
Assault and Battery	35.1%	8.7
Hit and Run	33.3%	8.1
Manslaughter Vehicular	33.3%	8.1
Drunk	32.8%	7.9
Marijuana (felony)	30.0%	6.9
Petty Theft	28.8%	6.5
Lewd Conduct	28.6%	6.4
Other Theft	27.8%	6.2
Motor Vehicle Theft	27.1%	6.0
Trespassing	26.3%	5.8
Hit and Run	25.0%	5.4
Dangerous Drugs (misd)	23.4%	4.9
Vandalism	21.1%	4.3
Disturbing the Peace	14.3%	2.7

<b>Female arrests (all ages), 2013, offenses ranked by percent comprised of black females</b>	<b>Black female arrests as percent of all female arrests</b>	<b>Ratio, arrest rate Black vs. nonblack</b>
Disorderly Conduct	11.5%	2.1
Driving Under the Influence (felony)	11.3%	2.1
Driving Under the Influence (misd)	8.3%	1.5
Other Drugs (felony)	0.0%	0.0
Burglary Tools	0.0%	0.0
Glue Sniffing	0.0%	0.0

**Appendix Table 2. Disparity in San Francisco black-vs-nonblack female arrest disparities versus the rest of California, 2013**

<b>Females Offense</b>	<b>Racial arrest rate disparity San Francisco vs rest of CA</b>		<b>Black vs. nonblack arrest rate disparity</b>	
			<b>San Francisco</b>	<b>Rest of CA</b>
All offenses	4.3		13.4	3.1
Felonies	5.6		18.3	3.3
Violent felonies	3.2		15.1	4.7
Robbery	2.1		21.0	10.2
Assault	3.3		13.7	4.1
Property felonies	3.8		15.8	4.1
Drug felonies	10.1		18.1	1.8
Narcotics	9.5		33.5	3.5
Marijuana	2.8		6.9	2.4
Dangerous drugs	4.5		4.9	1.1
Weapons	14.4		53.7	3.7
Misdemeanors	3.5		10.7	3.1
Traffic offenses	4.9		16.9	3.5
Status Offenses	n.a.		n.a.	2.0

Sources for all tables: CJSC (2014), DRU (2015).