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State Rates of Incarceration by Race

The Sentencing Project
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STATE RATES OF INCARCERATION BY RACE

In 1997, The Sentencing Project published a policy report examining racial disparities in imprisonment among the states. That report, *Intended and Unintended Consequences: State Racial Disparities in Imprisonment*, revealed that African Americans were more than seven times as likely to be imprisoned as whites, based on 1994 data. Variations among the states were quite broad, ranging from a black/white disparity of 3.43 in Idaho to 22.77 in Minnesota.

The following tables provide an updated analysis of racial disparities in the use of incarceration. Table 1 provides prison incarceration rates for Whites and Blacks for 1997, with states ranked by the Black/White disparity ratio. Table 2 provides similar information, but is based on 2001 data and includes local jails as well as prisons.

The tables in this report are not entirely comparable with the previous report due to the reporting of Hispanics in the data. The previous report was based on Bureau of Justice Statistics data on race of prisoners, but not ethnicity. Therefore, Hispanic prisoners were included in either the White or Black categories. The tables in this report are based on data that treats Hispanics separately. In general, since most Hispanics are categorized as White by race, the White rates of incarceration may be lower in some instances than previously, and the Black/White ratio higher.

Table 1: Prison Incarceration Rates, 1997

Rate of Incarceration per 100,000 Population

State	White	Black	Ratio
District of Columbia	65	3672	56.49
Minnesota	80	2459	30.74
Wisconsin	199	4476	22.49
New Jersey	116	2447	21.09
Iowa	236	4807	20.37
Connecticut	224	4240	18.93
Pennsylvania	145	2551	17.59
Rhode Island	261	4369	16.74
Illinois	151	2220	14.70
Utah	237	3193	13.47
Nebraska	185	2439	13.18
New York	136	1739	12.79
Kansas	243	3046	12.53
Massachusetts	137	1652	12.06
Colorado	259	3067	11.84
Washington	218	2310	10.60
Oregon	267	2784	10.43
Ohio	289	3010	10.42
New Mexico	209	2166	10.36
Indiana	250	2368	9.47
New Hampshire	227	2109	9.29
South Dakota	349	3232	9.26
Wyoming	372	3434	9.23
National	289	2629	9.10
Florida	289	2610	9.03
Maryland	195	1754	8.99
Maine	158	1411	8.93
Delaware	406	3609	8.89
Texas	467	4115	8.81
Kentucky	332	2869	8.64
Michigan	308	2640	8.57
California	366	3128	8.55
Virginia	242	2009	8.30
Oklahoma	558	4302	7.71
North Carolina	238	1818	7.64
Missouri	362	2735	7.56
Louisiana	326	2452	7.52
Arkansas	282	2111	7.49
Arizona	473	3510	7.42
Alaska	594	4011	6.75
Vermont	270	1679	6.22
West Virginia	197	1206	6.12
North Dakota	128	780	6.09
Alabama	315	1906	6.05
South Carolina	315	1894	6.01
Mississippi	275	1645	5.98
Tennessee	240	1414	5.89
Nevada	543	3144	5.79
Georgia	306	1706	5.58
Montana	340	1869	5.50
Idaho	341	1577	4.62
Hawaii	329	960	2.92

*Incarceration rates from National Center on Institutions and Alternatives, *Masking the Divide: How Officially Reported Prison Statistics Distort the Racial and Ethnic Realities of Prison Growth*, with data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Table 2: Prison & Jail Incarceration Rates, 2001

Rate of Incarceration per 100,000 Population

State	White	Black	Ratio
District of Columbia	52	1504	28.92
New Jersey	161	2117	13.15
Connecticut	190	2427	12.77
Minnesota	139	1755	12.63
Iowa	284	3302	11.63
Wisconsin	350	4058	11.59
Pennsylvania	244	2570	10.53
New York	173	1638	9.47
New Hampshire	286	2649	9.26
Nebraska	229	1973	8.62
Rhode Island	198	1672	8.44
Vermont	218	1794	8.23
New Mexico	344	2666	7.75
Massachusetts	206	1562	7.58
Illinois	251	1889	7.53
Kansas	345	2469	7.16
Ohio	324	2279	7.03
North Dakota	189	1321	6.99
Colorado	394	2751	6.98
Maryland	248	1686	6.80
Delaware	427	2799	6.56
Utah	372	2341	6.29
Virginia	361	2268	6.28
Michigan	369	2247	6.09
North Carolina	265	1612	6.08
National	366	2209	6.04
Oregon	458	2763	6.03
Louisiana	379	2251	5.94
California	470	2757	5.87
West Virginia	294	1708	5.81
Washington	374	2141	5.72
Indiana	391	2236	5.72
Wyoming	443	2477	5.59
Kentucky	429	2392	5.58
South Dakota	385	2022	5.25
Arizona	544	2849	5.24
Texas	640	3287	5.14
Montana	417	2118	5.08
Tennessee	392	1991	5.08
Missouri	430	2160	5.02
South Carolina	349	1740	4.99
Florida	536	2591	4.83
Oklahoma	644	2980	4.63
Maine	201	926	4.61
Alabama	417	1877	4.50
Arkansas	393	1759	4.48
Nevada	646	2769	4.29
Georgia	519	2149	4.14
Mississippi	399	1645	4.12
Alaska	464	1864	4.02
Idaho	551	1573	2.85
Hawaii	455	609	1.34

*Incarceration rates based on data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2001*, April 2002.