

Crime and Punishment

Sentencing in Courts

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What is Crime and Punishment ?

A crime is a serious offence such as murder or robbery. *A punishment* is a penalty imposed on somebody who is convicted of a crime. A punishment could be, for example, time in prison or a fine.

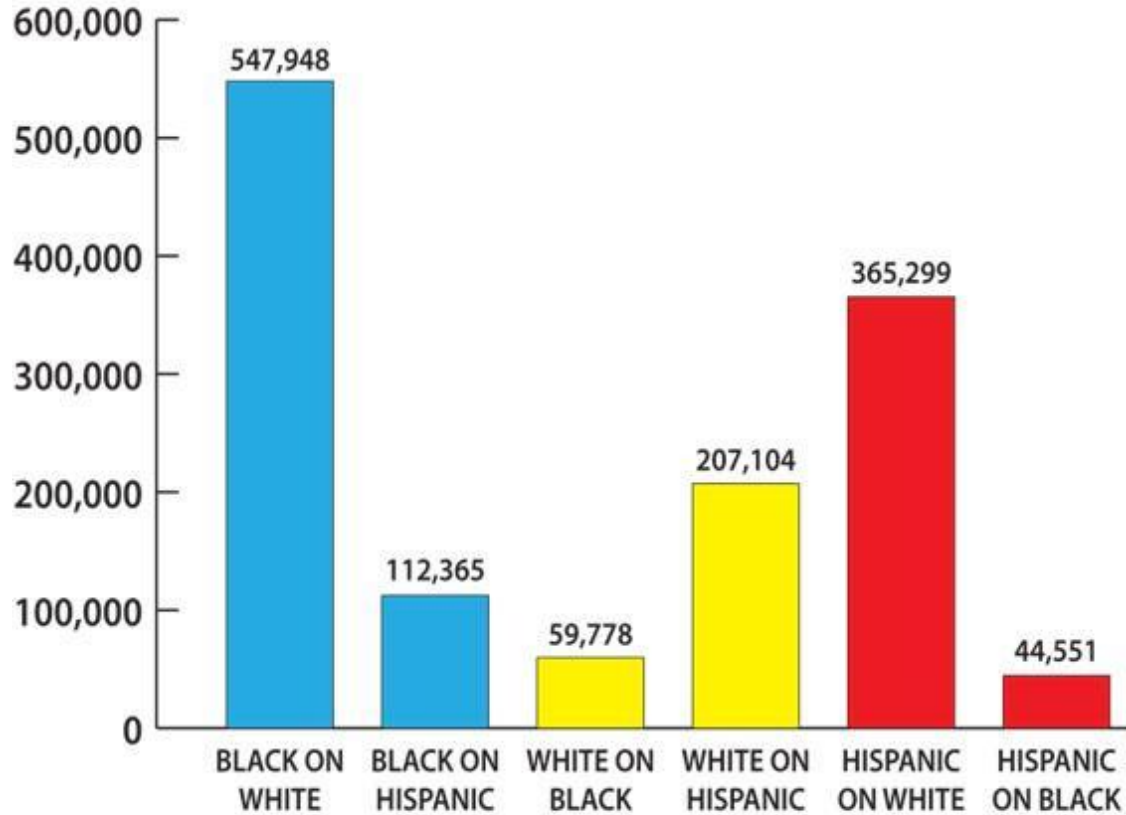
What does it mean to be sentenced in court ?

When a defendant is sentenced, they are issued a formal judgment that details the punishment. Sentencing is only completed by a judge once a person is convicted of a crime.

When a person is sentenced they are:

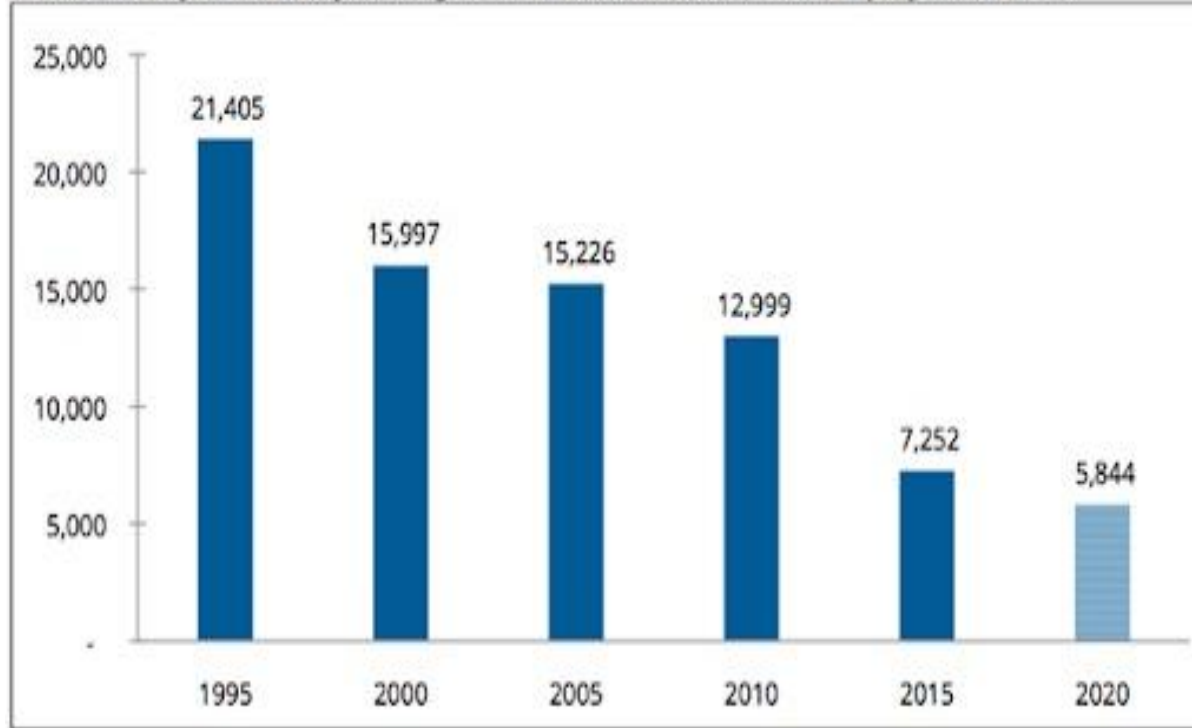
1. Judged for their crime
2. Able to appeal under the right circumstances
3. Condemned under the eyes of the law.

INTERRACIAL VIOLENT CRIME INCIDENTS 2018



As you can see, black-on-white crime is by far the most predominant interracial victimization, followed by Hispanic-on-white. White-on-black and Hispanic-on-black crimes are the rarest form of interracial violence, according to the survey.

Violent felony arrests of youth ages 12-17, actual (1995-2015) and projected (2020)



A new research report from the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice (CJCJ) predicts ongoing declines in the violent felony arrest rate of California's youth through 2020. The report analyzes past violent felony arrest data for two age groups — children under age 12 and youth ages 12-17 — to identify the relationship between childhood arrest rates today and those of older youth five years in the future. The analysis finds a strong, predictive relationship between the violent felony arrest rates of children under 12 and those of older youth ages 12-17. As such, recent declines in childhood arrest signal continuing and substantial declines in the arrest rate of older youth.



Cyntoia Brown, a woman serving a life sentence for killing a man when she was 16, appeared during her clemency hearing in May 2018. Brown and her supporters for years have maintained that the 2004 killing was an act of self-defense.

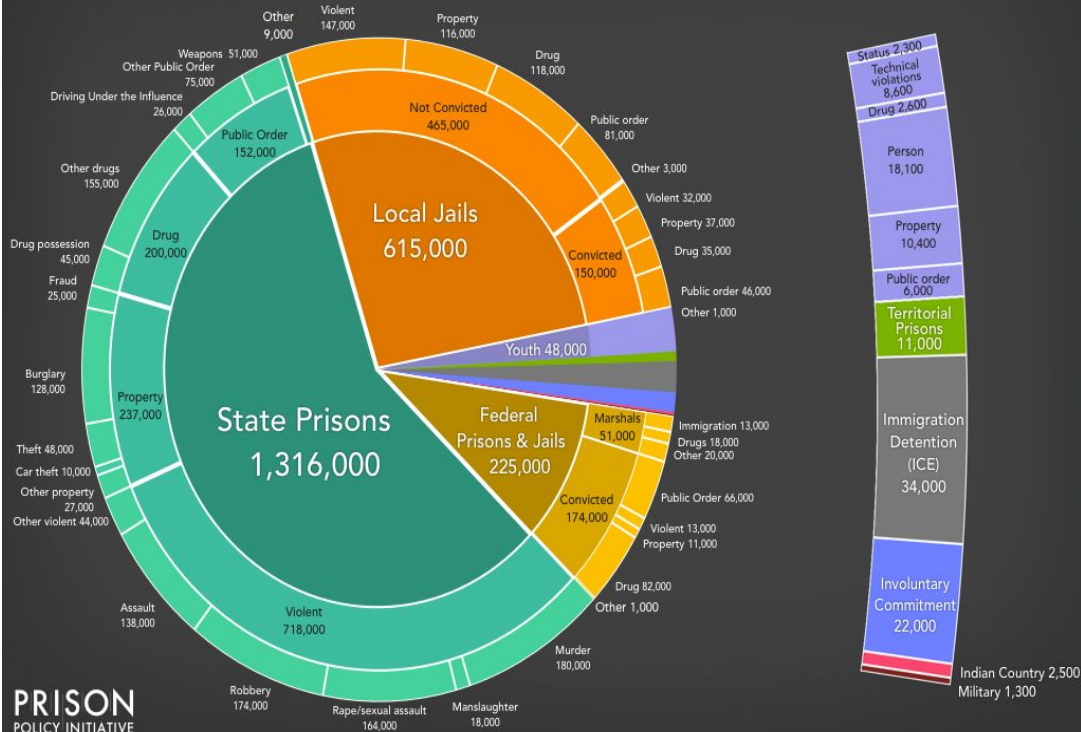


Brown-Long, now 32, served 15 years in a state prison in Tennessee after killing Johnny Allen, a 43-year-old real estate agent from Nashville. In 2004, Allen picked up Brown-Long, agreed to pay her \$150 for sex and took her to his house. (Brown-Long is her married name; at the time of the incident she went by Cyntoia Brown.) Brown-Long, then 16, shot and killed Allen while they were in bed; she told police she thought he was pulling out a gun and that she acted in self defense. She also said she had been forced into prostitution by a man called “Cut Throat.” Though she was a minor at the time of Allen’s murder, Brown-Long was tried as an adult. In court, prosecutors questioned her claim of self-defense, arguing instead that Brown-Long killed Allen in order to rob him.

Functionalism does not encourage people to take an active role in changing their social environment, even when such change may benefit them. Instead, functionalism sees active social change as undesirable because the various parts of society will compensate naturally for any problems that may arise. For example, in this case from a functionalist perspective, a sociologist would likely argue that sex trafficking persists because it provides a necessary function for society. This may include a social construction of deviance, employment for police officers, fodder for campaign speeches, material used in television and films, etc. In Cyntoia Brown case, more and more police begun to get involved which increased the employment of police officers. Also, this have gotten around to many celebrities such as Rihanna and others. This case spreaded on television and films.

How many people are locked up in the United States?

The United States locks up more people, per capita, than any other nation. But grappling with why requires us to first consider the many types of correctional facilities and the reasons that 2.3 million people are confined there.



PRISON
POLICY INITIATIVE

Sources and data notes: See <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2018.html>

This pie chart provides a comprehensive snapshot of the correctional system, the graphic does not capture the enormous churn in and out of the correctional facilities and the far larger universe of people whose lives are affected by the criminal justice system. Every year, 626,000 people walk out of prison gates, but people go to jail 10.6 million times each year. Jail churn is particularly high because most people in jails have not been convicted. Some have just been arrested and will make bail in the next few hours or days, and others are too poor to make bail and must remain behind bars until their trial. Only a small number (150,000 on any given day) have been convicted, generally serving misdemeanors sentences under a year.

Summary

By increasing support for punitive policies, racial perceptions of crime have made sentencing more severe for all Americans. The United States now has the world's highest imprisonment rate, with one in nine prisoners serving life sentences. Racial perceptions of crime, combined with other factors, have led to the disparate punishment of people of color. Although blacks and Latinos together comprise just 30% of the general population, they account for 58% of the prison population. The jail system can be improved in many different ways. For example, changing harsh penalties. Several states have changed how they penalize offenders, including revising mandatory minimum sentences and re-classifying offenses. Also, streamlining parole and expanding eligibility. Fixing delays in parole processing and expanding eligibility allows candidates to be released to less costly options like treatment programs. This shortens length of stay while ensuring that the necessary structures are in place to protect the public.

Citations

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