

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK AND NEED IN THE CLASSIFICATION AND
SUPERVISION OF OFFENDERS IN THE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS SETTING:
THE ROLE OF GENDER

by

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ABSTRACT

Risk has emerged as a defining feature of punishment in the United States. Feeley and Simon (1992) note that contemporary punishment is increasingly moving away from rehabilitation (the old penology) and moving toward the management and control of offenders (the new penology), often through actuarial techniques. While the profusion of risk assessment instruments, now entering their fourth generation, provides some support for the assertion that risk is indeed an important element in corrections, it was previously unknown if the risk model applied to all offenders, particularly female offenders. This dissertation addressed that gap by examining whether the risk model applied to female offenders in the community corrections setting.

This dissertation surveyed 93 community corrections officers employed by the Orange County Community Corrections Department. The findings suggest that the department has incorporated many elements of the new penology into the classification and supervision of offenders in each of its units, though several gender differences were noted. Classification overrides, the perceived level of risk to the community, supervision decisions, and the perceived importance of risk and need factors were all examined in this study. The results indicate that some elements of classification and supervision function uniformly for offenders and operate irrespective of gender, but some areas, such as the perceived level of risk to the community and the perceived importance of risk factors, are influenced by gender.

In loving memory of my Mom.
I finally finished my little paper.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem: The Risk Society

The concept of risk has become an important framework for characterizing contemporary society. First put forth by Giddens (1991), and later Beck (1992; 1994), the notion of the “risk society” holds that a salient feature of society is its preoccupation with the distribution of risks. Beck asserts that the centrality of risk in contemporary society stems in part from technological advances that reduce the need for human labor and the rapidly growing productive forces of modernization. For example, according to Simon (2001), the global economy has threatened political/economic stability at the individual level such that expectations of lifetime employment and generous benefits have disappeared in the name of fiscal order. Simon goes on to state that “the market economy, once framed by national circumstances, domestic competitors, unions, ... and customers, increasingly operates on a global basis in a manner that raises the costs of negotiating agreements and that inevitably increases insecurity for all these groups” (31). In short, the global nature of the marketplace has produced a climate in which no one is safe from unemployment. According to Beck (1998):

Here we have the new law of productivity that global capitalism in the information age has discovered: fewer and fewer well-trained and globally interchangeable people can generate more and more output and services. Thus, economic growth no longer reduces unemployment but actually requires a reduction in the number of jobs (58).

While shifts to automated production have always produced insecurities, Beck (1992) argues that the risk society is defined by new insecurities and dangers that now cut across social boundaries affecting all persons equally regardless of class or race. Similarly, Giddens (1991) refers to unanticipated consequences of rapid societal and technological change ever present in society as the dark side of modernity.

The risk society thesis then is predicated on the idea that technological developments have shaken the foundation of modern society and produced, not only economic uncertainty but, new types of risks that are characterized by a constant threat of disaster (Korts, 2004). Threats of disaster are typically associated with chemical, nuclear, environmental, and medical dangers (Caplan, 2000; Ungar, 2001). These dangers include the threat of nuclear war, Three Mile Island, breast implants, global warming, the Exxon Valdez, Ebola Zaire, and mad cow disease (Ungar, 2001) just to name a few.

The fear and insecurity that drives the risk society is not limited to the political/economic realm or natural disasters. Attempts to deal with ever-present threats have contributed to the development of numerous risk instruments. For Giddens (1991), living in the risk society means that an “indefinite range of potential courses of action (with their attendant risks) is at any given moment open to individuals and collectives” (29). Risk assessment enters the picture when individuals consider one of any number of potential future possibilities and respond in a way that is intended to best minimize risk. As Beck (1992) so aptly puts it, “the movement set in motion by the risk society . . . is expressed in the statement: *I am afraid!*” (49).

Risk and the Criminal Justice System

The notion of the risk society has obvious implications for the criminal justice system. While the containment of risk has long been a relevant consideration in the justice system, it is now more central to its design. What differentiates assessment then and now is the relative attention given to the treatment of risk factors in the decision making of justice officials. Earlier efforts at classification, especially in the 1970s, assessed both risks and needs, with priority being given to the needs of individual offenders. It has now been widely argued that the focus of classification has shifted from measuring needs in connection to rehabilitative objectives to an overwhelming focus on assigning risk based on membership in a particular group or category of offender.

The increased attention on risk and some of the economic shifts can be attributed in part to the rise of what has been termed the dangerous underclass. The development of this dangerous underclass is but another negative consequence of the advancement of modern societies, “a segment of society that is viewed as permanently excluded from social mobility and economic integration” (Feeley and Simon, 1992: 467). The most dangerous population of offenders is considered to be a part of this larger segment of society (Feeley and Simon, 1992; Lynch, 1998). Because the dangerous underclass of offenders is so thoroughly disenfranchised from mainstream values, ties to the community, and economic opportunities, the expectation of reintegration is seen as all but futile. Consequently, the control of these offenders is based on risk containment, rather than rehabilitation or deterrence.

According to Feeley and Simon (1992), the criminal justice system is less concerned with fact finding and establishing guilt or innocence and is more focused on the efficient management and detection of offenders. For example, policing in the risk society requires a number of new technologies and tactics to handle the vast array of crime data that police encounter each day (Campbell, 2004). This technology can include computer assisted dispatch systems, voice entry incident report systems, electronically based victim self report processes, as well as numerous other types to standardize and catalog risk data (Campbell, 2004). The extension of the risk society in criminal justice can also be found in the prolific use of classification instruments. At every level of contact with the criminal justice system, offenders are classified according to the risk they pose to the community as well as the institutional environment. Risk assessment instruments determine suitability for pretrial release, inmate housing assignments, prison release dates, and caseload management in probation and parole (Rigakos, 1999). Risk assessment not only includes broad penal policy, but also day-to-day operational procedures. The emphasis on risk in penal policy is most visible in laws that authorize preventative detention, sex offender registration/notification, sex offender civil commitment, and selective incapacitation (e.g., habitual offender statutes and three strikes laws). Less visible, but perhaps more commonplace, is the role of risk assessment in community corrections.

In the past few decades, shifts in client population and criticisms of ineffectiveness have prompted probation agencies to increase their use of objective case classification systems (also referred to as actuarial risk assessment tools or techniques)

(Jones, Johnson, Latessa, and Travis, 1999). Underlying much of the objective classification are actuarial statistics. Actuarial tools aggregate offenders with similar characteristics to better predict and plan risks (Simon, 1987:62). The driving force behind current actuarial risk assessment tools is the idea that scientific research-generated guidelines are superior to professional opinion. The most popular version of these assessments includes both measures of risk (to determine security level) and need (to determine treatment program referrals), although reliance on the need portion of the assessment is a relatively new phenomenon.

The body of literature that is primarily responsible for documenting and interpreting the role of risk and the criminal justice system comes under the heading of the “new penology”, risk penology, or postmodern penology.¹ This literature highlights the purported shift away from the reliance on rehabilitative techniques and a move toward the management, custody, and control of dangerous offenders, often through actuarial techniques (Feeley and Simon, 1992; 1995). The general question of risk is discussed primarily in terms of specifying markers that demonstrate the shift to increasing reliance on actuarial risk assessment tools (Feeley and Simon, 1992) and increasing the severity of punishments. While the terminology employed to characterize this presumed shift is varied, as evidenced in postmodern penalty (Feeley and Simon, 1992) or late modernity (Garland, 1995; Lucken, 1998), the debate is one of interpreting current penal trends in the context of their departure from conventional practice.

¹ Risk is considered a postmodern issue in criminal justice even though others outside of the discipline may not necessarily characterize it in this way.

This is illustrated by Feeley and Simon's (1992) argument that the meta-narrative of punishment is shifting from offender normalization to system efficiency and the identification of groups that pose the greatest threat to public safety. Specifically, the new penology involves a *new* language highlighting probability and risk, *new* objectives highlighting efficient control mechanisms and internal system processes, and *new* techniques that target groups instead of individuals.

Garland's (1995) survey of penal trends acknowledges the use of actuarial risk techniques, but concludes actuarialism does not represent a break with modernity. Garland's conclusion about the reliance on actuarial risk techniques and the concern with offender management has historical precedent, as seen in the Eugenics movement in the early 1900s. Similarly, Lucken (1998) also places the current trend toward risk assessment within the context of modern penology. Lucken maintains that current classification schemes do not neglect individual concerns and may even move closer to rehabilitation because they can better highlight the specific needs of offenders.

In contrast, Simon (1998) concludes that current trends in corrections do represent a break with modernity and his analysis demonstrates the role that fear plays in the risk society in the discussion of sex offenders. Sex offenders have traditionally been viewed as victims of a psychological disease, but under the new penology scheme, sex offenders are viewed as modern day monsters in need of control. Civil commitment and notification laws that have been upheld by the Supreme Court (see for example *Kansas v. Hendricks, 1996*), exemplify the new penology because they eschew offender

normalization as the primary goal and instead seek to control a subgroup of offenders deemed to be beyond redemption.

Beyond Generalizations of Risk and the Criminal Justice System

Much of the punishment literature on risk has tended to focus on identifying and interpreting broad trends in punishment. Most researchers have identified risk as a relevant feature of punishment, thus the point of this literature is not whether risk is pervasive in corrections, but whether the concentration on risk is indicative of new, old, modern, or postmodern trends. While generalized explanations of penal trends are important for clarifying what are often complex and contradictory structures, meaningful variations in penal trends may be lost in the process or unrepresented. For instance, many correctional systems assume that risk is genderless, classless, and raceless (Hannah-Moffat, 1999). This is exemplified in the reliance on the same risk assessment instruments to determine institutional risk for all types of inmates and risk to the community for all types of offenders supervised in the community. However, Beck (1992) does concede that the growth of risk will likely affect some people more than others, thereby creating social risk positions. Similarly, research on crime has established that crime and victimization are not evenly distributed across all groups (Farrell, 1992; Garland, 1996; Polvi, Looman, Humphries, and Pease, 1990). Current Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data indicates that males account for 76.2 percent of all arrests and 82.1 percent of arrests for violent crime (FBI, 2004). Given this, it is clear that the likelihood of being victimized by a female offender is much lower than that of a male offender,

thereby supporting the idea that risks are not equal and may not operate the same across gender.

Given the unprecedented increases in the female offender population in recent years (Blomberg and Lucken, 2000; Harrison and Beck, 2003; United States Department of Justice [USDJ], 1998), and the unique needs that female offenders have, with regard to motherhood (Greenfield and Snell, 1999; Kim, 2001; Temin, 2001), substance dependency (Greenfield and Snell, 1999), and physical and sexual abuse (Florida Corrections Commission [FCC], 2000; Greenfield and Snell, 1999), it is important to expand the current level of research to include female offenders in discussions of risk. A review of the current literature on risk and punishment reveals that the applied literature has made great gains in integrating women into discussions of risk, but this literature is largely disconnected from the broader theoretical debates on punishment such as those described above (FCC, 2000; Greenfield and Snell, 1999; Kim, 2001; Temin, 2001). The questions addressed by this literature typically center on cost effectiveness, program effectiveness, recidivism reduction, and administrative strategies to manage overcrowding (Benda, 2001; 2003; Benda, Toombs, Whiteside, 1996; Finn and Muirhead-Steves, 2002; Kempinen and Kurlychek, 2003; MacKenzie, Brame, McDowall, and Souryal, 1995; Marciniak, 1999; Marion, 2002; Petersilia, 1998; Petersilia and Turner, 1990; 1993; Stanz and Tewksbury, 2000; Stinchcomb and Terry, 2001; Ulmer, 2001). With regard to risk, the most common type of analysis is the efficacy of risk assessment tools to adequately predict institutional risk and recidivism among women (Bonta, Pang, and Wallace-Capretta, 1995; Farr 2000; Harer and Langan,

2001; McShane, Williams, and Dolny, 2002). The vast majority of this empirical research has focused on female correctional inmates, thus neglecting how risk operates for women in the community setting. This gap in the empirical research is problematic given that approximately 85% of female offenders are supervised in the community under probation and parole authorities (Greenfeld and Snell, 1999).

Currently, there are two voids in the literature that have yet to be addressed. The treatment of female offenders in the context of penal issues as modern/postmodern or new/old has not been addressed in sufficient detail. Secondly, questions of risk and women in the community corrections setting have not been fully explored in the literature. As previously noted, the risk society thesis can best be described in the statement “I am afraid” (Beck, 1992). In the context of punishment, the literature attributes the rise of risk to a dangerous underclass that should be feared. However, it is still unknown if this risk and fear applies or should apply to women under correctional supervision, especially given the rise in female criminality. Broader feminist claims posit that the correctional system seeks to discipline, infantilize, feminize, medicalize, and domesticize female offenders (Carlen and Tchaikovsky, 1985). On its face, none of these actions invoke the language of risk and from an empirical standpoint, it is unknown how risk influences the treatment of female offenders by criminal justice practitioners. Furthermore, an examination of the issues that most define the experiences of women in corrections raises questions about the appropriateness of the risk model in the classification and supervision of women. Given these voids in the literature, this

dissertation seeks to expand the understanding of risk in the classification and supervision of female offenders.

The Relevance of Gender

The gender question in penology is timely and deserving of expanded attention beyond research relating to fair treatment by the criminal justice system and/or the treatment of the problems faced by females such as substance abuse, sexual abuse, pregnancy, and motherhood (American Correctional Association, 1993; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Crawford, 2000; Gabel and Girard, 1995; Kim, 2001; MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001; Mauskopf, 1998; Mullings, Peugh and Belenko, 1999; Pollock, 2002; Pollock, and Crouch, 2002; Snell and Morton, 1994; Spohn and Beichner, 2000; Young, and Smith, 2000). While these are significant and relevant, the issue of women and risk has not been sufficiently examined.

The past few decades have witnessed unprecedented growth of females in the correctional system (Chesney-Lind, 1997; Gilliard and Beck, 1998; Harrison and Beck, 2003; Morash, Bynum, and Koons, 1998; USDJ, 1998). Recent figures indicate that nearly one out of every 109 adult women in the United States is under some form of correctional supervision on any given day (Greenfield and Snell, 1999). While female offenders make up 7 percent of the state and federal correctional populations, 23 percent of probationers, 12.7 percent of the local jail population, and 12 percent of the parole population (Glaze & Bonczar, 2006; Harrison & Beck, 2006), the rate of increased involvement in the system has prompted concern. Between 1981 and 1991, the number

of female inmates increased by 254 percent, compared to a 147 percent increase for male inmates during the same period (Blomberg and Lucken, 2000). Between 1990 and 1998, the number of women under some form of correctional supervision increased dramatically. According to Greenfield and Snell (1999), the female prison and jail incarceration rates increased 88 percent and 40 percent, respectively. Similarly, community corrections witnessed large per capita increases of females under supervision with probation supervision increasing by 40 percent and parole supervision increasing by 80 percent (Greenfield and Snell, 1999). The rate of growth in incarceration continues and since 1995, the annual growth rate of female incarceration has averaged a 4.7 percent increase, compared to the 3 percent increase for male prisoners (Harrison and Beck, 2006).

The boom in the female incarceration rate can be attributed to a number of factors, including determinate sentencing and tougher sanctions for drug offenses (Kim, 2001; USDJ, 1998; Young and Smith, 2000). Notably, there is no evidence to suggest that the increase in female incarceration occurred in response to a more dangerous and more disenfranchised violent breed of female offender (Mullings et al., 2002; Snider, 2003), which has been cited as a general cause for the shift to a risk penology (Feeley and Simon, 1992). The majority of women under correctional supervision have committed offenses such as theft, prostitution, and/or drug offenses (Covington, 2001; Greenfield and Snell, 1999; Young and Smith, 2000), which are not associated with fear of crime and risk. The Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report on Female Offenders indicates that of the 721,400 women under probation supervision in 1999 only 9% were convicted

of a violent crime, with the remaining 91% having been convicted for property, drug, or public order offenses (Greenfield and Snell, 1999).

Clearly these figures suggest that “risk” as far as women are concerned rarely indicates violence. The unique needs of women in the system also challenge conventional assumptions about risk and dangerousness. Consider, for example, that most women under correctional supervision are mothers, with approximately 70 percent having at least one child less than 18 years of age, (Greenfield and Snell, 1999). The vast majority of these women were the primary caretakers of their children and more than two-thirds had lived with their children prior to incarceration (Greenfield and Snell, 1999; Kim, 2001; Temin, 2001). It is estimated that only 44 percent of male offenders in state prison lived with their minor children prior to arrest (Greenfield and Snell, 1999).

Approximately 6 percent of female inmates will also enter prison/jail pregnant and will give birth behind bars (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). Children born in prison are typically removed from their mother’s care two to three days after birth (Temin, 2001). Once separated from their mother, only 25 percent of these children will live with their father, 51 percent will live with their grandparents, 20 percent will live with other relatives, 4 percent will live with a family friend, and 11 percent will be placed in foster care (Dressel, Porterfield, and Barnhill, 1998; USDJ, 1998).

Gender is further relevant to the question of risk considering that many female offenders are victims in their own right. Female offenders suffer physical abuse, sexual abuse, and drug addiction at much higher rates than do male offenders. Nearly 60 percent of women being held in state prisons reported experiencing some type of severe abuse in

the past (Greenfield and Snell, 1999). In a Florida study, 57 percent of female offender's versus 16 percent of male offender's, reported physical or sexual abuse prior to their incarceration (FCC, 2000). Drug addiction also poses a significant problem for female offenders. In a study on drug use, female offenders reported using drugs more frequently than male offenders—40 percent compared to 32 percent (Greenfield and Snell, 1999).

HIV infection and AIDS present another problem for female offenders. In the prison population, females suffer from the disease at much higher rates than males (Anderson, Rosay, and Saum, 2002). In 1995, the incidence of HIV infection among women inmates was almost double that of male inmates—4 percent compared to 2.3 percent (Gowdy, Cain, Corrothers, Katsel, Parmley, and Schmidt, 1998). The high rates of the disease among female offenders are attributed to a number of factors including drug use, trading sex for drugs and money, sexual abuse, prostitution, and living in impoverished conditions (Anderson et al., 2002; Decker, 1992; Snell and Morton, 1994; DeGroot, Leibel, and Zierler, 1998; Kane and DiBartolo, 2002; Zaitzow, 2001).

A final problem that factors into discussions of risk and women is the prevalence of mental illness among the female offender population. Numerous studies have found high rates of mental health problems among incarcerated women (Jordan, Schlenger, Fairbank, and Caddell, 1996; Kane and DiBartolo, 2002; Novick, Dellapenna, Schwartz, Remmlinger, and Lowenstein, 1977; Scott, Hannum, and Ghrist, 1982; Teplin, Abram, and McClelland, 1996). While mental illness also affects the male offender population, research has shown that women suffer at higher rates (Anderson et al., 2002; Ditton, 1999; Harlow, 1999; Harrison and Lawrence, 1998). According to the Bureau of Justice

Statistics, 24 percent of female prison and jail inmates and 22 percent of female probationers were identified as mentally ill (Ditton, 1999). This is compared to only 16 percent of male prison and jail inmates and 15 percent of male probationers being identified as having a mental health problem (Ditton, 1999). It must be noted, however, that female offenders may be more readily diagnosed as mentally ill for problems such as depression, therefore creating a potential clinical bias. Female inmates are much more likely to be medicated while in prison (Morris, 1987; Ross and Fabiano, 1986). For example, female inmates are administered psychotropic drugs (tranquilizers) at ten times the rate of male inmates (Culliver, 1993).

The prevalence of mental health issues can again be correlated with the high levels of sexual abuse and drug use found in the female offender population. The interrelated nature of mental illness and drug abuse is difficult to characterize because the drug abuse may exacerbate otherwise hidden mental health problems or occur as a result of mental health problems. For example, research has shown that females tend to view their substance abuse problems more negatively than men, thus creating feelings of depression and low self esteem (Anderson et al., 2002; Jainchill, Hawke, and Yagelka, 2000). There is also some evidence to suggest that female offenders use drugs in attempts to self-medicate for an undiagnosed mental health problem (Covington, 2001; Galbraith, 1998; Holtfreter and Morash, 2003; Inciardi and Pottieger, 1994).

Given these unique demands and needs of female offenders, it should not be assumed that risk does or should have the same meaning and function for females as it does for males. Prior literature illustrates that when a gender-based perspective is

employed, conventional wisdom and general theory are often revised in light of these new insights. This has been the case when female offenders have been incorporated into broader theoretical debates on crime causation, sentencing, and punishment.

The development of liberation thesis and power control theory, two gender specific theories of crime causation, found some empirical support (Austin, 1982; Grasmick, Hagan, Blackwell and Arnelklev, 1996; Hagan, Simpson, and Gillis, 1979; Smart, 1979; Steffensmeier and Steffensmeier, 1980) and led to advancements in the criminological field in general. The development of women specific theories has helped to fill the gaps in male theory and the inclusion of women in tests of traditional theories helped to correct the methodological pitfall of relying on samples comprised mostly of males (Gelsthorpe, 2002).

More relevant to this study are the leniency/chivalry studies that tended to dominate the early literature on female offenders and the criminal justice system (Crawford, 2000; Dominelli, 1984; Kruttschnitt, 1981; MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001; Nagel and Johnson, 1994; Spohn and Beichner, 2000). These studies examined sex differentials in criminal court processing, exploring the obvious question: “Are men and women treated the same by sentencing authorities?” Some studies found that women were sentenced more harshly than men (Boritch, 1992; Dominelli, 1984; Kruttschnitt, 1981; MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001), while others found that women were treated more leniently (Crawford, 2000; Nagel and Johnson, 1994; Spohn and Beichner, 2000). For example, Eaton (1986) found that when a defendant appears before a criminal court, comment is usually made concerning employment, if the defendant is a man, and family

life, if the defendant is a woman. Sentencing authorities may well view the defendant in the context of their particular gender role (Eaton, 1986).

Historical accounts of women's imprisonment also reveal differences that run contrary to conventional wisdom on prison reform (Foucault, 1977; Ignatieff, 1978; Pisciotta, 1994; Rothman, 1971). For example, it has been long held that the 1870s brought revolutionary change with the development of the reformatory. However, Rafter (1985) notes that the custodial model of prison was the dominant prison model for women from 1870 to 1930, not the reformatory. Because of this, the reformatory and the custodial prison model formed a bifurcated system of punishment for women.

Bosworth's (2000) analyses of *Hôpital de la Salpêtrière* found that the institution was primarily utilized as a control mechanism for undesirable women, most notably unwanted wives, pregnant or sexually active girls, and prostitutes. Despite the fact that different ideologies of punishment were employed during the institutions' history (1685-1916), the prison was consistently "used to control gender as often as it controlled crime" (277). Bosworth's (2000) analysis challenges the predominant mode of thinking by showing surprising continuity in the treatment of women between 1684 and 1916. The researcher notes: "despite the effect of modern scientific and medicinal discourses on the treatment of the incarcerated population, the basic belief that certain types of women needed to be confined did not change" (270).

This brief review of the woman centered literature in criminology and criminal justice reveals that gender is an especially important area of research because each attempt to investigate the treatment of women has yielded important findings for the field

in general. Examinations of gender differentials in criminal court processing have revealed that extralegal factors and institutions of informal social control can differentially influence the sentencing decisions of men and women. Finally, examinations of the historical treatment of women in prison challenge theories on the development of the reformatory movement in general. Findings from Rafter (1985) revealed that a dual system operated for women, in which race largely determined treatment. Bosworth (2000) has shown the actual treatment of women did not change no matter what penal reform may have been touted by reformers of the day. Importantly each study ultimately demonstrates that women have historically posed relatively low risks and may have been incarcerated because they were more socially undesirable than dangerous. Given these findings, it is reasonable to investigate the issue of gender with regard to the latest purported shift in penal practice.

Women, Risk, and Penalty

Historically and presently the literature indicates that female offenders suffer from a host of different psychological problems and are imprisoned for offenses that are not generally deemed dangerous or threatening to public safety (Alemagno and Dickie, 2002; FCC, 2000; Greenfield and Snell, 1999; Harm and Philips, 2001; Holtfreter and Morash, 2003; Morash et al., 1998; Mullings et al., 2002, Owen and Covington, 2003; Peugh and Belenko, 1999). Petrunik (2003) differentiates between risk and dangerousness, noting that risk refers to an offender's capacity to commit future criminal acts, where dangerousness refers to both the capacity for recidivism and a perception of how serious

the criminal act will be. Petrunik (2003) provides the example that “ a person considered to be an 80% risk of shoplifting will be considered to be less dangerous than a person considered to be at a 20% risk of committing sexual assault” (45). Accordingly, female offenders pose both a lower risk and a lower level of dangerousness compared to male offenders. Findings from Hardyman and Van Voorhis (2004) support this assumption, as their research found that 51 percent of correctional agencies reported that women either presented a much lower risk compared to men or a smaller portion of women than men posed serious threats to public safety and institutional staff.

In addition to posing lower risk and dangerousness to public safety, research has demonstrated that the risks and needs associated with female offenders tend to be different from their male counterparts (Harer and Langan, 2001; Holtfreter and Morash, 2003; Hardyman and Van Voorhis, 2004; Morash et al., 1998). In terms of classification, research has identified a number of relevant risk and need factors for women, including "marital status, suicide attempts, family structure of the childhood home, child abuse, depression, substance abuse, single parenting, reliance on public assistance, and dysfunctional relationships" (Hardyman and Van Voorhis, 2004:4). Given that the risks posed by women are markedly lower and different compared to male offenders, there has been a call for an increase in gender responsive programming, particularly for incarcerated women.

Traditionally, most programming inside female prisons has not been gender responsive (Holtfreter and Morash, 2003). This type of programming would address interrelated needs and issues common among female offenders (Morash et al., 1998). For

example, substance abuse is often associated with a variety of other problems such as physical abuse, lack of job skills, difficulty forming productive relationships, and criminal behavior (Morash et al., 1998; Mullings et al., 2002). Gender responsive programming would take a multifaceted approach and address the full range of problems instead of taking a traditional single dimensional approach to treatment (Harm and Philips, 2001; Holtfreter and Morash, 2003; Mullings et al., 2002; Peugh and Belenko, 1999). Gender responsive programming is based on prior literature that indicates female offenders have different needs and therefore may need to be processed differently (Covington, 2001; Holtfreter and Morash, 2003; Morash et al., 1998).

This call for gender responsive programming affords an opportunity to explore how the inclusion of gender can contribute to the penal literature especially as it relates to the concept of risk. Far too often, studies of female offenders pay little attention to the role of penal theory and policy (Hudson, 2002). Similarly, Howe (1994) notes, that most feminist research initiatives have not been actively engaged with issues raised by non-feminist analysts.

As indicated, research on female offenders in the correctional system too often is not informed by the theoretical claims of the penal literature in general, nor is research on the penal literature informed by feminist contributors to the field. Consequently, it is unknown whether the major arguments and assumptions of the general punishment literature apply equally to men and women. As Howe (1994) explains:

the problem is not simply that the new theoretisations of punishment ignore women or treat them as footnotes to the main event—the punishment of men; they also overlook the question of gender, or better still, the deeply sexed nature of punishment regimes and, by extension, their own analytical frameworks (2).

Thus, Howe (1994) poses the following challenge: a feminist analysis of penalty should address how social relations determine differential penal disciplining of males and females. Howe's challenge comes directly from the recognition that social histories and broad theoretizations of punishment are silent on the issue of gender. Howe suggests that the punishment literature has developed in two divergent ways: masculinist studies analyzing the emergence of punishment systems in the context of state power and feminist studies that examine the differential impact of disciplinary power over the bodies of women.

While the body of literature on female offenders has grown in the past few decades, Howe (1994) indicates that feminist theorists have been slightly myopic in their focus. Feminist scholars have been so concerned with including women into the historical and sociological picture that they have failed to fully consider new developments in the field (160). Given that one of the latest debates in the punishment literature is the modern/postmodern debate, Howe's challenge is useful in identifying a framework for analyzing women and penalty because her framework is informed by the feminist perspective, raising questions of the management of risk and differential treatment for female offenders from a postmodern perspective.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the current research is to examine the treatment of women in the correctional system in the context of the risk penology. The concepts of risk and need as they apply to women are examined through the use of a survey designed to assess

definitions of risk and need and perceptions of risk and need of community corrections officers. Current actuarial risk assessments promise to make classification more objective and fair for offenders, while making efficient use of correctional department funds. Despite the fact that risk/needs assessments do provide for a better and more objective level of classification as compared to a gut feeling of a probation officer (Andrews and Bonta, 1998; Clear, 1987; Gottfredson, 1987; Hanson and Bussiere, 1998), they are not without their problems (Holsinger, Lurigio, and Latessa, 2001). Most correctional agencies utilize the same risk assessment instrument for both male and female offenders and the assumption is that these tools perform an adequate job at assessing risks for both populations. However, much of the literature indicates that female offenders pose a much lower risk and have different need factors compared to their male counterparts (Farr, 2000; FBI, 2004; Greenfeld and Snell, 1999; Harer and Langan, 2001; Hardyman and Van Voorhis, 2004). Female offenders may, in turn, be overclassified, causing correctional officers to supervise females largely based on their professional opinion about them. Consequently, two trends may be operating in community corrections, a new penology for men which focuses on risk and control and an old penology for women which focuses on needs and therapeutic intervention. The purpose of this research is to determine how risks and needs impact the classification and supervision of female offenders in the community corrections setting.

The following questions are intended to guide the process of determining whether or not risk has a different meaning and function for female and male offenders supervised in the community:

1. How does the gender of the offender influence the practice of classification and supervision in community corrections?
2. Are gender differences in penal assessments valid in view of the different risks that male and female offenders pose to the community?
3. Do different trends in the practice of classification and supervision translate into differential management practices for male and female offenders?
4. Based on these definitions of risk in the classification and supervision process, are the practices consistent with the claims of postmodern and feminist frameworks?

Policy Implications

The current research has some important policy implications that can impact the supervision of female offenders in the community. There is a general consensus that female offenders suffer from a host of different problems when compared to their male counterparts (FCC, 2000; Harm and Philips, 2001; Holtfreter and Morash, 2003; Mullings et al., 2002, Peugh and Belenko, 1999). Problems such as substance abuse, physical and sexual abuse, as well as issues stemming from motherhood all pose significant demands on the system. While some of these problems, such as substance abuse and physical abuse are also present in the male offender population, their prevalence is greater among female offenders (FCC, 2000; Greenfield and Snell, 1999). Given this, some researchers have called for an increase in gender responsive

programming (Morash et al., 1998). This type of programming could result in significant differences in the supervision of female offenders. Gender responsive programming could manifest in community corrections in the development of specialized caseloads. These caseloads would resemble those currently used for drug offenders and sex offenders. Such specialization would necessitate training for probation officers on proper supervision techniques for women. Clearly, this would result in significant adjustments to the distribution of resources, with more money being allocated for the supervision of the female offender population.

In conclusion, this dissertation will examine the role of risk in the classification and supervision of female offenders. This research will focus on identifying salient risk and need factors for male and female offenders, as well as measuring perceptions of risk and need among community corrections officers, which may influence the supervision of female offenders. As such, this first chapter introduced the key concepts of the risk society, risk and the criminal justice system, and risk and female offenders as a starting point for this inquiry. Chapter Two will provide a detailed examination of the postmodern theoretical framework and the feminist theoretical framework to be used as a guide for this dissertation. Chapter Three will present the literature addressing actuarial risk assessment and female offenders and will conclude with the research questions and hypotheses of this research. Chapter Four will delineate the methodology that will be employed in the study. This chapter will explain the data sources, specific procedures to be employed, and the measurement of the variables. Chapter Five will present the descriptive statistics for each item of the survey instrument. Chapter Six will analyze

how the gender of the offender influences perceptions of differential risk and need and supervision difficulty. Chapter Seven will examine how an officer's supervision style affects definitions of risk and need and perceptions of risk and need. Finally, chapter Eight will provide a discussion of the results, with special attention being paid to the potential theoretical and policy implications of the findings, as well as the limitations of the research and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two interrelated frameworks shape the present study. A postmodern framework and a feminist framework inform the analysis of risk and the classification and supervision of women in the community corrections setting. A postmodern framework leads the concept of risk to the present analysis in that risk is seen as a predominant feature of postmodern life, as well as a predominant feature of contemporary penology. The feminist framework raises important questions of whether and how gender shapes conceptions of risk and whether and how these conceptions of risk work to the advantage or disadvantage of women in correctional settings. The relationship between postmodernism and feminist criminology is illustrated in Figure 2-1 below.

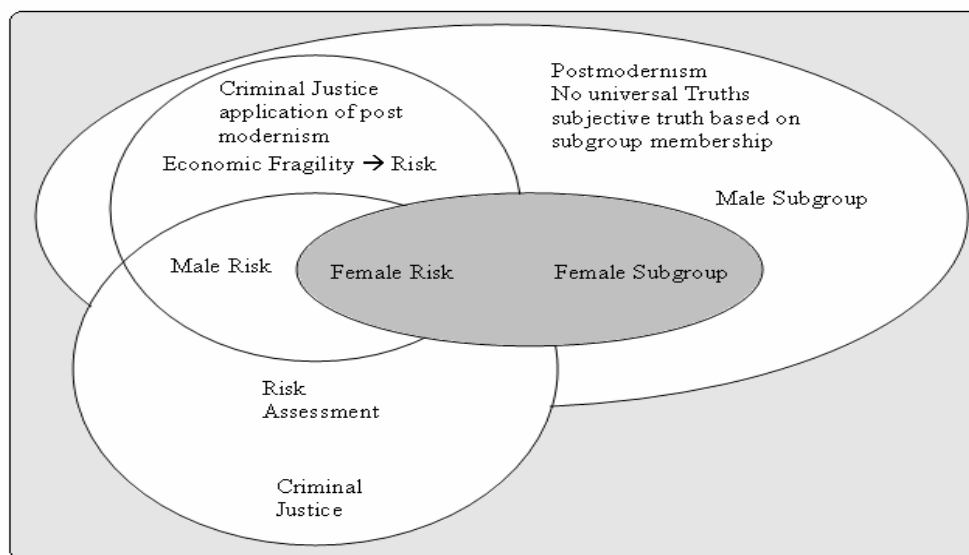


Figure 1: Feminist Criminology and Postmodernism

Postmodern Theoretical Framework

Postmodernism is an elusive term due, in large part, to its ubiquitous usage. A postmodern framework is widespread in the disciplines of political science, philosophy, geography, sociology, criminology, economics, architecture, art, film, fashion, and literature (Smart, 1993; Waugh, 1992). The relative newness of the term further complicates understanding of its meaning and implications. Introduced in or around the 1950s, postmodernism represents radical and controversial claims, many of which are antithetical to the contentions of science.

At the most basic level, postmodernism represents a break with the age of modernism. While it is difficult to determine an exact date for the start of modernism, the 18th century is generally accepted as marking the beginning of this era (Bolaito, 2003; Patterson, 2003; Sarup, 1989; Smart, 1993). Blomberg and Lucken (1998) characterize modernity as the “application of reason and science to discover singular truths in all areas concerning man, society, and science” (212). According to the modernist view, it is believed that just as one can understand the material world through the application of the scientific method, it is also possible to apply something similar to the study of humankind and social problems in an effort to achieve happiness for all (Hornsey, 1996). Lyotard (1984) maintains that complex societies have been undergoing a transition since the 1950s and are now in the midst of the postmodern age. Fundamental to the break from modernism, is the rejection of meta-narratives or grand theories, such as those espoused by Karl Marx, Freud, and the philosophers of the Enlightenment.

This view has been most famously expressed by Lyotard in *The Postmodern Condition*. In this important work, Lyotard questions the major assumptions of the modern age, in particular the beliefs of the Enlightenment. He maintains that meta-narratives universalize knowledge claims and fail to capture the unique experiences of the members of society. Lyotard (1984) claims that science has dominated the information landscape for quite some time, although the scientific discipline does not represent the totality of knowledge. Rather, scientific knowledge exists in addition to and in competition with narrative knowledge or subjective experiences (i.e. small narratives). Lyotard goes on to state that the scientific realm sees itself as the exclusive form of knowledge, but small narratives see themselves as one possible version among many.

An essential part of the “postmodern condition” is the creation of the risk society. Beck (1992) looks to specific symptoms of moving beyond modernism when he maintains that risks will increasingly become pervasive in everyday life. O’Malley (1998) describes the risk society as “a society which is organized in significant ways around the concept of risk and which increasingly governs its problems in terms of discourses and technologies of risk” (xi). In short, risk assessments will increasingly be employed in the risk society to minimize and control risks. The risk society has developed largely in response to economic insecurities as well as the threat of a global disaster (e.g., nuclear war and the threat of various diseases). The global nature of the economy has further contributed to insecurities by producing an economic climate where virtually no one has job security (Beck, 1998). These changes have greatly impacted society through the permanent marginalization of a segment of the population. This

“dangerous underclass” of offenders as described by Feeley and Simon (1992) is permanently disadvantaged, without skills, and without hope. Thus, for the criminal justice system, the dangerous underclass is not suitable for rehabilitation and must instead be managed and controlled for the safety of society. The discussion of the dangerous underclass, as well as the move away from rehabilitation is important because it is in these areas that postmodernism intersects with the punishment literature.

Postmodernism and Punishment

Postmodernism has manifested in the punishment literature as the new penology/risk penology or actuarialism. Over the last few decades, there has been an ostensible paradigm shift in the field of corrections with the grand narrative purportedly in crisis (Simon, 1993). According to Simon (1993), the meta-narrative is being challenged by some due to its inability to provide a solution to the problem of crime. With this perspective in mind, some scholars have argued that punishment is undergoing a transformation whereby new methods of controlling crime are being implemented (Feeley and Simon, 1992; Hannah-Moffat, 2000; Hudson, 1998; O'Malley, 1992; 1996; 1998; Rose and Valverde, 1998; Simon, 1993; 1994). Some analysts of penal trends suggest the nature of punishment has radically changed and a central feature of the change is a focus on risk management.

Claims of a radical transformation were first articulated by Bottoms (1980). Bottoms identified four salient trends in punishment that suggest the end of the modern age—the collapse of the rehabilitative ideal due to lack of effectiveness, the increased

reliance on custody and control, the lack of available resources, and the bifurcation of offenders (lesser offenders vs. serious offenders).

Feeley and Simon (1992) developed many of Bottoms' ideas in their “new penology” thesis. The concept of a “new penology” involves shifts in three areas: a new language highlighting probability and risk; new objectives for the system (e.g., efficiency and management); and new techniques that target groups instead of individuals. The “new” in the new penology refers to the shift away from individualism and the move toward classifying offenders into groups based on aggregate characteristics (e.g., age, offense, drug offenders, sex offenders, and youthful offenders) (Hudson, 1998). The new penology is linked to the postmodern movement because Feeley and Simon (1992) argue that currently, punishment is anti-rehabilitative. Because postmodernism is, at its core, a rejection of grand theories or narratives, postmodernism in punishment involves the rejection of punishment’s grand narrative of rehabilitation.

Under the framework of the new penology, there is a general recognition that “nothing works.” The optimism that characterized punishment after the Enlightenment is, according to Feeley and Simon, disappearing. Because of this, there is a clear focus on improving areas that can function, such as system efficiency and offender management (Feeley and Simon, 1992; Shichor, 1997). Where the focus of modern punishment was on individual factors relating to crime (social background, psychology, etc.), the focus of the new penology is on the management of dangerous groups (Alschuler, 2003; Feeley and Simon, 1992; Hudson, 1998; Simon, 1998). To facilitate the identification and management of dangerous offenders, actuarial analysis and other

statistical techniques (such as risk assessment instruments) are often utilized. Their purpose is to identify variants of risk and manage offenders accordingly. Further evidence of a break from the modern can be found in the "growing sense that little or nothing can be done to change offenders" (Simon, 1998: 454).

The proliferation of risk assessment is perpetuated by the constant fear of living in the risk society and questions of risk and risk assessment arise when individuals and institutions define potential negative outcomes and attach probabilities to the likelihood that those risks will be realized (Sparks, 2001). In punishment, risk generally refers to the risk of re-offending by the already convicted (Sparks, 2001) and the likelihood of re-offending is increasingly being determined by tools that utilize actuarial techniques to assess both risks and needs.

Actuarial techniques are concerned with the "statistical distribution of behaviors primarily in order to assess and predict their consequences for security, rather than their moral affront; and it seeks to develop ways of manipulating risk-bearing behaviors in order to increase security" (O'Malley, 1998: xii). While risk for violence and escape are both commonly employed risk measures at the institutional level, many correctional institutions utilize additional measures of risk including: 1) actuarial or predictive, 2) cost, and 3) professional judgment (Harer and Langan, 2001). The actuarial or predictive element of risk analyzes the inmates' background information to predict incidents of institutional misconduct. The cost component identifies a security level floor based on the potential for harm inside the institution and the potential danger to the public. Finally, the professional judgment component supplements the actuarial and cost

components through firsthand evaluations of risk for serious misconduct (Harer and Langan, 2001).

Risk assessment and classification through actuarial techniques has received much attention in the punishment literature. In the literature of penology, risk is centered on future behavior or the potential for re-offending. Risk assessment of dangerous populations, such as sex offenders has tended to dominate the risk literature (Abracen and Looman, 2005; Campbell, 2003; Craig, Browne, and Stringer, 2003; DeClue, 2002; Ferguson, Eidelson, and Witt, 1998; Janus and Prentk, 2003; Langstrom, 2004; Roberts, Doren, and Thornton, 2002; Simon, 1998; Stalans, Juergens, and Seng, 2004; Thornton, 2002). Additionally, many studies have examined the efficacy of actuarial instruments to determine appropriate levels of risk as well as classification designations for offenders in general (Gendreau, et al., 1996; Girard and Wormith, 2004; Harris, 1994; Proctor, 1994; Silver, Smith, and Banks, 2000; Simourd, 2004). Less frequently, questions of effectiveness and usefulness of actuarial tools have been examined for female offenders (Bonta et al., 1995; Coulson, Giorgio, Nutbrown, Giulekas, and Cudjoe, 1996; Funk, 1999; Hannah-Moffat, 1999; 2004; Harer and Langan, 2001; McShane et al., 2002; Webster and Doob, 2004).

The examination of broad punishment trends in the context of postmodernism has broadened our understanding of penal functions and effects particularly as it relates to the concept of risk. While these examinations have aided in the understanding of our system, interesting questions emerge when we examine these trends under a gender-based lens. According to Hannah-Moffat (2004), there is an absence of research as to how to assess

women's risk to reflect the gendered nature of female offenders' experiences. A risk framework for female offenders poses questions as to whether or not risk has a different meaning and function for female and male offenders supervised in the community. These questions center on the following: 1) How does the practice of classification and supervision in penal systems appear by gender? 2) Are gender differences in penal assessments valid in view of the different risks that male and female offenders pose to the community? and 3) Do different trends in the practice of classification and supervision translate into differential management practices for male and female offenders? A framework that illustrates the possibilities for risk interpretation in female penalty draws from the feminist theoretical framework.

Feminist Theoretical Framework

Feminism is both a set of theories about the oppression of women and a set of strategies designed to foster social change (Daly and Chesney-Lind, 1988). At its most basic level, feminism embodies the desire to examine the conditions that are unique to the lives of women and to gain an understanding of the subordination, oppression, and marginalization of women in most areas of society (Jackson and Jones, 1998). Implicit in this framework is the belief that women are discriminated against solely on the basis of their gender (Delmar, 1994; Messerschmidt, 1993) and that women have specific needs in the social, economic and political arenas. To ensure that these unmet needs are satisfied and parity in these areas is achieved, feminist theory asserts that major societal changes are needed (Delmar, 1994).

While there are a multitude of feminist theories, four major types are identified by researchers as being the most representative. Most researchers identify liberal, Marxist, radical, and socialist feminism as being the dominant theoretical frameworks (Daly and Chesney-Lind, 1988; Jaggar, 1983; Walklate, 2001). These categories are far from exhaustive and other types of feminism include women of color, psychoanalytical, existential, postmodern, gynocentric, multi cultural, lesbian separatists, anarcho-feminists, Freudian feminists, eco-feminists, radical women of color, and French post-structuralist feminists (Blake, 1998; Jaggar, 1983; Kensinger, 1997; Sommers, 1990). In addition to these major categories, many feminist theories can be broken down into smaller subcategories. For example, liberal feminism can be broken down into classical liberals and welfare liberals (Tong, 1989) or traditional liberals and contemporary liberals (Jaggar, 1983). Feminist theory is further complicated because many of the philosophical categories overlap. The distinctions between liberal, socialist, and radical feminism are more ambiguous than these typologies would appear to indicate. None of these frameworks is perfect as each has its own methodological strength and weakness in the analysis of gender (Tong, 1989:1).

Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism, which finds its origins in social contract theory (Jaggar, 1983), is probably the most widely recognized mode of feminist thought (Kourany, Sterba, and Tong, 1999). According to Kourany et al. (1999), “the overall claim of liberal feminists is that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal restraints that block

women's entrance and/or success in the public world" (310). An essential element of liberal feminism is the demand that the principles of liberty and equality be applied to women (Jaggar, 1983). Consequently, a great deal of political work has been focused on the pursuit of legal rights (Jaggar, 1983; Walklate, 2001). This type of feminism was brought to the forefront in the political arena during the 1960's and, like the civil rights movement, demanded equality and sought to end discrimination on the basis of sex (Messerschmidt, 1993).

The origins of gender inequality are not expressly stated in a liberal feminist framework, but they are assumed to stem from society's exclusion of women in intellectual, physical, and public endeavors (Daly and Chesney-Lind, 1988). Liberal feminism is, in a sense, married to the type of liberalism advocated by Rawls (1971). At the heart of Rawlsian liberalism is the notion that the goods of society should be distributed equally. Furthermore, societal goods should not be distributed based on morally irrelevant features such as gender and race. While the concepts of freedom, justice and equality are espoused in both liberalism and liberal feminism, some feminist thinkers have been quick to point out that many prominent liberal philosophers are silent on injustices related to gender (Graham, 2000).

The usefulness of a liberal feminist framework is not limited to political endeavors, as it is also associated with a particular methodological position—feminist empiricism (Walklate, 2001). The term feminist empiricism is attributed to Sandra Harding, who proposed it as a possible solution to the problem of how research can be made more scientific, instead of allegedly value-neutral (Tanesini, 1999). A central

feature of feminist empiricism is the belief that the rules of science are sound, but it is the application of these rules that result in gender biased research (Tanesini, 1999; Walklate, 2001). Consequently, it is presumed that bad scientific work will produce sexist empirical work (Walklate, 2001). Thus, feminist empiricists work within the traditional rules of science and view good science as self-correcting (Cosgrove, 2003). In an effort to correct bad science, feminist empiricists have sought to include female subjects in research and have sought to include women as researchers (Walklate, 2001).

Marxist, Radical, and Socialist Feminism

Many of the contemporary feminist theories have defined themselves in reaction to liberal feminism (Tong, 1989). Liberal feminists insist that the solution to gender injustice requires us to "first, to make the rules of the game fair and, second, to make certain that none of the runners in the race for society's goods and services is systematically disadvantaged" (Tong, 1989: 2). Marxist feminism does not see this as a feasible solution to gender bias and instead focuses on the problems inherent in the class-based system. Marxist feminists do not believe that all women will be relegated to the same lower status. Rather, bourgeois women will be afforded higher status than proletarian women (Tong, 1989). In this way, the class struggle is believed to be more important than the struggle of women. Ultimately, Marxist feminists believe that once the class system is abolished and the struggle is won, gender discrimination will be a thing of the past (Jaggar, 1983).

Instead of focusing on social conditions that relegate women to a lower status, radical feminism focuses on the role of patriarchy in the oppression of women (Walklate, 2001). While most radical feminists agree that “women are the most oppressed group in history” (Sommers, 1990) and that men are the oppressors, there are significant differences of opinion about “how and why this was done, or whether women are a class, a caste, ... a colonized group or a fourth world” (Brooke, 1980). Radical feminism is seen to be a minority movement within the larger feminist movement because men have been named the oppressor and the goal of many radical feminists is to end male supremacy (Brooke, 1980). There is some difficulty in performing that goal, however. Most radical feminists acknowledge that oppression cannot be removed by modifying the economic system or even abolishing the class system (Sommers, 1990).

Finally, socialist feminism is a combination of radical feminism and Marxist feminism. Implicit in the socialist feminist perspective is the desire to see gender abolished as a meaningful category (Jaggar, 1983). Socialist feminism is an "outgrowth of Marxist feminist dissatisfaction with the gender-blind concept of class" (Gelsthorpe, 2002: 114). Ultimately, socialist feminists believe that class and gender play an equal role in explaining women's discrimination.

Like radical feminism, socialist feminism believes that the patriarchy is a contributing factor to women's inequality. In the movement's seminal phase numerous attempts were made to identify the relationship between class, gender, patriarchy and capitalism in maintenance of women's inferior social status (Hoggart, 2000). Where radical feminism acknowledges the existence of a patriarchal system, the socialist

feminist believes that capitalism and patriarchy are deeply intertwined. Some feminist thinkers have coined the phrase “capitalist patriarchy” to emphasize the interconnectedness of capitalism and male supremacy (Eisenstein, 1999).

Upon examination, it becomes apparent that liberal feminism has had the most significant impact on criminology (Walklate, 2001). Examinations of bias and discrimination in the criminal justice system have informed a wealth of research (Walklate, 2001:42), including studies that examine whether women receive harsher or lesser sentences than their male counterparts (Boritch, 1992; Crawford, 2000; Dominelli, 1984; Kruttschnitt, 1981; MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001; Nagel and Johnson, 1994; Spohn and Beichner, 2000). Other research has included women in historical examinations of imprisonment (Bosworth, 2000; Dobash, Dobash, and Gutteridge, 1986; Freedman, 1986; Rafter, 1985).

Feminism and Criminology

Criminology has been, for the most part, decidedly focused on male offenders. Women as objects of study had been excluded from the criminological literature until feminist scholars of the 1970s began to pose gender questions (Adler, 1975; Daly and Chesney-Lind, 1988; Messerschmidt, 1993; Naffine, 1996; 2001; Simon, 1975; Smart, 1977). Though a gender-based body of literature has been long in the making since that time, examinations of women, crime, and punishment have typically been peripheral in the criminological literature (Comack, 1999; Flavin, 2001; Naffine, 2001). Early feminist criminologists set out to "question some of the gender-blind assumptions within

criminology and to create a space for women's voices and experiences" (Gelsthorpe, 2002: 112). The inclusion of women in the criminological literature has typically taken two forms—examination of women as victims and examination of women as offenders. The victimization of women has received considerable attention in the literature and has served as the foundation of feminist criminology (Comack, 1999). A variety of studies have examined the causes, prevalence and impact of domestic abuse (Crowell and Burgess, 1996; Fagan and Browne, 1994; Felson and Burchfield, 2004; Lauritsen and Schaum, 2004; Smith, 1990), as well as the various policies and practices of both police and prosecutors (Hinch, 1985; Roberts and Mohr, 1994; Ursel, 1991; Valverde, MacLeod and Johnson, 1995). The focus on women as victims has been helpful in moving important issues, such as domestic violence and abuse, to the forefront of criminological examination, but there has been less of a focus on women as offenders in the literature.

If we examine women as offenders in the criminological literature, it becomes apparent that a cohesive body of literature is only now emerging. A review of the available research reveals that many feminist studies are heavily empirical and not linked to current theoretical debates (Howe, 1994; Naffine, 1996). Nevertheless, a variety of researchers have examined the treatment of females under correctional supervision. Carlen and Worrall (2004) note three major views of female offenders that have shaped their treatment in the correctional system. First, female offenders who commit crimes are doubly deviant—they have broken the law and they have somehow broken with their womanhood. In short, female offenders are bad citizens and “unnatural women.” This view was first put forth in Carlen’s (1983) analysis of the imprisonment of women in

Scotland. Carlen notes that female offenders are disciplined in ways that differ from males. She notes that discriminatory practices in both sentencing and punishment are in place because female offenders have not only broken the law, but they are also wives and mothers who have stepped out of place (Carlen, 1983). Carlen and Worrall also note that prison systems continually medicalize female offenders and female offenders are seen as having inferior physical and mental capabilities, compared to male prisoners. The final view speaks to the familial status of female offenders and prison systems typically draw attention to different types of programming that prisons can employ to limit the damage done to families of incarcerated women. These assumptions about female offenders can lead to problems because female inmates are subjected to all the same physical constraints as male offenders, but they are continually psychologically constrained by the disciplines of feminization, domestication, and medicalization (Carlen and Worrall, 2004).

Despite the growing body of woman-centered literature, feminist concerns still remain peripheral in research and system operations. Because of this, many feminist criminologists have called for the inclusion of female offenders in mainstream research studies as well as equality within the system. Worrall (2002) notes that this search for equivalence within the system has had some unfortunate side effects for female offenders, most notably in the willingness to deny that there are any gender differences, especially in the area of victimization. Women are much more likely to be the victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and other forms of victimization, but some empirical evidence has been put forth that men are also victims of abuse, with some studies citing

equal rates of victimization for men and women (Farrell, 1999; McNeely and Robinson-Simpson, 1987; Straus, 1997). However, more methodologically rigorous studies reveal that women are still overwhelmingly victimized by men (Saunders, 2002). Despite this, the current view holds that if “women are no longer victims of gender-specific oppressions, such as domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse, because men are also victims of these things, then there is no need for gender-specific approaches to these offenses after all and certainly no need for gender-specific ways of dealing with offenders” (Worrall, 2002: 49). This view is problematic because Hedderman and Gelsthorpe (1997) note that equality in the system depends, in large part, on people in similar circumstances receiving comparable treatment by the system, but it must be recognized that in the majority of cases, men and women do not appear in the criminal justice system under similar circumstances. It is widely noted that female offenders suffer various forms of victimization at far greater rates compared to the male offender population (FCC, 1999; Human Rights Watch, 1996; USDJ, 1996; United States General Accounting Office, 1999). Additionally, the rates of violent offenses committed by female offenders are far lower than rates of violence among male offenders (FBI, 2004). Once inside prison, there is substantial evidence to indicate that women have much less serious institutional infractions and are not prone to violent outbursts (Carlen and Worrall, 2004; Harer and Langan, 2001). In short, the majority of female offenders are quite different from male offenders and not part of the dangerous underclass as described by Feeley and Simon (1992).

It is in the examination of the unique characteristics of female offenders that discussions of risk and risk assessment emerge, particularly in the tools of classification and categorization. According to Worrall (2002), the denial of sex differences in offending has been used to justify the use of gender neutral classification tools, such as the LSI-R, Salient Factor Score (SFS), and the Wisconsin Case Classification Instrument.² However, Morash et al. (1998) report that the most common penal management problem is in the area of female offender classification. Penal administrators generally state that classification procedures fail to provide salient information for female offenders and fail to match needs with programming.

Of the available research, most has focused on the ability of gender neutral assessment tools to classify female inmates (Bonta et al., 1995; Farr, 2000; Funk, 1999; Harer and Langan 2001; Holsinger, Lowenkamp, and Latessa, 2003; McShane et al., 2002; Van Voorhis and Presser, 2001). With one notable exception (Hannah-Moffat, 1999), the risk literature has not focused on gender bias in the classification and supervision of women under correctional supervision. This empirical void is problematic because there is some evidence to suggest that risk does not operate the same for female offenders and male offenders. Hannah-Moffat (1999), for example, found that risks and needs are often confounded, meaning that female inmates with high needs are often treated as though they are high risk.

² These classification tools measure a variety of criminogenic areas to determine the likelihood that an offender will engage in antisocial behavior in the future.

Clearly the institutional risks posed by female offenders are different from their male counterparts; nevertheless, very few states have taken this into consideration and integrated these differences into classification systems. According to Farr (2000), the majority of state and federal prisons utilize the same, “gender neutral”, risk classification instrument when making security level decisions for male and female inmates. Farr also asserts the women have been shown to exhibit low institutional and community risk and that many factors that are salient risk predictors for men do not accurately predict risk for female inmates. Van Voorhis and Presser (2001) suggest that risk/custody assessment is considered by all states to be the foundation of their classification systems; however, in four states the classification instruments were developed exclusively for men and 39 states consider the instrument to be gender neutral. In addition, most states have not validated the classification/custody instruments on samples of female inmates. Van Voorhis and Presser’s (2001) findings point to three areas of concern regarding the classification of women offenders: 1) Overclassification of female inmates, 2) Inadequate classification systems that fail to meet the goals set for female inmates, and 3) Invalid or inaccurate classification systems for female inmates. Similarly, findings from Webster and Doob (2004) suggest that many female inmates are overclassified and assigned to custody levels that far exceed the actual level of risk posed by the inmates. As a result, current classification systems cannot claim to have predictive validity for female inmates, as they fail to measure variables that are salient for the female inmate population and are often not validated on samples of women. Perhaps even more pressing, given the

distribution of sanctions, is the role of risk in the classification and supervision of female offenders in the community corrections setting.

In conclusion, this chapter has introduced two theoretical frameworks which inform discussions of risk and female offenders. The postmodern theoretical framework highlights the shift in punishment away from largely rehabilitative aims, toward a reliance on risk assessment instruments to identify, manage, and control dangerous offenders. The feminist theoretical framework focuses on the medicalization, sexualization, infantilization, and domestication of female offenders that often leads to differential treatment by the criminal justice system. These two frameworks intersect and shape the examination of risk in the classification and supervision of women in the community corrections setting.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

While most female offenders receive a sentence of probation (Greenfeld and Snell, 1999), literature on risk and female offenders typically centers on the female prison inmate population. Within this literature, there are three major categories. These categories include theoretical evaluations, applied evaluations, and integrative studies that merge both theory and practice. Applied studies focusing on the ability of risk assessment instruments to classify and predict recidivism for female inmates and parolees have tended to dominate the risk literature and only minimal attention has been paid to theoretical evaluations and integrative studies.

Theoretical Evaluations

Hannah-Moffat (2005) suggests that risk plays a role in penalty and her analysis of the influence of risk on subgroups of offenders demonstrates that the concept of risk is ambiguous, fractured, and flexible. Hannah-Moffat asserts that actuarial risk assessment tools and techniques tend to confound risk and need factors, causing need factors to be redefined as risk factors. This phenomenon has led to the development of a hybrid system whereby risks and needs are essentially fused together. Actuarial approaches represent a new way of thinking about need, which could adversely affect certain populations of offenders, particularly those with many unmet needs. Because female

offenders typically fall into this category, they may be disadvantaged under the new system more than any other group.

Hannah-Moffat (2005) notes that under the new hybridized system of risks and needs, only those needs that can be identified fully by correctional intervention will be addressed. In other words, needs which are situated in broader social inequities will likely not receive attention by the system, no matter how beneficial such intervention might be for the offender. For female offenders this means that needs related to children, past abuse, and trauma are addressed only as those needs relate to female inmates' criminal offenses. Female offender needs, in turn, are then treated only as therapeutic targets when they are statistically related to recidivism and/or subject to available correctional programs. This is problematic because it has been widely noted that correctional programming is lacking in the gender specific areas of children, past abuse, and trauma.

Applied Evaluations

The objective assessment and classification of offenders is increasingly becoming an integral part of both institutional and community supervision and intervention (Holsinger et al., 2003). An important method of actuarial risk/need assessment involves the use of an instrument, such as the Level of Service Inventory Revised (LSI-R) (Andrews and Bonta, 1995). The LSI-R measures ten criminogenic areas to determine an individuals' tendency to commit future antisocial behavior. The validity of the LSI-R has been supported by a number of empirical studies (Bonta and Motiuk, 1987; Coulson et

al., 1996; Girard and Wormith, 2004; Hollin and Palmer, 2003; Lowenkamp, Holsinger, and Latessa, 2000; Loza and Simourd, 1994; Motiuk, Motiuk, and Bonta, 1992; Simourd, 2004; Simourd and Bruce, 1998), but this research has, for the most part, only been tested on male offender populations.

Research on risk assessment and female offenders is now beginning to emerge, with only a few empirical studies having been conducted. Of particular interest in the literature is the applicability of “gender neutral” risk assessment tools, such as the LSI-R to accurately predict risk, recidivism, and likelihood of institutional violence among female offenders. Many researchers question the ability of objective risk classification tools to accurately classify female offenders because risk scales have been developed and tested almost exclusively on male offenders (Bonta et al., 1995: 281). This is problematic, critics contend, because female offenders have markedly different risk factors than their male counterparts, making these risk instruments only minimally relevant for women (Brennan, 1998; Farr, 2000; Hardyman, 2001; Harer and Langan, 2001; Morash et al., 1998).

The available research concludes that risk assessment tools perform an adequate job of predicting likelihood of violence and recidivism, but the numbers of females are so small and the rates of violence among women are equally small that it is very difficult to assess the validity of these instruments. Examples of these tools are the Salient Factor Score (SFS), the Wisconsin Case Classification Instrument, the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R), and the Statistical Information on Recidivism scale (Bonta et al., 1995). While the literature on these tools indicates they can accurately predict

recidivism, violence, and risk objectively for male offenders (Andrews and Bonta, 1998), there is some difficulty in applying those results to the female offender population. There has been very little validation research to determine if risk classification instruments can be applied to female offenders (Bonta et al., 1995). Consequently it is unknown if these tools can produce fair and objective treatment of female inmates. The following assess the predictive validity of “gender neutral” risk assessment and classification tools for female offenders.

Bonta, Pang, and Wallace-Capretta (1995) conducted an empirical investigation on the SIR scale, which is used in Canada to help facilitate parole release decisions for female offenders. Prior to this evaluation, the SIR scale had only been validated on male offenders. The researchers gathered a sample of Canadian federally sentenced inmates and performed two studies. The first study examined the validity of the SIR scale for female offenders. Results from the first study generally indicated that the tool was unable to predict recidivism for the female inmates. Specifically, the researchers found only two of the items, age at first adult conviction and sentence length, accurately predicted recidivism. However, the results from this study were problematic because not all of the items in the scale could be measured due to the infrequency of their occurrence. For example, violent sexual offenses and parole violations could not be measured because no women in the study had a history of either.

The second phase of this study included the use of semi-structured interviews with 173 women. The purpose of this phase of the research was to assess needs relating to child rearing and victimization, two salient factors that are not included on the SIR

scale. Findings revealed that single mothers had a much higher rate of recidivism compared to mothers who reported having a partner (51 percent vs. 22 percent respectively). When victimization was examined, the researchers found that a history of physical abuse was statistically related to reoffending, but the relationship was inverted. Specifically, only 35.4 percent of women with a history of adult abuse recidivated compared to 66.7 percent for those denying abuse.

Bonta et al. (1995) found that within 3 years, less than half (46%) of the women who were predicted to be at risk had committed a new offense and 12 women were returned to prison on a technical violation. Overall, the researchers concluded that the SIR scale was not a particularly useful tool in predicting recidivism for female offenders. The lack of predictive validity was attributed to poor differentiation of risk among many of the categories as well as the numerous items that occurred too infrequently in the female offenders studied to be relevant as the reason for their conclusions. This study underscores the importance of including relevant factors for women on risk assessment tools. Because sexual offenses occur so infrequently among female offenders, it may not be the most relevant variable to analyze in determining risk of reoffending for female offenders. Thus, far more accurate predictions could undoubtedly be made through the inclusion of pertinent risk and need factors for women.

In an effort to determine the predictive validity of another risk assessment tool Couslon, Ilacqua, Nutbrown, Giulekas and Cudjoe (1996) examined the Level of Service Inventory (LSI) on incarcerated female offenders. The researchers administered the LSI to 526 female offenders and evaluated three major areas. These areas included 1 and 2

year recidivism, parole failure, and halfway house noncompliance. Overall, the average LSI score for females was much lower, compared to the average score of male offenders. This finding is not surprising given the differences in criminality between males and females.

In terms of predictive utility, the researchers found that the LSI was able to predict both parole failure and halfway house noncompliance. In both of these areas, high risk offenders recidivated at nearly 3 times the rate of low risk offenders after one year. High risk offenders were also more likely to fail while on parole and in a halfway house, compared to low risk offenders. Given these findings, the researchers noted that the LSI is robust enough to accurately predict risk and dangerousness among different populations.

The vast majority of research relating to risk and female offenders has been conducted in institutional settings. To address this gap in the literature, Funk (1999) examined the use of risk assessment tools on juvenile female offenders under community supervision. The researcher drew a random sample of juvenile males placed on formal probation or referred to DJJ and examined all female cases placed on formal probation or referred to DJJ during 1993. The result was a total sample of 388 male cases and 112 female cases. A variety of risk factors were examined for the males and females that included offense type, family factors, school factors, and substance abuse.

Results indicated that general risk assessment tools could not perform an adequate job at predicting female risk for the sample under study. Funk noted that the instruments accounted for less variance in female offending and also failed to identify most female

risk factors. The findings revealed that an instrument developed specifically for female offenders could predict a juvenile's chance at reoffending more than twice as well as an instrument that combines male and female factors.

In response to the growing need for empirical data on risk classification tools and their applicability to female offenders in the United States, Harer and Langan (2001) sought to evaluate the accuracy of gender neutral risk assessment tools to predict violence among women in prison. The researchers drew from federally sentenced inmates from 1991 through 1998 and the resulting sample consisted of 24,765 women and 177,767 men. Demographic data and offense data were compared with records of prison violence and the researchers found that the same risk assessment tool could predict likelihood of violence with a fair degree of accuracy, but the results suggested that the nature of the violence is very different for men and women. Additionally, in almost every violence category, the mean rate of female violence was far lower than male violence, with the exception of the less serious fighting category, whereby the mean rates for men and women were almost equal.

Harer and Langan's (2001) findings indicate that the rate of institutional violence committed by females is far lower than their male counterparts in the following categories: killing or attempting, assault more serious, weapon possession, fighting, threatening bodily harm, and assault less serious. Based on these findings, Harer and Langan concluded that while existing classification tools appear to perform an adequate job at classifying female offenders, a gender specific risk instrument would be both worthwhile and beneficial. Much like Bonta et al. (1995), Harer and Langan (2001) also

noted that the small numbers of female offenders as well as their low rates of violent offending might adversely affect the ability of researchers to gather data in this area.

While previous research has examined the applicability of gender neutral risk assessment instruments to the female offender population, relatively few studies have examined the statewide classification and supervision policies and practices of correctional departments. To address this gap in the literature, Van Voorhis and Presser (2001) conducted a national telephone survey of state departments of correction to determine practices used in the classification of female offenders. The results of the survey were similar to Morash et al. (1998), as Van Voorhis and Presser found that despite numerous reported problems with classification systems for women, 39 states used the same instrument for both male offenders and female offenders. Additionally, few states reported use of a system that measured needs in a gender responsive manner despite the large body of literature which indicates that men and women have vastly different needs. Many states indicated that their current system overclassified female offenders and as a result correctional officials were required to override classification decisions. In total, representatives from 10 states indicated that they used classification overrides in more than 15 percent of their scores, although the actual rates ranged from 18 to 70 percent of cases. These results indicate that for at least 20 percent of state correctional agencies, existing classification systems are not working for female offenders.

McShane, Williams, and Dolny (2002) conducted an empirical investigation of risk assessment tools utilized in decisions to grant parole to female offenders. The

researchers drew a random sample of parolees that included 546 females. The primary question posed by the researchers was: does a classification system designed for males work for female offenders? Risk classification instruments used in parole decisions are the same instruments utilized in other areas of corrections, with the Wisconsin model and the LSI being the most commonly employed. The instruments were designed and tested with mostly male offender samples and there has been little research conducted to test their applicability to female offenders. With this in mind, the researchers evaluated the effectiveness of a gender neutral model to predict success or failure while on parole. Following this, the researchers also tested a female specific risk assessment instrument to determine its accuracy.

The researchers found that women were more likely to succeed on parole compared to their male counterparts. Specifically, over half of the female parolees had not returned to prison following release on parole, compared to only 41 percent of males. These results do call into question the ability of gender neutral risk assessment instruments to accurately predict success and failure on parole. Given this concern the researchers compared a newly developed female specific risk assessment instrument using samples of males and females. The female specific risk assessment instrument did not perform any better than the traditional instrument, leading the researchers to conclude that male tested instruments do not do any particular harm to female offenders.

Webster and Doob (2004) sought to determine the predictive validity of the Custody Rating Scale (CRS) for federally sentenced female offenders in Canada. Much like other nations, Canada has instituted the use of objective risk assessment tools to

determine initial security classification for offenders in prison. The researchers utilized findings published by the Correctional Service of Canada to determine the instruments utility in making risk decisions.

The researchers examined the CRS in its entirety and found that overall the scale does have significant predictive capability for female offenders. Specifically, the researchers found a significant linear relationship between custody level and number of incidents in the institution. That is to say, female offenders assigned to low security levels tend to have fewer institutional incidents compared to females at higher security designations. While the scale does have predictive utility in general, the researchers noted that this did not hold true for all types of offenders. When the researchers examined Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal offenders separately, they noted the instrument was not accurate. An examination of incident reports revealed that the rates of institutional incidents for Aboriginal offenders were virtually identical at each security classification.³

Additional problems with the CRS instrument were found when the researchers examined the Security Risk subscale and several of the individual items of the instrument. The researchers noted an overall correlation between Security Risk score and institutional instruments, but when Aboriginal women were examined, the correlation did not hold. When the 28 individual scale items were examined, it was found that half (14) of the items had very low correlations with institutional incidents and one item had zero

³ For example, misconduct rates for Aboriginal women at minimum security were approximately 28.6% vs. 26.8% for Aboriginal women classified as medium security.

correlation for Aboriginal inmates. Furthermore, three additional items (current offense, most serious outstanding charge, and age) were found to be negative predictors.

Therefore, offenders with high scores in each category were actually less likely to have institutional incidents. It should be noted, however, that these relationships were not statistically significant.

The CRS may appear to accurately predict institutional risk in general, but when different types of female offenders are considered the predictive utility of the instrument appears to break down. Specifically, the instrument was unable to accurately predict risk for different subgroups of female offenders, most notably aboriginal women. Findings from Webster and Doob are important because they demonstrate that risk assessment tools, which may appear valid on their face, may not accurately predict risk for all subgroups of female offenders.

More recently, Schwalbe, Fraser, and Day (2007) examined the predictive validity of a revised version of the North Carolina Assessment of Risk (NCAR). The NCAR is a relatively short instrument utilized by juvenile courts to predict risk and recidivism for male and female juvenile offenders.⁴ To expand the scope of the instrument, the researchers added five additional measures for psychological risk, family criminal history, and responsivity.⁵ To examine the predictive validity of the newly revised

⁴ The NCAR contains only 9 items that measure past offenses, substance abuse, truancy, and running away from home.

⁵ Responsivity holds that offenders are unique and will respond differently to various correctional interventions. Implicit in the concept of responsivity is the matching of treatment to the learning styles of offenders (Crow, 2004: 64).

instrument, the researchers gathered assessment and follow-up data on 590 youths (approximately 68% of the sample was male).

While the revised instrument did lead to better predictive capabilities for offenders in the general, the researchers noted gender differences in the predictive validity of some items of the revised instrument. For the most part, traditional static and dynamic risk factors were able to predict risk and recidivism for male offenders, but for female offenders, there was a significant interaction effect between length of time in out-of-home placement and dynamic risk. Specifically, as the length of time in out-of-home placement increased, dynamic risk factors became less relevant predictors of risk and recidivism for female offenders. The authors note that this finding is most likely due to the system's allocation of out-of-home placements for high risk female offenders only.

Findings from this evaluation run contrary to previous research in this area. The authors note that the gender neutral NCAR instrument may be a valid prediction instrument for male and female offenders, however findings from Funk (1999) note that a female specific instrument had far more predictive validity than gender neutral tools. Noticeably absent from the revised instrument evaluated by Schwalbe et al., (2007) are measures of abuse (both physical and sexual), that are salient in the female offender population. Consequently, it is unknown how such variables would influence risk predictions. Additionally, this study examined juvenile offenders, thus is unknown if the findings can be generalized to the adult offender population.

Norland and Mann's (1984) study of gender differences in violation of probation (VOP) reports is the first to examine the possible gendered nature of supervision in the

community. Norland and Mann examined 339 violation reports to assess whether there were gender differences in the type and likelihood of VOP's. The researchers also conducted interviews with probation officers to identify possible reasons for gender differences in VOP's, as well as gender differences in supervision difficulty.

The total number of VOP's filed by officers was quite low for both genders, with only 322 reports filed for male offenders and 17 for female offenders over a three year period. The researchers note that probation officers were pressured to keep violation rates low for all offenders because institutional overcrowding prevented prison placement for all but the most serious offenders. Despite the low rate of VOPS's for both genders, male offenders were more likely than female offenders to incur violations. In addition to a higher rate of violations among males, the nature of the violations was also different among offenders, with males being much more likely than females to commit new offenses while on community supervision. In contrast, most of the violations incurred by female offenders were technical in nature.

When asked to explain the gender differences in VOP's, probation officers noted that they were reluctant to issue violations for female offenders because they typically have family responsibilities. Paternalistic beliefs toward women also factored into the low rates of violations filed by officers. One respondent stated that s/he was less willing to violate a woman because "men are stronger than women ... you see them as little creatures, real delicate" (125)

Next, officers were asked to explain why women on probation are troublesome. The researchers noted two themes in the responses. First, female offenders tend to take

up more of the correctional officers time, compared to male offenders. One respondent stated that “they [female offenders] are more oriented toward telling all their problems, in great depth, regardless of how minor they might be” (128). In contrast, contact with male offenders tended to be shallow and brief. Probation officers also noted that female offenders have more complicated problems than their male counterparts. For both of these reasons, probation officers generally stated that they prefer to work with male offenders.

In summary, findings from Norland and Mann (1984) support the idea that supervision can be gender based. Both the frequency and type of VOP issued was different for male and female offenders. Additionally, probation officers noted gender differences in supervision difficulty. Though this study is dated, it represents a first step in examining how gender can shape the supervision of offenders in the community.

More recently, Seng and Lurigio (2005) examined probation officers’ perceptions about the risks and needs of female offenders and the difficulties associated with the supervision of women on probation. The researchers administered a brief survey to probation officers (n=224) in Cook County, Chicago and conducted in-depth telephone interviews with 30 probation officers. First, probation officers were asked if they believed that male and female probationers had different needs. Most officers (71%) believed female offenders presented different needs than their male counterparts, particularly in the areas of parenting, employment, abusive relationships, and substance abuse. Next, officers in the telephone interview were asked if they felt prepared to address the needs of female probationers in the following areas: finances, housing,

medical health, substance abuse, domestic violence, and education/employment. Most officers stated that they did not feel prepared to deal with the financial, housing, and medical needs of female offenders. However, about half of the officers believed that they were at least somewhat prepared to address mental health problems and most felt prepared to deal with needs relating to domestic violence, substance abuse and education/employment.

The researchers also addressed perceptions of offender risk by asking officers if they believed that female probationers were more, less, or equally likely to violate their conditions of probation, compared to male probationers. Most officers (61%) believed that male and female offenders presented equal risks in this area, 23% believed that women were less likely than men to violate, and 15% believed that females were more likely than men to violate conditions of supervision. Officers were also asked to identify the most frequent types of probation violations incurred by female offenders and slightly over half (51%) cited failure to report. The remaining categories included: new arrests (34%), drug use (22%), failure to comply with special conditions (20%), and failure to pay fees or restitution (12%). Finally, officers were asked whether the nature of probation violations was different for men and women. Officers generally stated that the types of violations committed by men and women were the same, but the motivations behind the violations were often different.

Finally, the researchers measured gender differences in supervision difficulty by asking probation officers whether female offenders presented more or less supervision difficulty, compared to male offenders. Over half of the officers (55%) stated that female

offenders were harder to supervise, 7% rated female offenders as being easier to supervise, and 38% believed that the level of difficulty between male and female offenders was about the same. Among the officers who believed that female probationers were harder to supervise, most cited issues relating to parenting, addiction, and personal problems as explanations for the perceived difference. Additionally, a few officers noted that females tend to be more aggressive and have “more attitude” than male offenders. Responses from officers in the telephone interview were similar, as officers mentioned the following reasons for the increased supervision difficulty of female probationers: multiple problems (17%), more emotional (12%), difficulty in keeping appointments (11%), more manipulative (9%), more resistant (8%), require more time/attention (4%).

Results from this study suggest that men and women present different risks and needs while on probation and gender can influence the perceived level of supervision difficulty. While this study represents an important contribution to the literature, more research is needed in this area. Given that risk and need encompass more than probation violations and program referrals, an expanded analysis of how gender shapes classification decisions, such as the decision to override a classification instrument score is still absent from the literature. Additionally, it is unknown how issues such as communication, lying, and aggression influence the perceived level of supervision difficulty for both male and female offenders in the community corrections setting.

Integrative Studies

To varying degrees, the language of risk is present in the criminal justice system, but there is no indication that risk assessment is an objective activity. Hannah-Moffat (1999) argues that risk is gendered and often the needs of female offenders are simultaneously treated as risks. In her examination of a Canadian risk assessment tool, Hannah-Moffat provides a convincing argument for the gendered nature of risk assessment. She found that two of the central elements of the assessment tool, case manager recommendation and prior involvement with the system, were highly subjective. Case managers could override recommendations derived from the risk assessment if they deemed it necessary. It was argued that prior involvement in the system, a seemingly objective variable, was quite subjective. She noted that past involvements, "are often the outcome of a series of legal and normative processes which are arguably quite subjective" (81).

Additional problems stemmed from the tendency of correctional officials to confound needs, many of which are unique to female offenders, and risks. For example, dependency, low self-esteem, substance abuse, and parental responsibilities were often viewed as both needs and criminogenic risks. This slippage between needs and risks presents a serious problem for female offenders and can lead to differential treatment. An examination of a correctional policy developed to deal with risky and needy offenders revealed that there was "no difference between the management of women who are considered high risk due to violence and women who are high need because of mental health problems" (87). Much like other empirical studies of the new penology, Hannah-

Moffat concluded that new forms of actuarial penalty have not replaced the old penalty. Instead these two forms of penalty "co-exist in a highly unstable and unpredictable network of penal powers" (89).

Hannah-Moffat (2004) summarized findings from three studies in which 90 practitioners were asked about the role of gender in the assessment of risk and need. Additionally, correctional officials were asked how risk is assessed for women in the absence of gender specific guidelines and assessment tools. During interviews in each of the studies, correctional officials indicated that they believed that female and minority prisoners generally had different needs and those needs warranted the use of specific risk/needs instruments for those groups. Officials believed that a separate risk tool for female inmates was necessary for three major reasons: 1) A tool was needed to capture the complexity and stability of women's relationships as well as personal and emotional issues; 2) Current instruments contained risk criteria largely based on male offenders; 3) Current instruments failed to include information relevant for female inmates (e.g., victimization, personal relationship, and children issues).

In reaction to the perceived failure of risk tools to apply to female inmates, Hannah-Moffat noted three major responses among correctional officials. Officials responded to women with gender neutrality, caution, or appendage. Gender neutrality refers to those officials who utilized the same risk tool for both men and women because they either perceived the tool as being relevant for female inmates or simply better than nothing. Officials who were characterized as using caution, spent more time scrutinizing the files of female inmates and made very conservative decisions regarding risk.

According to Hannah-Moffat “one-third of practitioners admitted to being *more rigorous* and careful when making decisions about women’s risk of re-offending (particularly when women were perpetrators of violence) *because of* ‘uncertainty’ associated with the absence of gender relevant actuarial assessments (emphasis in the original) (245). The third approach, called appendage, involved supplementing existing knowledge with gender sensitivity training. The training provided information on current research, characteristics of female offenders, and information about the women’s gendered experiences (e.g., abuse and maternal status).

Several problems were noted when risk assessment tools were supplemented with gender sensitivity training. Most correctional officials believed that it was important to address women’s specific needs in an effort to reduce overall risk. This is problematic because risks and needs are often confounded and when asked, most officials hesitated before being able to identify the difference between risks and needs. Further problems stemmed from the training because women tended to be characterized largely in terms of gender stereotypes. Additionally, correctional officials were not instructed on how to use their newly acquired knowledge, creating confusion and inconsistencies because only some officials chose to use the information provided in the training.

Summary and Conclusion

A review of the literature focusing on risk and female offenders reveals that the majority of research has focused on the predictive validity of risk assessment tools for female inmates. The bulk of the research findings indicate that classification systems that

have been developed for men and tested on largely male samples cannot accurately predict salient factors, such as risk, recidivism, and violence, for female offenders. The exception to this is the evaluation from Couslon et al (1996), which noted that the SIR scale is robust enough to predict risk for female inmates released on parole and the evaluation from McShane et al. (2002), which found that traditional risk assessment tools do not do female offenders any particular harm. Additionally, Schwalbe, Fraser, and Day (2007) note that the NCAR may prove to be a viable risk assessment instrument for male and female juvenile offenders. Overall, these findings indicate that there may be gender responsive variables that can better predict risk and recidivism for female offenders, such as marital status, suicide attempts, family structure of childhood home, childhood abuse, depression, and substance abuse, single parenting, reliance upon public assistance, and relationships (Van Voorhis and Presser, 2001).

The most notable reason cited for the lack of predictive validity of risk instruments to the female offender population is the fact that the level of female violence and recidivism is extremely low compared to male offenders. While this may be true, low levels of violence and recidivism are not core feminist issues. What is missing from the literature is an evaluation that merges core feminist issues such as differential treatment based on stereotypical characterizations of female offenders with an empirical examination of risk. For example, Carlen and Tchaikovsky (1985) conclude that prison systems seek to “discipline, infantilize, feminize, medicalize, and domesticize” female offenders. These central feminist concerns have not been adequately addressed in the risk literature. Exceptions to this include the evaluations by Hannah-Moffat (1999);

2004), which merged feminist theoretical approaches with concerns relevant to practitioners. Results from Hannah-Moffat's studies indicate that, in general, correctional officials often confound risks with needs, that female offenders may be overly scrutinized when it comes to risk decisions, and that there is little consensus on how best to classify female offenders.

Within the applied literature, findings from the majority of the studies indicate that female offenders present different needs and much lower risks compared to male offenders. For example, Harer and Langan's (2001) study found that female offenders do not have the same propensity to engage in the same types of violent behaviors that male offenders do. In spite of these findings, Van Voorhis and Presser (2001) found 39 states used the same instrument to classify both male offenders and female offenders. Similarly, in an empirical evaluation of the LSI-R, Holsinger et al. (2003) stated that male offenders scored significantly higher on the LSI-R compared to female offenders, indicating that the male offenders posed a higher level of risk than their female counterparts. Likewise Webster and Doob's (2004) study of the predictive validity of the Custody Rating Scale (CRS) showed that when different types of female offenders were considered, the predictive utility of the instrument tended to break down. Finally, McShane et al. (2002) analyzed risk assessment tools utilized in parole decisions for female offenders and found that women were more likely to succeed on parole compared to their male counterparts. Overall, in the literature, there is no evidence that female offenders represent an especially profound security risk to the general public.

Noticeably absent from the literature relating to risk and female offenders is the role of risk assessment in community corrections. Specifically, no evaluations could be found that examined risk assessment and adult female offenders in the community corrections setting. While they did not measure risk assessment explicitly, the evaluations by Norland and Mann (1984) and Seng and Lurigio (2005), represent two studies that integrated gender into discussion of risk and supervision in the community. Nevertheless, an expanded discussion of the role of gender in risk assessment and supervision issues is still missing from the literature. The examination of risk assessment and female probationers is especially important given that most female offenders receive a term of probation, not prison. According the Bureau of Justice Statistics, women account for 23% of the probation population, with 956,200 female probationers (Glaze and Bonczar, 2006). In contrast, women make up approximately 7% of the prison population, with 106,174 women incarcerated in state and federal prison facilities (Harrison and Beck, 2006).

Despite the promise of actuarial risk assessments to provide objective classification and treatment of offenders, there is some concern that the risk assessment tools may be subjective. Silver and Miller (2002) note "actuarial risk assessment tools aggregate individuals into groups with like characteristics, an approach that is likely to further marginalize populations that are already at the fringes of the economic and political mainstream" (155). Additionally, actuarial techniques could be morally charged and subjective because "moralities are built into the technologies and expert systems of risk management" (Rigakos, 1999:140). The subjective nature of risk assessment and its

effect on the female offender population (especially those under community supervision) is an often overlooked area of research (Farr, 2000).

While examinations of objective risk classification tools are an important area of research, far more interesting questions can be examined by investigating the subjective nature of risk for female offenders. Existing classification schemes for female offenders are largely ineffective (Farr, 2000) and some research suggests that practitioners often override the score provided by the classification instrument and supplant it with their own subjective assessment of risk (Hannah-Moffat, 1999). As a result, there may be two trends operating in corrections—a new penology for men, which focuses on objective risk classification and management and an old penology for women which still focuses on mostly subjective measures. If this is the case, it affords the opportunity for differential treatment based on gender. More research is needed to identify what the practice of classification and supervision looks like by gender and to determine if differences in assessment are valid in light of the different risks that males and females pose to the community. Furthermore, it is still largely unknown if these different trends actually translate into differential management practices for male and female offenders. This research seeks to address those questions.

Given the shortcomings of current actuarial classification instruments and the difficulty in applying gender neutral risk variables to all types of offenders, the current research will employ measures that are salient for both male and female offenders to measure perceptions of risk and need. These variables include more traditional static risk factors such as violence in the offense history, age at first arrest, and employment history,

which have been successful at predicting risk for male offenders. In addition to these measures, several gender responsive variables, such as suicide attempts, relationships, and abuse, will be included in the study as they may be able to more accurately reflect the risk and need areas of female offenders.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions will be utilized to guide this study:

1. How does the gender of the offender influence the practice of classification and supervision in community corrections?
2. Are gender differences in penal assessments valid in view of the different risks that male and female offenders pose to the community?
3. Do different trends in the practice of classification and supervision translate into differential management practices for male and female offenders?
4. Based on these definitions of risk in the classification and supervision process, are the practices consistent with the claims of postmodern and feminist frameworks?

Based on the aforementioned research questions, the following hypotheses will be tested in the study.

H₁: There will be a significant difference in the frequency of classification instrument overrides for male and female offenders.

Empirical research demonstrates that classification instruments can accurately assess risk for male inmates, but are inadequate at assessing and classifying female inmates (Bonta et al., 1995; Harer and Langan, 2001; McShane et al., 2002; Van Voorhis and Presser, 2001; Webster and Doob, 2004). Specifically, these instruments overestimate the amount of risk posed by female offenders due, in large part, to the confounding of risks and needs. Often, to address this problem, correctional officials override the classification score and classify female offenders based on their own personal judgment. It is believed that this phenomenon will also occur in the community corrections setting, with officers classifying female offenders based largely on their professional judgment, but relying on classification instruments in decisions regarding male offenders.

H₂: Community corrections officers will perceive female offenders as posing less risk than male offenders.

Official statistics indicate that rates of violent crimes committed by male offenders far outpace those of female offenders. Per capita rates of male offending account for about one violent offender per nine males over age 10, whereas female offending accounts for about one violent offender per fifty-six females age 10 or older (Greenfeld and Snell, 1999). Given this difference, it is believed that community corrections officers will perceive female offenders as being much less of a risk compared to male offenders.

H₃: Community corrections officers will recommend a more lenient course of action for female offenders who violate conditions of supervision than for their male counterparts.

Female offenders are not members of the dangerous underclass and pose much less risk compared to male offenders, therefore it is believed that community corrections officers will recommend a more lenient course of action for female offenders who violate conditions of supervision compared to male offenders. As this relates to penal postmodernism, it is believed that decisions made by officers about female offenders will be consistent with the old penology (e.g. rehabilitative ideal), while decisions about male offenders will reflect the postmodern reliance on risk management and mitigation.

H₄: Community corrections officers will view female offenders as being more difficult to supervise than male offenders.

Some research has noted that correctional officials view female offenders as being more difficult to manage compared to male offenders. This perception is exacerbated by the lack of gender specific training provided to correctional staff. For example, Bloom, Owen, and Covington (2003), note that jail staff in their study reported needing training to “learn communication skills, sensitivity training, available community resources, and how to handle the emotions and manipulations of the female inmate” (23). Community corrections officers in Orange County have not received gender specific training for the supervision of female offenders, thus it is believed that officers will view female offenders as being more difficult to supervise than male offenders.

H₅: Community corrections officers will rate risk factors as being more important for male offenders than female offenders in classification decisions.

H₆: Community corrections officers will rate need factors as being more important for female offenders than male offenders in classification decisions.

Female offenders typically have many unmet needs (e.g. issues with children, past physical and sexual abuse) and relatively few risk factors (e.g. violence in the offense history and high number of prior offenses). Therefore, it is likely that community corrections officers will give higher priority to the needs of female offenders in making risk decisions. Conversely, male offenders typically have higher risks and lower needs so it is expected that risk factors will be elevated in importance above need factors in classification and assessment decisions.

H₇: The supervision style of community corrections officers will impact the way male and female offenders are supervised in the community.

Since community corrections officers do not all approach their job with the same type of supervision style, it is necessary to differentiate between the different styles of supervision. Supervision styles can range from law enforcement (control oriented) to social work (rehabilitation oriented) or somewhere in the middle (broker of services). It is likely that officers who identify themselves as having more of a law enforcement style will emphasize risk management and control of offenders regardless of the gender of the offender. Conversely, officers who identify themselves as being more social work oriented are expected to emphasize needs and services for offenders regardless of the gender of the offender.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

Data

The data for the present research project consisted of survey responses gathered from community corrections officers from Orange County, Florida. The Orange County community corrections department supervises an average daily population of over 8,000 offenders and employs 104 community corrections officers and supervisors. For the current project, officers from the following units were included in the study: administration, intake, pre-trial diversion, alternative community service, probation, home confinement, work release, and pre-trial services. While these departments supervise a diverse range of offenders at different stages of the criminal justice process, they are nevertheless applicable to the current study because they all, to some degree, conduct risk assessments (either formally or informally) and provide supervision services for offenders. For example, the pre-trial services department conducts a formal risk assessment of all offenders, supervises offenders either in person or via the telephone, and requires offenders to pay a fee for supervision services.

Each community corrections officer employed in the eight units was contacted and given an opportunity to participate in the study. With the exception of the pre-trial services and work release divisions, all community corrections units are located in the central administration building at the Orange County Corrections complex. The pre-trial services unit is located at the Booking and Release Center on the main corrections

complex and the Work Release Center is a separate non-secure community facility located off site, approximately three miles from county corrections complex.

Instrumentation

Two versions of a 79 item questionnaire were developed by the researcher and distributed to all community corrections officers who conduct risk assessments (either formally or informally) and/or supervise offenders for the Orange County Community Corrections Department. Multiple versions were necessary due to the gendered nature of the survey questions. One version of the survey contains questions about female offenders (see appendix A) and the other version has questions pertaining to male offenders (see appendix B). Randomization was accomplished by random distribution of the two gender versions. The survey contains three major areas including definitions of risk and need, perceptions of differential risk and need, and supervision difficulty.

Pre-test

A pre-test of the survey instrument was conducted over a two day period during the first week of January 2007. The researcher met with 5 community corrections officers employed in administration, alternative community service, intake, and community surveillance. Two respondents were former community corrections officers who were now employed in administrative positions. While these officers did not currently have caseloads, they were still able to provide insightful feedback based on

their past experiences with offenders. The remaining three respondents were currently supervising offenders in their respective units.

The respondents were instructed to fill out the survey and stop when they reached any item that presented questions for them. Each interview lasted approximately 25 minutes and led to some changes on the final survey instrument. For example, one community corrections officer noted that some answers to the questions could depend on the type of caseload that officer's currently supervised. This comment led to the addition of a question about the type of caseload (e.g. domestic violence, traffic, and misdemeanor). Additionally, some of the scenario questions needed clarification, particularly in the questions that asked officers to assess risk for the offender in the given scenario. One officer noted that, in her opinion, the offender in two scenarios represented a relatively low risk to the community, but a high risk to themselves. This prompted the researcher to clarify the scenario questions to ask officers to indicate how much risk to the community they felt the offender posed.

Procedures

Data collection took place over a three month period from January 2007 to March 2007. Data were collected via a self-administered questionnaire designed to measure definitions of risk and need and community corrections officers' perceptions about the classification and supervision of male and female offenders. The researcher traveled to all Orange County Community Corrections units on multiple occasions to administer the survey to groups of community corrections officers. The researcher attended staff

meetings for the probation, diversion, and home confinement units and distributed the survey to the officers at the conclusion of the meetings. Some officers were not present at the staff meetings so it was necessary to make appointments with those officers and administer the survey individually. The pre-trial services unit employs officers in three shifts, so it was necessary for the researcher to administer the survey to smaller groups of officers following their shift briefing. Additionally, officers in administration, intake, work release, and alternative community service were contacted individually and asked to complete the survey during their regular shift. Instructions were provided to all respondents prior to the administration of the questionnaire and the researcher was present during the completion of the survey to answer any questions.

The survey was confidential and respondents were informed that all personal identifiers would be removed prior to data analysis. Respondents were also assured that none of their individual responses would be shared with the county management. The respondents were asked to read a consent form outlining their rights as research subjects and they were asked to sign their name to indicate their agreement with the terms outlined on the form. The consent form notified respondents that they did not have to answer any question(s) that they did not wish to answer (see Appendix C). Participants were also advised that they had the right to opt out of the research and they could withdraw from the survey at any time without consequence. After the respondents read and signed the consent form, the researcher detached the form from the survey.

In an effort to ensure that all community corrections officers were afforded the opportunity to participate in the study, the researcher tracked survey respondents.

Tracking was accomplished through the use of a master list of community corrections officers that was obtained from Corrections Administration. The signed consent forms were then compared against the master list to determine which officers completed the survey. Questionnaires were distributed to all 104 community corrections officers and 93 surveys were completed, representing a response rate of approximately 89%.

Measurement of Variables

The present study seeks to determine whether the gender of the offender influences community corrections officers' perceptions of risk and need and whether those perceptions translate into differential classification and supervision procedures. A summary of the operationalization of all study variables is presented in Appendix D. The independent variables, gender of the offender and supervision style, and the dependent variables, definitions of risk, definition of need, perceptions of differential risk, perceptions of differential need, and supervision difficulty are detailed below.

Gender of the offender

The influence of the gender of the offender was measured by randomly distributing two versions of the survey to community corrections officers. Half of the sample received a survey with questions involving female offenders and the other half of the sample received an identical survey, but the gender of the offender in the paired questions was changed to male.

Supervision Style

Two measures of supervision style were included in the survey. First respondents were asked to indicate the style that best describes the way they supervise offenders on their caseload. The answer options include law enforcement (monitoring), social worker (therapeutic), broker of services, and an open ended “other” category. Next, all officers were asked if their supervision style is different when they supervise female offenders.

Definitions of Risk and Need

Definitions of risk and need were measured by asking respondents to define risk and need in two open ended questions. Respondents were provided with space to write out their own definitions following each question. This approach is similar to Hannah-Moffat (2004) in her open ended interviews of correctional officials.

Perceptions of Differential Risk

A variety of approaches were utilized to measure perceptions of differential risk. First respondents were asked if they believe that the risk posed by male and female offenders is generally the same. Respondents were given yes or no response options and an opportunity to explain their answer. Next, respondents were asked if they feel more comfortable decreasing the supervision level of a male offender or a female offender, assuming that relevant factors such as offense history and current offense are the same. Respondents were given three answer options (male, female, no difference) and an opportunity to explain their answer.

A series of hypothetical scenarios provided another measure of differential risk perceptions. These scenarios centered on an offender who had violated their terms of supervision in some way (e.g. by testing positive for drugs or committing a new offense). Respondents were then asked what their most likely course of action would be for the offender. Answer options ranged from least severe (simply modifying the terms of supervision in some way) to most severe (violating community supervision and issuing an arrest warrant). To determine gender differences in perceptions of risk, one version of the survey contained scenarios featuring a male offender, while the other survey contained scenarios featuring a female offender.

Three Likert scale questions provided another measure of perceptions of differential risk. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statements: 1) female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete their term of supervision, 2) male offenders are more likely than female offenders to incur a technical violation of supervision, and 3) male offenders are more likely than female offenders to violate their term of supervision with a new arrest.

Finally, differential risk was measured by providing respondents with a list of factors and officers were asked to rate the importance of each in their assessment and classification decisions. The list of factors contained various risk factors, such as current offense, prior record, extent of violence in the offense history, and number of previous probation or parole violations.

Perceptions of Differential Need

Perceptions of differential need were measured by asking respondents if they believe that the needs posed by male and female offenders are generally the same. Dichotomous response choices of yes and no were provided. Another measure of perceptions of differential need took the form of a series of Likert scale questions. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statements: 1) compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of substance abuse treatment, 2) compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of parenting programming, 3) compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of mental health programming, 4) I am more likely to refer a male offender for vocational programming than a female offender, and 5) I have more knowledge about female offenders' personal/family relationships than male offenders' personal relationships.

Finally, perceptions of differential need was measured by presenting respondents with a list of factors containing various needs, such as history of suicide attempts, history of sexual and physical abuse both as an adult and child, and current reliance on public assistance and officers were asked to rate the importance of each in their classification and assessment of offenders.

Supervision Difficulty

A series of Likert scale questionnaire items paired by gender provided a measure of supervision difficulty. First, respondents were asked how difficult fe/male offenders are to supervise compared to fe/male offenders. Next officers were asked how difficult fe/male offenders are to supervise in specific areas of supervision, including communication (e.g. willingness to share details of personal life), emotional expression of problems/needs (e.g. crying, threats of self harm), lying, manipulation, possessing loose morals, verbal expressions of aggression, and physical expressions of aggression.

Control Variables

Respondents were asked several questions about their gender, age, race, educational attainment, and years of experience at Orange County Community Corrections and other agencies. These measures have been examined by several researchers of criminal justice in general and corrections more specifically (see for example Caeti, Hemmens, Cullen and Burton, 2003; Slate, Wells and Johnson, 2003; Wells, Colbert and Slate, 2006). These control variables will be examined to determine whether officer characteristics influence the treatment of offenders under community supervision.

Analysis of the Data

Three sets of analyses were conducted in this dissertation. Chapter Five consists of the basic descriptive statistics for each item on the survey. This analysis will include discussions of the survey respondents' background characteristics as well as univariate analysis for all survey items. This analysis will serve as the foundation for more in-depth analysis on how the gender of the offender influences the dependent variables (Chapter Six) and how the supervision style of officer's influence the dependent variables (Chapter Seven).

Chapter Six will present a series of statistical analyses to test the hypotheses that the gender of the offender influences how community corrections officers supervise offenders in the community, and how the gender of the offender affects the perceived importance of risk and need factors and perceived supervision difficulty. Standard statistical procedures such as spearman correlation, independent samples t-test, and chi-square will be used in this analysis.

Finally, Chapter Seven will examine the relationship between supervision style and the dependent variables. Standard statistical tests such as chi-square, spearman correlation, and independent samples t-test will be utilized to determine how the officer's style of supervision influences the dependent variables.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The goal of this study is to determine if the gender of the offender influences the perceptions of risk and need held by community corrections officers. Additionally, this study seeks to determine the influence of supervision style on risk and need perceptions. Before those questions can be addressed, it is first necessary to detail the distributions of each of the variables included in the study. As such, this chapter describes the distributions for each item in the survey and reports the descriptive statistics for the research.

Sample Characteristics

Ninety-three community corrections officers employed by the Orange County Community Corrections Department were included in this study, representing approximately 89% of all community corrections officers employed by the county.⁶ Table 1 reports the demographic characteristics for the study participants and shows that an overwhelming majority of the respondents in the sample were female (71%) and the average age was 44 years old. Approximately 56.3% of the respondents were Caucasian, 31% were African American, 6.9% identified themselves as Hispanic, and 2.3% were Asian. The level of educational attainment among respondents ranged from having

⁶ All officers were given an opportunity to participate in the study, but 11 declined to complete the survey. Demographic characteristics were obtained from 7 non respondents and are included in Table 2. Demographic information could not be obtained for the remaining 4 non respondents

attended junior college but not earning a degree to having earned a graduate degree, with most respondents (76.2%) having earned a Bachelors degree or higher.

The Orange County Community Corrections Department is comprised of eight units and all were included in this study, with probation and pre-trial services containing the largest number of respondents at 33.3% and 28% respectively. When asked how long they had been employed with the Orange County Community Corrections Department, responses ranged from only a few months to 30 years, with a mean of 12.02 years. The average length of employment as a community corrections officer was 9.5 years and most respondents (65.9%) reported that they had not worked for another agency prior to their employment at the Orange County Community Corrections Department.

Table 3 reports the type of caseload supervised by the respondents. Most officers (66.7%) reported supervising a mixed caseload, which contains a diverse range of offenders and offenses. Other caseloads included traffic (14%), domestic violence (7%), misdemeanor (7%), and telephone reporting (5.3%). All of the respondents in the study interact with female offenders on a regular basis, either through case classification (intake and pre-trial services) or supervision services (alternative community service, probation, work release, diversion, and home confinement). Of those officers who supervise offenders, all reported having some female offenders on their caseload, though female offenders only account for about 13% of all offenders supervised by the Orange County Community Corrections Department. Over half of the respondents (54.9%) had caseloads comprised of fewer than 20% female and only 29.1% of respondents had between 21-30% females on their caseload (Table 3).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Survey Respondents

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	66	71
Male	27	29
Total	93	100
<i>Race</i>		
African American	27	31.0
Asian	2	2.3
Caucasian	49	56.3
Hispanic	6	6.9
Other	3	3.4
Total	87	100
<i>Educational Attainment</i>		
Some junior college, but did not earn a degree	8	9.1
Associates degree (AA)	2	2.3
More than 2 years of college, but did not earn a bachelors degree	11	12.5
Bachelors degree	38	43.2
Some graduate courses, but did not earn graduate degree	16	18.2
Graduate degree	13	14.8
Total	88	100
<i>Department of Employment</i>		
Work Release	5	5.4
Community Surveillance Unit	7	7.5
Pre-trial Services	26	28.0
Diversion Services	7	7.5
Probation	31	33.3
Intake Unit	8	8.6
Alternative Community Service	5	5.4
Administration	4	4.3
Total	93	100.0
<i>Employment at another correctional agency</i>		
Yes	29	34.1
No	56	65.9
<i>Employment as a community corrections officer for another agency</i>		
Yes	8	27.6
No	21	72.4
<hr/>		
<i>Age</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
	43.88	9.09
<i>Employment Characteristics</i>		
Number of years employed by OCCD	12.02	8.69
Number of years employed as a CO by OCCD	9.53	8.04
Number of years employed by another correction agency, besides	10.79	8.24
Number of years employed as a CO at another agency besides OCCD	8.44	5.17

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Survey Non Respondents

	<i>N</i>	%	
Gender	Male	3	42.9
	Female	4	57.1
Race	African American	3	42.9
	Caucasian	4	57.1
	Mean	SD	
	Length of employment	13.71	9.11
	Age	41.71	7.41

Table 3: Caseload Characteristics

	<i>N</i>	%
<i>Caseload</i>		
Domestic violence	4	7
Traffic	8	14
Misdemeanor	4	7
Telephone Reporting	3	5.3
Mixed Caseload	38	66.7
Total	57	100
<i>Percentage of females on caseload</i>		
Less than 5%	9	14.5
6%-10%	13	21.0
11%-15%	6	9.7
16%-20%	6	9.7
21%-25%	6	9.7
26%-30%	12	19.4
Other	10	16.1
Total	62	100

Risk Assessment Instrument

Every department at the Orange County Community Corrections Department is involved (either formally or informally) with classification and/or supervision of offenders. When asked which classification tool was currently used by their department, most respondents (67.9%) identified the Wisconsin Case Classification Instrument as the tool currently in use (Table 4). The Wisconsin instrument is a third generation tool that classifies offenders based on risks (e.g. current and past offense history, criminal associations, etc.) and needs (e.g. employment, substance abuse, mental ability, etc.). While most officers reported using the Wisconsin tool, a few respondents revealed that the Orange County Community Corrections Department only utilizes the risk portion of the instrument. The implications of this will be discussed later in the analysis.

If officers do not feel that the risk score derived from the instrument is reflective of the actual risk presented by an offender, the Wisconsin instrument provides officers with the ability to override the score provided by the instrument and supplant it with their own, based largely on professional judgment. Almost 16% of the respondents reported that they never override the instrument, 20.5% rarely utilize instrument overrides, 28.9% override the scores sometimes, and only 3.6% reported overriding the scores often (Table 4).

Table 4: Risk Assessment Instrument Descriptive Statistics

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Type of risk assessment instrument</i>		
Wisconsin Risk-Need classification instrument	55	67.9
Client Management Classification tool (CMC)	1	1.2
Informal risk assessment instrument	9	11.1
Other	16	19.8
Total	81	100
<i>Override classification instrument or policy</i>		
Never	13	15.7
Rarely	17	20.5
Sometimes	24	28.9
Often	3	3.6
Not Applicable	26	31.3
Total	83	100.0

Supervision Style

Supervision style was first measured by asking respondents to indicate the style that best describes the way they supervise offenders on their caseload. Glaser (1964) identified a typology of parole officers that includes paternal officers, punitive officers, welfare workers, and passive agents. Paternal officers are those officers who view their job as one designed to protect both the public and the offender. These officers typically place high emphasis on both control and assistance. Punitive officers are those who focus on control, but lack a strong emphasis on assistance. In contrast, welfare workers typically work to try to benefit the lives of those on their caseload, stressing assistance rather than control. Finally, passive agents are generally unconcerned with offenders or the general public and highlight neither control nor assistance in their supervision of offenders (Glaser, 1964). Using this typology as a guide, the answer options included law enforcement, social worker, broker of services, and an open ended other category. Officers with a law enforcement approach to supervision typically focus more on control

and monitoring and are similar to the punitive officers described by Glaser (1964). The social worker style of supervision includes those officers who are concerned with offender welfare and rehabilitation (these officers would be analogous to the welfare workers described by Glaser). Finally, the broker of services style of supervision falls somewhere in the middle between the law enforcement and social worker styles, and these officers typically view their job as one of matching offenders with appropriate services.

Slightly more than a third of the officers (35.8%) identified themselves as taking a law enforcement approach to supervision and 20.9% reported that they are more social worker oriented in their supervision of offenders (see Table 5). The remaining respondents reported that their supervision style is a combination of law enforcement and social worker (17.9%) a combination of law enforcement, social worker and broker of services (7.5%), broker of services only (7.5%), or another self described supervision style, such as accountability (10.4%).

The second measure of supervision style took the form of a single Likert scale item in which officers were asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statement: “My supervision style is different when I supervise male and female offenders.” Given the differences between male and female offenders, particularly in the area of unmet needs, one might expect officers to take a different approach to supervising offenders based on gender. Over half of the respondents (58%) disagreed overall that their supervision style is gender based, with 35.8% disagreeing strongly (Table 5).

Table 5: Supervision Style Descriptive Statistics

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Supervision Style</i>		
Law Enforcement (monitoring)	24	35.8
Social Worker (therapeutic)	14	20.9
Broker of Services	5	7.5
Combination of Law Enforcement and Social Worker	12	17.9
Combination of All Three	5	7.5
Other	7	10.4
Total	67	100
<i>My Supervision style is different when I supervise male and female offenders</i>		
Disagree Strongly	29	35.8
Disagree Somewhat	18	22.2
Uncertain	18	22.2
Agree Somewhat	16	19.8
Total	81	100.0

Definitions of Risk and Need

Two open ended questionnaire items provided measures for definitions of risk and need. First, respondents were asked the following open-ended question: “In your professional opinion, what is the definition of risk in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?” Quantitative content analysis was used to uncover three distinct categories of response to this question. Community corrections officers in this study defined risk in terms of: (1) society, (2) the department, or (3) the offender. Indicator variables have been encoded, with 1 to indicate the presence of the theme and 0 to indicate the absence of the theme.

Society Risks

When asked to define risks, almost half (49.4%) of the responses characterized risk in terms of potential threat to the community, making this category the second largest

group of definitions (Table 6).⁷ Though similar to the “offender risks” category of definitions to be discussed later, the “society risks” category is differentiated from an individual’s propensity to engage in criminal behavior in that these definitions specifically mention a possible threat to society at large. The following definitions are representative of this category:

- “The risk an offender poses to the community regarding to creating more victims of crime.”
- “Would this offender pose safety issues for law abiding citizens?”
- “Threat to community safety.”

Department Risks

Slightly more than a quarter of the provided definitions (28.7%) defined risk in terms of the department. This category of definitions typically described risk in terms of successful completion of a community supervision program or frequency of supervision (Table 6). Definitions in this category include:

- “The level of possibility for the offender to successfully complete his/her term of probation.”
- “Whether the person can successfully complete a CCD program.”
- “What is the probability of the offender completing probation successfully as relative to the amount of supervision?”

⁷ It is important to note that many responses contained multiple themes, therefore these categories do not sum to 100%.

Offender Risks

The final category of risk definitions includes those which cite individual offender characteristics, such as previous offense history, history of violence, and the likelihood of reoffending. This category made up the largest group of definitions, with 62.1% of officers defining risk largely in terms of the individual offenders. For example, three officers defined risk in the following ways:

- “The possibility that the person will re-offend. It is based on the current case conviction and any past criminal history, including any past probation revocations.”
- “No stable residence, prior arrest history, drug dependence.”
- “Risk is classified 2 ways: history and potential to re-offend. 1) History: previous number of offenses, type and consequences. 2) Potential: degree of social stability, level of maturity, support systems.”

To determine how community corrections officers define need, officers were asked the following open ended question: “In your professional opinion, what is the definition of need in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?” Quantitative content analysis revealed that the responses fell into one or more of the following categories: (1) society, (2) department, (3) offender needs and (4) risk.

Society Needs

The offender’s ability to become a contributing and/or functional member of society made up the smallest category of responses, with only 7.7% of community

corrections officers characterizing needs in those terms (Table 6). Definitions that are representative of this category include:

- “Whether the offender could benefit from available resources to ... help them become successful citizens”
- “What the offender needs to successfully participate and live in society without any issues.”
- “Need would be the things the offenders require to keep them properly functioning in society. These things may include access to mental health care, proper shelter, access to training or education, counseling, etc.”

Department Needs

Definitions grouped under “department” included those that described factors needed to facilitate successful completion of the term of supervision, compliance with court ordered conditions, or those issues that can be addressed with departmental intervention. The majority of respondents (53.5%) defined need in terms of program success. Definitions in this category include the following:

- “Need is the issues that would be holding a person back from completing probation successfully. Job, money, education, etc.”
- "Need is the program or steps necessary to ensure the offender successfully completes their supervision requirements.”
- “Need-what the defendant must do to succeed in their program. What they must complete in order to successfully complete the program.”

Offender Needs

The individual needs of offenders comprised approximately 56.4% of the definitions provided (Table 6). These definitions typically took the form of listing

various factors that respondents felt encompassed offender needs. Some examples include:

- “The stressors which present themselves in terms of behavior patterns or needs defined by Maslow’s pyramid, food shelter, mental health, etc.”
- “What the defendant should have to be successful.”
- “What the offender requires to become and maintain successfulness in her lifestyle. Treatment, mental health/drug; financial assistance; counseling.”

Risks

The final category, risk, is perhaps the most interesting theme because it demonstrates that approximately 11% of community corrections officers define need in terms of the risk posed by the offender. For example, one officer defined need by stating that “it’s a necessity or obligation to classify and assess offenders before release to probation or supervision in order to protect the public.” This finding is consistent with previous research in this area, which has found that some correctional officials have difficulty distinguishing between risks and needs. These results are still promising, however, because only nine officers defined need in terms of offender risk, suggesting that the majority of officers do not confound these concepts.

Table 6: Definitions of Risk and Need

	<i>N</i>	<i>%*</i>
<i>Definitions of Risk</i>		
Society	43	49.4
Department	25	28.7
Offender	54	62.1
<i>Definitions of Need</i>		
Society	6	7.7
Department	42	53.8
Offender	44	56.4
Risk	9	11.5

*Percentages exceed 100% because many responses contained multiple themes

In summary, when asked to define risk and need, respondents tended to define risk in terms of community safety and the offender’s likelihood to re-offend. This finding was expected given the high liability of keeping offenders in the community while under correctional supervision. Most respondents defined needs in terms of successful program completion or by simply listing possible offender needs, such as shelter and addiction. Though present in a few need definitions, a focus on rehabilitative potential was not a major theme in the definitions provided.

Perceptions of Differential Risk

A variety of approaches to the measurement of perceptions of differential risk are examined. First respondents were asked if they believe that the risk posed by male and female offenders is generally the same. Given the previous research on offending patterns and recidivism, it was expected that most officers would indicate that the likelihood of recidivism is not equal across gender. Results from this question supported

that expectation, as 72.5% of officers responded that they do not believe that men and women present an equal risk of recidivism (Table 7).

Next, respondents were asked if they feel more comfortable decreasing the supervision level of a male offender or a female offender, assuming that relevant factors such as offense history and current offense are the same. An overwhelming majority of respondents (89.2%) reported that gender does not play a role in the decision to increase or decrease an offender's supervision level as long as all other factors are identical (Table 7).

When asked which factors, risk or need, most affect the way they supervise offenders, most respondents (79%) reported that risk factors have the largest influence on supervision (Table 7). This finding was unexpected, given that only 35.8% of the respondents identified themselves as taking a purely law enforcement approach to supervision. One might anticipate a higher percentage of respondents to focus on needs, especially among those officers who identified themselves as taking a social worker or broker of services approach to supervision. Respondents were provided with space to explain their answer to this question and some officers were able to shed additional light on these findings. According to one officer, "the department has deemed [that] offenders will be supervised first based on risk and then the only needs addressed are employment." Another respondent stated that "our system does not take the 'needs' into account, which is why there is such a high violation rate. Often needs outweigh the risk, but we supervise based on risk only."

Table 7: Perceptions of Differential Risk Descriptive Statistics

	N	%
<i>Do you believe that the risk of recidivism posed by male and female offenders is generally the same?</i>		
No	66	72.5
Yes	25	27.5
Total	91	100
<i>Do you feel more comfortable decreasing the supervision level of a male or a female offender?</i>		
Female	7	8.4
Male	2	2.2
No Difference	74	89.2
Total	83	100
<i>On average, which factors (risk or need) most affect the way you supervise offenders?</i>		
Risk	64	79
Need	17	21
Total	81	100

A series of hypothetical scenarios provided the next measure of perceptions of differential risk. Officers were given background information for a fictitious offender and told that the offender had been placed on their caseload. Respondents were first asked to estimate the overall level of risk to the community that they believed the offender presented on a scale of one (lowest risk) to five (highest risk). Next, respondents were told that the offender had violated their terms of supervision in some way (e.g. by testing positive for drugs or committing a new offense). Respondents were then asked what their most likely course of action would be to address the supervision violation. Answer options ranged from least severe (simply modifying the terms of supervision in some way) to most severe (violating community supervision and issuing an arrest warrant). The following analysis examines perceived risk irrespective of gender and will serve as the foundation for an examination of gender differences in Chapter Six.

Scenario One

“You are currently supervising a single parent of 3 children who was convicted of passing bad checks in the amount of \$2500. His/her record indicates no prior arrests or convictions. The offender is addicted to cocaine and is participating in a court ordered drug treatment program.”

After reading this scenario, respondents were asked to estimate on a scale of one to five, with one being the lowest amount of risk and five being the highest level of risk, how much risk they believed the offender posed to the community. As shown in Table 8, the mean risk level for this offender was 2.85, with a standard deviation of .930, indicating that the perceived risk level for this offender was slightly below average.

Respondents were then told that the offender in the scenario had tested positive for cocaine during a weekly drug test and they were asked to select their most likely course of action. Almost half of the officers (49.4%) reported that they would modify the terms of supervision instead of issuing a violation of community supervision, 29.2% would issue a violation of supervision and issue an arrest warrant, and 12.4% would issue a violation of supervision, but issue a hearing notice instead of an arrest warrant (Table 9).

Scenario Two

“You are currently supervising an offender with one child. S/he has been convicted of possession of marijuana paraphernalia and has an offense history that includes one conviction for grand theft. The offender has a history of involvement in dysfunctional romantic relationships. The offender is currently employed part time.”

Respondents were once again asked to approximate the level of risk that the offender presented to the community. As shown in Table 8, results were similar to the first scenario, with most respondents estimating a below average level of risk to the community ($\mu=2.61$ and $SD= .925$).

Next, respondents were told that the offender in the scenario was \$100 in arrears of their payment of supervision fees and that the offender had received two notifications. When asked what their most likely course of action for this violation would be, there was a great deal of variability in the responses (see Table 9). Approximately 35.6% of respondents reported that they would modify the terms of supervision in some way, 17.2% would violate and issue a hearing notice in lieu of a warrant, 11.5% of respondents would provide employment counseling or give the offender some information on obtaining a full time job, 10.3% would request a waiver for the supervision fees, 4.6% would violate and issue an arrest warrant, and 2.3% would increase the terms of supervision until the offender became current with their fees.

Scenario Three

“You are supervising a married offender with no children, convicted of attempting to fraudulently obtain prescription drugs as a result of an addiction to pain killers. The offender also has a documented history of depression and s/he has attempted suicide on at least one occasion. The offender has been ordered to a mental health program.”

As shown in Table 8, officers perceived this offender as being the highest risk, compared to the offenders in the other scenarios ($\mu= 3.17$). Though comparatively high, the perceived risk to the community was still about average. The attempted suicide

described in the scenario likely had some influence on the responses. A few of the respondents who believed that this offender posed a low risk to the community wrote on the survey that they believed this offender posed a very high risk to themselves and their family.

Respondents were then told that the offender had not been attending the court mandated counseling sessions. When asked what course of action they would most likely pursue, most respondents (45.5%) would issue a warning to reenroll in the program and if the offender continued to skip the sessions they would issue a violation. Of the remaining respondents, 23.9% would violate and issue a violation hearing notice, and 21.6% would violate and issue an arrest warrant (Table 9).

Scenario Four

“A first time offender is currently on your caseload for possession of cocaine. S/he has been given regular drug tests while on your caseload and all have come back negative.”

The offender in this scenario was viewed as posing the lowest amount of risk to the community, compared to the offenders in the other three scenarios. The mean risk level for this offender was 1.74 (Table 8), and it is worthy to note that none of the respondents believed that this offender posed a high risk to the community.

Respondents were then given the following information:

“The offender in the above scenario has just been arrested for possession of cocaine again, though s/he maintains s/he was only holding the drugs for his/her close friend (the same accomplice from his/her current conviction).”

Respondents were asked what they would recommend at the revocation hearing and a wide variety of responses were provided. As reported in Table 9, about a third of the respondents (32.6%) stated that they would reinstate the term of supervision with the added condition of an in patient treatment program. The remaining respondents recommended revoking the term of supervision and recommended termination from community supervision (22.1%), increase the intensity of community supervision (19.8%), jail time (9.3%), increase the intensity of community supervision and add the condition of an in patient treatment program (5.8%), and issue a violation of supervision with a warrant (4.7%).

In summary, the scenario questions provided an adequate measure of how officers supervise offenders in various situations. Most offenders were viewed as presenting an average risk to the community, with the exception of the offender convicted of possession of cocaine. When asked about a potential course of action for a proposed violation by each of the offenders in scenarios two and four, many officers preferred to take an alternative approach and avoid issuing violations of supervision, at least as the initial course of action. This finding is somewhat unexpected given the department's clear focus on risk and offender management.

Table 8: Level of Risk Posed to the Community Descriptive Statistics (scenario questions)

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Scenario One	91	2.85	.930
Scenario Two	89	2.61	.925
Scenario Three	90	3.17	1.020
Scenario Four	90	1.74	.712

Table 9: Proposed Course of Action for Violations of Supervision (scenario questions)

		N	%
<i>Scenario One</i>	Modify the terms of supervision	44	49.4
	Violate with a violation hearing notice is issued	11	12.4
	Violate with arrest warrant issued	26	29.2
	None of the above	8	9
	Total	89	100
<i>Scenario Two</i>	No action	3	3.4
	Waiver	9	10.3
	Employment counseling	10	11.5
	Modify the terms of supervision	31	35.6
	Increase terms of supervision	2	2.3
	Violate with a violation hearing notice is issued	15	17.2
	Violate with arrest warrant issued	4	4.6
	None of the above	13	14.9
Total	87	100	
<i>Scenario Three</i>	Issue a warning to reenroll in the program or the offender will be violated	40	45.5
	Violate with a violation hearing notice is issued	21	23.9
	Violate with arrest warrant issued	19	21.6
	None of the above	8	9.1
	Total	88	100
<i>Scenario Four</i>	Reinstate the term of community supervision and add the condition of an in patient treatment program	28	32.6
	Increase intensity of community supervision	17	19.8
	Increase intensity of community supervision and add the condition of an in patient treatment program	5	5.8
	Revoke the term of supervision and recommend termination from community supervision	19	22.1
	Recommend jail time	8	9.3
	Issue a violation with arrest warrant issued	4	4.7
	None of the above	5	5.8
Total	86	100	

A differential risk additive index comprised of three Likert scale questionnaire items provided the next measure of differential risk. Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the following statements: 1) female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete their term of supervision, 2) male offenders are more likely than female offenders to incur a technical violation of supervision, and 3) male offenders are more likely than female offenders to violate their term of supervision with a new arrest (all were coded 1= Disagree Strongly, 2= Disagree Somewhat, 3=Uncertain, 4=Agree Somewhat, and 5=Agree Strongly). As shown in Table 10, 31% of respondents agreed somewhat and 4.6% agreed strongly with the statement that female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete supervision ($\mu=3.10$) and there was a high level of agreement among respondents when asked about new arrest violations ($\mu= 3.57$), with 50.6% of respondents agreeing somewhat and 12.6% agreeing strongly with that statement.⁸

⁸ Because some respondents did not answer every item on the survey, it was necessary to impute some of the missing values in the indices. Eleven missing values were imputed using a regression technique to predict the value of the missing item using the constant, regression coefficients, and answers from the other items on the index.

Table 10: Differential Risk Descriptive Statistics

	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree Somewhat</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>	<i>Agree Somewhat</i>	<i>Agree Strongly</i>
Female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete their term of supervision.	6.9%	16.1%	41.4%	31.0%	4.6%
Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to incur a technical violation of supervision.	8.2%	25.9%	29.4%	34.1%	2.4%
Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to violate their term of supervision with a new arrest.	2.3%	13.8%	20.7%	50.6%	12.6%
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete their term of supervision.	87	3.10	.965		
Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to incur a technical violation of supervision.	87	2.95	1.01		
Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to violate their term of supervision with a new arrest.	87	3.57	.960		
Differential Need Additive Index	87	9.63	2.36		

To determine whether the items could be combined to form an index, reliability analysis was run and results revealed an alpha coefficient of .69, which is above the acceptable cut-off point of .60 (Gronlund, 1981). Scores on the index ranged from a minimum of three to a maximum of fifteen, and the mean score for index is 9.63. Over half of the respondents (54%) scored a 10 or above on the index, suggesting that there is

some agreement among respondents regarding gender differences and the likelihood of successful completion of the term of supervision.

A risk salience index provided the last measure of differential risk. This additive index was comprised of ten Likert scale questionnaire items in which officers were asked to rate the importance of risk factors in classification and assessment decisions for offenders (Table 11). The responses were given on a five point Likert scale where 1= not all important, 2=of little importance, 3=somewhat important, 4=important, and 5=very important. Most respondents identified *current offense* ($\mu=4.31$), *prior record as an adult* ($\mu= 4.38$), *extent of violence in the offense history* ($\mu= 4.49$), *number of prior prison incarcerations* ($\mu= 4.34$), *history of probation and parole violations and jail incarcerations* ($\mu= 4.35$), and *observed attitude* ($\mu= 4.17$) as being “important” in assessment and classification decisions. Less important risk factors included *marital status* ($\mu= 2.38$), *current age* ($\mu= 2.92$), and *age at first arrest* ($\mu= 3.32$).

Table 11: Risk Salience Index Descriptive Statistics

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Current offense	90	4.31	.788
Prior record as an adult	89	4.38	.761
Prior record as a juvenile	90	3.50	.951
Marital status	90	2.38	.955
Current age	90	2.92	1.20
Age at first arrest	90	3.32	1.06
Extent of violence in offense history	89	4.49	.640
Number of prior prison incarcerations	89	4.34	.753
History of probation and parole violations and jail incarcerations	89	4.35	.725
Observed attitude	89	4.17	.711
Risk Salience Additive Index	88	38.24	4.98

Reliability analysis revealed an alpha coefficient of .775 for the items on the index. Scores on the index ranged from 19 to 47, with a mean of 38.24, suggesting that most respondents consider the included risk factors important in assessment and classification decisions.

In summation, respondents rated most risk factors as “important” in classification decisions, with the exception of age at first arrest, prior record as a juvenile, marital status, and current age. These findings were expected given that the department utilizes the risk half of the Wisconsin Case Classification Instrument, which measures many of the items in the risk salience index when classifying offenders.

Perceptions of Differential Need

Multiple measures of differential need are examined. First, respondents were asked if they believe that the needs posed by male and female offenders are generally the same. The distribution was almost equally divided, with 50.5% reporting that they do not believe the needs are the same and 49.5% responding that the needs of male and female offenders are the same. This finding was somewhat unexpected given that previous research in this area, albeit limited, has noted that most officers believe that female offenders present different needs than their male counterparts (Seng and Lurigio, 2005).

A differential need additive index comprised of a series of Likert scale questionnaire items dealing with issues salient for female offenders provided another measure of differential need. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the items on a five point scale where: 1= Disagree Strongly, 2= Disagree Somewhat,

3=Uncertain, 4=Agree Somewhat, and 5=Agree Strongly. The following items were included on the survey: 1) Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of substance abuse treatment. 2) Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of parenting treatment. 3) Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of mental health treatment. 4) I am more likely to refer a male offender for vocational programming than a female offender. 5) I have more knowledge about female offenders' personal/family relationships than male offenders' personal relationships. As shown in Table 12, respondents tended to disagree with the statements. The exception to this, however, is the item pertaining to parenting treatment, with 49.4% of respondents agreeing somewhat or agreeing strongly with the statement ($\mu=3.21$).

Table 12: Differential Need Descriptive Statistics

	<i>Disagree Strongly</i>	<i>Disagree Somewhat</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>	<i>Agree Somewhat</i>	<i>Agree Strongly</i>
Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of substance abuse treatment	14.6%	37.1%	31.5%	13.5%	3.4%
Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of parenting treatment.	11.5%	19.5%	19.5%	35.6%	13.8%
Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of mental health treatment.	13.8%	21.8%	36.8%	21.8%	5.7%
I am more likely to refer a male offender for vocational programming than a female offender.	31.0%	27.6%	24.1%	14.9%	2.3%
I have more knowledge about female offenders' personal/family relationships than male offenders' personal relationships.	11.6%	24.4%	23.3%	36.0%	4.7%
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of substance abuse treatment.	89	2.54	1.01		
Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of parenting treatment.	88	3.21	1.23		
Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of mental health treatment.	87	2.84	1.10		
I am more likely to refer a male offender for vocational programming than a female offender.	87	2.30	1.13		
I have more knowledge about female offenders' personal/family relationships than male offenders' personal relationships.	87	2.98	1.12		
Differential need index	87	13.90	3.72		

Reliability analysis revealed an alpha coefficient of .685 for the five items in this index, indicating they provide a reliable measure of differential need. Responses to these questions ranged from a low of 5 to a high of 24, with a mean of 13.90. The distribution was highly variable, suggesting that there is not a consensus among respondents in these areas.

A need salience index provided the final measure of differential need. Respondents were presented with a list of factors containing various needs, such as history of suicide attempts, history of sexual and physical abuse both as an adult and child, and current reliance of public assistance and they were asked to rate the level of importance of each need factor in the classification and assessment of offenders. The responses were given on a five point Likert scale where 1= not all important, 2=of little importance, 3=somewhat important, 4=important, and 5=very important. The mean and standard deviation for each need factor is reported in Table 13. Most need areas were considered at least “somewhat important” in assessment and classification decisions, however officers identified five need factors as important when making classification decisions—*history of suicide attempts* ($\mu=4.20$), *history of depression or other mental health disorders* ($\mu= 4.34$), *substance abuse history* ($\mu= 4.44$), *current participation in a substance abuse treatment program* ($\mu = 4.09$), and *history of sexual abuse as an adult* ($\mu = 4.00$).

Table 13: Need Salience Index Descriptive Statistics

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
History of suicide attempts	90	4.20	.889
History of depression or other mental health disorders	90	4.34	.737
Substance abuse history	90	4.44	.620
Current participation in a substance abuse treatment program	90	4.09	.830
Past participation in a substance abuse treatment program	90	3.61	.870
Completion of substance abuse treatment program	90	3.90	.835
Level of dysfunction in childhood home	90	3.29	1.042
History of physical abuse as a child	90	3.63	1.136
History of sexual abuse as a child	90	3.88	1.109
History of physical abuse as an adult	90	3.99	.930
History of sexual abuse as an adult	90	4.00	.936
Current reliance on public assistance	89	3.03	.982
History of dysfunctional adult relationships	89	3.26	1.06
Current employment status	89	3.90	.707
Stability of employment history	89	3.74	.805
Educational attainment	88	3.34	.783
Vocational skills	88	3.32	.781
Single parenting	88	3.17	.962
Number of children parented	88	3.08	.997
Number of dependent children	88	3.19	1.027
Number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives	88	3.22	1.12
Need Salience Additive Index	88	76.56	13.16

The alpha for this index was .941, demonstrating that these items provided a reliable measure of need factors. The responses for this index ranged from 37 to 100, with a mean of 76.56. Almost 70% of the respondents scored a 70 or higher on the index, suggesting that community corrections officers believe needs are somewhat important in the assessment and classification of offenders.

In summary, need factors were consistently regarded as only being somewhat important in classification decisions, with the exception of a history of suicide attempts,

history of depression or other mental health disorders, substance abuse history, current participation in a substance abuse treatment program, and history of sexual abuse as an adult. These findings are consistent with the department's focus on risks over needs in offender classification and supervision.

Supervision Difficulty

Supervision difficulty is examined both generally and specifically. First respondents were asked the following: Based on your experiences, how challenging, compared to male offenders, is supervising female offenders? The following responses were provided: 1= Fe/males are much less challenging, 2= Fe/males are somewhat less challenging, 3= No Difference, 4= Fe/males are somewhat more challenging and 5= Fe/males are much more challenging. The goal of these questions was to determine if gender can influence the level of supervision difficulty, therefore, one version asked respondents how difficult female offenders are to supervise compared to male offenders and the other version inverted this question and asked respondents to rate how difficult male offenders are to supervise compared to female offenders. For ease in interpretation, the values on the male version of the survey questions were reversed so that higher values reflected greater difficulty with the supervision of female offenders, regardless of survey version. Specifically, the value of five (males are much more challenging) was recoded to one (females are much less challenging) and the value of one (females are much less challenging) was recoded to five (males are much more challenging). The values of two (males are somewhat less challenging) and four (males are somewhat more challenging)

were similarly reversed and the value of three (no difference) remained unchanged. As shown in Table 14, most respondents reported that supervision difficulty is not influenced by the gender of the offender ($\mu = 3.14$).

Next, respondents were asked how challenging offenders were to supervise in the following dimensions of supervision: communication (e.g. willingness to share details of personal life), emotional expression of problems/needs (e.g. crying, threats of self harm), lying, manipulation, possessing loose morals, complexity of needs, verbal expressions of aggression, and physical expressions of aggression. When asked about these specific areas of supervision, some differences in the level of supervision difficulty for male and female offenders emerged. As shown in Table 14, respondents reported that female offenders are less difficult than male offenders to supervise in the areas of *communication* ($\mu = 2.40$), *verbal expressions of aggression* ($\mu = 2.41$), and *physical expressions of aggression* ($\mu = 2.16$). However, respondents reported that female offenders were more difficult to supervise than male offenders due to the *complexity of their needs* ($\mu = 3.51$).

Table 14: Supervision Difficulty Descriptive Statistics

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Overall difficulty	3.14	1.047	79
Communication	2.40	.986	86
Emotional expression of problems/needs	3.14	1.294	86
Lying	2.92	.680	84
Manipulation	3.02	.957	84
Possessing loose morals	2.88	.596	82
Complexity of needs	3.51	.811	85
Verbal expressions of aggression	2.41	.835	85
Physical expression of aggression	2.16	.879	86
Expression index	9.12	2.913	85
Morality index	9.24	1.689	79

Initially these items were intended to form one supervision difficulty index, but principle component factor analysis revealed two distinct indices. As such, the expression index contained the following items: communication, verbal expressions of aggression, and physical expressions of aggression ($\alpha = .653$). Scores ranged from a low of 3 to a high of 15, and the mean score was 9.12. The morality index contained the following items: lying, manipulation, and possessing loose morals ($\alpha = .616$). Scores ranged from a low of 4 to a high of 15, and the mean score was 9.24.

In summary, respondents reported that there are differences in the level of supervision difficulty for male and female offenders, though the findings run contrary to the proposed expectation and previous research in this area (see for example Seng and Lurigio, 2005). Respondents revealed that male offenders pose more challenges than their female counterparts. Communication was defined as the willingness to share details of their personal life and respondents reported that male offenders are more difficult in

this area. This difficulty seems to arise because male offenders do not share such details and are generally reluctant to communicate with their officers. As one officer stated in a conversation following survey completion, “Male offenders do not tell us that they are having a problem until it is too late.” This finding was unanticipated because previous research has found that correctional workers in the juvenile setting find males to be more open and straightforward than females (Baines and Adler, 1996). Unexpected findings also occurred when respondents were asked how challenging female offenders were to supervise in the area of manipulation. On the surface, it appears that respondents believe that there are no differences between male and female offenders in this area; however previous research indicates that correctional staff generally perceive females to be more manipulative than their male counterparts (Bains and Adler, 1996; Bond-Maupin, Maupin, and Leisenring, 2002; Gaarder, Rodriguea, and Zatz, 2004). Social desirability may have played some role in this contradictory finding, an idea which will be explored more fully in the next chapter.

In conclusion, this chapter has detailed the descriptive statistics for each of the variables included in the study. Officers reported using the risk half of the Wisconsin instrument and most officers reported overriding the instrument score infrequently. Consistent with the mission of the department, classification and supervision is risk based and risk factors were consistently elevated in importance over need factors in assessment and classification decisions for all offenders.

With regard to gender differences in risk, officers generally reported that female offenders pose less risk than their male counterparts. Additionally, many officers agreed

that female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete a community supervision program and male offenders are more likely than female offenders to incur both technical violations of supervision and new arrest violations. Gender differences in need were also noted, with officers reporting that they believe female offenders are more likely than male offenders to require some sort of parenting treatment. Measures of supervision difficulty also revealed gender differences between offenders. Male offenders were generally regarded as being more difficult to supervise than their female counterparts and areas such as manipulation and possessing loose morals, which have been identified as salient supervision issues for women were not identified as posing more difficulty in the supervision of female offenders.

While gender differences in risk and need were not assessed in great detail in this chapter, the results from this descriptive analysis provide the foundation for further investigation into gender differences in the next chapter. As such, Chapter Six reports the results from statistical tests that measure how the gender of the offender influences perceptions of risk, need, and supervision difficulty. A series of statistical tests will be reported that determine the relationship between the gender of the offender and each of the dependent variables. The final results chapter, Chapter Seven, examines how supervision style affects the perceptions of community corrections officers as they relate to the classification and supervision of offenders.

CHAPTER SIX: THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER ON PERCEPTIONS OF RISK, NEED AND SUPERVISION DIFFICULTY

This study seeks to determine if the gender of the offender influences community corrections officers' perceptions of risk, need, and supervision difficulty. This chapter will first examine the relationship between the gender of the offender and an officer's decision to override classification instrument scores. Next, findings from the paired scenario questions will be reported to assess whether the gender of the offender influences the perceived level of risk to the community. Further analysis will explore what effect these gendered perceptions have on supervision decisions in the community, such as the proposed course of action for a violation of supervision. The perceived importance of risk factors (such as current offense, prior record as an adult, and number of prior prison incarcerations) and need factors (such as a history of suicide attempts, substance abuse history, and a history of depression or other mental health disorders) in classification decisions will also be examined. This chapter will conclude with an analysis of the supervision difficulties associated with male and female offenders. A series of statistical analyses will uncover whether male or female offenders present more difficulties for officers in areas such as communication, manipulation, and complexity of needs. To examine each of these areas, this chapter will report the descriptive statistics across gender as well as a series of statistical analyses examining the influence of offender gender on each of the dependent variables.

Use of Classification Overrides

Research has demonstrated that gender neutral risk assessment instruments, such as the Wisconsin Case Classification instrument, do not adequately address salient risk and need areas for female offenders. As such, the predictive validity of these instruments in risk decisions for female offenders has been called into question. In cases when an officer does not believe that the derived risk score is reflective of the actual risk presented by the offender, the Wisconsin classification instrument provides officers with the discretionary ability to override the score provided by the instrument and supplant it with their own, based largely on professional judgment. It was hypothesized in Chapter Three that community corrections officers would need to override the scores obtained from the risk assessment instrument more frequently for female offenders, compared to male offenders. Results presented here are not consistent with that expectation as respondents reported using overrides for males and females rarely. As shown in Table 15, the mean use of overrides for male and female offenders was comparable, and similarly an independent samples t-test did not reveal a statistically significant relationship between gender and the frequency of classification instrument overrides. The finding of equivalence in the frequency of classification overrides fails to support the gender specific hypothesis for overrides.

Table 15: Use of Classification Overrides

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Female Offenders	2.21	.957	28
Male Offenders	2.38	.820	29
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	-.700	55	.487

* Question only applied to those officers who use overrides

In summary, contrary to previous research in institutional settings, community corrections officers in this study reported using classification instrument overrides at approximately the same frequency for male and female offenders. There are a few possible explanations for this finding. First, the Wisconsin instrument may have predictive validity for female offenders supervised in the community, thus officers do not feel the need to override the derived score. A second explanation for equivalence in classification overrides may also be related to the types of offenders (i.e. lower risk) that are supervised by officers in the community corrections department. Given this, the Wisconsin instrument may have predictive validity for lower risk offenders of both genders. An alternative explanation for this finding stems from the department's utilization of the risk half of the classification instrument, as well as the department's policy that, with the exception of employment, offender needs will not be addressed by supervision. This departmental policy constrains the amount of discretion that community corrections officers have in making assessment and classification decisions for all offenders. The assessment of offenders on a limited range of factors, such as current offense, substance abuse, and current living situation, does not leave much room

for variation in risk decisions and may not necessitate a departure from the instruments risk prediction score.

Perceptions of Differential Risk: Perceived Risk in Scenario Questions

A series of hypothetical scenarios paired by gender were designed to test the hypothesis that community corrections officers will perceive female offenders as posing less risk than male offenders. Respondents were first given background characteristics of a fictitious offender on their caseload and then asked to assess the risk level for the offender in the scenario. Each scenario contained information about an offender's current offense, past offense history, and personal characteristics. The current offenses included in the scenarios ranged from less serious crimes such as possession of marijuana paraphernalia to more serious charges such as check fraud. Similarly, the past offense histories for the offenders in the scenarios ranged from having no prior record to having previously committed grand theft. Finally, the personal characteristics in each scenario included information about marital status, number of children, employment status, mental health issues, and substance abuse history. Each scenario was paired by gender so that all of the information was identical, with the exception of the gender of the offender which was altered according to the version of the survey (male versus female). The following scenarios were included on the survey:

Scenario One: "You are currently supervising a single parent of 3 children who was convicted of passing bad checks in the amount of \$2500. His/her record indicates no prior arrests or convictions. The offender is addicted to cocaine and is participating in a court ordered drug treatment program."

Scenario Two: “You are currently supervising an offender with one child. S/he has been convicted of possession of marijuana paraphernalia and has an offense history that includes one conviction for grand theft. The offender has a history of involvement in dysfunctional romantic relationships. The offender is currently employed part time.”

Scenario Three: “You are supervising a married offender with no children, convicted of attempting to fraudulently obtain prescription drugs as a result of an addiction to pain killers. The offender also has a documented history of depression and s/he has attempted suicide on at least one occasion. The offender has been ordered to a mental health program.”

Scenario Four: “A first time offender is currently on your caseload for possession of cocaine. S/he has been given regular drug tests while on your caseload and all have come back negative.”

Following each scenario, respondents were asked to estimate the level of risk that the offender in the scenario posed to the community on a scale from one (lowest risk) to five (highest risk). Table 16 reports the descriptive statistics and results from bivariate analysis for the scenario questions. In each scenario question, female offenders were perceived as presenting a lower risk to the community compared to male offenders, even when all other factors in the scenario were identical. While the perceived risk level for the female versions of the scenarios were lower in all cases, statistically significant differences between the estimated *risk* for male and female offenders were noted for only scenario three (Table 17). Respondents reported that the male offender, with the history of depression and documented suicide attempt, who was convicted of attempting to fraudulently obtain prescription drugs presented a greater risk to the community ($\mu=3.50$), compared to the female offender with the same characteristics ($\mu=2.85$).

The attempted suicide mentioned in scenario three likely had some influence on the estimated risk level provided by respondents. While an attempted suicide is a serious

event for a male or a female offender, respondents may have viewed the attempt as being more serious for the male in the scenario, compared to the female. Nevertheless, this finding indicates that in some cases the perceived risk level of offenders falls along gender lines, with female offenders presenting an ostensibly lower risk, compared to their male counterparts. The proposed hypothesis is, therefore, supported.

Table 16: Perceived Level of Risk to the Community Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation

	<i>Female Survey</i>			<i>Male Survey</i>			<i>r</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
Scenario One	2.74	.88027	46	2.96	.97597	45	0.119	.131
Scenario Two	2.50	.93690	46	2.72	.90831	43	0.171	.055
Scenario Three	2.85	.96534	46	3.50	.97647	44	0.335	.001**
Scenario Four	1.65	.64005	46	1.84	.77589	44	0.116	.137

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Table 17: Perceived Level of Risk to the Community Independent Samples T-Test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>
Scenario One	-1.111	89	.135	-.21643
Scenario Two	-1.128	87	.131	-.22093
Scenario Three	-3.186	88	.001	-.65217
Scenario Four	-1.261	88	.1054	-.18874

Perceptions of Differential Risk: Proposed Course of Action in the Scenario Questions

Following each hypothetical scenario, respondents were told that the offender had violated their conditions of supervision in some way (e.g. by testing positive for drugs or committing a new offense). The following violations were included on the survey:

Scenario One: For the first time in 6 months, the offender described in the above scenario tests positive for cocaine in his/her weekly drug test.

Scenario Two: The offender in the above scenario has been notified twice that s/he is \$100 in arrears in his/her payment of supervision fees.

Scenario Three: You have just been notified that the offender in the above scenario has not been attending most of the required counseling sessions.

Scenario Four: The offender in the above scenario has just been arrested for possession of cocaine again, though s/he maintains s/he was only holding the drugs for his/her close friend (the same accomplice from his/her current conviction).

Respondents were asked to indicate what their most likely course of action would be for handling the violation. The provided responses to the violations differed with each scenario, but the possible alternatives ranged from less serious options (such as modifying the terms of supervision or issuing a warning) to more serious courses of action (such as issuing a violation with an arrest warrant or recommending termination from community supervision). These questions addressed the hypothesis that community corrections officers will recommend a different course of action for female offenders who violate conditions of supervision compared to their male counterparts. Specifically, it was believed that officers would treat female offenders with more leniency than male offenders.

Table 18 reports the median response and bivariate analysis for the proposed course of action for a violation of supervision for the offender in each scenario question. The potential courses of action ranged from least severe to most severe and in each scenario the severity of the proposed course of action was similar for males and females. This was the case in all scenarios, despite the difference in the perceived risk level for

male and female offenders. Bivariate analysis revealed no significant correlation between the gender of the offender in the scenario and the severity of response to a violation of supervision (Table 18). Results from an independent samples t-test also indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in the proposed course of action for male and female offenders (Table 19). Because it appears that male and female offenders receive much the same treatment for violations of supervision, the proposed hypothesis is not supported.

Table 18: Proposed Course of Action for Supervision Violations Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation

	<i>Female Survey</i>		<i>Male Survey</i>		<i>r</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
	<i>Median</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>N</i>		
Scenario One	1	45	2	44	0.035	.744
Scenario Two	4	45	4	42	0.048	.658
Scenario Three	1	45	2	43	0.167	.120
Scenario Four	2	45	3	41	0.112	.305

Table 19: Proposed Course of Action for Supervision Violation Independent Samples T-Test

	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>
Scenario One	-.194	87	.847	-.04444
Scenario Two	-.378	85	.706	-.16190
Scenario Three	-1.567	86	.121	-.33850
Scenario Four	-1.026	84	.308	-.41301

In summary, results from the scenario questions revealed that in some instances the gender of the offender can influence the perceived level of risk to the community.

Despite this, the proposed course of action for a violation of supervision does not appear to be influenced by gender. Put differently, offenders who violate their conditions of supervision receive much the same treatment, irrespective of their gender. These findings suggest that supervision in the community is not gender based and the perceptions of officers regarding risk level and dangerousness do not influence treatment, at least as far as violations of supervision are concerned. These findings are consistent with the new penology because officers report that offenders in the same circumstances will be treated in a similar manner, regardless of personal characteristics. The theoretical implications of this finding will be explored more fully in Chapter Eight.

Perceptions of Differential Risk: Classification and Assessment Factors

To assess the perceived importance of risk factors in assessment and classification decisions, respondents were presented with a risk salience index comprised of ten risk items. Officers were asked to rate the importance of each risk factor on a five point Likert scale, where 1= not all important, 2=of little importance, 3=somewhat important, 4=important, and 5=very important. These items addressed the hypothesis that community corrections officers will rate risk factors as being more important for male offenders than female offenders in classification decisions.

Table 20 reports the descriptive statistics and bivariate analysis for each of the classification and assessment risk factors included in the risk salience index. Most risk factors were considered at least “somewhat important” in classification decisions. For example, *the extent of violence in the offense history* was considered important by

respondents in both the male and female versions of the survey ($\mu = 4.35$ for females and $\mu = 4.63$ for males). An offender's *prior record as an adult* was also considered important for male offenders ($\mu=4.58$) and female offenders ($\mu= 4.20$). Less important risk factors included *marital status* ($\mu=2.55$ for males and $\mu=2.22$ for females) and *current age* ($\mu=2.91$ for male offenders and $\mu=2.94$ for female offenders). Officers rated risk factors as being less important for female offenders, compared to male offenders for almost every item of the risk salience index, with the exception of current age and observed attitude. In the female version of the survey, scores on the risk salience index ranged from a low of 19 to a high of 47, with a mean of 37.29. In the male version of the survey, scores on the risk salience index ranged from a low of 28 to a high of 46 and the mean was 39.29. Overall, scores on the risk salience index exhibited much more variation on the female version of the survey compared to the male version, suggesting some disagreement among officers in the importance of risk factors in the assessment and classification of female offenders.

As shown in Table 20, bivariate analysis revealed statistically significant relationships between gender and *prior record as an adult* ($p= .009$), *prior record as a juvenile* ($p=.025$), *extent of violence in the offense history* ($p=.012$), *marital status* ($p=.050$), and the entire risk salience index ($p=.035$). The results from an independent samples t-test are reported in Table 21 and reveal statistically significant differences in the assessment and classification of male and female offenders in *current offense* ($p=.046$), *prior record as an adult* ($p=.008$), *prior record as a juvenile* ($p=.038$), and the *extent of violence in offense history* ($p=.021$). Collectively, statistically significant

differences were found in the risk salience index, with a p value of .030. This finding was expected and most likely stems from the fact that female offenders are unlikely to have extensive criminal histories or offense histories that include violent offenses. These findings provide support for the hypothesis that the gender of the offender influences the perceived importance of risk factors. The theoretical implications of these findings will be explored in Chapter Eight.

Table 20: Assessment and Classification Risk Factors Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation

	<i>Female Survey</i>			<i>Male Survey</i>			<i>r</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
Current offense	4.17	.8769	46	4.45	.6631	44	.167	.058
Prior record as an adult	4.20	.8594	46	4.58	.5868	43	.250	.009**
Prior record as a juvenile	3.32	.9202	46	3.68	.9589	44	.207	.025*
Marital status	2.22	1.009	46	2.55	.8748	44	.174	.050*
Current age	2.93	1.289	46	2.91	1.116	44	-.032	.381
Age at first arrest	3.28	1.148	46	3.36	.9666	44	.036	.369
Extent of violence in offense history	4.35	.6382	46	4.63	.6181	43	.240	.012*
Number of prior prison incarcerations	4.30	.7851	46	4.37	.7245	43	.036	.368
History of VOP and jail incarcerations	4.28	.7199	46	4.42	.7313	43	.109	.154
Observed attitude	4.22	.7276	46	4.12	.6972	43	-.072	.251
Risk Salience Index	37.28	5.333	46	39.29	4.380	42	.194	.035*

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Table 21: Assessment and Classification Risk Factors Independent Samples T-Test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean difference</i>
Current offense	-1.707	88	.046	-.28063
Prior record as an adult	-2.456	87	.008	-.38574
Prior record as a juvenile	-1.796	88	.038	-.35573
Marital status	-1.645	88	.052	-.32806
Current age	.101	88	.460	.02569
Age at first arrest	-.361	88	.360	-.08103
Extent of violence in offense history	-2.067	87	.021	-.27556
Number of prior prison incarcerations	-.422	87	.337	-.06775
History of VOP and jail incarcerations	-.884	87	.190	-.13600
Observed attitude	.668	87	.253	.10111
Risk Salience Index	-1.910	86	.030	-1.99858

Perceptions of Differential Need: Classification and Assessment Factors

To test the hypothesis that community corrections officers will rate need factors as being more important for female offenders than male offenders in classification decisions, respondents were presented with a need salience index comprised of 21 need factors. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each need factor on a five point Likert scale (all were coded 1= not all important, 2=of little importance, 3=somewhat important, 4=important, and 5=very important). Table 22 reports the descriptive statistics and bivariate analysis for each classification and assessment need factor in the need salience index. Respondents considered need factors to be at least somewhat important for both male and female offenders, but respondents considered many areas to be slightly more important for female offenders. For example an offender's *substance abuse history* was considered important for both males ($\mu=4.41$) and females ($\mu=4.48$) in assessment and classification decisions. Additionally, a *history of suicide attempts* was ranked important for males ($\mu= 4.11$) and females ($\mu= 4.28$), as was

a *history of depression or other mental health disorders* ($\mu= 4.32$ for males and $\mu=4.37$ for females). Other important need areas for female offenders include *history of physical abuse as a child* ($\mu=3.67$ for females and $\mu=3.59$ for males) and *history of physical abuse as an adult* ($\mu=4.09$ for females and $\mu=3.89$ for males). While most need areas were considered to be slightly more important for females compared to males, results from bivariate analysis revealed only one statistically significant correlation between gender and *the number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives*, with a p value of .038 (Table 22). The relationship between gender and single parenting approached statistical significance with a p value of .053. Results from an independent samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of the number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives in classification decisions for male and female offenders ($p=.042$). Specifically, the number of children in foster care was considered more important for female offenders, than male offenders (Table 23).

Table 22: Assessment and Classification Need Factors Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation

	<i>Female Survey</i>			<i>Male Survey</i>			<i>r</i>	<i>sig.</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
History of suicide attempts	4.28	.91075	46	4.11	.86846	44	-.119	.132
History of depression or other mental health disorders	4.37	.82620	46	4.32	.63878	44	-.091	.198
Substance abuse history	4.48	.69087	46	4.41	.54210	44	-.104	.166
Current participation in a substance abuse treatment program	4.20	.80608	46	3.98	.84876	44	-.145	.087
Past participation in a substance abuse treatment program	3.61	.93043	46	3.61	.81315	44	.010	.462
Completion of substance abuse treatment program	3.85	.86839	46	3.95	.80569	44	.060	.287
Level of dysfunction in childhood home	3.27	1.10419	46	3.31	.98576	44	-.008	.472
History of physical abuse as a child	3.67	1.19358	46	3.59	1.08517	44	-.056	.299
History of sexual abuse as a child	3.89	1.25128	46	3.86	.95457	44	-.071	.252
History of physical abuse as an adult	4.09	1.00722	46	3.89	.84126	44	-.154	.074
History of sexual abuse as an adult	4.09	1.02905	46	3.91	.83019	44	-.144	.089
Current reliance on public assistance	3.15	.96534	46	2.91	.99556	43	-.130	.112
History of dysfunctional adult relationships	3.28	1.02552	46	3.23	1.10921	43	-.054	.307
Current employment status	3.96	.66522	46	3.84	.75373	43	-.066	.270
Stability of employment history	3.78	.72765	46	3.70	.88734	43	-.020	.425
Educational attainment	3.36	.73555	46	3.31	.84068	42	-.072	.253
Vocational skills	3.39	.77397	46	3.24	.79048	42	-.128	.118
Single parenting	3.30	1.02999	46	3.02	.86920	42	-.173	.053
Number of children parented	3.22	.98687	46	2.93	.99738	42	-.133	.108
Number of dependent children	3.26	1.08392	46	3.12	.96783	42	-.077	.238
Number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives	3.41	1.12696	46	3.00	1.08200	42	-.190	.038*
Assessment and classification need salience index	77.91	14.0772	46	75.09	12.0701	42	-.142	.093

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (1-tailed)

Table 23: Assessment and Classification Need Factors Independent Samples T-Test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>
History of suicide attempts	.900	88	.186	.169
History of depression or other mental health disorders	.329	88	.372	.051
Substance abuse history	.527	88	.300	.069
Current participation in a substance abuse treatment program	1.252	88	.107	.218
Past participation in a substance abuse treatment program	-.027	88	.490	-.005
Completion of substance abuse treatment program	-.588	88	.279	-.104
Level of dysfunction in childhood home	-.190	88	.425	-.042
History of physical abuse as a child	.345	88	.366	.083
History of sexual abuse as a child	.118	88	.453	.028
History of physical abuse as an adult	1.023	88	.155	.201
History of sexual abuse as an adult	.900	88	.186	.178
Current reliance on public assistance	1.179	87	.121	.245
History of dysfunctional adult relationships	.221	87	.412	.050
Current employment status	.793	87	.215	.119
Stability of employment history	.495	87	.311	.085
Educational attainment	.298	86	.383	.050
Vocational skills	.918	86	.091	.153
Single parenting	1.374	86	.086	.281
Number of children parented	1.364	86	.088	.289
Number of dependent children	.645	86	.261	.142
Number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives	1.750	86	.042	.413
Assessment and classification need salience index	1.006	86	.159	2.83

Collectively, scores on the need salience index revealed that the perceived level of importance of need factors for male and female offenders was very similar ($\mu = 77.91$ for female offenders and $\mu = 75.09$ for male offenders), though respondents rated need factors for female offenders to be slightly more important compared to male offenders. Results from an independent samples t-test confirmed that this was not a statistically significant difference (Table 23) and suggest that community corrections officers perceive needs to be equally important for both male and female offenders. The finding of perceived need equivalence for male and female offenders was unexpected and is inconsistent with the extensive body of literature which highlights the many unmet needs of female offenders. Some needs, such as issues with past and current physical and sexual abuse are far more prevalent in the female offender population, yet there was no statistically significant difference in the importance of such needs for male and female offenders. This finding most likely stems from the department's omission of need factors in case classification and the department's policy to supervise almost exclusively on risk. Due to findings of perceived equivalence in the importance of need factors in classification decisions for male and female offenders, the hypothesis that community corrections officers will rate need factors as being more important for female offenders than male offenders in classification decisions is not supported.

Despite findings of equivalence in the perceived importance of need factors between male and female offenders, when comparing the differences between risk and need factors within each gender, there does appear to be a difference. Initially, it was believed that community corrections officers would elevate risk factors for male

offenders and need factors for female offenders when making classification and assessment decisions and the results partially support that expectation. The mean score on the risk and need salience indices was computed and revealed that risk factors were elevated above need factors in importance for male offenders, with a mean of 3.9 for risk factors and a mean of 3.68 for need factors. As illustrated in Table 24, a paired samples t-test revealed that this was a significant difference, with a p value of .000. Equivalence between the importance of risk and need factors was found in the female version of the survey ($\mu=3.74$ for risk factors and $\mu= 3.73$ for need factors), suggesting that officers believe that risk and need factors are equally important in assessment and classification decisions for women. This finding at least partially supports the assertion that two trends are operating in the community corrections system—a new penology for male offenders, which emphasizes risk over need and a different trend for female offenders. While these findings do not necessarily support the idea that the treatment of female offenders is fully grounded in the old penology, it does suggest that elements of the old persist for female offenders.

Table 24: Risk and Need Indices Comparison Within Gender

	<i>Risk Salience Index</i>			<i>Need Salience Index</i>			<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
Female	3.74	.53140	46	3.73	.67593	46	.112	.456
Male	3.92	.44259	41	3.61	.56504	41	3.861	.000

Supervision Difficulty

To measure supervision difficulty, officers were first asked how challenging female offenders were to supervise compared to male offenders.⁹ The provided response options included the following: 1= Fe/males are much less challenging, 2= Fe/males are somewhat less challenging, 3= No Difference, 4= Fe/males are somewhat more challenging, and 5= Fe/males are much more challenging. This question addresses the hypothesis that community corrections officers will view female offenders as being more difficult to supervise than male offenders. Table 25 reports the descriptive statistics and bivariate analysis for supervision difficulty. Officers reported that female offenders are slightly more challenging to supervise, compared to male offenders ($\mu=3.24$ for females and $\mu= 2.97$ for males). However, bivariate analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between gender and supervision difficulty on this item.

Officers who reported that offenders were much less or much more challenging to supervise were asked to explain their answer. The majority of the open-ended responses to this question (n=12) came from officers who believed that females are more difficult to supervise, compared to males. The following are a few explanations from officers:

- They [females] “try to use their children to manipulate and they cry much more than males.”
- “Females tend to be more emotional, make snap decisions, and family matters often interfere with good decision making.”

⁹ This question was paired by gender and the male version of the survey asked respondents: Based on your experiences, how challenging, compared to female offenders, is supervising male offenders?

- “Male offenders don’t arrive on supervision with ‘emotional baggage’ like female offenders.”

A few respondents did indicate that females were much less challenging to supervise than their male counterparts. For example, one officer stated that “females in my opinion are less of a threat physically. Females generally have much less violent charges or histories than males.” Finally, one officer expressed an ambivalence in responding stating that “overall, many women are more apt to cooperate and not confront officers, but as a male officer in the field the issue of sexuality makes some females more challenging.”

The next measure of supervision difficulty took the form of two additive indices in which respondents were asked how difficult offenders were to supervise in specific dimensions of supervision. As illustrated in Table 25, differences in the level of supervision difficulty were noted in several areas. Respondents reported that male offenders are more challenging to supervise than female offenders in the areas of *communication* ($\mu= 3.52$ for males and $\mu= 2.32$ for females), *verbal expressions of aggression* ($\mu=3.71$ for males and $\mu=2.54$ for females), and *physical expression of aggression* ($\mu=3.93$ for males and 2.25 for females). Conversely, respondents reported that female offenders are more difficult to supervise than male offenders due to the *complexity of their needs* ($\mu=3.58$ for females and $\mu= 2.57$ for males).

Table 25: Supervision Difficulty Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation

	<i>Female Survey</i>			<i>Male Survey</i>			<i>r</i>	<i>sig.</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
Overall difficulty	3.24	1.01933	41	2.97	1.07771	38	-0.140	.109
Communication	2.32	.93443	44	3.52	1.04153	42	0.543	.000**
Emotional expression of problems/needs	3.14	1.32228	44	2.86	1.27970	42	-0.112	.153
Lying	3.12	.54377	43	3.29	.74980	41	0.155	.080
Manipulation	3.12	.74980	41	3.07	1.17026	41	-0.060	.296
Possessing Loose Morals	2.83	.44173	41	3.07	.72077	41	0.166	.069
Complexity of needs	3.58	.76322	43	2.57	.85946	42	-0.548	.000**
Verbal Expressions of aggression	2.54	.73513	43	3.71	.91826	42	0.584	.000**
Physical Expression of aggression	2.25	.78132	44	3.93	.97262	42	0.709	.000**
Supervision difficulty expression index	7.12	1.90500	43	11.17	2.27303	42	0.710	.000**
Supervision difficulty morality index	9.10	1.22076	41	9.40	2.08650	38	0.072	.265

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Bivariate analysis revealed a relationship between gender of the offender and perceived supervision difficulty in the areas of *communication* ($p < .0001$), *verbal expressions of aggression* ($p < .0001$), *physical expressions of aggression* ($p < .0001$), and *complexity of needs* ($p < .0001$). Results from an independent samples t-test revealed significant differences in the perceived level of supervision difficulty between male and female offenders in the aforementioned areas, as well as the *possessing loose morals* item ($p = .034$).

Initially the supervision difficulty items were intended to form one supervision difficulty index, but principle component factor analysis revealed two distinct indices, an expression index and a morality index. As such, the expression index contained the following items: communication, verbal expressions of aggression, and physical expressions of aggression. The mean value of this index was 7.12 for the female version of the survey and 11.17 for the male version, suggesting that community corrections officers have more difficulties with male offenders in these areas (Table 25). The morality index, which was comprised of lying, manipulation, and possessing loose morals, produced analogous means for males ($\mu = 9.40$) and females ($\mu = 9.10$), suggesting that gender does not influence the level of supervision difficulty in these areas.

As reported in Table 26, results from an independent samples t-test revealed that the differences in perceived supervision difficulty between male and female offenders were significant, though not in the way anticipated by the hypothesis. When asked about specific supervision areas, officers reported that male offenders are more difficult to supervise than female offenders. With the exception of complexity of needs, female

offenders were perceived as being less difficult to supervise in all other dimensions of supervision. Because significant differences in the level of supervision difficulty were found between male and female offenders, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 26: Supervision Difficulty Independent Samples T-Test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Diff.</i>
Overall difficulty	1.145	77	.128	.27022
Communication	-5.656	84	.000	-1.20563
Emotional expression of problems/needs	.994	84	.162	.27922
Lying	-1.239	82	.110	-.17640
Manipulation	.206	82	.419	.04311
Possessing Loose Morals	-1.847	80	.034	-.24390
Complexity of needs	5.732	83	.000	1.00997
Verbal Expressions of aggression	-6.545	83	.000	-1.17940
Physical Expression of aggression	-8.843	84	.000	-1.67857
Supervision difficulty expression index	-8.912	83	.000	-4.05039
Supervision difficulty morality index	-.780	77	.219	-.29718

The Influence of the Survey Version on Supervision Difficulty Responses

When asked about supervision difficulty in the area of manipulation, the survey version (male versus female questions) appears to have influenced the responses. As shown in Table 27, when respondents were asked if female offenders presented more or less supervision difficulty than male offenders because of manipulation, officers were much more likely to report that there was no difference between male and female offenders. However, when asked if male offenders were more difficult to supervise than female offenders in the area of manipulation, respondents were less inclined to report that there were no gender differences.

Table 27: Supervision Difficulty Descriptives by Gender

	<i>Female</i>		<i>Male</i>		
<i>Communication</i>	Much less challenging	9	10.5	3	3.5
	Somewhat Less	17	19.8	4	4.7
	No difference	13	15.1	7	8.1
	Somewhat More	5	5.8	24	27.9
	Much More Challenging	0	0	4	4.7
<i>Emotional Expression of Problems</i>	Much less challenging	8	9.3	8	9.3
	Somewhat Less	6	7.0	10	11.6
	No difference	7	8.1	7	8.1
	Somewhat More	18	20.9	14	16.3
	Much More Challenging	5	5.8	3	3.5
<i>Lying</i>	Much less challenging	0	0	1	1.2
	Somewhat Less	3	3.6	1	1.2
	No difference	33	39.3	27	32.1
	Somewhat More	6	7.1	9	10.7
	Much More Challenging	1	1.2	3	3.6
<i>Manipulation</i>	Much less challenging	1	1.2	2	2.4
	Somewhat Less	3	3.6	14	16.7
	No difference	31	36.9	10	11.9
	Somewhat More	6	7.1	9	10.7
	Much More Challenging	2	2.4	6	7.1
<i>Possessing Loose Morals</i>	Much less challenging	1	1.2	0	0
	Somewhat Less	5	6.1	7	8.5
	No difference	35	42.7	26	31.7
	Somewhat More	0	0	6	7.3
	Much More Challenging	0	0	2	2.4
<i>Complexity of Needs</i>	Much less challenging	0	0	3	3.5
	Somewhat Less	5	5.9	18	21.2
	No difference	10	11.8	16	18.8
	Somewhat More	26	30.6	4	4.7
	Much More Challenging	2	2.4	1	1.2

	<i>Female</i>		<i>Male</i>	
<i>Verbal Expression of Aggression</i>				
Much less challenging	2	2.4	0	0
Somewhat Less Challenging	20	23.5	5	5.9
No difference	17	20.0	10	11.8
Somewhat More	4	4.7	19	22.4
Much More Challenging	0	0	8	9.4
<i>Physical Expressions of Aggression</i>				
Much less challenging	8	9.3	1	1.2
Somewhat Less Challenging	18	20.9	2	2.3
No difference	17	19.8	9	10.5
Somewhat More	1	1.2	17	19.8
Much More Challenging	0	0	13	15.1

To assess whether the survey version had a statistically significant influence on responses to the manipulation item, a chi-square test for significance was calculated. Because some response categories had observations with less than five cases, the categories were combined. Initially, the response categories were trichotomized where 1= less challenging, 2=no difference, and 3=more challenging.¹⁰ Because 11 response categories contained five items or less it was necessary to further combine the categories and dichotomize the responses where 1= difference and 2= no difference.¹¹ As shown in Table 28, results from the chi-square test revealed a statistically significant difference between survey versions on the manipulation item and the possessing loose morals item. Specifically, officers with the male version of the survey were more likely to indicate that there were gender related differences in the level of supervision difficulty due to

¹⁰ The values of much less challenging and somewhat less challenging were combined to form the less challenging category. Somewhat more challenging and much more challenging were combined to form the more challenging category, and the no difference category remained unchanged.

¹¹ The much less, somewhat less, much more, and somewhat more challenging categories were combined to form the difference category and the no difference category remained unchanged.

manipulation and possessing loose morals. Conversely, officers with the female version of the survey were inclined to report that there were no gender related supervision differences in these areas. These findings appear to suggest that social desirability influenced the responses to the manipulation and loose morals items. Respondents with the female version of the survey may have been reluctant to indicate that manipulation and possessing loose morals are problems when they supervise female offenders because they did not want to appear biased. This perception could have influenced the veracity of their response. Alternatively, respondents may have been reluctant to reveal that manipulation and possessing loose morals are problems for fear of department reprisal, given that the survey was not anonymous. The interpretation of these findings should be taken with caution as they are highly speculative and further investigation is likely warranted.

Table 28: Chi-Square on Supervision Difficulty and Gender of the Offender

	Gender		<i>df</i>	χ^2	<i>Sig.</i>	
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>				
<i>Communication</i>	Difference	31	35	1	1.997	.158
	No difference	13	7			
<i>Emotional Expression of Problems</i>	Difference	37	35	1	.009	.924
	No difference	7	7			
<i>Lying</i>	Difference	10	14	1	1.220	.269
	No difference	33	27			
<i>Manipulation</i>	Difference	4	16	1	20.05	.000
	No difference	31	10			
<i>Possessing Loose Morals</i>	Difference	6	15	1	5.185	.023
	No difference	35	26			
<i>Complexity of Needs</i>	Difference	33	26	1	2.424	.138
	No difference	10	16			
<i>Verbal Expression of Aggression</i>	Difference	26	32	1	3.017	.119
	No difference	17	10			
<i>Physical Expressions of Aggression</i>	Difference	27	33	1	3.017	.082
	No difference	17	9			

In conclusion, this chapter has presented the results of the research as they pertain to the gender of the offender. A variety of risk issues have been examined, such as the use of classification instrument overrides, perceived risk to community, proposed course of action for supervision violations, and the perceived importance of risk factors in classification decisions. Needs were also explored as they relate to the perceived

importance of need factors in classification decisions. Finally, the difficulties associated with supervising male and female offenders in a variety of areas, including communication, complexity of needs, and aggression, was examined with non parametric and bivariate statistical techniques.

The results from the scenario questions suggest that in some instances the gender of the offender can influence the perceived level of risk, even when all other relevant factors are identical. Despite differences in the perceived threat to the community, respondents reported that their course of action would not be substantially different for a male or female offender who violates their terms of supervision. These findings suggest that subgroup membership does not influence the treatment of offenders while on community supervision, at least as far as violations are concerned. As it relates to the new penology, this finding suggests that both males and females receive objective treatment while on community supervision, thus supporting the idea that the old penology, with its largely subjective treatment of offenders, does not apply to the community corrections department included in this study.

Analyses revealed statistically significant differences in the perceived importance of risk factors in the classification of male and female offenders. Specifically, community corrections officers perceived risk factors as being more important for male offenders, compared to female offenders. Statistical equivalence was found in the perceived importance of most need factors for male and female offenders in classification decisions. The only notable exception to this was the number of children in foster care or

in the care of relatives, which was found to be more important for female offenders than male offenders.

A comparison between the risk and need salience indices revealed that risk factors were considered significantly more important than need factors in classification decisions involving male offenders. In contrast, respondents reported that risk and need factors are of almost equal importance when making classification decisions for female offenders. This finding provides partial support for the idea that two trends are currently functioning in the community corrections sphere—a new penology for men and an old penology for women.

Finally, results indicate that male offenders are more difficult to supervise than their female counterparts due, in large part, to their unwillingness to share details of their personal life with officers, their loose morals, and due to their propensity to engage in violence, both verbal and physical. These findings were inconsistent with the proposed expectations as well as with previous research in this area. For example, Seng and Lurigio (2005) found that most probation officers rated female offenders as being more difficult to supervise due to issues relating to parenting, addiction, and personal problems. Additionally, some officers in Seng and Lurigio's study noted that females tend to be more aggressive than males, a finding that runs contrary to the results of this study.

While the major purpose of this study is to examine the influence of offender gender on perceptions of risk and need, there are other variables which likely affect the supervision of offenders in the community. One such variable, supervision style, will be

examined in the next chapter. Chapter Seven will assess how the supervision style of correctional officers influences definitions of risk and need, the supervision of offenders, and perceptions of risk and need.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE INFLUENCE OF SUPERVISION STYLE ON RISK AND NEED

This chapter examines the influence of supervision style on definitions of risk and need, classification and supervision issues such as the decision to recommend a violation of supervision, and the perceived importance of risk and need factors in the assessment and classification of offenders. A series of statistical analyses are conducted that test the null of the following hypothesis: The supervision style of community corrections officers will influence the way male and female offenders are supervised in the community. Specifically, it is believed that community corrections officers who identify themselves as being more law enforcement oriented will have a more punitive response to violations of supervision. Additionally, it is believed that officers with a law enforcement supervision style will elevate risk factors in importance for all offenders, regardless of the gender of the offender. Furthermore, it is anticipated that officers with a non law enforcement approach to supervision will elevate need factors in importance for offenders.

To measure the supervision style of officers, respondents were asked to indicate which supervision style best characterizes their supervision of offenders. Drawing from the typology of supervision styles outlined by Glaser (1964), four response options were provided, law enforcement, social worker, and broker of services, along with an open ended other category. Officers with a law enforcement approach to supervision typically emphasize control and monitoring over rehabilitation for offenders. In contrast, the social worker style of supervision includes those officers who emphasize offender

welfare and rehabilitation. Finally, the broker of services style of supervision falls between the law enforcement and social worker styles, and includes those officers who view their job as one of matching offenders with appropriate services.

As reported in Chapter Five, slightly more than a third of the officers (35.8%) identified themselves as taking a law enforcement approach to supervision and 20.9% reported that they are more social work oriented in their supervision of offenders. The remaining respondents reported that their supervision style is a combination of law enforcement and social worker (17.9%) a combination of law enforcement, social worker and broker of services (7.5%), broker of services only (7.5%), or another self described supervision style, such as accountability (10.4%). Due to the variability in the responses, it was necessary to combine the categories to draw comparisons between the supervision styles. To facilitate statistical analysis, the categories were collapsed to form two groups—those with a law enforcement style of supervision and those without a law enforcement style. Respondents who reported that their supervision style was law enforcement oriented or some combination of law enforcement and another style were combined to form the law enforcement group (n=41). The social worker, broker of services, and self described supervision styles were combined to form the non law enforcement group (n=26).

Definitions of Risk and Need

Before issues of risk and need can be analyzed, it is first necessary to examine how community corrections officers define risk and need. Given that each supervision

style emphasizes varying degrees of rehabilitation or control, it was expected that supervision style would influence definitions of risk and need. Specifically, officers in the law enforcement group might be more likely than the non law enforcement group to define risk as a threat to the community. In terms of need, one might expect those officers in the law enforcement group to define need as the successful completion of a community supervision program or in terms of offender risk.

Two open ended questionnaire items provide measures for definitions of risk and need. First, respondents were asked the following: “In your professional opinion, what is the definition of risk in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?” Findings from this study fail to support the assumption that supervision style affects definitions of risk and need, as there were few discernable differences between the definitions provided by both groups of officers. Regardless of supervision style, community corrections officers in this study defined risk in terms of the: (1) society, (2) department, or (3) offender.

The “society” category contained those definitions that included some mention of threat to the community. Definitions in the “department” category described risk in terms of successful completion of a community supervision program or frequency of supervision. Finally, the “offender” category contained definitions which cited offender characteristics, such as previous offense history or the likelihood of reoffending. The following definitions of risk are representative of the definitions provided by both groups of officers.

Society Risks

Many officers, regardless of supervision style, defined risk in terms of the threat to the community. As shown in Table 29, among those officers that defined risk in terms of a threat to society at large, 15 reported that they take a law enforcement approach to supervision and 14 indicated that they do not take a law enforcement approach. The following are definitions that are representative of this type of definition:

- “Risk to the community at large for increased harm to the public (i.e. robbery for drugs, etc.)” (*law enforcement*)
- Risk is the “danger to the community, family members and to the offender.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Does this offender pose a threat to society, are they an upstanding citizen, can they hold a job? Are they steady with living arrangements or are they transient like. And will they show up for meetings or court?” (*law enforcement*)
- “Risk means how much of a risk the defendant will be to the community and how much risk he will be to himself and his family.” (*non law enforcement*)
- “The possible danger to victims and on citizens of the community and the possible danger to themselves.” (*non law enforcement*)
- “Risk means how this offender would function in contemporary society. Would this offender pose safety issues for law abiding citizens?” (*non law enforcement*).

Departmental Risks

The department category made up the smallest grouping of definitions provided by the officers. Typically these definitions contained some mention of the successful completion of a community supervision program or the level of supervision that the offender would require. Of the 16 responses that made up this category, most (10) came

from officers who described their supervision style as being law enforcement oriented (Table 29). The following definitions are representative of this category:

- “Whether the person can successfully complete a CCD program.” (*law enforcement*)
- “The level of supervision in which they may re-offend.” (*law enforcement*)
- “How often a person being supervised should be seen by his officer. What are all the risk factors involved with this defendant when he is outside the arena of supervision.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Risk determines how often we see an offender.” (*non law enforcement*)
- “What is the probability of the offender completing probation successfully as relative to the amount of supervision?” (*non law enforcement*)

Offender Risks

The offender risks category made up the single largest category of responses with 43 officers defining risk in terms of individual offender risks. Of the officers that defined risk in more individual terms, 27 reported that they take a law enforcement approach to the supervision of offenders, and 16 indicated that they do not have a law enforcement style of supervision (Table 29). Most responses included in this category defined risk as an offender’s propensity to engage in future criminal behavior. This category differs from the society risk grouping in that the focus in these definitions is on the individual, whereas the society group focused more on the dangers to the community at large. The following are examples of the “offender risks” definitions:

- “Risk to me is the possibility that the person will re-offend. It is based on the current case conviction and any past criminal history, including any past probation revocations.” (*law enforcement*)

- “Their current offense, their criminal history, their current and past substance use, their current and past relationships--in and out of family, their current and past job history and residential history, their level of education.” (*law enforcement*)
- “The probability that an offender will violate their terms of probation based on a wide variety of variables which may include criminal history, past behavior, previous drug use, stressors.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Look at offender’s prior history, convictions, alcohol and drug usage, family dynamics and you will be able to assess the risk.” (*non law enforcement*)
- “Their likelihood of continuing criminal behavior.” (*non law enforcement*)
- “Risk is the predictability that an offender will re-offend or get arrested.” (*non law enforcement*)

To measure definitions of need, respondents were next asked the following open ended question: “In your professional opinion, what is the definition of need in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?” Each opened ended response was examined and several themes were identified. Responses fell into one or more of the following categories: 1) society, 2) department, 3) offender needs and 4) risk. With a few notable exceptions, the definitions provided by the officers were very similar and were not influenced by supervision style.

Society Needs

Few officers included a consideration of society in their definitions, but in five cases officers cited needs relating to the successful reintegration of offenders back into society (Table 29). Of those definitions included in this group, two were provided by officers with a law enforcement approach and three came from officers in the non law enforcement group.

- “Deficits that impact the offender's ability to be a functional citizen.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Need--what the offender needs to successfully participate and live in society without any issues.” (*non law enforcement*)
- “Whether the offender could benefit from available resources to ... help them become successful citizens.” (*non law enforcement*)

Department Needs

Definitions grouped under “department” included those that described factors needed to facilitate successful completion of the term of supervision, compliance with court ordered conditions, or those issues that can be addressed with departmental intervention. As shown in Table 29, this category made up the second largest grouping of definitions, with 31 officers (17 law enforcement and 14 non law enforcement) defining needs as they relate to the department. The following are representative definitions of this category:

- “Needs are those things the offender may need to be able to successfully complete probation and for the personal need. For instance, shelter for the homeless, child care, or job referral.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Need-what the defendant must do to succeed in their program. What they must complete in order to successfully complete the program.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Referrals/information/guidance that a defendant needs to increase their chance of success.” (*law enforcement*)
- “It is what the offender must have access to or what programs or classes, training that are identified this offender would benefit if available.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Need determine if the offender has any requirements for certain programs for assistance with addictions of drugs, impulse control, monetary.” (*non law enforcement*)

- “Need is the factors that might prevent offender from being successful on probation” (*non law enforcement*)
- “Need is any service required to assist with successful compliance.” (*non law enforcement*)

Offender Needs

The “offender” category contained definitions in which respondents listed various factors that they believed encompassed offender needs. This grouping of definitions made up the largest category of needs, with 36 officers describing needs in terms of individual offender characteristics (Table 29). The following definitions are representative of this category:

- “Their compliance/noncompliance with standard conditions and special conditions, level of literacy, level of comprehension, understanding of accountability/responsibility, understanding of co-dependency/enabling, any mental health or physical challenges.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Need-the basic necessities of life—stable home, job, relationship.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Needs addresses deficiency. Need example: environmental stability, employment, education, support systems, and mental health.” (*law enforcement*)
- “Look at the offender’s job history, education, involvement in the community, church, etc. who they reside with, income and that will determine the need.” (*non law enforcement*)
- “The offender’s case management needs (i.e. financial assistance, educational assistance, employment, counseling, etc.).” (*non law enforcement*)
- “Need-pretty self explanatory--what a person needs. i.e. shelter, food, job, education, etc. to be successful law abiding in the community.” (*non law enforcement*)

Risks as Needs

Though limited in frequency, the discussion of risk or risk factors in the definition of need was also seen in some responses from the law enforcement group. These definitions typically included risk factors such as current offense, which officers believed could influence the overall level of need. As shown in Table 29, only six officers defined need in terms of risk factors and with the exception of one officer, all identified themselves as taking a law enforcement approach to the supervision of offenders.

Examples of these definitions include the following:

- “Need would indicate the level of supervision needed.”
- “It's a necessity and obligation to classify and assess offenders before release to probation or supervision in order to protect the public.”
- In addition to educational skills and employment issues, the “nature of offense would also dictate their needs such as substance abuse charges, domestic violence, etc.”

While there was significant overlap in the definitions of risk and need, some clear differences between the two groups of officers can be seen in a few of the responses. Specifically, officers who do not take a law enforcement approach to the supervision of offenders tended to cite offender needs and program referral in their definitions of need more frequently than those with a law enforcement style. The following are examples of this type of definition:

- Needs are defined as “what's going on with an offender and how can I best help him get through this probationary period—according to his needs.”
- “Is the offender in a situation that they are unable to handle without some type of help?”

While these types of definitions did not make up the majority of responses from the non law enforcement group, they were generally absent within the law enforcement group of officers. These definitions also help to illustrate the fundamental differences between officers who are strictly concerned with community safety (i.e. law enforcement style) and officers who tend to take a more rehabilitative approach to supervision (i.e. social work or broker of services).

Table 29 reports the responses to the open ended risk and need questions broken down by supervision style.¹² There were few differences in the definitions of risk and need provided by the two groups of officers. For example, of the officers that included some mention of threat to society or the community, slightly more than half (51.7%) indicated that they take a law enforcement approach to supervision while 48.3% take a non law enforcement approach (such as social worker or broker of services). Definitions of need were also similar between the two groups of officers. The risk theme is the exception to this pattern, with only one officer from the non law enforcement group defining need in this way, compared to five officers from the law enforcement group (Table 29). Results from a chi-square test revealed no statistically significant differences in the way that officers define risk and need (Table 30).

¹² Many responses contained multiple themes, therefore these categories do not sum to 100%.

Table 29: Definitions of Risk and Need by Supervision Style

	<i>Law Enforcement</i>		<i>Non Law Enforcement</i>	
	N	%	N	%
<i>Definitions of Risk</i>				
Society	15	51.7%	14	48.3%
Department	10	62.5%	6	37.5%
Offender	27	62.8%	16	37.2%
<i>Definitions of Need</i>				
Society	2	40.0%	3	60.0%
Department	17	54.8%	14	45.2%
Offender	23	63.9%	13	36.1%
Risk	5	83.3%	1	16.7%

Table 30: Definitions of Risk and Need Chi-Square

	<i>Pearson Chi-Square Value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>
<i>Risk definition</i>			
Society	1.658	1	.198
Department	.043	1	.836
Offender	.346	1	.556
<i>Need definition</i>			
Society	.909	1	.340
Department	.712	1	.399
Offender	.567	1	.451
Risk	1.512	1	.219

In summary, it was believed that officers with different styles of supervision would define risk and need in dissimilar ways, but that finding was not supported. When asked to define risk, most officers defined it in terms of community safety or the likelihood of successful completion of supervision. Similarly, definitions of need also cut across supervision styles, with officers tending to provide definitions that centered around successful program completion or interventions designed to reduce recidivism. There are two explanations for this finding. First, it is possible that the line between a law enforcement approach to supervision and a non law enforcement approach is not as clear

cut as was anticipated. Based on the definitions that were provided, it appears that community corrections officers of all supervision styles consider community safety and compliance with conditions of supervision as integral elements of risk. Similarly, reintegration into the community and successful completion of program requirements are viewed as fundamental areas of need.

Secondly, these definitions may indicate that most officers define risk and need in terms of the department's policy and mission to protect society and enforce conditions of supervision. The definitions of risk and need that were provided by respondents are promising because they suggest that the majority of officers are not confounding risks and needs. While a few officers did cite risk areas in their definitions of need, it is important to note that no one cited need factors (e.g. history of depression, issues relating to children, etc.) in their definitions of risk. These results contradict findings from Hannah-Moffat (2004) and indicate that, at least as far as definitions of need are concerned, there does not appear to be a widespread confounding of risk and need factors in this study.

Perceptions of Differential Risk

Because there were two versions of the survey and most questions were paired by gender, it was first necessary to verify that there was not a relationship between the survey version (male/female) and supervision style. As shown in Table 31, results from a chi-square test revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two variables ($p=.427$). Since there is no statistical relationship between the survey

version and supervision style, the influence of the survey version on supervision style can be ruled out. As such, any significant differences noted between supervision style and the dependent variables can be attributed to the style of the officer.

Table 31: Survey Version and Supervision Style Chi Square

	<i>Survey Version</i>		
	Female	Male	Total
Law Enforcement	23	18	41
Not Law Enforcement	12	14	26
Total	35	32	67
	<i>Pearson Chi Square</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	.631	1	.427

To assess perceptions of differential risk, respondents were first provided with a series of four scenarios paired by gender. Each scenario contained background information, such as current offense, offense history, marital/family status, and employment status for a fictitious offender. All of the offender information was identical in the scenarios, with the exception of the gender of the offender, which was altered according to the version of the survey. Officers were asked to approximate the level of risk posed to the community by the offender in each scenario on a scale from one to five (1=lowest risk and 5=highest risk). The descriptive values and bivariate analysis for the scenario questions, with results broken down by supervision style are reported in Table 32. The results reveal that in three scenarios the estimated risk levels were lower in the law enforcement group than the non law enforcement group. However, bivariate analysis revealed no correlation between supervision style and the estimated risk level and an independent samples t-test indicated that there was no statistically significant difference

between the two groups (Table 34). This finding was unanticipated as it was expected that officers with a law enforcement approach to supervision would focus more on control and would therefore assess offenders at higher risk levels compared to other supervision styles. One possible explanation for this finding stems from level of importance that is placed on risks by each style of supervision. Officers who take a law enforcement approach to supervision are typically more punitive than other supervision styles, but they may have assessed the risk level lower in the scenario questions because the offenders may not have presented *enough* of a risk to warrant a higher risk level. This explanation is highly speculative and further investigation into supervision style and risk assessment is likely warranted.

Next, the officers were told that the offender in each scenario had violated their term of supervision in some way. Respondents were asked to select the course of action that they would most likely pursue for the fictitious offender. The courses of action ranged from least severe to most severe and as reported in Table 33, the severity of response to a proposed violation was similar in each group of officers. Results from an independent samples t-test revealed no statistically significant differences in the courses of action that would be taken by officers in the law enforcement group and the non law enforcement group (Table 34). These results may indicate that community corrections officers are supervising offenders based primarily on the policies and procedures of OCCD, with little influence from their particular style of supervision.

Table 32: Perceived Level of Risk to the Community Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Analysis

	<i>Law Enforcement</i>			<i>Non Law Enforcement</i>			<i>r</i>	<i>sig. (2-tailed)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
Scenario One	2.76	.83007	41	3.08	.84489	26	-.196	.112
Scenario Two	2.58	.93060	40	2.73	.82741	26	-.092	.462
Scenario Three	2.98	.91952	40	3.35	1.05612	26	-.195	.116
Scenario Four	1.83	.67511	40	1.81	.74936	26	.020	.871

Table 33: Course of Action Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Analysis

	<i>Law Enforcement</i>		<i>Non Law Enforcement</i>		<i>r</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
	<i>Median</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>N</i>		
Scenario One	1	63	2	26	.035	.782
Scenario Two	4	62	4	25	.117	.350
Scenario Three	2	62	2	26	-.190	.126
Scenario Four	3	61	2	25	.143	.256

Table 34: Perceived Level of Risk to the Community and Proposed Course of Action for a Violation of Supervision Independent Samples T-Test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean</i>
<i>Perceived level of risk to the community</i>				
Scenario One	-1.531	65	.131	-.32083
Scenario Two	-.693	64	.491	-.15577
Scenario Three	-1.511	64	.136	-.37115
Scenario Four	.097	64	.923	.01731
<i>Proposed course of action for violation</i>				
Scenario One	-.292	65	.771	-.07974
Scenario Two	-.930	64	.491	-.50049
Scenario Three	1.635	64	.107	.41538
Scenario Four	-1.164	63	.249	-.54500

The next measure of differential risk took the form of a risk salience index. Officers were asked to rate the importance of ten risk factors in classification and assessment decisions on a five point scale (all were coded 1= not all important, 2=of little importance, 3=somewhat important, 4=important, 5=very important). With the exception of prior record as a juvenile, marital status, current age, and age at first arrest, both groups of officers rated risk factors as being “important” in classification decisions (Table 35). The only discernable difference between the two groups was seen on the marital status item. Officers with a law enforcement approach to supervision were more likely to indicate that the marital status of the offender is of little importance in the classification of offenders ($\mu= 2.34$). In contrast, the perceived importance of marital status approached being somewhat important in the non law enforcement group ($\mu=2.84$). Results from an independent samples t-test confirmed that this difference was statistically significant (Table 36). The mean on the risk salience index was very similar for the two groups of officers ($\mu=38.20$ for law enforcement and $\mu=38.96$ for non law enforcement), suggesting that supervision style does not influence the perceived importance of risk factors.

Table 35: Assessment and Classification Risk Factors Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation

	<i>Law Enforcement</i>			<i>Not Law Enforcement</i>			<i>r</i>	<i>sig.</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
Current offense	4.42	.66991	41	4.04	1.05987	25	.167	.181
Prior record as an adult	4.35	.57957	40	4.28	1.10000	25	-.089	.479
Prior record as a juvenile	3.37	.94223	41	3.44	1.08321	25	-.051	.684
Marital status	2.34	.99020	41	2.84	.89815	25	-.240	.052
Current age	2.87	1.16609	41	3.40	1.19024	25	-.216	.081
Age at first arrest	3.42	1.09489	41	3.44	.96090	25	-.006	.962
Extent of violence in offense history	4.42	.66991	41	4.60	.57735	25	-.137	.273
Number of prior prison incarcerations	4.34	.76190	41	4.36	.70000	25	.003	.983
History of VOP and jail incarcerations	4.32	.72246	41	4.40	.64550	25	-.045	.717
Observed attitude	4.22	.68964	41	4.16	.80000	25	.018	.886
Risk salience index	38.20	4.7078	40	38.96	5.92649	25	.146	.245

Table 36: Assessment and Classification Risk Factors Independent Samples T-Test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>
Current offense	-1.762	64	.083	-.37463
Prior record as an adult	-.336	63	.738	-.07000
Prior record as a juvenile	.293	64	.771	.07415
Marital status	2.054	64	.044	.49854
Current age	1.750	64	.085	.52195
Age at first arrest	.096	64	.924	.02537
Extent of violence in offense history	1.147	64	.256	.18537
Number of prior prison incarcerations	.099	64	.922	.01854
History of VOP and jail incarcerations	.470	64	.640	.08293
Observed attitude	-.320	64	.750	-.05951
Risk salience index	.573	63	.569	.76000

In summary, it appears that an officer's supervision style does not influence their perceptions of risk or the way that they would handle an offender who violates their terms of supervision. Because the law enforcement style of supervision is analogous to Glaser's (1964) punitive officer style, it was anticipated that officers with a law enforcement style would take a more punitive approach to the supervision of offenders, but that expectation was not supported. It is interesting to note that officers with a law enforcement style of supervision were just as likely as the other supervision styles to recommend an alternative and often times, less punitive solution to some violations of supervision (see scenario two and scenario four). Additionally, there were few differences in the perceived importance of risk factors between the two groups of officers. With the exception of prior record as a juvenile, marital status, current age, and age at first arrest, risk factors were consistently rated as important in classification decisions by both groups.

Perceptions of Differential Need

Because it was anticipated that supervision style would influence the perceived importance of need factors in classification decisions, it is necessary to examine differences between supervision styles and perceptions of differential need. Officers were asked to indicate the perceived importance of 21 need factors in assessment and classification decision on a five point scale, where 1= not all important, 2=of little importance, 3=somewhat important, 4=important, and 5=very important. Several differences between the supervision styles are noted for the items that comprise the need

saliency index. That is, officers with a non law enforcement supervision style were more likely to identify need factors as being “somewhat important” or “important” in the classification and assessment of offenders, compared to those officers with a law enforcement style. The descriptive values and bivariate analysis for items in the need saliency index, with results broken down by supervision style are reported in Table 37. Officers with a non law enforcement supervision style considered *current employment status* ($\mu=4.40$) and *stability of employment history* ($\mu=4.28$) to be important. The following need factors were considered to be at least somewhat important by the non law enforcement group: *educational attainment* ($\mu=3.75$), *vocational skills* ($\mu=3.68$), *number of children parented* ($\mu=3.52$), and *number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives* ($\mu=3.72$). In comparison, officers with a law enforcement style of supervision rated those need factors as less important in classification and assessment decisions.

Bivariate analysis revealed a significant correlation between supervision style and the perceived importance of current employment status, stability of employment history, educational attainment, vocational skills, number of children parented, and number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives. Results from an independent samples t-test revealed significant differences in each of the aforementioned areas (Table 38). These findings were expected and support the assumption that supervision style can influence the perceived importance of need factors in assessment and classification decisions. Those officers who do not take a law enforcement approach to offender supervision tend to rate need factors as being more important in classification decisions, compared to officers who are more law enforcement oriented. Because the officers in the

non law enforcement group tend to emphasize offender rehabilitation and welfare, it is not surprising that they would elevate need factors in importance in assessment and classification decisions.

Scores on the need salience index ranged from a low of 66 to a high of 94 for the law enforcement group and the mean is 82.76. For the law enforcement group, scores on the index ranged from 47 to 100, with a mean of 76.04. As shown in Table 38, an independent samples t-test revealed that this difference is statistically significant ($p=.022$).

Table 37: Assessment and Classification Need Factors Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation

	<i>Law Enforcement</i>			<i>Not Law Enforcement</i>			<i>r</i>	<i>sig.</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
History of suicide attempts	4.22	.93574	41	4.52	.50990	25	-.116	.356
History of depression or other mental health disorders	4.34	.79403	41	4.48	.50990	25	-.041	.743
Substance abuse history	4.46	.55216	41	4.64	.48990	25	-.156	.211
Current participation in a substance abuse treatment	4.10	.91665	41	4.40	.57735	25	-.147	.238
Past participation in a substance abuse treatment program	3.56	.97593	41	3.80	.70711	25	-.113	.364
Completion of substance abuse treatment program	3.93	.84824	41	4.12	.52771	25	-.072	.567
Level of dysfunction in childhood home	3.40	1.09088	41	3.31	.85452	25	.109	.382
History of physical abuse as a child	3.63	1.11257	41	3.84	.98658	25	-.074	.554
History of sexual abuse as a child	3.95	1.09433	41	4.00	.91287	25	.013	.918
History of physical abuse as an adult	4.07	.75466	41	4.20	.86603	25	-.102	.416
History of sexual abuse as an adult	4.12	.78087	41	4.24	.83066	25	-.089	.475
Current reliance on public assistance	3.00	1.08604	40	3.40	.86603	25	-.173	.169
History of dysfunctional adult relationships	3.25	1.10361	40	3.64	.90738	25	-.165	.188
Current employment status	3.73	.59264	41	4.40	.64550	25	-.481	.000**
Stability of employment history	3.51	.71141	41	4.28	.61373	25	-.496	.000**
Educational attainment	3.28	.71567	40	3.74	.72285	25	-.280	.024*
Vocational skills	3.30	.72324	40	3.68	.62716	25	-.273	.028*
Single parenting	3.18	1.00989	40	3.36	.81035	25	-.080	.526
Number of children parented	2.98	1.02501	40	3.52	.65320	25	-.275	.027*
Number of dependent children	3.13	1.04237	40	3.48	.71414	25	-.175	.163
Number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives	3.08	1.14102	40	3.72	.89069	25	-.278	.025*
Need salience index	76.04	12.9112	40	82.76	7.74080	25	-.267	.032

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 38: Assessment and Classification Need Factors Independent Samples T-Test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>
History of suicide attempts	1.475	64	.145	.30049
History of depression or other mental health disorders	.779	64	.439	.13854
Substance abuse history	1.314	64	.194	.17659
Current participation in a substance abuse treatment program	1.478	64	.144	.30244
Past participation in a substance abuse treatment program	1.065	64	.291	.23902
Completion of substance abuse treatment program	.997	64	.323	.18829
Level of dysfunction in childhood home	-.375	64	.709	-.09594
History of physical abuse as a child	.760	64	.450	.20585
History of sexual abuse as a child	.187	64	.853	.04878
History of physical abuse as an adult	.626	64	.533	.12683
History of sexual abuse as an adult	.582	64	.563	.11805
Current reliance on public assistance	1.557	63	.125	.40000
History of dysfunctional adult relationships	1.480	63	.144	.39000
Current employment status	4.296	64	.000	.66829
Stability of employment history	4.473	64	.000	.76780
Educational attainment	2.549	63	.013	.46680
Vocational skills	2.166	63	.034	.38000
Single parenting	.773	63	.442	.18500
Number of children parented	2.371	63	.021	.54500
Number of dependent children	1.495	63	.140	.35500
Number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives	2.403	63	.019	.64500
Need salience index	2.350	63	.022	6.72597

Initially, it was believed that community corrections officers who take a law enforcement approach to the supervision of offenders would elevate risk factors above need factors in classification and assessment decisions. In contrast, it was believed that officers who do not take a law enforcement approach to offender supervision would emphasize need factors in importance in classification decisions. Results from a paired samples t-test partially support that assumption, though the results are not statistically significant. The mean score on the risk and need salience indices was computed and revealed that risk factors were elevated above need factors in importance by officers who take a law enforcement approach to the supervision of offenders ($\mu=3.81$ for risk factors and $\mu= 3.65$ for need factors). As illustrated in Table 39, a paired samples t-test revealed that this approached statistical significance, with a p value of .061. Equivalence between the importance of risk and need factors was found for officers who do not take a law enforcement approach to supervision ($\mu=3.9$ for risk factors and $\mu= 3.97$ for need factors).

Table 39: Risk and Need Indices Comparison Within Supervision Styles

	<i>Risk Salience Index</i>			<i>Need Salience Index</i>			<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>		
Law Enforcement	3.81	.47472	39	3.65	.60348	39	1.934	.061
Not Law Enforcement	3.9	.59265	25	3.97	.36313	25	-.632	.534

The independent effect of gender of the offender and supervision style on each of the dependent risk, need and supervision difficulty variables, controlling for the theoretically relevant background characteristics of the officers was examined with a

series of multivariate statistical analyses.¹³ A variety of demographic variables, such as the gender of the officer, age, educational attainment, race, length of employment at OCCD, and the type of caseload currently being supervised by the officers were included in each model. It was anticipated that some of these characteristics might influence perceptions of risk, need, and supervision difficulty. These measures have been examined by several researchers of corrections (see for example Caeti, Hemmens, Cullen and Burton, 2003; Slate, Wells and Johnson, 2003; Wells, Colbert and Slate, 2006). Non response on some of the questionnaire items, particularly in the supervision style item, decreased the sample size that could be included in each regression model to less than 50. Newton and Rudestam (1999) recommend a ratio of 15 subjects to each independent variable when calculating regression models. Given that the sample size was approximately 47 in each regression model, the maximum number of variables that could be included in each model was three. The low *n* in each regression model prevented meaningful statistical analysis of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent risk, need, and supervision difficulty variables. Given the limitations associated with the small sample size, the regression models have been excluded from this chapter.

In conclusion, results from this study suggest that supervision style has little influence over perceptions of risk or supervision decisions. Officers from all supervision styles tend to assess risk for offenders in a similar way. Additionally, officers from all

¹³ Five regression models were computed on the risk salience index, the differential risk index, the need salience index, the differential need index, and the supervision difficulty index. These indices were modeled on gender of the offender, supervision style and six control variables.

supervision styles place a similar emphasis on various risk factors in assessment and classification decisions. With the exception of the marital status item, all officers rated assessment and classification risk factors in a similar way. The decision to issue a violation of supervision does not appear to be influenced by the style of the officer. All officers reported that they would pursue similar courses of action for offenders who violate conditions of supervision. In contrast, supervision style does appear to have some influence over the perceived importance of need factors. Overall, officers with a non law enforcement supervision style rated need factors, particularly those relating to employment and children, as more important than officers with a law enforcement style. Both groups of officers elevated needs relating to substance abuse in importance in classification decisions, but that finding is to be expected given that the department's risk assessment instrument examines both alcohol and drug usage in case classification.

The next chapter will provide an overview of the key findings of this study. The theoretical implications of this research as they relate to the new penology will be discussed and the policy implication will be detailed. Finally, Chapter Eight will conclude with the limitations of this study and directions for future research.

CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Risk has emerged as a defining feature of punishment in the United States. Feeley and Simon (1992) note that contemporary punishment is increasingly moving away from rehabilitation (the old penology) and moving toward the management and control of offenders (the new penology), often through actuarial techniques. While the profusion of risk assessment instruments, now entering their fourth generation, provides some support for the assertion that risk is indeed an important element in corrections, it was previously unknown if the risk model applied equally to male and female offenders.

A review of the current research on risk and punishment reveals voids in both the theoretical and applied risk literature. The theoretical literature has largely failed to examine whether risk functions uniformly across populations. In the bulk of this literature, it is assumed that risk is defined and responded to in much the same way for males and females. Hannah-Moffat's (1999) study represents an exception to this as risk was examined for female offenders in the institutional setting and results revealed that the focus on risk has deleterious effects for female inmates. Because female offenders typically have many unmet needs, a concentration on risks at the expense of offender needs can be detrimental and hinder rehabilitative potential. There is also a danger that offenders with high needs, such as those commonly found in the female offender population, will be assessed at risk levels that are not commensurate with the amount of danger that they actually present. This "overclassification" of female offenders represents a misappropriation of departmental resources and could signal that the new penology is not a suitable supervision model for the female offender population.

The applied literature has integrated women into discussions of risk by examining the predictive validity of risk assessment instruments for female offenders. This literature still contains a void because it is largely disconnected from broader theoretical debates on punishment, such as the new penology. Additionally, the vast majority of the applied research has focused on female correctional inmates, thus neglecting how risk operates for women in the community setting. This gap in the empirical research is problematic given that most female offenders (85%) are supervised in the community by probation and parole authorities (Greenfeld and Snell, 1999).

This study addressed these voids by examining whether the risk model applied to female offenders in the community corrections setting. The issues associated with the theoretical void were addressed by examining the new penology using a gender based lens to determine whether risk and need function differently for male and female offenders. The limitations of the applied research were also addressed by examining risk assessment in the most relevant setting for female offenders, the community.

This chapter provides an overview of the results of this dissertation and examines how the concentration on risk over need influences the classification and supervision of female offenders in the community. The results of the study will be situated in the broader theoretical framework of the new penology. Additionally, the policy implications and limitations of the study will be discussed. Finally, the chapter will conclude with directions for future research in the area of gender and supervision in the community.

Key Findings

The findings reported here suggest that the Orange County Community Corrections Department has incorporated many elements of the new penology into the classification and supervision of offenders in each of its units, though several gender differences were noted. Classification overrides, the perceived level of risk to the community, supervision decisions, and the perceived importance of risk and need factors were all examined in this study. The results indicate that some elements of classification and supervision function uniformly for offenders and operate irrespective of gender, but some areas, such as the perceived level of risk to the community and the perceived importance of risk factors, are influenced by gender.

The Orange County Community Corrections Department (OCCD) utilizes part of the Wisconsin Case Classification Instrument, a third generation risk assessment tool, to make assessment and classification decisions. While the Wisconsin instrument assesses both offender risks and needs, offenders and defendants supervised by OCCD are classified almost exclusively on risks, with minimal consideration of needs. The Wisconsin instrument provides officers with the opportunity to override the classification score and supplant it with their own, if they believe the score under or overestimates the amount of risk posed by the offender. Officers at OCCD reported rarely using classification overrides for male and female offenders, suggesting that case classification is objective for all offenders.

It was hypothesized that community corrections officers would perceive female offenders as posing less risk than male offenders and the results support that assumption.

As reported in Chapter Five, many officers (41.4%) were uncertain when asked whether female offenders were more likely to successfully complete their term of supervision compared to male offenders. However, when asked about violations of supervision that involved new arrests, the majority of officers (63.2%) believed that male offenders were more likely than female offenders to incur that type of violation. Findings from the scenario questions reported in Chapter Six revealed that in all of the scenarios, female offenders were perceived as posing less risk than male offenders, even if all background characteristics were identical. The scenario involving the offender convicted of attempting to fraudulently obtain prescription drugs as a result of an addiction to pain killers (scenario three) produced statistically significant differences in the perceived level of risk the community, with the male offender being assessed at a much higher risk level than the female offender. This suggests that the manifestation of the new penology in community corrections may be gender based. Because female offenders were regarded as presenting a lower risk to the community than their male counterparts, the idea that female offenders are not members of the “dangerous underclass” is supported. Since Feeley and Simon (1992) note that the driving force behind the move to the new penology is the “dangerous underclass”, these findings suggest that the new penology may not be the most accurate way to characterize the supervision of female offenders in the community.

Despite findings of perceived differential risk in all scenario questions, it appears that the treatment of male and female offenders, once they incur violations of supervision, is identical. When asked what their most likely course of action would be

for violations such as being in arrears in supervision fees or being arrested while on supervision, few gender differences were found (see Chapter Six). Community corrections officers reported that once an offender has violated conditions of supervision, their course of action for the offender is not influenced by gender, even in cases when the perceived level of risk is much lower for female offenders.

When asked to rate the importance of risk and need factors in assessment and classification decisions, several differences between the male and female versions of the survey were noted. As reported in Chapter Six, respondents indicated that current offense, prior record as an adult, prior record as a juvenile, and the extent of violence in the offense history were significantly more important in classification decisions for male offenders, compared to female offenders. Respondents rated each of the items in the risk salience index as being more important for male offenders than female offenders, and statistically significant differences between the gender of the offender and the risk salience index were found. These findings indicate that risks are perceived differently for male and female offenders and may signal differential classification.

Differential need was also examined and some needs are considered more important for female offenders, compared to male offenders. When asked whether female offenders are more likely than male offenders to require some form of parenting treatment, almost half (49.4%) of the respondents agreed that females present more need in this area (see Chapter Five). With regard to the importance of need factors in classification decisions, equivalence between male and female offenders was noted in the vast majority of items (see Chapter Six). However, the number of children in foster care

or in the care of relatives was rated as being significantly more important for female offenders. The relationship between gender and single parenting approached statistical significance, with officers reporting that the item was more important for female offenders compared to male offenders. Overall, however, there was little difference in the perceived importance of need factors in the classification of male and female offenders.

Despite findings of equivalence in the perceived importance of most need factors for male and female offenders, a comparison within each gender revealed that community corrections officers elevate risk factors over need factors for male offenders, but rate risk and need factors to be equally important for female offenders (see Chapter Six). The findings indicate that, at least as far as the perceptions of community corrections officers are concerned, risks and needs do not operate the same for male and female offenders in the community corrections setting.

Previous research has found that female offenders pose many difficulties for correctional officials. Because of this, it was anticipated that community corrections officers would report that female offenders are more difficult to supervise than male offenders and that expectation was partially supported. As reported in Chapter Six, community corrections officers indicated that male offenders pose more supervision difficulty than female offenders in the areas of communication, possessing loose morals, and aggression. Female offenders, on the other hand, pose more supervision difficulty than male offenders because they have complex needs. What remains unclear, however,

is whether this increased difficulty translates into differential treatment for male and female offenders.

Finally, the supervision style of officers does not appear to influence most areas of classification and supervision (see Chapter Seven). With regard to definitions of risk and need, few differences were found in the way that officers define each of those terms. Officers tend to define risk in terms of community safety and need in terms of successful completion of a community supervision program. The perceived importance of risk factors was also not influenced by supervision style. Most officers, regardless of supervision style, rated risk factors as being “important” in classification decisions. Additionally, the treatment of offenders was not influenced by supervision style as most officers reported similar treatment of offenders who violate the terms of their supervision. Differences in the perceived importance of need were noted, with non law enforcement styles of supervision rating need factors as being more important than officers with a law enforcement style.

Theoretical Implications

Findings from this study suggest that at the time of this research, community corrections officers are more oriented toward the new penology over traditional old penology ideals. Initially, it was anticipated that two trends were operating in the community corrections setting, a new penology for male offenders, which focuses on objective risk assessment and control and an old penology for female offenders which focuses on rehabilitation and is largely subjective. That assumption is partially

supported, as it appears that risk is a defining feature in the classification and supervision of male offenders.

Consistent with the new penology, classification in the community is risk based for all offenders. Community corrections officers reported that the department only utilizes the risk half of the classification instrument and officers reported overriding the derived score rarely for male and female offenders (see Chapters Five and Six). Both the concentration on risk and the lack of subjectivity in classification are hallmarks of the new penology. It is unknown whether the Wisconsin instrument has predictive validity for female offenders supervised in the community as no validation studies could be found in the literature. It is possible that the instrument is a valid predictor of risk and recidivism for both male and female offenders, but further research is needed in this area to determine the reasons for the low rates of overrides.

Findings from the scenario questions in Chapter Six reveal that in all cases female offenders were perceived as presenting a lower risk to the community than their male counterparts, though only one scenario produced statistically significant results. These findings suggest that the types of female offenders supervised by OCCD (e.g. lower risk and typically misdemeanor) are not necessarily part of the “dangerous underclass” of offenders described by Feeley and Simon (1992). Because most female offenders are perceived as being low risk, the fear and danger associated with the new penology may not apply to women supervised in the community corrections setting.

Respondents rated risk factors as being more important than need factors in assessment and classification decisions for male offenders only. However, the

perceptions of community corrections officers regarding the classification of female offenders do not appear to reflect the new penology because risks and needs are rated equally important. This finding suggests that the emergence of the new penology in community corrections may be gender based. Specifically, objective case classification and limited attention to needs may characterize the classification of male offenders, but because equivalence between risk and need factors was noted for female offenders, a different trend for women under community supervision may be operating. These findings should be treated with caution as they do not represent the actual emphasis attributed to risk and need factors, but rather measure the perceptions of the officers. It remains unclear what, if any, influence these perceptions have on assessment and classification decisions.

Despite gender differences in the perceived importance of classification factors, the supervision of offenders in the community is based on risk and gender has little influence over reported treatment. Female offenders were perceived as posing a lower amount of risk compared to male offenders; however, community corrections officers reported that the treatment of the men and women who violate conditions of supervision is identical. This finding provides support for the idea that the new penology has manifested in the community corrections department in this study because individual factors are eschewed in favor of objective treatment.

While the community corrections department appears to be moving toward a risk based penology, elements of the old penology still persist. Offender needs pertaining to employment are addressed while under supervision and there are some rehabilitative

programs available to offenders who have unmet needs. For example, offenders at the work release center (WRC) have access to substance abuse intervention, life skills programs, and chaplain services. However, the limited resources of the community corrections department can hinder meeting offender needs. According to one community corrections officer at the WRC, “The #1 job is to keep the community safe—some of the needs can be started to be addressed while at WRC, but not met until the person is released. We don't have enough time to work with them to meet most of their needs.”

Results from this study have established that, as it relates to supervision issues, such as the decision to issue a violation of supervision, risk operates much the same way for male and female offenders in the community. Despite this, responses from some of the officers do point to a desire to take needs into account especially for female offenders. According to one officer, “Generally, females are involved with children and their needs are equally important. Also female are generally significantly more emotional. They are usually typically in more need of family matters than males.” Similarly, one respondent stated that “most females come from a bad situation and often have children. They need the tools on how to manage things better.” Lastly, one respondent noted that “as a general rule, females are more likely to need some assistance such as social services, mental health, etc.” While the department’s policy is to classify and supervise based on risk, there appears to be recognition among some officers that offender needs, particularly for women, are important in both classification and supervision.

The findings from this study have additional implications for the feminist theoretical framework. As stated in Chapter Two, a fundamental part of feminism is the

recognition that women have traditionally been oppressed and marginalized in most areas in society. Additionally, women have a number of specific needs that must be fulfilled to enable full participation in all arenas of social life. The results of this study have shown that many areas of risk operate irrespective of gender and disparate treatment of female offenders in the areas of classification and supervision does not appear to be widespread. One key question remains unanswered: Is risk based supervision reasonable in view of the different risks and needs posed by male and female offenders?

On its face, risk based classification and supervision seems to ensure that there is parity between male and female offenders, but certain problems emerge when one considers the unique issues of women under correctional supervision (for example past abuse, motherhood, and substance abuse). Equal treatment by the system depends, in large measure, on offenders arriving to the system from similar circumstances (Hedderman and Gelsthorpe, 1997), but it is clear that female offenders arrive to the community corrections system with many more unmet needs and fewer risk factors than their male counterparts. Given this, some differential treatment based on needs may be warranted for women supervised in the community. A focus on needs over risks for female offenders may ultimately ensure that the mandate for parity within the system is achieved.

Policy Implications

Given the current political climate, as well as the liability involved in supervising offenders in the community, it is likely that the new penology represents the future of

community corrections. The most relevant policy issue becomes one of balancing risk to the community and effective supervision of male and female offenders. Female offenders represent only 13% of the total number of offenders supervised by the Orange County Community Corrections Department so it is likely that many community corrections officers lack extensive experience supervising female offenders. Implementing a gender responsive approach to both classification and supervision could lead to enhanced community safety and more effective classification and supervision for male and female offenders.

A gender responsive approach in corrections involves a recognition that there are differences between male and female offenders, both in their pathways to criminality and in the needs presented by each group (Bloom, Owen, and Covington, 2003; Berman, 2005). Additionally, the gender responsive approach to supervision involves providing services to female offenders to best address their often complex needs (Berman, 2005). A gender responsive approach to the supervision of female offenders in the community necessitates changes in at least two of the following areas: classification, training, and/or specialized caseloads.

The Orange County Community Corrections Department utilizes the risk half of the Wisconsin Case Classification Instrument, which is a gender neutral classification tool. There are two changes that could be implemented to address possible shortcomings with the classification decisions. First, the community corrections department could use both the risk and need portions of the instrument. Classification decisions based on risk and need may lead to more effective classification decisions for both male and female

offenders. The second classification alternative would involve the development/implementation of a female specific classification instrument. Bloom and McDiarmid (2000), note that the fields of mental health, social services, and public health have a variety of tools that could be useful in making classification decisions for female offenders. Additionally, the National Institute of Corrections and the University of Cincinnati are currently developing a gender responsive risk/needs assessment for female offenders (Van Voorhis, 2004). The research is ongoing so it is unknown at this time if the gender responsive classification tool has improved predictive validity for female offenders, compared to gender neutral instruments.

A second gender responsive strategy involves training for all community corrections officers to educate them about issues that are salient for female offenders, such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, and issues with children. Such training could aid in the development of effective strategies for addressing these problem areas. Because male and female offenders typically have different issues, it is likely that a change in supervision style is necessary when interacting with female offenders. Gender responsive training could aid in the development of an alternative supervision style that would lead to more effective supervision for female offenders. Such training would require the department to expend some resources, both in the form of money and time, which may prove difficult given the limited resources available.

The final gender responsive approach takes the form of specialized caseloads for female offenders. Given the resource limitations of the community corrections department, providing specialized training to a handful of officers charged with the

supervision of female offenders may prove to be a more viable option than providing training for all officers. These caseloads would resemble specialized caseloads that are common in felony state probation for drug offenders and sex offenders. With specialized caseloads, only officers with gender responsive training would supervise female offenders. These caseloads would aid in effective supervision and treatment of female offenders in the community, while still making the most efficient use of departmental resources. Some states have begun to implement these types of caseloads and the results seem favorable. The Missouri Department of Corrections reports that recidivism rates for female offenders on gender specific parole caseloads are less than 10% (Berman, 2005).

Limitations

As with any research, there are limitations in this study that need to be addressed. The study's small sample size, the use of survey methodology as a proxy for behavior, inadequate measurement of supervision style, and social desirability are all issues that present difficulty in this research.

The study participants represent 89% of the population of officers employed by the county, but the size of the group in the study was quite small (n=93). This small sample size resulted in an inability to examine the relationships between variables using multivariate techniques. Initially, the independent effect of gender of the offender and supervision style on each of the risk and need indices, controlling for the background characteristics of the officers (such as gender of the officers, age, educational attainment, and race) was to be examined with a series of multivariate statistical analyses. While

information on the background characteristics of the officers was collected, it was not possible to control for the effects of these characteristics on the dependent variables with multivariate analysis. Because the majority of the respondents were female (70%), multivariate analysis would be beneficial to examine how the gender of the community corrections officer affects outcomes. Specifically, it is unknown whether female officers classify female offenders differently or place a different emphasis on risk and need factors compared to male officers.

While the sample size in the study was small, the generalizability of the findings to other county community corrections agencies is bolstered by the size of the department. In a survey of case classification in the community, Hubbard, Travis and Latessa (2001) reported that 83.1% of the 339 local probation agencies included in their study employed fewer than 75 officers and 83.6% of the agencies supervised less than 3,000 offenders. OCCD is a large department that employs 104 officers who supervise over 8,000 offenders at various stages in the criminal justice system. Because the officers in this study interact with so many offenders on a regular basis, the results are most likely generalizable to many local agencies. However, it is unknown if the findings from this study can apply to agencies that are smaller than OCCD. This limitation can be easily addressed with future research that surveys officers employed by community corrections departments of varying sizes.

Additional questions about generalizability are raised due to the types of offenders (e.g. lower risk) that are supervised in the community. The majority of the offenders under community supervision in Orange County have committed misdemeanor

offenses, thus it is unknown if the findings from this research can apply to agencies that supervise felony offenders or institutional populations. Future research can address these questions by examining classification and supervision in felony state probation and surveying officers who conduct case classification in institutional settings.

A second limitation is the use of the survey methodology as a proxy for behavior. The survey method is an accepted approach to the measurement of attitudes and perceptions (Bachman and Schutt, 2007), however part of the goal of this research is to determine if the perceptions held by correctional officers might influence the actual treatment of offenders. While an observational study may have provided useful insight into the actions of community corrections officers, Gould (1996) notes that observational studies can suffer from problems relating to a Hawthorne effect and lack of uniformity in data collection. The scenario questions were included on the survey to serve as a proxy for behavior and to counter the issues associated with field research. Nevertheless, it might be useful in the future to examine agency records for classification scores and supervision decisions, such as violations of supervision to gain a more comprehensive evaluation of classification and supervision in the community.

The supervision style variable was somewhat problematic in this study as only one dimension of supervision style was included on the survey. As reported in Chapter Seven, supervision style was measured by asking officers to indicate which style of supervision (law enforcement, social worker, broker of services, and an open ended category) best characterized their approach to the supervision of offenders. The measurement of this variable could have been improved by including more dimensions,

such as the development of a supervision style index or a measure asking officers to rate their commitment to control or rehabilitation on a continuum.

Social desirability bias represents another possible limitation of the study. Because the survey dealt with a potentially sensitive subject (i.e. differential treatment based on gender), it is possible that respondents may have been reluctant to answer the questions on the survey in a completely truthful manner. Two related issues, the confidential nature of the survey and the department's recent completion of accreditation, further exacerbated the social desirability bias. Offering anonymity may have gone a long way to reducing the social desirability bias, but since we hoped to include the entire population of officers in the study, it was necessary to offer confidentiality for tracking purposes. Additionally, the timing of the study potentially influenced the responses received from the officers. Two units within the community corrections department had just completed the accreditation process a few months prior to the distribution of the survey. As part of accreditation by the American Correctional Association, an audit of all unit files in probation and home confinement was conducted. This audit led to some distrust of management that was still present at the time of this research. Despite assurances that all responses would be kept confidential and would not be shared with correctional management, a small handful of officers (n=11) expressed concern about completing the study and refused to take part. These concerns and distrust of management may have influenced the veracity of the survey responses that were provided by the officers who completed the study.

Future Research

This dissertation represents a first step in the examination of the risk penology in the community corrections setting. Due to its exploratory nature, many questions remain unanswered that should be addressed in future research. The predictive validity of gender neutral classification instruments for female offenders in the community corrections setting, supervision difficulties associated with male and female offenders, and the examination of risk and need using agency records are all areas that should be examined in future research.

Officers in this study reported rarely overriding the risk score provided by the Wisconsin Case Classification Instrument for male and female offenders, a finding that is inconsistent with research on risk assessment and institutional corrections. It is unknown if the low override rate is attributable to the instrument's predictive validity for both male and female offenders or due to some other factor. There has been a dearth of research on the predictive validity of gender neutral risk assessment instruments for female offenders in the community corrections setting. As such, future research should examine whether the Wisconsin Case Classification Instrument can accurately predict risk and recidivism for female offenders in the community. Such an analysis could aid in a more complete understanding of the appropriateness of the risk model for female offenders.

This dissertation raises additional questions regarding supervision difficulty for male and female offenders in the community corrections setting. There has been a paucity of research that examines issues of supervision difficulty in the adult community corrections setting and future research should expand more fully on areas of difficulty

highlighted in this study. Additionally, future research should examine whether increased difficulty translates into differential treatment based on gender. This research could draw upon both feminism and masculinities to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of gender on behavior and could aid in more effective supervision for male and female offenders.

Finally, one of the potential limitations of this research is its use of the survey methodology to measure behavior. It can be difficult to generalize the reported behaviors on the survey to the actual behavior and decisions of officers. Future research could examine agency records, with special attention paid to classification decisions, program referrals, violations of supervision, and other supervision decisions to determine whether there are differences in the treatment of male and female offenders, and whether those differences are consistent with the new penology. This research could also examine the influence of officer gender on classification and supervision decisions for male and female offenders.

In conclusion, this dissertation has addressed two important voids in the literature. First, this project integrated the issue of risk and female offenders into the broader theoretical debate of the new penology. Second, this dissertation examined the role of risk and female offenders supervised in the community, which was a previously under-researched area. Some elements of the new penology appear to be gender based in the community corrections department included in this study, as risk factors were elevated in importance over need factors for male offenders only. Additionally, male offenders were assessed at higher risk levels than their female counterparts in the scenario questions,

providing support for a gender based new penology. Given that female offenders were perceived as being lower risk compared to males, and risk and need factors were rated equally important for female offenders, elements of the old penology do appear to persist for women supervised in the community. However, elements of the new penology were also found in some classification and supervision issues for female offenders, possibly signaling a transition period for female offenders from the “old” to the “new.”

This research represents a starting point in an important area of research and serves as a foundation for future investigations into how gender shapes the supervision of offenders in the community. Further research is needed to address the limitations of this study, as well as the additional questions that were raised by the findings. The debate over the new penology is far from settled and future research should continue to examine its presence in community corrections as well as the application of risk to different populations under correctional supervision.

APPENDIX A: IRB COMMITTEE APPROVAL FORM



THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

IRB Committee Approval Form

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Laurie A. Gould #06-3918
(Supervisor: Eugene Paoline, Ph.D.)

PROJECT TITLE: Perceptions of risk and need in the classification and supervision of offenders in the community corrections setting: The role of gender

- New project submission
- Continuing review of lapsed project # _____
- Study expires
- Initial submission was approved by full board review but continuing review can be expedited
- Suspension of enrollment email sent to PI, entered on spreadsheet, administration notified _____
- Resubmission of lapsed project # _____
- Continuing review of # _____
- Initial submission was approved by expedited review

Chair

Expedited Approval

Dated: _____
Cite how qualifies for expedited review: minimal risk and _____

Exempt

Dated: 10/22/06
Cite how qualifies for exempt status: minimal risk and # 2

Expiration
Date: _____

IRB Reviewers:

Signed: Tracy Dietz
Dr. Tracy Dietz, Chair

Signed: _____
Dr. Craig Van Slyke, Vice-Chair

Signed: _____
Dr. Sophia Dziegielewski, Vice-Chair

Complete reverse side of expedited or exempt form

- Waiver of documentation of consent approved
- Waiver of consent approved
- Waiver of HIPAA Authorization approved

NOTES FROM IRB CHAIR (IF APPLICABLE): _____

APPENDIX B: FEMALE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Section Two: In the section, I am interested in learning how you define risk and need. Please read each question and answer each according to your professional opinion.

9) In your professional opinion, what is the definition of "risk" in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?

10) In your professional opinion, what is the definition of "need" in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?

Section Three: In this section I am interested in learning about how risk and need influence your supervision of offenders. Please read each question and circle each according to your experiences.

11) What type of risk assessment instrument does your department currently use?

- a. Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R)
- b. Wisconsin Risk-Need classification instrument
- c. Client Management Classification tool (CMC)
- d. Salient Factor Score (SFS)
- e. Informal risk assessment instrument
- f. None
- g. Other (please explain) _____

12) Do you believe that the risk of recidivism posed by male and female offenders is generally the same?

- a. Yes
- b. No

13) Do you believe that the needs (e.g. educational, vocational, mental health) of male and female offenders are generally the same?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14) On average, which factors (risk or need) most affect the way you supervise a female offender?

- a. Risk
- b. Need

Please explain how risk or need factors affect your supervision of female offenders:

15) In supervising female offenders, how often in the past have you overridden a classification instrument score (standard practice or policy) either by increasing or decreasing an offender's supervision level?

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes
- d. Often
- e. Not applicable

16) Assuming both males and females have the same prior and current offense history, do you feel more comfortable decreasing the supervision level of a female or a male offender?

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. No difference

Please explain your answer: _____

Section Four: In the section, I am interested in learning about your perceptions of classifying, assessing, and supervising female offenders. Please read each question and answer each according to your experiences.

17) Based on your experiences, how challenging, compared to male offenders, is supervising female offenders?

- a) Females are much less challenging
- b) Females are somewhat less challenging
- c) No difference
- d) Females are somewhat more challenging
- e) Females are much more challenging

18) If you answered A or E in question 17, what makes them more or less challenging?

19) Compared to supervising male offenders, how challenging are female offenders to supervise in the following areas:

Females are Much Less Challenging	Females Are Somewhat Less Challenging	No Difference	Females Are Somewhat More Challenging	Females Are Much More Challenging
1	2	3	4	5

Communication (e.g. willingness to share details of personal life)	1	2	3	4	5
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Emotional Expression of Problems/Needs (e.g. crying, threats of self harm)	1	2	3	4	5
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Lying	1	2	3	4	5
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Manipulation	1	2	3	4	5
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Possessing Loose Morals	1	2	3	4	5
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Complexity of Needs	1	2	3	4	5
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Verbal Expressions of Aggression	1	2	3	4	5
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Physical Expressions of Aggression	1	2	3	4	5
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20) Please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, disagree strongly, or are uncertain about the following statements.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of substance abuse treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of parenting treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of mental health treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
I am more likely to refer a male offender for vocational programming than a female offender.	1	2	3	4	5
I have more knowledge about female offenders' personal/family relationships than male offenders' personal relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
Female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete their term of supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to incur a technical violation of supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to violate their term of supervision with a new arrest.	1	2	3	4	5
My supervision style is different when I supervise male and female offenders.	1	2	3	4	5

21) In your professional opinion, how important are the following factors in classifying and assessing female offenders?

	Not At All 1	Of Little Importance 2	Somewhat Important 3	Important 4	Very Important 5
Current offense	1	2	3	4	5
Prior record as an adult	1	2	3	4	5
Prior record as a juvenile	1	2	3	4	5
Marital status	1	2	3	4	5
Current age	1	2	3	4	5
History of suicide attempts	1	2	3	4	5
History of depression or other mental health disorders	1	2	3	4	5
Substance abuse history	1	2	3	4	5
Current participation in a substance abuse treatment program	1	2	3	4	5
Past participation in a substance abuse treatment program	1	2	3	4	5
Completion of substance abuse treatment program	1	2	3	4	5
Level of dysfunction in childhood home	1	2	3	4	5
History of physical abuse as a child	1	2	3	4	5
History of sexual abuse as a child	1	2	3	4	5
History of physical abuse as an adult	1	2	3	4	5
History of sexual abuse as an adult	1	2	3	4	5

In your professional opinion, how important are the following factors in classifying and assessing female offenders

Not At All 1	Of Little Importance 2	Somewhat Important 3	Important 4	Very Important 5
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Current reliance on public assistance	1	2	3	4	5
History of dysfunctional adult relationships	1	2	3	4	5
Age at first arrest	1	2	3	4	5
Extent of violence in offense history	1	2	3	4	5
Number of prior prison incarcerations	1	2	3	4	5
History of probation and parole violations and jail incarcerations	1	2	3	4	5
Current employment status	1	2	3	4	5
Stability of employment history	1	2	3	4	5
Educational attainment	1	2	3	4	5
Vocational skills	1	2	3	4	5
Single parenting	1	2	3	4	5
Number of children parented	1	2	3	4	5
Number of dependent children	1	2	3	4	5
Number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives	1	2	3	4	5
Observed attitude (e.g. negative demeanor, resistant to authority, reluctant to communicate)	1	2	3	4	5

Section Five: In this section I am interested in learning about your caseload and your characteristics. Please read each question and circle the answer that best characterizes your response.

- 22) What type of caseload do you currently supervise?
- a. Domestic Violence
 - b. Traffic
 - c. Misdemeanor
 - d. Prostitution
 - e. Telephone Reporting
 - f. Mixed Caseload
- 23) Approximately what percentage of your current caseload is comprised of female offenders?
- a. Less than 5%
 - b. 6%-10%
 - c. 11%-15%
 - d. 16%-20%
 - e. 21%-25%
 - f. 26%-30%
 - g. Other _____
- 24) Which supervision style best characterizes your approach to supervising offenders?
- a. Law enforcement (monitoring)
 - b. Social worker (therapeutic)
 - c. Broker of services
 - d. Other _____
- 25) What is your gender?
- a. Male
 - b. Female
- 26) In what year were you born? _____
- 27) What is your race?
- a. African American
 - b. Asian
 - c. Caucasian
 - d. Hispanic
 - e. Other _____
- 28) What is your highest level of educational attainment?
- a. High school or GED
 - b. Some junior college, but did not earn a degree
 - c. Associates degree (AA)
 - d. More than 2 years of college, but did not earn a bachelors degree
 - e. Bachelors degree
 - f. Some graduate courses, but did not earn graduate degree
 - g. Graduate degree

29) How many years have you been working for OCCD? _____ (years)

30) How many years have you been a Community Corrections Officer with OCCD? _____ (years)

31) In what department /section are you employed?

- a. Work Release
- b. Community Surveillance Unit
- c. Pre-trial Services
- d. Diversion Services
- e. Probation
- f. Intake Unit
- g. Alternative Community Service
- h. Other _____

32) Besides OCCD have you worked for another correctional agency?

a. No

b. Yes

32a) All together, how many years did you work for other correctional agencies? _____ (years)

32b) Did you work as a community corrections officer for any of these other agencies?

a. No

b. Yes

32c) All together, how many years were you a community correction officer at this other agency? _____ (years)

Thank you!

APPENDIX C: MALE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Section Two: In the section, I am interested in learning about your perceptions of risk and need. Please read each question and answer each according to your experiences.

9) In your professional opinion, what is the definition of "risk" in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?

10) In your professional opinion, what is the definition of "need" in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?

Section Three: In this section I am interested in learning about how risk and need influence your supervision of offenders. Please read each question and circle each according to your experiences.

11) What type of risk assessment instrument does your department currently use?

- a. Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R)
- b. Wisconsin Risk-Need classification instrument
- c. Client Management Classification tool (CMC)
- d. Salient Factor Score (SFS)
- e. Informal risk assessment instrument
- f. None
- g. Other (please explain) _____

12) Do you believe that the risk of recidivism posed by male and female offenders is generally the same?

- a. Yes
- b. No

13) Do you believe that the needs (e.g. educational, vocational, mental health) of male and female offenders are generally the same?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14) On average, which factors (risk or need) most affect the way you supervise a male offender?

- a. Risk
- b. Need

Please explain how risk or need factors affect your supervision of male offenders:

15) In supervising male offenders, how often in the past have you overridden a classification instrument score (standard practice or policy) either by increasing or decreasing an offender's supervision level?

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes
- d. Often
- e. Not applicable

16) Assuming both males and females have the same prior and current offense history, do you feel more comfortable decreasing the supervision level of a male or a female offender?

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. No difference

Please explain your answer: _____

Section Four: In the section, I am interested in learning about your perceptions of classifying, assessing, and supervising male offenders. Please read each question and answer each according to your experiences.

17) Based on your experiences, how challenging, compared to female offenders, is supervising male offenders?

- a) Males are much less challenging
- b) Males are somewhat less challenging
- c) No difference
- d) Males are somewhat more challenging
- e) Males are much more challenging

18) If you answered A or E in question 17, what makes them more or less challenging?

19) Compared to supervising female offenders, how challenging are male offenders to supervise in the following areas:

Males are Much Less Challenging	Males Are Somewhat Less Challenging	No Difference	Males Are Somewhat More Challenging	Males Are Much More Challenging
1	2	3	4	5

Communication (e.g. willingness to share details of personal life)	1	2	3	4	5
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Emotional Expression of Problems/Needs (e.g. crying, threats of self harm)	1	2	3	4	5
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Lying	1	2	3	4	5
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Manipulation	1	2	3	4	5
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Possessing Loose Morals	1	2	3	4	5
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Complexity of Needs	1	2	3	4	5
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Verbal Expressions of Aggression	1	2	3	4	5
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Physical Expressions of Aggression	1	2	3	4	5
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20) Please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, disagree strongly, or are uncertain about the following statements.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree Strongly
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Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of substance abuse treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
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Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of parenting treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
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Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of mental health treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
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I am more likely to refer a male offender for vocational programming than a female offender.	1	2	3	4	5
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I have more knowledge about female offenders' personal/family relationships than male offenders' personal relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
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Female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete their term of supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
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Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to incur a technical violation of supervision.	1	2	3	4	5
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Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to violate their term of supervision with a new arrest.	1	2	3	4	5
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Level of dysfunction in childhood home	1	2	3	4	5
History of physical abuse as a child	1	2	3	4	5
History of sexual abuse as a child	1	2	3	4	5
History of physical abuse as an adult	1	2	3	4	5
History of sexual abuse as an adult	1	2	3	4	5

In your professional opinion, how important are the following factors in classifying and assessing male offenders?

	Not At All 1	Of Little Importance 2	Somewhat Important 3	Important 4	Very Important 5
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Current employment status	1	2	3	4	5
Stability of employment history	1	2	3	4	5
Educational attainment	1	2	3	4	5
Vocational skills	1	2	3	4	5
Single parenting	1	2	3	4	5
Number of children parented	1	2	3	4	5
Number of dependent children	1	2	3	4	5
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- 24) Which supervision style best characterizes your approach to supervising offenders?
- a. Law enforcement (monitoring)
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 - c. Broker of services
 - d. Other _____
- 25) What is your gender?
- a. Male
 - b. Female
- 26) In what year were you born? _____
- 27) What is your race?
- a. African American
 - b. Asian
 - c. Caucasian
 - d. Hispanic
 - e. Other _____
- 28) What is your highest level of educational attainment?
- a. High school or GED
 - b. Some junior college, but did not earn a degree
 - c. Associates degree (AA)
 - d. More than 2 years of college, but did not earn a bachelors degree
 - e. Bachelors degree
 - f. Some graduate courses, but did not earn graduate degree
 - g. Graduate degree

29) How many years have you been working for OCCD? _____ (years)

30) How many years have you been a Community Corrections Officer with OCCD? _____ (years)

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- d. Diversion Services
- e. Probation
- f. Intake Unit
- g. Alternative Community Service
- h. Other _____

32) Besides OCCD have you worked for another correctional agency?

- a. No
- b. Yes

32a) All together, how many years did you work for other correctional agencies? _____ (years)

32b) Did you work as a community corrections officer for any of these other agencies?

- a. No
- b. Yes

32c) All together, how many years were you a community correction officer at this other agency? _____ (years)

Thank you!

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM

Dear Community Corrections Officer:

My name is Laurie Gould and I am a graduate student at the University of Central Florida. I am working under the supervision of faculty member, Dr. Eugene Paoline. As part of my coursework, I am conducting a survey, to learn about how you supervise offenders. We would appreciate it if you would take approximately 20-30 minutes to answer questions on the survey. We believe the survey asks important, useful questions, the answers to which will help us understand your perceptions and supervision style.

You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. All survey information will be kept confidential and your individual responses will not be shared with anyone. Only I will have access to your completed surveys, which I will code and analyze, removing any identifiers during analysis. Your identity will be kept confidential and should this research be published, no information that would identify you will be written since all results will be reported in aggregate form. You must be at least 18 years old to participate. There will be no compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in this survey, and there are no anticipated risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life.

We realize this survey will take twenty or thirty minutes of your valuable time, but your participation is the only way for us to better understand what you do. You are very important to the success of this project, and we thank you for your consideration.

If you have any questions or comments about this research, please contact me or my faculty supervisor, Dr. Eugene Paoline, College of Health and Public Affairs, Orlando, FL; (407) 823-4946. Information regarding your rights as a research volunteer may be obtained from: IRB Coordinator, Institutional Review Board (IRB), University of Central Florida (UCF), 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246. The telephone number is (407) 823-2901. The office is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday except on UCF official holidays.

By signing this consent form, you give me permission to report your responses in the final manuscript to be submitted to my faculty supervisor as part of my dissertation. Furthermore you understand that there will be no negative consequences if you do not participate and you are acknowledging that you are aware that you can stop participating at any time for any reason. Finally you are acknowledging that you voluntarily agree to be in this study.

If you do not wish to participate in this survey, simply return this form and the blank survey to the researcher now or simply tell your investigator that you do not wish to participate. If you wish to participate in this study, please sign the form below:

Signature

Name (printed)

Thank you very much for your participation,
Laurie A. Gould
U. of Central Florida
Dept. of Criminal Justice/Legal Studies
P.O. Box 161600
Orlando, FL 32816-1600
407-823-2603
407-823-5360 (Fax)

APPENDIX E: OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Operationalization</i>	<i>Response Options</i>
Gender of the offender	The sample was divided and two versions of the survey were distributed to respondents—one with questions pertaining to female offenders and the other with questions pertaining to male offenders.	
Supervision style	Which supervision style best characterizes your approach to supervising offenders?	Law enforcement (monitoring); Social worker (therapeutic); Broker of services; Other
	My supervision style is different when I supervise male and female offenders.	Disagree Strongly; Disagree Somewhat; Uncertain; Agree Somewhat; Agree Strongly
Definition of risk and need	In your professional opinion, what is the definition of risk in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?	Open ended
	In your professional opinion, what is the definition of need in the classification and assessment of offenders placed on community supervision?	Open ended
Current caseload	Approximately what percentage of your current caseload is made up of female offenders?	Less than 5%; 6%-10%; 11%-15%; 16%-20%; 21%-25%; 26%-30%; other _____
	What type of caseload do you currently supervise?	Domestic Violence; Traffic; Misdemeanor; Prostitution; Telephone Reporting; Mixed Caseload

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Operationalization</i>	<i>Response Options</i>
Risk assessment Instrument	What type of risk assessment instrument does your department currently use?	LSI-R; Wisconsin Risk-Need classification instrument; Salient Factor Score (SFS); Client Management Classification tool (CMC); Informal risk assessment instrument; other (please explain)_____
Perception of differential risk	Do you believe that the risk of recidivism posed by male and female offenders is generally the same?	Yes; No
	On average, which factors (risk or need) most affect the way you supervise a female offender?	Risk; Need; Please explain answer
	In supervising female offenders, how often in the past have you overridden a classification instrument score (standard practice or policy) either by increasing or decreasing an offender's supervision level?	Never; Rarely; Sometimes; Often
	Assuming both males and females have the same prior and current offense history, do you feel more comfortable decreasing the supervision level of a male or a female offender?	Female; Male; No difference
	You are currently supervising a single parent of 3 children who was convicted of passing bad checks in the amount of \$2500. Her record indicates no prior arrests or convictions. The offender is addicted to cocaine and is participating in a court ordered drug treatment program. For the first time in 6 months, a weekly drug test shows positive for cocaine. Which of the following is your most likely course of action?	Violate with arrest warrant issued; Violate (violation hearing notice is issued in lieu of warrant); Modify the terms of probation to include more supervision and/or drug treatment; None of the above (please explain)

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Operationalization</i>	<i>Response Options</i>
Perception of differential risk	You are currently supervising an offender with one child. She has been convicted of possession of marijuana paraphernalia and has an offense history that includes one conviction for grand theft. The offender has a history of involvement in dysfunctional romantic relationships. The offender is currently employed part time and has been notified twice that she is \$100 in arrears in her payment of supervision fees. Which of the following is your most likely course of action?	Violate with arrest warrant issued; Violate (violation hearing notice is issued in lieu of warrant); Modify the terms of probation to allow for a waiver of fees to perform community service in lieu of paying supervision fees; None of the above (please explain)
	You are supervising a married offender with no children, convicted of attempting to fraudulently obtain prescription drugs as a result of an addiction to pain killers. The offender also has a documented history of depression and has attempted suicide on at least one occasion. The offender has been ordered to a mental health program, but you have been notified that she has not been attending most of the required counseling sessions. Which of the following is your most likely course of action?	Violate with arrest warrant issued; Violate (violation hearing notice is issued in lieu of warrant); Issue a warning to reenroll in the program or the offender will be violated; None of the above (please explain)
	A first time offender is currently on your caseload for possession of cocaine. She has been given regular drug tests while on your caseload and all have come back negative. This offender has just been arrested for possession of cocaine again, though she maintains she was only holding the drugs for her close friend (the same accomplice from her current conviction). At the revocation hearing, which of the following would you recommend?	Increase intensity of community supervision; Revoke the term of supervision and recommend termination from community supervision; Reinstate the term of supervision with the added condition of an in patient treatment program; None of the above (please explain)
	Female offenders are more likely than male offenders to successfully complete their term of supervision.	Disagree Strongly; Disagree Somewhat; Uncertain; Agree Somewhat; Agree Strongly

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Operationalization</i>	<i>Response Options</i>
Perception of differential risk	Male offenders are more likely than female offenders to incur a technical violation of supervision.	Disagree Strongly; Disagree Somewhat; Uncertain; Agree Somewhat; Agree Strongly
	Male offenders are more likely than female to violate their term of supervision with a new arrest.	Disagree Strongly; Disagree Somewhat; Uncertain; Agree Somewhat; Agree Strongly
	In your professional opinion, how important are the following factors in classifying and assessing <u>female</u> offenders? Current offense Prior record as an adult Prior record as a juvenile Marital status Current age Age at first arrest Extent of violence in offense history Number of prior prison incarcerations History of probation and parole violations and jail incarcerations Observed attitude (e.g. negative demeanor, resistant to authority, reluctant to communicate)	Not at all; Of little importance; Somewhat important; Important; Very important
Perceptions of differential need	Do you believe that the needs (e.g. educational, vocational, mental health) of male and female offenders are generally the same?	Yes; No
	Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of substance abuse treatment.	Disagree Strongly; Disagree Somewhat; Uncertain; Agree Somewhat; Agree Strongly
	Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to require some form of parenting programming.	Disagree Strongly; Disagree Somewhat; Uncertain; Agree Somewhat; Agree Strongly

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Operationalization</i>	<i>Response Options</i>
Perceptions of differential need	I am more likely to refer a male offender for vocational programming than a female offender.	Disagree Strongly; Disagree Somewhat; Uncertain; Agree Somewhat; Agree Strongly
	I have more knowledge about female offenders' personal/family relationships than male offenders' personal relationships.	Disagree Strongly; Disagree Somewhat; Uncertain; Agree Somewhat; Agree Strongly
	In your professional opinion, how important are the following factors in classifying and assessing <u>female</u> offenders? History of suicide attempts History of depression or other mental health disorders Substance abuse history Current participation in a substance abuse treatment program Past participation in a substance abuse treatment program Completion of substance abuse treatment program Level of dysfunction in childhood home History of physical abuse as a child History of sexual abuse as a child History of physical abuse as an adult History of sexual abuse as an adult Current reliance on public assistance History of dysfunctional adult relationships Current employment status Stability of employment history Educational attainment Vocational skills Single parenting Number of children parented Number of dependent children Number of children in foster care or in the care of relatives	Not at all; Of little importance; Somewhat important; Important; Very important

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Operationalization</i>	<i>Response Options</i>
Supervision Difficulty	<p>Based on your experiences, how challenging, compared to male offenders, is supervising female offenders?</p> <p>Compared to supervising male offenders, how challenging are female offenders to supervise in the following areas:</p> <p>Communication (e.g. willingness to share details of personal life) Emotional Expression of Problems/Needs (e.g. crying, threats of self harm) Lying Manipulation Possessing loose morals Complexity of needs Verbal expressions of aggression Physical expressions of aggression</p>	<p>Females are much less challenging, Females are somewhat less challenging, No difference, Females are somewhat more challenging, Females are much more challenging</p> <p>Females are much less challenging, Females are somewhat less challenging, No difference, Females are somewhat more challenging, Females are much more challenging</p>
Gender	What is your gender?	Male; Female
Age	In what year were you born?	Open ended
Race	What is your race?	African American; Asian; Caucasian; Hispanic; Other
Education	What is your highest level of educational attainment?	Less than high school; High school or GED; Some junior college, but did not earn a degree; Associates degree (AA); More than 2 years of college, but did not earn a bachelors degree ; Bachelors degree; Some graduate courses, but did not earn graduate degree; Graduate degree

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Operationalization</i>	<i>Response Options</i>
Work Experience	How many years have you been working for OCCD?	Open ended
	How long have you been a community corrections officer with OCCD?	Open ended
	In what department /section are you employed?	Work release; Home confinement; Pre-trial services; Pre-trial diversion; Probation; Other
	Besides OCCD have you worked for another correctional agency?	Yes; No
	How long did you work for this agency?	Open ended
	Did you work as a community corrections officer?	Yes; No
	How long were you a community correction officer at this other agency?	Open ended

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