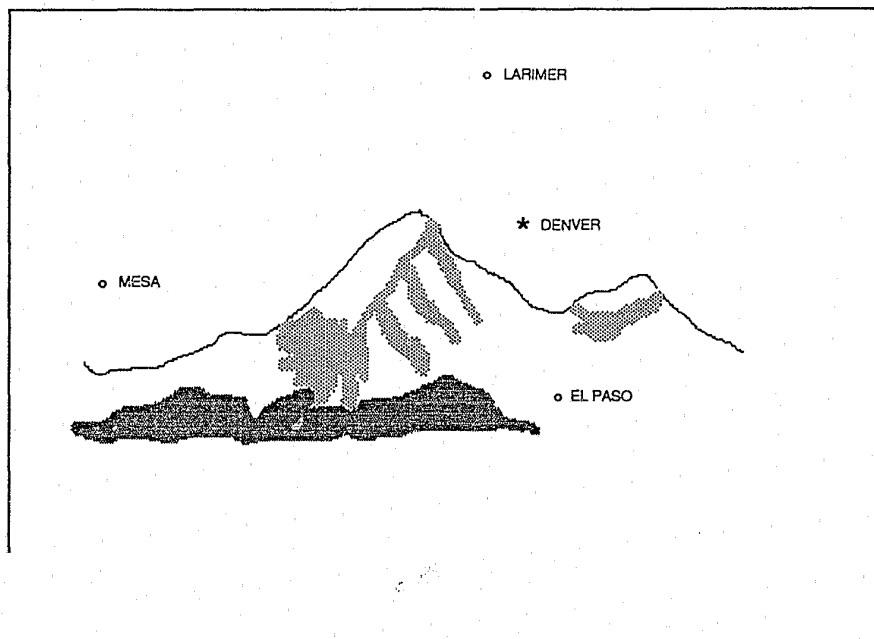


ATTITUDES TOWARD CRIME: A SURVEY OF COLORADO CITIZENS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE OFFICIALS



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COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1988, the Division of Criminal Justice conducted its third public opinion survey to learn what Colorado citizens and criminal justice officials think about crime, how crime affects them, what they do to protect themselves and what they think public policy ought to be. Similar surveys were conducted in 1982 and 1984.

Questionnaires were sent to a randomly selected sample of 3,200 registered voters in Denver, El Paso, Larimer and Mesa Counties. Of these, 1,328 were completed and returned (618 were returned with no forwarding address). A very similar questionnaire was also sent to system officials in each of the four counties. System officials, or practitioners, were defined for this survey as legislators, district court judges, prosecutors, public defenders and probation officers. A comparison of respondent social/demographic characteristics to Colorado population data shows that the respondents are older, have fewer minority members, a higher average income, and are more likely to be Republicans. Thus, any sample bias is likely to be on the conservative side.

What Colorado Citizens Think about Crime

- o Both citizens and criminal justice officials ranked crime as one of the top three social issues. The public ranked crime as the most serious problem, followed by drug abuse and having enough money to pay the bills. Officials ranked the federal budget deficit as the most serious problem while crime was ranked second and drug abuse third.

- o In response to a survey question about use of drugs, more than one-third of the public and half of the officials said they have a friend or acquaintance who uses marijuana. Twenty percent of the citizens and over 33 percent of the officials said they know someone who uses cocaine.
- o Citizens and officials see crime in the state as more serious than crime in their community. Over 50 percent of both groups said crime in the state is a serious problem, while 21 percent of the citizens and 33 percent of the officials said that crime in their community is serious.
- o 84 percent of the citizens and 68 percent of the officials believe crime will increase in the future; however, reported crime has actually decreased since 1980.
- o Findings from surveys conducted in 1982, 1984 and 1988 show that fewer citizens (52 percent) think crime is a serious problem in the state in 1988 than did so in 1982 (67 percent).
- o Most citizens and officials feel safe: 75 percent of the citizens said they feel safe compared to 85 percent of the officials.
- o Respondents 60 years old or older and women feel significantly less safe compared to men and younger respondents: 35 percent of the 60 or over group report a high fear level compared to 29 percent of those under 60; citizen responses show that 37 percent of the women compared to 23 percent of the men reported a high level of fear. For officials, 22 percent of the women compared to 13 percent of the men reported a high fear level.
- o 20 percent of the public respondents and 27 percent of the criminal justice officials who responded said they had been a victim of crime in the 12 months preceding the survey.

Reactions to Crime

- o 96 percent of the citizen respondents and 98 percent of the officials said they limit their activities very little or not at all during the day because of crime. At night, however, 28 percent of the citizens and 14 percent of the officials limit their activities quite a lot or very much because of crime.
- o Women and citizens aged 60 or over said they are more likely to limit activities at night: 37 percent of the women respondents compared to 16 percent of the men respondents limit their activities at night quite a lot or very much. Of those 60 or over, 35 percent limit their activities at night compared to 25 percent of those under 60.

- o Installing special locks was reported as the most important crime prevention measure: 58 percent of the citizens and 56 percent of the officials have done so; 34 percent of the citizens and 35 percent of the officials participate in Operation ID; 28 percent of the citizens and 25 percent of the officials belong to neighborhood watch; and 22 percent of the citizens and 25 percent of the officials have bought a gun.
- o Purchasing a gun is becoming more common as a means of crime prevention: in 1982, 12 percent of the citizen respondents bought a gun; in 1984, 25 percent; and in 1988, 22 percent.

Attitudes toward Sentencing and the System

According to citizens and criminal justice officials, the primary purpose of sentencing is incapacitation of the offender, but for the majority of sentencing scenarios presented respondents recommended placement in a structured community program such as jail and probation, intensive supervision probation, or residential community corrections.

- o 57 percent of the citizens and 52 percent of the criminal justice officials respondents chose incapacitation as the primary purpose of sentencing. Rehabilitation was the second choice with 21 percent of the public and 30 percent of the officials selecting this purpose as most important.
- o When asked if the sentences imposed by Colorado judges are extremely severe, moderately severe, about right, moderately soft, or extremely soft, four percent of the public respondents answered "extremely severe" compared to 31 percent of the criminal justice respondents. Of the public respondents, 53 percent said sentences are "moderately soft" and 17 percent said the sentences are "extremely soft." Officials, having worked with the sentencing law passed in 1985 which doubled sentence lengths, were much less likely to perceive soft sentencing practices: 6 percent responded "extremely soft" and 23 percent "moderately soft."
- o When no information about the offenders or the circumstances of the crime was given, much more severe sentences were recommended. When given more detailed information, most respondents recommended structured community placement for first time offenders even if the offender had a juvenile criminal history record.

- o When prison was recommended as the appropriate sentence, it was selected by about 10 percent more criminal justice than citizen respondents.
- o The public expressed a preference for higher levels of community supervision than officials, and they did not support straight probation for most cases.
- o Sentence lengths recommended by citizens were, on average, 12 months shorter than sentences recommended by criminal justice officials.
- o Respondents who indicated that sentences imposed by Colorado judges are "soft" recommended structured community placement for all but three of the sentencing scenarios presented in the survey. This implies that "soft sentences" refers to sentences to straight probation and not to the belief that more offenders should be sentenced to prison for longer sentences.
- o Increasing alcohol and tobacco taxes is the most popular method of funding prison construction and operation. Lotto revenue is the public's second choice. Criminal justice officials chose lotto first and alcohol/tobacco tax second.
- o In answer to a question about how well criminal justice agencies perform, the local police department received the most excellent and good ratings.

INTRODUCTION

In 1988, the Division of Criminal Justice conducted its third public opinion survey to learn what Colorado citizens and officials think about crime, how crime affects them, what they do to protect themselves and what they think public policy ought to be. The first survey conducted in 1982 was mailed to 1,000 households randomly selected from regional telephone books. The 1984 survey, also sent to 1,000 randomly selected households, added a sample of legislators, candidates for the legislature, judges, prosecutors, public defenders, police chiefs, sheriffs, probation officers and corrections workers. The 1988 survey was sent to a randomly selected sample of 800 registered voters and certain criminal justice officials (described below) in each of the following Judicial Districts: 2, Denver County; 4, El Paso County; 8, Larimer County; 21, Mesa County.

These four judicial districts account for 47 percent of the felony court case filings in Colorado and represent the Denver metro area, the western slope, a northern university district and the Colorado Springs military-tourist district. A slightly modified version of the survey questionnaire was also sent to system officials in each of the four districts. System officials, or practitioners, were defined for the 1988 survey as legislators, district court judges, prosecutors, public defenders and

probation officers. These officials were selected because they have the most direct impact on sentencing decisions.

The survey was sent to a total of 3,208 citizens; of these, 618 were returned by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable, 2,590 were assumed to have been delivered, and 1,328 were completed and returned. All of the 219 surveys mailed to officials were delivered; 112 were returned complete.

A district specific, rather than statewide, sample of citizens and officials for the 1988 survey was selected to (1) provide a representative cross-section of opinions to update our two previous surveys, and (2) to serve as a data source for possible improvement of prison population projections by determining how, or if, public opinion influences correctional policy. This report is concerned primarily with the first of these two purposes.

Characteristics of the Respondents

Although the citizen sample was selected randomly, without an attempt to stratify by sex, its composition by gender is fairly consistent with the state population. At the state level, males and females each account for 50 percent of the population (1980 census, updated by 1988 state demographer's estimate). Among our public respondents, 44 percent were male; 56 percent were female. As would be expected, there is a greater difference between male and female representation in the official respondent group and the state: among official respondents, 76 percent were male, while 24 percent were female. Traditionally, men have been and still are more likely than women to hold legislative or criminal justice policy making positions.

Ethnic Groups

Citizens and officials defined in the survey sample as Mexican-Americans are underrepresented compared to state population estimates of persons of Spanish origin in the total population. Black citizens in the public respondent group are slightly underrepresented, while in the official respondent group they are slightly overrepresented. Table I-1 presents these data.

TABLE I-1				
PERCENT OF COLORADO POPULATION AND SAMPLE BY ETHNIC GROUP				
Ethnic Group	State Population 1987 Estimated (Percent)	Sample		
		P* (Percent)	O* (Percent)	
White	82	93	84	
Black	4	2	6	
Oriental		0	0	
Asian	1			
Mexican-American		3	6	
Spanish Origin	12			
Other	1	2	4	
	TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100
*P = Public *O = Officials				

Age Groups

Colorado citizens 35 to 44 are overrepresented in the official respondent sample. The largest age group in Colorado's population over age 18 is the 25 to 34 year age group; in the sample, however, the largest group is the 35 to 44 year age group.

TABLE I-2

PERCENT OF POPULATION AND SAMPLE BY AGE GROUP

Age Group	State Population 1987 Estimated (Percent)	Sample	
		P* (Percent)	O* (Percent)
18 - 24	16	6	0
25 - 34	26	19	22
35 - 44	22	22	42
45 - 54	13	18	24
55 - 64	10	15	9
65+	13	20	3
	---	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100

*P - Public
*O - Officials

Income Groups

In 1987, the average annual pay of workers covered by unemployment insurance in Colorado was \$20,736 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1987). Survey respondents' incomes were significantly higher, as would be expected for an older group. Average household income reported by those in the public respondent group is about \$30,000; for the official respondents, the average is about \$45,000. The highest 19 percent of the public respondents reported household incomes of \$49,999 and above; the lowest 20 percent, \$20,000 and below. The highest 20 percent of the official respondents reported household incomes of \$50,000 and above; the lowest 20 percent of this group, \$40,000 and below. Household income categories reported by survey respondents are displayed in Table I-3.

TABLE I-3

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY INCOME CATEGORY

Income Category	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Less than \$10,000	10	0
\$10,000 - \$14,999	9	0
\$15,000 - \$19,999	10	0
\$20,000 - \$24,999	10	1
\$25,000 - \$29,999	10	7
\$30,000 - \$34,999	11	5
\$35,000 - \$39,999	7	12
\$40,000 - \$44,999	7	12
\$45,000 - \$49,999	7	10
\$50,000 - \$74,999	14	38
\$75,000+	5	15
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1249	107

Political Affiliation

Following, in Table I-4, is a comparison of the distribution by party affiliation of those in the public respondent group, the official respondent group and all registered voters in Colorado (Secretary of State's Office, November 1988).

TABLE I-4

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS AND ALL REGISTERED VOTERS BY POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION

Party Affiliation	State: All Registered Voters (Percent)	Survey P - O (Percent)	
Republican	33	41	22
Democratic	31	29	44
Unaffiliated	36		
Independent		28	33
Other		2	1
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100

•P • Public
•O • Officials

Although exact comparisons cannot be made because of different methods of categorizing party affiliations (State: Unaffiliated; Survey: Independent and Other), the above figures indicate overrepresentation of the Republican Party among public respondents. The proportion of Democrats among this respondent group, however, is very close to the statewide proportion.

Thus, the sample overrepresents older, more affluent, more conservative Colorado citizens.

Organization of Report

This report presents the findings from the data contributed by respondents described in the previous section. Although analysis was based entirely on quantitative information, these findings are highlighted throughout the report by open comments contributed by respondents who had more to say than could be expressed in response to survey questions. Throughout the report, responses of citizens are compared to those of respondents in the official/practitioner group. In addition, each chapter contains a section which compares findings, wherever possible, with the findings of our 1982 and 1984 surveys.

Chapter One presents the findings on attitudes toward crime, including concern about crime and fear of crime and victimization. Chapter Two examines reactions to crime and precautions taken by respondents against becoming victims of crime. Attitudes toward sentencing philosophy, policy and practice and toward the criminal justice system in general are reported in Chapter Three. This chapter also reports preferences for funding correctional alternatives.

In addition to the three chapters which comprise the body of this report, a section devoted to the presentation and discussion of open comments contributed by public and official respondents has been included as Appendix B.

CHAPTER ONE

ATTITUDES TOWARD CRIME

Crime starts in--yes--elementary school! Stolen coats, etc. Don't those parents wonder, or do they care where that new coat came from? So, the youth stops by a neighborhood house to steal. Why not? The police never catch him. Then, adults make a living from it. Yes, I am bitter. Lock your doors, lock your car, and don't let the children out of your sight!

A secretary's comment, reported above, dramatizes the anxiety and frustration about crime felt by many citizens. This chapter focuses on these attitudes: specifically, we look at public and official perceptions of the crime problem, including the use of drugs, concerns about crime, and fear of crime and victimization.

Perception of the Crime Problem

Public perceptions of the seriousness of the crime problem become evident in concern expressed about crime and fear of crime. However, these perceptions are not always consistent with reported crime and victimization rates. There are several ways to measure level of concern about crime: (1) compare it to concern about other social problems, (2) compare the seriousness of the crime problem in the community of residence to its seriousness in the state of Colorado, and (3) compare

the seriousness of the crime problems in the present to expectations of crime in the future.

Concern about Crime

Findings from our 1988 survey indicate that public and practitioner respondents share similar attitudes about the seriousness of crime in Colorado. As a first measure of such concern, our survey asked respondents to rank, among 14 social issues, the three they are most concerned about. As shown in Table 1-1, both citizens and officials ranked crime among the top three social issues. However, the public ranked crime as the most serious problem, followed by drug abuse and having enough money to pay the bills, while officials identified the federal budget deficit as the most pressing social problem, followed respectively by crime and drug abuse. Crime, drug abuse and the economy are, therefore, top concerns for both groups.

TABLE 1-1
THE PUBLIC AND PRACTITIONERS AGREE: CRIME, DRUG ABUSE, AND THE ECONOMY ARE CONSIDERED OUR MOST PRESSING SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Social Problem:	Percent Ranking 1, 2 or 3			
	Public		Officials	
	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank
Crime	51	(1)	40	(2)
Drug Abuse	48	(2)	38	(3)
Money enough to pay bills	41	(3)	31	(6)
Recession	40	(4)	36	(4)
Budget deficit	37	(5)	46	(1)
Inflation	35	(6)	13	(12)
Pollution	33	(7)	34	(5)
The Homeless	23	(8)	22	(8)
AIDS	22	(9)	22	(9)
Getting into another war	16	(10)	18	(10)
Alcoholism	14	(11)	13	(13)
Prison construction	13	(12)	23	(7)
Nuclear War	10	(13)	15	(11)
The war in Nicaragua	7	(14)	5	(14)
TOTAL NUMBER		1325		112

Available statistics suggest that drug abuse is indeed one of this nation's most serious social problems. One report informs us that in 1986, more than one-third of offenders in state prison admitted they were under the influence of drugs at the time they committed their current offense (BJS Special Report, July 1988). Another study reports that between 53 and 79 percent of men arrested for serious offenses in 12 major U.S. cities (Denver was not included) tested positive for illegal drugs (NIJ Reports, March/April 1988). Based on a new federal Drug Use Forecasting system, the U.S. Attorney General has announced that "overwhelming evidence now exists that links drug use to criminal activity" (NIJ Reports).

Although no comprehensive or reliable statistics are available for measuring the seriousness of the drug abuse problem in Colorado, survey responses show substantial agreement with the Attorney General's statement. For example, a public school teacher expressed her concern in the following comment:

I feel drugs are the biggest crime problem. The use of drugs leads to other crimes. I believe the people bringing drugs to our children should be given the most severe penalty....Drug dealers are not given due justice for their crimes.

This teacher's concern is shared by almost fifty percent of the public respondent group that ranked drug abuse among the top three most serious social concerns and by more than one-third of the practitioner group who agreed.

How accurate are these perceptions? We know that the 1987 arrest rate for drug abuse violations as reported by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, was 221.8 per 100,000 population. Approximately 12 percent of these arrests involved juveniles. Arrests of juvenile drug offenders in 1987 were approximately 11 percent

lower than in 1986; for adults, arrests rose by one percent. However, arrest rates underestimate the actual number of offenses committed. A more accurate estimate might be obtained if statistics were collected on the number of drug offenses among the Index Crimes reported to the FBI and CBI.

An indirect measure of drug use was included in the questionnaire by asking respondents whether they have a friend or acquaintance who uses any of the following drugs: marijuana, crack, cocaine, ecstasy or methadone. More than one-third of the public and half of the practitioner respondents reported that they have at least one friend or acquaintance who uses marijuana. In addition, one-fifth of the public and over one-third of the practitioners said they know someone who uses cocaine. Response data for each drug are presented in Table 1-2.

TABLE 1-2
RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE FRIENDS OR ACQUAINTANCES
WHO USE DRUGS

Friend or Acquaintance who uses:	Public			Officials		
	Yes (Percent)	No (Percent)	(N)	Yes (Percent)	No (Percent)	(N)
Marijuana	37	63	1298	56	44	109
Crack	3	97	1286	7	93	109
Cocaine	20	80	1292	36	64	108
Ecstasy	2	98	1282	3	97	109
Methadone	1	99	1285	5	95	109

As already indicated, more than half of the 1988 survey respondents ranked crime among Colorado's top three social problems. Additionally, as shown below in Table 1-3, 53 percent of citizen and 58 percent of public official respondents saw crime as a serious problem in the state. Crime was viewed as a serious problem in

the community by only 21 percent of the citizens and 33 percent of the officials. One might infer from this finding that most respondents see crime as a problem in the larger society that does not necessarily penetrate to the community. Also, according to Table 1-5, displayed later, a large proportion of both groups (84 percent of the citizens and 68 percent of the criminal justice respondents) believes crime will increase in the future.

TABLE 1-3
PERCEPTIONS OF THE CRIME PROBLEM
IN COLORADO AND THE COMMUNITY

Level of Concern:	Crime in Colorado		Crime in Community	
	Public	Officials	Public	Officials
	(Percent)		(Percent)	
Not a Problem	1	0	3	1
Slight Problem	3	4	26	15
Moderate Problem	43	38	50	51
Serious Problem	53	58	21	33
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1318	112	1316	112

When these data concerning perceptions of the crime problem are further examined by judicial district, we find that the citizens who see crime as a serious problem in their community and the state are predominately from Denver and El Paso Counties. Sixty-three percent of Denver County citizen respondents see crime in Colorado as a serious problem; 24 percent feel the same about crime in the community. In El Paso County, crime in the state is seen as a serious problem by 58 percent of the respondents and by 34 percent as a moderate problem. The proportion of Larimer and Mesa County citizens who see crime in both the state and

the community as a serious problem is between 41 and 48 percent. These data reflect a fairly accurate perception of higher crime rates reported in the more urban judicial districts. Table 1-4 displays these data.

TABLE 1-4
MORE CITIZENS IN DENVER AND EL PASO COUNTIES VIEW CRIME
AS A PROBLEM IN COLORADO AND THE COMMUNITY

Degree of Seriousness:	Counties			
	Denver (Percent)	El Paso (Percent)	Larimer (Percent)	Mesa (Percent)
<u>No Problem</u>				
In Colorado	2	5	4	5
In Community	25	28	33	28
<u>Moderate Problem</u>				
In Colorado	35	38	55	47
In Community	51	38	57	56
<u>Serious Problem</u>				
In Colorado	63	58	41	48
In Community	24	34	10	16
TOTAL PERCENT	100*	100	100	100
COLORADO TOTAL NUMBER	304	350	338	326 • 1318
COMMUNITY TOTAL NUMBER	302	348	337	325 • 1316
*100 PERCENT FOR COLORADO AND 100 PERCENT FOR COMMUNITY				

Although few respondents foresee that crime will "greatly increase," most indicate that they think there will be an "increase." As shown in Table 1-5, more than 60 percent of both citizen and official respondents believe crime will "increase" in both the state and the community. Among public respondents, 73 percent believe crime will "increase" in Colorado, while 68 percent believe it will "increase" in their community. Sixty-two percent of the official respondents believe crime in Colorado will "increase," and 61 percent think crime in their community will "increase."

TABLE 1-5
MOST RESPONDENTS BELIEVE CRIME WILL INCREASE IN
COLORADO AND THE COMMUNITY

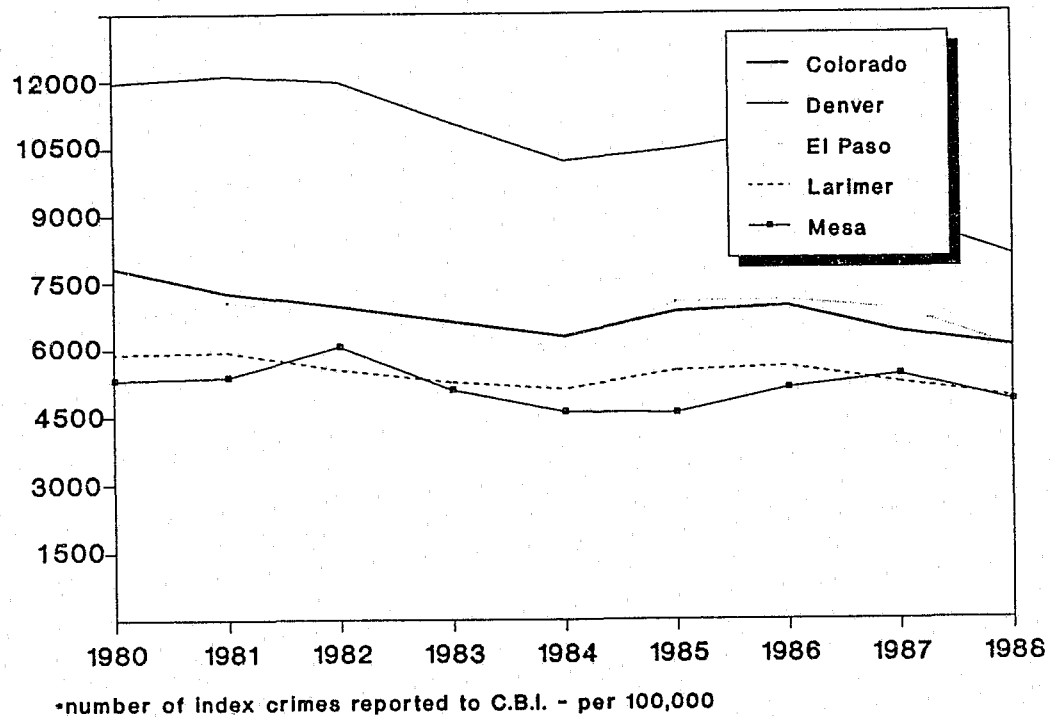
In the future, crime will...	Public (Percent)		Officials (Percent)	
	Colorado	Community	Colorado	Community
Greatly Increase	11	6	6	7
Increase	73	68	62	61
Remain the Same	13	23	26	26
Decrease	2	2	6	6
Greatly Decrease	1	1	0	0
	---	---	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1312	1314	110	112

As discussed earlier, a slightly smaller proportion of the public compared to practitioners saw crime as a serious current problem, but a greater proportion of the public thought crime would increase in the future. This difference may suggest that criminal justice practitioners are more aware of actual crime levels since they deal with it on the job. In addition, a greater proportion of the practitioners believed the crime problem would decrease in the future, suggesting they may be aware of the actual decrease in reported crime throughout this decade. The perception that crime will increase in the future does not vary by district.

Although both groups of respondents ranked crime among the top three social problems, reported crime rates have been going down during this decade, both in Colorado and nationally. Reported index crimes in Colorado, according to Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) statistics, declined steadily from 1980 to 1984 (from 7,825 to 6,274 per 100,000 people), rose in 1986 to 6,939, dropped to 6,357 in 1987

and to 6,025 in 1988. The 1988 crime rate represents a 23 percent decrease over the 1980 crime rate.

CRIME RATE IN COLORADO: 1980 - 1988*



Findings over Three Time Periods: Concern about Crime

In 1984 and 1988 our survey presented a list of current social issues and asked respondents to rank as 1, 2 or 3 those they were most concerned about at the time of the survey. Table 1-6 presents these data.

TABLE 1-6

**CRIME AND LAWLESSNESS IS A CONTINUING CONCERN
OF RESPONDENTS IN 1984 AND 1988**

Problem:	Year	Number	Percent Ranking Number 1,2 or 3
Crime and Lawlessness	1984	315	52
	1988	635	48
Inflation and High Prices	1984	298	50
	1988	469	36
Money to Live/Pay Bills	1984	264	44
	1988	542	41
Drug Abuse	1984	224	37
	1988	632	48
The Budget Deficit	1984	213	35
	1988	489	37
Alcoholism	1984	141	33
	1988	183	14
Pollution of the Environment	1984	187	31
	1988	434	33
Getting Into Another War	1984	184	31
	1988	208	16

In all three survey years--1982, 1984, 1988--respondents were also asked to what extent they thought crime was a problem in Colorado and the community. More than half of the respondents in all three surveys rated it as a serious problem in Colorado, while a much smaller proportion saw crime as a serious problem in their community. Data displayed in Table 1-7 show a consistent decrease in the proportion of respondents who rated crime as a serious problem in the state: from 67 percent in 1982 to 56 percent in 1984 and 52 percent in 1988. Similarly, the proportion of respondents who see crime as a serious problem in their community is smaller in 1988 than it was in 1982, but the decrease has not been consistent across the three survey years. As the data show, in 1982 26 percent saw crime as

a serious problem in their community; in 1984 the proportion dropped to 17 percent and rose to 21 percent in 1988.

TABLE 1-7
CRIME CONTINUES TO BE PERCEIVED AS A MORE SERIOUS
PROBLEM IN THE STATE THAN IN THE COMMUNITY

Level of Concern:	Colorado (Percent)			Community (Percent)		
	1982	1984	1988	1982	1984	1988
Not a Problem at All	1	0	0	2	4	3
A Slight Problem	4	3	4	25	30	26
A Moderate Problem	28	41	44	47	49	50
A Serious Problem	67	56	52	26	17	21
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	671	599	1318	671	599	1316

Thus, survey respondents believe crime is a problem in Colorado and in their community, but the proportion of respondents considering it a serious problem in the state has consistently decreased since 1982. The proportion who view crime as a serious problem in the community, while greater than in 1984, is lower than in

TABLE 1-8
IN 1984 AND 1988 THE MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS SAID
CRIME WILL INCREASE IN THE STATE AND COMMUNITY

Degree of Increase:	Colorado (Percent)		Community (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Greatly Increase	14	11	8	6
Increase	67	73	64	68
Stay the Same	16	13	25	23
Decrease	2	2	3	2
Greatly Decrease	1	1	0	1
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	602	1312	602	1314

1982. Further, as Table 1-8 shows, most respondents still believe crime will increase in the future, although a slightly smaller proportion of the 1988 respondents think crime will greatly increase.

Fear of Crime and Victimization

I have not answered your questionnaire because I've been in my home for over 20 years and have never had a crime in our area.

This comment by an older citizen is representative of many responses to survey questions about fear of crime. To measure this fear, citizens and officials were asked about feelings of safety during the day and at night; in the community and at home. Data show that respondents do feel safe during the day and at night, both in the community and at home.

TABLE 1-9
MOST RESPONDENTS DO NOT FEEL UNSAFE
BECAUSE OF CRIME

Level of Safety	Area and Time			
	Day		Night	
	Public Community (Percent)	Home (Percent)	Officials Community (Percent)	Home (Percent)
Very Safe	31	41	44	58
Safe	63	56	53	40
Unsafe	6	3	3	2
Very Unsafe	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1324	1323	112	112

Level of Safety	Area and Time			
	Day		Night	
	Public Community (Percent)	Home (Percent)	Officials Community (Percent)	Home (Percent)
Very Safe	9	23	13	30
Safe	60	63	70	66
Unsafe	26	12	16	4
Very Unsafe	5	2	1	0
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1320	1317	112	112

Specifically, 85 percent of the officials feel safe or very safe compared to 75 percent of the citizen respondents, according to a measure of fear created from four survey questions pertaining to feelings of safety during the day/at night/at home/in the community (Mande and English, 1989). (See Tables 1-21 and 1-22.) The greatest difference is in the very unsafe category with six percent of the citizens included here compared to one percent of the practitioners.

This difference may be explained in part by the larger proportion of women and elderly respondents in the citizen group. Both of these subgroups--women and the elderly--feel significantly less safe compared to men and younger respondents.

Additionally, this difference between the two respondent groups regarding fear of crime may be related to greater familiarity of practitioners with criminals. Criminals are the business of practitioners--who are trained and experienced in dealing with them--whereas the public, without specific information, tends to imagine "the criminal" as the worst of the murderers or rapists described daily by the media.

TABLE 1-10
MORE CITIZENS IN DENVER AND EL PASO
COUNTIES FEEL UNSAFE

Feelings of Safety	Counties				Total (Percent)
	Denver (Percent)	El Paso (Percent)	Larimer (Percent)	Mesa (Percent)	
Very Safe	11	26	38	25	100
Safe	21	25	26	28	100
Unsafe	34	30	18	18	100
Very Unsafe	41	30	13	16	100
	---	---	---	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	23	26	26	25	100
TOTAL NUMBER	303	347	338	326	1314

Table 1-10 shows that those who feel very unsafe are not equally distributed among the four study districts: 71 percent are from Denver and El Paso Counties, although only 51 percent of the sample are from these counties.

Two questions included in the questionnaire were designed to measure how safe respondents feel in their own neighborhoods for themselves and members of their family. Responses to the question, "Are you afraid to walk alone at night within a mile of your home?" indicated that more than half (55 percent) of the public, and only 38 percent of the official respondents were afraid. Of the women in the public respondent group, 71 percent were afraid, compared to 36 percent of the men. Among women in the official respondent group 70 percent were afraid compared to 28 percent of the men. A second question asked, "How about other family members? Would you be afraid for them to walk alone at night within a mile of your home?" Responses showed that approximately two-thirds of all respondents were more afraid for other adult family members, and more than three-fourths were afraid for children in their families. Among men and women respondents, men tended to be slightly less fearful for children than women. Tables 1-11 and 1-12 present the response data for these questions.

TABLE 1-11

ARE YOU AFRAID TO WALK ALONE AT NIGHT
WITHIN A MILE OF YOUR HOME?

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Yes	55	38
No	45	62
	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1315	112

TABLE 1-12

**ARE YOU AFRAID FOR ADULT OR CHILD MEMBERS
OF YOUR FAMILY TO WALK ALONE AT NIGHT
WITHIN A MILE OF YOUR HOME?**

	Adults		Children	
	P*	O*	P*	O*
	(Percent)		(Percent)	
Yes	65	66	85	85
No	35	34	15	15
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1242	112	1142	112

•P = Public
•O = Officials

Officials were less afraid than citizens, as shown in table 1-13. When respondents were asked how often at night they are afraid someone is going to break into their homes and threaten them, 29 percent of public respondents and 19 percent of official respondents reported that they are frequently or sometimes afraid. A larger proportion of women than men in both groups reported being afraid of nighttime break-ins. Among the women in the public respondent group, 34 percent expressed such fear compared to 21 percent of the men. None of the women in the official respondent group reported frequently being afraid of nighttime break-ins, but 22 percent said they were afraid sometimes. Two percent of male officials said they were afraid frequently, and only 15 percent said they were afraid sometimes.

TABLE 1-13

**HOW OFTEN AT NIGHT ARE YOU AFRAID SOMEONE IS GOING
TO BREAK INTO YOUR HOME AND THREATEN YOU?**

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Frequently	3	2
Sometimes	26	17
Rarely	51	61
Never	20	20
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1321	112

The questionnaire also asked about fear of specific crimes. As shown in Table 1-14, the data consistently reflect that a greater proportion of the public, compared to practitioners, worried frequently or sometimes about getting murdered, robbed, raped or beaten. More public and practitioner respondents (56 percent public; 28 percent practitioner) worried frequently or sometimes about being robbed than murdered, raped or assaulted. Murder is the offense both respondent groups are rarely or never concerned about (84 percent public; 91 percent practitioner). Without controlling for gender, it would appear that most public and official respondents are never worried about being raped. However, since women are overwhelmingly the victims of rape, it is important to look separately at responses for females and males. If sex of these respondents is taken into consideration, we see that it is the male respondents who seldom fear rape: 71 percent of male public respondents never fear rape compared to 17 percent of the female public respondents. Among officials, 91 percent of the males never fear rape, while seven percent of the females never fear this type of victimization.

TABLE 1-14
FEAR OF CRIME
Do You Worry About Getting Murdered, Robbed,
Raped, or Beaten?

	Murdered		Robbed		Raped		Beaten	
	P.	O.	P.	O.	P.	O.	P.	O.
	(Percent)		(Percent)		(Percent)		(Percent)	
Frequently	1	0	10	4	5	1	3	4
Sometimes	15	9	46	24	27	13	27	16
Rarely	41	43	34	53	28	16	44	56
Never	43	48	10	19	40	70	26	24
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1312	112	1318	112	1286	112	1286	112

•P = Public
•O = Officials

As mentioned before, women and older respondents--the two groups with the lowest in victimization rates--are more afraid of crime in general than men and the younger respondents. For example, 23 percent of the males in the public respondent group fear crime compared with 37 percent of the females and, among respondents in the criminal justice practitioner group, 13 percent of the males and 22 percent of the females fear crime.

The older group, defined as age 60 or over, also feel less safe: thirty-five percent of public respondents aged 60 or over fear crime compared with 29 percent of those under 60. This paradox of high-fear, low victimization has been explained in terms of vulnerability and time at risk (Skogan and Maxfield, 1983). Women and those in the older age group may perceive themselves as less able to defend themselves against potential crimes, thus increasing the fear level. Also, the potential loss may be relatively greater than might first appear. For example, a purse snatching from an older victim may leave her without money to live on for the month, and an injury may be months in healing. The time-at-risk explanation is based on the assumption that the victimization rates of those over 60 are reduced by their tendency to restrict activities.

Tables 1-15 and 1-16 present the data for general fear of crime based on gender and age. The number of practitioners over age 60 is too small to permit analysis on this variable.

TABLE 1-15

MORE WOMEN THAN MEN ARE AFRAID OF CRIME

Level of Fear	Public		Officials	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
	(Percent)		(Percent)	
Very Low	12	7	13	11
Low	65	58	74	67
High	19	32	13	22
Very High	4	5	0	0
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	575	732	85	27

TABLE 1-16

THE ELDERLY FEAR CRIME MORE THAN THE YOUNG

Level of Fear	Under Age	Age 60
	60	and Over
	(Percent)	(Percent)
Very Low	11	6
Low	60	59
High	26	28
Very High	3	7
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	922	374

Quantitative and open-comment data show that, for some respondents, fear of crime is based on personal or family experience. For example, the female manager of a business expressed anger, fear and frustration because of her victimization:

I feel very angry that I cannot enjoy my house without fear of burglary. I lock myself in the house both day and night. I have been burglarized four times and fear the next time. It seems like the police department just kind of forgot about any further contact after the 'big one.'

To measure victimization, the questionnaire included several questions which asked whether the respondent or members of the respondent's household had been

victimized and, if so, what types of crimes were involved and if they had been reported. In response to the first of these questions, "In the last 12 months, has anyone in your household been a victim of crime?" 20 percent of the public and 27 percent of the official respondents said "yes." (These data are represented in Table 1-17.) For most of the respondents in both groups, a property crime was involved. Only ten percent of both the public and official respondent groups reported they or a member of their household had been the victim of a violent crime.

TABLE 1-17

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS HAS ANYONE IN YOUR
HOUSEHOLD BEEN A VICTIM OF CRIME?

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Yes	20	27
No	80	73
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1327	112

A look at the entire respondent sample reveals that, when asked "How many times have you or a member of your household been the victim of a crime?" 11

TABLE 1-18

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD VICTIMIZATIONS

Number of Times	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
One	5	3
Two	6	7
Three	4	12
Four	2	2
Five	3	6
None	80	70
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1325	112

percent of all public respondents answered "once" or "twice," while 12 percent of all criminal justice practitioners indicated their households had been victimized three times.

Among respondents who reported they or members of their households had been victimized, theft was reported as the most serious crime by most citizen victims (34 percent), while burglary was listed as the most serious crime by officials (33 percent).

The survey also asked if they or anyone in their household had been a victim of murder, rape, robbery or assault in the past 12 months. Five percent of the public and four percent of the official group said they had been. As Table 1-19 indicates, robbery was most frequently reported by the public group who said "yes" and assault was the crime reported by the largest proportion of officials. One percent of the public and no official respondents reported that a household member had been a victim of rape, and no public or official respondents indicated that a household member had been a victim of murder.

TABLE 1-19

HOUSEHOLD VICTIM OF VIOLENT CRIME

Type of Violent Crime	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Murder	0	0
Rape	1	0
Robbery	2	1
Assault	2	3
None	95	96
	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1328	112

Ages of citizens touched by violent crime were distributed fairly equally from ages six through 83. One-third of the victims, however, were in the 22 to 34 age group; 33 percent were male and 67 percent were female. Since we know that females in the general population are less likely than males to be victimized, this finding indicates that respondents to mail surveys seriously underrepresent certain sub-groups. That is, female victims are more widely represented in the groups that tend to respond to mail surveys, while male victims, particularly young minority males, are in the group least likely to respond to surveys.

Findings over Three Survey Periods: Fear of Crime and Victimization

The following four tables describe respondents' reported fear of crime in 1982, 1984 and 1988. The data in Tables 1-20 and 1-21 indicate how safe respondents feel during the day, both in their home and in their community, and at night at home and in their community. There is virtually no change in the level of fear during the day between 1984 and 1988: 95 percent of the respondents in 1984 reported they feel safe or very safe during the day in their home; 97 percent agreed in 1988. Similarly, 94 percent of respondents said they feel safe or very safe during the day in their community in both 1984 and 1988. Slightly fewer respondents reported feeling safe or very safe at night. However, the proportion of respondents who do feel safe at night increased slightly in 1988.

TABLE 1-20

**MOST PEOPLE FEEL SAFE FROM CRIME
DURING THE DAY**

Level of Safety	Community (Percent)		Home (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Very Safe	31	31	38	41
Safe	63	63	67	56
Unsafe	6	6	4	3
Very Unsafe	0	0	1	0
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	597	1318	597	1317

TABLE 1-21

MOST PEOPLE FEEL SAFE FROM CRIME AT NIGHT

Level of Safety	Community (Percent)		Home (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Very Safe	11	9	20	23
Safe	57	60	62	63
Unsafe	28	26	15	12
Very Unsafe	4	5	3	2
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	598	1314	598	1311

The very low fear of crime levels displayed in Table 1-22 for 1982, 1984 and 1988 suggest a trend, for both males and females, toward a lessening of feelings of safety. A change in degree of feelings of safety or fear is suggested rather than in proportion of the respondents who are afraid. The data show the changing distribution for males between very low and low fear of crime categories: in 1982, 37 percent reported very low fear compared with 12 percent in 1988. The low fear categories increased from 38 percent in 1982 to 65 percent in 1988. The data show a similar pattern for females.

It is also interesting to note, in Table 1-22, the decrease in high fear levels for women, but relative stability in the fear levels for men. It may be that as more and more women enter public life, and begin to feel less vulnerable, high fear levels decrease.

TABLE 1-22
TRENDS IN LEVEL OF FEAR OF CRIME AMONG
MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS

Level of Fear	Males (Percent)			Females (Percent)		
	1982	1984	1988	1982	1984	1988
Very Low	37	20	12	28	13	7
Low	38	58	65	31	48	56
High	21	17	19	30	30	32
Very High	4	5	4	11	9	5
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	365	331	575	299	255	732

As shown in Table 1-23, there is little change in the distribution of fear by age between 1984 and 1988, although the data suggest the same pattern as found for fear by sex of respondent. While the percent of respondents over 60 who report a very low level of fear remains stable at six percent, the data show a decrease in the

TABLE 1-23
TRENDS IN LEVEL OF FEAR OF CRIME AMONG
RESPONDENTS UNDER AGE 60
AND AGE 60 AND OVER

Level of Fear	Under Age 60 (Percent)		Age 60 and Over (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Very Low	19	11	6	6
Low	54	60	53	59
High	21	26	30	28
Very High	6	3	11	7
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	452	922	121	374

proportion of those under 60 who report very low levels of fear as well as very high levels of fear.

Overall, as Table 1-24 illustrates, in 1988 a smaller proportion of respondents worried about specific types of victimization than in 1984. Of the four offenses listed, robbery was cited most often as the crime respondents worried about sometimes or frequently. However, the percentage of respondents in these categories decreased slightly from 62 percent in 1984 to 56 percent in 1988.

TABLE 1-24

FEW PEOPLE WORRY FREQUENTLY ABOUT
SPECIFIC TYPES OF VICTIMIZATION

	Murder (Percent)		Rape (Percent)		Robbery (Percent)		Assault (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988	1984	1988	1984	1988
Frequently	2	1	8	5	17	10	7	3
Sometimes	17	15	21	27	45	46	30	27
Rarely	44	41	20	28	29	34	40	44
Never	37	43	51	40	9	10	23	26
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	589	1306	589	1280	589	1312	589	1308

Chapter Summary

Survey findings related to concern about crime show that citizens and criminal justice practitioners both ranked crime, drug abuse and the economy as serious social problems. Over half of each group believes the crime problem in Colorado is serious, but a greater proportion of citizens compared to officials believes crime will increase. A smaller proportion of each group believes crime in the community is serious, but a slightly larger proportion of citizens believes crime in their community will increase. In general, then, the public and criminal justice practitioners agree

about the extent of the current crime problem, but fewer practitioners believe crime will increase in the future.

The following statements summarize the survey findings regarding public and practitioner fear of crime and victimization:

- o Most respondents in both the public and practitioner groups of respondents do not feel unsafe because of crime in their community or at home.
- o Well over half of those respondents who did report feeling very unsafe live in the urban areas of Denver and El Paso.
- o A greater proportion of public than practitioner respondents worry frequently or sometimes about being victims of violent crime; most of those in both groups worry more about being robbed than murdered, raped or assaulted.
- o More female citizens and officials fear crime than do males in both respondent groups, and more male and female citizens over 60 fear crime than do those under 60 years of age.
- o One-fifth of all respondents reported that they or members of their household had been victims of crime during the preceding 12 months. The largest proportion of public respondent victims said they had been victimized once or twice; among official respondent victims, three victimizations were reported. For most victims in both groups, a property crime was involved.
- o Among the small proportion of public and practitioner respondents who had been victims of violent crime, robbery was the most serious crime for citizens and assault the most serious for officials.
- o One-third of the victims in the public respondent group were between the ages of 22 and 34, and two-thirds were female. Only four criminal justice practitioners reported personal or household victimizations. Of these, three were teenagers and one was 32 years old; two were male and two were female.

The survey findings suggest that concern about and fear of crime do not necessarily correlate with crime rate or victimization statistics. However, they do affect reactions to crime and attitudes toward sentencing and the criminal justice system in general. These topics will be discussed in the chapters which follow.

CHAPTER TWO

REACTIONS TO CRIME

...I remember Denver in 1950--we walked from our high school dances through Cheeseman Park at 12:30 a.m. We walked from Lakeside, at closing, to the Capitol Hill area when the trolley didn't work in 1947. There were crimes then--some pretty spectacular ones, as a matter of fact--but people watched out for each other. Neighbors took an interest in the kids and each other....Then we all got busy chasing the Almighty Dollar and Building the American Dream, and a lot of people were lost--the ones who are now in prison.

Are these reflections of a Denver area bookkeeper merely nostalgic memories of the "good old days?" Although our data indicate that crime is one of the three most serious social problems, most public and official respondents to our 1988 questionnaire reported that they do not feel unsafe because of crime (Table 1-9 in Chapter One). However, for those who do feel unsafe, most are women and/or over 60 years of age.

How do those who are afraid of being victimized react to their fear? To identify and measure possible reactions to fear of crime, our questionnaire asked several questions related to limiting activities and to actions taken to protect self and property. Table 2-1 displays the general responses of public and official respondents to the question, "Do you limit your activities because of fear of crime?"

TABLE 2-1

**MOST RESPONDENTS DO NOT LIMIT THEIR ACTIVITIES
BECAUSE OF FEAR OF CRIME**

Do you limit your activities because of fear of crime?	During the Day?		At Night?	
	P* (Percent)	O* (Percent)	P* (Percent)	O* (Percent)
Not at all	61	78	28	40
Very little	35	20	44	46
Quite a lot	4	2	21	13
Very much	1	0	7	1
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1312	112	1320	112

•P • Public
•O • Officials

Our data show that more female and older respondents limit their activities during the day and at night than do male and under-age-60 respondents. The big difference, however, is in nighttime activities. Most male and female respondents in both groups limit their daytime activities very little or not at all. At night, however, the differences are greater. Females in the public respondent group limit their nighttime activities quite a lot or very much, slightly more than twice as much (36 percent) as do the males (16 percent) in this group. There is no significant difference between male and female responses in the practitioner group. These data are presented in Table 2-2.

Data also show that public respondents over age 60 are more likely to limit activities than those under age sixty. In the 60-and-over age group, ten percent limit activities during the day quite a lot or very much, while only three percent of this group who are under 60 years old limit their activities during the day quite a lot or very much. At night, 25 percent of those under 60 limit their activities

TABLE 2-2

**MORE WOMEN THAN MEN LIMIT ACTIVITIES DURING THE
DAY AND NIGHT BECAUSE OF FEAR OF CRIME**

Do you limit your activities because of fear of crime?	During the Day			
	Public Male Female (Percent)		Officials Male Female (Percent)	
Not at all	69	55	79	74
Very little	28	39	20	22
Quite a lot	3	5	1	4
Very Much	0	1	0	0
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	577	732	85	27

	At Night			
	Public Male Female (Percent)		Officials Male Female (Percent)	
Not at all	39	21	42	33
Very little	45	43	45	52
Quite a lot	13	27	12	15
Very much	3	9	1	0
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	576	731	85	27

quite a lot or very much, compared to 35 percent of those over 60. Table 2-3 presents the data, by age, for limiting activities during the day and at night for the public group of respondents. Because of the small number of criminal justice

TABLE 2-3

**MORE ELDERLY PUBLIC RESPONDENTS LIMIT THEIR
ACTIVITIES DURING THE DAY AND AT NIGHT
BECAUSE OF FEAR OF CRIME**

Do you limit your activities because of fear of crime?	Daytime		Nighttime	
	Age 60+ (Percent)	Under 60 (Percent)	Age 60+ (Percent)	Under 60 (Percent)
Not at all	56	63	28	29
Very Little	34	34	37	46
Quite a Lot	9	3	21	21
Very Much	1	0	14	4
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	372	925	371	925

officials in the sample who are over 60, data for this respondent group are not shown.

To further measure the reaction to fear of crime among public and criminal justice practitioner respondents, our questionnaire asked, "Are there neighborhood places where you used to go at night, but are now afraid to go because of the threat of crime?" Almost three-fourths of both respondent groups answered "no."

Table 2-4 presents these data.

TABLE 2-4		
MOST RESPONDENTS ARE NOT AFRAID, BECAUSE OF FEAR OF CRIME, TO GO TO NEIGHBORHOOD PLACES WHERE THEY USED TO GO AT NIGHT		
Are you afraid to go to neighborhood places where you used to go at night because of fear of crime?	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Yes	30	27
No	70	73
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1297	112

Another reaction to fear of crime measured by the survey is the precaution of identifying the person who is ringing the bell before opening the door to one's house. A larger proportion of public respondents (81 percent) than practitioner respondents (69 percent) reported that they frequently or sometimes determine who is there before opening their door. Only 19 percent of public respondents compared to 31 percent of the criminal justice group rarely or never identify their callers before opening the door. These data are displayed in Table 2-5.

TABLE 2-5
MORE PUBLIC THAN OFFICIAL RESPONDENTS IDENTIFY
CALLERS BEFORE OPENING THEIR DOOR

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Frequently	61	58
Sometimes	20	11
Rarely	12	15
Never	7	16
	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1319	112

Finally, our questionnaire asked respondents what crime prevention actions they have taken to protect themselves or their property. It asked specifically whether they had installed special locks, bars or a burglar alarm; bought a gun or got a dog; joined a neighborhood watch program; or, marked valuable items (Operation I.D.). More than half of both respondent groups (58 percent of public respondents; 56 percent of official respondents) reported that they have installed special locks, while only nine percent of each group indicated they have burglar alarms. Table 2-6 displays these data.

TABLE 2-6
USE OF SPECIAL LOCKS IS THE MOST FREQUENTLY
REPORTED FORM OF CRIME PREVENTION FOR
BOTH PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL RESPONDENTS

Crime Prevention Method	Public (Percent)	N	Official (Percent)	N
Installed special locks	58	748	56	58
Got a dog	33	427	31	33
Marked valuable items	34	441	35	36
Bought a gun	22	277	25	25
Joined a Neighborhood Watch Group	28	354	25	25
Installed bars on windows and doors	12	151	15	15
Installed a burglar alarm	9	109	9	9

Findings over Three Survey Periods: Reactions to Crime

In response to their awareness of, concern for, or fear of crime, some respondents have reported in all three of our surveys that they have limited their activities. Table 2-7 shows that a slightly higher proportion of respondents limited daytime activities in 1988 than in 1984 or 1982. The same comparison holds true for nighttime activities (data displayed in Table 2-8).

TABLE 2-7

LIMITING ACTIVITIES DURING THE DAY BECAUSE OF FEAR OF CRIME: 1982, 1984, AND 1988

Limit activities during day	1982	Percent 1984	1988
Not at all	69	70	61
Very little	27	28	35
Quite a lot	3	2	4
Very much	1	0	0
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	671	593	1315

TABLE 2-8

LIMITING ACTIVITIES AT NIGHT BECAUSE OF FEAR OF CRIME: 1982, 1984, AND 1988

Limit activities at night	1982	Percent 1984	1988
Not at all	38	33	28
Very little	38	44	44
Quite a lot	18	17	21
Very much	6	6	7
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	671	545	1320

As discussed earlier, gender seems to affect whether people limit nighttime activities. In both 1984 and 1988, women respondents were more than twice as likely as men to limit activities at night "quite a lot or very much." As Table 2-9 shows, 33 percent of the women in 1984, compared to 14 percent of the men, reported limiting nighttime activities. In 1988, 36 percent of the women and 17 percent of the men did so.

TABLE 2-9
MORE FEMALES THAN MALES LIMIT NIGHTTIME ACTIVITIES

Limit activities at night	Male (Percent)		Female (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Not at all	37	38	28	21
Very little	49	45	39	43
Quite a lot	11	13	24	27
Very much	3	4	9	9
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	331	567	257	731

Age is another factor affecting nighttime activities. Survey responses in 1988 indicated that those age 60 and over are three times more likely than their younger counterparts to limit activities very much at night. However, compared to 1984, a larger proportion of respondents under age 60 have also limited their nighttime activities quite a lot. Table 2-10 presents these findings.

Respondents in all three time periods were also asked how frequently they identified visitors before opening their doors. The data on this question are not directly comparable because, in 1982, there were five response choices; in 1984 and 1988 there were only four. The results of all three years are shown in Table 2-11.

TABLE 2-10

**MORE RESPONDENTS UNDER AGE 60 LIMIT NIGHTTIME
ACTIVITIES IN 1988 THAN IN 1984**

Limit activities at night	Under Age 60 (Percent)		Age 60 or Over (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Not at all	37	29	20	28
Very little	46	46	40	37
Quite a lot	14	21	25	21
Very much	3	4	15	14
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	452	925	122	371

Over 61 percent of respondents in 1984 and 1988 said they frequently determine who their visitors are before opening the door, while over 71 percent in 1982 reported they inquire about their visitors always or most of the time.

TABLE 2-11

**MOST RESPONDENTS INQUIRE ABOUT VISITORS
BEFORE OPENING THEIR DOOR**

Frequency	Percent 1982	Frequency	Percent Who Identify Visitors	
			1984	1988
Always	45	Frequently	61	61
Most of the time	26	Sometimes	21	20
Sometimes	16	Rarely	13	12
Hardly ever	9	Never	5	7
Never	4			
TOTAL PERCENT	100		100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	671		600	1319

In addition, all three surveys asked respondents what they have done as a means of crime prevention. Marking valuable items and getting a dog (not asked in 1982) are the next most common forms of crime prevention. Data in Table 2-12 also

show that joining a neighborhood watch group has become increasingly popular over the three survey time periods. Further, the proportion of those who bought a gun more than doubled between 1982 and 1984.

TABLE 2-12

USE OF SPECIAL LOCKS IS THE MOST FREQUENTLY
REPORTED FORM OF CRIME PREVENTION

Crime Prevention Method	Percent YES		
	1982	1984	1988
Installed special locks	40	58	58
Obtained a dog	•	35	33
Marked valuable items	27	35	34
Bought a gun	12	25	22
Joined a neighborhood watch	17	24	28
Installed bars on windows/doors	9	8	12
Installed a burglar alarm	6	7	9

Chapter Summary

As the data suggest, most public and official respondents do not limit their activities during the day or at night because of fear of crime. More women than men and more older than younger persons do so, but most limit activities very little or not at all. Similarly, most public and official respondents are not afraid to go to neighborhood places where they used to go because of fear of crime.

More public than official respondents, but a large majority of both groups, identify callers before opening the doors to their homes, and over half of both groups have installed special locks to protect their homes and families. Joining neighborhood watch groups has steadily grown in popularity, and the proportion of

respondents who reported buying a gun remains almost double the proportion who chose that method of protection in 1982.

Once again, however, we have found that although the public and criminal justice officials see crime as one of the most serious social problems in Colorado, most of them also feel safe enough to continue their usual activities during the day and at night.

CHAPTER THREE

ATTITUDES TOWARD SENTENCING AND THE SYSTEM

In general, I feel the goal of sentencing should be to prevent future recurrences, preferably by making the offender better able to live a non-criminal life. Prison does not presently do this, so I feel other options are better. Prison should be a last resort for public protection from those who do not benefit from less stringent treatment.

The above comment contributed by a Front Range housewife represents the attitudes expressed by most respondents when given full information about crimes committed. However, when provided only with brief descriptions of crime types, most public and official respondents recommended prison sentences for violent crimes. What might be the basis for such attitudes?

Coverage of sensational crimes sells newspapers and attracts viewers to television documentaries. On the other hand, educational articles explaining legislative changes in sentencing law provisions and the complexities of administering criminal justice do little to increase profits or ratings. As a consequence, when the public reads a headline announcing that a parolee, recently released, has committed a violent crime, many feel angry and vulnerable and blame the system because it has failed to protect them. How many read on or inquire further to determine whether the parole board had a choice regarding that release or what the sentencing law provisions were at the time the parolee committed the

offense for which he was sentenced? How many contact their legislators simply as citizens concerned about crime, justice and correctional policy? Too often, perceptions and emotions are based only on what the news media present. The complexities of the criminal justice system and the media's sensationalist presentation of the crime problem understandably influence attitudes toward sentencing policies and practices.

To understand more deeply held attitudes toward crime and justice, however, it is necessary to determine what the public and officials perceive to be the purpose of correctional intervention. Thus, our questionnaire asked respondents to select from six correctional goals the three most important reasons for imposing sentences on criminal offenders.

Generally, both the public and criminal justice practitioners responded similarly to the purposes listed on the questionnaire. As reflected in Table 3-1, over half of each group stated that the primary purpose of sentencing is incapacitation (removing the offender from the community to protect society). As also shown in Table 3-1, the second largest proportion of each group (30 percent of the officials; 21 percent of the public) supported rehabilitation as the primary reason for imposing sentences.

Other questions used in our survey to measure attitudes of the public and criminal justice practitioners toward correctional purposes and policies are discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

TABLE 3-1
PUBLIC AND PRACTITIONERS: SENTENCING PHILOSOPHIES

Reason for Imposing Sentences:	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
It is society's way of getting even with the offender for harm done to the victim	3	1
It removes the criminal from the community and protects citizens against further crimes	57	52
It deters other people from committing crimes	6	7
It places the criminal in an environment where he can be reformed through job training, work experience, education, etc.	21	30
It is the way the law promises that those who commit crimes will get what they deserve	11	7
Prison is a harsh experience that will discourage that person from committing another crime	9	8

•NOTE: May not total 100 percent. Some respondents gave the same ranking to more than one reason.

Attitudes toward Appropriate Sentencing Practices

What are the attitudes of citizens and criminal justice practitioners regarding appropriate sentencing practices? As presented in the survey, there are two parts to this question. First, how do citizens think judges are currently sentencing offenders in Colorado? Second, what sentences would they consider most appropriate for certain cases?

Public and official respondents disagreed considerably on the question of sentencing by Colorado judges. As indicated in Table 3-2, 70 percent of the public, compared to 29 percent of the practitioners, believe judges are "soft." Additionally, although sentence lengths have doubled since 1985, only four percent of the public

believes Colorado judges sentence severely compared to 32 percent of criminal justice practitioners.

TABLE 3-2
VIEWS OF PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL RESPONDENTS
ON SEVERITY OF SENTENCES

Sentences are:	Public	Officials
Extremely severe	0	5
Moderately severe	4	27
About right	26	39
Moderately soft	53	23
Extremely soft	17	6
	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1258	110

Four years ago, the public and criminal justice officials were much more in agreement. A majority of both groups thought sentences were either moderately soft or extremely soft: 73 percent of the public believed sentences were soft compared to 60 percent of the officials. The 1988 data indicate that over two-thirds of the public (69 percent) but less than one-third (28 percent) of the official respondents still feel this way.

Our 1984 and 1988 data pose an interesting question about what respondents mean by "soft" sentencing. As will be discussed in the next section of this chapter, when given details of hypothetical cases and asked to recommend sentences for these crimes, many who perceive sentencing as moderately or extremely soft recommended sentences to structured community programs (see The Effect of

Public Opinion on Correctional Policy: A Comparison of Opinions and Practice.

[Mande and English, 1989] for the research findings related to this issue).

Actually, sentences imposed by judges have changed dramatically since the 1984 survey. In July 1985, new legislation (House Bill 1320) doubled the presumptive sentencing ranges for most felony offenses, dramatically increasing sentence lengths. Most criminal justice practitioners--in particular, judges, district attorneys, public defenders and probation officers--are aware of this legislation because it directly affects their work. The public, however, may be unaware of this major change in the criminal justice system. Consequently, despite the fact that sentences in Colorado have, on average, more than doubled since the 1984 survey, a majority of the public, as represented by our sample, continues to feel judges impose "soft" sentences. The public's perception may also be related to the media's focus on violent and sensational crimes.

A public school teacher's open comment reflects this perception:

We feel the justice system is far too lenient. If punishment were more severe, this might deter more people from committing crimes.

Appropriate Sentences: Five Crime Scenarios

To measure public and practitioner perceptions of appropriate sentences, the questionnaire asked two different types of questions about crimes and sentences. The first set of questions listed five crimes, with no information about the offender or the circumstances of the crime, and asked the respondent to recommend the most appropriate sentencing placement: probation, a combination of jail and probation,

intensive supervision probation (ISP), community corrections or prison. The second set of questions provided more detailed information about the case: for example, crime committed, criminal history, and marital and employment status.

As mentioned earlier, when respondents were given information only about the type of crime committed, the vast majority recommended prison sentences for violent crimes. For property and drug crimes, the majority of both public and practitioner respondents favored structured community placements (jail and probation combined, ISP and community corrections). The only time probation was favored by a majority of respondents was in the "Cashed-Stolen-Paycheck" case: 59 percent of criminal justice practitioners favored probation.

Table 3-3 shows that a greater proportion of both the public and criminal justice officials recommended prison sentences when given only information about the crime type and no information about the case. Dramatically different results were obtained, however, when respondents were given more detailed information about the offender in five scenarios discussed in the following section.

TABLE 3-3
RESPONDENTS GIVEN CRIME TYPE ONLY:
THE SENTENCE FOR VIOLENT CRIMES
SHOULD BE PRISON

Case		Prob	Jail/Prob	ISP (Percent)	ComCor	Prison	Months to Prison
Assault	(P)	1	3	2	7	87	48
	(O)	0	5	4	7	84	60
Armed Rob.	(P)	0	3	4	8	85	48
	(O)	1	2	6	8	83	48
Cashed Stolen Pay Check	(P)	14	28	20	21	17	24
	(O)	59	25	8	5	3	27
Heroin Use	(P)	6	6	29	47	12	22
	(O)	44	15	21	16	4	18
Burglary	(P)	6	21	17	27	29	24
	(O)	16	29	17	20	18	48

As mentioned earlier, respondents were asked about perceptions of appropriate sentences for crimes described only by type and also for crimes described in more detail in five hypothetical case scenarios. For example, in some cases, the offender had an alcohol problem, or had prior convictions, or had young children to support. Following is a discussion of the findings from the scenario questions.

The data indicate that a majority of the public, when given more detailed information, would use structured community placement for the first time offenders described in the scenarios (even if the offender has a juvenile record). When prison was recommended, it was usually selected by a larger proportion of criminal justice respondents (about 10 percent larger) than public respondents. For nearly every scenario in which prison was the recommended placement, the public consistently sentenced the offender for a shorter term (on average, 16 months shorter) compared to criminal justice officials. This may be due, in part, to practitioners' greater familiarity with current sentencing laws which allow the offender to become eligible for parole at midpoint of the sentence term. Tables 3-4 through 3-8 present the data for the five scenarios included in the survey.

As shown in Table 3-4, although Scenario One describes a violent crime (robbery), 70 percent of the public respondents and 61 percent of the official respondents recommended community placement. Note that 85 percent of public and 83 percent of practitioner respondents recommended prison for armed robbery when they were not given detailed case information (Table 3-3 in previous section). For Scenario One, however, prison was preferred by a minority of respondents: 30 percent of public respondents compared to 39 percent of practitioner respondents.

Sentences recommended by criminal justice respondents were 60 percent longer (five years instead of three years) than sentences recommended by citizens. Very few respondents recommended probation: three percent of the officials and two percent of the public.

When the offender had one prior conviction for robbery, 66 percent of the public and 74 percent of the officials recommended prison. No one in either group recommended probation. A slightly larger proportion of the public (34 percent), compared to officials (26 percent), recommended structured supervision in the community rather than prison confinement. Again, sentence lengths recommended by officials exceeded those recommended by the public by 24 months (six years compared to four years).

Finally, when the offender was addicted to heroin and requested drug treatment, the majority of respondents recommended structured community placement. Over two-thirds of both groups recommended community supervision, and the placements were fairly equally distributed between the two groups of respondents. However, slightly fewer public respondents (19 percent) recommended intensive supervision probation compared to official respondents (25 percent), and slightly more of the public recommended community corrections (37 percent compared to 28 percent). Criminal justice practitioners recommended longer sentences by 12 months. The median sentence recommended by practitioners was five years compared to four years recommended by the public.

TABLE 3-4

SCENARIO ONE: The offender is convicted of robbery, had a gun, is 24 years old, unemployed, has an average IQ, no prior record, and has an alcohol problem

Placement:	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	3	2
Jail-Probation	18	21
ISP	20	22
Community Corrections	29	16
Prison	30	39
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1304	110
Median prison term	36 Months	60 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO ONE: But offender has one prior similar conviction

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	0	0
Jail-Probation	12	2
ISP	8	12
Community Corrections	14	12
Prison	66	74
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1295	111
Median prison term	48 Months	72 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO ONE: But offender is addicted to heroin and wants drug treatment

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	1	4
Jail-Probation	7	6
ISP	19	25
Community Corrections	37	28
Prison	36	37
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1301	112
Median prison term	48 Months	60 Months

•ISP = Intensive Supervision Probation

Data in Table 3-5 show that the majority of both groups recommended structured community placements for the robber/ purse-snatcher portrayed in Scenario Two, even when the victim was especially vulnerable (handicapped; elderly). Six to eight percent more of the public than the criminal justice respondents chose the community corrections sentencing option, a pattern consistent with many of the other scenarios.

Approximately three-fourths of both groups recommended structured community placement for this offender when the victim was described as "female." When the victim was especially vulnerable, both groups looked less favorably on community corrections, but the majority still recommended probation and jail, intensive supervision probation or community corrections. Specifically, when the victim was in a wheelchair, 36 percent of the public and 47 percent of the practitioners indicated they would send the offender to prison. For this case, the public sentenced the offender to three years, while the practitioners recommended four years. When the victim was elderly, 38 percent of the public and 49 percent of the practitioners would have sent the offender to prison.

Generally, as shown in Table 3-6, less than four percent of the respondents from either group recommended prison for the jewelry theft case. Even when there had been a previous conviction for a similar offense, the majority of both groups (71 percent of the public and 89 percent of the officials) recommended jail and probation combined, intensive supervision probation or community corrections. When the offender had a prior theft conviction, public respondents were less tolerant compared to criminal justice respondents: the majority of both groups still

TABLE 3-5

SCENARIO TWO: Offender is convicted of assault and robbery, is unemployed, 18 years old, has average IQ, is a school dropout, has juvenile record, and victim is female

Placement	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	2	6
Probation/Jail	23	30
ISP	23	15
Community Corrections	27	21
Prison	25	28
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1306	112
Median prison term	36 Months	36 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO TWO: But victim is in a wheelchair

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	1	4
Probation/Jail	19	16
ISP	18	14
Community Corrections	26	19
Prison	36	47
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1307	112
Median prison term	36 Months	48 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO TWO: But victim is elderly

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	1	4
Probation/Jail	18	17
ISP	17	12
Community Corrections	26	18
Prison	38	49
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1302	112
Median prison term	36 Months	40 Months

TABLE 3-6

SCENARIO THREE: Offender pled guilty to theft over \$300 (she stole \$5,000 worth of jewelry), she is 28 years old, has two children, regularly employed until four months ago, has no prior record

Placement:	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	33	68
Probation/Jail	14	15
ISP	35	8
Community Corrections	15	7
Prison	3	2
	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1308	112
Median prison term	24 Months	42 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO THREE: But offender has a severe drinking problem

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	6	49
Probation/Jail	9	14
ISP	40	21
Community Corrections	40	15
Prison	5	1
	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1309	112
Median prison term	24 Months	60 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO THREE: But offender has previous conviction for theft

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	1	1
Probation/Jail	23	35
ISP	20	19
Community Corrections	28	35
Prison	28	10
	---	---
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1306	112
Median prison term	24 Months	36 Months

recommended placement in the community although compared to an offender with no priors, a much greater proportion of the public recommended prison. However, when prison was recommended, the median term set by the public was only two years compared to three years set by officials.

Reactions to this theft case reflect the greatest disparity between the public and criminal justice officials regarding probation supervision. Only 33 percent of the public recommended probation for the first version of this case (no priors; no alcohol problem), while 68 percent of the officials favored probation. Similarly, when this offender had a severe drinking problem, only six percent of the public felt probation was appropriate, while 49 percent of the practitioners recommended probation. When looking at community programs with higher levels of supervision, such as intensive supervision probation, jail and probation, and residential community corrections, 89 percent of the public respondents favored community placement for this offender, suggesting favorable public attitudes toward highly structured community placement.

Data presented in Table 3-7 indicate that, as in previous scenarios depicting substance abuse problems, a majority of both respondent groups would recommend a community sentence when the offender was participating in an alcohol treatment program (67 percent of the public; 79 percent of the officials). However, of those who recommended prison, a larger proportion of the public compared to practitioners did so in this case: 33 percent compared to 21 percent. Both of these groups recommended a median three-year prison term.

TABLE 3-7

SCENARIO FOUR: Offender pled guilty to manslaughter, was drinking at the time of the offense, is employed at the oil fields, is 25 years old, married with a three-year-old child, and has no prior convictions

Placement:	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	18	20
Probation/Jail	18	21
ISP	22	21
Community Corrections	25	24
Prison	17	14
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1307	112
Median prison term	36 Months	36 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO FOUR: But he has a prior conviction for assault

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	1	2
Probation/Jail	19	5
ISP	11	12
Community Corrections	20	21
Prison	49	60
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1283	112
Median prison term	36 Months	48 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO FOUR: But he is currently participating in a rehabilitation program for problem drinkers

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	4	12
Probation/Jail	12	12
ISP	22	26
Community Corrections	29	29
Prison	33	21
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1291	112
Median prison term	36 Months	36 Months

In the final scenario about a burglar, the data (Table 3-8) reflect sentencing patterns consistent with the previous scenarios: the majority of respondents recommended community placement for a first-time property offender (88 percent of the public; 92 percent of the officials). However, only ten percent of the public favored probation compared to 42 percent of the officials.

TABLE 3-8

SCENARIO FIVE: The offender pled guilty to burglary, he has no prior felony convictions, but has one non-violent misdemeanor conviction, he is 30 years old, unemployed, separated from his wife and children

Placement:	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	10	42
Probation/Jail	31	29
ISP	24	14
Community Corrections	23	7
Prison	12	8
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1301	112
Median prison term	24 Months	24 Months

SAME AS SCENARIO FIVE: But offender has two prior convictions for similar crimes

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Probation	0	0
Probation/Jail	16	3
ISP	10	8
Community Corrections	18	23
Prison	56	66
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1292	112
Median prison term	30 Months	48 Months

When the offender had two prior convictions for burglaries, the majority of both the public and the officials recommended prison (56 percent and 66 percent, respectively), and almost no one recommended probation. Public respondents recommending prison suggested shorter sentences than did criminal justice practitioners: 30 months compared to 48 months.

In addition, a large proportion--but not a majority--of the public continued to support community placement (not probation) for this three-time burglar: 44 percent of the public and 34 percent of the officials recommended structured community placement.

Review of all five scenarios indicate several sentencing patterns. Responses to the three scenarios involving alcohol or drug problems (Table 3-4, 3-5 and 3-6), show that the majority of both public and criminal justice respondents favor structured community placement for offenders with substance abuse problems. Data from Scenarios Two (violent current offense) and Three (jewelry theft) indicate an acceptance of community sentencing options for offenders with prior nonviolent convictions. Scenarios Three and Five demonstrate the public's lack of support for straight probation.

The Death Penalty

The majority of both respondent groups favored imposition of the death penalty. However, this view is held by a much larger proportion of the public than of criminal justice officials. As indicated in Table 3-9, 87 percent of the public favors the death penalty compared to 54 percent of the criminal justice practitioners.

TABLE 3-9
THE DEATH PENALTY: The Public and
Officials Attitudes Compared

	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Favor Strongly	65	37
Favor Somewhat	22	17
No Opinion	3	3
Oppose Somewhat	5	6
Oppose Strongly	5	37
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100

Findings over Three Survey Periods: Attitudes toward Sentencing

Because the wording or response procedure for the question about attitudes toward sentencing philosophy was different over the three public opinion survey time periods, the responses are not comparable from year to year. In 1982 respondents were asked to indicate how they felt about each of six reasons (most important to least important) for sentencing a person convicted of a crime to prison. In 1984 respondents were asked to rank as 1, 2 and 3 what they believed were the three most important reasons for sentencing a person convicted of a crime to prison.

In 1988, the question was changed to ask about sentencing philosophy in general rather than sentences to prison. Findings from the two earlier surveys indicate that for most respondents incapacitation was the most important reason for imposing a sentence to prison. Support for rehabilitation received the third highest rating by 12 percent of the public respondents in both 1982 and 1984.

As stated above, in 1988 the question was changed to provide a more general measure of attitudes toward sentencing philosophies. Responses to this question in

TABLE 3-10
RANKING OF MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR SENTENCING

Reason for Sentencing Convicted Offenders	Public			Officials	
	Reason for Sentences to Prison	Reason for Sentencing		Reason for Sentences to Prison	Reason for Sentencing
	(Percent)	(Percent)		(Percent)	
	1982	1984	1988	1984	1988
GET EVEN: It is society's way of getting even with the criminal for what has been done to the victim	10	5	3	2	1
INCAPACITATION: It removes the criminal from the community and protects citizens against further crimes that might be committed by that person	65	68	57	70	52
DETERRENCE: It deters other people from committing crimes because they are shown an example that crime does not pay	33	10	6	6	7
REHABILITATION: It places the criminal in an environment where he can be reformed through job training, work experience, education and similar programs	12	12	21	3	30
JUST DESERTS: It is the way the law keeps its promise that those who commit crime will get what they deserve	30	13	11	15	7
HARSH EXPERIENCE: It provides a harsh experience that will discourage that person from committing another crime	12	7	9	6	8

NOTE: May not add to 100 percent because some respondents ranked more than one reason as No. 1.

1982 and 1984 were often accompanied with the comment that "prisons do not rehabilitate." Therefore, in 1988 the sentencing attitudes question asked respondents to consider purposes for sentencing rather than reasons for sentencing to prison. Respondents were asked to rank as 1, 2 and 3, from the same six sentencing philosophies, what they felt were the three most important reasons for the court to impose sentence on a person convicted of a crime.

The 1988 survey findings show that incapacitation is still the first choice among 57 percent of the citizens and 52 percent of the officials. Rehabilitation received the second highest rating in 1988 from 21 percent of the citizens and 30 percent of the officials. However, since probation and community corrections sentences are usually thought of as rehabilitation placements, we cannot infer increased support for rehabilitation. It may have been there all along but not tapped because of question wording.

Other 1988 differences to be expected, given the different wording of the sentencing philosophy question, are in the just deserts and deterrence goals. Prison, for certain crimes, is often believed to be "deserved" as well as to deter from further crimes. In 1982, 30 percent of the citizen respondents ranked just deserts as number one, while only 13 percent in 1984 and 11 percent in 1988 did so. In 1982, deterrence received 33 percent of the number one ratings, but only ten percent in 1984 and six percent in 1988.

Although sentencing philosophies cannot be compared over the survey period, we can compare the sentencing recommendations for specific cases presented in 1984 and 1988 (1982 cases are not comparable). Three cases are compared. The

first two are from the first set of crimes with no case information. The third case is from Scenario Five, a burglar with two prior burglaries. Tables 3-11, 3-12 and 3-13 show these recommendations.

TABLE 3-11

ARMED ROBBERY OF A COMPANY PAYROLL

Placement:	Public (Percent)		Officials (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Probation	0	0	0	1
Probation/Jail	6	3	2	2
ISP	•	4	•	6
Community Corrections	5	8	4	8
Prison	89	85	94	83
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
Median prison term	48 Months	55 Months	60 Months	69 Months

• Not available in 1984

TABLE 3-12

ASSAULT WITH A GUN ON A STRANGER

Placement:	Public (Percent)		Officials (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Probation	1	1	0	0
Probation/Jail	7	3	2	4
ISP	•	2	•	4
Community Corrections	5	7	2	7
Prison	87	87	96	85
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
Median prison term	48 Months	60 Months	60 Months	70 Months

• Not available in 1984

TABLE 3-13

**BURGLARY OF A HOME, DEFENDANT HAS TWO
PRIOR SIMILAR CONVICTIONS**

Placement:	Public (Percent)		Officials (Percent)	
	1984	1988	1984	1988
Probation	1	0	0	0
Probation/Jail	22	16	13	3
ISP	.	10	.	8
Community Corrections	13	18	13	23
Prison	64	56	74	66
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100	100	100
Median prison term	24 Months	43 Months	48 Months	54 Months

• Not available in 1984

As shown in Tables 3-11, 3-12, and 3-13, fewer respondents overall are recommending prison for these cases in 1988. The one exception is in Case Two, assault with a gun on a stranger. Here, in both years, 87 percent of public respondents recommended prison. In all three cases, 8 to 11 percent fewer officials recommended prison in 1988.

Attitudes toward Funding Correctional Alternatives

The cost of incarceration is a central issue in the criminal justice system, and legislators and practitioners alike are well aware that many other citizens share the opinion of the 24-year old diet technician who made the following comment:

It seems to cost quite a bit to keep inmates in jail. Most college graduates probably begin making \$18,000.00 a year. It appears that the inmates have more rights and get more help than the elderly and the poor. The victims of crime pay twice: once when the crime is committed and then again when they pay taxes. I have no real insights on how to solve this problem. The money prisons use must come from somewhere. Somehow, it just doesn't seem fair to punish the taxpayer for the crimes instigated by a few.

Currently, maximum security prison cells cost between \$60,000 and \$80,000 per bed to construct, and of each prisoner costs between \$15,000 and \$20,000 per year to incarcerate. As prison populations expand, paying the cost of corrections becomes an important public policy issue.

As we have shown earlier in this chapter, when public and practitioner respondents are presented with questions regarding sentencing which specify crime types only, a majority of the public and almost a third of the practitioner respondents are of the opinion that sentences imposed are extremely or moderately soft. However, when questions provide more information about the criminal cases, responses show greater support for community alternatives to incarceration.

We asked respondents about their preferred method of funding jail and prison construction and operation, and the responses were consistent with those from previous studies. A difference this year, however, was the introduction of the state lotto as a source of correctional funding. The "sin" tax on tobacco and alcohol continues to be favored by a large proportion of respondents (48 percent of the

TABLE 3-14
PREFERRED SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR
PRISON AND JAIL CONSTRUCTION

Source of Funding	Public Percent Ranking as Most Preferred Method	Officials
Sales tax	6	6
Property tax	1	1
Tobacco/Alcohol tax	48	34
Income tax	2	3
Business tax	4	14
Lotto	39	42
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1348	114

• Total N large due to some respondents marking more than one as most preferred

public; 34 percent of the officials). Lotto, however, is favored by 39 percent of the public and 42 percent of the officials. Table 3-14 compares the preferences of public and official respondents for various sources of correctional funding.

Another funding method, specifically for constructing new county jails, favored somewhat or strongly by both respondent groups, is a local bond issue. As Table 3-15 shows, 19 percent of the public respondents favor this method strongly; 42 percent favor it somewhat. Among the practitioner respondents, 34 percent favor a local bond issue strongly, while 27 percent favor it somewhat.

TABLE 3-15
PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL RESPONDENTS FAVOR A LOCAL
BOND ISSUE TO FUND A NEW COUNTY JAIL

Favor or Oppose	Public (Percent)	Officials (Percent)
Favor strongly	19	34
Favor somewhat	42	27
Neutral	15	11
Oppose somewhat	12	13
Oppose strongly	12	15
TOTAL PERCENT	100	100
TOTAL NUMBER	1292	112

Past experience shows that passing bond issues for jail construction is not easily accomplished. Therefore, the positive response to this question may simply reflect the following attitude: "A local bond issue is a good way to finance new jail construction as long as the new jail is not being built in my county."

Open comments by two different respondents seem appropriate as reflections of attitudes toward funding alternatives to incarceration. The manager of operations for an electronic industry expressed the following attitude toward building jails:

Building more jails is an admission of defeat. We must spend those funds on crime prevention. We have to do a better job, both in the home and in the schools.

Finally, another concerned citizen spoke about the problem of balancing public security against funding constraints:

I am concerned about the large amount of crime in Colorado. I hope that the current trends toward probation and rehabilitative counseling will produce favorable results. I realize it is a good approach in theory and practicality. I'd like to see results published showing its effectiveness versus prison terms. I would feel much safer in my city and home if these persons were in prison, but I realize it's a matter of money--isn't everything?

Findings over Three Survey Periods: Funding for Correctional Alternatives

While many respondents favor sentencing offenders to prison, a very small proportion are willing to pay for the cost of building new facilities. Respondents in 1982 were asked to rank five methods of funding prisons as follows: favor strongly, favor somewhat, oppose somewhat or oppose strongly. Respondents in 1984 and 1988 were asked to rank the same five funding methods as 1, 2 or 3 in order of their preference. Table 3-16 shows the percentage of the 1982 respondents who ranked each item as number one. In all three time periods, nearly half of the respondents listed increasing state alcohol and tobacco taxes as their preferred method of funding prisons. The least favorite method, supported by only three percent in 1982 and 1984, and by one percent in 1988, was an increase in residential property taxes.

TABLE 3-16

**THE MOST POPULAR METHOD OF FUNDING
PRISONS IS BY INCREASING THE STATE
ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO TAX**

Method	Percent Strongly Favored	Percent Ranking as Most Preferred Method	
	1982	1984	1988
Increase State Sales Tax	14	16	6
Increase Property Tax	3	3	1
Increase Alcohol & Tobacco Tax	59	61	48
Increase Personal Income Tax	3	5	2
Increase Business Income Tax	16	14	4
Lotto	.	.	39

. Not available in 1982 and 1984

In 1988, the planned introduction of a state lotto as a source of revenue for prison construction provided an additional option. This became the second choice among public respondents for correctional funding and the first choice for practitioners.

Attitudes toward the Criminal Justice System

The following comment by a 32-year old buyer reflects the feelings shared by a large majority of both public and official respondents who responded to a series of questions asking them to rate the job performance of criminal justice agencies in their area:

I believe city, state and federal judicial systems and the people who work in these systems are doing the best they can under current systems and law. There is a black and white to wrong and right! And this commitment costs money! I do understand this. I feel we allow 'gray' because of money.

A large majority of both public and official respondents indicated that their local police departments, district attorneys, judges and public defenders were doing a fair or better job in dealing with the complexities of Colorado's judicial system. Two-thirds of the public respondents and 71 percent of the officials rated the job performance of local police departments as good or excellent. Forty-nine percent of the public and 50 percent of the official respondent group gave their district attorneys the same ratings. A little more than one-third (34 percent) of the public and 60 percent of the official respondents felt that judges are doing a good or excellent job. The performance of public defenders was rated as good or excellent by 45 percent of the public and 70 percent of the official respondents.

To summarize, as Table 3-17 shows, the largest proportion of both public and official respondents gave good or excellent ratings to their local police departments. Judges were rated good or excellent by the smallest proportion of public respondents, while district attorneys were so rated by the smallest proportion of official respondents.

TABLE 3-17
RESPONDENTS SAY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT
DOES THE BEST JOB

Agency		N	Ratings					Total Percent
			Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	
The Police Department	P•	1292	11	55	27	6	1	100
	O•	111	15	56	23	5	1	100
District Attorneys	P•	1278	6	43	37	11	3	100
	O•	111	10	40	30	16	4	100
The Public Defender	P•	1294	6	39	44	8	3	100
	O•	110	24	46	21	5	4	100
The Judges	P•	1275	4	30	38	19	9	100
	O•	111	16	44	25	10	5	100

•P = Public
•O = Officials

The data reported in preceding chapters reveal several interesting contradictions related to public and official perceptions about crime in Colorado and about our criminal justice system. For example, although respondents see crime as one of Colorado's most serious problems and believe that it will increase in the future, crime rate statistics reported by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation show that in 1987 the crime rate was 19 percent lower than in 1980, and 1988 statistics show a continuing downward trend.

The data also indicate that while Colorado citizens and officials see crime as a serious problem, most respondents are not afraid of crime. Additionally, women and the elderly, the two groups with the lowest victimization rates, are most likely to be afraid of crime and to restrict their activities because of their fear.

Another contradiction was found in attitudes toward sentencing. Although sentence lengths have increased dramatically since July 1985, 69 percent of the public and 28 percent of official respondents still believe sentences imposed by the courts are moderately or extremely soft. Looking further into feelings about sentencing, we found that when asked to recommend appropriate sentences for five types of crimes, over 80 percent of both public and official respondents recommended prison for violent crimes and structured community placements for property and drug crimes. However, when provided with more details about individual cases, the data indicate that many respondents who reported they believe sentencing to be soft, recommended sentences to supervised community programs, even for first-time violent offenders. For example, in the first Scenario One armed

robbery case, only 30 percent of the public and 39 percent of the official respondents recommended prison.

As the sections on Findings over Three Survey Periods show, many of these contradictions are similar to those found in the 1982 and 1984 survey findings. The criminal justice system is complex. Public knowledge and understanding of how it works are limited. Perceptions and judgments are often based on media coverage of sensational crimes and system reactions. It is interesting to note, however, that when perceptions about crime in Colorado expressed by citizens are compared to those expressed by criminal justice practitioners, there is more agreement than disagreement.

In conclusion, most respondents and readers would agree with the citizen who observed in his open comment that "there are no simple solutions." He went on to say that "we can accept responsibility for bringing up our children improperly," and that "part of that responsibility is to stress the seriousness of all crime, especially violent crime." He concluded with these words:

We must develop effective long-term solutions or the situation will continue to erode the system with attendant costs to the offender, the victims, to society, and the world.

Chapter Summary

Responses to survey questions concerning attitudes toward sentencing, funding sentencing alternatives and the criminal justice system in general are summarized below:

- o Although sentences actually imposed by judges have increased dramatically since the 1984 survey, a majority of both respondent groups believe sentences imposed by judges are either moderately soft or extremely soft.

- o Given very little information about the criminal, the majority of the public and criminal justice officials would recommend prison for violent offenders.
- o Given detailed information about the offender and the case, the majority of both officials and the public would recommend structured community placement for a first time robber and for a robber/assaulter with a juvenile record.
- o The preference by the public for structured community placement for repeat property offenders, some first-time violent offenders and offenders with drug and alcohol problems has significant policy implications for Colorado's criminal justice and correctional system.
- o When prison was recommended as the appropriate sentence, it was usually selected by a larger proportion of criminal justice respondents (about ten percent larger) than public respondents.
- o The public favors higher levels of community supervision/custody than officials, and they do not favor straight probation for most cases.
- o When citizen and criminal justice respondents recommended prison, the median sentence length suggested by criminal justice practitioners exceeded the median sentence length recommended by the public in ten of the fourteen hypothetical cases presented in the scenarios.
- o Sentence lengths recommended by criminal justice practitioners were, on average, 12 months longer than sentences recommended by the public.
- o A greater proportion of both citizen and official respondents recommended prison when the victim of a violent crime was elderly or handicapped. However, a majority of both groups recommended structured community sentences. For citizen respondents, the length of the prison term remained constant for victims of violent crimes, regardless of the type of victim. Criminal justice officials added four to twelve months to the prison sentence if the victim was elderly or handicapped.
- o Increasing the "sin" tax is still the most popular method of funding prison construction and operation among the public respondents. Lotto revenue is the public's second choice. Among official respondents, however, lotto ranks first and the "sin" tax ranks second.
- o Almost two-thirds of each respondent group said they favor strongly or somewhat a local bond issue as a method of funding the construction of a new county jail.
- o Overall, the local police department received the most excellent and good ratings from respondents in both groups. About half of both groups rated

district attorneys either excellent or good. There were greater differences, however, in each group's ratings of public defenders and judges. Less than half of public respondents, but more than two-thirds of official respondents gave public defenders an excellent or good rating, while judges were rated excellent or good by only one third of the public respondent group and by more than half of the officials.

Report Summary

A summary of all survey findings is included in the executive summary at the beginning of this report.

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APPENDICES

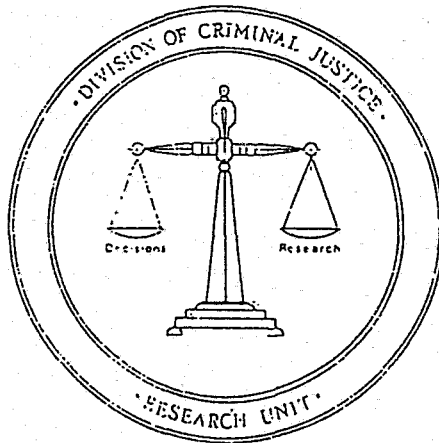
APPENDIX A

CRIME IN COLORADO

A SURVEY OF COLORADO CITIZENS ABOUT CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUE

This survey is being conducted in order to better understand what Colorado voters think about crime, how crime affects them, and what they think public policy ought to be. Please answer all the questions. If you wish to comment on any questions or qualify your answers, please feel free to use the space in the margins or the back cover. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

Thank you for your help.



Department of Public Safety
Division of Criminal Justice
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CRIMINAL JUSTICE SURVEY OF COLORADO CITIZENS

The first few questions ask about the seriousness of the crime problem in Colorado and in your community. There are no "right" answers to these questions or to any of the other criminal justice questions herein--we are interested in your opinions.

(Please answer each question as best as you can by circling the number next to the answer which best reflects your opinion.)

1. In what extent do you think that crime is a problem in Colorado?

- 1 NOT A PROBLEM AT ALL
- 2 A SLIGHT PROBLEM
- 3 A MODERATE PROBLEM
- 4 A SERIOUS PROBLEM

2. In the future, do you think crime in Colorado will

- 1 GREATLY INCREASE
- 2 INCREASE
- 3 STAY THE SAME
- 4 DECREASE
- 5 GREATLY DECREASE

3. To what extent do you think crime is a problem in the community where you live?

- 1 NOT A PROBLEM AT ALL
- 2 A SLIGHT PROBLEM
- 3 A MODERATE PROBLEM
- 4 A SERIOUS PROBLEM

4. In the future, do you think crime in your community will

- 1 GREATLY INCREASE
- 2 INCREASE
- 3 STAY THE SAME
- 4 DECREASE
- 5 GREATLY DECREASE

5. Here is a list of things people have told us they are concerned about today. (Please rank as 1, 2 and 3 the three issues you personally are most concerned about today.)

RANK		RANK	
_____	Inflation and high prices	_____	The budget deficit
_____	The homeless	_____	Getting into another war
_____	Money enough to live right and pay the bills	_____	AIDS
_____	A recession and rising unemployment	_____	Pollution of the environment
_____	Crime and lawlessness	_____	Nuclear war
_____	Prison building	_____	Alcoholism
		_____	The war in Nicaragua
		_____	Drug abuse

6. Do you have a friend or acquaintance who uses any of the following drugs? (For each drug please circle number of your answer.)

MARIJUANA	1 YES	2 NO
CRACK	1 YES	2 NO
COCAINE	1 YES	2 NO
ECSTASY	1 YES	2 NO
METHADONE	1 YES	2 NO

In addition to finding out what you think about the seriousness of the crime problem, we would also like to know more specifically how crime affects your daily life. (For each of the following questions, please circle the numbers of the responses which most accurately represent your behavior and thoughts.)

7. In general, how safe do you feel in your community during the day and at night?

HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL

DURING THE DAY

- 1 VERY SAFE
- 2 SAFE
- 3 UNSAFE
- 4 VERY UNSAFE

DURING THE NIGHT

- 1 VERY SAFE
- 2 SAFE
- 3 UNSAFE
- 4 VERY UNSAFE

8. In general, how safe do you feel in your home?

HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL

DURING THE DAY

- 1 VERY SAFE
- 2 SAFE
- 3 UNSAFE
- 4 VERY UNSAFE

DURING THE NIGHT

- 1 VERY SAFE
- 2 SAFE
- 3 UNSAFE
- 4 VERY UNSAFE

9a. Is there anywhere around your home--that is within a mile--where you would be afraid to walk alone at night because of crime?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

b. How about other family members? Would you be afraid for them to walk alone at night because of crime?

OTHER ADULTS

- 1 Yes
- 2 NO

CHILDREN

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

10. At night, I'm afraid someone is going to break into my home and threaten me.

- 1 FREQUENTLY
- 2 SOMETIMES
- 3 RARELY
- 4 NEVER

11. Before I open the door to my home, I determine who is there.

- 1 FREQUENTLY
- 2 SOMETIMES
- 3 RARELY
- 4 NEVER

12. How often do you worry about the following:

<u>Getting Murdered</u>	<u>Getting Robbed</u>	<u>Getting Raped</u>	<u>Getting Beaten</u>
-------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	-----------------------

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1 FREQUENTLY | 1 FREQUENTLY | 1 FREQUENTLY | 1 FREQUENTLY |
| 2 SOMETIMES | 2 SOMETIMES | 2 SOMETIMES | 2 SOMETIMES |
| 3 RARELY | 3 RARELY | 3 RARELY | 3 RARELY |
| 4 NEVER | 4 NEVER | 4 NEVER | 4 NEVER |

13. Are there neighborhood places where you used to go at night, but are now afraid to go because of the threat of crime?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

14. To what extent have you limited your activities in the past two years because of fear of crime?

LIMITED ACTIVITIES

DURING THE DAY

- 1 NOT AT ALL
- 2 VERY LITTLE
- 3 QUITE A LOT
- 4 VERY MUCH

AFTER DARK

- 1 NOT AT ALL
- 2 VERY LITTLE
- 3 QUITE A LOT
- 4 VERY MUCH

15a. In the last 12 months, has anyone in your household been a victim of crime?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO -- IF NO, SKIP TO QUESTION 18 --> ON NEXT PAGE -->

b. If Yes, was this a

- 1 VIOLENT CRIME--such as assault, rape, murder, kidnapping
- 2 PROPERTY CRIME--such as burglary without a weapon or injury, theft, forgery

16a. How many times have you or a member of your household been the victim of a crime?

- 1 ONCE
- 2 TWICE
- 3 THREE TIMES
- 4 FOUR TIMES
- 5 FIVE OR MORE TIMES

b. What was (were) the crime(s)?

c. Did you report the crime(s)?

- 1 YES, each time
- 2 YES, most of the time
- 3 YES, some of the time
- 4 NO

d. In general, how well do you think the police and courts did their job in this case (these cases)?

POLICE

- 1 VERY WELL
- 2 ADEQUATELY
- 3 UNDECIDED
- 4 INADEQUATELY
- 5 VERY POORLY

COURTS (If applicable.)

- 1 VERY WELL
- 2 ADEQUATELY
- 3 UNDECIDED
- 4 INADEQUATELY
- 5 VERY POORLY

17a. In the last 12 months, has anyone in your household been a victim of a murder, rape, robbery or assault? Note: Many people confuse burglary and robbery. Burglary is breaking into and entering a building or dwelling for the purpose of committing theft; robbery is direct confrontation of the victim by the offender for the purpose of taking something of value by the use of force, threats or intimidation.

- 1 YES
- 2 NO -- IF NO, SKIP TO QUESTION 18 --> ON NEXT PAGE -->

h. If yes, what was the crime?

- 1 MURDER
- 2 RAPE
- 3 ROBBERY
- 4 ASSAULT

c. If yes, what were the age and sex of the victim?

AGE

SEX

1 MALE

2 FEMALE

18. Which of the following actions have you taken to protect yourself or your property? (For each action, please circle number of your answer.)

- | | | |
|--|-------|------|
| Installed special locks | 1 YES | 1 NO |
| Installed a burglar alarm | 2 YES | 2 NO |
| Joined a neighborhood watch program | 3 YES | 3 NO |
| Marked valuable items (Operation I.D.) | 4 YES | 4 NO |
| Installed bars on windows or doors | 5 YES | 5 NO |
| Bought a gun | 6 YES | 6 NO |
| Got a dog | 7 YES | 7 NO |
| Other _____ | 8 YES | 8 NO |

(Please specify)

The next section deals with how offenders are sentenced. Please read the following information before going on to the sentencing questions.

Currently, our prisons are full--with a population of about 5200. Prison terms vary from 12 months, for less serious crimes, up to life for First Degree Murder. Every month added to the average prison term increases the prison population by about 200 inmates.

Prison construction costs average between \$60,000 to \$80,000 per bed, and it costs \$18,000 per inmate per year in operating costs. Thus, operating the prison system requires an increasing share of the state budget.

Prison is one of several sentencing options available to the court. Offenders can be punished in many ways, and prison is the most severe of the commonly used options. (Although the death penalty may be imposed in some premeditated murder cases, these cases are so few that they do not affect the size of the prison population.)

Below is a list of the major options available to the court for sentencing felony offenders. (Please read each carefully.)

PROBATION

Supervision by special officers in the offender's local community for a term set by the courts, usually 2 or 3 years. Offender is required to make restitution where appropriate as well as to pay many of the costs of supervision.

COUNTY JAIL AND PROBATION

A sentence to probation preceded by a short term in the county jail, usually 1 to 3 months. County jails are usually located in the town which serves as the county seat.

INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION (ISP)

The intensive supervision program, created by the Colorado Legislature in 1985, diverts some of the less serious prison-bound offenders to a highly structured surveillance and treatment program, lasting nine months to one year. Violations of the court-imposed conditions result in the offender being resentenced to the Department of Corrections.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

Sentence to a community residential center, usually located near the offender's community. Offenders work during the day and are confined to the center at night and on weekends. Offenders attend special programs for alcohol/drug abuse treatment, mental health counseling, and training in social skills during off-work hours.

STATE PRISON

Confinement in a state prison facility for a term set by the court. The state prison complex is centered in Canon City, with additional facilities at Ordway, Buena Vista, Delta, Rifle and Denver.

(Please use the options described above to select the sentence you think should be given to the following types of offenders.)

19. Below are five examples of convicted offenders. Please read each, then circle the number (to the right) of the sentence you think ought to be given to each offender.

	Probation	Jail & Probation	Intensive Supervision Probation	Community Corrections	State Prison	If Prison How Long?
A person is found guilty of cashing stolen payroll checks.	1	2	3	4	5	___ Months
A person is found guilty of using heroin.	1	2	3	4	5	___ Months
A person is found guilty of armed robbery of a company payroll.	1	2	3	4	5	___ Months
A person is found guilty of burglary of a dwelling. (A color TV set was stolen.)	1	2	3	4	5	___ Months
A person is found guilty of assault with a gun on a stranger.	1	2	3	4	5	___ Months

20. Research has found that offenders who commit crimes at very high rates tend to be school dropouts, tend to use drugs at a very young age and continue to have drug problems, do crimes for the reputation, for excitement and to get money for drugs, and are first convicted for a crime at a very young age.

Given this information, would you be willing to pay tax money to support crime prevention programs such as Stay-in-School programs, drug education programs, and intensive drug treatment programs? (Please circle number of your answer.) I would:

- 1 STRONGLY SUPPORT
- 2 SUPPORT
- 3 NEITHER SUPPORT NOR OPPOSE
- 4 OPPOSE
- 5 STRONGLY OPPOSE

21. What kind of job would you say the following criminal justice agencies in your area are doing? (Please circle your response.)

POLICE DEPT. WHICH ARRESTS AND INVESTIGATES PEOPLE SUSPECTED OF BREAKING THE LAW	DISTRICT ATTORNEYS WHICH PROSECUTE CASES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH BREAKING THE LAW	THE JUDGES WHO PRESIDE OVER THE COURTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND IMPOSE SENTENCES ON CONVICTED OFFENDERS	PUBLIC DEFENDER OR OTHER DEFENSE ATTORNEYS APPOINTED BY THE COURT TO REPRESENT PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF CRIMES
1 EXCELLENT	1 EXCELLENT	1 EXCELLENT	1 EXCELLENT
2 GOOD	2 GOOD	2 GOOD	2 GOOD
3 FAIR	3 FAIR	3 FAIR	3 FAIR
4 POOR	4 POOR	4 POOR	4 POOR
5 VERY POOR	5 VERY POOR	5 VERY POOR	5 VERY POOR

22. In general, would you say the sentences imposed by judges in Colorado are: (Please circle your response.)

- 1 EXTREMELY SEVERE
- 2 MODERATELY SEVERE
- 3 ABOUT RIGHT
- 4 MODERATELY SOFT
- 5 EXTREMELY SOFT

As discussed earlier, the court may sentence a convicted felony offender to probation, jail and probation, community corrections or prison (see page 6). (Please read the following cases very carefully and circle the number which best represents your opinion about how the offender should be sentenced.)

23. An offender has been convicted of robbery. The evidence presented at the trial included the following. The defendant and a friend entered a convenience store in your community and at gun point forced three customers and a clerk to lie on the floor while the gunmen looted the cash register. A fourth customer escaped and alerted the police who arrested the defendant a short distance from the store within a few minutes of the robbery. The second man escaped and the weapon used was

never recovered. The defendant gave no statement and has never identified his accomplice. All five witnesses at the trial testified to the defendant's presence in the store; however, the evidence was conflicting as to whether the defendant was the person who used the weapon. The probation department's report shows that the defendant is an unemployed 24 year old male, who has an average IQ, no prior felony convictions and an eighth grade education. He has a prior conviction for a misdemeanor which appears to be related to excessive consumption of alcohol. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
 - 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
 - 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
 - 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
 - 5 PRISON _____
- (If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

24. Same facts as Question 23 except that the defendant has been convicted of one prior similar felony. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
 - 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
 - 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
 - 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
 - 5 PRISON _____
- (If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

25. Same facts as Question 23 except that the defendant has been addicted to heroin for the past three years and has testified at the probation hearing with apparent sincerity that he is hopeful that you will place him in a community drug rehabilitation program, which is available as a condition of probation. The offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
 - 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
 - 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
 - 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
 - 5 PRISON _____
- (If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

26. An offender has been convicted of assault and robbery. Just after dark, he approached a woman from the rear, knocked her to the ground, grabbed her purse and ran. The offender is an unemployed 18 year old male with an average IQ. He dropped out of school in the 10th grade and has a juvenile record. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
 - 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
 - 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
 - 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
 - 5 PRISON _____
- (If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

27. Same as Question 26 except the victim is in a wheelchair. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
 - 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
 - 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
 - 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
 - 5 PRISON _____
- (If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

28. Same as Question 26 except the victim is an elderly woman. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
 - 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
 - 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
 - 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
 - 5 PRISON _____
- (If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

29. An offender has pled guilty to theft over \$300. The offender went through the personal possessions of members of a health club taking money and jewelry worth \$5,000. The offender is a 28 year old female who had been steadily employed for four years until she was laid off 8 months ago. She is divorced and has custody of her two children. She has no prior convictions. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
 - 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
 - 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
 - 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
 - 5 PRISON _____
- (If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

30. Same as Question 29 except the offender has a severe drinking problem. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
- 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
- 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
- 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
- 5 PRISON _____
(If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

31. Same as Question 29 except the offender has been previously convicted of theft. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
- 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
- 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
- 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
- 5 PRISON _____
(If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

32. An offender has pled guilty to manslaughter. The offender was drinking with friends in a local bar when a group from another community came in. A fight started between the two groups, and in the free-for-all that followed, the offender knocked the victim into the bar where his head struck the corner of the bar. The victim died as a result of his injuries. The offender was employed in the oil fields at the time of this incident. He is 25 years old, married, and has a three year old child. He has no prior convictions. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
- 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
- 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
- 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
- 5 PRISON _____
(If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

33. Same as Question 32 except offender has been previously convicted of assault. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
- 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
- 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
- 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
- 5 PRISON _____
(If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

34. Same as Question 32 except offender is currently participating in a rehabilitation program for problem drinkers. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
- 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
- 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
- 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
- 5 PRISON _____
(If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

35. An offender has pled guilty to burglary. He gained entry into a home through an unlatched window and was apprehended by a passing policeman as the offender left the premises with the victim's jewelry stuffed in his pocket. The defendant has no prior felony convictions and one previous non-violent misdemeanor conviction. He is an unemployed 30 year old male, who is separated from his wife and children. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
- 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
- 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
- 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
- 5 PRISON _____
(If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

36. Same facts as Question 35 except that the defendant has been convicted of two similar crimes. This offender should be sentenced to:

- 1 PROBATION
- 2 JAIL AND PROBATION
- 3 INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION
- 4 COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
- 5 PRISON _____
(If you circled prison, please specify number of months)

37. Now, would you please indicate how you feel about different means of raising money for building and expanding prisons or jails. (Please rank as 1, 2 and 3 your three preferred means of raising money.)

RANK

- ___ INCREASING THE STATE SALES TAX
- ___ INCREASING THE TAXES ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY
- ___ INCREASING STATE ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO TAX
- ___ INCREASING STATE PERSONAL INCOME TAX
- ___ INCREASING STATE BUSINESS INCOME TAX
- ___ LOTTO

38. One way that local government can raise money to build and expand jails is to put a bond issue before the voters. If approved, money would be made immediately available for jail construction. The bonds would then be paid off over a period of years from the general tax revenue funds. Suppose you were voting today on a bond issue to build or expand county or city jails. Would you favor or oppose it? (Please circle your responses.)

- 1 FAVOR STRONGLY
- 2 FAVOR SOMEWHAT
- 3 NEITHER FAVOR NOR OPPOSE
- 4 OPPOSE SOMEWHAT
- 5 OPPOSE STRONGLY

The next statements are reasons which have been given for the sentences imposed by the court. (Please rank as 1, 2 and 3 your three most important reasons.)

39. The court should impose sentences for the purpose of

RANK

- ___ Getting even with the criminal for what has been done to the victim.
- ___ Removing the criminal from the community and protecting citizens against further crimes that might be committed by that person.
- ___ Deterring other people from committing crimes because they are shown an example that crime does not pay.
- ___ Placing the criminal in an environment where he can be reformed through job training, work experience, education and similar programs.
- ___ Keeping the law's promise that those who commit crimes will get the punishment they deserve.
- ___ Providing a harsh experience that will discourage that person from committing another crime.

40. Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of pre-meditated murder? (Please circle your response.)

- 1 FAVOR STRONGLY
- 2 FAVOR SOMEWHAT
- 3 NO OPINION
- 4 OPPOSE SOMEWHAT
- 5 OPPOSE STRONGLY

41. Do you think your opinions about crime are similar to the general public's opinions?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

42. Do you think decisions made in your local court system reflect public opinion in your community?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

43. Have you ever contacted any of the following officials regarding a criminal justice issue? (For each official, please circle number of your answer.)

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------|------|
| A LEGISLATOR | 1 YES | 2 NO |
| YOUR DISTRICT ATTORNEY | 1 YES | 2 NO |
| A JUDGE | 1 YES | 2 NO |
| A PROBATION OFFICER | 1 YES | 2 NO |

Finally, we need some information on personal characteristics in order to analyze the data and to assess the representativeness of the sample. We want to emphasize that this information is strictly confidential and will in no way be associated with your name. (Please circle the correct response.)

44. Length of residence in the community:

- 1 LESS THAN 1 YEAR
- 2 1-5 YEARS
- 3 6-10 YEARS
- 4 11-15 YEARS
- 5 MORE THAN 15 YEARS

45. Size of household:

NUMBER OF ADULTS _____
NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER 18 _____

46. Sex of respondent: (Please circle number.)

- 1 MALE
- 2 FEMALE

47. Are you presently: (Please circle number.)

- 1 EMPLOYED
- 2 UNEMPLOYED
- 3 RETIRED
- 4 FULL-TIME HOMEMAKER
- 5 OTHER _____

(Please specify)

48. Are you salaried or self-employed? (Please circle number.)

- 1 SALARIED
- 2 SELF-EMPLOYED
- 3 NOT APPLICABLE - I AM NOT EMPLOYED

49. How many members of your household are employed 32 hours a week or more?

(Please specify)

50. Please describe your present occupation. (If retired, please describe the usual occupation before retirement.)

TITLE: _____
KIND OF WORK YOU DO: _____
KIND OF COMPANY OR
BUSINESS: _____

51. Marital status: (Please circle number.)

- 1 NEVER MARRIED
- 2 MARRIED
- 3 SEPARATED
- 4 DIVORCED
- 5 WIDOWED

52. Age: _____
(Years)

53. Highest level of education that you have completed? (Please circle number.)

- 1 NO FORMAL EDUCATION
- 2 SOME GRADE SCHOOL
- 3 COMPLETED GRADE SCHOOL
- 4 SOME HIGH SCHOOL
- 5 COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL
- 6 SOME COLLEGE
- 7 COMPLETED COLLEGE (Specify major) _____
- 8 SOME GRADUATE WORK
- 9 A GRADUATE DEGREE

54. Approximate household income, before taxes, in 1987: (Please circle number.)

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 LESS THAN \$10,000 | 7 35,000 - 39,999 |
| 2 10,000 - 14,999 | 8 40,000 - 44,999 |
| 3 15,000 - 19,999 | 9 45,000 - 49,999 |
| 4 20,000 - 24,999 | 10 50,000 - 74,999 |
| 5 25,000 - 29,999 | 11 75,000 and over |
| 6 30,000 - 34,999 | |

55. Do you consider your political ideology to be: (Please circle number.)

- 1 LIBERAL
- 2 MODERATE
- 3 CONSERVATIVE

56. Which do you consider yourself to be? (Please circle number.)

- 1 REPUBLICAN
- 2 DEMOCRAT
- 3 INDEPENDENT
- 4 OTHER _____

(Please specify)

57. To what extent do you know your neighbors? (Please circle number.)

- 1 I DON'T KNOW ANY OF THEM
- 2 I KNOW A FEW OF THEM
- 3 I KNOW MOST OF THEM
- 4 I KNOW ALL MY NEIGHBORS

58. What is your ethnic or racial background? (Please circle number.)

- 1 WHITE
- 2 BLACK
- 3 ORIENTAL
- 4 MEXICAN AMERICAN
- 5 OTHER _____

(Please specify)

59. Please use this space to make any comment you might have concerning crime, crime victims, the prevention of crime, or the control of crime.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR
YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO OUR
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CRIME IN
COLORADO

APPENDIX B

OPEN COMMENTS BY RESPONDENTS

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Justice must be tempered with mercy. Criminals are usually made, not born....You speak of spending money to incarcerate more people who lack education, employment, the ability to say 'NO' to drugs and alcohol. Spend the 'bond' money on jobs, education and rehabilitation up front. Put people to work-help them to find out what it takes to survive without crime and keep on doing it until there is no need for prisons except for the sociopaths. For those besotted individuals, throw away the key.

--55 Year Old Bookkeeper

Almost fifty percent (48.8%) of the 642 citizen respondents who returned completed surveys still had more to say about crime and criminals after circling numbers and filling blanks in response to 58 complex questions presented in a controlled multiple-choice format. Some of the comments addressed single issues; others included opinions about several topics or about survey questions.

The criminal justice system as a whole, or practices and policies of its components, also elicited open comments and, last but not least, 21 respondents took the time to voice their opposition to or support of the survey itself. Fourteen of these responses were positive; seven were negative.

To facilitate analysis of the open responses, researchers coded them into a number of general categories. These topic areas, with corresponding response frequencies and excerpts from individual comments, are described in the following paragraphs.

The comments of many citizen respondents reflected a perception that crime in general, violent crime in particular, is on the increase. Only a few comments, however, referred specifically to crime rates. Three citizens expressed the belief that the rate of domestic violence crime is increasing; another noted that "crime is on the increase in rural areas." A third respondent stated simply: "Crime is increasing." A

fourth declared, "Crime rates are out of control." Only one citizen expressly disagreed. "Crime rates," he said, "are not so bad."

Public apathy toward the crime problem was an issue of concern expressed by two respondents. A 41 year old business owner reported her feelings as follows:

I am personally concerned that too many people think crime is not a problem. In our community, domestic violence is a big problem, much more so than theft or burglary; so, I'd like to see more addressing of this issue....Raising taxes is not the solution as that only affects the people who can least afford it....I think most people are beginning to wonder what has happened to our tax money now. Is there crime in our state government?

Another respondent, who did not complete the survey but wrote in length about crime issues, commented that a small number of citizens have "intelligent answers relevant to the problems of today," but many others, "because of the remote nature of such social dilemmas, simply don't care." He went on to explain the effect:

...Such indifference is not limited to the general public. Apathy has caused a monumental communication problem within our judicial system, which is reflected most distinctly in the lack of communication and cooperation between the police department and the D.A.'s office which claims to be too busy for consideration of finite details. Judges with passive attitudes (and actions) and witnesses with conflicting information only add to the immense communication problem...One can readily see the dilemma of justice. If the justice agencies could work closer together and pass on pertinent information, justice could be better served.

One respondent wrote about parental responsibility in these words:

All importance is given to money and material; two parents working; no home left; no home left leaves children without guidance; children without guidance produces adults without direction; adults without direction produce crime.

--62 Year Old Meter Relay Mechanic

Better role models are needed "if children are to believe that crime does not pay," was an idea expressed by nine of the "open-comment" respondents. One of these expanded on this thought:

Raising the minimum wage, encouraging small business and creating more and better jobs would help deal with the causes

of crime--poverty and frustration. People who see crooks, liars and con artists in government think they are justified in acting the same way.. Times are hard for poor people; we need more social programs and fewer prisons.

--38 Year Old Secretary

CRIME PREVENTION

Building more jails in an admission of defeat. We must spend those funds on crime prevention. We have to do a better job both in the home and schools.

--Manager, Operations
Electronics Industry

Concern about the lack or inadequacy of crime prevention programs and efforts was expressed by approximately 150 (147:22.9%) respondents. Most often mentioned was the need for early intervention by family, educators, social services and/or the criminal justice system.

One twenty-one year old citizen expressed his opinion very simply: "More money should be used to prevent crimes than to punish them." Twelve other respondents agreed. A thirty-two year old business manager expressed her thoughts in greater detail:

We all acknowledge that criminal behavior starts in the home as a reaction to a dysfunctional family (drugs, booze, etc.). If this is so, why haven't we poured more money into prevention programs? The system needs to be able to make some kind of move before children are beaten to death, or near death, waiting for a social worker's aid. We need to be far more aggressive with our identification and prevention programs, and I'm willing to put my money where my mouth is.

The need to address social and economic problems as a method of crime prevention was observed specifically by 37 citizens. For example a twenty-eight year old loan service representative wrote about social issues in these words:

If we could help solve the problems of alcoholism, unemployment, etc., there would be fewer prisoners and more room for the real criminals rather than for those who are the victims of circumstance.

Other suggestions included the formation of neighborhood crime watch groups (12 respondents), criminal justice agency networking (3 respondents), early substance abuse prevention and intervention (2 respondents), and early recognition of and treatment for assaultive behavior (1 respondent).

A former major league athlete agreed with others that "crime prevention should begin at the grass roots, " but went on to state:

There's too much emphasis on fun, sports, etc. We're not here to prepare our kids for major league sports, but for major league life!

--56 Year Old Auto Parts
Store President

More specifically, the need for better education and job skill training was noted by fifty-two of the respondents concerned about crime prevention. Another citizen said that we need more public education programs than already exist. Two more respondents recommended wiping out pornography as a step toward crime prevention. Another expressed the belief that "violence and crime on TV can't help but increase crime--in spite of reports to the contrary by programmers." Four other respondents expressed agreement.

Thirteen of those who contributed comments on crime prevention felt that the deterioration of parental responsibility needed to be turned around if crime prevention is to have any success; another citizen stated that children should be removed from abusive homes.

Juveniles were the focus of concern for 28 citizens who supported prevention as a priority for addressing the problem of crime. A forty-two year old school administrator expressed his concern as follows:

Colorado does not spend enough money on juvenile corrections, therapy and counseling. Few good options exist for quality community placement with supervision. Juvenile crime leads to adult crime. We need to increase prevention. Use lottery dollars to prevent crime.

The words of a fifty-two year old supervisor of a program for handicapped adults seem to summarize the feelings and ideas of those who wrote about juveniles and crime prevention:

I feel that since more crime is being committed by youth, we need more training in crime prevention in the schools, starting in the first grade. Policemen should visit schools, talk about crime, ask questions, answer questions, become friends with kids. We need more awareness of what is going on in every community and to prevent instead of looking the other way.

Finally, an encouraging view was expressed by a nineteen year old market researcher:

Prison is not the answer for some young kid who is repressed at home and is looking for release. Train him in a job that will give him a chance to rise above the pain of ignorance and stupidity. Give him a chance to help himself, and he will, I guarantee, help others who were like him.

Alternatives to incarceration were considered appropriate for non-violent, first-time offenders by 19 respondents. Two of these went on to agree with 14 others that sentences should be designed to reform the offender.

Additional suggestions related to alternatives to placement in or confinement to prison included the following:

	No. of Respondents
Mandatory counseling for all who are placed in or returned to the community	1
Home incarceration, electronically monitored	1
Community service	1
Work release programs; to pay victim and/or society	1
Use of high fines	1

Writing about both crime prevention and alternatives to incarceration, the 47 year old president of a construction company contributed the following comment:

The most appropriate way to deal with crime is through equal opportunity for all; education, rehabilitation services and compassion. Building more prisons and incarcerating more people is NOT the answer. We are only punishing ourselves with an increasingly hard-to-carry tax burden to support the prison system.

Some respondents did not agree that incarceration is always the most effective and appropriate punishment. One of these did not recommend long sentences, even for habitual criminals:

I don't think sentences should be as long as they are. If habitual offenders don't change, they need something else and should be used in a way beneficial to society if possible-- manual labor, research, etc. They will have forfeited their rights to live as a normal human--but it was their choice.

--25 Year Old Insurance Agent

A more tempered opinion was contributed by a citizen whose views represent more closely that of the 34 others who expressed support for alternatives to incarceration:

It is my feeling that we must make a clear distinction between crimes of violence and other crimes....In almost no case should a person take up prison space for non-violent crimes. Any crime of violence, if a weapon is involved, should result in a long ten-plus years in prison.

--37 Year Old Stockbroker

The comments of a 31 year old owner of a magazine publishing and greeting card manufacturing firm combine many of the views of those who expressed the belief that the criminal justice system is too lenient:

...Criminal offenders often get off too easy. I am all for rehabilitation. However, when a life has been threatened or lost, the offenders should receive rehabilitation behind bars....Additionally, there should be no release until he, she has spent a good amount of time in prison. I am totally against the death penalty, but I certainly don't want these folks out and about where I live and where my daughter plays. I believe criminals start out doing lightweight offenses, get their hands slapped or do a small jail stint and turn around and do the same crime again and again. Before long, someone ends up hurt or dead. Get these folks the first time around. Let them know we won't tolerate lawlessness. Maybe then we will see crime on the decrease instead of on the increase.

ATTITUDES TOWARD SENTENCING AND PUNISHMENT

I feel the justice system is far too lenient. If punishment were more severe, this might deter more people from committing crimes. I also feel the criminal should pay back the victim according to the crime.

--36 Year Old Teacher

More than 100 other respondents agreed with the views expressed in the above quotation. Seven of the 114 citizens who stated that sentencing is too lenient agreed with 37 others that sentences should include mandatory restitution. Six more who said sentencing is too lenient, plus 32 additional respondents, specified that all high risk, repeat and violent offenders should receive a sentence to prison. Two more of those concerned about leniency agreed, with ten other respondents, that progressively harsher sentences should be imposed for each subsequent offense.

Other recommendations related to tougher sentencing included the following:

	No. of Respondents
Life sentences for violent crimes	3
Life sentences for drug dealers; no parole if death to another results	1
Life (until death) for habitual criminals	1
Harsher sentences for crimes against the helpless	5
Harsher sentences for crimes using weapons	2
Life sentences should be until death	1

Two comments recommended stiffer sentences specifically to fulfill the purpose of deterring others from committing crimes. Another four respondents feel that, for the same purpose, at least a short-term prison sentence should be imposed for all offenders convicted of a felony.

Concern about leniency was also expressed by 55 other citizen respondents who focused on the term "punishment" rather than on sentences or sentencing. Twenty-two of these comments supported an "eye-for-an-eye" concept of punishment. For example, a 38 year old truck driver urged the criminal justice system to "disarm all repeat rapists and child molesters." Fifteen others simply agreed that punishment should be quick and certain; another 18 stated that too many offenders go unpunished. Particularly cited were perpetrators of white collar crime, child abuse, and domestic violence crimes. Also included were those who cause injury or death to others as a result of driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

Reference to the death penalty as a form of punishment was the focus of or was included in the comments of 95 citizen respondents. Five of these comments expressed opposition to the death penalty. One opponent expressed her feeling as follows:

The reason I so strongly oppose the death penalty is that a person who is convicted of premeditated murder or murder of any kind can be punished by spending the rest of his/her life in prison. Why does it make it right for the judicial system to kill someone by the death penalty? Isn't that also premeditated murder?

--26 Year Old Nurse Administrator

A thirty-two year old homemaker disagreed. She expressed her support for the death penalty by stating, "I believe in capital punishment. If our jails are so overcrowded, why don't we eliminate the lifers?" The 94 others who favor the death penalty said they do so for a variety of reasons. Some feel it should be imposed on all repeat, violent offenders (8); some merely stressed that it should be carried out

quickly (6); seven stated explicitly that it is a deterrent to crime; eleven others said that it not only should be used, but the number of appeals should be limited.

Another comment expressed concern about appeals of the death penalty:

In my opinion, people who have been given the death penalty should not have the right to appeal but one time. If the first appeal has been turned down and the death sentence still stands, it should be carried out no longer than one month after and by a means which is the most cost effective.

--40 Year Old Homemaker

Other suggestions related to the use of the death penalty included:

	No. of Respondents
Bring back public hangings	1
Use for child molesters	1
Use for drug dealers	1
Use for second drug offense	1
Use for offenders if not 99% rehabilitated after ten years in prison	1

One respondent recommended that an offender not be taken alive into custody if caught using a weapon while committing a crime.

JUDICIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Judicial policies and procedures were issues of concern for many of the respondents (12.9 %). The issues that provoked the greatest response include judicial discretion, technicalities, probation and treatment of victims. Also mentioned were inconsistencies in policy and placement decisions and in attitudes toward certain types of crimes, as well as inequities in the treatment of defendants.

The need to "speed up the system," and an awareness that there is "too much backlog in the system," was referred to directly by only three respondents. There were many other related comments, however, regarding funding and staffing.

Three respondents expressed support for judicial discretion; the viewpoint of 15 others who oppose judicial discretion were reflected in the words of a 42 year old sales representative who said, "the sentencing of a criminal should have a more defined standard, with all getting a similar sentence for a similar crime."

The sections of the survey that required respondents to indicate what sentences and placements they would impose in a series of hypothetical cases caused one respondent to write as follows:

The survey became a little frustrating, trying to figure out the sentences to impose on people convicted. As a matter of fact, I don't envy the profession of being a judge.

--26 Year Old Silkscreener

Plea bargaining was mentioned by 48 citizen respondents: one favored it; 47 opposed it. A 62 year old aerospace engineering manager wrote that he believes "prosecutor case overloads allow plea bargains that are not commensurate with the crime committed, for the sake of expediting dispositions."

Twenty-one respondents emphasized that too many offenders are freed on technicalities. The most representative comment on this issue was stated as follows:

Generally the system seems to work. However, many times it appears that due to improper notice of rights, acquisition of evidence, etc., many criminals are set free. In cases where the crime is obviously serious and evidence clearly shows guilt...the crime should be punished.

--Certified Public Accountant

Another respondent, a 31 year old medical claims examiner, expressed the same concern more dramatically:

Sometimes--often--I feel our laws have gotten away from the word 'justice.' It seems to have been replaced with the words 'due process.' For example, a man is arrested and not read his Miranda rights. Though ninety-five percent of the evidence, and perhaps eye witnesses attest to his guilt, he may get reduced charges or be let off because of this 'violation of his rights.' Is this serving man's society? Would it not, perhaps, be more just to reduce the man's sentence by six months or a year if he is convicted?

....Is man now the servant to the words put on reams of paper in the name of due process? Where is the common sense of this matter? Has it too been lost in a legal loophole? Or is it just buried in reams of paper waiting to be rediscovered?

The following criticisms and suggestions related to prosecution of cases were also mentioned:

	No. of Respondents
White collar crime is not equally prosecuted	3
Prosecutors should be allowed to disclose more about defendant's background	1
DA's should be more involved in background and follow-up of a case	1
DA filing and bargaining should be based on nature of the crime, not status nor ethnicity of the defendant	2
Too much time spent prosecuting victimless crimes	1
Not-Guilty-By-Reason-Of-Insanity plea is abused	1
Judicial system needs to educate the public about what it is doing	1

A 35 year old engineering technician wrote that there should be no plea bargaining for repeat offenders. In his words, "It makes lawyers fat and criminals unafraid."

Public defenders were mentioned only three times in the open comments. One respondent believes they are to blame for many of the delays in proceedings because "If there are loopholes that public defenders can find and use to the advantage of criminals, they will." Another comment referred specifically to defendants being allowed to defend themselves with the advice of a public defender to guide them. The words of the 62 year old computer engineer who made this comment indicate how strongly he feels. He declared, "This is a disgrace!" and then continued:

How can a citizen have any respect for the legal system and our courts when this kind of foolishness is condoned? At the point where intelligence, logic and sanity should be predominant, we have pure idiocy.

Comments about probation and probation officers ranged from the merely hopeful to the very critical. The statement of a 69 year old retired teacher revealed some anxiety. She wrote, "I hope that probation officers who supervise are well paid and have a case load which allows them to be effective."

Another respondent, critical of probation officers in her community, shared an opinion also expressed by many others. This 26 year old cook commented that "probation officers in this community are too lax. They don't keep in touch with their clients; they lose some of them and they don't seem to care. They are overworked; therefore, they don't care."

Thirteen other citizens who contributed comments about probation agreed that probation supervision is too lax; four more mentioned support for probation as an alternative to incarceration for all offenders convicted of property crimes. One of these specified that probation should be an option only for first-time offenders. Other comments about probation included:

	No. of Respondents
There should be no probation for repeaters	2
More probation officers are needed	1
Officers need better pay and lighter case loads	1
Volunteer programs should be expanded	1
Intensive Supervision Probation is too lax	1

VICTIMS

A large number of comments focused on issues related to victims. Of the 71 citizens who referred directly to victims, 49 (45%) complained, in one way or another, that victims have either no rights or fewer rights than criminals. Another nine observations noted that the criminal justice system often "victimizes the victim."

More victim support was advocated in comments contributed by nine other citizens; other issues raised, in each case by only one or two respondents, included the following:

	No. of Respondents
More attention should be given to crimes against women, children and the elderly	1
More effort should be made to protect victims from the offender	1
More attention should be given to crimes with victims	2
Victims should be assured compensation; use offender's assets	1
More information should be available to victims about case progress	1
More should be done for victims of vandalism	1

While expressing her opinion about the treatment of victims, a 37 year old secretary incorporated several of the other issues raised in this section on judicial policies and procedures:

Crime victims seem to be the forgotten element in all this. Often the victim (particularly the rape victim) has to prove his/her innocence before the criminal justice system makes any headway toward doing something with the criminal. Many

judges are far too quick to go easy on a convicted criminal because of his/her back-ground (broken home, child abuse, etc.). Plea bargaining is a joke much of the time, allowing a criminal off scott free. There are far too many cases being thrown out due to a 'technicality' that has nothing to do with the case. Criminals are more protected than victims.

FEAR OF CRIME

Closely associated with comments about victim's rights were those that dealt with the fear of crime and how some citizen respondents are responding to this fear. The tone is set by the following observations and concerns of a 56 year old librarian:

I am very concerned about the great number of murders and other violent crimes committed by previously convicted people now roaming the state. While this certainly isn't unique to Colorado, if something isn't done soon, no place is going to be safe to live. Organized crime and drug related crimes are destroying the country. Meanwhile, we are given platitudes from the Federal government and 'What it's going to cost?' from state legislators. It is absolutely 'open season' on women (who must have asked for it, right?), and child abuse seems to be the most popular form of recreation for far too many males. Even if people are caught, nothing happens. The lawyers, the courts, etc. take forever to even bring cases to trial. The victims are long since forgotten, while those who do the evil things among us get every consideration....So quickly we kill a pit bull or any dog that bites. But a really calculating person who has killed or injured we allow to live! Enough is enough! The series in the Rocky Mountain News about the state justice system showed how strained the so-called probation system is, etc. Nonviolent crimes are increasing so fast that I don't expect to stay lucky forever.

Personal fear of crime was expressed in ten responses. Several others described how they or their community are dealing with this fear. A 69 year old stationary engineer simply said, "The best insurance a man can have these days is a Smith and Wesson."

A 56 year old real estate agent wrote about his community:

I personally feel that the reason we do not have crime in this small rural community is that everyone owns a gun and knows how to use it. If more people had guns I am sure the criminal element would not commit crimes if they knew they may be

shot. Gun education would be cheaper than prisons, but not as appealing.

Several respondents wrote that the growing trend in the use or ownership of guns by private citizens for self-protection is, in itself, a cause of fear. They advocated limiting sales of guns and stronger gun control laws.

Another comment, by a fifty year old female manager described both fear and a sense of helplessness shared by several other respondents:

I feel very angry that I cannot enjoy my house without fear of burglary. I lock myself in the house both day and night. I have been burglarized four times and fear the next time. It seems like the police department just kind of forgot about any further contact after the 'big' one. I even supplied a license plate number neighbors gave me. I feel they could have at least told me if the information was of any value.

Other comments indicated that fear of crime is often related to the degree of confidence citizens have in their police department. Most of these comments were supportive of law enforcement officers and agencies; some also professed an understanding of budget, staffing and "red tape" obstacles faced by the police.

The following recommendations and criticisms regarding police protection were mentioned by citizen respondents:

	No. of Respondents
More visibility in high crime areas	12
Should work more with youth/community	7
Go back to walking the beat	1
Should work more with victims	4
Should concentrate less on victimless crime	2
Need more authority; fewer restrictions	7
Need more backup and support from the courts	15
Need more support from the community	2
Should work more on prevention; less on revenue generating activities	10
Need more cooperation among law enforcement agencies	1
Need more officers	4
Need higher quality people in law enforcement	2

Understanding and support were included in the words of a 31 year old special services supervisor:

I have great admiration for the police department. They put their lives on the line daily. But I hear so much about repeat offenders, that would indicate a breakdown in punishment and/or rehabilitation.

Three additional comments were devoted to praise and support of law enforcement officers.

On the critical side, one respondent expressed concern about police brutality, another stressed that suspects, particularly those accused of victimless crimes, should be treated better by the police; a third respondent expressed a concern that treatment by the police may be influenced by the race and/or status of the suspect.

A 45 year old clerk typist who transcribes police cases observed that, in her opinion...

Police officers spend too much time on petty problems such as very lengthy, in-depth probes of telephone harassment cases, which 70 percent of the time they are unable to solve. Some officers spend too much time on the details of thefts and car repairs, etc. by calling and contacting local merchants to get estimates....I feel this is between the victim of the crime and his/her insurance company, not something the police department should be involved in.

On the brighter side, one woman who obviously feels well protected and has no fear of crime, explained why she did not complete the survey:

I have not answered your questionnaire because I've been in my home for over 20 years and have never had a crime in our area.

DRUGS

Of the 61 respondents who commented about drug use and distribution, twenty-four expressed the belief that most crime is drug related. The words of a 40 year old teacher reflect the attitude of many who wrote about this issue:

I feel drugs are the biggest crime problem. The use of drugs leads to other crimes. I believe the people bringing drugs to our children should be given the most severe penalty....Drug dealers are not given due justice for their crimes.

A 63 year old computer specialist wrote, "Make selling drugs to minors a capital offense!"

A similar, but more expanded opinion was stated in the following words by the 57 year old business owner:

I believe drug use and sales and the spinoff effect of drug related crime is by far the most costly problem to the health of our citizens, the morale of our young people, and the economy of the state. I think it should be a top priority to rid our state of this problem. I believe laws should be passed and enforced that would require on the first conviction for selling drugs that all profits and equipment be forfeited to the general fund to balance the budget. A mandatory one year sentence to state prison and a record that cannot be dismissed or treated as anything other than a first conviction should be the punishment. On a second conviction for selling drugs there should be a mandatory death sentence to be carried out within 90 days of sentencing with no appeal procedure.

The following suggestions were most often offered for addressing the problem of drug-related crimes:

	No. of Respondents
Eliminate the demand for drugs	6
Stop traffic from other countries	6
Impose harsher sentences for drug offenders	24
Legalize drugs	5

Three citizens, including the director of a alcohol and drug treatment center, stressed that "diminished capacity" caused by substance abuse should not be a mitigating factor in determining punishment. Another said that sentences are already too harsh for drug offenders, and one more respondent recommended treatment and rehabilitation instead of prison.

PRISON, PRISONERS AND PAROLE

In general, comments about prisons, prisoners and parole reflected the following beliefs: prisons are too comfortable, prisoners have it too easy, and parole is too risky.

A sales representative with a law enforcement background stated it this way:

The major problem with the prison system is that the prisoners are treated as though they were on vacation with libraries, TV's, lounges, etc. This is not a deterrent to crime or, [a contribution] to the rehabilitation of the criminal. Prisons should be similar to World War II prison camps, and prisoners

should be housed in masses....Crime is on the increase in Colorado.... mainly because of...poor judges and crowded prisons that put some resorts in Mexico to shame.

Comments about prisons included 21 from citizens who feel that prisons are like country clubs. Fourteen others stated that we need more prisons. One of these, plus an additional five, implied their support for more prisons by stating money is needed for the construction of additional facilities.

Costs to the taxpayer for building and maintaining prisons was a concern expressed by some citizen respondents. A young diet technician spoke for most of these citizens when she wrote the following words:

It seems to cost quite a bit to keep inmates in jail/prison. Most college graduates probably begin making \$18,000 per year; cost of maintaining an inmate for a year in prison. It appears that the inmates have more rights and get more help than the elderly and the poor. The victims of crime pay twice: once when the crime is committed and then again when they pay taxes. I have no real insight on how to solve this problem. The money prisons use must come from somewhere. Somehow, it just doesn't seem fair to punish the taxpayer for the crimes committed by a few.

Thirteen respondents agreed that too much money is spent and, in most cases, wasted on prisons or prisoners. Another 16 emphasized that taxpayers should not have to pay the cost: prisons should be self-supporting. Several ways to accomplish this were suggested: Prisoners can build and maintain the prisons; they can work in prison industries and sell their products or, if not a risk to society, can be employed on work release or furnish labor for public projects to compensate the state for their room and board. Ten additional comments recommended using revenue from lotto and sin taxes to pay for building and operating prisons. Other suggestions included earmarking, exclusively for prisons, money and equipment taken during drug "busts" and/or from property confiscated during other types of arrests.

The use of private prisons was supported by 10 respondents and opposed by one respondent. Two other comments stressed that we do not need more prisons. Four additional comments recommended that more money be spent on probation and community corrections to enhance these programs and relieve prison overcrowding.

One citizen expressed the opinion that if corporations ran the prisons, prison life would not be as easy:

If corporations could be given the responsibility to run the prisons, it seems it would be tougher. There could be more

prisons built to house more inmates and those inmates would do the menial work for the corporation.

Eighty-five citizens objected to the "easy life" prisoners enjoy at the "expense of the law abiding taxpayers." Forty-five of these protesters agreed that prisoners should do hard labor or public works. One asked, "What has happened to our chain gangs?" Twenty-nine others agreed that prisoners are "treated like guests," and seven additional respondents went on to say that inmates receive better care than Colorado's elderly and indigent.

A strong statement was contributed by a man who did not give his age or occupation:

Criminals must work two or three years at labor that will produce income or reduce costs. A prison today is a 'lark'-- nice easy living. No sweat or labor. To reduce prison population make it a place of punishment. The 'sob-sister' approach to criminals has not worked--it never will. Work the Hell out of them and they may find their way to Heaven!

Agreement with the attitude toward the 'sob-sister' approach came in the more in-depth comments received from a 25 year old student. He stated in part:

I...don't buy hard luck stories. I started without much and gradually built a good life for myself--legally....A person should always be responsible toward society and be held accountable for his actions. Once a person has been jailed, I think he should lose many of the rights he was guaranteed as a U.S. citizen. While this doesn't mean he should be beaten, it does mean that color TV is out of the question. Even three good meals seems a luxury. There is no reason to make his prison life better than that of many law abiding citizens. Prison is not supposed to be a country club!...What a prisoner wears, eats, sleeps on, and lives in should be paid for by the prisoner. He should be worked hard, like any normal person who wants to succeed in this world....I think many criminals have never learned the value, and rewards of hard work....Our prison system only makes the matter worse by being so easy on them....People will say that prison work could never bring in enough income to adequately support the prisoners; maybe that is for the best. It might give them incentive to get out and not return.

Nine other respondents agreed that criminals should forfeit many of their rights when they break the laws and do harm to others. Most who said prison life is too "luxurious," also had no concern about overcrowding. The attitude expressed was "let them suffer in overcrowding." A 39 year old taxi driver commented as follows:

I am not worried about overcrowding in prison. If you let them out then the public is overcrowded with criminals.

Not all who contributed open comments agreed that prison should be all hard work and no privileges. Although one respondent made it clear that education and training received in prison should not be paid for by taxpayers, and another four said rehabilitation is a waste of money, 46 others wrote in support of treatment and rehabilitation programs for inmates.

One respondent recommended "a strict, military type of rehabilitation as in Texas, with an educational/skill development emphasis." He went on to say that the "cost of these programs can be offset by manufacturing products (e.g. printed circuits; testing cables)." He concluded, "Languishing in a prison cell is as costly and is not a deterrent." A few others expressed skepticism about the chances of success for rehabilitation in a prison environment.

A twenty-eight year old full time homemaker implied in her comment that prison should be the consequence when an offender will not or cannot be rehabilitated:

I favor helping people who are sincerely in need of help, whether medical or educational, but anyone given a chance to reform who shows a constant bad attitude or unwillingness to change should be re-evaluated and given a prison sentence if deemed uncooperative or unable to rehabilitate fully.

Another respondent, a 47 year old secretary, is hopeful about rehabilitation, but has some reservations:

I hope that the current trends toward probation and rehabilitative counseling will produce favorable results. I realize it is a good approach in theory and practicality. I'd like to see results published showing its effectiveness versus prison terms. I would feel much safer in my city and home if these persons were in prison, but I realize it's a matter of money--isn't everything?

Two other comments reveal doubts about the effectiveness of programs in prison, first from a fifty year old housewife:

...I feel the goal of sentencing should be to prevent future recurrences, preferably by making the offender better able to live a non-criminal life. Prison does not presently do this, so I feel other options are better. Prison should be a last resort for public protection from those who do not benefit from less stringent treatment. I believe that SWIFTESS and CERTAINTY OF CONVICTION are more important than severity of

punishment in deterring crime. We need to break the bottlenecks in the court even more than increasing prison capacity.

Second, from a 37 year old day care teacher:

My basic philosophy is that of getting training and counseling for those who commit lesser crimes so that offenders can get out and hopefully learn to be productive, useful citizens. Some, however, are habitual incorrigibles and these should have life or death sentences instead of being a constant financial drain to society.

A few other comments expressed concern for the prisoner. Two respondents cited a need to better segregate different types of prisoners; another respondent remarked that more involvement by the church and the community would help inmates to turn their lives around.

Another concern, expressed by a thirty-five year old attorney, dealt with the issue of perceived inequity in sentencing and placement on the basis of ethnicity.

There exists a disproportionate number of minorities in prison in relation to their portion of the population. It is my belief that law enforcement, whether it is the police department or the D.A.'s office, all the way through the courts, that the application of the law is a double standard: one for anglos and one for minorities. We must come to grips with this institutional racism. More minority judges, D.A.'s and assistants, police officers, and a general education of the public is needed.

Parole was an issue of interest and concern to 68 respondents. More than one third (36.8%) of their comments focused on a fear of or opposition to early release. Five of these respondents wrote that parole should be abolished. Fourteen others wrote that there should be no parole for violent and/or repeat offenders; another recommended no parole for offenders who sell drugs to children. Others, while not advocating an end to the parole system, did make it clear that inmates should not be released until they have served their full sentence. A 46 year old electronic technician, who shares this belief, wrote as follows:

I believe in justice. The guilty should be punished and the innocent should be protected. I do not agree with the present system by which the courts apply a certain sentence to an individual and, as soon as the individual enters prison, the court's sentence is dropped and state corrections assumes control over the individual's sentence. Ten years should be ten years; life should be life, etc.

Eighteen respondents were in agreement that sentences should not be reduced by good time; another six wrote that length of sentence should not be shortened because of overcrowding.

Other parole issues mentioned by respondents included the following:

	No. of Respondents
Need better screening and guidelines for release	12
Need a longer period of parole	1
Need more transitional facilities and programs	2
Need more intensive supervision	5
Need higher qualifications for Parole Board and parole officers	4

Five citizens wrote that, in their opinion, parole should be abolished. Another 14 declared that there should be no parole for repeat and/or violent offenders.

Another respondent has apparently given much thought to the problems of our criminal justice system:

I feel that jail, prison, and community corrections sentences are not always the answer, yet releasing every offender to probation, allowing them to be scot-free, is asking for even more trouble. Meaningful community service in the form of mandatory participation in offender pay-back programs should be required from all offenders. There are many areas currently requiring public-financed labor where a community corrections program could be employed. Such programs, when properly enforced, could bring about pleasant changes in our communities and cut costs in the need for new jails and prisons. In addition, this policy would show the offender and other potential offenders that crime does not pay. All offenders must be treated as though society expected a change in them and must be encouraged to expect a change in themselves. Most of all, they need and should be given the opportunity to learn all phases of interrelational living. Work can be satisfying.

This letter also illustrates the information vacuum in which public opinions develop: much "news" on sensational cases and little or no information on system problems or positive programs. For example, Colorado law has required restitution for all sentenced offenders for several years. In fiscal year 1987-1988, our courts collected \$3,979,647 in restitution.

LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATORS

One respondent expressed disappointment that the survey did not ask the recipients about legislators. Several others commented about the impact of legislative decisions on criminal justice problems and issues. Three of these comments expressed belief that decisions related to the criminal justice system are based too much on politics; five more citizens wished that the legislators would consider and evaluate the possible consequences of legislation being considered before it is enacted into law, while another said legislators need to "take a hard line stand" against crime and criminals.

An additional respondent indicated frustration because legislators "ought to be more open to the public"; and, two more expressed the opinion that greater integrity and a sense of responsibility is needed in the legislature. A 34 year old student declared, "Politicians, because they are entrusted with the confidence of the people they represent, should be most severely punished for crimes involving their office."

FINAL COMMENTS

Finally, a few respondents recognized that solving the problems and addressing the issues in the criminal justice system are not simple matters. A 39 year old nurse wrote as follows:

Since we are humans with different views and ideas, I think these problems will never be solved. We can only hope that we are making right decisions.

Another respondent, a 33 year old homemaker, expressed understanding:

I was a legal secretary...and I've seen the good and bad sides of the criminal justice system...I think all people in the system, from clerks to judges, are overworked and underpaid for the miracles they are asked to perform daily.

Last, but not least, a 72 year old retired carpenter wrote about a specific goal he believes would help to solve some of the problems:

You should not think that the Division of Criminal Justice should or could solve all of these criminal problems. However, someone has to lead all the citizens of the state into an effective remedial program. The goal of the state should be a 15-20% reduction in prison population in five years. What a saving of people's lives and money this would be!

COMMENTS BY LEGISLATORS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE PRACTITIONERS

We have, as a society, consistently ignored the actual bases of crime (poverty, lack of education and opportunity, alcoholism, drug abuse, etc.) and instead tried to deal with the problem at the wrong end of the spectrum by increasing spending on prisons, police and punishment. Until and unless we start addressing these issues the system will simply grow and require ever increasing resources from society.

--34 Year Old Public Defender

Of the 219 surveys mailed to legislators and criminal justice practitioners, 113 (51.6 percent) were returned completed: 47 (41.6 percent) of these included general open comments.

Thirteen of the 47 (27.7 percent) open comments mentioned early intervention as a priority in crime prevention. Nine of these 13 specified intervention at the juvenile level in the form of sanctions, treatment and programs (4 public defenders; 5 probation officers). One probation officer, with respect to juveniles, said "We need to be consistent and punitive so the message gets around." Another probation officer complained, "The job of dealing with juvenile offenders shouldn't be tied to the political climate, but it is." A fourteenth respondent specified early intervention in the use of marijuana and the abuse of other drugs.

Speaking of early intervention, a public defender wrote the following comment:

I feel we do too much mop-up work. By the time an offender is an adult, it usually is too late. Stress should be put on the following programs to deter crime:

- (1) Drug and alcohol rehabilitation with emphasis not only on dependency but future options (job training, etc.)
- (2) Juvenile programs
- (3) Job training
- (4) Programs for the mentally ill. Community mental health programs are inadequate. There is very little available for the developmentally disabled.

A probation officer and a public defender agreed that education and job skill training are needed as strategies for crime prevention. Another five public defenders wrote that we cannot prevent crime until we address the social and economic problems which face today's society.

Finally, the following comment from a probation officer contains a recommended approach to intervention at the juvenile level:

...Use the school system to identify individuals, and be proactive-- do networking with child, parents, school and community to solve problems.

Funding needs were another issue of interest to criminal justice professionals. A judge, concerned that offenders are released too soon because of inadequate funding, stated that we need more money to assure a sound and secure probation and community corrections alternative for those who need not be incarcerated "providing they are adequately supervised and given treatment and training as needed." A public defender and four probation officers agreed. One of the probation officers went on to state: "With adequate funding, we should expect and get accountability from those in corrections."

Probation officers were the only criminal justice professionals who commented directly on spending for prisons: one supported increased funding; two said too much money is spent on prisons. Another probation officer declared that money spent on rehabilitation is wasted.

One judge and one probation officer did note that more prisons are needed. A second probation officer agreed with 16 of the citizen respondents who stated that prisons should be paid for by the inmates. A related comment was offered by a third probation officer who believes that lower-security prisons should be built closer to population centers to facilitate work release programs.

Two legislators and several criminal justice practitioners expressed concern about treatment of prison inmates. A state senator shared with 84 citizens the belief that prisoners "have it too easy," while a member of the House of Representatives observed that prisoners should simply be warehoused because "prisons do not rehabilitate."

A probation officer agreed that inmates have too many comforts. Two judges, three public defenders and an additional probation officer specifically noted that more rehabilitation programs are needed for those who will be released to the community. A judge noted that more half-way houses are needed and also recommended a longer period of parole. A probation officer suggested that greater effort be spent on having jobs waiting for parolees.

Sentencing and court procedures were issues mentioned by one judge, two district attorneys and several public defenders and probation officers. A public defender, two district attorneys and two probation officers agreed with the 114 citizen respondents who declared that sentences are too lenient. A judge, one public defender and two probation officers recommended a sentence to prison for all high risk, repeat or violent offenders. Two probation officers wrote that all who are convicted of a felony should, as a deterrent, be sentenced to at least a short term in prison. The same judge who recommended prison for all violent offenders, plus two additional public defenders and three additional probation officers, specifically recommended that first-time, nonviolent offenders be sentenced to an alternative placement. One of the probation officers emphasized that such offenders "should be re-educated to the community, not stuck in prison."

Two additional probation officers expressed opposition to judicial discretion, while another went on to say that "sentencing power should be taken away from judges." One more probation officer stressed that disparity in sentencing should be addressed; another noted that punishment should be more equitable--"not influenced by race, ethnicity or social status." Finally, a sixth additional probation officer joined the 24 citizen respondents who advocated an "eye-for-an-eye" approach to punishment.

A judge commented that "twenty years ago, the punishment was intended to fit the defendant." He went on to say, "This was the hey-day of 'rehabilitation'." Observing that today, "punishment is supposed to fit the crime," this judge wrote about a pending theory:

Pending, however, is the 'economic' theory that punishment should fit the budget, i.e. we divide the amount of dollars allocated to the number of prisoner-days anticipated (as weighted for nature of offense) and reach a mathematical determination as to the sentence,...Does this approach make any sense?

Community corrections was and is a great and economical idea. But it has never been adequately funded so as to demonstrate its worth. A sentence to community corrections usually means a defendant hits the streets within 4 1/2 to 6 months--short enough to discourage real use of the program even for non-violent, but serious, offenders.

A probation officer wrote about disparity based on whether a jurisdiction is urban or semi-rural and rural:

Colorado has a vast difference in attitude between urban and semi-rural and rural jurisdictions. Urban areas are forced to be liberal for incarceration because of overcrowding. rural and semi-rural areas are overly conservative and commit too many

offenders. We need a balance. Metro areas need to commit more; rural and semi-rural areas need to increase programs.

While 21.9 percent of the citizen respondents viewed plea bargaining as an issue, less than three percent of the legislative/criminal justice comments identified it as a problem. One probation officer opposed it in general, a second noted that district attorneys should be held more accountable for their negotiations; a third probation officer observed that many plea bargains are inappropriate.

Concern about victims was expressed in the open comments only by probation officers. Three agreed with 49 citizen respondents that "criminals have more rights than victims." Another probation officer complained that victims should have more protection and assistance, and a fifth probation recommended that district attorneys provide more feedback to victims concerning the case against the offender.

Comments on drug abuse also were contributed by less than three percent of the legislative/criminal justice group, as opposed to 27.9 percent of the citizen respondents. One probation officer simply commented that most crime is drug related; another recommended that more treatment programs for the unemployed substance-abuse offender should be available.

Among the comments contributed by criminal justice professionals, only two were about legislators. These two also were submitted by probation officers. One expressed the feeling that legislators should be more proactive in their attitude toward and consideration of criminal justice issues; the other expressed the hope that legislators will view alternatives to incarceration as part of the correctional system as they develop policy and advocate funding.

In conclusion, regardless of whether the respondent was a citizen, legislator or criminal justice practitioner; favored prevention of--or a "get tough " response to--crime, all who contributed open comments seemed to agree that as it is, the criminal justice system is failing to change criminal behavior or to impose appropriate sanctions on those who commit crimes. Open comments seem to suggest that the public does not understand the impact of inadequate resources not the effects of a complex tangle of legal technicalities and statutory provisions, while practitioners indicate they are often frustrated by these realities. All seem to agree that change is necessary and that the problem of crime needs to be viewed from a broader perspective, which in turn seems to imply an awareness that policy decisions designed to address a problem faced by one part of the criminal justice system may cause additional problems for other criminal justice agencies.

Several respondents used the open-comment section of the survey to express support for a study that can provide that broader perspective and for being given the opportunity to contribute their assessment of what is needed and how soon changes should be implemented. Very few, however, expressly stated that such a study will really make a difference or that change will come soon enough.

The following comment provides a challenging close for the open-comment section of this report:

I think this survey is excellent. However, I believe... change will be too slow and too inadequate. Let's do something NOW!