

STATISTICS DIVISION

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**THE FEMALE OFFENDER
A STATISTICAL
PERSPECTIVE**

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ACQUISITIONS

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DISCLAIMER

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increase in the rate at which papers dealing with selected aspects of female criminality have appeared in professional journals. Unfortunately, due to the relative obscurity of such periodicals and the concomitant absence of factual information, the public must often rely upon media descriptions for information. These accounts tend to present a distorted picture of the female offender and her offences, adding to many of the popular misconceptions which have arisen in the absence of scientific data. Indeed, the lack of adequate information has been noted in almost every study of the female offender. Most recently, the report of the National Advisory Committee on the Female Offender (1977) noted "severe shortcomings encountered with statistics presently available on females with the criminal justice system". As a result of efforts to assist the National Advisory Committee, a preliminary document containing basic descriptive data was prepared and subsequently published as a companion volume (*The Female Offender - Selected Statistics*).

This present report expands and elaborates upon that work, providing a more comprehensive description of the female offender and the extent and nature of offences committed by her. Generally, scientific information on the criminality of women is sparse and incomplete at best. The few studies concerned with female offenders are often outdated, lacking in a scientific approach, buried in professional journals or larger studies of male offenders, or focused on isolated programs for women within the criminal justice system. The preponderance of criminological theory and research has focused on male populations, and interpretations of the findings are frequently generalized to female offenders with-

out any serious questioning of underlying assumptions. Historically, the lack of research in the area of female criminality has been attributed to the small proportion which women comprise of the offender population and a traditional perception of female criminal activity as socially offensive as opposed to actually dangerous.

Section I of this report discusses the theoretical framework of female criminality through a review of the literature and a summary of the Canadian experience. The main body of the report, Section II, contains descriptive data on three phases of the criminal justice system. The statistics and accompanying analysis examine the situation of female offenders as revealed through the police, court and correctional institution stages. Unfortunately, the national parole statistics currently available do not differentiate between the male and female parole population, thus precluding any analysis of the parole experience of females. Section III provides a synthesis of the information contained within the previous section. Conclusions have been drawn from the highlights of the data analysis that may be of assistance in the identification of areas requiring research attention and the need for quantitative information necessary for policy planning and program development.

This study could not have been undertaken without the collaboration and assistance of the Inmate Statistics Information Division of the Canadian Penitentiary Service, and Justice Statistics Division of Statistics Canada. The useful advice and assistance from Carolyn Fuller of the Information Systems and Statistics Division of the Ministry of the Solicitor General greatly enhanced the preparation of this report. I am also indebted to Thérèse Lajeunesse for the contributions she made to the final draft of this report.

METHODOLOGY

This report presents an overview of current available data on female offenders at three major stages of the Canadian Criminal Justice system — police, courts, corrections. It is a descriptive statistical study in a format that provides comparisons with males.

In Canada, statistics are collected at many stages of the criminal justice process in order to meet the requirements of public information, administrative assistance and research inquiry. Most often the data pertain to particular activities of an official agency. Police statistics generally identify the number of crimes reported or known to them, crimes cleared and the number of persons charged. Statistics reported by the courts relate to charges, acquittals, convictions, dispositions and appeals, as well as some personal characteristics of convicted individuals. Statistics from correctional institutions provide a count of persons admitted and released with some information on the personal characteristics and criminal histories of inmates. There is at present no national criminal justice data base which integrates police, court and correctional activities.

As often happens with such statistics, whether collected at the provincial or federal level, the data are marred by a lack of standardization in the collection process, gaps in the acquisition of pertinent information, incomplete processing of the collected data, and lack of currency of the information collected. Consequently, most of the data currently collected have limited use in attempting an analysis of an issue such as female offenders and their offences.

Traditionally, the relatively small number of female offenders, as compared to male offenders, has precluded the development of a data base extensive enough to identify issues and trends in

female criminality. In attempting to follow the progression of female offenders through the criminal justice process, from the police to the courts to the institutions, the numbers diminish to such an extent that detailed statistical analyses are inappropriate. Consequently, a large portion of the data contained in the following tables is presented in terms of absolute numbers. Further, offence groupings and combined annual figures have been utilized where necessary. Where percentages have been utilized, caution should be employed in interpreting their significance. Because the analysis draws upon three separate statistical systems and covers different time periods, one cannot match the flow of female offenders from one segment of the justice system to another.

Most of the statistics contained in the tables and charts were derived from Statistics Canada's annual publications *Crime Statistics (Police)*, *Crime and Traffic Enforcement Statistics*, *Statistics of Criminal and Other Offences (Courts)*, and *Correctional Institution Statistics*, as well as from data made available by Statistics Canada on request. Additional information on female inmates under federal jurisdiction was obtained from the Inmate Records System of the Canadian Penitentiary Service.

The statistical tables, charts and related narrative are grouped sequentially within three general areas: the incidence of crime (police statistics); judicial response (court statistics); and female inmate (correctional institution statistics). It should be pointed out that the police data include adults and juveniles, whereas only adults are covered in the courts and corrections sections. An overall review of the literature on the female offender was conducted to identify salient points and issues and also to help situate the statistical information within the context of a theoretical background.

SUMMARY

Police statistics on persons charged during the decade 1965 to 1975 for all categories of offences indicate that female crime has increased, and at a faster pace than for males. The number of females charged (including adults and juveniles) increased by 84% compared to 49% for males. The largest increases were in Criminal Code, and Federal Statute drug charges.

Yet, female crime is still a small proportion of all crime. In 1965, 9 out of 100 persons charged were female compared to the 1975 ratio of 11 in 100.

Large increases were noted in Crime Index offences. For this group of offences, 10 out of 100 persons charged in 1965 were female compared to 16 in 100 in 1975. This increase was mainly due to property offences. The single offence for which the largest number of women were charged in any year was theft. Provincial liquor act violations were the second most common offence for women. There has not been any significant increase in the proportion of women involved in violent crimes.

Court statistics are not as complete or current as police statistics yet general trends can be seen. Non-violent property offences comprise the largest single offence group for which males and females appear before the courts. In 1972, 75% of

all women convicted were the result of theft and fraud offences, compared to 46% of males. Violent personal and property offences accounted for a further 6% of women and 29% of males convicted.

The conviction rate for men and women is very similar, 85% and 83% respectively of all persons appearing for Criminal Code offences in 1972.

In total, a larger proportion of women than men received non-incarcerative dispositions, reflective of the less serious nature of their offences. In 1972, 82% of women and 59% of men received non-incarcerative sentences. There was a slight tendency away from incarceration for both sexes. The predominant incarceration disposition is to a provincial institution.

Women make up a small proportion of the total incarcerated population in Canada. In 1974 a survey of correctional institutions indicated that 4% of all inmates were female. There were 48 males to every incarcerated female under federal jurisdiction in 1976. The major offence for which women were admitted to penitentiary in the seventies was Narcotic Control Act violations.

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SECTION I – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

(a) Review of the Literature

Historically, the etiology of female crime has had a strong emphasis placed upon female sexuality. Theories on the female delinquent have reflected prevailing attitudes toward women in general, from the biological theories popular at the turn of the century, to the more feminist and politically conscious theories which have recently become apparent. A whole gamut of explanations for women's proportionally lesser participation in crime have ranged from the female sex being bestowed with a "higher morality" to women being too passive and dull to commit crime. In order to place the phenomenon of female criminality within its proper perspective, it becomes necessary to separate the facts from moral assumptions and myths as to the intrinsic nature of women. This section will briefly outline some of the thinking in relation to the female offender.

Lombroso was one of the first to put together a work of any significance on the woman offender. His concept of women's physiological immobility, psychological passivity and criminality was combined with an example of a biological explanation of crime:

Even the female criminal is monotonous and uniform compared to her male companion, just as in general woman is inferior to man. Women have many traits in common with children; that their moral sense is deficient; that they are revengeful, jealous . . . In ordinary cases these defects are neutralized by piety, maternity, want of passion, sexual coldness, weakness and an undeveloped intelligence. (Lombroso, 1903)

Lombroso's thinking is further illustrated in the "Etiology of Female Crime" by Klein:

Lombroso deals with crime as an atavism, or survival of "primitive" traits in individuals, particularly those of the female and nonwhite races. He theorizes that individuals develop differentially within sexual and racial limitations which differ hierarchically from the most highly developed, the white man, to the most primitive, the nonwhite women . . . Although women lack the higher sensibilities of men, they are thus restrained from cri-

minal activity in most cases by lack of intelligence and passion, qualities which criminal women possess as well as men. (Klein, 1973)

Lombroso's work has become a classic as a result of his insistence on biological explanations of crime and female sexuality. These theories have been continuously reiterated over the years from Thomas' (1907) "Good women keep their bodies to sell in matrimony for marriage and security whereas bad women trade their bodies for excitement", to later theorists correlating menstrual cycles with criminal activity.

The Gluecks' (1934) *Five Hundred Delinquent Women* viewed the woman offender as a pathetic creature, again morally inferior:

The women are themselves on the whole a sorry lot. The major problem involved in the delinquency and criminality of our girls is their lack of control of their sexual impulses. Illicit sex practices are extremely common among them, beginning surprisingly early and carry in them brain disease, illegitimacy and unhappy matrimony.

They advocated voluntary sterilization as a possible method of preventative treatment because "these types of women need just as much protection and salvation as children; many of them are, in fact, psychologically children in their incapacity for assuming social responsibilities".

The psychological explanations of female crime were heavily influenced by Freud who believed that women, in their lack of a penis, are anatomically inferior to men. Any woman who is not passive and content in her role of mother and wife is consumed by penis envy, therefore sexually maladjusted and neurotic. Criminal women are sexual misfits, who are basically, attempting to become men.

(Freud's) entire psychology of women from which all of modern psychology and psycho-analysis derives heavily, is built upon an original tragic experience born female. To be born female is to be born castrated. (Millett, 1968)

Female criminal behaviour is explained in terms of neurosis, sexual maladjustment often labelled "immature", and a "masculine complex". Freud heavily influenced such writers as Pollak and others who later attempted to view female criminality in psychological or psychoanalytical terms.

Otto Pollak's *The Criminality of Women* (1950) was the next major contribution to the study of female crime. Pollak presents the theory of "hidden" female crime which accounts for low official female crime rates. Again, this is explained in terms of the nature of women themselves who are basically deceitful as a result of physiological factors. They are also inherently more capable of manipulation, accustomed to being sly, passive and passionless. Pollak bases his work on three assumptions:

- (1) offences most committed by women (shoplifting, thefts by prostitutes, domestic thefts, abortions) are greatly underreported;
- (2) the male attitude of protectiveness creates a situation in which males perform crimes at the instigation of women; and
- (3) laws deal more leniently with women than with men.

The importance of Pollak's work is found in this assertion that women's participation in crime is commensurate to their representation in the population.

These studies strive to dramatize Pollak's basic assumption that women are no more endowed with morality and decency than are men; but the roles they perform in society assume goodness, charity and morality, and it is those roles that serve as useful masks for hiding criminal activities. (Simon, 1975)

The combined effect of all these theorists is well summarized by Klein:

Crime defined as masculine seems to mean violent, overt crime, whereas "ladylike" crime usually refers to sexual violations and shoplifting. Women are neatly categorized no matter which kind of crime they commit: if they are violent, they are

"masculine" and suffering from chromosomal deficiencies, penis envy and atavisms. If they conform, they are manipulative, sexually maladjusted and promiscuous. The economic and social realities of crime — the fact that poor women commit crimes, and that most crimes for women are property offences — are overlooked . . . The theme of sexuality is a unifying thread in the various, often contradictory theories. (Klein, 1973)

The mid-sixties and seventies are seeing a new brand of theorist in relation to the female offender, that of women viewing female crime in terms of the approach of radical criminology and feminism combined. This is especially true of Klein and Kress who insist that one must start to consider the economic and social position of women rather than the narrow correctional perspective. (Klein & Kress, 1976) There has been too much acceptance of the traditional definition of crime which has viewed female criminality in terms of biological or psychological characteristics of women with social and economic factors often only marginally considered. Also, in keeping with the evolving role of women, new perspectives will have to be sought out, with writers becoming more conscious of the need of redefinitions.

An interesting work on female crime published in the United States in 1975 is Rita J. Simon's *Women and Crime* which "presents statistics describing trends on the proportion of women who have been arrested, convicted, sentenced, and paroled over the past two decades. It compares the types of crimes in which women have been most visible. It considers the relationship between the extent of female participation in the labour force at various levels with the anticipated participation of women on the criminal labour market". In summary, her conclusions indicate that although 1 in 6.5 persons arrested and 1 in 9 convicted are women, only 1 in 30 persons sentenced to prison are women.

As of 1972, 30 percent of all arrests for major larceny were women; 30 percent of all arrests for fraud and embezzlement were women; and 25 percent of all forgery arrests were women. These proportions are not 50 percent, but they are at least twice as high as they are for any other offences; and if present trends continue, in twenty years women should

be making a contribution in white-collar, financial crimes commensurate with their representation in society. The fact that female arrests have increased for these offences and not all offences is consistent both with opportunity theory and with the presence of a sizeable women's movement. (Simon, 1975)

The data presented by Simon showed that men were more likely to be found guilty of murder, robbery, theft and forgery than women but there was little difference in convictions for drug offences. The contributions of Rita Simon have given us an enlightening comparative perspective from which to view female crime in the seventies.

(b) Canadian Perspective

In 1969, three noteworthy publications made some contribution to what is known about the female offender in Canada. One of these, *Criminal Law and Women Offenders* stated that the Canadian criminal law reflects a nineteenth century view of the status of women and concluded that certain laws, practices and correctional programs should be changed if women are to be treated equally before the law (Royal Commission on the Status of Women, 1969).

In a similar vein the *Report of the Canadian Committee on Corrections* (1969) outlined the difference between male and female criminality and identified implications for treatment. For information purposes, this report was invaluable in its description of attitudes towards females, types of crimes committed by women, and differences in sentencing practices in relation to female and male offenders. Both of these reports made a long series of recommendations to modify and ameliorate certain aspects of the criminal justice system in its relation to women.

The Canadian Corrections Association published the *Brief on the Woman Offender* in 1969. Its purpose was to present factual information on the female offender in Canada with which to support recommendations for changes in legislation and institutional practices. It also dealt with the special problems of the female offender in relation to law enforcement, court proceedings, correctional treatment and detention facilities for women.

Another important contributor to the study of female criminality in Canada is Marie-Andrée

Bertrand who in her *Self-Image and Delinquency, a Contribution to the Study of Female Criminality and Women's Image* (1969) related self-image and social function to female criminality. The hypothesis is that women in general, and especially in male dominated societies, are seen as objects. They can adapt by arriving at either end of a continuum from "pleasure giver" to "mother goddess" depending on their socialization and the extent of their identification with socially acceptable patterns of womanhood. The hypothesis was confirmed in that female offenders felt like "objects" and perceived themselves as "victims". In addition, Bertrand also carried out a comparative study of female criminality in Canada, France, Belgium, Poland, Venezuela and Hungary. Her hypothesis was that societies where women are less bound to their traditional role of child bearers and homemakers would produce a greater proportion of female criminality. This was confirmed in that Venezuela had a low rate of female criminality as compared to Hungary but the penal codes of Hungary and Poland showed areas of discrimination as to sex. There were, however, no significant differences in self-image between Hungary and Canada.

A survey conducted by Bertrand (1973) of arrest data in Canada and the United States revealed the following conclusions:

- (1) female criminality is increasing at a faster pace than male criminality, proportionately in North America;
- (2) the number of arrests for sexual crimes is decreasing;
- (3) women are more involved than they were in crimes of violence (robbery, assaults) and here again the increase in female involvement is proportionately more important than that of men. Yet, this last remark must be taken, especially in relation to crimes of violence, with great caution. Often the numbers at the base line (in 1960) were so small that an increase of 200% of instance may mean 6 murders where there were 2 committed originally, i.e., 10 years previously;
- (4) there are more women arrested for fraud; their arrest rate for that offence is proportionately growing faster than that of men.

In relation to self-image, a side result of her analysis has shown that:

The universe of reference of women and girls, their leitbild, as exhibited in response to my questionnaire, is significantly more narrow, more domestic, more home-bound, more marriage and love-related, less politically informed than that of men and boys. The "most important decision that (they) have taken in the course of the last four or five years", in the case of girls but more strikingly so in the case of adult women, illustrates their powerlessness, economically, politically, their relative lack of mobility and freedom and in many instances differ significantly from what boys and men see as their realm of decision. (Bertrand, 1973)

Similarly, in *Special Problems Related to the Adult Female Offender* Margaret Benson (1968) found that in general female offenders are more emotionally disturbed than men, more worried about mental health, about love, affection and having a home. (Benson, 1968)

The most recent publication on the female offender in Canada is the *Report of the National Advisory Committee on the Female Offender* published in the Spring of 1977. The main purpose of the Committee and its final report was "to study the needs of the federal female offenders, and to make specific recommendations to the Commissioner of Penitentiaries and the Executive Director of the National Parole Service regarding the development of a comprehensive plan to provide adequate institutional and community services appropriate to her unique program and security needs". Thus the Report is almost entirely concerned with examining certain problems relating to how the female offender is handled within the system, primarily in the correctional sphere. In addition to making specific recommendations as to the needs and services required by the female offender, many of which would apply equally as well to the justice processing of all offenders, the report also suggests a number of topics for future study and research, including the collection of data missing from our knowledge of female offenders.

SUMMARY:

This review of some of the more representative theorists on the subject of female criminality serves to illustrate the broad spectrum of thought which has influenced our perception of and reaction to the female offender since the turn of the century. In summary, the theories appear to be perhaps more illustrative of the particular theoretical inclination and analytic approach of the writers rather than illuminating to our understanding of the female offender. The early theorists relied upon an individualist approach in seeking physiologically constitutional characteristics of the female criminal (Lombroso, 1903). Later studies utilized multicausal and empirical approaches in attempting to explain criminality among women (Glueck, 1934; Pollack 1950). More specifically, a great majority of the early academic material characterized female offenders as innately depraved, atavistic and morally deficient (Lombroso, 1903); pathetic, morally inferior and mentally deficient (Glueck, 1934) and devious, deceitful and passive (Pollak, 1950). In commenting upon the underlying assumptions of many of these theorists Klein asserts that:

The writers see criminality as a result of individual characteristics that are only peripherally affected by economic, social and political forces. These characteristics are of a physiological or psychological nature and are uniformly based on implicit or explicit assumptions about the inherent nature of women. (Klein, 1973)

In Canada, during the sixties, attention was drawn away from the traditional criminological theories and focused upon the nature of the structural policies and practices of the criminal justice system in its response to the female offender (*Status of Women Report, 1969; Report of the Canadian Committee on Corrections, 1969; Brief on the Woman Offender, 1969*). With the rising feminist consciousness, and the changing nature of women's position in the work force and in the family, the theorists of the seventies have focused upon an examination of female offenders from an economic, political and social perspective (Klein and Kress, 1976; Simon, 1975), and a questioning of the hegemonic standard of conduct for women and the sexual definition of crime.

SECTION II — PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

(a) Police Statistics

National police statistics are used in this section to examine the extent to which women participate in criminal activities in comparison with men. Though police or crime statistics reflect more on police activity than actual criminal occurrences, these statistics provide the closest indication of the incidence of criminal activity on a national scale, in the absence of more sensitive and reliable data sources such as victimization surveys. Police, or crime statistics can never accurately reflect the total incidence of criminal activity. It is obvious from the outset that official statistics cannot possibly include unreported and undiscovered crimes which tend to vary with the nature of the offence; for example, fraud, embezzlement and shoplifting are often considered under-represented in official statistics. In attempting to place crime statistics in their proper perspective, one must consider the large number of definitional, attitudinal, both social and economic, and reporting factors which influence both actual and recorded crime rates.

As noted above, the quality of the data is considered to vary with the type of offence. Variations in official reporting practices also influence the data. In 1962, Statistics Canada's method of collecting crime statistics from police departments across the country underwent substantial change. At that time, the Uniform Crime Reporting Program was introduced to provide more comprehensive and relevant information on the incidence of crime in Canada. As design and collection problems are often encountered during the first years of implementation of most information systems, it was decided, for the purpose of this report; to utilize crime statistics commencing with the reporting year 1965. Other factors such as police resource allocation, socio-demographic characteristics of the population, changes in criminal justice legislation and/or policy and advancing technology, further affect the quality of data to varying degrees.

Within the context of this section, the police statistics collected by Statistics Canada have been used to examine the proportion that females (adult and juvenile combined) comprise of all persons charged for selected criminal offences. The data in the following tables and accompanying narrative relate to those individuals

charged with offences as reported by police and should not be interpreted as measures of the actual volume or rate of crime committed by females. The tables in this section are to a large extent concerned with female involvement in the Crime Index offences. The offences of murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, attempted murder, wounding, breaking and entering, theft, and theft of motor vehicle comprise the Uniform Crime Index as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program. The first six offences listed form the violent crime index, and the last three make up the property crime index. For comparative purposes, the offence of rape has been omitted from the violent crime index as this is exclusively a male offence. The crime index offences are considered the most serious crimes because of the nature of the offence itself, or the volume in which they occur.

Have Crimes Committed by Females Increased?

This question cannot be answered directly because official police statistics are not the proper statistical tool. However, police statistics do provide indications of the number of females being drawn into the justice network as evidenced by the number of females charged. This may then be used as a proxy indicator of female involvement in crime.

A look at the statistics on persons charged for the last ten years indicates that female crime has increased. Table 1.1 provides data on males and females charged from 1965 to 1975. The figures are grouped according to the legislative categories of offences: Criminal Code, Federal Statute, Provincial Statute and Municipal By-Law.

The data indicate that female involvement in crime has increased at a faster pace than for males. In total, the number of females charged increased by 84% while for males the increase was 49%. The growth rate is represented graphically in Figure 1.1.

The largest increase for both males and females was in Federal Statute charges. The next largest increase was in Criminal Code charges, and it is this category of offences where the greatest disparity in the rate of increase between males and females lies. The number of females charged tripled, while males charged almost doubled. Charges for Provincial Statutes increased moderately for both sexes, but the data indicated no steady upward trend. Municipal By-Law charges decreased for both sexes.

TABLE 1.1

NUMBER OF PERSONS⁽¹⁾ CHARGED BY POLICE, BY TYPE OF LEGISLATIVE OFFENCE CATEGORY AND SEX,
SHOWING TOTAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE, CANADA, 1965 TO 1975

YEAR.	TOTAL PERSONS CHARGED		TYPE OF OFFENCE ⁽³⁾							
			CRIMINAL CODE		FEDERAL STATUTES		PROVINCIAL STATUTES		MUNICIPAL BY-LAWS	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
1965	431,303	42,691	154,744	16,111	20,502	1,961	218,613	20,626	37,444	3,993
1966	474,758	46,221	164,531	18,037	24,999	2,563	243,834	21,009	41,394	4,612
1967	505,620	49,212	182,099	19,271	25,115	2,808	254,413	21,154	43,993	5,979
1968	510,157	47,559	197,760	20,594	29,078	2,835	236,373	18,450	46,946	5,680
1969	525,195	49,882	206,180	22,649	34,660	3,236	242,894	18,101	41,461	5,896
1970	518,274	53,695	222,186	27,110	31,738	3,181	224,741	17,879	39,609	5,525
1971	519,212	58,433	228,827	31,348	34,915	3,379	217,763	18,261	37,707	5,445
1972	520,742	59,380	234,797	33,407	39,975	4,493	209,530	16,818	36,440	4,662
1973	574,273	70,466	258,478	39,796	60,014	7,230	223,119	19,000	32,662	4,440
1974	613,846	72,933	273,499	42,634	65,659	7,251	247,848	19,582	26,840	3,466
1975 ⁽²⁾	641,819	78,507	298,294	46,804	61,395	6,659	257,270	21,887	24,860	3,157
PERCENT CHANGE 1975/1965	+49	+84	+93	+191	+199	+240	+18	+6	-34	-21

(1) Includes both adults and juveniles.

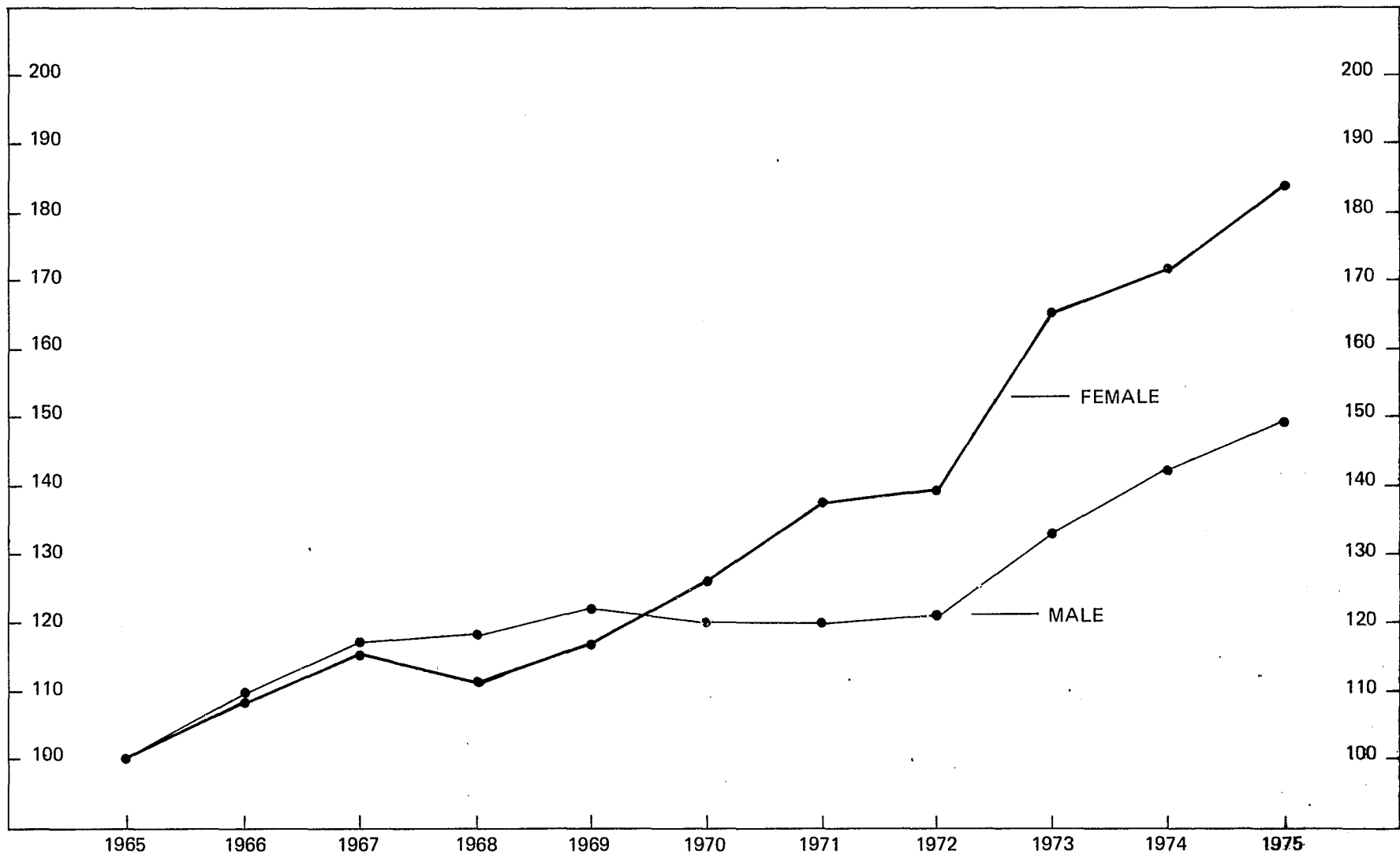
(2) Figures for 1975 are preliminary.

(3) Excludes traffic offences.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Crime Statistics (Police)", 1965 to 1971.
(Catalogue # 85-205)
"Crime and Traffic Enforcement
Statistics", 1972 to 1975.
(Catalogue # 85-205)

FIGURE 1.1
 INDEX (1965 = 100) OF PERSONS CHARGED BY POLICE, BY SEX, CANADA, 1965 TO 1975



PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada "Crime Statistics (Police)", 1965 to 1971.
 (Catalogue #85-205)
 "Crime and Traffic Enforcement
 Statistics", 1972 to 1975
 (Catalogue #85-205)

A further indication of the fact that the growth in female crime outstripped that of males is the decrease evident in the male to female charge ratio. In 1965 males charged for all crimes outnumbered females by 10 to 1; in 1975 the ratio was 8 to 1. But these ratios also highlight the fact that male criminal involvement is far greater than female criminal involvement.

As noted, the largest increases were in Federal Statute and Criminal Code charges. Charges for Federal Statute offences increased substantially for both sexes because of the increase in drug charges. The data presented in the box below illustrate the magnitude of the numerical growth in drug charges for both sexes, but particularly for males.

As Criminal Code charges showed the greatest disparity in growth between males and females, Table 1.2 is presented to show the actual number of males and females charged for Crime Index offences, which are the most serious and numerous Criminal Code Offences.

The total number of females charged for Crime Index offences increased by more than twice the male increase (271% compared to 113%). Also, females showed greater increases than males for each of the specific Crime Index offences. Generally, property offences showed larger increases than violent offences for females, whereas the reverse was true for males.

What Proportion of Crime is Committed by Females?

The previous section examined the question as to whether female involvement in crime had increased. Using police statistics on persons charged, the answer was yes. It was also established that males greatly outnumbered females in terms of persons charged, but that the disparity in the sex ratio had diminished over the decade.

This section examines more closely the shift in the relative proportions of male/female criminal involvement in terms of the magnitude of the change and in which offence categories it occurred.

Table 1.3 presents the percentage distribution of females among all persons charged by police for total offences, and for Crime Index Offences, the more serious crimes.

The more rapid growth in the absolute number of females charged than males charged has changed the sex ratio. The proportion that females comprise of all persons charged by police has increased. To put it simply, females are forming a larger part of Canada's criminal population, though of course, still much less than males. In 1965, 9 out of 100 persons charged for all offences were female; in 1975, 11 of 100 were female. This represents a moderate shift, and one that is influenced by the inclusion of Provincial

NUMBER OF PERSONS CHARGED BY POLICE WITH FEDERAL STATUTE OFFENCES (DRUG AND OTHER), BY SEX, CANADA 1965 AND 1975

TYPE OF FEDERAL STATUTE OFFENCE ⁽¹⁾	MALES		FEMALES	
	1965	1975 ⁽³⁾	1965	1975 ⁽³⁾
TOTAL PERSONS CHARGED ⁽²⁾	20,502	61,395	1,961	6,659
Federal Statute Drug Offences	406	41,855	231	4,660
Other Federal Statute Offences	20,096	19,540	1,730	1,999

(1) Excludes traffic offences

(2) Includes both adults and juveniles.

(3) Figures for 1975 are preliminary

SOURCE: Statistics Canada "Crime Statistics (Police)", (Catalogue #85-205)

TABLE 1.2

NUMBER OF PERSONS⁽¹⁾ CHARGED BY POLICE WITH CRIME INDEX OFFENCES, BY SEX, SHOWING TOTAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE,
CANADA, 1965 TO 1975

YEAR	CRIME INDEX OFFENCES																	
	TOTAL PERSONS CHARGED		VIOLENT OFFENCES								PROPERTY OFFENCES							
			TOTAL VIOLENT		MURDER/ MAN- SLAUGHTER		ATTEMPTED MURDER/ WOUNDING/		ROBBERY		TOTAL PROPERTY		BREAKING & ENTERING		THEFT ⁽³⁾		THEFT - MOTOR VEHICLE	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
1965	67,755	7,345	2,970	249	184	24	536	80	2,250	145	64,785	7,096	20,967	507	33,536	6,388	10,282	201
1966	70,767	8,544	3,274	214	194	35	561	82	2,519	97	67,493	8,330	21,431	611	36,047	7,505	10,015	214
1967	75,831	9,310	3,620	240	230	20	600	81	2,790	139	72,211	9,070	23,782	637	37,139	8,210	11,290	223
1968	88,448	9,935	4,435	364	279	36	870	150	3,286	178	84,013	9,571	28,822	712	42,815	8,589	12,376	270
1969	95,447	11,484	4,842	390	272	48	1,040	148	3,530	194	90,605	11,094	32,408	875	44,704	9,933	13,493	286
1970	104,578	14,736	5,493	475	316	36	1,004	169	4,173	270	99,085	14,261	33,727	1,050	51,726	12,890	13,632	321
1971	108,960	17,614	5,636	506	369	46	1,139	180	4,128	280	103,324	17,108	35,327	1,185	54,511	15,504	13,486	419
1972	109,448	18,590	5,863	489	373	63	1,153	187	4,337	239	103,585	18,101	35,618	1,240	53,289	16,401	14,678	460
1973	116,227	21,019	6,471	685	413	57	1,232	251	4,826	377	109,756	20,334	38,934	1,667	55,416	18,108	15,406	559
1974	128,560	23,829	7,726	716	453	70	1,339	231	5,934	415	120,834	23,113	44,329	1,828	58,327	20,634	18,178	651
1975 ⁽²⁾	144,507	27,229	8,703	818	475	80	1,295	249	6,933	489	135,804	26,411	52,076	2,159	64,449	23,454	19,279	798
PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1975/1964	+113	+271	+193	+229	+158	+233	+142	+211	+208	+237	+110	+272	+148	+326	+92	+267	+88	+297

(1) Includes both adults and juveniles.

(2) Figures for 1975 are preliminary.

(3) Includes "Theft over" and "Theft under".

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada "Crime Statistics (Police)", 1965 to 1971.
(Catalogue #85-205
"Crime and Traffic Enforcement
Statistics", 1972 to 1975.
(Catalogue #85-205

TABLE 1.3

PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS CHARGED WITH VARIOUS OFFENCES, WHO WERE FEMALES, SHOWING AN
AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE, CANADA, 1965 TO 1975.

18

YEAR	ALL OFFENCES ⁽²⁾	CRIME INDEX OFFENCES								
		TOTAL CRIME INDEX OFFENCES	VIOLENT OFFENCES				PROPERTY OFFENCES			
			TOTAL VIOLENT	MURDER/ MAN- SLAUGHTER	ATTEMPTED MURDER/ WOUNDING	ROBBERY	TOTAL PROPERTY	BREAKING & ENTERING	THEFT ⁽³⁾	THEFT - MOTOR VEHICLE
1965	8.8	9.8	7.7	11.5	13.0	6.0	9.9	2.4	16.0	1.9
1966	8.9	10.8	6.1	15.3	12.7	3.7	11.0	2.8	17.2	2.1
1967	8.9	10.9	6.2	8.0	11.9	4.7	10.4	2.1	18.1	1.9
1968	8.5	10.1	7.6	11.4	14.7	5.1	10.2	2.4	16.7	2.1
1969	8.7	10.7	7.5	15.0	12.4	5.2	10.9	2.6	18.2	2.1
1970	9.4	12.4	8.0	10.2	14.4	6.1	12.6	3.0	19.9	2.3
1971	10.1	13.9	8.2	11.1	13.6	6.3	14.2	3.2	22.1	3.0
1972	10.2	14.5	7.7	14.4	13.9	5.2	14.9	3.4	23.5	3.0
1973	9.9	15.3	9.6	12.1	16.9	7.2	15.6	4.1	24.6	3.5
1974	10.6	15.7	8.7	13.4	14.7	6.7	16.1	4.0	26.1	3.4
1975 ⁽⁴⁾	10.9	15.9	8.6	14.4	16.1	6.6	16.3	4.0	26.7	4.0
AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE, 1965-1975	+0.21	+0.61	+0.09	+0.29	+0.31	+0.06	+0.64	+0.16	+1.07	+0.21
AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE, 1965-1970	+0.11	+0.51	+0.04	-0.26	+0.28	+0.02	+0.54	+0.12	+0.78	+0.08
AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE, 1970-1975	+0.30	+0.70	+0.13	+0.84	+0.34	+0.10	+0.74	+0.20	+1.36	+0.34

NOTE: "Average annual rate of change" refers to the averaging of the annual difference in the proportion of females charged by the police.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978

(1) Includes both adults and juveniles.

(2) Includes: Criminal Code, Federal Statute, Provincial Statute, and Municipal By-Law Offences.

(3) Includes both "Theft over" and "Theft under".

(4) Figures for 1975 are preliminary.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Crime Statistics (Police), 1965 to 1971,
(Catalogue #85-205)
"Crime and Traffic Enforcement
Statistics", 1972 to 1975.
(Catalogue #85-205)

Statute and Municipal By-Law offences, two areas of relatively little change for both males and females.

For the Crime Index Offences, a more significant increase is apparent. In 1965, 10 of every 100 persons charged for these offences were female; by 1975, the figure was 16.

The proportion of females charged with violent offences increased only slightly over the decade. In 1965, 8 of every 100 persons so charged were female and in 1975, the proportion had increased to 9. This proportional involvement of females in violent crime fluctuated over the decade.

In contrast to the relatively small increase in females charged with violent offences, there was a fairly large increase in the proportion charged with property crimes. In 1965, 10 of 100 persons charged were female compared to 16 in 1975. Property offences showed a consistent yearly increase over the decade.

By looking at the average rates of change per year (as seen on Table 1.3), the increased proportion of females among persons charged by the police can be seen to be largely a phenomenon of the seventies. It is difficult to identify whether this increase in the involvement of women in criminal activity as reflected in official statistics is an actual increase in the real level of female criminality, or a perceived increase resulting from changes in the criminal justice system's response to female offenders. It has been speculated by many authors that with the advent of feminism and demands of female equality, victims and police have become less hesitant to charge a female than was previously the case, reflecting a less chivalrous and less paternalistic attitude by treating women as they would male suspects. (Klein and Kress, 1976; Simon, 1975). As Rita Simon notes in her study of women and crime:

Indeed, in large measure perhaps, the phenomena we are witnessing are changes in the attitudes and behaviour of the police rather than in the propensities of women to engage in crime. The fact, however, that the rates of female arrests have varied by the nature of the offence indicates that the hypothesized change in police behaviour cannot account for all the shifts. There would be no reason to assume, for example, that police would

respond to female property offenders differently than they would to women who were suspected of killing or assaulting the victims. (Simon, 1975).

There were no consistent trends in the data on the proportion that females comprised of the total number of persons charged for specific Crime Index offences with the exception of theft, which increased significantly.

Generally speaking, females made up a larger proportion of persons charged for violent offences than for property offences. For example, in 1975, 14.4% of all persons charged for murder/manslaughter were female compared to 4.0% for breaking and entering. Females tend to participate in the traditionally male offences of robbery, breaking and entering, and auto theft to a relatively small degree. In 1975, 6.6% of all persons charged for robbery were female, and 4.0% for theft of a motor vehicle. The volume of females in these offences is therefore relatively slight in comparison to males.

Female involvement in theft offences grew substantially over the decade, — from 16.0% of all persons charged in 1965 to 26.7% in 1975. The offence category of theft includes shoplifting, theft under \$200 and theft over \$200.

Changes in the patterns of marketing in self-service stores, and increased emphasis and expenditure on security systems since the mid-sixties have undoubtedly resulted in an increase in the arrest and prosecution of shoplifters. This is reflected in an increase in the number of persons charged with theft. The concentration of women within the arrest figures of the theft category appears to be closely related to the frequency of female shopping activities as part of routine familial duties. As theft does not involve overt physical strength, violence, or personal contact, it is considered to be compatible with the traditional nature of female criminality.

Theft offences not only accounted for the largest proportion of females charged, but these offences also recorded the largest increase within the Crime Index offences over the decade examined. By 1975 approximately one of every four persons charged with a theft offence was female. The greatest increase occurred during the seventies, at an average rate of +1.36% per year.

What Kind of Crimes do Females Commit?

Data from the previous pages showed that female criminal involvement has risen particularly for Criminal Code and Federal Statute offences. There were also indications that a large part of the increase may have come from property offences. We shall now examine in more detail the kinds of crimes that females commit, and changes in the female offence pattern over the decade 1965 to 1975. Again, we shall be using police statistics on persons charged.

Figure 1.2 illustrates one basic difference in the nature of male/female offences. In 1975 there was a rather substantial difference in the proportion of female offences that fell under the Criminal Code compared to males (60% versus 46% respectively). Conversely male offences were much more heavily weighted under Provincial Statutes, Federal Statutes and Municipal By-Laws were almost proportionally even. As traffic offences are excluded from these data, it cannot be assumed that these comprise the bulk of male Provincial Statute offences.

As Criminal Code offences are the more serious, we shall examine them in more depth.

Table 1.4 displays the relative proportion of Crime Index offences amongst all offences within respective sex cohorts. The first noticeable difference between males and females is that Crime Index offences formed a more significant proportion of females charged than males charged over the years. Initially, in 1965, there was not much difference between the two groups. For females, 17.2% of charges were for Crime Index offences, and for males, 15.3%. By 1975 however, the proportion for females was 34.7%, whereas it had risen to only 22.4% for males. Thus, 1 out of every 3 females charged by police was charged for a Crime Index offence compared to 1 in every 5 males. Though the proportion of both males and females charged with Crime Index offences increased, the average annual rate of change for females was two and a half times greater than that of males (+1.75% and +0.71% respectively).

Most Crime Index offences were property offences for both males and females. The proportional distribution of persons charged with property offences has been consistently greater for females than for males charged. In fact, the proportion of females charged with property offences has increased at an average rate of 1.70%

per year while for males the increase was less than half that of women or .65% per year. In 1965 out of all women charged, one in six was for a serious property offence; by 1975, the proportion had increased such that one in every three women charged were for property offence violations.

The percentage of both males and females charged with violent crimes increased at a similar rate. For women, the average rate of change was +.05% per year, while for males the change was +.07%. The average rate of increase for females charged with crimes of violence was lower during the period 1970-1975 than in the last half of the sixties. For both males and females, persons charged with violent offences comprised less than 1.5% of persons charged for all offences.

What is most noticeable is the lack of any major difference between the rates at which males and females were charged for the violent offences of murder/manslaughter, and attempted murder/wounding. In fact, any variation over the decade has been so slight that the average rate of change was negligible.

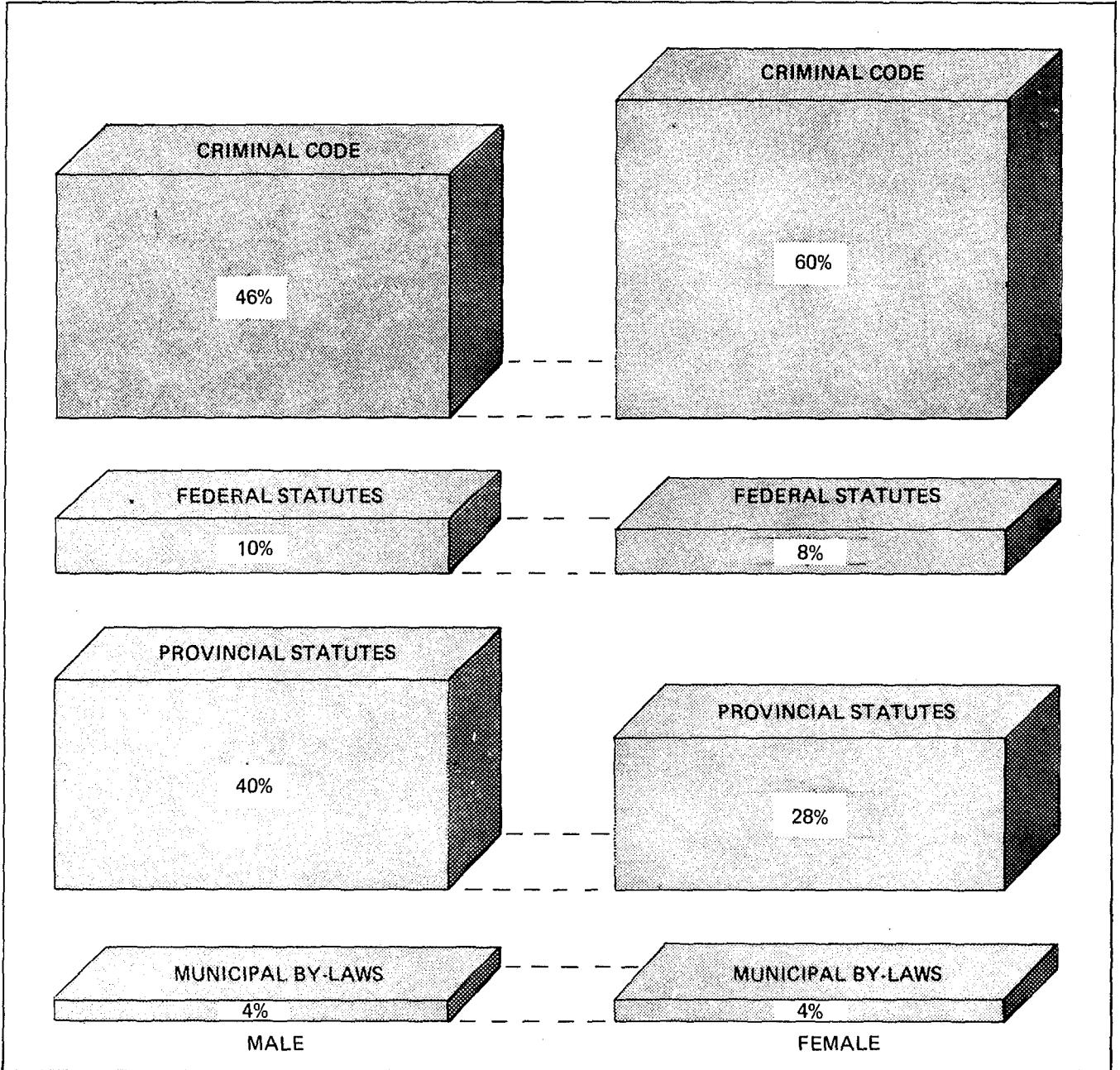
The low rate of females charged for robbery, motor vehicle theft, and breaking and entering appears to substantiate what many theorists consider to be the traditional nature of female criminality. In many incidences where females are actually charged with such offences, their roles are often secondary to, and supportive of a male counterpart (Pollak, 1950). In 1975, robbery accounted for 1% of all males charged by police, breaking and entering for a further 8%, and auto theft for 3%. These offences comprised 0.6%, 2.7% and 1% respectively, of all females charged.

As indicated previously, females are being charged with theft at a pace which outstrips males. In fact, the increase for females from 1965 to 1975 was more than six times greater than the increase for males. In 1975, 30% of females charged were for theft offence violations. This proportion was 10% for males.

Figure 1.3 identifies the rank order of the ten offences for which males and females were most likely to be charged during 1975. Minor theft offences and provincial liquor act violations accounted for 52% of all females charged and 44% of all males charged. These are the highest ranking offences for *both* sexes, but they appear in reverse order. Federal Statute drug offences comprised the third most likely offence for which

FIGURE 1.2

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS⁽¹⁾ CHARGED BY POLICE BY TYPE OF LEGISLATIVE OFFENCE CATEGORY⁽²⁾ AND SEX, CANADA, 1975⁽³⁾



(1) Includes both adults and juveniles.
 (2) Excludes traffic offences.
 (3) Figures for 1975 are preliminary.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
 Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.
 SOURCE: Statistics Canada,
 "Crime and Traffic Enforcement
 Statistics", 1975.
 (Catalogue #85-205)

TABLE 1.4

FOR MALES AND FOR FEMALES,⁽¹⁾ PERCENTAGE OF THOSE CHARGED BY POLICE,⁽²⁾ WHO WERE CHARGED WITH CRIME INDEX OFFENCES,
SHOWING AN AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE, CANADA, 1965 TO 1975

YEAR	CRIME INDEX OFFENCES																		
	TOTAL CRIME INDEX OFFENCES		VIOLENT OFFENCES								PROPERTY OFFENCES								
			TOTAL VIOLENT		MURDER/ MAN- SLAUGHTER		ATTEMPTED MURDER/ WOUNDING		ROBBERY		TOTAL PROPERTY		BREAKING & ENTERING		THEFT ⁽³⁾		THEFT - MOTOR VEHICLE		
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	
1965	15.35	17.20	0.67	0.58	0.04	0.06	0.12	0.19	0.51	0.34	14.68	16.62	4.75	1.19	7.60	14.96	2.33	0.47	
1966	14.90	18.48	0.68	0.46	0.04	0.07	0.12	0.18	0.53	0.31	14.22	18.02	4.51	1.32	7.59	16.24	2.11	0.46	
1967	14.99	18.91	0.71	0.48	0.04	0.04	0.12	0.16	0.55	0.28	15.47	18.43	4.70	1.29	7.34	16.68	2.23	0.45	
1968	17.33	20.88	0.86	0.76	0.05	0.07	0.17	0.31	0.64	0.37	16.47	20.12	5.65	1.50	8.39	18.06	2.42	0.57	
1969	18.17	23.02	0.92	0.78	0.05	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.67	0.39	17.25	22.24	6.17	1.75	8.51	19.91	2.57	0.57	
1970	20.17	27.44	1.05	0.88	0.06	0.07	0.19	0.31	0.80	0.50	19.12	26.59	6.51	1.95	9.98	24.00	2.63	0.60	
1971	20.98	30.14	1.08	0.86	0.07	0.08	0.22	0.31	0.79	0.48	19.90	29.28	6.80	2.03	10.50	26.53	2.60	0.72	
1972	21.01	31.30	1.12	0.82	0.07	0.11	0.22	0.31	0.83	0.40	19.89	30.48	6.84	2.09	10.23	27.62	2.82	0.77	
1973	20.23	33.35	1.12	1.08	0.07	0.09	0.21	0.40	0.84	0.60	19.11	32.27	6.78	2.64	9.65	28.73	2.68	0.89	
1974	20.91	32.67	1.22	0.98	0.07	0.09	0.22	0.32	0.93	0.57	19.68	31.69	7.22	2.51	9.50	28.29	2.96	0.89	
1975 ⁽⁴⁾	22.42	34.68	1.35	1.04	0.07	0.10	0.20	0.32	1.08	0.62	21.16	33.64	8.11	2.75	10.04	29.87	3.00	1.02	
AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE, 1965-1975	+0.71	+1.75	+0.07	+0.05	-	-	+0.01	+0.01	+0.06	+0.03	+0.65	+1.70	+0.34	+0.16	+0.24	+1.49	+0.07	+0.06	
AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE, 1965-1970	+0.96	+2.05	+0.08	+0.06	-	-	+0.01	+0.02	+0.06	+0.03	+0.89	+1.99	+0.35	+0.15	+0.48	+1.80	+0.06	+0.03	
AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE, 1970-1975	+0.45	+1.45	+0.06	+0.03	-	-	-	-	+0.06	+0.02	+0.41	+1.41	+0.32	+0.16	+0.01	+1.17	+0.07	+0.08	

NOTE: "Average annual rate of change" refers to the averaging of the annual difference in the proportion of respective sex cohorts charged by the police.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March, 1978.

(1) Includes both adults and juveniles.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Crime Statistics (Police), 1965 to 1971.
(Catalogue #85-205)
"Crime and Traffic Enforcement
Statistics", 1972 to 1975.
(Catalogue #85-205)

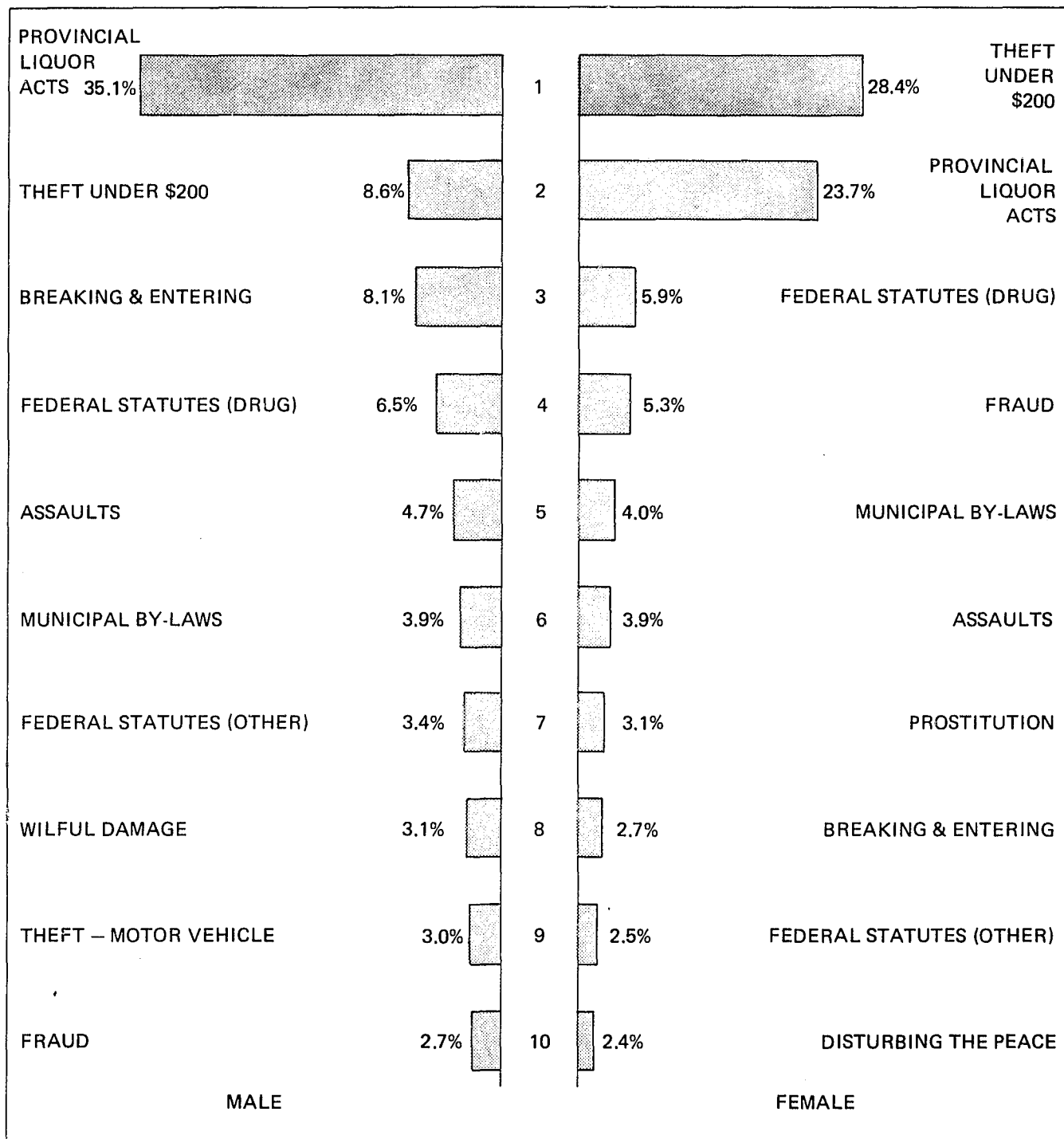
(2) Includes: Criminal Code, Federal Statute, Provincial Statute, and Municipal By-Law Offences.

(3) Includes both "Theft over" and "Theft under".

(4) Figures for 1975 are preliminary.

FIGURE 1.3

RANK ORDER OF TOP TEN OFFENCES WITH WHICH PERSONS⁽¹⁾ WERE MOST OFTEN CHARGED BY POLICE, BY SEX, CANADA, 1975⁽²⁾



NOTE: Percentages do not aggregate to 100 percent as only the top ten offences for both sexes are indicated.

- (1) Includes both adults and juveniles.
- (2) Based on preliminary figures for 1975.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Crime and Traffic Enforcement Statistics", 1975. (Catalogue #85-205)

a woman was charged. Eight of the ten offences listed for females also fall within the ten most frequent male offences. These ten offences accounted for 82% of all women charged in 1975, and 79% of all men charged.

SUMMARY:

In summary, from the data contained in these tables, we see that during the decade 1965 to 1975 the number of women charged with offences by the police has increased at a faster rate than was the case for males. The degree to which the increase has been influenced by changing attitudes on the part of victims and police, by the larger participation of women within the labour force, and by the ensuing increased opportunities to commit offences is not identifiable from the available data. In 1965, ten times as many men as women were charged by police; by 1975, this ratio had decreased to 8 males for every female charged. The rising number of women involved in the commission of property offences accounted for the most obvious increase. Though similar proportions of males and females arrested in 1965 were charged with property offences (theft, breaking and entering and motor vehicle theft), 15% and 17% respectively, by 1975 the proportion of males charged with such offences had increased to 21%, while for women it increased to 34%. The single offence for which the largest number of women were charged in any year was theft. In 1975, theft under \$200, essentially comprised of petty theft or shoplifting, accounted for 22,330 or 28% of all women charged. For males, this offence represented 55,334 or less than 9% of all males charged.

Contrary to many prevailing public impressions gleaned from sensationalized media stories and confirmed by some academics (Adler, 1975), there has not been any significant increase in the proportion of women involved in violent crimes. The number of women participating in all types of crimes increased over the decade examined yet the increases in such violent offences as murder, manslaughter, attempted murder, wounding and robbery have been proportionately lower than for other types of offences such as shoplifting and drug violations. In 1965, 7.7% (249) of all persons charged with such violent offences were women, by 1975, this proportion had increased to 8.6% (818). The proportion of females charged with murder and manslaughter has remained the most stable of all violent offences over the decade examined.

The most significant increase in absolute numbers of persons charged, both males and females, occurred for Federal Statute drug offences which in 1975 comprised 6% (46,515) of all males and females charged by police. Provincial liquor act violations were the second most common offence for women and the most common offence for males charged in 1975 (24% and 35% respectively).

(b) Court Statistics

The data contained in this section were derived from the adult court program operated by Statistics Canada. Though the court program is national in scope, its attempt to respond to the particular administrative requirements of the individual provinces has resulted in the existence of a program composed of a variety of reporting systems. The current court program is fraught with time delays, data incompatibilities and a diversity of reporting methodologies. These limitations, as well as other administrative and operational difficulties, have led to the existing situation whereby the most current public court data on a national level is for the calendar year 1972. Furthermore, judicial statistics published by Statistics Canada have not contained data for the provinces of Quebec and Alberta since 1969. Consequently, the tables within this section do not include court data for these two provinces which comprise approximately one-third of the total Canadian population. These deficiencies are being remedied, and Statistics Canada hopes to publish complete and current data within the next few months.

Under the Court Reporting Program, variables relate to the results of cases disposed of during a given calendar year. Within the Court Statistics, offences are classified within two categories, "indictable offences" and "offences punishable upon summary conviction". The indictable offences are essentially Criminal Code and Federal Statute violations and are commonly considered to be offences of a more serious nature in terms of social danger and sentence than summary conviction offences. The indictable offences have been grouped within generic categories. Such groupings were considered necessary if all offences were to be included in the analysis. As the number of women appearing before the courts is relatively insignificant in comparison to the male population, individual offences often account for only a small number of cases.

The unit of count for the court data used in this section is the person convicted of an indictable offence during a given calendar year. While an individual may be charged with more than one offence during a year, the most serious offence in terms of the maximum penalty, or the offence for which court proceedings were carried to the furthest stage is the one tabulated for each person represented in the data. When examining the sentences recorded for convictions, it should be remembered that though sentences or dispositions can be interpreted as indicators of judiciary or legal attitudes towards various types of criminal activity, the sentences also reflect other considerations such as: minimum sentencing provisions prescribed within the Statutes (e.g. a 7-year term of imprisonment is currently the prescribed minimum sentence for a conviction of importing in violation of the Narcotic Control Act); compensating attitudes in relation to other functions of the system (e.g. parole eligibility and prison remission systems); changes in judicial administration or reporting practices and availability of correctional resources (e.g. bed-space or cell capacity of community facilities or institutions; the availability and work-load of probation officers or court workers).

Unfortunately, statistics published for summary conviction offences are collected on the basis of convictions recorded, not of persons convicted, as are the indictable offences. Thus, it is not possible to make a distinction between the number of separate individuals responsible for the commission of these offences. At best, we can only identify the number of convictions recorded for an unknown number of individuals during a given year.

The offence groups used in the tables in this section dealing with indictable offences are composed of the following offences:

Against the Person

- *murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, rape, other offences, assault, abduction/kidnapping, criminal negligence, other offences against the person;*

Against Property with violence

- *robbery, extortion, breaking and entering;*

Against Property without Violence

- *theft, motor vehicle theft, fraud, false pretences, possession of stolen goods, forgery and offences relating to currency;*

Other Criminal Code

- *all other Criminal Code offences not specified;*

Federal Statutes

- *Narcotic Control Act, Food & Drugs Act and all other Federal Statutes excluding traffic violations.*

How Many Women are Charged and Convicted in the Courts?

As would be expected from increases reported in police charge figures, more women are processed through the courts. Table 2.1 presents the actual numbers of adults charged and convicted for indictable offences from 1968 to 1972. The number of females convicted increased by 87% during this time period, rising from 4,285 in 1968 to 8,011 in 1972. For males, the increase was in the order of 46%. The growth in the number of adults charged and convicted is graphically represented in Figure 2.1.

Though the figures suggest that the conviction rate (i.e. the percent convicted of persons charged) is relatively high for both sexes, these figures also reflect, to a certain degree, the selection process used in the court statistics program which was described in the introduction to this section. In general, no discernible trend emerges regarding variations in the conviction rate of women totally or within each of the indictable offence groups. Generally speaking, there is not much differentiation between the conviction rates for males and females when examined in total or for each offence group. The exception is Federal Statute offences, where the female conviction rate is lower.

Table 2.1 also provides the ratio of males to females among persons charged and convicted for indictable offences. The male to female ratio at both the charge and conviction stage lessened over time, most noticeably for offences against property with violence. In other words, although the absolute numbers of males and females convicted of indictable offences has increased from 1968 to 1972, the rate of increase for females has surpassed that of males within most offence groups. Even so, the actual numbers of females convicted in any offence group barely approaches that of men. In 1968, there were seven times as many males as females convicted, but by 1972 the ratio had decreased to 5 to 1.

TABLE 2.1
NUMBER OF ADULTS CHARGED AND CONVICTED OF INDICTABLE OFFENCES BY OFFENCE GROUP AND SEX,
SHOWING PERCENTAGE CONVICTED AND SEX RATIO⁽¹⁾, CANADA⁽²⁾, 1968 TO 1972

OFFENCE GROUP	YEAR														
	1968			1969			1970			1971			1972		
	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO
TOTAL INDICTABLE OFFENCES:															
ADULTS CHARGED	33,199	4,895	7:1	37,387	5,805	6:1	43,911	7,955	6:1	45,439	8,659	5:1	50,306	9,775	5:1
ADULTS CONVICTED	29,041	4,285	7:1	32,948	5,069	7:1	38,883	6,997	6:1	40,138	7,735	5:1	42,436	8,611	5:1
% CONVICTED	87	88		88	87		89	88		88	89		84	82	
TOTAL CRIMINAL CODE:															
ADULTS CHARGED	31,811	4,650	7:1	35,104	5,465	6:1	41,576	7,636	5:1	43,803	8,443	5:1	45,119	9,087	5:1
ADULTS CONVICTED	27,970	4,119	7:1	31,059	4,816	6:1	36,911	6,775	5:1	38,785	7,606	5:1	38,236	7,581	5:1
% CONVICTED	88	89		88	88		89	89		89	90		85	83	
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON:															
ADULTS CHARGED	5,590	302	19:1	6,053	355	17:1	6,875	481	14:1	7,221	509	14:1	6,455	452	14:1
ADULTS CONVICTED	4,542	213	21:1	4,929	267	19:1	5,560	355	16:1	5,842	370	16:1	4,971	331	15:1
% CONVICTED	81	71		81	75		81	74		81	73		77	73	
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY WITH VIOLENCE:															
ADULTS CHARGED	6,573	156	42:1	6,830	169	40:1	7,761	222	35:1	8,158	240	34:1	8,053	221	36:1
ADULTS CONVICTED	5,896	109	54:1	6,224	124	50:1	7,069	172	41:1	7,487	196	38:1	7,139	170	42:1
% CONVICTED	90	70		91	73		91	77		92	82		89	77	
OFFENCE AGAINST PROPERTY WITHOUT VIOLENCE:															
ADULTS CHARGED	16,554	3,851	4:1	18,273	4,578	4:1	22,285	6,509	3:1	23,461	7,299	3:1	24,692	7,900	3:1
ADULTS CONVICTED	14,633	3,522	4:1	16,590	4,152	4:1	20,239	5,894	3:1	21,217	6,714	3:1	21,206	6,666	3:1
% CONVICTED	88	91		91	91		91	91		90	92		86	84	
OTHER CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES:															
ADULTS CHARGED	3,420	341	10:1	3,948	363	11:1	4,655	424	11:1	4,963	395	13:1	5,919	514	12:1
ADULTS CONVICTED	2,899	275	11:1	3,316	273	12:1	4,043	354	11:1	4,239	326	13:1	4,922	414	12:1
% CONVICTED	85	81		84	75		87	83		85	83		83	81	
FEDERAL STATUTES:															
ADULTS CHARGED	1,388	245	6:1	2,283	340	7:1	2,335	319	7:1	1,636	216	8:1	5,187	688	8:1
ADULTS CONVICTED	1,071	166	7:1	1,889	253	8:1	1,972	222	9:1	1,353	129	11:1	4,200	430	10:1
% CONVICTED	77	68		83	74		84	70		83	60		81	63	

NOTE: Calculations of ratios and conviction rates have been rounded.

(1) Ratio of males to females.

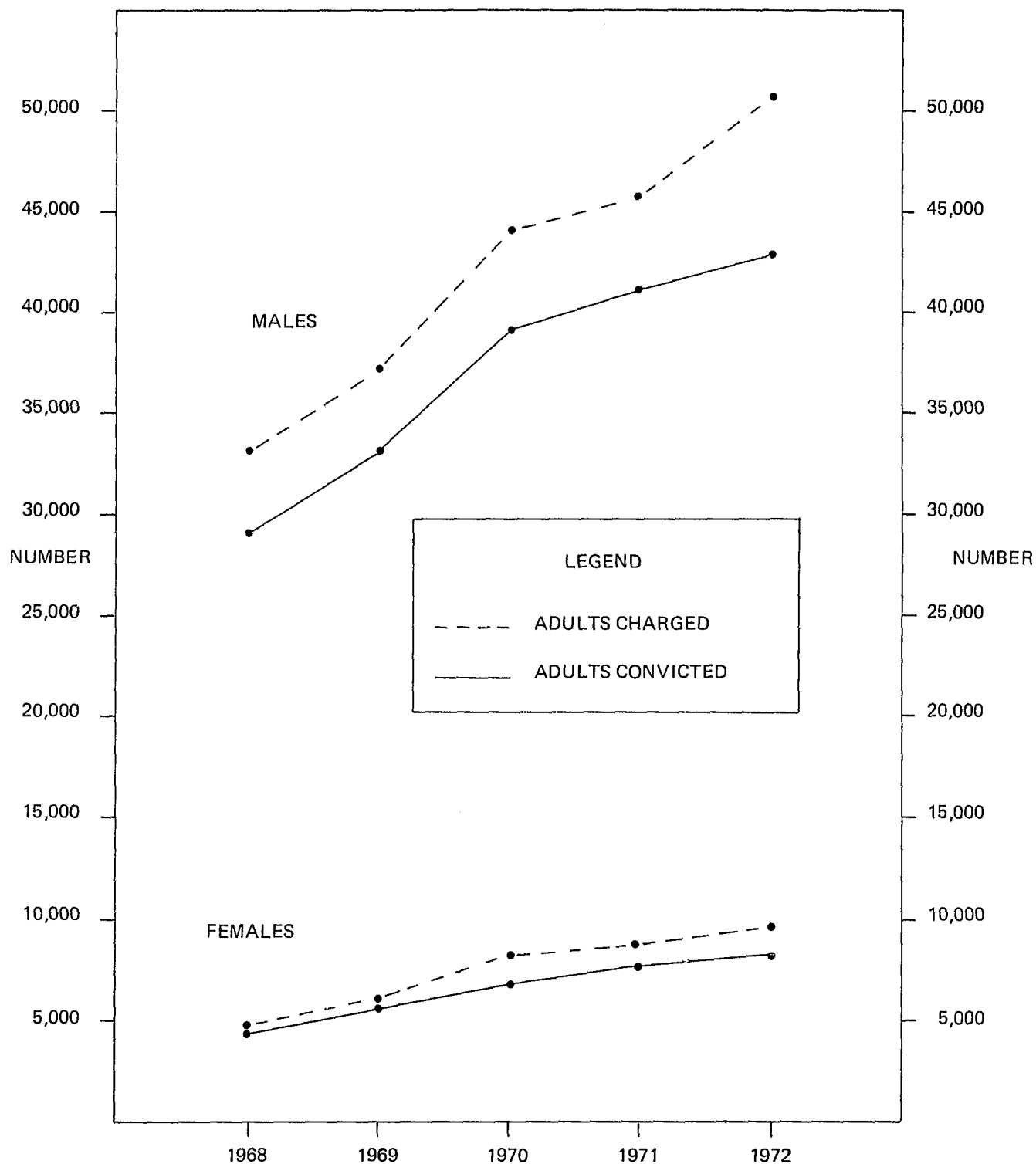
(2) Excludes Quebec and Alberta.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
 Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada "Statistics of Criminal and Other Offences", (Catalogue #85-201)

FIGURE 2.1

(1)
 NUMBER OF ADULTS CHARGED AND CONVICTED OF INDICTABLE OFFENCES BY SEX, CANADA, 1968 TO 1972



Excludes Quebec and Alberta.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
 Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Statistics of Criminal and Other
 Offences". (Catalogue #85-201)

The two offence groups which reveal the largest discrepancy between the number and proportion of men and women charged tend to be those of a violent nature, the traditional domain of male criminal activity (e.g. crimes against the person and against property with violence). These findings have been previously noted in the police statistics. In 1968, for 21 males convicted of a violent personal offence, 1 female was similarly convicted; by 1972, this ratio had decreased to 15:1. For the violent property offences such as robbery and breaking and entering the ratio was 54 to 1 in 1968 and 42 to 1 in 1972. For property offences, the ratio is much closer. In 1972, for every woman charged and convicted of an offence against property without violence, three males were also charged and convicted.

What Kinds of Sentences do Women Receive for their Crimes?

Table 2.2 presents both the type of indictable offence and the sentences awarded for males and females convicted between 1968 and 1972.

First, let us examine the nature of the offences for which females were convicted. Figure 2.2 highlights the years 1968 and 1972. There is remarkable stability in the offence distribution for each sex, though there are great differences between the sexes. The next most noticeable fact is that over 80% of the women were convicted of offences against property without violence — predominantly theft. Though we cannot make direct comparisons between the two distinct statistical reporting programs, that of the police and the courts, this proportional distribution for property offences corresponds to the police data on females charged. In comparison, 50% of males were convicted for this offence group. For both sexes, this remains the most significant offence group. There was a decrease in the proportion of males and females convicted of offences against the person and property with violence. For females, the proportion dropped from 8% in 1968 to 6% in 1972; the corresponding figures for males are 36% and 29%. The substantial increase in the number of persons convicted of Federal Statute drug offences has contributed to the changes in the proportional distribution of the offences.

Table 2.3 isolates the type of sentence awarded to adults convicted between 1968 and 1972. At first glance, the data appear to indicate that the sentencing process operates in favour of female offenders. But, it is necessary to consider that sentencing differences between males and

females may not only reflect what many theorists claim to be paternalism on the part of the judiciary (Pollak, 1950; Adler, 1975; Klein and Kress, 1976), but also the legal differences within individual cases. Such factors as the offence, the prior record of the accused and situational elements of the crime, whether the suspect was armed or physical violence was involved, often influence the resulting sentence.

Over the five years approximately 48% of all females convicted of indictable offences were fined compared to 27% of males. Unfortunately, the official statistics only identify sentences awarded by the courts, which are not necessarily the same as the ultimate result of the disposition. This is often the situation where fines, usually imposed in lieu of imprisonment, may result in a term of imprisonment if they are not paid. Proportionately twice as many females as males were given suspended sentences, while an almost equal proportion of both sexes were given suspended sentences with probation. The use of suspended sentences alone has decreased for both sexes. In 1968, 21% of females convicted received this disposition and by 1972, the proportion had decreased to 12%. However, during this same period the use of probation and fines increased.

The largest proportion of both males and females incarcerated falls within provincial jurisdiction with the term of imprisonment usually less than 6 months. In 1976, 15% of females convicted of indictable offences were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, a proportion which has remained relatively stable since 1968. In contrast to this, there has been a decrease in the use of prison terms for males. In 1968, 45% of males convicted of indictable offences were sentenced to terms of imprisonment; by 1972, the proportion had decreased to 39%.

Figure 2.3 summarizes the sentencing pattern for the years 1968 to 1972 combined. Non-incarcerative dispositions were used for 85% of females convicted compared to 58% of males, 13% of females were sentenced to provincial incarceration and 1% to federal compared to 36% and 6% respectively of males.

Historically, non-incarcerative dispositions for Criminal Code convictions are more frequently awarded to females than to males, and more severe sentences such as federal incarceration (terms of imprisonment of two years or over) are proportionately more often used for male

TABLE 2.2
NUMBER OF ADULTS CONVICTED OF INDICTABLE OFFENCES BY OFFENCE GROUP AND SEX
SHOWING TYPE OF SENTENCE, CANADA⁽¹⁾, 1968 TO 1972

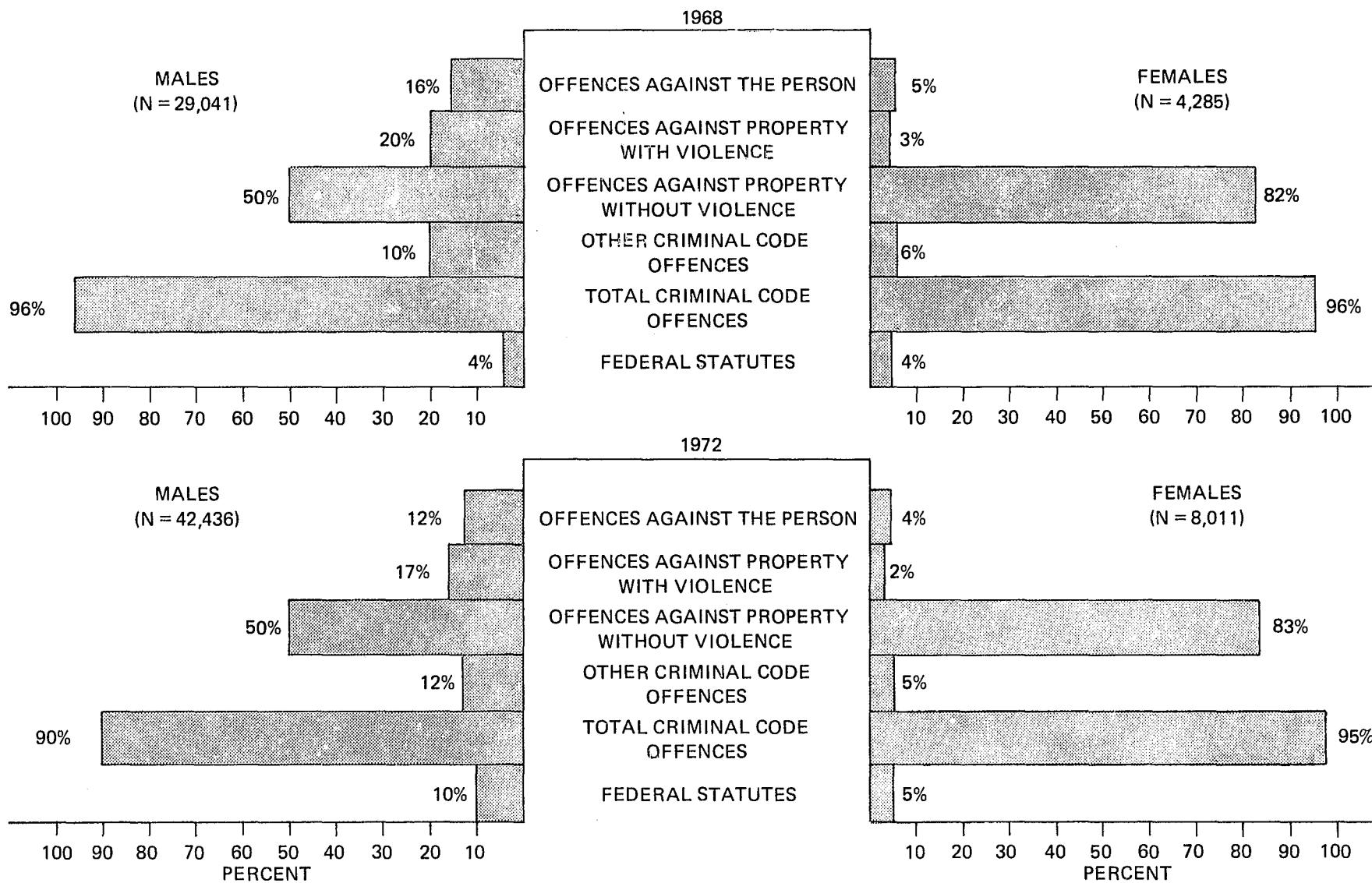
OFFENCE GROUP AND YEAR	ADULTS CONVICTED			TYPE OF SENTENCE															NOT STATED
				SUSPENDED SENTENCE		SUSPENDED SENTENCE WITH PROBATION		FINE		GAOL				REFORMATORY/ TRAINING SCHOOL		PENITENTIARY			
										1 - 6 MOS.		OVER 6 MOS. & UNDER 2 YEARS							
TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	
TOTAL INDICTABLE OFFENCES:																			
1968	33,326	29,041	4,285	3,172	906	5,722	756	6,959	1,889	7,345	488	1,863	68	1,941	121	2,039	57	-	
1969	38,017	32,948	5,069	2,963	927	7,146	1,070	8,503	2,320	8,311	545	1,991	67	1,828	91	2,206	49	-	
1970	45,880	38,883	6,997	2,711	848	9,599	1,691	10,910	3,577	9,161	610	2,324	84	2,099	142	2,079	45	-	
1971	47,873	40,138	7,735	2,500	870	10,008	1,771	11,531	4,103	9,954	738	2,810	106	1,333	112	2,002	35	-	
1972	50,447	42,436	8,011	2,674	948	10,168	1,820	12,338	3,749	10,212	802	3,237	133	949	167	1,952	66	1,232	
TOTAL CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES:																			
1968	32,089	27,970	4,119	3,062	879	5,472	723	6,924	1,888	6,996	451	1,742	44	1,848	100	1,926	34	-	
1969	35,875	31,059	4,816	2,839	893	6,569	982	8,251	2,300	7,725	486	1,839	48	1,748	81	2,088	26	-	
1970	43,686	36,911	6,775	2,667	839	9,283	1,622	10,126	3,507	8,744	579	2,126	67	2,013	126	1,952	35	-	
1971	46,391	38,785	7,606	2,488	870	9,819	1,741	11,106	4,061	9,562	713	2,634	88	1,295	107	1,881	26	-	
1972	45,817	38,236	7,581	2,625	938	9,642	1,722	10,704	3,633	9,420	724	2,870	87	864	150	1,691	42	705	
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON:																			
1968	4,755	4,542	213	381	58	473	37	1,962	66	1,062	37	191	4	180	5	293	6	-	
1969	5,196	4,929	267	351	43	559	58	2,220	103	1,124	42	165	6	172	6	338	9	-	
1970	5,915	5,560	355	318	54	772	104	2,506	106	1,219	62	257	14	199	7	289	8	-	
1971	6,212	5,842	370	289	52	903	102	2,377	127	1,408	63	367	10	138	14	360	2	-	
1972	5,302	4,971	331	305	46	886	106	1,830	96	1,160	41	295	12	91	12	383	16	23	
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY WITH VIOLENCE:																			
1968	6,005	5,896	109	457	19	1,772	35	86	3	1,274	28	666	10	797	7	844	7	-	
1969	6,348	6,224	124	382	19	1,957	52	100	2	1,385	24	712	7	763	15	925	5	-	
1970	7,241	7,069	172	359	25	2,505	65	111	3	1,650	44	782	8	794	16	868	11	-	
1971	7,683	7,487	196	390	12	2,695	96	130	6	1,850	44	995	20	577	12	850	6	-	
1972	7,307	7,137	170	380	26	2,552	81	100	2	1,733	28	1,127	13	411	17	815	3	19	
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY WITHOUT VIOLENCE:																			
1968	18,155	14,633	3,522	1,899	751	2,825	614	3,924	1,722	3,920	319	765	23	775	76	525	17	-	
1969	20,742	16,590	4,152	1,811	792	3,541	827	4,716	2,085	4,415	361	836	30	695	47	576	10	-	
1970	26,133	20,239	5,894	1,650	722	5,222	1,359	6,176	3,282	4,868	405	924	36	858	83	541	7	-	
1971	27,931	21,217	6,714	1,557	772	5,369	1,454	7,145	3,822	5,136	533	1,061	54	503	67	446	12	-	
1972	27,872	21,206	6,666	1,612	830	5,201	1,421	7,131	3,419	5,107	569	1,102	48	323	89	381	16	623	
OTHER CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES:																			
1968	3,174	2,899	275	325	51	402	37	952	97	740	67	120	7	96	12	264	4	-	
1969	3,589	3,316	273	295	39	512	45	1,215	110	801	59	126	5	118	13	249	2	-	
1970	4,397	4,043	354	340	38	784	94	1,333	116	1,007	68	163	9	162	20	254	9	-	
1971	4,565	4,239	326	252	34	852	89	1,454	106	1,168	73	211	4	77	14	225	6	-	
1972	5,336	4,922	414	328	36	1,003	114	1,643	116	1,420	86	346	14	39	32	112	7	40	
FEDERAL STATUTES:																			
1968	1,237	1,071	166	110	27	250	33	35	1	349	37	121	24	93	21	113	23	-	
1969	2,142	1,889	253	124	34	577	88	252	20	586	59	152	19	80	10	118	23	-	
1970	2,194	1,972	222	44	9	316	69	784	70	417	31	198	17	86	16	127	10	-	
1971	1,482	1,353	129	12	-	189	30	425	42	392	25	176	18	38	5	121	9	-	
1972	4,630	4,200	430	49	10	526	98	1,634	116	792	78	367	46	85	17	261	24	527	

(1) Excludes Quebec and Alberta

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
 Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Statistics of Criminal and Other Offences", (Catalogue #85-201)

FIGURE 2.2
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ADULTS CONVICTED OF INDICTABLE OFFENCES BY OFFENCE GROUP AND SEX, CANADA⁽¹⁾, 1968 AND 1972



NOTE: Percentages may not aggregate to totals due to rounding.
 (1) Excludes Quebec and Alberta.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
 Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.
 SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Statistics of Criminal and Other
 Offences". (Catalogue #85-201)

TABLE 2.3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ADULTS CONVICTED OF INDICTABLE OFFENCES BY TYPE OF SENTENCE AND SEX, CANADA ⁽¹⁾, 1968 TO 1972

TYPE OF SENTENCE	YEAR OF CONVICTION										
	1968		1969		1970		1971		1972		
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	
TOTAL ADULTS CONVICTED	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
SUSPENDED SENTENCE	11	21	9	18	7	12	6	11	6	12	
SUSPENDED SENTENCE WITH PROBATION	20	18	22	21	25	24	25	23	24	23	
FINE	24	44	26	46	28	51	29	53	29	47	
GAOL – 6 MONTHS AND UNDER	25	11	25	11	24	9	25	10	24	10	
GAOL – OVER 6 MONTHS AND UNDER 2 YEARS	6	2	6	1	6	1	7	1	8	2	
REFORMATORY/ TRAINING SCHOOL	7	3	6	2	5	2	3	2	2	2	
PENITENTIARY	7	1	7	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	

NOTE: Percentages may not aggregate to totals due to rounding, or missing data (1972).

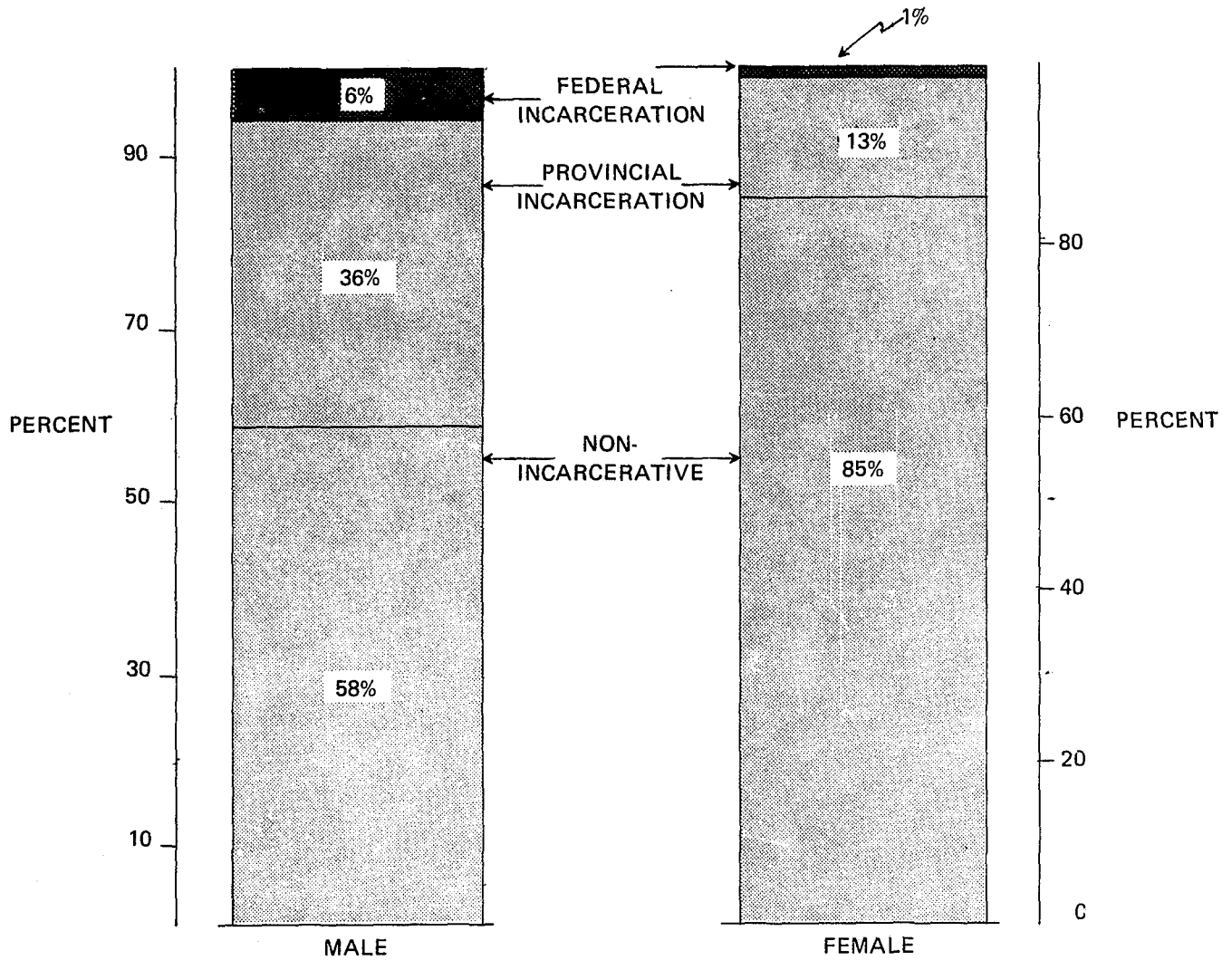
(1) Excludes Quebec and Alberta.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Statistics of Criminal and Other Offences".
(Catalogue #85-201)

FIGURE 2.3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ADULTS CONVICTED OF INDICTABLE OFFENCES BY TYPES OF INCARCERATION AND SEX, CANADA⁽¹⁾, 1968 - 72 (YEARS COMBINED)



NOTE: Percentages may not aggregate to totals due to rounding.

(1) Excludes Quebec and Alberta.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Statistics of Criminal and Other Offences", (Catalogue #85-201)

offenders. In 1972, 83% of females convicted of Criminal Code violations received a non-imprisonment sentence (e.g. fine, suspended sentence and/or probation) in comparison to 60% of males convicted. During the same year, 4% of all males convicted of Criminal Code offences received federal terms of imprisonment as compared to less than 1% of the females.

It should be kept in mind that the relatively large use of non-incarcerative dispositions for females is more an indication of the nature of their offences than any other single factor.

As stated, the predominant offence for which women are convicted is theft under \$200, which generally does not warrant a term of imprisonment. Proportionately, males were most likely to be sentenced to terms of imprisonment for violent property offences and females for Federal Statute violations.

It is interesting to note that the sentences received by males and females convicted of Federal Statute violations (approximately 90% of such convictions were under the Narcotic Control Act for both males and females) were almost identical for both 1968 and 1972. Non-incarcerative dispositions, most often fines, were awarded to 52% of males and females convicted in 1972. Approximately 30% of males and females were sentenced to provincial terms of imprisonment and 6% were sentenced to federal institutions. For both sexes, there has been a proportionate increase in the use of non-incarcerative dispositions (suspended sentences and fines) and a corresponding decrease in sentences of imprisonment for Federal Statute convictions from 1968 to 1972.

As previously noted in the opening paragraphs of this section, data on offences punishable on summary conviction are compiled on the basis of convictions only. Such offences, though of a less serious nature than indictable offences, encompass a significant proportion of female illegal activity. However, we can only extract from the data the number of convictions involving an unknown number of females. Table 2.4 presents the number and ratio of male and female convictions for summary conviction offences from 1968 to 1972. The inclusion of these data is essentially to identify the significance of Provincial Statute regulations in relation to the volume of male and female convictions. The figures show that in 1972, over 100,000 female

convictions and 1,000,000 male convictions were recorded before the courts for Provincial Statute violations, 85% of which resulted from Highway Traffic Act violations.

SUMMARY:

Though the Court based statistics cannot provide a comprehensive picture of the female offender within the court process, general trends are discernible from the data. The most significant fact that emerges is that non-violent property offences comprise the largest single offence group for which females and males appear before the courts. In 1972, over 75% of all female convictions were the result of theft and fraud offences while for males, 46% were convicted for such violations. Violent personal and property infractions comprised a further 6% of the women and 29% of the males convicted.

As individuals move through the criminal justice process from the point of arrest, the ratio of males to females narrows from approximately ten to one at the police charge level to five to one (in 1972) at the court stage. The extent to which a selection process involving preferential treatment of the female exists at the court stage cannot be identified from the present data. Yet, a statement by the Canadian Committee on Corrections (1969) that females are more likely than men to be formally charged and brought to trial and that discernible sex differences occur in the disposition of convicted offenders, is an issue coming under increasing scrutiny for which speculation alone cannot suffice.

The judicial data have shown that relatively similar proportions of men and women are convicted, 85% and 83% respectively, of all persons charged with Criminal Code offences in 1972. The category of violent offences contained the largest difference in the number of men and women appearing before the courts. In 1972, the ratio of males to females convicted of violent personal and violent property offences was 15 to 1 and 42 to 1 respectively. The number of women charged with drug and theft offences increased more than any other indictable offence from 1968 to 1972.

A larger proportion of women than men received non-incarcerative dispositions in line with the predominately minor nature of their offences. In 1968, 83% of women and 55% of men were given non-incarcerative dispositions compared to 82% and 59% respectively in 1972.

TABLE 2.4
NUMBER OF CONVICTIONS FOR OFFENCES PUNISHABLE ON SUMMARY CONVICTION BY OFFENCE GROUP AND SEX, SHOWING
A SEX RATIO⁽¹⁾, CANADA⁽²⁾, 1968 TO 1972

OFFENCE GROUP	YEAR														
	1968			1969			1970			1971			1972 ⁽³⁾		
	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	M/F RATIO
TOTAL SUMMARY CONVICTION OFFENCES	1,673,458	128,485	13:1	1,575,263	135,773	12:1	1,333,270	118,673	11:1	1,323,393	115,745	11:1	1,382,559	134,859	10:1
CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES	84,916	4,098	21:1	74,609	3,251	23:1	85,781	3,741	23:1	100,787	3,671	27:1	100,382	4,443	23:1
FEDERAL STATUTES	24,413	1,328	18:1	24,319	1,458	17:1	24,608	1,387	18:1	28,936	1,776	16:1	27,054	1,795	15:1
PROVINCIAL STATUTES	1,420,952	108,361	13:1	1,356,083	117,769	12:1	1,114,898	100,623	11:1	1,087,287	98,734	11:1	1,164,307	117,231	10:1
MUNICIPAL BY-LAWS	143,177	14,698	10:1	120,252	13,295	9:1	107,983	12,922	8:1	106,383	11,564	9:1	90,816	11,390	8:1

NOTE: Calculations have been rounded.

(1) Ratio of males to females.

(2) Excludes Quebec and Alberta.

(3) All 1972 figures are preliminary.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, "Statistics of Criminal and Other Offences". (Catalogue #85-201)

The proportion of convicted males sentenced to terms of imprisonment decreased from 45% in 1968 to 39% in 1972, while for women, the proportion decreased from 17% to 15%.

(c) Corrections Statistics

There exists in Canada a basic lack of information about female offenders. One of the possible reasons female offenders receive such scant attention is that they represent such a small proportion of the offender population, and as one progresses through the system they represent a progressively smaller proportion. It is also suggested by theorists that the lack of concern about female criminality is reflective of the nature of their offences, more often inconvenient as opposed to actually dangerous to or threatening of the social order (Pollak, 1950; Simon, 1975). In recent years, the attention which female criminality has received has been related to the incidence and nature of female criminal activity as opposed to humanitarian concerns for the female offender within the system. Often, by the time a woman has passed through the police and court stage, and enters the correctional sphere (where her minority status is most pronounced) she truly becomes the "forgotten offender".

Efforts to gather information on the correctional aspect of female criminality and attempts to examine the nature of non-incarcerative court dispositions such as fines and probation revealed that the data, where existent, were often incomplete, unstandardized, and incompatible. As the administration of non-incarcerative dispositions is a provincial responsibility, there is great variation between provinces in the corrections information systems.

Due to the paucity of information on the female offenders who are not confined, yet under correctional supervision (e.g. probation, parole), and the incompatibility of provincial information systems, the main focus of this section is the female offender sentenced to a term of incarceration under federal jurisdiction.

The data in the following tables were derived from two sources. The Statistics Canada *Correctional Institution Statistics* publication contains information on inmates admitted to and released from federal institutions during a given calendar year. More recent and extensive data were also obtained from the Inmate Records System operated by the Directorate of Operational Information Services of the Canadian Penitentiary Service.

Unfortunately, the implementation and increasing use of federal-provincial inmate exchange contracts primarily since 1974 has had a significant effect on the statistics programs covering the federal female inmate population. These agreements, which allow certain inmates sentenced to federal terms of imprisonment to serve their sentence within provincial correctional facilities, have resulted in difficulties in the collecting and recording of information on females. It has been estimated that approximately 160 females have been involved in these transfer agreements since they commenced. However, there is no certainty with regard to this estimate. Once the female inmate enters the provincial system, follow-up information (e.g. release dates or types) is often not provided. Thus, the following tables exclude an unknown number of women who, though sentenced to federal jurisdiction, are incarcerated in provincial institutions. Obviously, the utility of the statistics would be enhanced if more complete data on these women were available. In some of the tables, the data have been grouped longitudinally so that analysis would be more meaningful.

As we have seen from the previous sections, in Canada, women are arrested and sentenced to prison less frequently than men. A United Nations Census of Prison Populations conducted in 1974 indicated that females comprised less than 4% of the federal and provincial incarcerated populations; in actual numbers this represented 702 females out of 20,466 inmates.

Table 3.1 provides the inmate population of federal penitentiaries on the census date of December 31st for each year from 1970 to 1976 inclusive. The accompanying graph, Figure 3.1, depicts the growth rate.

The female population doubled during this time period, rising from 93 to 189 inmates. This represents a growth rate of approximately 13% per year. In contrast, the male population increased at about 5% per year. In spite of the increase, females comprised only 2% of the federal inmate population by 1976.

The data used in Tables 3.2 to 3.4 and the companion graphs relate to inmate admissions to penitentiary from 1970 to 1976 combined.

TABLE 3.1
NUMBER OF PERSONS IN FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS⁽¹⁾ BY SEX SHOWING FEMALES AS
A PERCENT OF TOTAL PERSONS, CANADA, 1970 TO 1976.

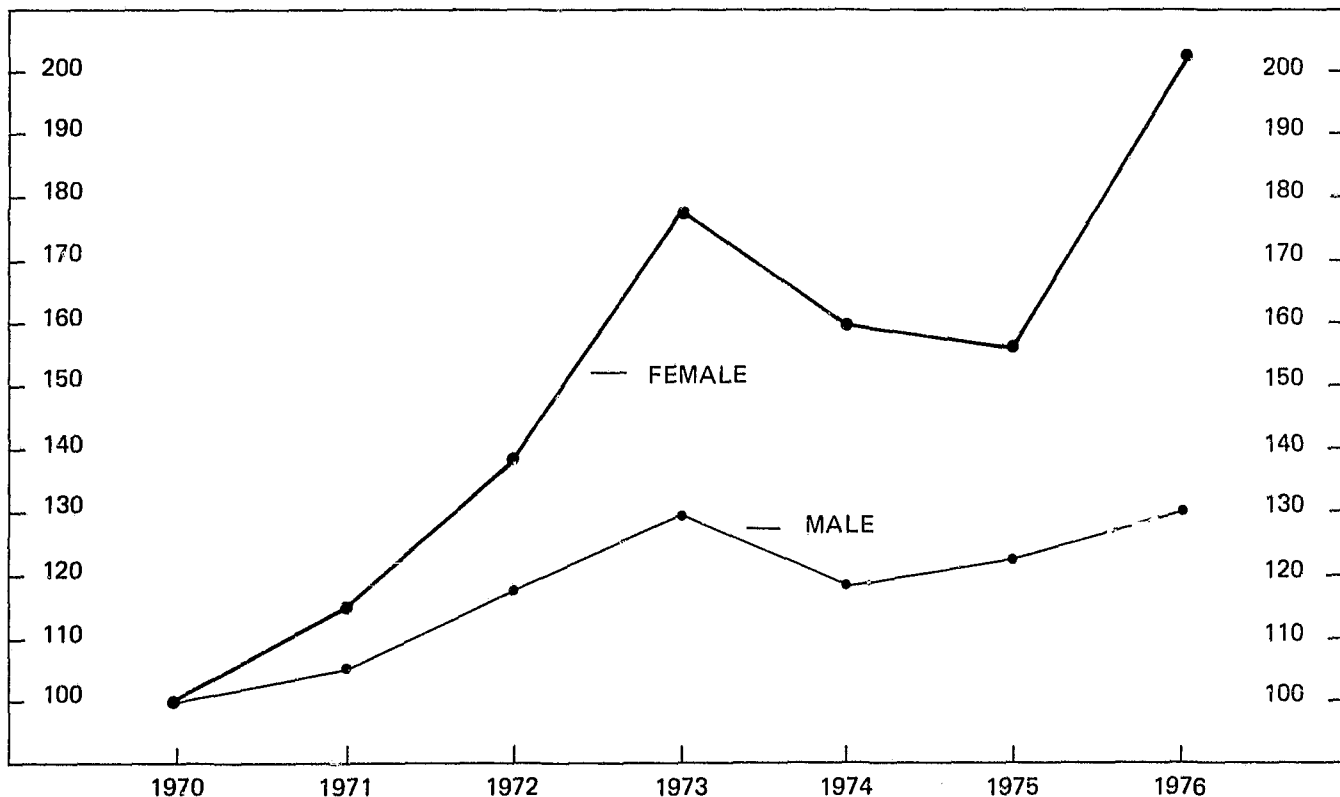
YEAR	TOTAL	SEX		PERCENT FEMALE
		MALE	FEMALE	
1970	7,109	7,016	93	1.3
1971	7,484	7,377	107	1.4
1972	8,344	8,216	128	1.5
1973	9,112	8,947	165	1.8
1974	8,503	8,354	149	1.8
1975	8,734	8,589	145	1.7
1976	9,325	9,136	189	2.0

(1) Persons on register as of the Census Date December 31st of each year. Does not include persons in temporary detention.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
 Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Weekly Population Returns, Directorate of Operational
 Information Services, Canadian Penitentiary Service.

FIGURE 3.1
INDEX (1970 = 100) OF PERSONS IN FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS⁽¹⁾ BY SEX,
CANADA, 1970 TO 1976



(1) Persons on Register as of the Census Date December 31st of each year. Does not include persons in temporary detention.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
 Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Weekly Population Returns, Directorate of Operational
 Information Services, Canadian Penitentiary Service.

TABLE 3.2

**NUMBER OF PERSONS ADMITTED TO FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS BY TYPE OF
MAJOR OFFENCE AND SEX, CANADA, 1970 - 76 (YEARS COMBINED)**

MAJOR OFFENCE	TOTAL	SEX	
		MALE	FEMALE
TOTAL PERSONS ADMITTED	29,730	29,115	615
MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER	1,501	1,438	63
ATTEMPTED MURDER/WOUNDING/ASSAULT	1,421	1,395	26
RAPE/OTHER SEXUAL OFFENCES	1,607	1,603	4
ROBBERY	5,855	5,794	61
BREAKING & ENTERING/THEFT	8,947	8,894	53
FRAUD	2,152	2,073	79
NARCOTIC CONTROL ACT	5,731	5,615	116
OTHER OFFENCES	2,516	2,303	213

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Inmate Records System, Directorate of Operational Information Services, Canadian Penitentiary Service.

Annual admissions over this seven year period were aggregated to allow for a more meaningful interpretation of the relatively small number of females admitted to penitentiary during any one year.

Table 3.2 and, Figure 3.2, provide a comparison of the major offence for males and females admitted to penitentiary. Of obvious significance is the large proportion of females admitted for Narcotic Control Act violations (35% of the total female admissions in comparison to 8% of male admissions).

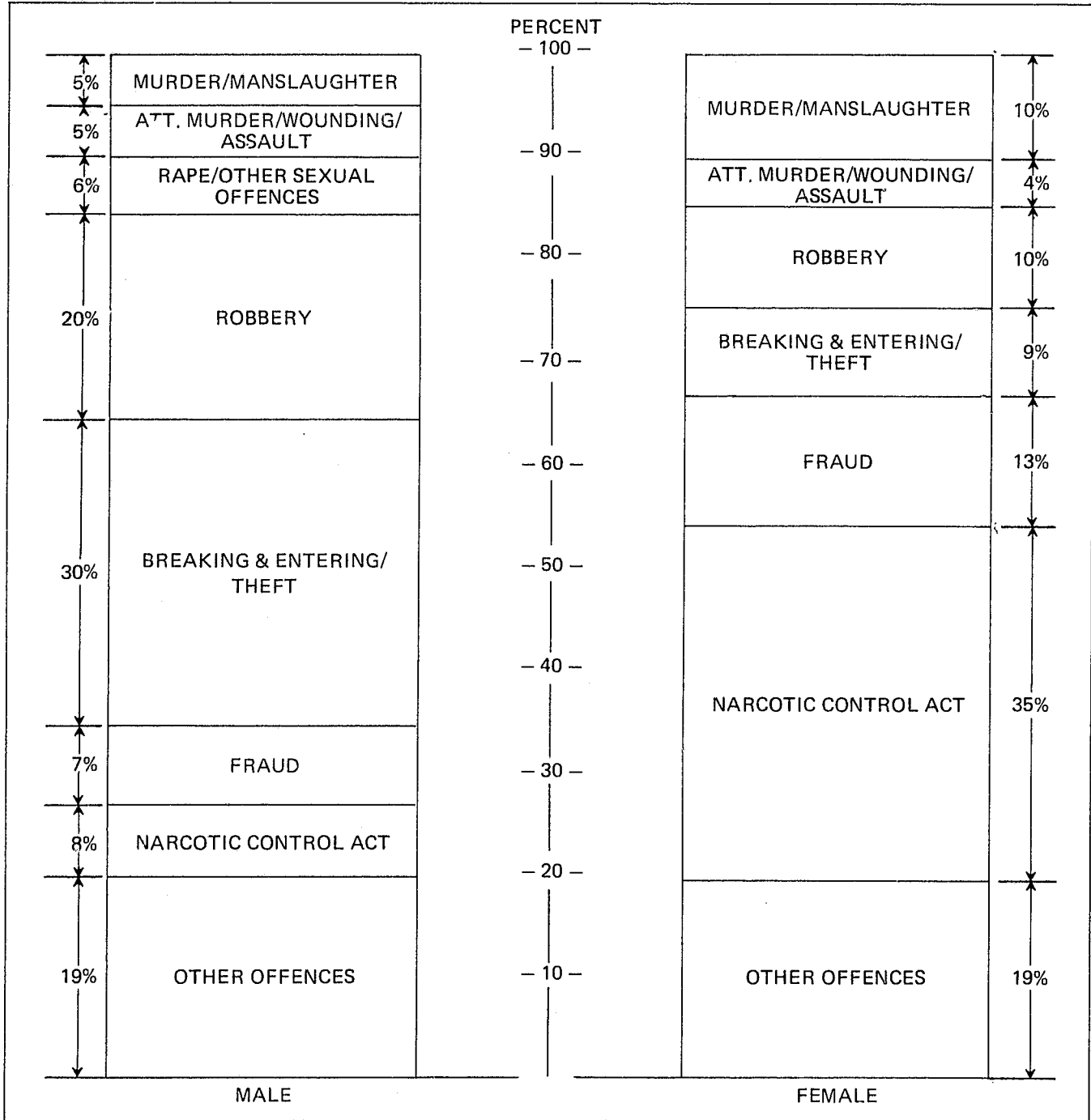
The findings from the police and court statistics indicated that women are predominantly involved in property offences, and that upon conviction they rarely receive terms of federal imprisonment. Only 9% of female admissions to penitentiary were the result of convictions for breaking and entering or theft, compared to 30% of the males admitted. Fraud constituted the predominant property offence of females admit-

ted (13%). Case file studies indicate that the severity of such sentences is often related to either an extensive prior criminal record of a large number of charges.

Table 3.3 shows offences by length of sentence and on Figure 3.3, sentence length is compared for each sex. Without considering offence, relatively little variation in the sentence distribution actually exists between the male and female population. From the data, it does not appear that women receive more lenient treatment in terms of sentencing, once the issue of prison commitment has been determined. For both males and females admitted, approximately 60% received sentences ranging between 2 and 5 years. The relatively high proportion of parole/mandatory supervision violations and subsequent re-admissions to serve remanet sentences accounts for the majority of persons admitted for terms of less than 2 years. For both sexes, 4% were admitted for terms of 10 years and over, and 2% for life.

FIGURE 3.2

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS ADMITTED TO FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS BY TYPE OF MAJOR OFFENCE AND SEX, CANADA, 1970 - 76 (YEARS COMBINED)



PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Inmate Records System, Directorate of Operational Information Services, Canadian Penitentiary Service.

TABLE 3.3

NUMBER OF MALES AND FEMALES ADMITTED TO FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS BY TYPE OF MAJOR OFFENCE SHOWING A PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENTENCE LENGTH WITHIN RESPECTIVE SEX COHORTS, CANADA, 1970-76 (YEARS COMBINED)

MAJOR OFFENCE	TOTAL		LENGTH OF SENTENCE													
			LESS THAN 2 YEARS ⁽¹⁾		2 & LESS THAN 3 YEARS		3 & LESS THAN 5 YEARS		5 & LESS THAN 10 YEARS		10 YEARS & OVER		LIFE ⁽²⁾			
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE		
TOTAL PERSONS ADMITTED	29,115	100% 615	100%	20%	15%	36%	34%	24%	26%	13%	18%	4%	4%	2%	2%	
MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER	1,438	100 63	100	1	—	4	10	14	27	24	33	17	10	40	21	
ATTEMPTED MURDER/WOUNDING/ASSAULT	1,395	100 26	100	20	4	37	58	20	15	14	15	7	8	1	—	
RAPE/OTHER SEXUAL OFFENCES	1,603	100 4	100	3	25	27	25	38	25	25	25	6	—	1	—	
ROBBERY	5,794	100 61	100	3	3	30	49	34	23	25	18	8	5	—	2	
BREAKING & ENTERING/THEFT	8,894	100 53	100	23	30	52	51	20	19	4	—	1	—	—	—	
FRAUD	2,073	100 79	100	26	22	45	53	23	20	5	5	1	—	—	—	
NARCOTIC CONTROL ACT	5,615	100 116	100	7	5	26	22	32	38	26	30	8	6	1	—	
OTHER OFFENCES	2,303	100 213	100	45	41	29	37	16	15	6	6	2	2	2	—	

NOTE: Percentages may not aggregate to totals due to rounding.

(1) Although sentences of less than two years usually fall within Provincial Jurisdiction, persons may be admitted to a Federal Institution on such a sentence as a result of remanet sentences of parole or mandatory supervision violations.

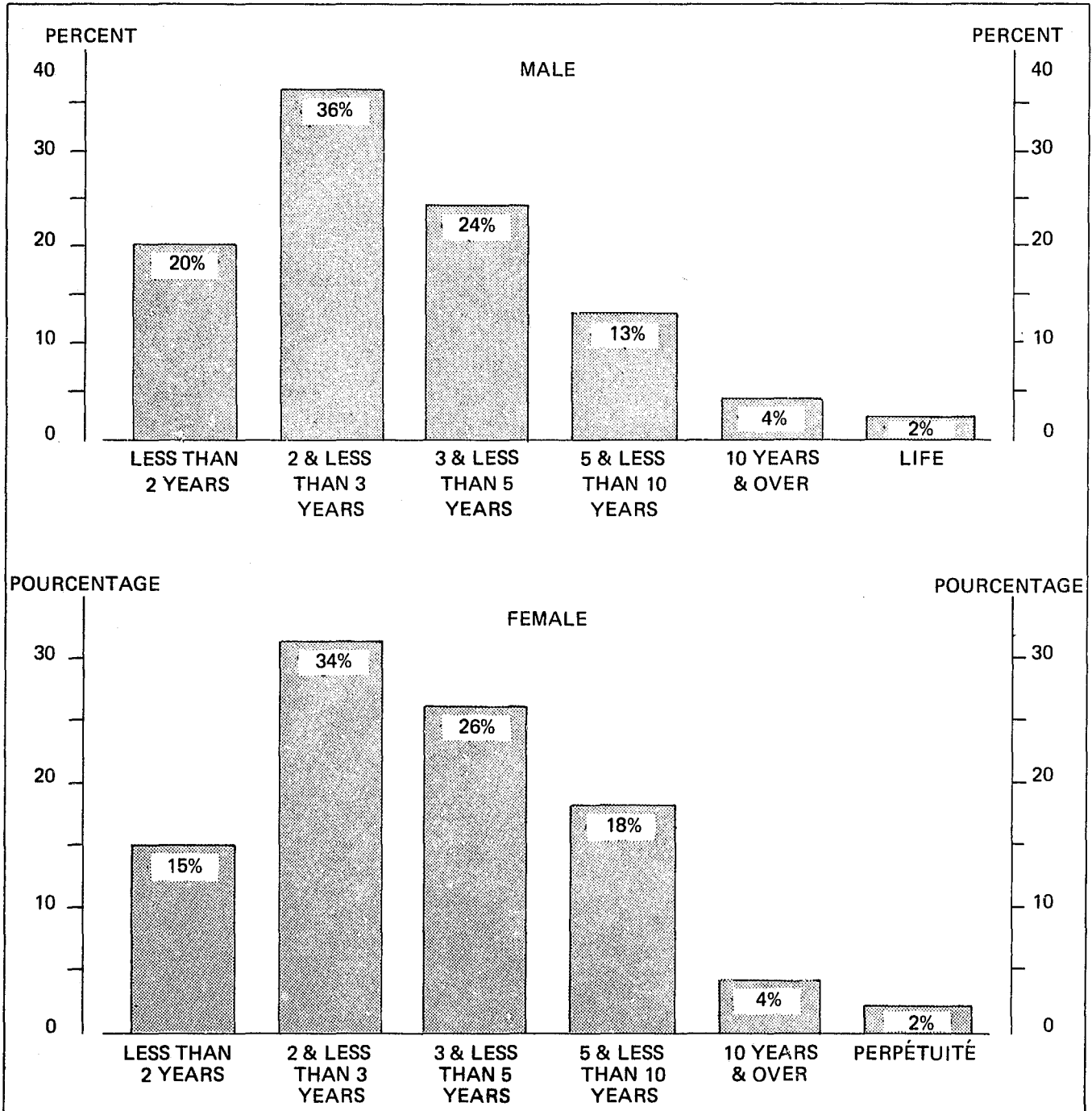
(2) Includes life, death commuted and preventive detention dispositions.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Inmate Records System,
Directorate of Operational Information Services,
Canadian Penitentiary Service.

FIGURE 3.3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS ADMITTED TO FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS
BY SENTENCE LENGTH AND SEX, CANADA, 1970 - 76 (YEARS COMBINED)



NOTE: Percentages may not aggregate to totals due to rounding.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Inmate Records Systems, Directorate of Operational
Information Services, Canadian Penitentiary Service.

Looking at offences in relation to sentence length does not appreciably alter the impression that the penitentiary sentences awarded both males and females are, with some exceptions, remarkably similar. For the offence group murder/manslaughter, 64% of females received 5 years or more in comparison with 81% of males similarly convicted. The difference between these proportions is partially related to the larger proportion of such female admissions resulting from manslaughter convictions. Males admitted for robbery received longer sentences than females: 32% of males admitted for robbery received sentences of 5 years or more compared to 25% of females admitted for the same offence. Unfortunately, it is not possible on the basis of the available data to examine the nature of the offence at admission to determine whether force or physical injuries were involved in the commission of the offence, the role of the individual as accessory or perpetrator, and such other factors which tend to influence the determination of the sentence.

In Table 3.4 major offence is displayed against the age groups of persons admitted to penitentiaries. Age distribution is highlighted on Figure 3.4 and is similar for both sexes. The majority of offenders are between 20 and 30 years old (57% of males, 59% of females). The most noticeable difference between the sexes is the age group under 20 years which included 11% of the males and 6% of the females. On the whole, females tend to be slightly older than males upon admission to penitentiary but not significantly so.

Linking offence with age does not illustrate any significant differences between males and females. We find that men and women between 20 and 30 comprised the largest proportion of offenders in all offence groups, most noticeably for robbery and Narcotic Control Act violations.

The next two tables provide information on inmates released from penitentiary. Again, the data have been aggregated over the seven year period 1970 to 1976 to allow for more meaningful interpretation of the figures.

In Table 3.5 the number of persons released is displayed against the major offence at admission. The importance of this table is to be able to compare the number of departing inmates to the influx found on Table 3.2. In total, almost 3,000 more persons were admitted than were released,

and this has contributed to the increase in the penitentiary population recorded during this time period. In general all offence groups showed more admissions than releases for both males and females. A noticeable exception was fraud for males where over 1,000 fewer males were admitted than were released. The most dramatic increase was for males admitted for Narcotic Control Act offences; over three times as many males were admitted than released (5,615 compared to 1,548). Marked changes such as these examples in the admissions/releases flows can change the penitentiary population inmate profile.

In Table 3.6, the time served by inmates released is presented against major offence at admission. Time served is most directly influenced by the type of offence which results in the admission and reflects the sentence awarded by the court. Other factors such as inmate response to institutional programs, the remission system, and parole further influence the amount of time which an inmate spends in an institution.

Approximately three-quarters of the women served less than two years compared to 69% of the males. About the same proportion of both sexes served two to three years (18% males, 17% females).

The figures indicate that relatively few women served more than three years (35 or about 7%). These women tended to be convicted of a Narcotic Control Act offence or manslaughter. For men, 13% or 3,436 of those released served more than three years, and as one would expect, these inmates were most often admitted for violent personal offences.

SUMMARY:

Women comprise a relatively small proportion of the total incarcerated population in Canada. In 1974, a survey of correctional institutions indicated that 4% of all inmates were female. In 1976, there were 48 males to every female incarcerated in a federal penitentiary.

The data presented in this section related to inmates under federal jurisdiction — admitted to, confined in, or released from penitentiary during the period 1970 to 1976. In 1976, females comprised 2% of the penitentiary population, an increase from the 1% in 1970. Drug offences

TABLE 3.4

NUMBER OF MALES AND FEMALES ADMITTED TO FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS BY TYPE OF MAJOR OFFENCE SHOWING A PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AGE GROUP WITHIN RESPECTIVE SEX COHORTS, CANADA, 1970-76 (YEARS COMBINED)

MAJOR OFFENCE	TOTAL				AGE GROUP							
	MALE		FEMALE		UNDER 20 YEARS		20 TO UNDER 30 YEARS		30 TO UNDER 40 YEARS		40 YEARS & OVER	
					MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
TOTAL PERSONS ADMITTED	29,115	100%	615	100%	11%	6%	57%	59%	20%	22%	12%	13%
MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER	1,438	100	63	100	11	6	48	46	24	30	17	17
ATTEMPTED MURDER/WOUNDING/ ASSAULT	1,395	100	26	100	10	18	56	37	23	30	11	15
RAPE/OTHER SEXUAL OFFENCES	1,603	100	4	100	9	25	55	75	21	—	15	—
ROBBERY	5,794	100	61	100	15	15	64	64	16	18	5	3
BREAKING & ENTERING/THEFT	8,894	100	53	100	15	6	57	57	17	23	10	15
FRAUD	2,073	100	79	100	2	1	39	53	32	29	27	17
NARCOTIC CONTROL ACT	5,615	100	116	100	5	5	66	68	20	19	9	8
OTHER OFFENCES	2,303	100	213	100	8	3	53	57	24	20	14	20

NOTE: Percentages may not aggregate to the totals due to rounding.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

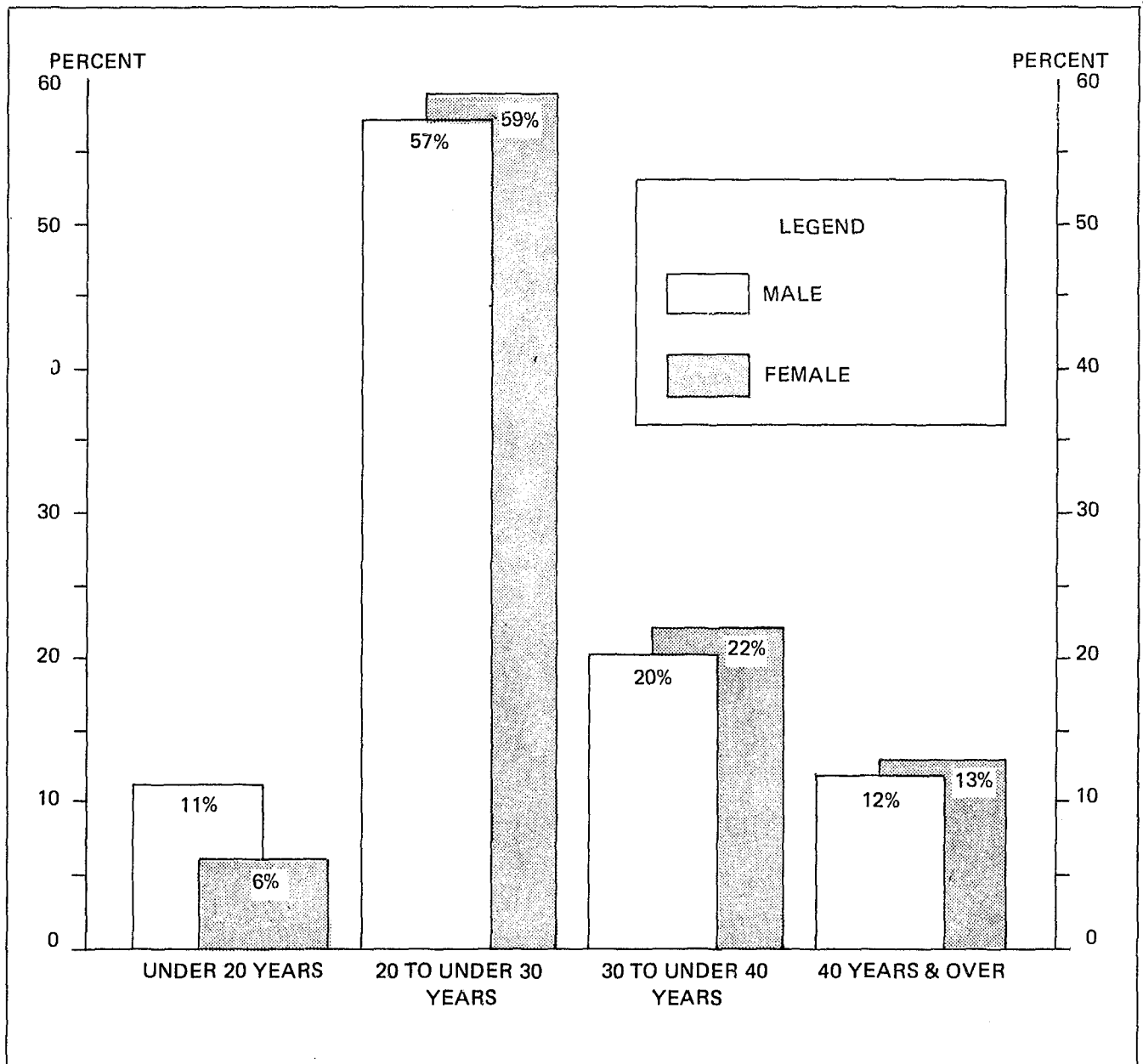
SOURCE: Inmate Records System,
Directorate of Operational Information Services,
Canadian Penitentiary Service.

(Narcotic Control Act violations) were the predominant offence for which women were admitted to penitentiary in the seventies, comprising 35% of those admitted. This offence accounted for 8% of the male admissions. The majority of females and males were between 20 and 30 years of age, 59% and 57% respectively. For inmates released during the same period, 76% of the

females and 69% of the males had spent less than 2 years in penitentiary. As would be expected, persons admitted upon conviction of violent personal offences tended to serve a longer period of time than was true for property offenders. Some 7% of women released had served more than 3 years in comparison to 13% of the males released.

FIGURE 3.4

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS ADMITTED TO FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS
BY AGE AND SEX, CANADA, 1970 - 76 (YEARS COMBINED)



PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Inmate Records System, Directorate of Operational Information Systems, Canadian Penitentiary Service.

TABLE 3.5

**NUMBER OF PERSONS RELEASED FROM FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS BY TYPE OF MAJOR
OFFENCE AT ADMISSION AND SEX, CANADA, 1970 - 76 (YEARS COMBINED)**

MAJOR OFFENCE AT ADMISSION	TOTAL	SEX	
		MALE	FEMALE
TOTAL PERSONS RELEASED	26,826	26,299	527
MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER	826	782	44
ATTEMPTED MURDER/WOUNDING/ASSAULT	1,153	1,130	23
RAPE/OTHER SEXUAL OFFENCES	1,162	1,160	2
ROBBERY	4,661	4,626	35
BREAKING & ENTERING/THEFT	8,845	8,793	52
FRAUD	3,184	3,127	57
NARCOTIC CONTROL ACT	1,684	1,548	136
OTHER OFFENCES	5,311	5,133	178

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Inmate Records System, Directorate of Operational Information Services, Canadian Penitentiary Service.

TABLE 3.6

NUMBER OF MALES AND FEMALES RELEASED FROM FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS BY TYPE OF MAJOR OFFENCE AT ADMISSION SHOWING TIME SERVED, WITHIN RESPECTIVE SEX COHORTS, CANADA, 1970-78 (YEARS COMBINED)

MAJOR OFFENCE AT ADMISSION	TOTAL		TIME SERVED PRIOR TO RELEASE ⁽¹⁾											
			LESS THAN 1 YEAR		1 & LESS THAN 2 YEARS		2 & LESS THAN 3 YEARS		3 & LESS THAN 5 YEARS		5 & LESS THAN 10 YEARS		10 YEARS & OVER	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
TOTAL PERSONS RELEASED	26,299	527	7,414	205	10,717	196	4,732	91	2,469	30	822	5	145	—
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION	(100%)	(100%)	(28%)	(39%)	(41%)	(37%)	(18%)	(17%)	(9%)	(6%)	(3%)	(1%)	(1%)	(0%)
MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER	782	44	66	8	171	13	147	11	174	8	149	4	75	—
ATTEMPTED MURDER/WOUNDING/ ASSAULT	1,130	23	298	3	452	15	197	2	117	2	57	1	9	—
RAPE/OTHER SEXUAL OFFENCES	1,160	2	257	—	466	1	233	—	139	1	55	—	10	—
ROBBERY	4,626	35	805	11	1,716	11	992	11	770	2	312	—	31	—
BREAKING & ENTERING/THEFT	8,793	52	2,707	26	3,890	21	1,493	4	586	1	115	—	2	—
FRAUD	3,127	57	564	20	1,994	21	389	11	164	5	16	—	—	—
NARCOTIC CONTROL ACT	1,548	136	370	39	623	62	359	28	170	7	24	—	2	—
OTHER OFFENCES	5,133	178	2,347	98	1,405	52	922	24	349	4	94	—	16	—

NOTE: Percentages may not aggregate to totals due to rounding.

(1) In some cases when the amount of time served appears incongruous with the admitting offence (i.e. inmates admitted for murder/manslaughter and released after serving less than one year), such releases are usually the result of court orders based upon appeals, retrials or an overturning of the original conviction.

PREPARED BY: Information Systems and Statistics Division,
Ministry of the Solicitor General, March 1978.

SOURCE: Inmate Records System,
Directorate of Operational Information Services,
Canadian Penitentiary Service.

SECTION III SYNTHESIS

Due to the lack of adequate, compatible and current statistical information, it has not been possible to develop a comprehensive perspective of the phenomenon of female crime and experience with the Canadian criminal justice system. Consequently, this report reflects, to a large degree, the institutional responses of the system rather than the specific nature of female criminality. An overview of the traditional criminological literature on women, as well as data derived from the police, courts and correctional institutions have been presented in systematic fashion to illustrate specific aspects of female criminality, and to raise some questions for future consideration.

Though an increase or decrease in the police crime statistics does not necessarily indicate a rise or decline in actual criminal activity, such data are commonly accepted as proxies or indicators of the level of crime in society. It is obvious from police statistics that the number of women charged by police is increasing at a pace that outstrips the rate of increase for males. However, despite such increases, females still comprise a relatively small proportion of all persons charged by police (11% in 1975). This increased representation of females in the police statistics has been attributed to the influence of various factors, none of which can be readily confirmed or disputed on the basis of available data. The data may reflect an actual increase in the number of women committing offences; changing attitudes towards female offenders by victims and/or police; changes in statistical reporting methodologies; and increased police effectiveness. During the decade 1965 to 1975, the number of women charged for all offences increased by 84% while for males an increase of 49% was recorded.

An obvious difference between male and female criminality lies in the nature of the crimes which women tend to commit. A great majority of women are charged with minor property or victimless offences. Theft and liquor violations accounted for over fifty percent of all women charged by police in 1975. Eighty percent of theft offences are shoplifting — the most predominant female criminal activity. Many writers trend to attribute the increasing participation of women in property offences to the changing role of women in society, in particular the labour market (Simon, 1975). A more radical perspective sees the proliferation of petty property offences among women as an affirma-

tion of women's secondary economic and social position within a capitalist society (Hoffman — Bustamante, 1973; Klein and Kress, 1976). Current economic and social conditions such as unemployment and inflation combined with changes in the labour market structure affecting women, would lead one to believe that female criminal activity in property offences will increase in proportions related to the offenders' needs and opportunity to commit such offences.

It is not possible at this time to state, with any degree of certainty, whether increases can be expected in the participation of females in violent crimes. Contrary to popular beliefs and many media reports, violent crimes committed by females have only marginally increased over the past decade. In 1965, women accounted for one out of every thirteen persons charged with a violent offence. By 1975, this ratio had decreased to one in twelve. Overall, the percentages of males and females charged with such offences have increased at similar rates.

A significant area of concern identified by the data is the relatively large proportion of drug or drug-related offences committed by females (the third largest offence group in 1975). Concomitant with this is the application of longer institutional sentences for this category of offender. If law enforcement and judicial resources continue to be allocated to the "drug" area, one may expect the number of females charged and convicted of drug offences to continue to increase until such time as opportunities to enter into drug trade (trafficking, importing) are restricted or deterred, and adequate treatment centres are developed to provide medical services to the addict portion of this segment of the offender population. It is significant to note that a sentence of federal imprisonment for females results most often from Narcotic Control Act convictions for trafficking or importing. The number of such offenders, the length of their sentences, and their personal characteristics which tend to be quite distinct from traditional images and stereotypes of female criminals are necessitating a rethinking and restructuring of corrections programs for the female inmate population. Drug offenders also form a significant proportion of the provincial female inmate population.

With regard to other sentencing patterns, a larger proportion of females than males received non-incarcerative dispositions, usually in the form of fines or suspended sentences with probation.

Though the nature of the offence and personal characteristics of the accused are significant factors in sentencing, it was not possible, within the context of this report, to analyse the sex-related differences in criminal justice processing of male and female offenders.

As the large number of persons born in the two decades after the Second World War move into their late teens and twenties, there could be an increase in the proportion of offenders between 16 and 29 years of age due to the enlarged population of potential offenders. The extent to which this has influenced actual incidence of crime can only be speculative. However, as police, prosecutors and judges are increasingly confronted with substantial numbers of women defendants accused of crimes, it has been suggested that the treatment afforded men and women will converge (Simon, 1975). Though the use of fines, probation and other forms of non-incarcerative dispositions will continue to be applied to the great majority of male and female offenders, one must also expect on the basis of growth in sheer numbers, an increase in the number of women sentenced to institutions.

As the number of women receiving institutional sentences can be expected to increase, there will obviously be significant implications for correctional programs. Closely associated with this is the changing composition of the female offender population. As a reflection of the improved educational level of society in general, the education level of the female offender will be somewhat higher than is presently the case. On the basis of the current population composition of our society (e.g. 65% of the population is under 30 years of age) a large segment of the female offender population can be expected to fall within this age group.

Traditionally, women have tended to commit crimes as male accessories, in keeping with sex roles and deriving lesser return; however as the changing status of women in Canadian society continues, we would expect an increase in the number of women committing crimes more in response to their own immediate social and economic needs. As community corrections and programs continue to increase, it is expected that a large number of women will be filtered out of the criminal justice system at municipal and provincial levels as a greater function becomes apparent for community-based planning, private agencies and diversion programs.

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