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Mary Catherine O'Connor
Innocent Until Proven Guilty: Not
for the Families
Vicarious Incarceration within a
County Jail

ABSTRACT

When an individual goes to jail, family members are often left in the shadow of the incarceration. This qualitative research study contributes to the incarceration literature by focusing on caregivers' experiences at county jails, and by suggesting the usage of the term *vicarious incarceration* to fully encompass the levels of impact that incarceration has on the family. Caregivers in the present study engaged in a semi-structured interview modeled after Megan Comfort's (2009) examination of secondary prisonization at San Quentin. Findings indicate that caregivers visiting a county jail do experience secondary prisonization, both at the jail and within the home. However the emotional, physical, and financial toll that incarceration takes on the family has some notable differences from secondary prisonization, thus warranting a new term to describe the phenomenon: *vicarious incarceration*. The discussion contextualizes this finding through Ecological Theory and suggests implications for social work practice.

INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY: NOT FOR THE FAMILIES
VICARIOUS INCARCERATION WITHIN A COUNTY JAIL

A project based upon an independent investigation,
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Social Work

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2017

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the caregivers, families, and children who have been impacted by incarceration. To the caregivers who helped me complete this project—thank you. I am unbelievably touched by your kindness, and I am forever grateful for your support. I have been so incredibly inspired by your strength and your resilience as you take care of your family, and wait for your loved ones to come home.

I would also like to dedicate this thesis to the men and women sitting in county jails throughout the country, waiting for their right to a “fair and speedy trial.” To the individuals I worked with over the past year: you are my motivation for this project; you were the driving force that kept me going throughout this year. I will forever hold you, your families, and your children in my heart.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to explore if and how secondary prisonization impacts caregivers for people who are currently housed within a county jail. This research question was developed after reading Megan Comfort's (2009) book titled, *Doing Time Together: Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison*. Comfort (2009) interviewed 50 romantic partners of men who were housed in San Quentin State Prison in California. From her research, she coined the term "secondary prisonization" to describe the process where romantic partners alter certain aspects of their life in order to maintain a relationship with a loved one who is living under a system of control. This thesis seeks to adapt Comfort's (2009) framework; specifically, the current work looks to explore how secondary prisonization occurs for caregivers of those in jails.

While there is a wealth of research pertaining to the prison system in the United States, far less research is available about jails (Irwin, 2013). Arditti (2012) highlighted this literature gap at the end of her comprehensive literature review, *Parental incarceration and the family: Psychological and social effects of imprisonment on children, parents, and caregivers*. Arditti calls for future researchers to look into the impact that county jails have on the family in order to advance a social justice agenda, as policies and practices around jails tend to impact marginalized communities and families with the fewest economic resources. According to the Rule of Law, individuals are innocent until proven guilty. However, individuals who are unable to make bail are often held in county jails as they await trial, meaning that many people in county jails are technically innocent. It is estimated that between three to seven million people pass through jails each year, which is 30 times the rate of individuals housed in state and federal prisons (Irwin, 2013). The Open Society Institute (2011, p.1) describes jails as an "overlooked

form of human rights abuse,” arguing that jails also increase poverty, stunt economic development, aid in the spread of disease, and undermine the Rule of Law. Irwin (2013) further delineates these human rights abuses in his extensive research in San Francisco county jails, observing that county jails serve as holding cells for more people because they are “offensive” rather than holding cells for people who committed crimes. He also argued that that the primary purpose of the jail was to manage people he describes as the “rabble,” also known as poor, marginalized, “detached and disreputable persons” (Irwin, 2013, p. XXV). This is consistent with the arguments made by Michelle Alexander (2011) in *The New Jim Crow* that the prison system in the United States serves as a means of social control and can be labeled as modern day slavery.

Definition of Key Terms

While the general population sometimes has the tendency to use the terms “jail” and “prison” interchangeably, it is of the utmost importance to distinguish jails from prisons. Prisons are where people go *after* they have been found guilty of a crime. Typically, prisons are state or federal institutions that hold people who have been convicted of a felony, serving more than one year (Irwin, 2013). Legally, jails are the point of entry into the criminal justice system. People who become arrested are booked in a county jail, and they are forced to remain there if they cannot afford bail, or if they are denied bail. It is noteworthy that jails can also serve as the county detention facility for persons serving misdemeanor sentences, which in most states cannot exceed one year (Irwin, 2013, p.1). For the purpose of this research study, all of the incarcerated individuals connected to the research were awaiting trial at the time their caregivers were interviewed.

Prisonization is a term coined by sociologist Donald Clemmer who wrote the book *The Prison Community* (1940, 1958) based on roughly thirty thousand conversations with twenty five hundred inmates during his tenure as a mental health professional at a corrections facility in Illinois. Prisonization refers to the “taking on, in greater or lesser degree, of the folkways, mores, customs, and general culture of the penitentiary” (Clemmer, 1958, p.299 as cited by Comfort, 2009, p.12). Adapted from the term “Americanization” describing the process in which immigrants assimilated into American society, Prisonization includes accepting an inferior role, accumulating facts associated with the organization of the prison, developing new habits of eating, sleeping, dressing, and working, and adopting the local language (Clemmer, 1958, as cited by Comfort, 2009).

Noticing that “free” people who interact with their loved ones in the criminal justice system also were experiencing changes associated with Prisonization, Comfort coined the term *Secondary Prisonization* based on Clemmer’s (1940, 1958) framework. Comfort (2009, p.14) argues that people’s intimate and social lives are “profoundly transformed” as they regulate their conduct and adjust their physical appearances, speech, agendas, and sexual relations in order to interact with their incarcerated partner. Comfort delineates four levels of secondary prisonization. The first level of secondary prisonization occurs when a visitor enters a correctional facility, as they forfeit certain rights such as liberty, goods and services, heterosexual relationships, autonomy, and security. This augmentation of behavior, forfeit of rights, constant surveillance, and subsequent poor treatment by prison guards who sometimes view caregivers as “guilty by association” parallels their loved one’s prisonization and thus leads to secondary prisonization. Furthermore, Comfort argues that secondary prisonization extends into the home as communication with their partner is governed through “elaborate regulations”

such as restrictions surrounding phone privileges, costs associated with letter writing, and financial responsibilities surrounding supplying their partner with commissary. The third level of secondary prisonization is present when un-incarcerated partners voluntarily experience major life events within the prison through conjugal visits and weddings. Finally, Comfort argues that the prison exerts itself as a defining mechanism impacting the overall nature of the relationship.

While Comfort (2009) examined secondary prisonization of romantic partners, this study seeks to explore the role of secondary prisonization for all caregivers who interact with the county jail. In the current study, the term “caregiver” refers to anyone, male or female, who cares for a child of the incarcerated individual; all incarcerated individuals in the present study were males.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand how incarceration impacts caregivers and children, it is first necessary to examine the history of mass incarceration within the United States. A brief overview concerning the history of racial relations within the United States must be provided, as race and the mass incarceration movement are complexly intertwined. This literature review contains four sections: a brief overview of racial relations in the United States; the history of the mass incarceration movement; the impact that incarceration has on caregivers; and finally, a review and discussion of a theoretical framework that highlights how matters of incarceration extend past the incarcerated individual into families and communities.

A Brief Overview of Racial Relations in the United States

Ever since the abolishment of slavery, success by people of color, whether it is economic, social, or political, has been met with significant backlash. This section very briefly examines the history of systems of control and oppression as well as the subsequent backlash when people of color manage to overcome these oppressive systems. This review begins with slavery and ends with the Civil Rights Movement, and the following section explores how the mass incarceration movement emerged as a reaction to gains made by people of color through the Civil Rights Movement.

System of control: Slavery. In American History classes throughout the country, youth are taught that the United States was founded under the notion that all men were created equal. This is simply not true. In fact, the entire structure and content of the United States Constitution was based on an effort to preserve a racial caste system (Alexander, 2011). According to Alexander (2011), race is a relatively new social construct, emerging over the last few centuries.

Race was conceptualized largely through European imperialism, and in the United States race served as a justification for chattel slavery and the mass genocide of American Indians. As European colonizers settled in what is now known as North America, indentured servants, who were both black and white, provided a means for cheap labor. However, the expansion of tobacco and cotton farming created an economic boom for the planter elite, leading to an increased demand for both cheap labor and land. Colonizers seized land through a mass genocide of American Indians, which was justified by referring to them as “savages.” As colonizers seized more land, the need for cheap labor was met through slavery. In an attempt to end their servitude, slaves, indentured servants, and poor whites rebelled against the planter elite during Bacon’s Rebellion in 1675. The planter elite responded by extending special privileges to poor whites in an attempt to drive them apart from black slaves. The goal was to prevent future alliances, which might overthrow the dominating group. This caused white people in the United States to assume a racially privileged position, as they distanced themselves from slavery. Just as the extermination of American Indians was justified by referring to them as “savages,” a similar dehumanizing process was used to justify slavery, by referring to African slaves as three fifths of a person. Dehumanizing groups that were not white allowed political leaders to justify the constitutional clause that “all men are created equal” because slaves were not fully men, therefore they were not fully equal. Furthermore, the American government built slavery into the structure of the constitution; federalism divided power between the states and the government, protecting states that wished to perpetuate slavery, and the Electoral College was specifically designed with slaveholders in mind (Alexander, 2011, p.26).

Slavery abolition. Slavery was officially abolished on December 6, 1865 with the construction of the Thirteenth Amendment (Library of Congress). The Thirteenth Amendment to

the United States Constitution reads, “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction”. The wording of this amendment is absolutely critical and will be examined in later sections.

Backlash. After slavery ended, the south faced two major problems. The first was rebuilding southern economy, which essentially collapsed as a result of the war and subsequent freeing of slaves, and the second was maintaining white control (Alexander, 2011; Wacquant, 2000). In order to accomplish these goals, and reassert their dominance and control, southern whites engaged in the practice of convict-leasing (DuVernay, 2016). Convict-leasing created a vice for which formerly freed slaves could be arrested for minor crimes such as loitering and vagrancy. It is important to note here that the thirteenth amendment contains an exception clause, “except as a punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.” As such, convict-leasing became the way that the south could negate the thirteenth amendment and rebuild their economy through legalized slavery (DuVernay, 2016). These convict-leasing laws, also referred to as “black codes,” were eventually overturned. Around this time, new federal civil rights legislation passed, which lead to the Reconstruction Era.

Reconstruction. From roughly 1867 until 1877, the United States entered into the Reconstruction era, during which time there was an expansion of services and laws that protected the humanity and rights of former slaves (Alexander, 2011). For example, a new public education system became available, and the Freedman’s Bureau was expanded, which provided food, clothing, fuel, and other forms of assistance to former slaves. In addition, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 granted full citizenship to African Americans; the Fourteenth Amendment established equal protection under laws; the Fifteenth Amendment stated that the right to vote

should not be denied on the basis of race; and Ku Klux Klan Acts declared that interfering with voting was a federal offence as well as a violation of one's civil rights. During the Reconstruction era, literacy rates among African Americans climbed, and educated African Americans began to open schools, develop businesses, and obtain elected positions.

Backlash. There was significant backlash to the Reconstruction Era, which lasted until World War II (DuVernay, 2016) Southern conservatives used several strategies to reverse gains from the construction era. The Virginia Supreme Court Case *Ruffin v. Commonwealth* ruled that “convicts” were not legally distinguishable from slaves, and convict-leasing experienced a re-birth (Alexander, 2011; Wacquant, 2000). The notion of the black man as an inherent criminal was reinforced through the media. For example, DuVernay (2016) discussed how the film “Birth of a Nation” (1915) functioned to culturally criminalize by depicting black men as criminals and rapists, particularly of white women. Physical violence was perpetuated on black bodies as the Ku Klux Klan fought against Reconstruction governments with bombings, lynching's, and mob violence (Alexander, 2011). This caused people to flee the south to the relative safety of cities such as Los Angeles, Oakland, New York, Boston, Cleveland, and Detroit (DuVernay, 2016). Unfortunately, restrictive policies in these cities forced people to congregate in what Wacquant (2000) refers to as a “black belt.” These segregated areas quickly became overcrowded, underserved, and devastated by crime, disease, and ruin. In addition, a job ceiling forced people into hazardous and underpaid jobs. When lynching and mass displacement of African American communities was deemed to be unacceptable, a new system of control emerged as a way to legalize segregation.

New system of control: Jim Crow. Similar to how slavery was justified by labeling African Americans as three fifths of a person, the Jim Crow Era legally degraded African

Americans to permanent second-class citizens (DuVernay, 2016). Just as the planter elite drove a wedge between African Americans and poor whites after Bacon's Rebellion, segregation was deliberately used to encourage lower-class whites to maintain a sense of superiority over blacks in order to prevent the two groups from aligning together in order to take down the white elite (Alexander, 2011). By the beginning of the twentieth century, every southern state had laws that barred African Americans from schools, restrooms, orphanages, funeral homes, restaurants, hospitals and cemeteries (Alexander, 2011, p.35).

Civil Rights Movement. The Jim Crow era officially ended with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, dismantling Jim Crow laws (DuVernay, 2016). Similarly, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 ended voting discrimination (DuVernay, 2016). The Civil Rights Movement has been described as the “largest mass movement for racial reform and civil rights in the twentieth century” (Alexander, 2011, p. 37). Between 1964 and 1969, the percentage of African American adults who registered to vote in the south doubled and in some cases tripled, and the Civil Rights Movement soon became an equal rights movement, with economic inequality at the forefront of the agenda. Civil Rights leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. called for a redistribution of political and economic resources and this was supported through President Johnson's 1964 State of the Union Address where he called for an “unconditional war on poverty” (Alexander, 2011).

History of the Current System of Control: Mass Incarceration

The mass incarceration movement began during the 1960s as the United States experienced a spike in crime, which quickly became politicized as crime rates were linked to racial tensions stemming from the Civil Rights Movement (Alexander, 2011; Travis et al., 2014; DuVernay, 2016). Conservatives and liberals framed the spike in crime differently. Democratic President Lyndon Johnson attempted to examine the “root causes” of criminal activity and the

Warren Court issued a series of decisions that restricted the authority of the police, protected people who were in custody, and overturned convictions that violated constitutional principles stemming from the Civil Rights Movement. Republicans accused President Johnson of being “soft on crime” and blamed the “misguided liberal policies” from the Warren Court for the increase in crime. This stark political difference occurred during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, and as African Americans were in the middle of a second Great Migration to urban areas (Travis et al., 2014). As society became more integrated, many whites responded by abandoning public schools, keeping away from public spaces, and relocating to the suburbs (Wacquant, 2000). Southern governors and law enforcement officials capitalized on white opposition to the Civil Rights Movement by endorsing segregationist rhetoric of “law and order.” They strategically linked aggression from the civil rights legislation to calls for law and order, and sensationalized crime through the media. Just as African Americans were portrayed as criminals during the backlash to the Reconstruction Era, a similar narrative began in the news during the 1960s, as civil rights protestors were repeatedly labeled as “criminals.” For example, conservatives made the argument that Martin Luther King Jr.’s civil disobedience philosophy was a major contributor to crime rates (Alexander, 2011).

During the 1968 election year, President Richard Nixon built upon the momentum of his predecessor and employed a “southern strategy” to appeal to democrats in the South (Duvernay, 2016). He did this by making issues of “law and order” central to his campaign, and asked voters to embrace order and to reject the “lawlessness” from the Civil Rights Movement (Alexander, 2011). Once elected, in 1972, Nixon declared a “War on Drugs” where he stated that illegal drug abuse was “public enemy number one” (Travis et al., 2014). Even though President

Nixon declared the initial “War on Drugs,” dramatic shifts in drug policy were not experienced until the election of Ronald Reagan (Alexander, 2011).

In 1980, President Ronald Reagan led his campaign in a way that changed the game of politics when he appealed to racial anxieties of working class whites without ever mentioning race (Alexander, 2011). During the 1980s, globalization and deindustrialization benefited members of society in the corporate world but left inner city communities in an economic collapse; many people from these communities sought alternative forms of income, such as the distribution of illegal drugs like crack cocaine. Reagan appealed to working class whites who were impacted by this economic collapse by blaming the country's problems on crime and abusers of welfare. He used rhetoric such as “welfare queens” and “predators” which directly alluded to images of African Americans but without ever directly bringing race into the conversation. This is a similar strategy that was used to gain social control after Bacon's rebellion, as well as strategies used during the Jim Crow Era. His strategy was successful, as he was elected into office in 1980.

In October 1982, Reagan declared a second “War on Drugs” that turned Nixon's theoretical war into an actual war. Building off his momentum from his election strategy, Alexander (2011) claims that Reagan's war had “little to do with the public concern about drugs and much to do with the public concern about race” (p.49). If Reagan were actually concerned about drug abuse, he might allocate funds to drug prevention. However, between 1980 and 1991, the opposite occurred: FBI antidrug funding increased by 87 million dollars; allocations of antidrug funding to the Department of Defense increased by 947 million dollars; DEA spending increased by 940 million; conversely, funding for the National Institute of Drug Abuse was decreased by 217 million dollars, and antidrug funds directed at the Department of Education

were cut by 11 million dollars. When his war was declared, less than two percent of the population viewed drugs as the most important issue facing the country, but Regan gained support for the war by sensationalizing crack through the media. Images of “crack whores” “crack babies” and “gangbangers” were directly connected to images of African Americans, but because the conversation was centered on crime and crack, the media was able to marginalize communities of color without ever directly mentioning race. The media approach worked, as crack became *Time Magazine*’s “Issue of the Year” in 1986. As public support for the war on drugs increased, so did legislation that further perpetuated the war. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 created mandatory minimum sentences for the distribution of crack cocaine, public housing authorities were allowed to evict tenants who engaged in any drug-related criminal activity, and the act expanded the death penalty for serious drug-related offenses. The federal government incentivized state and local governments to participate in the drug war through free military equipment, training, and cash grants. In addition, police were able to keep up to 80 percent of the assets that they took from people suspected of drug sales. Thus, President Reagan turned Nixon’s hypothetical war on drugs into an actual war; as a retired police chief from New Haven Connecticut stated, “I was offered tanks, bazookas, anything I wanted” (Alexander, 2011, p.74).

Although President Ronald Reagan was the pioneer of the drug war, subsequent presidents such as Bill Clinton exacerbated the war by appealing to voters through “tough on crime” rhetoric and initiating federal policy that caused the prison population to soar (DuVernay, 2016; Alexander, 2016; Travis et al., 2014). During his presidency, President Clinton cut public housing funding by 17 billion dollars and increased funding for corrections facilities by 19 billion dollars (Alexander, 2011). In addition he created a five-year lifetime limit on welfare assistance, a permanent ban for welfare and food stamps for anyone convicted of a felony drug

offence, and he also led an initiative for the “One Strike and You’re Out” movement, causing anyone with a criminal history to be barred from federal public housing. Under his presidency California passed a “Three Strikes and You’re Out” movement in 1994. By 1994, every state had a minimum sentencing law, which shifted sentencing power from judges to prosecutors, this changed courtroom dynamics as judges were no longer able to exercise discretion over an individual’s circumstances while prosecutors might politically benefit from winning criminal court cases. At the same time, The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 led to the Truth-in-Sentencing movement. The Truth-in-Sentencing movement suggested that there was something untrue about sentencing practices, and in order to negate this, States were allowed to receive eight billion dollars in prison funding if their inmates served at least 85 per cent of their sentences. All of these policies caused the prison population to grow to over two million people, while millions more were legally banned from housing and employment. Alexander (2011) argues that the people were pushed to the margins of society in legal ways that paralleled laws from the Jim Crow Era.

While the history of the war on drugs helps explain why more individuals were arrested, the number of people that flow into prisons is related to factors that occur after the time of the arrest. When an individual is arrested, they are booked in a county jail. They then face one of three options: they can be released on bond from the county jail, detained in jail if they cannot afford bail, or denied bail due to the seriousness of their charge. Individuals who are forced to wait in county jails until their trial might plead guilty to their charges so that they can reduce their possible sentence. People who await trial in jail might be more susceptible to taking what Alexander (2011) refers to as a “bad deal” because they have already suffered in jail and do not want to spend any more time away from home. While offering “deals” allows prosecutors to

increase their conviction rates, individuals who plead guilty to a felony might suffer the consequences for this for the rest of their lives if they are barred from public housing, and unable to find employment. This can create a cycle of incarceration because if people wind up homeless and unemployed because they pled guilty to a crime they didn't commit, this might cause them to engage in criminal activity if this is their only viable source of income.

Today, the United States has the highest rate of incarceration in the world. Historically, incarceration rates were related to population growth but in the past 30 years it has significantly exceeded this rate; since the 1970's, the incarcerated population has skyrocketed from around 300,000 to two million individuals (Arditti, 2012; Alexander, 2011). The mass incarceration movement in the United States has become the new system of racial and social control: policing indigent neighborhoods, bringing people to jail, and degrading them to a second class status by either locking them up, or forcing them to take a felony deal, parallels tactics that were used during the Jim Crow Era to legally degrade African Americans to a second class status. People who become incarcerated do not suffer these consequences alone; their families are impacted when a loved one is removed from the home, and they also suffer collateral consequences associated with their loved one's second class status once they re-enter society. This in turn impacts entire communities of people, as their loved one's are swept off the streets and then funneled into a seemingly never ending system of control.

Impact of Incarceration on Caregivers

The consequences of incarceration are not isolated to the individual, as romantic partners, parents, siblings, and children suffer when somebody they love is removed from the home. This section contains literature pertaining to the impact that incarceration has on caregivers. The term "caregiver" refers to anybody who takes care of the incarcerated person's child while they are

away. Caregivers are impacted in a multitude of areas when somebody they love becomes incarcerated. First, after a loved one is removed from the home, caregivers are often faced with a “choice”: decide to discontinue the relationship or navigate the institutional policies of the corrections facility in order to maintain a relationship with their loved one. These institutional policies, not limited to the institution, often extend into the home as caregivers maintain contact with their loved one (Comfort, 2009). A caregiver’s home life is also impacted if they take on additional caregiving responsibilities for the loved one’s children. Incarceration can be quite emotional for caregivers, especially as they process the loss of their loved one, and undergo subsequent changes in the nature of their relationship. In addition, incarceration can be costly, and the loved one’s children are consequently impacted by all of these factors. This section explores the literature surrounding these dynamics in order to highlight the extent to which families are impacted by incarceration.

Barriers to visitation. For caregivers who want to maintain an in-person connection with their loved one, often times their only option is to visit them at the corrections facility. Barriers to visitation were examined in an ethnographic study containing 19 interviews and 200 hours of observation of families interacting with New York prisons (Christain, 2005). One of the greatest barriers was the overall cost of visitation, averaging around 80 dollars per visit, and in many cases the amount was estimated to be much higher. In this study, caregivers indicated that visitation was a way for them to “watch the system” for fear that something might happen to their loved one if their presence was not known. For caregivers traveling with small children, visiting areas often pose challenges as they are often not child friendly, can be highly restrictive in nature, and if a child is unable to sit still the family might be subject to rude treatment or somehow penalized by deputized staff (Arditti, 2005). The restrictive nature of the visiting area

was echoed by Comfort (2009), who compares the processing area for visitation at San Quentin to a slaveholding tank, as multiple physical stressors convey a message of inferiority and intentional corporeal discomfort.

Relationship with deputized staff. An additional barrier to visitation is the rude and criminalizing treatment that caregivers often receive from deputized staff, who view caregivers as “guilty by association” Comfort (2009). Comfort (2009) describes the parallel incarceration process by which deputies coldly inform visitors of the rules ensuring that visitors become obedient and nonthreatening, which degrades them to a second-class status . The relationship between deputized staff and visitors was explored by Struges (2002), who interviewed deputized staff, wardens, and visitors about their opinions regarding visitation practices in a qualitative study across five county jails in Pennsylvania. In the pilot study, across two county jails, visitors described deputized staff as “mean” and “rude” and participants shared that “they treat us like inmates.” In turn, deputized staff described visitors as “aggravating”, “belligerent”, “impatient”, “pigs”, and “as ignorant as the inmates” (Struges, 2002, p.35). The actual study, across all five jails, provided some mixed findings depending on the jail, which suggests that the nature of deputy-familial interactions might vary depending on the facility. One of the overall conclusions was that officers did not enjoy working with “unruly visitors” and visitors wanted to be treated better by deputized staff (Struges, 2002). Institutional policies associated with the jail setting have a significant impact on caregivers, and they do not end when caregivers leave the corrections facility.

If caregivers wish to support their loved one outside of the corrections facility, their attempts to do so through phone calls, letters, and packages are governed by the elaborate rules and regulations of the corrections institution (Comfort, 2009). This not only forces caregivers to

forfeit aspects of their privacy, but these practices can be both costly and stigmatizing. One example of this is the nature of telephone calls. Not only are all calls recorded, but collect calls made from corrections facilities cost the receiving household five to ten times more than if the call was made from a residential phone (Hairston, 1998). While this provides a lucrative business for the telephone companies, it makes it extremely difficult for families to communicate, especially if their economic resources are allocated to other areas. In addition, when somebody wants to send mail, it is marked with a stamp containing a warning that it is from a correctional institution. This can make it hard for loved ones to write letters if they are worried about the stigma associated with receiving mail (Hairston, 1998). While some caregivers might choose to distance themselves from their loved one as a result of these costs, other caregivers might feel a pressure to maintain contact, especially if they are caring for their loved one's children.

Additional caregiving. When a loved one leaves the home, they usually rely on other family members to care for their children. This significantly increases the collateral impact of incarceration as it is estimated that about half of all prisoners report having lived with their children prior to their incarceration (Bockneck, Sanderson, & Britner IV, 2009). In fact, there has been a significant increase in grandparents taking on the primary caregiver role since the 1970s; in 1970, 2.2 million youth lived with grandparents, and by 2000 there was an increase to five million grandparent households (Hanlon, Carswell, & Rose, 2007). In two ethnographic studies of 101 African American grandparents, Burton and Merriwether- de Vries (1992) discovered that many grandparents enjoyed raising their grandchildren, and some saw it as a unique second chance. However, this study did bring light to some unique challenges facing grandparents such as the pressure of taking care of multiple generations, as well as keeping up with school-aged children in terms of their physical and social activities. Some grandparents indicated that this

took a “tremendous” toll on their personal lives, which caused some to take a leave of absence from their jobs. Additional risks were highlighted in a comprehensive literature review focusing on grandparents who care for children with an incarcerated mother (Hanlon, Carswell, & Rose, 2007). One notable theme from the literature was that grandparents might become financially vulnerable or feel socially isolated, and there is a high rate of depression or health problems as a result from taking on additional caretaking responsibilities after their child’s incarceration.

Emotional Impact. Caregivers can experience an intense emotional impact when they lose a loved one to incarceration. Hart-Johnson (2014) developed a grounded theory of symbolic imprisonment, grief, and coping in order to explain how the loss of a loved one to incarceration occurs on a psychological, social, symbolic, and physical level. After interviewing 20 African American women in the Washington DC metropolitan area, she concluded that prolonged states of social isolation often paralleled their partner’s incarceration, and that losing a loved one to incarceration produced feelings of grief similar to a death. She identified the notion of vicarious imprisonment a key aspect of her symbolic imprisonment, grief, and coping theory. Vicarious imprisonment, as defined by Hart-Johnson (2014), refers to “a state of self-induced confinement and restriction that is reinforced by grief and sustained through charismatic and controlling mate encounters” (p.167). As per this work, vicarious imprisonment contains the following components: inducing physical separation/ isolation; feeling psychologically constrained; placing freedom on hold; feeling criminalized; experiencing humiliation and confinement; creating social isolation; and emulating the partner’s physical and mental state. This notion of vicarious imprisonment suggests that in addition to Comfort’s (2009) notion of secondary prisonization, caregivers also experience a parallel incarceration process on both physical and emotional levels when somebody they love gets wrapped up in the system. Additional literature suggests that

caregivers can have difficulty processing their feelings when a loved one becomes incarcerated. In a qualitative research study at a maximum-security prison in Arizona, 58 family members of incarcerated men were interviewed about their experiences (Ferraro, Johnson, Jorgensen, & Bolton, 1983). Eighty-three percent of participants indicated that they had trouble expressing their feelings surrounding their loved one's incarceration, and they had problems enjoying life. Furthermore, most participants stated that it was very difficult for them to get information about what was happening to their loved one.

Ambiguous loss. Uncertainty of a loved one's whereabouts can be described as an ambiguous loss, where there is a physical and psychological loss but the facts surrounding the loss are uncertain (Boss, 2002 as cited in Dyer, 2007). This role of ambiguity is very present in the lives of caregivers, who often face uncertainty about how to include their loved one in family life, and are who are frequently kept out-of-the-loop about their loved one's legal status. Incarceration is an example of an ambiguous loss because it often feels like a loss similar to divorce or death, however it doesn't elicit the same sympathy from society due to the stigma surrounding incarceration (Arditti, 2005; Arditti, Lambert-Shute, & Joest, 2003). Since society has little compassion for the incarcerated individual and their family, caregivers might have trouble processing their own grief, which can lead to emotional disturbances amongst other family members. In addition to Hart-Johnson's (2014) symbolic imprisonment, grief, and coping theory, the nature of ambiguous loss suggests another way in which caregivers suffer emotionally when somebody they love becomes incarcerated.

Impact on the Relationship. Incarceration can be emotionally overwhelming for caregivers, which might lead them to experience various changes in their relationship with their incarcerated loved one. For example, it can be difficult for people to sustain marriages while one

person is incarcerated. In an event history analysis of 2,762 married men from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, Lopoo and Western (2005) discovered that incarceration during marriage significantly increases the risk of divorce or separation. In fact, the likelihood that a marriage would fail within the year that a man was incarcerated was about three times higher than for somebody who was not incarcerated. Conversely, some caregivers experience improvements in their relationship, which can lead to conflicting feelings regarding the nature of incarceration. Comfort (2009) writes about the “abiding ambivalence” that caregivers face regarding the impact of the corrections institute on their romantic relationship. For example, incarceration can bring out emotional vulnerability in men, as they lean on their partners for support. This can cause them develop better communication skills, and many women take pleasure in these qualities. In turn, women might provide their partners with additional money for commissary, as a way to reinforce these behaviors. While incarceration can impact relationships in various ways, those who do maintain a relationship with their incarcerated loved one are often subjected to the associated financial costs that coincide with the maintenance of this relationship.

Financial impact. Supporting a loved one while they are incarcerated takes a hefty economic toll on caregivers (Arditti, Lambert-Shute, & Joest, 2003). In Ferraro, Johson, Jorgensen, and Bolton’s (1983) study of 58 family members in Arizona, 92 percent of spouses indicated that they were having trouble with finances. Families might struggle with financial obligations due to a loss in income from the incarcerated family member, compounded by the fact that this loss in support might also lead to unexpected childcare costs (Arditti et al., 2003). In addition, there are direct expenses surrounding the loved one’s incarceration such as receiving collect calls, and sending money. In a qualitative study of 56 caregivers visiting an incarcerated

family member at a local jail, three fourths of participants reported sending an average of 75 dollars a month to their loved one (Arditti et al., 2003). One unexpected finding of this study was that the stress from lack of childcare and increasing family conflict might cause the caregiver to quit or become fired from a paid work position. Therefore, not only do caregivers lose the household income from their loved one, but they also can take on additional childcare expenses, and risk losing employment.

Impact on children. When children are raised in a home with economic instability combined with the loss of a parent, they might experience a range of emotional and psychological problems including depression, aggression, withdrawal, and educational challenges (Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999). In a study examining the impacts of ambiguous loss in children with an incarcerated parent, Brockneck et al., (2009) interviewed 35 school- aged children from Bridgeport CT that were enrolled in a federally funded mentoring program. Results indicate that children experience symptoms such as hypervigilance, psychosomaticizing, and guilt, which are consistent with posttraumatic stress and trauma. Sometimes children disengaged from school because they were afraid of the security guards. When a parent is arrested, children often lack the emotional tools to cope; they might look toward their non-incarcerated parent to help them navigate their emotions, but this can be difficult for some caregivers if they are struggling to navigate their own feelings. Furthermore, it might also be difficult for caregivers to know exactly how to talk to their children because incarceration is so stigmatized. In a qualitative study examining the impacts of incarceration on children, 118 wives of Jewish prisoners in Israel were interviewed about their children's behaviors (Lowensten, 1986). Findings indicate that about 40 percent of children experienced emotional and interactional difficulties, and behavioral problems were present in about 20 percent of children.

Lowenstein (1986) concluded that a child's ability to cope with the parental incarceration was related to the mothers' family and personal resources as well as the amount of stigmatization associated with the criminal event. Therefore, a mother's response can help mitigate some of the potential negative behaviors that are sometimes seen in children with an incarcerated parent.

Theoretical Framework

Even though incarceration is often thought of as a punishment for a specific individual, the impacts of incarceration extend far past the incarcerated individual into families and communities. Ecological Theory will be utilized in this research study because it highlights how institutional practices at the macro level trickle down and impact caregivers at every level, down to their most basic, micro level functioning. The Ecological Theory framework will be applied to this research study because it best highlights the various systemic ways that caregivers are impacted by their loved one's incarceration. Arditti's work (2012) illustrates this in the application of a combination of Ecological Theory and Developmental Contextualism to the comprehensive literature reviewed in the book *Parental incarceration and the family: Psychological and social effects of imprisonment on children, parents, and caregivers*.

Ecological Theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979 in order to explain the complex systems that determine the way an individual relates to his or her environment. Bronfenbrenner (1981) uses the term "developing person" to refer to the individual at the center of the ecological framework (p.3). For the sake of this research, "developing person" refers to the caregiver for the child of the incarcerated individual. Bronfenbrenner states that the ecological environment is made up of four basic structures, each existing inside the next, like a set of "Russian dolls." The four systems that make up somebody's ecological environment include the Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, and Macrosystem.

The microsystem exists at the most interpersonal level and is defined as the interaction between the “developing person” and their environment over time, placing relationships at the center of the microsystem (Arditti, 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1995). When a loved one becomes incarcerated, a caregiver is impacted at the micro level because there is a disruption in their relationship. A loved one’s incarceration not only impacts the caregiver, but the caregiver’s reaction to this disruption can have an immediate impact on other family members. Therefore, even though jails were designed to punish the individual, their loved one’s are subsequently impacted at the most basic, micro level because of the fundamental importance of family relationships.

The mesosystem is defined as the interrelations between two or more settings involving the developing person (Bronfenbrenner, 1981). Visiting areas in jails are relevant here because they exist as a link between the home and jail environments. The exosystem is an extension of the mesosystem, however it does not directly involve the developing person (Arditti, 2012). For example, a caregiver’s primary exosystem includes the institutional practices associated with the jail setting and the policies surrounding their loved one’s reentry into society. While these practices were not designed to explicitly involve the caregiver, they do influence the caregiver on a more systemic level.

The macrosystem involves overarching institutional patterns that influence the caregiver (Arditti, 2012). These institutional patterns are seen on economic, social, legal, educational, and political levels. Ultimately, incarceration can be understood as a macro problem because a loved one’s incarceration impacts caregivers on almost all of these levels. Caregivers might struggle to economically provide for their family due to the loss in income from the incarcerated loved one. Stigma surrounding incarceration can impact caregivers and the children they care for on social

and educational levels. One of the reasons why the Prison Industrial Complex is so complex is due to the fact that there are macro level benefits for politicians and companies contracted by the facility that have economic, political, legal, and social implications.

The complexities surrounding the mass incarceration movement are extremely difficult to quantify, in part because of the structural, systemic, and interpersonal ways that this movement has impacted individuals and their families. Ecological Theory focuses on ramifications at the individual level but it also addresses how structural policies contribute to an individual's experience. Ecological Theory will be applied to this study because it addresses the many layers surrounding the ramifications of the mass incarceration movement.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine how having a loved one in jail impacts the rest of the family, specifically the caregivers for the incarcerated person's children. The research question aims to understand how secondary prisonization applies to caregivers for people who are currently housed within a county jail. Before I delve into my method's section, I feel it is imperative to contextualize my role in the research in order to illuminate some of my inherent biases.

I am a white, cisgendered, female, completing this research project for my Masters in Social Work Program. I grew up in a conservative republican family, although my political views became quite liberal during college. I was initially interested in doing research within the criminal justice realm because I have a long-standing passion for the intersection of psychology and the law, and "criminal justice reform" is my central focus as a social worker. Through my studies, I knew that there were significant problems within the criminal justice system, and I was originally a big proponent of working within the system in order to initiate change. I was optimistic about this possibility, and I did not really agree with the notion, "For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (Lorde, 2003).

I now recognize how my privilege informed this mentality; as a white, cisgendered, female, I have inherently benefited from the same system that oppresses many of the families that I interviewed for this project. I came to this realization as I engaged with people working in the jail, as well as through the interviews and general research that I completed for this thesis project. I now see how incarceration serves as modern day slavery (Alexander, 2011), and one of

my goals for this research project is to expose this system of control. I state this in order to illuminate how some of my past biases, as well as some of my current biases, inform how I write this paper on vicarious incarceration.

Another experience also shaped how I came to understand the experience of vicarious incarceration. In order to gain access to the jail, I reached out to two alums from my Masters program that worked in the jail as social workers. They were supportive of my research, stating that if they had the funding, they would love to provide supportive services to the family members. They helped me obtain jail clearance by signing me on as a volunteer, and they introduced me to some of the families they worked with through their programs. Since (1) my senior colleagues had invited me into the space, (2) I had been given clearance, (3) I was interviewing people who were not in custody, and (4) I completed all of my interviews outside of the jail, I was surprised when I ran into institutional pushback. I quickly learned that when you try to expose a system of control, the system has a way of crashing down on you. At one location, staff at a jail saw me passing out flyers in the lobby, quickly confiscated them, and informed me that I needed the jail's permission before passing out any materials in the lobby. They also informed me that I might need the jail's permission to do my project in general. While I understood the recruitment concerns, I began to panic. If I needed the jail's permission to do my study, this would be a lengthy a process that would likely not be complete until after my thesis was due. Even though my conversation with the staff member was very mild-mannered, there was a part of me that began to panic. I thought, "How can they tell me that I can't talk to family members? They have no jurisdiction over me or the family members, we are not incarcerated!" I worried that this might cause me to lose my jail clearance, which would result in me being unable to complete this project, which would either delay my graduation or potentially

cause me to get kicked out of my masters program. I wondered if I needed a lawyer. I wondered what my rights were. I wondered if this person had a right to take my materials, and legally, what I had to give to them. This experience right here is an example of secondary prisonization. The end result from this incident was that I was allowed to carry out my project, however I could do absolutely no recruitment at the jail.

Based on the sum of these experiences, I aimed to address the ways that my perspective and personal history may influence the data collected and my subsequent interpretations. I ensured the trustworthiness of the data by supplementing my caregiver interviews with conversations I had with four people who worked inside the county jail where this research took place. In addition, I used member checking to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. I checked in with ten (83%) of my participants. During this process I notified them of my findings, and asked what was indicative of their experience, and what was not relevant to their experience. All of the participants that I checked in with agreed with my interpretation of their experience, and some participants added additional stories that they felt were consistent with my themes. One participant suggested a different term to refer to the phenomenon and this will be expanded upon in the discussion.

Participants

Participants (N=12) were recruited using non-probability, purposive sampling techniques. All recruitment was completed outside of the actual jail and participants expressed a desire to learn more about the study at the time of meeting or over the telephone. When speaking, the study was described in detail, and it was made explicitly clear that the research was completely separate from the jail. It was also made explicitly clear that my research was completely separate from any social work programs that were currently at the jail.

All participants identified as a caregiver for a child of the incarcerated loved one. According to the rule of law, every caregiver that I interviewed had a loved one who was technically innocent. They either could not afford bail or bail was not presented as an option to them. Participants were predominantly women of color. Eleven participants (92%) identified as female. Ten participants (83%) identified as a person of color: Five participants (41%) identified as African American or as a person of African descent; two participants (17%) identified as mixed race; three participants (25%) identified as latinx, Mexican, or as Filipino. Two participants (17%) identified as white, although in some instances participants made an effort to distance themselves from whiteness.

In terms of relationship to the incarcerated loved one, three participants (25%) identified as the mother to the incarcerated loved one. Seven participants (58%) identified as the mother of the incarcerated loved one's child. In regards to the mothers to the children, three participants (25%) identified as being in a romantic relationship with the individual; two of which (17%) identified as the loved one's wife, and one person (8%) identified as the loved one's girlfriend. Four participants (33%) stated that they were no longer romantically involved with the incarcerated individual. In addition, one participant (8%) identified as a sibling, and one participant (8%) identified as a stepparent.

Seven participants (58%) stated that they came to the jail on a weekly basis. Three participants (25%) indicated that they came to the jail on a biweekly basis. One participant (8%) stated that they came to the jail twice a week, and one participant (8%) stated that they came to the jail two to three times a month. Participants ranged in age from 23 to 58 years ($M=37$ years); the average age for parents of the incarcerated individual was 50 years, while the average age for caregivers with other relationships was 30 years.

Measures

Participants (N=12) engaged in a semi-structured interview based off the interview Comfort (2009) used in her book, *Doing Time Together: Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison* (See Appendix A). However, language was modified in order to encompass the jail experience, rather than prison experience (See Appendix B). The Interview contained four core themes: relationship with the incarcerated person; interaction with deputized staff; impact that incarceration has on the self and home; and social networks and resources. In addition, participants were asked about what, if any, services could be useful in supporting family members impacted by having a loved one at the county jail. It is noteworthy that Comfort's (2009) interview contained five themes; the fifth included demographic information. Rather than answering these questions in an interview, participants filled out demographic information on a separate piece of paper (see Appendix C).

Procedure

Participants were given the option to complete the interview in person or over the phone. Participants were compensated twenty dollars for their time, although three participants (25%) refused the payment. Participants were also offered a list of supportive services. If the interview was completed in person (n=5), the consent was formally obtained before the interview and the payment and distribution of supportive services occurred afterwards. When the interview was completed over the phone (n=7), I met caregivers in a public place, such as a coffee shop, to describe the study and complete the consent form. I also distributed the payment and supportive services at this time, and then arranged for a time to complete the interview over the phone. On average, the interviews took around 45 minutes to complete. The shortest interview took 20 minutes to complete and the longest lasted for three hours.

Ethical concerns

I am aware that there is a history of white people researching marginalized communities and using their stories for personal gain; my intention with this research study is to help share the stories of families who have been significantly impacted by incarceration, so that the general public can have a more comprehensive understanding about the ways in which county jails can have a detrimental impact on families. Within the context of this research it is also important to name that while I am able to leave the jail, the incarcerated individuals and their families do not have this same privilege, and if this paper gets published, someone from the jail could read it, and there is a risk that staff or lawyers could try to figure out who participated and use it against them. In an attempt to protect the participants of this study, I will not disclose where this research took place; strong efforts were made to de-identify and generalize the data. In order to increase the validity and trustworthiness of the data, I interviewed two social workers and two case managers about their experience working inside the jail. There will therefore be times throughout this paper when I supplement quotes from my interviews with experiences described by four staff members working within the county jail.

Since the incarcerated population is a vulnerable population, strict measures were taken in order to ensure the confidentiality of all participants and their families. It was made explicitly clear that this research was completely separate from the jail, and declining to participate in the interview would not impact their relationship with any social work programs at the jail. It was also made explicitly clear that there was a risk of interviews being subpoenaed, therefore, caregivers were encouraged to talk about their own personal experiences, rather than any details related to their loved one's case. Given these concerns, participants were given the option to allow for the interview to be audiotaped. For those who agreed to be audiotaped (n=10)

interviews were recorded on a small cassette recorder. The recording was transcribed within a week of the interview, after which, the audio clip was deleted. For participants who declined the audio recording (n=2), I asked for their permission to take notes throughout the interview. All information was de-identified immediately; names of caregivers were replaced with a pseudonym, every child mentioned was replaced with “child,” and the incarcerated individual’s name was replaced with “loved one” on all transcripts. Participants were encouraged to choose their own pseudonym. However, in cases where I felt that the pseudonym was too close to their actual name, I chose a different name in order to ensure confidentiality.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter documents the findings from 12 semi-structured interviews with caregivers who have an incarcerated loved one residing in a county jail. All caregivers who were interviewed had a loved one who was either still awaiting trial, or currently in the trial process. Therefore, according to the Rule of Law, every caregiver had a loved one who was technically innocent; the loved one was in jail because they either couldn't afford bail, or bail was not presented as an option to them. The interview contained four core components: relationship with the incarcerated person; interaction with deputized staff; impact that incarceration has on the self and home; and social networks and resources. In addition, participants were asked about what, if any, services could be useful in supporting family members impacted by having a loved one at a county jail. After all interviews were transcribed, they were coded for themes. The main themes that emerged from the data were: secondary prisonization; interactions with deputized staff; relationship with incarcerated loved one; impact on the self; impact on the child; and financial implications.

The initial research question of this study aimed to explore if and how secondary prisonization applies to caregivers for people who are currently housed within a county jail. Findings indicate that elements of secondary prisonization are present in the lives of caregivers. Elements of secondary prisonization are most prominent when caregivers enter the jail, and secondary prisonization further extends into the home as caregivers adjust their daily routines to maintain contact with their incarcerated loved one. Findings also highlight additional processes that emerge when families are coping with and responding to the ambiguity of jail, instead of

prison. Based on the experiences outlined in this paper, a new term seems warranted to fully describe the experience of caregivers in this research study: *Vicarious incarceration*.

The processes outlined below speak to the experience of *vicarious incarceration*. Findings indicate that caregivers were subject to *vicarious incarceration* in three main domains: At the jail; in the home; and the overall physical, emotional, and financial impact within the family system. Therefore, this results section is broken up into three sections, each section describes the ways in which caregivers were subject to *vicarious incarceration*.

Vicarious Incarceration at the Jail

The most notable finding from this research study is that *vicarious incarceration* was present at the jail. This typically occurred as participants entered the jail, interacted with deputized staff, and negotiated inconsistent application of rules, with particular attention to clothing. Findings from the present study indicate that there is a parallel process between those who are incarcerated and loved ones who visit them. This section describes four levels of *vicarious incarceration* at the jail and additionally, describes caregivers' responses to experiencing *vicarious incarceration* at the jail.

Vicarious incarceration when caregivers enter the jail. All caregivers are subject to *vicarious incarceration* when they enter the jail through the implementation of strict practices and policies that emphasize a transition between the culture of the outside world and the jail. All visitors must show their identification at the gate, and then must wait outside for a bus to take them to the jail. Once they enter the jail, caregivers are required to show their identification a second time, go through a metal detector, and send their personal belongings through a conveyer belt similar to the airport. During this time, caregivers are subjected to the constant surveillance of deputized staff, ensuring that all visitors abide by the lobby rules. For caregivers, a deviation

from the lobby rules may lead to a loss of a sense of agency, a key aspect of what Comfort (2009) describes as secondary prisonization. For example, Elizabeth described a time where she was scolded for having her phone in the lobby, even though she was only playing a game on her cell phone as she waited for her visit. This made her feel criminalized, defensive, angry, and confused, as she did not understand the harm in her playing a game on her cell phone.

Treatment by deputized staff. In addition to the experiences of entering the jail, participants also experienced *vicarious incarceration* when they interacted with deputized staff. When participants were asked about their interactions with deputized staff at the jail, the most common response, stated directly by nine participants (75%) was, “Some of them are okay, but...” After the “but” participants used words that demonstrated the disrespect and dehumanization that they felt from the deputies. Some of the phrases they used to describe the deputized staff were, “horrible,” “heartless,” “rude,” “unpredictable,” “butt hole surfers,” and “the attitude is there.” Consistent with the finding that three quarters of caregivers generally felt disrespected, eight participants (67%) either stated directly that they felt like they were treated like an inmate when they were at the jail, or they described treatment by the guards in ways that align with this statement. For example, when asked about treatment by deputized staff, Cheyenne emphasized the intensity of this feeling:

“They’re horrible. In every aspect. Whatever you can think of, they’re horrible. I’m not gonna say all of them, there’s a total of maybe three that are okay, but the rest of them are very rude. They act like we’re the inmates, they don’t care how they talk to you.”

In contrast, two participants (17%) indicated that they felt neutral about deputized staff, or that they didn’t have a problem with them; one of these participants indicated that she knew some of the deputies on a personal level. Finally, only one participant (8%) endorsed quasi-

positive experience with deputized staff, and noted that he felt a sense of safety emerge from behaviors that other caregivers experienced as criminalizing. He stated:

“I tend to feel more comfortable around the guards than I do around the other family members.... You know, sometimes I think, ‘I’ve got more in common with the guards, then with the general population.’ So I can definitely understand where they come from in terms of, for lack of a better word—control. But what’s behind that control is ultimately safety.”

It is noteworthy that this response came from the only male that was interviewed, and he had previous work experiences in corrections facilities.

Rigidity and inconsistent rules. In addition to unpleasant treatment by deputized staff, eight participants (67%) complained about the rigid, and often times unpredictable, rules that are present at the facility. The most prominent finding was the rigidity around arriving on time for the visit. Eight participants (67%) stated that they have been turned away from the gate at least one time, even if they are only a few minutes late. As India put it:

“There’s even been times where I’ve been running like two minutes late, and when I say two minutes, I literally mean two minutes, and they will not let you in... and they’re so strict and its crazy because you’ve got people coming from all these places (names place two hours away) to see their loved one’s and it’s like (imitating deputy) ‘No! You can’t come!’ with no regards to how far they’ve traveled, who they are coming to see, or what the occasion might be.”

This quotation highlights how the rigidity in rules can impact the caregivers. Not only has being turned away personally impacted India, but she is also vicariously impacted as she sees people she knows get turned away at the gate. When I followed up with India about how this makes her

feel, she described the deep sadness she feels for the children who get turned away at the gate. She cannot comprehend how the guards can show no compassion to children who are looking forward to seeing their father. Many caregivers also endorsed that the guards are inconsistent with the rules and that there can be a lot of variability depending on the deputy who is at the front gate.

In terms of inconsistency with rules, there are times when the facility changes their rules and policies; however these changes appear to go unarticulated to the caregivers until it is too late. For example, Remi visits her boyfriend through the glass on a weekly basis. She usually brings their baby with her. When Remi registers for the visits online, she only includes herself in the visit, not their baby, as it is standard protocol to not register infants. However, one day when she approached the gate for a glass visit, a deputy told her about a new rule stating that visitors are now required to register all children online for the glass visits. Rather than making an exception, since Remi was never informed of the rule, she was turned away at the gate. Here she describes the incident:

“I just had a problem with the deputy who didn’t let the baby go up. He kept going back and forth with me. He was going on and on like, ‘All babies have identities, you have to add her as a person.’ It was just too much. I was looking forward to the visit. They should have already had those rules instead of springing it on me like that. Some people drive all the way up there for no reason. They waste their time, and then the deputies will give you a hard time.”

As Remi described this incident, I could hear the sadness in her voice. This quotation also highlights how some deputies take a dehumanizing, and even shaming tone, when they state things like, “all babies have identities.” While this is true, it does not account for the real issue at

hand: the abrupt change in policy without properly informing caregivers. The rigid and inconsistent rules surrounding the timing of the visit is one obstacle that caregivers need to navigate in order to visit their loved one.

Clothing. In addition, even if caregivers make it on time to their visit, they might be turned away if their clothing is deemed inappropriate by deputized staff. There are strict clothing regulations at the jail. Visitors are forbidden from wearing anything that might be associated with a gang color, or a color too similar to the clothing that the men on the inside wear. They are also not allowed to wear spaghetti straps, razor back tops, clothing that is too tight or see-through, and they are not allowed to wear open toed shoes. Two caregivers (17%) indicated that they were turned away at the facility because of their clothing. Tina stated that she was turned away because she wore open toed shoes, even though the person in front of her, who was wearing similar sandals, was allowed to enter. Another participant, Elizabeth, indicated that she was turned away several times because of her clothing. She stated that she has been turned away for wearing burgundy or pink, because these items look too close to the color red. She described a time when she had on a top deemed inappropriate because of the straps; due to the feedback, she tried to put on her coat, but they still turned her away because there was a possibility that she might try to take off her coat. This same participant was also turned away for having on a “see through shirt” however, when describing this incident she indicated that this shirt was black. She exclaimed, “You can’t see through my shirt because I can’t see through my shirt! You know? It’s like, you’re just trying to pick with me.” Both Tina and Elizabeth described the frustration they experienced when they were turned away for not having the right clothing. Emotions ranged from anger to exasperation. They felt targeted by the deputies and felt as if they were being unfairly treated.

Caregiver response. Caregivers have a variety of responses to these aspects of *vicarious incarceration*, ranging from trying to mentally prepare themselves for the visits to completely distancing themselves from the entire process; some caregivers also discussed being fearful of retribution if they push back against the rules.

When I asked Tina about her treatment by deputized staff, she replied:

“(I’ve been treated) Just like an inmates relative—a number...I feel like it’s the way the system was set up to be...and I know what I’m walking into when I schedule a visit and try to get there. I, I know what to expect—I try to know what to expect, but sometimes I get caught off guard.”

Even if caregivers try to prepare themselves, there might still be instances where they feel blindsided by the deputies. This could have psychological implications for the caregivers, and potentially also the children that they bring with them to the visits. Sometimes, this can cause caregivers to feel like they need to be on the defense when they come to visits, as Georgia states:

“And I always say this, because HE is the one that is in jail, WE are not, I am not. Yeah in their eyes these are criminals and their terrible... I feel like every time that I’m in contact with them they have this stereotype of me. So I’m always like on the defense when I’m there. Like, I’m always kind of just ready for them to say some just fucked up shit.”

This response highlights the emotional toll that *vicarious incarceration* can take on a caregiver. Receiving criminalized and degrading treatment makes Georgia constantly feel like she has to be on the defense. It is also noteworthy that she often visits the jail with her six-year-old son, who is not only vicariously exposed to this criminalization, but also bears witness to his mother’s anxieties and her attempts to defend her family as they enter into the jail. Georgia indicated that

the treatment she receives by deputized staff makes her not want to come back to the jail. However she only does so because she recognizes that it is important for her son to see his father. Choosing between maintaining their own peace and allowing the child to see their father is a very tough decision that 25% of caregivers endorsed.

In addition, five participants (42%) stated that they cope with the guards by distancing themselves as much as possible. There are various reasons for this distancing. For example, Georgia stated, “I just try not to give them the time of day” while Elizabeth explained:

“I don’t argue with them, I don’t find no reason to say nothing to them because they know who I’m coming to see, and if they get mad at anything that I say, they can potentially take it out on him. And, I don’t want that to happen. So I just try not to fight with them, or say anything to them, outside of, ‘hi, bye.’(chuckles)”

Fear of having behavior taken out on the loved one was also endorsed by Fontaine, who described a recent episode where she was turned away at the gate. She initially wanted to push back against the deputy, but then she worried that if she argued too much then the deputies could block her from visiting her son for 30 days.

Staff working within the jail stated that they have personally witnessed caregivers losing their visits due to altercations with deputized staff. When I asked the civilian staff members about their perception of deputized staff and their interactions with caregivers, three different staff members described the following incident. Here is my summary of what they described:

We were in the lobby one morning and we observed a line of females go through the metal detector to go visit their loved ones. There was one young woman at the end of the line who was not able to go into the visit, as it was scheduled for a half hour later. “But the guy at the gate told me to get on the bus” she confusingly replied. The deputy shooed her away,

explaining that she needed to take the bus back and wait until it was her turn for a visit. As she walked away, she muttered, to herself, something along the lines of, “That’s fucking annoying, I could have just waited in my car.” The deputy overheard this and got out from behind the desk. He exclaimed, “Watch your tone! Do you want me to cancel your visit entirely!?” The situation began to escalate, and out of spite the woman defensively exclaimed that she didn’t care if her visit was canceled. This comment was made in the heat of the moment and it was clear that she didn’t mean this. But those words were her kiss of death. The woman began to panic, and exclaiming that none of this was her fault, that she followed the rules. The deputy exclaimed that this was ALL her fault. He shamed her for losing her visit and made her leave the jail immediately.

The staff members stated that taking a stance against a deputy likely caused this woman to lose her visiting privileges for at least 30 days, if not indefinitely. This incident provides additional evidence for the defensiveness, powerlessness, and the distancing nature described by the caregivers that I interviewed. When I asked how the staff felt about witnessing this interaction, they indicated that they felt both horrified and powerless. As one staff member stated:

“My face contained a horrified expression. However, I realized that I could not show this face to the deputy, so I turned away towards the window. My compassionate nature called for me to intervene, to try to deescalate the situation. This is what I would have normally done... however, I felt powerless. I felt as if I could not intervene. Intervening with a guard could make me lose my jail clearance. If I intervened I would also run the risk of this action being taken out on my program, which would harm even more people. So I stood there. I stood there horrified, and powerless, but I did not do anything.”

I provide this quotation to highlight the complex nature of *vicarious incarceration* within a county jail. Not only are caregivers subject to *vicarious incarceration* when they enter the facility, but civilian staff, many who are there by nature to “help”, can also feel powerless and fearful in the presence of deputized staff. This passage begins to highlight the complications surrounding working within the system to change the system, and suggests how civilian staff might reinforce elements of *vicarious incarceration* towards caregivers if they feel unable to intervene with the oppressive nature of deputized staff.

Caregivers are subject to *vicarious incarceration* the moment they enter into the jail; they immediately become denoted to a second-class status when they are required to repeatedly show identification, are subject to being searched, and as they interact with deputized staff who criminalize them, and create an environment with rigid, yet inconsistent rules. Caregivers have a variety of responses to their treatment by deputized staff, ranging from mentally preparing themselves, being on the defense, and distancing themselves as much as possible, in part to protect their loved one from further punishment. The next section explores how *vicarious incarceration* does not stop at the jail; it extends into the home as caregivers adjust their schedules to maintain a relationship with their incarcerated loved one.

Vicarious Incarceration in the Home

Findings from the present study indicate that caregivers who interact with loved ones at the county jail also experience an expansion of *vicarious incarceration* from the jail into the home. This was seen as caregivers altered their daily routines in order to maintain a relationship with their incarcerated loved one. Each area where caregivers had to alter their daily routine is described below: scheduling glass visits, communicating with the loved one over the phone, and sending care packages.

Scheduling glass visits. The procedures that caregivers must go through in order to schedule a glass visit with their loved one in jail is one of the most prominent examples of how *vicarious incarceration* extends into the home. In order to schedule a glass visit, caregivers must go through the following process: First, caregivers must create an online account through a website contracted by the sheriffs department. Second, caregivers must wait up until midnight in order to schedule a visit for the following day. Once the clock strikes 12:00, caregivers must log into the website, sign up for their time slot, enter in their information, hit submit, and then wait for a confirmation email. All twelve participants (100%) had experience with this process. Caregivers described the challenges that they had in terms of scheduling visits in this manner. Caregivers identified that they struggle to stay up until midnight because they feel tired; two caregivers (17%) indicated that they have to set an alarm in order to make sure they don't accidentally fall asleep and miss a visit. Caregivers feel a pressure to schedule the visit exactly at 12:00AM because often times the visits will be completely filled by 12:30; caregivers described the disappointment and frustration they feel when they are unable to schedule a visit. Some caregivers stated that the system is confusing, as Fontaine put it, "If you are not computer savvy, then you're in trouble." One caregiver stated that she works a night shift, so this frequently prevents her from being able to schedule a glass visit. Finally, two caregivers (17%) stated that the entire process is so taxing that this prevents them from making a visit altogether.

The complications surrounding this process have significant implications. Most notably, glass visits are the closest thing that caregivers can experience in terms of maintaining an in person connection. It is also noteworthy that all participants in this study were interviewed because they were caring for a child of their incarcerated loved one. Caring for a child can be exhausting in and of itself, not to mention the extra burden of waiting up until a certain hour so

that both caregivers and their children could visit their loved one. This process is one example of how county jails can divide families apart. Not only is the loved one physically removed from the home, but the jail's policies and procedures make it increasingly difficult to maintain a human connection with the incarcerated loved one. While caregivers varied in terms of how frequently they visited their loved one through the glass, every caregiver stated that they maintained some sort of contact with their loved one via phone calls.

Phone calls. Twelve participants (100%) stated that they communicate with their loved one over the phone. The extent to which caregiver's altered their daily routines in order to communicate with their loved one varied by participant. Eight participants (67%) indicated that they altered their daily routine to communicate with their loved one over the phone to some degree. Here Cheyenne describes her routine as she waits for her partner's phone call:

“I really have to time everything around the times that he's gonna call, so that way I can make sure that he has communication with (child), that he's able to talk to me, and to just make sure everything is okay...once I get in the habit of times that he's gonna call, I make sure my phone is charged and that I've done all the stuff.”

When I followed up with Cheyenne about this, she further described the extent to which she alters her daily routine to support her partner. She bases her work schedule around him calling and cannot work weekends so that she can visit him; she stated that the visits and phone calls are what gets him through his time, it also keeps them together as a couple. The challenge with altering a daily routine around times when a loved one might call is that the guy's schedule on the inside is frequently subject to change. For example, if somebody gets into a fight and gets sent to solitary confinement, they might have to wait several days before they are able to access a phone to inform their family members. Therefore, there will likely be times when Cheyenne

prepares herself for a phone call that doesn't happen, or happens several hours later than expected. This not only causes a physical disruption to her daily routine, but an emotional one as well. It is noteworthy that there was a subset of caregivers (17%) who did not allow for their loved one to impact their daily routine. For example, one caregiver was in school and stated that she cannot afford to step out of class just to talk to her husband for fifteen minutes. This same caregiver was also somebody who stated that she had no problem with the deputized staff. Subsequently, this caregiver did not appear to experience high levels of *vicarious incarceration*, although her past experiences, similar to other participants, may have led her to this level of disengagement, which may also be understood as an element of *vicarious incarceration*.

In the above quotation Cheyenne also highlights twofold pressure to answer the phone: so that her son can have contact with his father, and so that she can make sure that everything is okay; these two themes were present within the narratives of other caregivers in this research study. Two other participants (25%) indicated that they felt pressure to answer the phone so that their child could communicate with his or her father. Three caregivers (33%) echoed the sentiment of "making sure that her loved one was okay." Fontaine shared that she talks to her son every day in order to make sure that he is doing all right and to keep his spirits uplifted. She tells her son, "Sit back and relax, everything is going to be okay...we'll take care of everything else out here, you just sit there." Six participants (50%) described a similar pressure to lift up their loved one's spirits. There were various reasons for this. For example, when I followed up with Fontaine regarding what she meant by this statement, she said that she wants her son to relax so that he does not go stir-crazy in jail, and take the first deal that is offered to him, as these deals can be very undesirable. Other caregivers worried that if their loved one became upset over the phone that they might handle their frustration by getting into a fight, which could cause them to lose

their visits for 30 days. This impacts not only the men themselves, but also the caregivers and children, who rely on these visits.

It can be challenging to support a loved one over the phone because all calls coming from the jail are recorded. Caregivers described both the frustration, and the deep fear that they feel around this. For example, if a loved one is offered a deal, it makes sense that they would want to discuss this with their family members, as this will significantly impact their lives too. However, it is not safe to have this conversation if all calls are recorded, thus highlighting an additional obstacle that caregivers must face as they emotionally support their loved one on the inside. Communicating over the phone both physically and emotionally disrupts caregiver's daily routines, thus providing evidence of *vicarious incarceration*.

Packages, letters, and money for commissary. In addition to emotional support, caregivers provide their loved one's with physical support as they send packages, letters, and provide their loved one with money for commissary. Six caregivers (50%) stated that they physically supported their loved ones by sending them care packages. Six caregivers (50%) said that they send their loved one pictures or letters. Seven caregivers (58%) stated that they put money on their loved one's books so that their loved one can purchase commissary. One reason for doing so, which five participants (42%) endorsed, was to provide their loved one with a better quality of food. Remi indicated that sometimes she feels like she has to choose between talking with her boyfriend over the phone, and sending him money for food. At the end of the day, she stated that she feels like it is better if he eats because of her partner's description of the food:

“(Loved one) will say, ‘I don't know what I'm eating’ and that it makes his stomach hurt.

It's sad because it seems like nobody really cares about them. So many people have to spend money for food because the food there is so disgusting. And its not like they are

being picky, sometimes its because they don't know what they're eating, its just like gunk and bread, stuff like that.”

Here, Remi is subject to *vicarious incarceration* in a number of ways. First of all, it is likely that she vicariously experiences some of traumas surrounding incarceration as she listens to her boyfriend's description of the disgusting food. Secondly, she is vicariously incarcerated in a financial sense, as the cost of supporting her loved one in jail forces her to choose between providing either emotional or physical support.

This section highlights that in addition to experiencing *vicarious* incarceration at the jail, caregivers are also subjected to *vicarious incarceration* within their homes as they alter their daily routines to both support and maintain a relationship with their loved one. Until now, most of my description of *vicarious incarceration* is consistent with Comfort's (2009) definition of secondary prisonization. Especially Comfort's argument that secondary prisonization is present at the facility, and then extends into the home as caregivers alter their daily routine to maintain contact with their loved one. Most of the content in the next section denotes a break from Comfort's (2009) definition of secondary prisonization, thus warranting the term, *vicarious incarceration*, to more accurately describe the experience of caregivers. The next section delineates how caregivers are impacted at a physical, emotional, and financial level when they have a loved one in a county jail, and their children are not exempt from elements of *vicarious incarceration*.

Vicarious Incarceration in the Family System

This section focuses on the role of *vicarious incarceration* within the family system. While Comfort's (2009) notion of secondary prisonization speaks to the meso and exo systems of Ecological Theory, this section focuses on the caregivers' microsystem, particularly in terms

of the physical and emotional impact. Some caregivers felt physically bound to the jail as they are prevented from making any drastic decisions regarding their own lives due to the ambiguous nature of the incarceration. Caregivers are vicariously incarcerated on an emotional level due to their overwhelming emotions surrounding losing their loved one, which sometimes causes them to become consumed with worry about the incarceration. Since relationships are at the center of a caregiver's microsystem, findings surrounding this theme are documented here. While Comfort (2009) includes the financial impact within her description of secondary prisonization, eight participants (67%) within the present study explicitly described how they feel, "physically, emotionally, and financially" impacted by their loved one's incarceration, so it therefore feels appropriate to group these three themes together. This section explores the physical, emotional, and financial aspects of *vicarious incarceration*, concluding with the caregiver's insights about how the children are impacted by their father's time in jail.

Vicarious incarceration at a physical level. Physically, caregivers are subject to *vicarious incarceration* in three major ways. *Vicarious incarceration* is first seen as caregivers put their lives on hold, waiting for their loved one to return home. In addition, many caregivers are physically impacted when they obtain additional caregiving responsibilities for the incarcerated loved one's child. Finally, caregivers experience varying degrees of interference with their social networks when a loved one goes to jail.

Life put on hold. Six participants (50%) described ways in which they put their lives on hold after their loved one was sent to jail. This notion of putting life on hold appears to be related to the ambiguity surrounding jail; seven participants (58%) described how they feel like they are just waiting for their loved one to return home. Of the caregivers I interviewed, there is one family where the notion of putting life on hold is especially pertinent. I interviewed Momo, the

mother to an incarcerated loved one, and her long term domestic partner, Grump City, who identifies as the loved one's step father. The couple is responsible for raising the incarcerated loved one's two daughters. This family lives two hours away from the jail; Momo and Grump City take turns driving to the jail every other weekend so that the girls can see their father. They therefore spend a minimum of four hours in the car every other weekend, which can expand upwards of six or seven hours if there is traffic. In order to do some comprehensive field research, I made this drive on a Saturday afternoon; it was exhausting and there were times when I worried that I might fall asleep at the wheel. When I asked Grump City how his stepson's incarceration impacted his home life, he stated:

“We have two weekends: One we drive, one we don't drive—that's it. We don't have spring, we don't have winter, we don't have summer, we don't have snow we don't have beach. We have weekends we drive and weekends we don't drive... There's not one facet of our lives that is not affected in some way. Work, financially, relationships with others, everything that we do... Everything we have done over the last several years has been centered around this incarceration.”

Additionally, when I asked Momo a similar question, she stated, “Basically right now were doing jail right along with him. We can't make any decisions because we don't know what's happening. We're still in limbo. So were doing the jail time with him.” These two quotations highlight the need for the term *vicarious incarceration*. This family is not just conforming their schedules to accommodate the strict policies of the jail, or altering their lives in a way that molds with the jails strict policies; their lives are literally on hold as they wait for their loved one to return home, and the uncertainty of whether or not he will come home, adds an additional component keeping this family physically bound to the jail.

Not every caregiver puts their lives on hold when their loved one goes to jail. For example, there was one caregiver who appeared exasperated by her husband's incarceration. She did not put her life on hold to accommodate any aspect of his incarceration. She does not visit him in person because it takes longer to travel to the visit than the time she would be able to spend in the visit herself, she does not feel pressure to answer his phone calls if she is busy, and she rarely puts money on his books or phone. She does however bring their son to visit his father, as she believes fostering this bond is important.

Additional caregiving. Ten participants (67%) experienced an increase in their caregiving responsibility to the incarcerated loved one's child. This looked one of two ways: three caregivers (25%) physically became the primary caregiver for their loved one's child. These caregivers did not have children in their home, or were not considered as the primary caregiver, before the incarceration. An additional eight caregivers (67%) experienced a significant loss of support when their loved one was incarcerated. Remi summed it up best when she said, "I was never planning on being a single mother." This portion of the sample described the emotional, physical, and financial burden of losing their co-parent. These caregivers described their co-parent as a supportive figure in both their lives and their child's lives, and felt significantly strained, and in many cases overwhelmed, by the fact that their co-parent is no longer present. It is important to note that one participant felt that she had already been functioning as a single mother before her loved one's incarceration, especially in terms of financially supporting their child. However, she indicated that she wishes that her son's father was around to emotionally support their child, and she is fearful about how the incarceration will emotionally impact their son. Although this caregiver did not feel like the phrase "I never asked

to be a single mom” was indicative of her experience, she did state that the incarceration left her with “unnecessary shit to take on.”

This physical level of incarceration impacted around half of the participant’s social lives, and more than half of the participants described the stigma associated with the incarceration. Of the six (50%) caregivers who experienced a change in their social activities: Three caregivers (25%) attributed this change to taking on additional caregiving responsibilities; two caregivers (17%) stated that they felt like they couldn’t do certain things because they needed to visit their loved one every weekend; and one caregiver (8%) explained that she and her partner used to hang out with several other couples, and she now felt an awkwardness because her partner was incarcerated. In addition, seven participants (58%) indicated that they, or their children, experienced judgment/ stigma when they told people about their loved one’s situation, or they indicated that fear of judgment/stigma prevented them from telling others about their loved one. These findings begin to illustrate the net effect of one person’s incarceration. For one incarcerated person, their caregivers are vicariously incarcerated through their interactions with the facility, the extension of policies into the home, and on a physical level as they put their lives on hold and take on additional caretaking responsibilities. Additionally, the people within the caregivers support network might be impacted if the caregiver experiences a reduction in their social activities.

Vicarious incarceration on an emotional level. There is a clear, heavy, emotional component to *vicarious incarceration* that warrants exploration. This involves the direct emotions experienced by caregivers, the notion of ambiguous loss, and the emotional impact that incarceration has on the relationship.

Emotions experienced by caregivers. The emotional impact of *vicarious incarceration* involves not only the direct emotions experienced by caregivers, but also the extent to which the loved one's incarceration consumes the caregiver as well as the worrying aspect surrounding the incarceration.

In terms of emotions expressed by caregivers, Three participants (25%) explicitly used the word "depressed" to describe how they felt when their loved one left. Here, Cheyenne describes the extent to which she has been emotionally impacted by her partner's incarceration:

"It's done a number on me. That I can say. I went through so many emotions, mad, angry, for the first year... It was just horrible like some days I didn't even get out of the bed. If I didn't have to feed the baby and give him a bath, I literally stayed in bed all day. I did that— I wanna say the first year that (loved one) went to jail... I was just very depressed."

Here you can see how Cheyenne went through a grieving process when her partner was incarcerated. She also described how she felt consumed by her husband's incarceration, especially within the first year that he left.

Six participants (50%) either stated directly that they felt consumed by their loved one's incarceration or described behavior that would indicate that this incarceration consumes their life. These caregivers were emotionally concerned with their loved one's well being, and stated that their loved one's incarceration made them feel like they needed to devote all of their weekends to visiting their loved one. All of the mothers I interviewed (25%) became emotionally consumed if they did not hear from their son on a daily basis. Marissa describes the emotional toll that this can take on a mother:

“It’s hard because if something happens, like if he goes to the hospital or if he gets hurt, I don’t know if they will call me... They will call me if he is dead though, this I know. So when I don’t hear from him I get really worried and I sit around thinking, ‘what if?’ But I know that if I don’t hear from anybody that this is good because it means that he is not dead.”

This quotation highlights the extreme emotional impact that waiting for a loved one’s call can have on a caregiver. When I spoke with Marissa, she was completely consumed with her son’s behavior and whereabouts. She stated that she was glad that I was able to come over and visit her because otherwise she can become overwhelmed with her thoughts regarding her son’s well being. The extent to which this caregiver was consumed by hearing from her son is a very strong example of the emotional components of *vicarious incarceration*, as her son’s incarceration was so emotionally overwhelming that she became completely consumed by it to the point where she seems to be incarcerated on an emotional level. Additionally, other caregivers were consumed with their loved one’s trial. Sometimes this involves writing letters to attorneys, obtaining character letters on behalf of their loved one, going to court hearings, and doing everything in their power to try to fight for justice for their loved one. This level of consumption also speaks to the sense of worry that some caregivers experience surrounding incarceration.

Six participants (50%) endorsed general worrying about their incarcerated loved one. Participants worried about different things. Marissa worried that if something happens to her son in jail, that she will not find out about it unless he is dead. Fontaine worried about her son’s health conditions in jail, and about the extreme amount of weight he has gained since being there. Because of her age, Momo worries that if her son is sentenced to prison for several years, she might never get to see her son as a free person again. Remi and India worry about their small

children growing up without a father in their life. Cheyenne worries about whether or not she and her husband will be able to live out their lives together the way they intended, as a happy married couple.

It is noteworthy that five out of the six caregivers just mentioned above were either the mother's of the incarcerated individual, or still involved romantically with the incarcerated individual, suggesting that people who are still connected to the individual, either by blood or romantically involved, might experience a different emotional impact than caregivers who are no longer romantically, or physically, involved with the incarcerated loved one. There is one exception to this however; one caregiver, who identifies as the wife to her incarcerated loved one, appears to emotionally distance herself as much as possible from the jail. It is also noteworthy that this was not her husband's first incarceration. Perhaps her way of coping with the jail is to emotionally distance herself as much as possible from it.

Ambiguous loss. Seven participants (58%) endorsed a phenomenon that is referred to as "ambiguous loss," when there is a physical and psychological loss, but the facts around the loss are uncertain. The complicated thing about an ambiguous loss is that it often feels similar to a loss, like divorce or death, yet it doesn't elicit the same sympathy from society (Arditti, 2005; Arditti, Lambert-Shute, & Joest, 2003). As Momo stated:

"Its kind of like when you first have a death or a crisis your friends are right there and supportive, but as time goes on, then they begin to question 'Well how come he's still in there? And there's no trial yet?' and that creates awkwardness."

The nature of ambiguous loss can cause caregivers to feel uncertain about how to include their loved one in family life, and caregivers might feel guilty about moving on without their loved one (Dyer, 2007). Four participants (33%), including all three of the mothers, endorsed this

sentiment. For example, Cheyenne stated that she couldn't celebrate Christmas or Easter for the first year that her husband was incarcerated because she felt too depressed. In addition, Momo described how she had a hard time laughing, enjoying herself, or hosting events because she felt guilty that her son was not present.

I could feel the sense of ambiguous loss when I visited caregivers in their homes. While caregivers greeted me with overwhelming warmth, I couldn't help but feel a sense of emptiness in the homes that I visited. It felt like a key member of the family was missing. Both families that invited me into their home took the time to share happy memories of their loved one with me. Children showed me photo albums of their father, pictures were taken down off the wall, and letters were read out loud. This incarcerated family member was still very much in the home, even though he was not physically present.

Relationship with incarcerated loved one. Of the 12 participants interviewed, five (42%) stated that their loved one's incarceration actually brought them closer together. Some participants attributed this to the fact that they were able to communicate more openly and honestly with their loved one, others stated that they felt like their loved one became more vulnerable as they relied on the outside for support. Two participants (17%) stated that while they are separated now, that they would consider getting back together with their loved one after he was released. Even though many participants endorsed some type of positive impact on the relationship, eight participants (67%) stated that there was a negative impact on their relationship, and two participants (17%) stated that they felt neutral about how jail has impacted their relationship. It is noteworthy that even though several participants indicated that they experienced an improvement to their specific relationship, they felt like the incarceration had an

overall negative impact on the family. For example, when I asked India how her ex-boyfriend's incarceration impacted her, she nervously responded by stating:

“I feel like as crazy as it sounds, it kind of made me and (loved one's) relationship, um better. Like as far as being able to communicate or talking about things...in a more copacetic place, it's not like arguing or yelling... But like I feel like its impacted (child) more so in a negative way...All in all, regardless of how I feel... none of that comes close to him needing to be home for his son...So I wanted to give you both insights because my insight is completely different from how I feel about him being home for his son.”

I use this quotation because I believe it encompasses the experiences of many caregivers that I interviewed. They described how they experienced an improvement in their relationship on an individual level, but that they felt that it was detrimental to the family system as a whole.

One area where caregivers felt a strain on their relationship was the struggle to provide their loved one with emotional support, and five participants (42%) stated that they felt like their loved one would take things out on them. When I asked Cheyenne what she thought would be helpful for people to know about incarceration, she stated:

“I just tell people that dealing with someone who is incarcerated, I believe, is more so like a mental thing. If you're not mentally prepared for it, it's going to eat you alive. And it has done that to people that I've met, I've met a lot of women in the jail that its literally done that to them... So its like... how you wanna deal with it. Because you're gonna get cussed out, you're gonna get talked to, you're gonna get hung up on, and they're gonna call back, its stressful! You know, some deal with it, some don't.”

This quotation highlights the struggle that many women go through when they have an incarcerated loved one. The notion of incarceration eating you alive speaks to what it means to be vicariously incarcerated at the emotional level.

Vicarious incarceration on a financial level. All caregivers were asked if and how they were financially impacted by their loved one's incarceration. An analysis of the results from this question yields two primary categories: direct costs and indirect costs. This section differentiates direct costs from indirect costs associated with incarceration, highlighting the financial implications for each category.

Caregivers spent an average of \$425.00 a month on direct costs associated with their loved one's incarceration. A direct cost refers to the money that a caregiver spends to physically support their loved one in jail. The following four categories emerged to reflect the direct financial cost to the caregiver: providing the loved one with money for phone calls (75%); putting money on their books/ commissary (58%); sending care packages (50%); and transportation costs associated with visiting the loved one (100%). Results were recorded from the dollar amount that each caregiver reported, with the exception of transportation. While only two participants (17%) explicitly identified transportation, every caregiver interviewed frequently visits the jail, so it can be assumed that there are transportation costs associated with this. Transportation costs were calculated by multiplying the distance each caregiver traveled by the IRS 2017 Standard Mileage Rate, 53.5 cents per mile (IRS website). Participants indicated how frequently they visited the jail on their demographics sheet, and this was used to calculate the overall monthly cost of transportation.

Direct cost results were analyzed in an excel spreadsheet (See Appendix D). First, each categorical answer was adjusted to reflect the monthly impact to the caregiver. All categories

were then added together in order to determine the monthly amount that each caregiver spends to support their loved one in jail. Finally, all monthly totals were averaged together. Caregivers spent an average of \$425.00 monthly on direct costs associated with their loved one's incarceration. It is also noteworthy that there is a fee associated with every transaction mentioned above, excluding transportation. Therefore, not only are the prices of the items in jail listed above market rate, but the subsequent fees make it so the dollar amount spent affords caregivers much less than that same amount would on the outside.

In addition to the \$425.00 it takes to physically support a loved one in jail, there are also several indirect costs associated with incarceration. Indirect costs associated with incarceration refer to ways in which caregivers were impacted by losing the financial support of their loved one, and the additional costs associated with not having them in the home. Eight categories emerged in terms of indirect costs. Seven participants (58%) indicated that losing their loved one caused them to assume a greater financial responsibility for the incarcerated loved one's child, many of these caregivers expressed their sadness and frustration over the fact that their loved one was a main provider for the family. Four participants (33%) indicated that they lost their entire savings as a result of their loved one's incarceration. Four participants (33%) are maintaining a space in the home so their loved one has a place to return to if they are released. Three participants (25%) stated that in the past they have had to rent a car in order to visit their loved one. Two participants (17%) mentioned that they had to adjust their work schedules due to the incarceration. Two participants (17%) talked about taking in their loved one's pets, and the subsequent costs associated with this. Two participants (17%) discussed the financial implications surrounding maintaining an attorney for their loved one, and one participant (8%)

talked about the financial implications surrounding taking time off of work to attend her loved one's court hearings.

While it is difficult to assign an overall dollar amount to the indirect costs of incarceration, it is noteworthy that when caregivers feel pressure to directly support their loved one financially through the incarceration, they naturally have less money for the indirect costs associated with incarceration. For example, at least three participants (25%) indicated that they are now living paycheck to paycheck as a direct result of their loved one's incarceration. This depletion in economic resources can have a detrimental impact to the family system. For example, Cheyenne lost all of her savings due to her husband's incarceration. She now works multiple jobs, but since her partner is in jail, she has nobody to watch her one-year-old son while she is at work. She looked into daycare, but the amount that she spends on her husband's incarceration does not allow her to afford this expense at this time. She decided to temporarily send her one-year-old son to go live with his grandmother out of state so that she could continue to work and support her husband. Her husband's incarceration therefore has caused her to become temporarily separated from her one-year-old child, just so she can stay afloat. In the following quotation, Momo describes the overwhelming nature of the financial impact of her son's incarceration:

“My retirement has been wiped out... I have to work at least 13 hours overtime every two weeks in order to make ends meet, in order to make sure that they make it to their visit...the security that we had built up is completely gone, its like starting all over like young parents trying to raise children, and the financial cost. So we not only have their cost but his cost so its like were maintaining him, maintaining his kids, just doing that. So, it's a big toll on us.”

This quotation highlights the stress that some caregivers feel in terms of both directly and indirectly supporting their loved one. This family spends an average of \$1,000 a month between direct and indirect costs associated with incarceration. Not only do jails vicariously incarcerate caregivers on a financial level by prematurely removing their loved ones from the home, but then these same caregivers must spend additional money in order to support their loved one in jail, leaving them with fewer economic resources to manage the indirect costs of incarceration. This process causes caregivers to experience *vicarious* incarceration at the financial level, as the jail completely depletes their economic resources. This not only impacts caregivers, but the children as well.

Vicarious incarceration and the impact on the children. All caregivers were asked the following question: How do you believe that (loved one's) incarceration impacts their child(ren)? A total of 13 children were explicitly mentioned in the interviews, although among the 10 incarcerated men, a total of 21 children are impacted by this incarceration. The discrepancy between the number of children discussed, and the total amount of children impacted can be accounted for by the fact that some incarcerated individuals have multiple mothers for their children; furthermore, step children are also accounted for in this number if the loved one was considered to be a primary caregiver for the child either before or during the incarceration. In general, responses varied depending on the age and gender of the child.

For school age girls (n=3) caregivers primarily described externalizing feelings and behaviors. Caregivers who had children in this category described their children's emotional struggle, and also mentioned that there were times when the girls acted out in various ways. Elizabeth said that her daughter was sad, asked a lot of questions, and at times could act like a "mean girl." In addition, Momo describes how incarceration impacted her two granddaughters:

“I’ll never forget that first night. (Child 1) crying in the car saying ‘Momo what am I going to do without my daddy? He’s the only daddy I have. He’s the only daddy I want, how am I going to live my life without my daddy?’ and just cried and cried. She couldn’t even sleep for the first night; she couldn’t go to bed. Because ‘I cant go to bed without my daddy I need my daddy!’ So their whole world as they knew it came crashing down because their identity was tied up with their dad.”

For school aged boys, (n=5) participants mostly described more internalizing feelings and behaviors. Participants who were caring for children in this category stated that there were a lot of, “one word answers,” or stated that the child “doesn’t really express himself that much.” Many participants in this category stated that they felt worried about how the incarceration was impacting the child, but indicated that the child didn’t say much about it.

Participants caring for toddlers (n=3) indicated that they felt that there was an impact, but they weren’t exactly sure to what extent. Participants in this category described some of the following behaviors: throwing tantrums or crying after visiting their dad; expressing confusion over not being able to see their dad whenever they wanted; and confusion over talking to dad on the phone. For example, one caregiver stated that her two-year-old son will sometimes ask, “Did daddy hang up on me?” because he doesn’t understand the nature of the 15 minute phone call. Caregivers in this category seemed to feel that the impact could get worse as their child got older, but also stated that the child was, “still a baby.” In addition, one theme that emerged was the way in which toddlers make sense of jail. One child frequently refers to jail as “daddy’s house” because this is the only place where he has seen his father.

Finally, caregivers of infants (n=2) stated that they weren’t sure how the children were impacted by their father’s incarceration. They mentioned their child being able to recognize their

dad in pictures, his voice on the phone, or saying the words “da da” but overall they felt as if the child was too young to understand, or be significantly impacted, by the incarceration.

While many of the responses can be broken down into themes surrounding the age and gender of the child, there were some additional themes that warrant mention. These include: ambiguous loss, asking questions, needing a father figure, counseling, dealing with stigma, and the presentation of secondary prisonization in children’s lives.

Just as caregivers cope with the ambiguity of jail, children (42%) also grapple with the notion of ambiguous loss, as they struggle to make sense of the separation from their father, and loyally preserve his memory. For example, one caregiver showed me pictures from birthday parties, holidays, and special events, all transpiring in the absence of her incarcerated loved one. In each picture, his children are posing with a phone, the physical and symbolic representation of their father. These children will wait to open their presents on Christmas morning until he calls so that he can be “present” for these memories. However, because jail is unpredictable, there are times when these children wait around for their father, who is unable to call. This happened recently at Momo’s granddaughter’s middle school graduation. The child wanted her father to call so he could here the graduation ceremony, but he was unable to because there was a lock down at the jail. This child then had to cope with the fact that her father was unable to be present from her middle school graduation, thus casting a dark shadow over what should have been a celebratory event.

The length of time that loved ones spend in jail is especially pertinent for children. For example, two years might not seem like a long time, especially considering the fact that there are people in this country serving life sentences. However, for a child, two years can be a significant

portion of their life, and loved ones in jail miss out on making memories with their children. As Momo stated:

“They lost their first tooth without him. Now, she’s playing basketball and he cant see her, there’s all these different milestones and every time it brings its own pain because she’s experienced it. She recently had her first dance, and it was devastating because her daddy wasn’t there to experience that with her. So it’s a constant grief and loss for them.”

In addition, it can be incredibly difficult for children to grapple with the ambiguous nature of jail. They might be kept out-of-the-loop, constantly wondering when their father might return home. Here is how Elizabeth described how her seven-year-old daughter tries to make sense of her father’s incarceration:

“(Quoting the child) ‘Mommy how can we break Daddy out?! How can we help him get out?’” and I’m like, ‘I don’t know. We just gotta wait...we just gotta wait and see.’ And she’s like, ‘Well’— before he went to jail, we went to go see um, what is that movie? “Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs II.” And she’s still talking about when we went to go see that movie. She’s like, ‘Well, when he comes home can we go see another movie?’ its—there was a movie that just came out on Friday, I can’t remember the name of it, but she’s like, ‘Do you think he’ll be out in time for us to go see this movie?’ and I’m like, ‘(sad face) no. I think we’ll just go see it.’ And then, she’s like, ‘oh well.’ Certain places we drive by she’s like, ‘oh, I remember when my dad used to take me here’ or ‘I remember when my dad took me here’ you know? Kinda gets—kinda gets sad.”

Elizabeth's voice was filled with pain and sadness as she described her daughter's reaction to her father's incarceration; she wants so badly to help her daughter cope with the absence of her father, but this is hard because Elizabeth herself doesn't know how long he will be gone for, so it is difficult to provide her daughter with any sort of closure or answers. This sentiment was echoed by five participants (42%) who stated that their children are asking questions about their father's incarceration, the most common question was "where's daddy?" or "When is he coming home?" Caregivers expressed that they feel uncertain about how to answer these questions, and how they can provide their children with emotional support.

Four participants (33%) stated that they worried about their child not having a father figure. Many women felt like even though they were doing everything they can, it would still be better for their child to have a father figure in their life. As India stated:

"Even little things now like trying to teach him to stand up and use the restroom, or like, just, you know things that a father should show his son. It's more so (child) being surrounded by females, that's been hard, there's no man around... So I feel like for (child) it definitely impacted him in not so good of a way... Like for his son to have that father figure around, like to teach him and to help him grow, to be a man."

Many caregivers fear how the incarceration will impact their children, and they make attempts to protect their children from a society that stigmatizes the incarcerated population and their families. Four participants (33%) stated that they either have their children in counseling, or stated that they wanted to get their children into counseling in order to cope with their absent father. Three participants (25%) indicated that they have witnessed their children experience stigma from other kids in school when they tell them about their father's incarceration. Georgia tries to protect her son from the stigma by telling him that his dad is in school:

“He just knows that its better if he says that his dad’s in school, and he knows that’s what I like. Its not because I’m naïve or trying to keep him out of a bubble, or doesn’t think he’s going to understand, its more the fact that I want him to feel open enough to talk about his dad and not feel ashamed. Or feel like this burden is on his shoulders because his dad’s in jail. So, little kids don’t understand stuff like that, and all they know is that that’s bad, and that’s his dad and I don’t want him to be like ‘Oh cus his dads bad, I’m bad.’ And not feel open to share with people because were cool people, you know?”

Even though the purpose of this study was to examine the role of secondary prisonization in the lives of caregivers, one unexpected finding was that children were also subject to secondary prisonization. Five participants (42%) described ways in which children experienced secondary prisonization. Just as caregivers are subject to the rules and regulations of the jail when they enter the facility, children are not exempt from these rules. In the following passage, Fontaine describes the struggle she faces as she tries to visit her son through the glass, while her two-year-old grandson becomes easily distracted in the visiting room:

“He loses interest real quick in it, because they’re not together, they’re not touching, so he’ll start running around the visiting room, and then from that he’ll try to open the door and run out to where the deputies are. Some of the deputies are really evil—or well not really evil but jus like irritated like ‘keep him in the room!’ You know, just kind of stern. So I have to put the phone down from talking to (loved one) and then run out to go catch him... And sometimes if I sit him on the counter, they’ll be like ‘take him down!’ ... And its like ‘he can’t see his son! What the heck?’ ... If the kid is like standing up or hitting on the glass, they’ll be like, ‘take the kid down’ I’m like, ‘what do you mean? This is like double glass! What is this little kid going to do to this glass?’”

This quotation highlights not only how children are subject to secondary prisonization through elaborate rules and regulations, but also alludes to some of the anxieties and pressures that caregivers might feel as they try to contain the behavior of a small child. Many caregivers also stated that the glass visits could be torturing for children, as they do not understand why they cannot touch their father. In addition to being subjected to elaborate rules and regulations, children are also criminalized when they break the rules. For example, Georgia described a time when her six-year-old son playfully kicked over a sign after visiting with his father. Rather than viewing this behavior as a harmless action of a six year old, the deputies accused him of destroying state property. Georgia stated that they treated him as if he were “a menace, a criminal, as if he was standing there with a graffiti spray can.” Meanwhile, this child was simply being a child, and likely coping with difficult emotions about visiting his father in jail in the first place.

The criminalization of the men in jail, their families, and their children, can have a significant impact on children. Just as secondary prisonization extends into the home for caregivers, the same process is present for children. Here Grump City describes how secondary prisonization continues to extend into his step-granddaughters personal lives:

“How you trust a system? You know, when these kids see a cop, they react. Not like I do like ‘fuck am I speeding?’ They react like, ‘oh god!’ (wide eyes expression). You know, everything, they’re broken children.”

As Grump City experiences secondary prisonization when drives two hours to bring his step-granddaughters to each visit, these girls must also alter their schedules so that they can visit their father. Grump City explained that his step-granddaughters are “tired of driving back and forth.” In addition, these girls alter their social lives to accommodate their father’s incarceration. For

example, one of the girls was recently invited to a birth party. However the party was on the same day that she usually goes to visit her dad. This ten-year-old girl had to make the incredibly tough decision between celebrating with her friends, and seeing her father. This is a lot of pressure for a child, putting her in what Grump City described as a “lose-lose situation.”

Children are not exempt from *vicarious incarceration* so it is both important and necessary to think about the 21 children who are impacted by their father’s time in jail. Children experience confusion over how to process and cope with the loss of their father; they are also subject to stigma from peers, and criminalized treatment. These children did not choose to have their fathers go to jail, and the impact of having their father in jail is detrimental on a number of levels. It is most explicitly observed in the three school aged girls mentioned in this study. However, even though the school aged boys don’t say much that does not mean that they aren’t extremely impacted by not having their father around. It should also be noted that the first year of a child’s life is a critical period in terms of forming attachments, the fact that many infants and toddlers have not had their father around during this time could have a lasting impact on their ability to form relationships throughout their lives. No matter what kind of arguments people want to make about the guys in jail, or even their family members, these children did not choose this path, and it is unfair to them to have their father ripped away from their lives. In fact, having a father in jail makes them much more vulnerable to cycles of poverty and incarceration. Here it is apparent that jails serve as a dividing mechanism for families as they also serve to reinforce cycles of poverty and incarceration.

Additional Findings

A particularly telling finding was the amount of people that were impacted per one individual’s incarceration. As I asked caregivers about their support networks, I observed that the

caregivers were often not suffering this loss alone, as they identified other family members and friends who were just as impacted by their loved one's incarceration. For example, Momo described how her daughter had to take several years off from college in order to help out the family after her brother was taken to jail, and she refuses to get married until her brother is out so that he can walk her down the aisle. In addition, it is clear from the present findings that mothers to the incarcerated individuals experience a huge emotional impact when their son goes to jail. It is therefore noteworthy that most the caregivers that I interviewed, who were romantically tied to the incarcerated individual, also mentioned the incarcerated loved one's mother as a support to the loved one. In order to gain an understanding of all the people impacted by just one person's incarceration, I tallied every single person that the caregiver mentioned throughout the interview. Twelve caregivers were interviewed regarding 10 incarcerated individuals; there were two instances where I interviewed multiple caregivers for the same loved one. For the ten incarcerated individuals, there were approximately 100 people mentioned that were either directly or indirectly impacted by the incarceration.

Below is a chart indicating the number of people impacted per one person's incarceration. The inner circle contains the 10 incarcerated individuals, the 12 caregivers I interviewed, and the 13 children that were directly mentioned in the interview. The women in blue represent the mothers, the women in pink represent the child's mother, and the women in green represent a female sibling. The middle circle contains any other person that the caregiver mentioned that was impacted by the incarceration; some of the women are color coded to illustrate the additional mothers, siblings, and children's mothers who are impacted. The outer circle represents the people that each caregiver described as either a support, or living in the caregiver's home. For example, one caregiver mentioned that she lived with her brother, his wife, and three children.

They are indirectly impacted by the incarceration, because the caregiver they live with is directly impacted. In order to portray why it is important to examine the individuals who are indirectly impacted, I will give you an example from the present study: Momo describes her partner, Grump City, as extremely helpful, stating that she couldn't do this without him. Tina describes her partner in an extremely similar way. Therefore, it is possible that Tina's partner is impacted in a way that parallels Grump City's experience. In sum, this study illustrates that caregivers and children experience an incredibly significant impact when they lose somebody to incarceration. When these caregivers are impacted, they in turn impact the individuals around them. This graphic illustrates that while there were only 10 incarcerated individuals discussed specifically in this study, they directly or indirectly impacted around 100 people. In reality, this number is likely much higher, as this chart only indicates the people that were specifically mentioned.



CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Modeled after Megan Comfort's (2009) book, *Doing Time Together: Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison*, the objective of this qualitative research study was to explore if and how secondary prisonization impacts caregivers for people who are in jail. Participants identified as caregivers for their incarcerated loved one's children, and they all had a loved one who was awaiting trial inside a county jail; meaning that while charged with a crime, all incarcerated men were technically innocent according to the Rule of Law. Findings indicate that caregivers were subjected to levels of secondary prisonization both at the county jail, and within the home. An unexpected finding was that caregivers were also impacted at physical and emotional levels that were consistent with aspects of Hart-Johnson's (2014) definition of vicarious imprisonment. In an attempt to encompass the full experience of caregivers in the present study, I suggest using the term *vicarious incarceration* to more accurately describe the levels in which families are impacted by incarceration. The best way to make sense of these results is to understand them through an Ecological Theory lens.

This chapter discusses the findings from the present research study in the following order: 1) key findings, describing the relationship between the study results and previous literature; 2) an analysis of the ecological theory, and its relevance to the present research study; 3) rationale for using the term *vicarious incarceration* to describe the familial impact; 4) implications for social work practice; and 5) limitations of the current research study, as well as recommendations for further research. This master's thesis does not discuss each set of findings in detail, but instead, offers a reflection about how the themes identified in this paper link to current theory regarding processes surrounding incarceration.

Key Findings: Comparison with Previous Literature

The impact that county jails have on the family was explored through the narratives of 12 people who identified as caregivers to children who had fathers in a county jail. This section explores the results of this study in comparison to previous literature.

Mapping current findings onto Comfort's Secondary Prisonization. The purpose of this subsection is to compare the findings from the present research study to the levels of secondary prisonization detailed in Megan Comfort's (2009) book, *Doing Time Together: Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison*. Comfort outlines four levels of secondary prisonization. Secondary prisonization begins inside the prison as visitors assume a second-class, inferior status in order to visit their loved one. Next, secondary prisonization extends into the home as communication is governed through the institutional practices of the prison. Furthermore, it is present when un-incarcerated partners voluntarily experience major life events within the prison through conjugal visits and weddings. Finally, Comfort argues that the prison exerts itself as a defining mechanism impacting the overall nature of the relationship. Findings from the present study directly map onto Comfort's first two levels of secondary prisonization: at the jail and in the home, however they are less relevant to other two levels detailed in her book.

Secondary prisonization at the jail. The most notable finding from this research study is that all caregivers were subject to some sort of secondary prisonization at the jail. In the second chapter of her book, Comfort (2009) describes a single hallway "the tube" where visitors wait to enter into correctional facility. Before they are able to visit their loved one, visitors wait in long lines, are evaluated by correction officers about the appropriateness of their clothing, and undergo other moors and customs in order to assimilate to the system of control. Findings from the present study show that caregivers for those in jail also have to go through an extensive

process in order to visit their loved ones. First, caregivers must show their identification at the gate, and then must wait outside for a bus to take them to the jail. Once they enter the jail, caregivers are required to show their identification a second time, go through a metal detector, and send their personal belongings through a conveyer belt similar to the airport. During this time, caregivers are subjected to the constant surveillance of deputized staff, ensuring that all visitors abide by the lobby rules. This can cause caregivers to feel criminalized, and powerless, which are strong aspects of secondary prisonization.

Interactions with deputized staff. Findings pertaining to treatment by deputized staff are consistent with the previous literature. In the present study, 75% of caregivers used the phrase, “Some of them are okay but...” to describe deputized staff. After the “but” participants used words that demonstrated the disrespect and dehumanization that they felt from the deputies, and 67% of the study stated that they felt criminalized by deputized staff. These findings are consistent with Sturges (2002) results, where visitors described the guards as “rude,” “mean,” or, “they treat us like inmates.” Comfort (2009) writes about how this is a natural process in prison, as correctional officers “attempt to transform prison visitors into an obedient corps of un-individuated, nonthreatening entities that can be organized according to the prison’s rules” (p.21). Findings from the present study suggest that deputized staff treat families at jails and prisons with a similar demeanor. While it is problematic that any family member receives criminalized treatment, the fact that deputies are just as rude to the families at jail adds an additional layer of concern because not only are the families innocent, but their loved ones on the inside are too.

Rigid and inconsistent rules. Sixty-seven percent of caregivers in the present study were troubled by the rigid and inconsistent policies of the jail. Similar findings appeared in Comfort’s

(2009) research, as she writes, “Abrupt policy changes have a similar effect on regular visitors as the lack of information has on new visitors, feeding a sense of commingled bewilderment, helplessness, and fear” (p.49). Comfort (2009, p.50) proceeds to quote Skyes, (1958, 74-75) who argues that this disorientation is often intentional because “Providing explanations carries an implication that those who are ruled have a right to know—and this in turn suggests that if the explanations are not satisfactory, the rule or order will be changed.” Grounded in literature, this quotation shines a new light on Remi’s experience being turned away at the gate with her baby for not following the newly developed protocol. It appears as if abrupt policy changes like this are indeed intentional, and serve as a way to disorient family members. This finding indicates yet another parallel between dehumanizing and disorienting treatment caregivers receive both in prisons and at jails.

Clothing. One of Comfort’s (2009) most pertinent examples of secondary prisonization was the strict clothing regulation at the prison. In fact, she built rapport with most of her participants by offering “prison appropriate” clothing to women who were turned away for wearing items deemed inappropriate by deputized staff. It is notable that only a small portion (17%) of participants endorsed being turned away due to clothing. However, the extent to which caregivers like Elizabeth felt that deputized staff repetitively targeted them for their clothing is noteworthy because I only interviewed a small sample of people who interact with the jail. Therefore, even though only two participants endorsed being sent away for their clothing, it is likely that many more people at the jail have experienced secondary prisonization in this way.

Secondary prisonization in the home. In the third chapter of her book, Comfort (2009) explains how secondary prisonization extends into the home through the elaborate regulations that govern their communication. Comfort proceeds to discuss the ways that relationship patterns

are impacted through these mechanisms of communication, as well as the associated financial costs. Comfort identifies the four main ways that loved one's keep in touch with their partners: writing letters, sending packages, phone calls, and shared fantasies. In this study, secondary prisonization extended into the home via protocol around scheduling glass visits, phone contact, and sending packages. The most notable finding regarding the presence of secondary prisonization was the strict guidelines in terms of scheduling a glass visit. If caregivers want to schedule a glass visit, they must wait up until midnight the evening before their intended visit. This might be difficult for caregivers who have children, or if caregivers work the night shift. Some caregivers stated that they set alarms so they do not fall asleep. In addition, some caregivers also stated that they also set alarms to remind themselves to send their loved one's packages, or money for commissary because there are weekly deadlines for men on the inside to receive these items.

Elements of secondary prisonization regarding the elaborate rules and regulations of the jail were especially pertinent in terms of phone calls. All phone calls are recorded by the facility, causing caregivers to forfeit their own privacy, and the timing of the phone calls is also governed by the jail. Comfort (2009) writes about how, even though directed at the men inside prison, "Bureaucratic and punitive delays...are arguably more problematic for outsiders, in that women often disorganize their demanding personal agendas to accommodate the prison timetable, and then become anxious or conjectured causes of any holdup" (p.89). This quotation contains several parallels to present study. For example, caregivers in the present study indicated that they altered their daily routine to accommodate phone calls from their loved ones, and all of the mothers interviewed for the study indicated that they begin to worry if they do not hear from their loved one. There is an additional layer of concern about how conversations are governed by

the jail in the present study. This is because many individuals in county jail are awaiting trial. Therefore, they need to be very careful about what they say on the phone, as all calls are recorded; what they disclose could be used against them in court. One caregiver described her frustration with this. Indicating that if her loved one is offered a deal, he has a right to talk this over with people from the outside, as this proposal not only impacts the incarcerated loved one, but the entire family as well. If all calls are recorded, he cannot discuss this as openly and freely as he would if he were on the outside.

Relationships. One unexpected finding was that 42% of the sample stated that their loved one's incarceration actually brought them closer together. Some participants attributed this to the fact that they were able to communicate more openly and honestly with their loved one, others stated that they felt like their loved one became more vulnerable as they relied on the outside for support. This finding was supported by Comfort (2009), who discussed how increases in emotional availability could turn into a "renewed courtship" for women. This was present in the current study, as two women stated that they would consider getting back together with their partner after the incarceration.

Comfort (2009) also describes the "abiding ambivalence" that caregivers feel in terms of the penal control over their relationship. She discusses how incarceration causes some men to become more communicative and emotionally vulnerable than they might otherwise be, and she states that there are times when incarceration serves as a mechanism for controlling men's behavior, especially if women were in domestic violence situations, or women had a partner with substance use disorder. Although not explicitly stated by caregivers in the present study, there was a theme around the jail serving an entity that helps loved ones get the treatment they need. Tina stated that she didn't think her brother would have gotten this treatment if he were not

incarcerated. The caveat to this, underscored by Comfort, is that there is a lack of social-welfare programs available to poor women, so the criminal justice system sometimes acts as the only resource where people can get the adequate help that they need. This highlights a greater, societal problem concerning the lack of supportive services available to indigent communities.

While Lopoo and Western (2005) discussed the increase in divorce rates among the incarcerated population, this was not a finding within the present research. It is also noteworthy that the only caregivers I interviewed were people that were currently receiving parent-child contact visits. The social workers at the jail indicated that it is fairly common for partners to separate over the course of the incarceration, and they named at least two instances where this occurred. Therefore, the lack of this finding could be due to the bias in sampling. Of the three caregivers who identified as being in a romantic relationship with the incarcerated loved one, there was one caregiver who described the strain the incarceration put on her marriage. One interpretation of this finding is that some caregivers might hold onto romantic relationships while their partner is in jail because of the ambivalence of jail. It could be possible that the permanence of prison might lead more couples to separate.

Finances. Findings from the present study indicate that caregivers face a hefty financial impact when their loved one goes to jail. It was estimated that caregivers spend an average of \$425.00 monthly on just the direct costs associated with supporting a loved one in county jail (See Appendix D). These findings were supported in the literature on incarceration. Comfort (2009) found that phone calls added anywhere from \$25 to \$300 a month to their bills; in the present study the average was around \$203.33, ranging from \$0.00 to \$500.00. Expenses surrounding the phones was also supported by Hariston (1998) who identified that the collect

calls made from corrections facilities cost the receiving household five to ten times more than if the call was made from a residential phone.

Hariston (1998) also described that while these fees provide a lucrative business for the telephone companies, it makes it extremely difficult for families to communicate, especially if they are drained financially. This finding was endorsed by Remi, who sometimes feels that she has to choose between communicating with her boyfriend, or providing him with money for food. Several caregivers in the present study also described their frustration over the fact that their loved one isn't able to receive the full dollar amount that they put onto their account, due to these fees. For example, caregivers stated that if they were to put \$25.00 on their loved one's phone the actual amount they receive is \$22.00.

In addition to phone calls, Arditti et al., (2003) found that three fourths of participants reported sending an average of \$75.00 a month to their loved one in county jail. Similarly, the average for the present study was \$85.25, ranging from \$0.00 to \$363.00. One unexpected finding of the Arditti et al., (2003) study was that the stress from lack of childcare and increasing family conflict might cause the caregiver to quit or become fired from a paid work position. This finding was also supported in the present research study. The fact that the financial implications are comparable between jails and prisons is particularly concerning because this provides direct evidence for the unjust nature of the jail as an entity that preys on indigent communities.

Unsupported levels of secondary prisonization. Results break from Comfort's (2009) findings at her fourth chapter, where she describes conjugal visits and weddings. The jail where this research study took place did not offer conjugal visits, and while I am aware of the occurrence of weddings, this is not something that came up in the interviews. The only theme that was consistent with the present findings is Comfort's description of a child who refers to the

prison as “Papa’s house.” She uses this example to describe the normalization of the prison in family life, and how parents and children begin to incorporate major aspects of their lives into the prison itself. In the present study, there was a child who refers to the jail as, “daddy’s house.” This suggests some elements of this level of secondary prisonization at the jail, however, given that jails are intended to be short term holding facilities, the majority of the outlined customs are not as relevant as they would be at facilities that are designed to hold people for longer amounts of time.

Finally, in her fifth chapter, Comfort (2009) talks about the role of secondary prisonization, and its function in maintaining relationships. She identifies three main categories of relationships: those who have been incarcerated for the entirety of their relationship, those who stand by their man during his episodic encounters with the law, and those who rely on carceral intervention to hold together an otherwise challenging or dangerous relationship. These categories are not as relevant to the present research study, although her descriptions of relationship patterns outlined in her third chapter are indeed more relevant to the present findings.

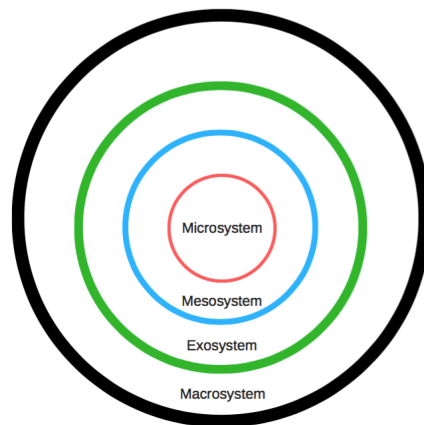
Conclusions related to secondary prisonization. In conclusion, the findings from the present research study directly map onto Comfort’s (2009) first two levels of secondary prisonization at the jail and the subsequent extension into the home. Comfort’s last two levels of secondary prisonization were not as pertinent in the present research study. This is likely due, in part, to the fact that the research occurred at a jail, not a prison. The fact that jails serve different functions than prisons likely accounts for this disconnect. Nevertheless, it is incredibly significant that caregivers for men in jail are subject to any levels of secondary prisonization. This is because all the caregivers in this study had a loved one who was technically innocent.

Therefore, the fact that caregivers were subject to a parallel incarceration process both in the jail and at the home highlights a major flaw within the criminal justice system.

Theoretical Framework

The results from the present study can be best understood within the context of Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Ecology Theory was selected for this study because Arditti (2012) applied it to her comprehensive literature review pertaining to the effects of incarceration on children, parents, and caregivers. Ecological Theory explains the complex systems that determine the way an individual relates to his or her environment.

Bronfenbrenner (1981, p.3) states that the ecological environment is made up of four basic structures, each existing inside the next, like a set of “Russian dolls.” The four systems that make up somebody’s ecological environment include the Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, and Macrosystem.



The microsystem exists at the most interpersonal level and is defined as the interaction between the “developing person” and their environment over time (Arditti, 2012). When a loved one becomes incarcerated, a caregiver is impacted at the micro level because there is a disruption in their relationship. A loved one’s incarceration not only impacts the caregiver, but the caregiver’s reaction to this disruption can have an immediate impact on other family members

(Bronfenbrenner, 1995; Arditti, 2012). Therefore, even though jails were designed to punish the individual, their loved one's are subsequently impacted at the most basic, micro level because of the fundamental importance of family relationships. Hart-Johnson's (2014) notion of vicarious imprisonment highlights how caregivers experience a disruption in their microsystem when someone they love becomes incarcerated. Within the present study, similar disruptions were seen in caregiver's microsystem in terms of the overwhelming physical and emotional impact that caregivers experienced.

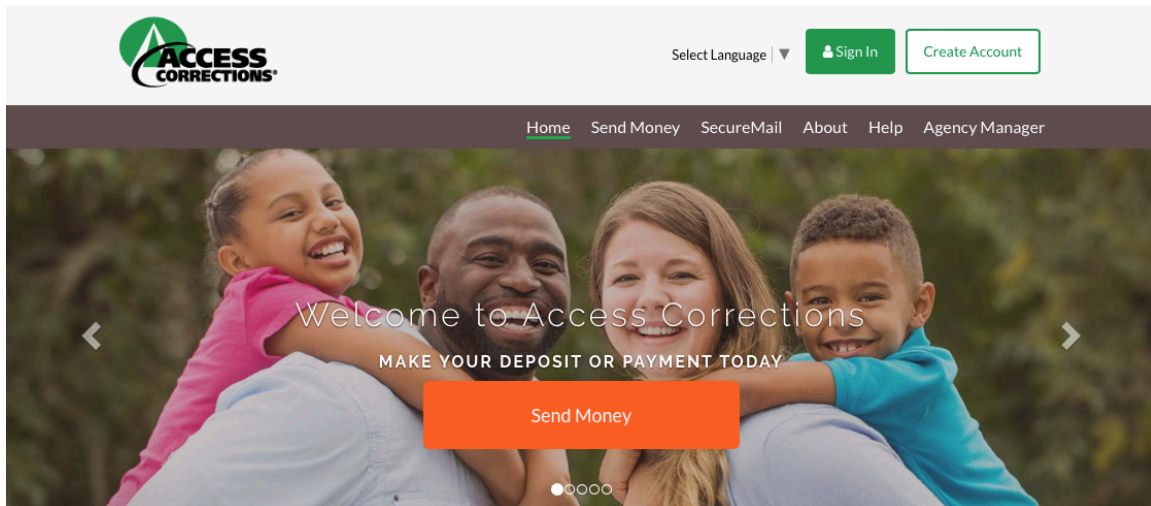
The mesosystem is defined as the interrelations between two or more settings involving the developing person (Bronfenbrenner, 1981). Visiting areas in jails are relevant here because they exist as a link between the home and jail environments (Arditti, 2012). Visiting areas in jails are subsequently where Comfort's (2009) first level of secondary prisonization begins for caregivers.

The exosystem is an extension of the mesosystem, however it does not directly involve the developing person (Arditti, 2012). For example, a caregiver's primary exosystem includes the institutional practices associated with the jail setting and the policies surrounding their loved one's reentry into society (Arditti, 2012). These institutional practices include Comfort's (2009) second level of secondary prisonization, as institutional policies from the jail govern their communication. While these practices were not designed to explicitly involve the caregiver, they do influence the caregiver on a more systemic level.

The macrosystem involves overarching institutional patterns that influence the caregiver (Arditti, 2012). These institutional patterns are seen on economic, social, educational, legal, and political levels (Arditti, 2012). While the initial focus of this research study was tailored to the first three systems in Ecological Theory, there were significant findings on a macrosystem level.

The economic impact is a perfect example of how issues at a macrosystem level trickle down to impact caregivers at every level, down to the microsystem.

Even though this research took place in a county jail, there are several examples where the Prison Industrial Complex exerts itself over caregivers. For example, if caregivers use public transportation to travel to the jail, there is a private shuttle company, contracted by the sheriffs department, which is responsible for transporting caregivers from the public transportation station to the jail. This is one example of a macrosystem decision that impacts caregivers at the microsystem and mesosystem. In order to put money on the loved one's books, caregivers must go through a company called Access Corrections. Below is a picture of the first page of the website. The irony of this seemingly happy family is interesting given that corrections facilities tend to serve as a dividing mechanism for families. Access Corrections has made it so easy for caregivers to send money, that they even offer apps online at the Apple store, or through Google pay. As you can see, the nature of sending money has become completely normalized. It is also noteworthy that this company charges around a \$3.00 to \$4.00 fee for every transaction, which they most likely absorb for their own profit.



Contracted by Access Corrections, Access Securepak is an entire entity devoted to sending loved one's packages. Below is a screenshot taken from the website.



It is noteworthy that this screenshot was taken in June, approximately six months away from any holiday, yet this company is already advertising for caregivers to supply their loved one's with holiday packages, "while supplies last." In addition to Access Corrections, there is another entity responsible for governing the phones, Global Telling (GTL). Taken from their website, "GTL is the corrections industry's trusted, one-stop source for integrated technology solutions" (gtl.net). In addition to phone services, the company also provides messaging, video visitation, and it also serves as mechanism of community corrections, so people can pay fees related to probation or parole. GTL impacts caregivers at the microsystem, as the company serves as a gatekeeper for communication, thus impacting the relationship. GTL impacts the mesosystem as it serves as a connection point from the jail to the home. The exosystem is impacted by global telling as it is related to institutional policies that were not necessarily designed with the caregiver in mind, yet significantly impact the caregiver in terms of communication and their loved one's reentry into society.

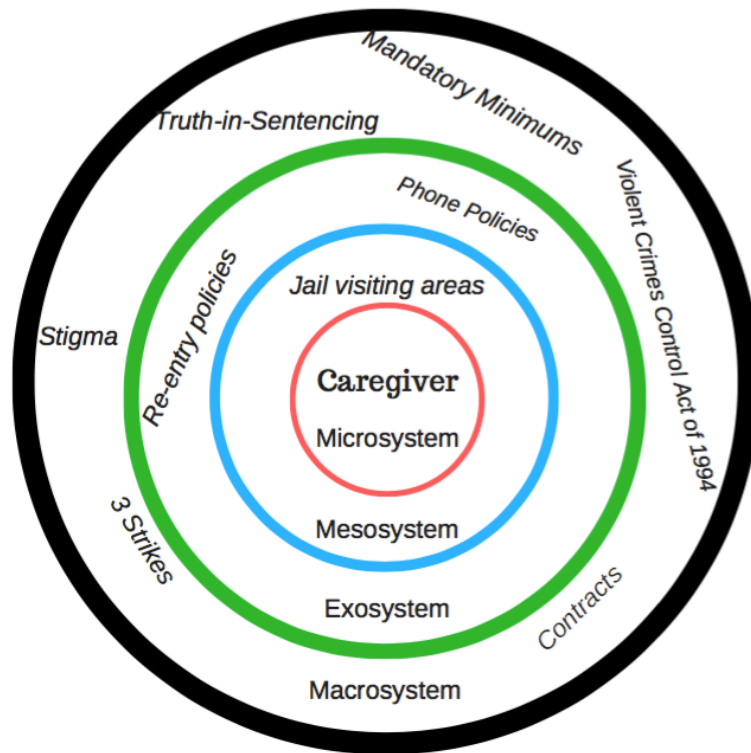
In addition to the economic impact, caregivers and their children are also impacted at a macro-level by the nature of stigma surrounding incarceration. The nature of stigma can impact

caregivers and their children on social and educational levels. Legally, decisions made at a macro-level absolutely impact the caregivers in this study. For example, minimum sentencing policies that shifted discretion from the judges to the prosecutor impacts families because prosecutors are often more concerned with winning cases than they are with the family members that will be impacted by the outcome of the trial. Finally, decisions made on a political level have a direct impact on caregivers. One example is The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. In addition, there is an interesting footnote in Comfort's (2009) book, regarding the impact of political donations. It reads,

“In June 2002 the *San Francisco Chronicle* (Wallack 2002) reported that ‘the state [of California] awarded billions of dollars in no-bid deals over the past three years,’ including a \$60 million contract with MCI WorldCom and Verizon to operate the pay phones in the state’s prisons. Both telecommunications companies ‘gave [Governor] Davis substantial campaign contributions [in 2001] at the same time the state was considering awarding the contract to a new bidder.’” (Comfort, 2009, p.89)

This quotation highlights how telephone companies can influence political campaigns. Further illustrating how overarching policies within the macrosystem trickle down to significantly impact caregivers down to the microsystem. This is evident, for caregivers who spend a significant portion of their income on supporting their loved one in jail, for caregivers who have to choose between communicating with their loved one and supporting them physically by providing them with food, for caregivers, who are dealing with jail in the first place because of their inability to afford bail, but who have to continuously spend a lot of money on their loved ones once they are taken from the home. This entire process illustrates one of the fundamental flaws with the relationships between big business and politics. Caregivers pay fees that go

directly to the companies, who then use this money to influence politicians. These politicians then support contracts with these companies, and develop policies that continue to impact these families, leading the families to feel completely powerless to the entire system. Below is a chart that portraying how caregivers from the present study are impacted by ecological theory.



Vicarious Incarceration

The purpose of this section is to provide rationale for the term *vicarious incarceration*, as a way to encompass the full experience of caregivers. *Vicarious incarceration* refers to the parallel incarceration process that families with an incarcerated loved one experience. This process is present when families visit their loved one at a corrections facility, it extends into the home as they maintain contact with their loved one, and further expands to describe the emotional, physical, and financial impact that incarceration has on the family. The term *vicarious incarceration* is influenced both by aspects of Comfort's (2009) secondary

prisonization, as well as Hart-Johnson's (2014) term vicarious imprisonment. The need for the term *vicarious incarceration* is two fold, and can be best understood through Ecological Theory.

In terms of Ecological Theory, Hart-Johnson's (2014) descriptors of vicarious imprisonment speak to the physical and emotional impact that caregivers face within their microsystem. Descriptions of vicarious imprisonment that are particularly relevant are: placing freedom on hold; feeling criminalized; inducing physical separation, which is the notion of "I'm locked up too"; and creating social isolation by restricting activities. On the other hand, Comfort's definition of secondary prisonization highlights the interactions between caregiver's microsystem and mesosystem, as they enter into the jail, and also the exosystem, as caregivers are governed through the elaborate regulations by the jail. The term *vicarious incarceration* is therefore necessary because it more fully encompasses all the levels of impact that caregivers experience when they lose somebody to incarceration.

It is also noteworthy that both Comfort's (2009) and Hart-Johnson's (2014) research took place in prisons, whereas this research examined the impact that jails have on the family. Since I wrote about the importance and necessity to distinguish prisons from jails, terms such as "secondary prisonization" or "vicarious imprisonment" do not feel appropriate, as they contain aspects of the word "prison" in their name. Going forward, I suggest using *vicarious incarceration* as an all-encompassing term reflecting the impact that caregivers face from the most interpersonal level, to the ways that their lives are governed by the corrections facility. The term *vicarious incarceration* is grounded in the notion of vicarious trauma. Vicarious trauma can occur because you care about people who have been hurt and you feel responsible to help (Headington Institute, 2008). This reflects the experience of many caregivers in the present study, as they are impacted vicariously by their loved one's experiences on the inside.

It is noteworthy that as I completed member checking with many of the caregivers that I interviewed, Momo told me that she felt like the term “Shadow Incarceration” more accurately describes the experiences of her and her family. Momo prefers the term shadow incarceration because she feels like her family is living in the shadow of their loved one. Momo discussed how their entire future rides on this incarceration; the children need their father, his sister refuses to get married until he is out, and Momo lives for the day that she will be able to hug her son again. However, this family feels powerless over their own destiny because so many aspects of their future lie in the hands of the prosecutor. Momo described how shadows always follow beings around, but nobody really pays attention to them. In this analogy, the courtroom is the sun beaming down on her son, thus casting a shadow on the entire family, however because they are in the shadow, nobody seems to care about their experience. With permission from the family, I am including the content from one of Momo’s granddaughter’s journals to highlight what it means to be in the shadows of incarceration:

“When I was 5 and my sister was 4 we were taking my dad to work and the cops pulled us over. They asked my dad, “Are you (name)?” He said yes. They said you are going to jail for something. But my sister, mom, and I were crying, and when my dad said you’re smart, you’re beautiful, and you can do anything you put your mind into. I said don’t take my dad ‘I need him, he is my dad don’t take him.’ I want my dad with me again because I miss him, he was my dad and my dad is not here taking care of me and I need him in my life.”

This journal entry emulates what it means to live in the shadow of incarceration. While the term *vicarious incarceration* is grounded in academic theory. It should be duly noted that the term “shadow incarceration” might better describe how some caregivers feel about the impact of jail,

especially in terms of the ambiguity surrounding the permanence of this loss. This discrepancy in terminology highlights a need for more community-based research in which participants are better able to define the terms that encompass the entirety of their experience.

Implications for Social Work Practice

This study contains several implications for social work practice. Given the nature of the impact that incarceration has on communities, it is very likely that social workers will either encounter somebody that was impacted by incarceration directly, or the family members of someone who was incarcerated. When I asked caregivers what kind of services would be helpful for family members, many caregivers endorsed either therapy for the children, or therapy for themselves. They also suggested additional community resources, or things that would bring people who were impacted together.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

One limitation of this study is that all caregivers had loved ones at the same county jail. In the future, it would be useful to interview caregivers across multiple county jails in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the data. This was emulated in surge's (2002) study, who concluded that results varied depending on the jail where the interviews took place. It would also be important to increase the sample size in future research, as this was another limitation of this study. Going forward, more research should be completed on what happens once individuals are released from jail. This is significant because many people in jail take deals leading to felony convictions in order to avoid going to prison. The collateral consequences that this has on the person and the family should be thoroughly examined. Additionally, Alexander (2011) discusses how the system of control is shifting from direct incarceration, to community incarceration. The economic implications in terms of the prison industrial complex are already visible, especially in

terms of the companies who make products such as ankle monitors. Given that the family often feels responsible for helping their loved one adhere to the guidelines surrounding probation or parole, their experiences should be examined further in future research studies in order to gain an even fuller picture concerning the impact that county jails have on the family.

Conclusion

This qualitative research study contains the narratives of 12 caregivers who have a loved one residing in a county jail, and I suggest using the term *vicarious incarceration* to reflect their experiences. *Vicarious incarceration* refers to the parallel incarceration process that begins at a corrections facility, extends into the home as caregivers maintain contact with their loved one, and further expands to describe the emotional, physical, and financial impact that incarceration has on the family. This term was inspired by elements from Comfort's (2009) "secondary prisonization," as well as Hart-Johnson's (2014) term "vicarious imprisonment." *Vicarious incarceration* is a more encompassing term, given that it contains elements from these previously indicated definitions, as well as language that can be applied to either prisons or jails for future research studies. Social workers should consider providing services to caregivers who are impacted by incarceration, and future research should replicate this study and explore the nature of *vicarious incarceration* further, particularly in terms of how it might impact caregivers after their loved one re-enters the community.

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APPENDIX A

Interview used by Megan Comfort for the book, *Doing Time Together: Love and Family in the*

Shadow of the Prison (2009) Page 206

1. *Relationship with the incarcerated partner*: history and status of the relationship, maintaining contact while partner is incarcerated, how current relationship compares with past relationships.
2. *Interaction with the prison authorities and state authorities*: experiences with prison officials, parole or probation officers, and police officers, perceived impact of incarceration on home community, political outlook, and activism.
3. *Impact of incarceration on self and home*: changes in home life when partner is in prison, perceived impact of partner's incarceration on participant, participant's children, and other important people in participant's life.
4. *Social networks and resources*: participant's living situation, relationship with kin and friends, social activities, and support system.
5. *Demographic and social profile of participant and partner*: age, ethnicity, education, income, and work history of participant and her partner, number and ages of children, who else known to participant is or has been incarcerated.

APPENDIX B

Interview

Relationship with the incarcerated loved one:

- Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with (loved one's name)
- How has jail impacted your relationship?
- How do you maintain contact while he's in jail?

Interaction with the deputized staff:

- How have your experiences been with deputized staff at the county jail?

Impact of incarceration on self and home:

- What changes have you experienced in your home life after (loved one) left?
- How has (loved one's) incarceration impacted you?
- How has (loved one's) incarceration impacted your child?
- How has (loved one's) incarceration impacted you financially?

Social networks and resources:

- Since (loved one) went to jail, have you experienced any changes to your: *(if participant answers yes, they will be asked to elaborate about how things changed)*
- Living situation
- Relationship with family
- Relationship with friends
- Social activities
- How has your support system been?

Anything to add/ Program Services

- Is there anything else that you would like to add or share about your experience?
- How could programs, such as the one your loved one is in, better support you?

APPENDIX C

Demographic Information

How would you describe your race/ ethnicity?

What is your age?

How would you describe your gender?

What is your relationship with your incarcerated loved one?

How frequently do you come to the jail?

APPENDIX D

Direct Costs Associated with Incarceration

Participant	Phone	Books/Commissary	Packages	Gas	Total
1	400	100	115	100	715
2	0	0	40	100	140
3	80	0	0	60	140
4	720	0	0	40	760
5	0	0	0	100	100
6	500	363	0	80	943
7	0	120	45	80	245
8	140	140	0	80	360
9	400	0	0	80	480
10	0	0	0	80	80
11	100	300	400	160	960
12	100	0	0	80	180
Total	203.33	85.25	50	86.67	425.25

APPENDIX E

HSR Approval letter



School for Social Work
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063
T (413) 585-7950 F (413) 585-7994

January 27, 2017

Mary O'Connor

Dear Molly,

You did a very nice job on your revisions. Your project is now approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee.

Please note the following requirements:

Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

Maintaining Data: You must retain all data and other documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

Renewal: You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

Completion: You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Congratulations and our best wishes on your interesting study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Kersten'.

Elaine Kersten, Ed.D.
Co-Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Mamta Dadlani, Research Advisor