

# THE ASSOCIATION OF ARRESTEES' DRUG AND PROPERTY OFFENSES

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A REPORT FOR THE LOCAL PUBLIC SAFETY COORDINATING COUNCIL'S  
ALCOHOL AND DRUG CRIMINAL JUSTICE WORKING GROUP

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## THE ASSOCIATION OF ARRESTEES' DRUG AND PROPERTY OFFENSES

This brief analysis attempts to identify the arrest relationship of drugs and crime with attention focusing on the relationship between methamphetamine and property crimes arrestees.<sup>1</sup> The manufacture and use of the synthetic drug methamphetamine has been a substantial and on-going issue for Multnomah County. Its costs to society include related criminal activity, health care and addiction treatment, impacts to families and children, and environmental clean-up. Several task forces currently operate to review data and work to address policy issues related to this and other drugs. This report is a first analytic examination of the relationship between those individuals arrested for both drug and property offenses.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Results from the Portland Police data examining unique arrestees finds that most people arrested for property crimes had no recent history (within the last five years) of drug arrests. And, that the majority of those arrested for drug offenses did not have a recent (within the last year) property crime arrest. The data did find a simple relationship between property arrestees and drugs arrestees by drug type, with amphetamine arrestees relationships higher than other drug types in general. This was especially true for identity theft, motor vehicle theft and forgery arrestees. Burglary was also elevated—17% of all 2004 burglars had an amphetamine related arrest in the last five years—but not as pronounced as the property categories for identity theft (37%), motor vehicle theft (29%) and forgery (28%).

Cocaine and the other drugs examined should also be mentioned for several reasons: 1) over five years there were more unique people with cocaine arrests than for any other drug, notably higher than amphetamine and marijuana; 2) those arrested for domestic violence (assault IV) were somewhat more likely to be cocaine arrestees; and 3) repeat drug arrestees were much more likely to be for cocaine than any other drug. Additionally, based on the data and recent local research it is likely that those addicted to methamphetamine may be suffering from a poly-substance addiction which may be impacting other behaviors.

What the data is unable to offer is the severity of the drug arrestee and the amount of total offenses an arrestee is responsible for. It is likely that a sub-group of the population reviewed herein are addicted and responsible for a greater proportion of the total offenses. Finally, recent local research has identified racial relationships by drug type, which may play a role in the results found in this report. Future research should address these methodological limitations.

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<sup>1</sup> Both amphetamine and methamphetamine are potent sympathomimetic agents; drugs that usually stimulate the heart, causes vasoconstriction, decreases glandular secretions and opens air passages. For the purposes of this report and the data methamphetamine and amphetamine are used synonymously. Property crimes examined included burglary, identity theft, larceny (theft), motor vehicle theft, forgery, and fraud (non-ID theft related).

## BACKGROUND

Anecdotally, a suspiciously high relationship between property crime and the specific drug methamphetamine has been cited in several sources.<sup>2</sup> Some sources have even stated that all property crime and identity theft crime is solely due to methamphetamine.<sup>3</sup> Common sense would suggest this is simply not the case given that property crime has been around far longer than methamphetamine abuse and given the fact that relationships between cocaine and heroin addicts and criminal behavior has been long established. Historical and current research has found that methamphetamine abuse is not a new phenomenon, but instead has waxed and waned over time and has varied greatly by geographical location.<sup>4</sup>

To lend perspective locally, the most recent local in-jail drug testing data found that methamphetamine was associated with 25% of males and 30% of female arrestees.<sup>5</sup> In terms of local substance abuse treatment, amphetamines as the primary substance of choice was 13.5% of all treatment in FY04. When cases where amphetamines was used, regardless of whether it was the primary drug of choice, that number increases to about 22.8%. About half of all treatment episodes where methamphetamine was the primary drug of choice were referred by a criminal justice related agency.<sup>6</sup> This proportion was relatively stable over the last six years.

## THE DRUG-CRIME ARREST MATRIX

An examination of arrestees from 2004 was performed based on data provided by the Portland Police Bureau's Planning and Support Division. This data only examined Portland Police data and did not examine other jurisdictions.<sup>7</sup> The data utilized all of the arrestee's charges, not just the most serious charge (i.e., not primary charge only). Their data were displayed in a matrix, where arrestees' drug offenses were compared to selected property offenses when available. The matrix—examining only unique people—didn't examine volume, just the simple arrest association. There were two matrixes created: one specifically for 2004 arrests only, and a variant that examined 2004 property arrests but examined five years of drug arrest history. This allowed the examination of all the unique drug arrestees and how many were arrested for specific property crimes, and vice-versa.

Each matrix has two tables; the juxtaposition of drug arrests and property arrests. It can be easily thought of as the overlap of two concentric circles—property and drug populations—as

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<sup>2</sup> See various Oregonian (<http://www.oregonlive.com/special/oregonian/meth/>) and Portland Tribune (<http://www.portlandtribune.com/archview.cgi?id=17354>) articles.

<sup>3</sup> See Oregon Meth Watch. <http://www.oregonmethwatch.org/stats.html>; Portland Tribune <http://www.portlandtribune.com/archview.cgi?id=17354>

<sup>4</sup> Anglin M.D., Burke C., Perrochet B., Stamper E., & Dawud-Noursi S. (2000). *History of the methamphetamine problem*. Journal of Psychoactive Drugs. Apr-Jun; 32(2):137-41. United Nation's Office on Drugs and Crime. *2004 World Drug Report*. [http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/world\\_drug\\_report.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/world_drug_report.html)

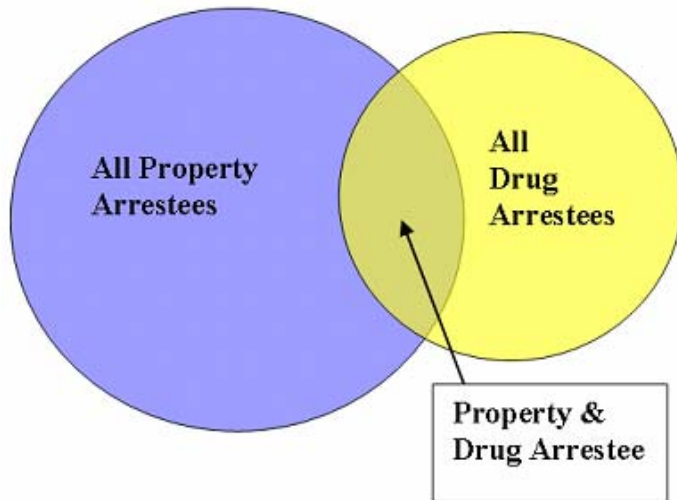
<sup>5</sup> See Nice, M.L. (2005). *Multnomah County Methamphetamine Data: Context and Perspectives: A presentation for the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council February 2, 2005*.

[http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/budget/performance/pmg\\_reports/multco\\_meth\\_data\\_lpscc\\_05.pdf](http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/budget/performance/pmg_reports/multco_meth_data_lpscc_05.pdf). Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM). National Institute of Justice. (2003). Portland catchment area. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/adam/welcome.html>

<sup>6</sup> Wu, L. & Nice, M. (2005). *Multnomah County methamphetamine treatment data: FY00-04 (#003-05)*. Multnomah County Budget Office Evaluation. <http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/budget/performance/index.shtml>

<sup>7</sup> According to LEDS, Portland Police account for approximately 71% of arrests in Multnomah County (2002).

displayed in Figure 1. Displaying data in tables this way can explain the number of property arrestees which are also drug offenders. And, of all the drug arrestees, how many are also property offenders.



**Figure 1. Conceptual model showing overlapping populations of property and drug arrestees**

Matrix I. The arrest data presented in the tables of the matrixes must be understood and used together to form a complete picture. The top table in *Matrix I* lists rows of drug types (left hand column, amphetamine, cocaine, etc.) and columns for various property crimes (burglary, ID theft, etc.). The data is reported from the perspective of the unique drug arrestee, not total arrests. In 2004, there were 1271 unique people arrested for an amphetamine offense, typically possession.<sup>8</sup> Of the 1271 amphetamine arrestees, only 44 had also been arrested at some point during 2004 for burglary. Thus, only 3% of all amphetamine arrestees were also arrested for burglary in 2004. The same values can be seen for ID theft, larceny (theft), forgery, and fraud (non-ID theft related).<sup>9</sup> It can also be viewed for cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and non-drug arrestees. But, this is only one side of the equation and the inverse needs to be examined to gain a complete understanding.

The lower table of *Matrix I* transposes the rows of various property crimes (left hand column) and a column of drugs listed in the table above. Again, there were 501 unique people arrested in 2004 for burglary. Of those, that same 44 people (from the top table) were also arrested for an amphetamine offense. This suggests that 9% of all burglars had an arrest for amphetamines in 2004. Taken together, this means that few amphetamine arrestees were also arrested for burglary, but a larger proportion of burglars were arrested for amphetamines. This proportion of burglars arrested for amphetamines is greater than other drugs relationships listed (see cocaine at 4%, heroin at 1%, and Marijuana at 3%).

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<sup>8</sup> People may be arrested more than once.

<sup>9</sup> Note that a single person who was arrested for amphetamine, cocaine and heroin, and burglary and identity theft would show in the table in six different places

Examination of the far right column labeled *Non-drug Arrestee* suggests that 85% of the arrested burglars had no associated drug arrest of any kind in 2004. Examining the burglary row, the total of all the drug arrestee columns (90) and the unique non-drug arrestee (426) results in a total of 516. Since there were only 501 burglars arrested, 15 were associated with multiple drug types.

With the exception of larceny (theft), amphetamine arrestees do appear to have a much greater association with the specific property crimes listed than do other drug arrestees. That should be tempered with the fact that between 69% and 86% of the listed property arrestees had no drug arrest association in the year 2004. But what if they didn't get arrested for drugs in 2004, but have a history of drug arrests?<sup>10</sup> *Matrix II (Portland Police Bureau Arrests for 2004 Arrests from 2000 through 2004)* attempts to answer this question.

*Matrix II*. Taking the same 2004 year property arrest data as in *Matrix I* and overlaying five years of drug arrests shows a consistent albeit greater association than in *Matrix I*. Examining five years of drug arrest data shows that there were 4989 unique people arrested for amphetamines offenses. Of those, 83 had also been arrested at some point in 2004 for burglary. Thus, only 2% of all amphetamine arrestees in the last five years were also associated with burglary in 2004, consistent with the results in *Matrix I*. Examining the transposed categories found that of the 501 burglars arrested in 2004, 83 (17%) had ever had an amphetamine arrest in the last five years. Results show greater percentages for all drugs than the single year matrix, but the results remained consistent when compared to other drugs.

Interestingly, in the last five years of drug arrestee data, there were considerably more unique cocaine arrestees than any other drug group. They were somewhat more likely to be associated with assault IV (domestic violence) than other drugs arrestees, and were much more likely to be re-arrested 4+ times for drugs (see *Matrix II*). Between 85% and 97% of drug arrestees (depending on drug type) had only one or two drug arrests in the past five years, thus the overwhelming majority do not get rearrested for drug offenses.

## DISCUSSION

The arrest data shows that most Portland drug arrestees were not also property arrestees. And that most property arrestees were not drug arrestees. That's not to say that they do not use illicit substances, but to say they were never arrested in the time period under review. Additionally, it does not say whether the few that do have a property and drug arrest do or do not commit the vast majority of crimes. The data does support the varying simple relationships with some drugs and property crimes, and that amphetamines arrestees in many cases had higher associations than other drug types. However, it is unknown whether these were poly-substance users or amphetamines only users.

This analysis asks more questions than it answers. Currently, we have no data to understand the arrest frequency and or addiction level by offender demographics. This analysis is a simple association between unique people and the types of property crimes and drug arrests. A few

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<sup>10</sup> Note, a history of drug use does not indicate addiction. Only a fraction of illicit drug users become addicted. Additionally, those previously addicted to drug may have successfully completed drug treatment and remained abstinent (see successful treatment rates by drug type in the report listed below).

people may cause a majority of the crime, but this model doesn't give that level of detail. As shown in the data most people only get arrested once or twice for drugs during the time period reviewed. Additionally, we know from the treatment data that certain drug types are more strongly correlated with certain racial and ethnic groups.<sup>11</sup> This and other demographics need to be considered in future analysis. We need to better identify the repeat drug and property arrestee and work to address this group. Finally, other crime categories such as robbery should be included in future research.

#### LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations in the research that should be noted. First, the data set only examined the data from the year 2004 and prior years for drug arrest data. This data only examines the Portland Police Bureau's arrest activity, activity that may impact the arrest data (e.g., special operations, changes in policies, etc.), and does not examine the relationship across jurisdictional lines. Additionally, this may not mean the cases were prosecuted or that arrestees were otherwise convicted.

Next, not all people who use illicit drug are arrested, nor do all people who use illicit drug commit crimes other than possession of the substance. Most people who have used illicit drugs do not become drug addicts. Drug use, abuse, and addiction represent varying levels of dependence and functionality of activities of daily living which range from not impaired to fully impaired. Many arrestees that have successfully completed drug treatment (e.g., drug court diversion programs, etc.) and achieve abstinence, but would still be counted in the multi-year dataset. Currently, there is no easy way to estimate the impairment drug arrestees. Also, drug related arrests data does not include those arrests where alcohol is the addiction.<sup>12</sup> Future research should attempt to address these methodological limitations.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Portland Police Bureau's staff for their assistance on this project. I wish to thank Steve Beedle and the staff of the Portland Police Bureau's Planning and Support Division for collecting and displaying the data needed for this report. Additionally, I wish to thank Captain Mike Reese and his staff of the Portland Police Bureau's Drugs and Vice Division for their feedback and assistance in interpreting the data. Their experience was invaluable and without their help this project would not have been possible.

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<sup>11</sup> Wu, L. & Nice, M. (2005). *Multnomah County alcohol and drug treatment data: FY00-04* (#003-04). Multnomah County Budget Office Evaluation.

[http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/budget/performance/pmg\\_reports/cpmsfinalrpt.pdf](http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/budget/performance/pmg_reports/cpmsfinalrpt.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics. (1999). Substance Abuse and Treatment, State and Federal Prisoners, 1997. Violent offenses were more likely to be committed by someone under the influence of alcohol (42%) than drugs (29%), cited in The Sentencing Project. (2001). *Drug policy and the criminal justice system*. Pg 4.; Charles E. Culpepper Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (1998). *Behind bars: Substance abuse and America's prison population*. Pg. 33. Found that 21% of state inmates and 11% of federal inmates serving time for violent crime admitted being under the influence only of alcohol at the time of their offense, with less than 4% for cocaine, crack and heroin.

**Matrix I: Portland Police Bureau Arrests for 2004**

		People w/ a Drug Arrest and an Associated Property Arrest in 2004											
Specific Drugs	Unique People	Burglary		ID Theft		Larceny		MV Theft		Forgery		Fraud (non-ID Theft)	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Amphetamine	1271	44	3%	71	6%	262	21%	147	12%	113	9%	27	2%
Cocaine	1250	22	2%	18	1%	215	17%	39	3%	22	2%	21	2%
Heroin	542	7	1%	8	1%	121	22%	15	3%	9	2%	16	3%
Marijuana	841	17	2%	3	0%	102	12%	29	3%	12	1%	6	1%
Non-drug Arrestee	17750	426	2%	208	1%	3701	21%	570	3%	470	3%	197	1%

		People w/ a Property Arrest and an Associated Drug Arrest in 2004									
Specific Property	Unique People	Amphetamine		Cocaine		Heroin		Marijuana		Non-drug Arrestee	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Burglary	501	44	9%	22	4%	7	1%	17	3%	426	85%
ID Theft	301	71	24%	18	6%	8	3%	3	1%	208	69%
Larceny	4321	262	6%	215	5%	121	3%	102	2%	3701	86%
MV Theft	778	147	19%	39	5%	15	2%	29	4%	570	73%
Forgery	618	113	18%	22	4%	9	1%	12	2%	470	76%
Fraud (non-ID Theft)	253	27	11%	21	8%	16	6%	6	2%	197	78%

Note: People can have more than one charge per arrest.  
1/25/2005

Data source: PPDS  
Planning and Support Division, Portland Police Bureau

**Matrix II: Portland Police Bureau Property Arrests for 2004, Drug Arrests for 2000-2004**

Arrests from 2000 through 2004*		People w/ a Drug Arrest and an Associated Property Arrest in 2004											
		Burglary		ID Theft		Larceny		MV Theft		Forgery		Fraud (non-ID Theft)	
Specific Drugs	Unique People	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Amphetamine	4989	83	2%	110	2%	470	9%	223	4%	171	3%	40	1%
Cocaine	5856	57	1%	35	1%	458	8%	82	1%	62	1%	40	1%
Heroin	2786	20	1%	12	0%	262	9%	30	1%	14	1%	22	1%
Marijuana	4935	61	1%	14	0%	248	5%	74	1%	30	1%	19	0%
Non-drug Arrestee	93264	909	1%	457	0%	7115	8%	1288	1%	898	1%	401	0%

Arrests in 2004		People w/ a Property Arrest and an Associated Drug Arrest in 2004									
		Amphetamine		Cocaine		Heroin		Marijuana		Non-drug Arrestee	
Specific Property	Unique People	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Burglary	501	83	17%	57	11%	20	4%	60	12%		
ID Theft	301	110	37%	35	12%	12	4%	14	5%		
Larceny	4321	470	11%	458	11%	262	6%	248	6%		
MV Theft	778	223	29%	82	11%	30	4%	74	10%		
Forgery	618	171	28%	62	10%	14	2%	30	5%		
Fraud (non-ID Theft)	253	40	16%	40	16%	22	9%	19	8%		
Assault IV (misd)	1530	94	6%	124	8%	24	2%	97	6%		

Note: People can have more than one charge per arrest.

Count of People with Multiple Arrests		1 Arrest		2 Arrests		3 Arrests		4 Arrests		5+ Arrests	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Specific Drugs	Unique People										
Amphetamine	4989	3834	77%	717	14%	250	5%	92	2%	95	2%
Cocaine	5856	4176	71%	822	14%	323	6%	177	3%	358	6%
Heroin	2786	2091	75%	433	16%	142	5%	65	2%	55	2%
Marijuana	4935	4277	87%	470	10%	102	2%	47	1%	39	1%

1/25/2005

Data source: PPDS

Planning and Support Division, Portland Police Bureau