Race and Criminal Justice in Monroe County, Indiana - January 2020 Update

1. Summary

Based on analysis of Monroe County criminal cases filed between January 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, Blacks were defendants in 16.3% of all cases and in 21.2% of the cases where the most serious charge was Misdemeanor Possession of Marijuana. Race was not reported in 1.4% of the criminal cases filed.

For context, the U.S. Census race and ethnicity demographics show "Black Alone" as 3.6% of the Monroe County population in 2018.

Blacks were defendants in 16.0% of the cases with defendants from Monroe County. Some defendants were involved in more than one case. As a percentage of defendants (as opposed to cases), Blacks made up 14.6% of the defendants from Monroe County and 16.0% of all defendants.

2. Background / Monroe County Court Data Request

"Race and Criminal Justice in Monroe County, Indiana: A Long-Range Perspective" (See http://UUbloomington.org/race-and-criminal-justice) was published in 2018 by the Monroe County Branch of the NAACP and the Racial Justice Task Force, Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington. Per that report, Blacks were far more likely to be incarcerated than would be expected by their population as Monroe County residents in each of the five years studied since 1997. In order to gain insights into possible sources of the disparity, the report recommended "The Monroe County Criminal Justice System, particularly the courts and prosecutor, should publish detailed data in a format that can be easily analyzed by the public."

Subsequent to the report, it was learned that Monroe County court records are no longer kept locally, but rather are maintained in the state's data and court management system, known as Odyssey. In August of 2019, Guy Loftman submitted a bulk data request to the Indiana Office of Court Services on behalf of the Monroe County Branch of the NAACP, formally signed by Branch President William Vance. The request was for non-confidential data related to criminal cases filed in Monroe County from January 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. The cost to obtain the data was shared by the Monroe County Branch of the NAACP and the Racial Justice Task Force of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington.

The bulk data files were generated on October 1, 2019 and received on November 6, 2019 by Guy Loftman and Ruth Aydt. This January 2020 update focuses on an initial analysis of files related to criminal cases and the defendants associated with those cases.

3. Case and Defendant Data

There were 11646 charges filed in 7259 cases during the 18 months represented in the data. 4428 of the cases involved a single charge.

Note: While the filed date for the cases was between January 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, 350 of the cases had offense dates prior to January 1, 2018.

There were 16142 parties associated with the cases. Of those, 7219 represented individual defendants; other parties included state plaintiff, probation department, bond companies, etc.

Of the 11646 charges and 7259 cases in the Case Data, 11620 charges and 7230 cases had defendants listed.

4. Most Serious Charge

The charge entered as Filed Charge Number = 1 was presumed to be the most serious charge.

[Data Cleaning Note: Three cases had two records with Filed Charge Number = 1. Upon inspection, all three cases and been decided and involved pleas and dismissed charges. For these cases, both charge records were left in the data, hence the 7233 charges with Filed Charge Number = 1, larger than the total number of cases listed earlier.]

Most Serious Charge		
Filed Degree	**Count**	**Percent**
Murder	8	0.11%
Felony 1	14	0.19%
Felony 2	57	0.79%
Felony 3	62	0.86%
Felony 4	95	1.31%
Felony 5	304	4.20%
Felony 6	1439	19.89%
Felony A	2	0.03%
Felony B	1	0.01%
Felony C	2	0.03%
Felony D	1	0.01%
Misdemeanor Class A	2552	35.28%
Misdemeanor Class B	1258	17.39%
Misdemeanor Class C	930	12.86%
Infraction Class C	27	0.37%
No State Code	481	6.65%
Total	**7233**	100.00%

"Infraction Class C" includes charges such as no valid driving license and speeding.

"No State Code" includes actions such as of probation, extraditions, property maintenance violations, animals without rabies vaccinations, fee referrals, etc.

Removing the 481 cases where the most serious charge had a Filed Degree of "No State Code", there are 6752 cases with charges of Murder, Felony, Misdemeanor, or Infraction Class C. Bloomington Police Department was involved with 45.38% of these cases, Monroe County Sheriff's Office with 20.20% and Indiana University Bloomington Police with 15.42%.

5. Demographics for Cases

"All Cases" in these tables means all cases for which there was defendant data available, and for which the Filed Degree of the Filed Charge Number = 1 was something other than "No State Code".

All Cases		
Race	**Count**	**Percent**
Asian	105	1.56%
Black	1101	16.31%
Indian	26	0.39%
Multiracial	1	0.01%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5	0.07%
Other	6	0.09%
Unavailable	19	0.28%
White	5395	79.90%
<blank>	94	1.39%
Total	6752	100.00%

All Cases		
Ethnicity	**Count**	**Percent**
Non Hispanic	501	7.42%
Hispanic	10	0.15%
<blank>	6241	92.43%
Total	6752	100.00%

All Cases		
Sex	**Count**	**Percent**
Female	1761	26.08%
Male	4987	73.86%
<blank>	4	0.06%
Total	6752	100.00%

6. Residence of Defendant

For the 6752 cases included as "All Cases" in the previous section, there were 393 different city entries. These included "NA" (545 cases), <blank> (3 cases), and a few misspelled city names. Note: cities with the same name from different states are counted as a single city in this tally.

The 66 cities with 5 or more cases make up 6281 of the cases, 93.02% of the total.   Of these, Bloomington accounted for 60.63%, "NA" for 8.07%, and Indianapolis for 5.55%. Based on an online source there are 15 zip codes in Monroe County. Defendants with Monroe County zip codes accounted for 4276 cases, 63.33% of the total.

7. Race Demographics for Cases with Defendants from Monroe County

Cases with Defendants from Monroe County		
Race	Count	Percent
Asian	87	2.03%
Black	683	15.97%
Indian	20	0.47%
Multiracial	0	0.00%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5	0.12%
Other	3	0.07%
Unavailable	13	0.30%
White	3415	79.86%
<blank>	50	1.17%
Total	**4276**	**100.00%**

8. Number of Cases per Defendant

In the Defendant Data, an individual is identified by a unique "PartyID". In the Case Data, if multiple cases involve the same defendant those cases will have the same "PartyID".

Over 41% of the cases are associated with defendants who had more than one case filed during the 18 month period.

Cases per Defendant	Number of Defendants	Percent of all Defendants	Total Cases	Percent of all Cases
1	3968	79.68%	3968	58.77%
2	615	12.35%	1230	18.22%
3	215	4.32%	645	9.55%
4	97	1.95%	388	5.75%
5	45	0.90%	225	3.33%
6	24	0.48%	144	2.13%

7	6	0.12%	42	0.62%
8	2	0.04%	16	0.24%
9	2	0.04%	18	0.27%
10	1	0.02%	10	0.15%
11	2	0.04%	22	0.33%
12	1	0.02%	12	0.18%
15	1	0.02%	15	0.22%
17	1	0.02%	17	0.25%
Totals -->	**4980**	**100.00%**	**6752**	**100.00%**

[Data Cleaning Note: A visual inspection of the data made it seem likely that in a few instances different PartyIDs were assigned to the same individual.   No attempt was made to determine the number of times this may have happened, or to edit the data.]

9. **Race Demographics for All Defendants**

All Defendants		
Race	**Count**	**Percent**
Asian	98	1.97%
Black	793	15.92%
Indian	25	0.50%
Multiracial	1	0.02%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	0.04%
Other	6	0.12%
Unavailable	16	0.32%
White	3947	79.26%
<blank>	92	1.85%
Total	4980	100.00%

10. **Race Demographics for Defendants from Monroe County**

Monroe County Defendants		
Race	**Count**	**Percent**
Asian	81	2.59%
Black	457	14.59%
Indian	19	0.61%
Multiracial	0	0.00%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	0.06%
Other	3	0.10%
Unavailable	10	0.32%

White	2511	80.17%
<blank>	49	1.56%
Total	3132	100.00%

11. Cases with Misdemeanor Possession of Marijuana as Most Serious Offense

There are 485 cases where the most serious offense is Misdemeanor Possession of Marijuana. Note: 21 of these cases had offense dates prior to 2018.

Indiana University Bloomington Police were the arresting agency in over 45% of the cases.

Misdemeanor Possession of Marijuana Cases		
Agency	**Count**	**Percent**
Indiana University Bloomington Police	220	45.36%
Bloomington Police Department	98	20.21%
Indiana State Police	73	15.05%
Monroe County Sheriff's Office	38	7.84%
Department of Natural Resources	25	5.15%
Ellettsville Police Department	23	4.74%
Indiana University Northwest Police	5	1.03%
Indiana State Excise Police	3	0.62%
Total	485	100.00%

Race	**Count**	**Percent**
Asian	9	1.86%
Black	103	21.24%
Indian	4	0.82%
White	356	73.40%
<blank>	13	2.68%
Total	485	100.00%

Ethnicity	**Count**	**Percent**
Non Hispanic	19	3.92%
Hispanic	1	0.21%
<blank>	465	95.88%
Total	485	100.00%

Sex	**Count**	**Percent**
Female	95	19.50%
Male	390	80.41%
Total	485	100.00%

12. Next Steps

The detailed data that underlies the information presented in this update offers many avenues for exploration. Further analysis of the data files to examine other factors such as pretrial diversion participation and sentence length will be undertaken in 2020 and reported in later updates.

Interested parties with questions or concerns are encouraged to contact Ruth Aydt (aydt@icloud.com) or Guy Loftman (guy@loftmanlaw.com).