

Issues of equal protection and due process: race and gender correlates in Missouri's application of pretrial detention to juvenile offenders presentation

Ph.D Dissertation

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Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation is to evaluate whether pretrial juvenile detention, as applied in Missouri, comports with relevant Constitutional and statutory provisions. This evaluation focuses primarily on issues relevant to equal application of the law and due process and uses criminological theories pertinent to race and gender relations to explain observed disparities in the treatment of blacks and whites and males and females. Descriptive as well as multivariate analytic techniques including contingency tables, logistic regression and ordinary least squares regression were used to determine whether and to what extent demographic, legal and jurisdictional differences accounted for differences in imposition, type and length of detention. These analyses produced mixed results but nevertheless suggest that race and sex influence detention decisions, at least under some circumstances, to the detriment of minorities and girls. The public policy implications of these results are discussed.