Collateral Consequences: The Impact of State-Level Policies on Perceived Stigma and Stigma Coping Strategies Among Ex-Offenders

Bronwyn Anne Hunter

DePaul University, bhunter@depaul.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://via.library.depaul.edu/csh_etd

Part of the Clinical Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation


https://via.library.depaul.edu/csh_etd/58

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Science and Health at Digital Commons@DePaul. It has been accepted for inclusion in College of Science and Health Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@DePaul. For more information, please contact digitalservices@depaul.edu.
COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES: THE IMPACT OF STATE-LEVEL POLICIES ON PERCEIVED STIGMA AND STIGMA COPING STRATEGIES AMONG EX-OFFENDERS

A Dissertation
Presented in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

BRONWYN ANNE HUNTER

May 9, 2013

Department of Psychology
College of Science and Health
DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois
DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Leonard A. Jason, Ph.D.
Chairperson

Nathan R. Todd, Ph.D.
Patrick J. Fowler, Ph.D.
Susan F. Bennett, Ph.D.
Bryan L. Sykes, Ph.D.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my dissertation chair Leonard Jason for his continued guidance throughout this process. I would also like to thank my husband and children who have been a great source of support and understanding throughout this process.

I would also like to thank the numerous undergraduate volunteers and Oxford House recruiters who assisted with data collection and data entry.

I would like to thank the American Psychological Association Division 27: The Society for Community Research and Action, Psi Chi, The International Honor Society in Psychology, The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), and the DePaul University Graduate Research Fund for the financial support of this project.
VITA

The author was born in Norwalk, Connecticut, June 1, 1981. She graduated from Norwalk High School, and received her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from Southern Connecticut State University in 2007. She was awarded the Master of Arts degree in Clinical Community Psychology with distinction in August 2010.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dissertation Committee......................................................................................... ii  
Acknowledgements.................................................................................................. iii  
Vita.......................................................................................................................... iv  
List of Tables........................................................................................................... ix  
List of Figures.......................................................................................................... x  
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION................................................................................... 1  
Prisoner Reentry...................................................................................................... 3  
Theories of Offending and Reentry.......................................................................... 7  
Offenders’ Needs..................................................................................................... 10  
  Education............................................................................................................... 11  
  Employment........................................................................................................... 12  
  Housing.................................................................................................................. 14  
  Substance Abuse.................................................................................................... 15  
  Family Support...................................................................................................... 17  
  Physical and Mental Health.................................................................................. 18  
  Gender.................................................................................................................... 19  
Reentry Policy......................................................................................................... 20  
  Historical Context................................................................................................ 22  
  Voting..................................................................................................................... 27  
  Employment and Education................................................................................ 28  
  Criminal Records................................................................................................ 31  
  Housing.................................................................................................................. 31
Strategies to Reduce Policy Restrictions.............................................................. 32
Stigma.................................................................................................................... 34
  Stigma and Ex-offenders.................................................................................... 39
Rationale................................................................................................................. 43
Statement of Hypotheses..................................................................................... 47
CHAPTER II. METHOD.......................................................................................... 48
Overview................................................................................................................. 49
  Description of Sample....................................................................................... 52
Materials................................................................................................................ 54
  Perceived Stigma............................................................................................... 54
  Stigma Coping Strategies.................................................................................. 56
  State Level Data................................................................................................. 58
Employment........................................................................................................... 67
  Housing............................................................................................................. 67
Procedure.............................................................................................................. 68
Data Collection Strategies................................................................................... 69
  Recruitment Across States............................................................................... 70
  Women and Empowerment.............................................................................. 70
  Men and Stigma............................................................................................... 71
Data Analysis Plan................................................................................................. 73
  Missing Data................................................................................................... 73
  Multilevel Modeling.......................................................................................... 74
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Comparison of overall demographics and criminal history variables for ex-offenders and non ex-offenders .............................................................................................................. 51
Table 2. Ex-offender sample by state, gender and minority status .................................. 53
Table 3. Descriptive statistics for the Devaluation/Discrimination Scale .................... 55
Table 4. Descriptive statistics for the Stigma Management Scale ................................. 57
Table 5. Collateral Sanctions Policy Scores by state .............................................. 60
Table 6. Correlations between Ewald Policy Scores and subscale scores ............... 62
Table 7. Correlations among policy scores and state-level criminal justice data .... 65
Table 8. Comparison of means, standard deviations, and range for 20 states and 29 states ........................................................................................................................................... 66
Table 9. Participants sources of rental income ................................................................ 67
Table 10. Descriptive statistics for predictor and outcome variables ....................... 76
Table 11. Aggregate correlations between state and individual-level variables .......... 77
Table 12. Means for predictor and outcome variables by state .................................. 78
Table 13. Unconditional models for Secrecy, Education, and Withdrawal ............. 81
Table 14. Hierarchical regression model predicting Secrecy scores ....................... 86
Table 15. Hierarchical regression model predicting Education scores .................... 88
Table 16. Hierarchical regression model predicting Withdrawal scores ................. 92
Table 17. Employment and TANF scores are predictors of employment and rental assistance ........................................................................................................ 94
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Interaction between perceived stigma, policy scores, and secrecy</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Interaction between perceived stigma, policy scores, and withdrawal</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>TANF benefit policy scores on the likelihood of receiving public assistance</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

More than 650,000 offenders return from prison to their families, communities, and society each year (Hughes & Wilson, 2003; Travis, Solomon & Waul, 2001). The process of prisoner reentry is integral to an offenders’ successful community reintegration (Visher & Travis, 2003); however, most offenders do not successfully reintegrate, and nearly two-thirds of released offenders will eventually be re-incarcerated (Langan & Levin, 2002). These high recidivism rates have propelled scholars to identify challenges to the reentry process. Consequently, research has demonstrated that many offenders reentering society face multiple barriers to successful reentry, including a lack of social support, employment, education, housing, and financial support, as well as untreated substance abuse issues (Maruna, 2001; Petersilia, 2003; Travis, et al., 2001; Travis, 2005; van Olphen, Freudenberg, Fortin & Galea, 2006; van Olphen, Eliason, Freudenberg & Barnes, 2009).

The challenges associated with prisoner reentry are compounded by social policies that limit ex-offenders’ opportunities for successful community reintegration. State-level social policies impose numerous restrictions on ex-offenders’ opportunities for voting, employment, parenting, driving privileges, education, and eligibility for public benefits (Ewald, 2012; Love, 2006; Love & Kuzma, 1996; Legal Action Center, 2009). Scholars have highlighted that these policies are differentially imposed across states, as each state has the power to develop or implement restrictions (Love, 2006; Love & Kuzma, 1996; Pinard,
Furthermore, social policies often disproportionately impact minorities (Uggen, Manza & Behrens, 2004) and women (Demleitner, 2002). Ironically, the areas that have been identified as central to successful community reentry are the most impacted by these policies, in that ex-offenders’ are often disqualified from housing, financial assistance, and career opportunities. Termed ‘collateral consequences,’ ‘invisible punishments,’ and ‘roadblocks to reentry,’ these state-level policies affect offenders’ life opportunities upon release from prison and often for the rest of their lives (Chin, 2002; Legal Action Center, 2009; Mauer, 2005; Pinard, 2006; Travis, 2002).

An additional, underlying barrier to successful community reentry is the stigma associated with the label ‘ex-offender.’ The stigma assigned to the label ‘ex-offender’ may further limit community reentry and exacerbate state-level policy restrictions, as it may directly influence opportunities for employment (Pager, 2003; Pager, Western & Sugie, 2009), housing (Legal Action Center, 2009; Roman & Travis, 2004), financial support (Demleitner, 2002) and other resources (Love, 2006; Legal Action Center, 2009; Uggen, et al., 2004). Stigma may also adversely affect offenders’ coping strategies during the reentry process which may limit their positive social supports (Maruna, 2001), decrease use of tangible resources (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008) and even increase their risk for recidivism (Chiricos, Barrick, Bales, & Bontrager, 2007). Although stigma has been highlighted as a significant challenge to prisoner reentry, few studies have quantitatively demonstrated how stigma influences offenders’ coping strategies during reentry.
Given the numerous state-level ‘roadblocks to reentry,’ it is unclear if, and how, state policies differentially impact perceived stigma for the label of ‘ex-offender’ and the coping strategies used by ex-offenders across, and within, states. Research has explored the role of labeling and its’ negative effects on offenders (Chiricos, et al., 2007; LeBel, 2011; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008); however, research has yet to examine how state-level policies interact with individual-level outcomes. Thus, the goal of this dissertation was to demonstrate the impact of state-level reentry policies on ex-offenders’ perceived stigma and the strategies they use to cope with stigma. The objectives of the present study were to: 1) document the relationship between perceived stigma and stigma coping strategies among a community-based sample of ex-offenders; 2) examine the impact of state-level policies on ex-offenders’ perceived stigma and coping strategies; and 3) test the observable effect of state policies on ex-offenders likelihood of employment and receipt of housing funds.

Prisoner Reentry

In 2009, more than 1.6 million individuals were incarcerated in state and federal prisons (West & Sabol, 2010) and an additional 5 million individuals were under some form of criminal justice system supervision, such as probation or parole (Glaze, Bonczar & Zhang, 2010). In addition, an estimated 12.9 million individuals had been admitted into county jail systems between June 2009 and June 2010 (Minton, 2011). Of those who are incarcerated, 95% will be released to the community at some point (Hughes & Wilson, 2003). This translates to an estimated 650,000 individuals returning from prison or jail to the community each
year (Travis, 2001). Research has also indicated that almost two-thirds of released offenders will be reincarcerated within three years of release from prison, with the highest likelihood of recidivism within the first year after release (Langan & Levin, 2002). Consequently, the large numbers of individuals who cycle through the criminal justice system have propelled scholars and researchers to examine factors related to crime, desistance, and prisoner reentry.

Several studies have described offenders’ characteristics and have outlined the needs of offenders while incarcerated and upon release from prison or jail (Petersilia, 2001; Travis, 2001; Visher & Travis, 2003). Research has also examined individuals under community supervision and has asserted that both populations face similar challenges (Bahr, Armstrong, Gibbs, Harris & Fisher, 2005; Harlow, 2003; Makarios, Steiner & Travis III, 2010; Schneider & McKim, 2003; Uggen, et al., 2004). For example, individuals with criminal justice involvement often have little workforce preparation, limited education, little financial support, unstable housing, inconsistent mental and physical healthcare, and untreated substance use disorders (Petersilia, 2003; Travis, et al., 2001; van Olphen, et al., 2009). Unfortunately, correctional and community supervision settings rarely have the resources to comprehensively address offenders’ needs (Petersilia, 2001).

Men comprise the largest proportion of the prison (93%; West & Sabol, 2010) and parole populations (88%; Glaze, et al., 2010). African American men are disproportionately imprisoned, as they are six times more likely to be incarcerated than White, non-Hispanic men, and three times more likely to be
incarcerated than Hispanic men, with similar patterns of race and incarceration rates for women (West & Sabol, 2010). Women represent a larger proportion of individuals under community supervision as compared to incarceration, specifically for probation (24%; Glaze, et al., 2010). The racial disparities evident in incarceration rates are not as apparent in the community supervision population, as most individuals under community supervision are White, non-Latino (55%), with comparatively lower rates among African Americans (29%), and Hispanic or Latinos (13%; Glaze, et al., 2010). Furthermore, it is important to note that most offenders incarcerated in state and federal prison are sentenced to two years or less (76%; West & Sabol, 2010).

The criminal justice system has historically focused on the punishment of criminal offenders rather than the promotion of rehabilitation. Although prisoner reentry has recently received much attention in the public sphere, it is not a new concept, as the original purpose of community supervision (i.e. parole) was to regulate and ease offenders’ transition from prison to the community (Petersilia, 2004). In 1974, a seminal paper claimed that ‘nothing worked’ in prisoner reentry (Martinson, 1974), and this assertion resonated loudly in the subsequent provision of services, policy initiatives, and funding strategies for services for offenders and ex-offenders. Consequently, until the late 1990’s and early 2000’s, national initiatives frequently focused on the punishment of offenders and few rehabilitative programs or services were provided. A recent shift in theories on criminal behavior, coupled with significant increases in incarceration and recidivism rates led policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to identify
variables that effectively reduce recidivism rates (Andrews, 2006; Petersilia, 2001; Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001). As a result, several national initiatives have provided funding for the treatment of offender and ex-offender populations, and several effective program components have been identified (Listwan, Cullen & LaTessa, 2006; Petersilia, 2004).

Correctional agencies have been expected to create and administer programs based on three principles of effective correctional programs: risk, needs, and responsivity (Listwan, et al., 2006). Risk assessment has been identified as an integral component of the prison intake process, and assessments have been designed to assess offenders’ risk for recidivism upon entry to prison. Ideally, risk assessments would identify offenders’ needs while incarcerated and utilize the knowledge of those needs to provide responsive programs while in prison and upon release to the community (Andrews, 2006; Listwan, et al., 2006; Petersilia, 2004). Unfortunately, given the large numbers of individuals involved in the criminal justice system, these strategies are not always implemented or adhered to in correctional settings.

Research has identified several evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism which include: behavioral and social learning interventions, the use of positive reinforcement, intensive services, matching offender risk to intensity of treatment services, community-based services, and a match between provider and offender learning styles (Petersilia, 2004). Although researchers have postulated that these practices lead to reduced recidivism, it is often a challenge for correctional facilities and community agencies to provide such comprehensive
programs (Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; van Olphen, et al., 2006). Thus, most offenders will exit the correctional system without receiving any treatment or services to increase their opportunities for success in society (Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; van Olphen, et al., 2006). Petersilia (2004) indicated that the inability of the correctional system to provide services to offenders upon release exacerbates the challenges of the reentry process.

Theories of Offending and Reentry

Criminologists have proposed several theories to identify the factors that contribute to the onset of criminal offending as well as to discover pathways to desistance from crime. It is well believed that most offenders will cease criminal activity at some point in their lives (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Sampson and Laub (1993) postulated that desistance from crime can be understood from a life-course framework that integrates components of informal social control. As such, they articulated that criminal behavior is highly influenced by the strength of social bonds, especially in the transition from youth to adulthood and that these strong social bonds may contribute to desistance in adulthood (Sampson & Laub, 1993). In tandem with the notion that strong social ties can reduce criminal behavior, Maruna (2001) also highlighted the importance of family support, peer support, and employment on an offenders’ successful community reintegration.

Travis (2005) outlined the reentry process as a critical turning point for offenders, with a core distinction between the process of prisoner reentry and reintegration into society. As such, reentry is the process of leaving jail or prison, a process in which 95% of all offenders will take part. In contrast, reintegration is
the process of creating ties to the community and participating in community life which leads to desistance from crime. Reintegration is most important, but is highly influenced by the success of reentry (Travis, et al., 2001). Within this paradigm, there are several components that influence successful reintegration which include: individual characteristics, family influences, community influences, and state policies (Visher & Travis, 2003). Visher and Travis (2003) proposed that the transition from prison to the community is both an individual and social process that occurs in a series of four stages: life prior to prison, life in prison, the moment of release, and life in the months and years following release, with the moment of release and life afterwards having the largest impact on offenders’ outcomes.

Research has identified several factors that are integral to understanding the reentry and reintegration processes. Many scholars suggest that women offenders have different needs than men and should be provided with different programs and services to meet those needs (Covington & Bloom, 2006; Robbins, Martin & Surratt, 2009). For example, women in the criminal justice system are often the primary caretakers of children and need more parenting support and support for family reunification than men (Robbins, et al., 2009). Another important factor is the role of labeling an individual as deviant and the stigma attached to that label. Many studies have reported that stigma is a frequently mentioned barrier among ex-offenders that is rarely addressed within this population (Bahr, et al., 2005; Dodge & Pogrebin, 2001; Hartwell, 2004; LeBel, 2011; Mauer, 2005; Petersilia, 2004; Schneider & McKim, 2003; Schnittiker &
Several authors have denoted importance of social context to successful community reintegration in that offenders frequently return to impoverished communities that have few resources available to assist them (Clear, Rose & Ryder, 2001; Lynch, 2006). Although most offenders remain incarcerated for an average of two years, few are able to actively participate in correctional programs to address substance abuse, employment, or educational needs. Upon release, offenders return to communities that do not have the resources to support their reintegration which then leads to an additional burden on the families and the resources that are available in the community (Travis, et al., 2001). Research has also noted the importance of the relationship between offenders’ individual characteristics and their social and community context; however, there is a dearth of research designed to examine the interplay among these components on the reentry and reintegration processes (Fleisher & Decker, 2001). Thus, further research is needed to assess the relationship between individual characteristics and the social context of prisoner reentry.

Research has also identified several challenges to prisoner reentry research. It has been noted that reentry is influenced by a combination of individual characteristics and social-ecological factors (Lynch, 2006; Travis, et al., 2001; Visher & Travis, 2003); however, as noted above, few empirical studies
have integrated both individual and community-level variables to examine prisoner reentry (Fleisher & Decker, 2001; Petersilia, 2004). In addition, few studies use self-report data to examine offenders’ outcomes; rather, they use data maintained by correctional agencies which limits the availability of individual-level, self-reported data (Lynch, 2006). Furthermore, recidivism, the most popular outcome of reentry research, has been criticized as a rudimentary measure of offender success because recidivism does not account for the individual and social processes that would be most reflective of community reintegration (Lynch, 2006). Recidivism as an outcome variable is difficult to decipher, as definitions vary widely across studies (Wormith, Althouse, Simpson, Reitzel, Fagan & Morgan, 2007). In addition, it is widely noted that follow-up studies of released offenders are rare and attrition rates in longitudinal studies of offenders are high, as this population is difficult to track (Lynch, 2006). Another challenge to research on prisoner reentry is the lack of large-scale, quantitative studies that document effective services (Petersilia, 2004). Consequently, most studies that do not use recidivism as an outcome variable have been qualitative (Petersilia, 2004).

**Offenders’ Needs**

It is clear that offenders enter the criminal justice system with many needs that are rarely addressed during their incarceration. Research has noted that offenders frequently have low educational attainment (Coley & Barton, 2006; Harlow, 2003), poor employment histories (Holzer, Raphael & Stoll, 2001; Shivy, Wu, Moon, Mann, Holland & Eacho, 2007; Travis, et al., 2001; van Olphen, et al., 2006;), little social support (Petersilia, 2003; Travis, et al., 2001), substance
abuse issues (Pelissier, 2004), and physical and mental health problems (Golembeski & Fullilove, 2005; Shivy, et al., 2007). It should also be noted that offenders’ needs do not act in isolation; rather, they often build upon each other and contribute to stress during the transition from prison to the community and thereafter (Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; Travis & Petersilia, 2001). Consequently, individuals who had been involved in the criminal justice system face a multitude of challenges and stressors as they attempt to integrate into society. Petersilia (2001) called for an examination of offenders as they return to their communities, families, and society and explicated that society does little to prepare offenders for their release, and that this lack of preparation perpetuates the cycle of criminal justice involvement.

**Education**

It is well documented that offenders often have low educational attainment. In fact, research has demonstrated that between 27% and 57% of the incarcerated population has not graduated from high school or received a GED (Coley & Barton, 2006). Similarly, between 20.5% (state inmates) and 34.8% (probationers) of individuals under correctional or community supervision have a high school diploma (Harlow, 2003). While incarcerated, there are few educational programs offered for offenders, however; studies that have examined educational participation among offender populations demonstrate striking outcomes in that participation in educational and vocational programs may reduce recidivism (Allen, 1988; Batiuk, Lahm, McKeever, Wilcox & Wilcox, 2005; Duguid & Pawson, 1995; Chappell, 2004; Gordon & Weldon, 2003; Steurer &
Smith, 2003). For example, Gordon and Weldon (2003) found that participation in GED and vocational training programs had a positive effect on reducing recidivism. Research has also examined the benefits of post-secondary educational programs (Batiuk, et al., 2005; Chappell, 2004; Steurer & Smith, 2003) and has found that they are more effective than GED or vocational training programs in reducing recidivism (Batiuk, et al., 2005). Although it is often a challenge to implement post-secondary educational programs in prison settings (Goldin & Thomas, 1984), there are several additional benefits of providing this type of educational services for offenders (Torre & Fine, 2005). Post-secondary educational programs for offenders not only increase offenders’ marketability for employment upon release from prison or jail (Batiuk, Moke & Rountree, 1997), but may also increase offenders’ sense of self-worth, esteem, and accomplishment (Fine, 2001; Torre & Fine, 2005).

**Employment**

Several studies have indicated that obtaining and maintaining employment may significantly reduce recidivism and promote successful community reintegration (Bahr, et al., 2005; Makarios, et al., 2010). However, ex-offenders face severe challenges in obtaining and maintaining employment (Holzer, Raphael & Stoll, 2003; Travis, et al., 2001). Ex-offenders often have limited work histories, which are compounded by low levels of education (Holzer, et al., 2003). In addition, ex-offenders frequently obtain employment that pays minimum wage, and research has shown that they are often paid less than non-offenders (Holzer, et al., 2003). The lack of employment and career training, education, and the job
discrimination that ex-offenders’ face greatly hinder attempts at reentry and frequently encourages a return to illegal activities (Freeman, 2003; van Olphen, et al., 2006; Western, 2002). Furthermore, several authors have noted that offenders are often released into poverty-stricken areas with few viable employment prospects (Clear, et al., 2001; Peck & Theodore, 2008; Western, 2002). As a result, ex-offenders are frequently employed by temporary agencies, but only about half of the ex-offenders who seek this type of employment will be placed in a permanent job and less than one fifth of those who are placed will maintain employment through the fifth month (Peck & Theodore, 2008).

Focus groups with offenders have identified themes related to the process of reentry and reintegration with specific attention to employment issues (Shivy, et al., 2007). For example, ex-offenders reported that programs to address employment issues, which would include assistance with career goals and planning, as well as the provision of knowledge related to career-related barriers would be helpful during and following prison life (Shivy, et al., 2007). Lack of employment opportunities also appear to be related to other factors that make the transition from prison to the community difficult. For example, research has found that many ex-offenders do not obtain employment upon release due to substance use, housing instability, and poor social support networks (Shinkfield & Graffam, 2007). In addition, community corrections officers have reported that unemployment, coupled with deviant peers, tends to lead to an increased likelihood of recidivism (Gunnison & Helfgott, 2011). Thus, it is important to acknowledge that employment challenges are often closely tied to additional
challenges, such as limited social support networks, substance abuse, and unstable housing.

**Housing**

Several studies have reported that offenders have higher rates of homelessness both prior to and upon release from incarceration (Cowan & Fionda, 1994; Greenberg & Rosenheck, 2008; Pogorzelski, Wolff, Pan & Blitz, 2005; Roman & Travis, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; Weiser, Neilands, Comfort, Dilworth, Cohen, Tulsky, et al., 2009). For example, Greenberg and Rosenheck (2008) found that 9.2% of the incarcerated population had been homeless in their lifetime; 7.5% of these had been homeless in the year preceding their arrest but not at the time of arrest; and 1.7% were homeless at the time of arrest. Inmates who had been homeless prior to their incarceration reported increased rates of substance use and mental health disorders, as well as lower employment rates, and lower incomes than inmates who had not been homeless (Greenberg & Rosenheck, 2008). Research has also found that homeless and marginally housed individuals reported high rates of incarceration, and those who had been incarcerated reported more mental illness, substance use, and increased sexual risk behaviors than those who had not been incarcerated (Kushel, Hahn, Evans, Bangsberg & Moss, 2005; Weiser, et al., 2009).

Ex-offenders often rely on family members for housing support upon release from prison or jail. Unfortunately, residing with family members is not always beneficial for ex-offenders, and may contribute to stress throughout the transition from incarceration to the community (Bahr, et al., 2005; Roman &
Travis, 2004). For example, African American men who were returning from prison to the community indicated that they had unstable housing and frequently had to move: even though most reported that they had family or friends with whom they could live, they felt uncomfortable doing so (Cooke, 2005). Thus, even though family members may be a source of housing support, ex-offenders often feel that they are a burden to their family, which may hinder attempts at reintegration.

Substance abuse

The large increase in the prison population is largely due to the use of increased criminal penalties for drug offenses, as more than 50% of the prison population meets the criteria for substance dependence (Chandler, Fletcher & Volkow, 2009; Pelissier, 2004). One study found that 57.5% of offenders entering prison qualified for a lifetime substance dependence disorder, with cocaine and marijuana the most commonly abused substances, however; only offenders currently dependent on cocaine or opiates perceived a need for treatment (Lo & Stephens, 2000). Furthermore, Kubiak, Boyd, Slayden and Young (2005) reported that two of three offenders in Michigan were in need of some type of substance abuse treatment. In recent years, research has demonstrated that addiction can be treated: however, this knowledge has not yet translated into substance abuse treatment programs in the criminal justice system (Chandler, et al., 2009). In addition, offenders have reported that they exited the criminal justice system with few resources for substance abuse treatment which impeded their attempts at recovery (Bahr, et al., 2005; van Olphen, et al., 2006).
Criminal justice researchers have recently begun to acknowledge that substance abuse treatment during incarceration combined with aftercare during reentry appears to most effective in the reduction of substance use (Chandler, et al., 2009; Gaes, Flanagan, Motiuk & Stewart, 1999; Harrison, 2000; Petersilia, 2004). However, research has demonstrated that linking an offender to substance abuse treatment services for utilization upon release rarely results in actual service utilization (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008). Without these much-needed supports, ex-offenders with substance abuse problems may be more likely to engage in criminal behavior and be re-incarcerated following release (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008).

Research has proposed various models of substance abuse aftercare for individuals returning from the criminal justice system to the community which include abstinence-based as well as harm reduction programs. One example of an abstinence based model is Oxford House, a democratic, self-supported, single-sex, safe and sober living environment for individuals in recovery from substance use (Oxford House, Inc., 2013). Research has demonstrated that Oxford Houses are conducive to successful recovery outcomes and decreased recidivism rates (Jason, Davis & Ferrari, 2007; Jason, Olson, Ferrari & LoSasso, 2006). The only requirement for admission to an Oxford House is the desire for and maintenance of sobriety. Research has identified several additional benefits of the Oxford House model for ex-offender populations, which include increased positive social supports (Groh, Jason, Davis, Olson & Ferrari, 2007), an increased sense of community (Ferrari, Jason, Olson, Davis & Alvarez, 2002), and increased
abstinence self-efficacy (Majer, Jason, Ferrari, Venable & Olson, 2002). As such, Oxford House may be a viable, community-based model for ex-offenders returning to the community, as this setting may help to ease the transition from prison to the community.

Family support

Families of the incarcerated often experience high levels of stress related to the incarceration of a loved one and often lose much-needed financial support due to incarceration (Travis, et al., 2001). Research has shown that children of incarcerated mothers are more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system as adults (Huebner & Gustafson, 2007). Furthermore, the families and children of incarcerated parents often face stigma related to parental incarceration (Huebner & Gustafson, 2007; Travis, et al., 2001). Negative family influences and high expectations of the ex-offender may lead to high levels of stress for ex-offenders (Bahr, et al., 2005; Uggen, et al., 2004). For example, Cooke (2005) found that men had not maintained contact with family members while incarcerated, due to substance use, geographic distance, cost, and infidelity. Furthermore, men often disrupted their family relationships due to the shame and embarrassment related to their incarceration (Cooke, 2005).

Although family can be a source of stress for an ex-offender, there are also benefits to a positive family support system upon release from incarceration (Visher & Travis, 2003). Research has indicated that even though contact between the incarcerated individual and family/children may be limited during incarceration, a strong relationship with children may reduce the likelihood of
recidivism (Bahr, et al., 2005). In addition, marriage has been found to reduce the likelihood of substance abuse and new crimes for offenders who were married prior to incarceration (Visher, Knight, Chalfin & Roman, 2009). Naser and La Vigne (2006) reported that families provided more support than offenders expected prior to release, and that ex-offenders highly valued this support. Furthermore, family support can increase employment connections, financial support, and provide housing upon release (Bahr, et al., 2005).

**Physical and Mental Health**

Several studies have investigated the health of offender and ex-offender populations and have demonstrated that rates of physical and mental illness are higher for individuals who are incarcerated as compared to the general population (Blitz, Wolff, Pan & Pogorzelski, 2005; Golembeski & Fullilove, 2005; Petersilia, 2001). Incarcerated individuals often have higher rates of chronic illnesses, such as asthma, and mental health diagnoses, such as depression than the general population (Blitz, et al., 2005). The National Commission on Correctional Healthcare report on soon-to-be released prisoners (2002) reported that the prevalence of AIDS in correctional settings is five times higher than in the general population. Furthermore, 13-19% of all individuals diagnosed with HIV infection, 12-15% of individuals with hepatitis B infection, 17.0-18.6% of individuals with hepatitis C infection, and 35% of individuals with tuberculosis infection (TB) spent time in a correctional facility (National Commission on Correctional Healthcare, 2002).
Although inmates have higher rates of physical and mental illness than the
general population, most of these illnesses are not treated during incarceration.
For example, jails do not always provide mental health services and inmates often
cycle in and out of jail facilities prior to treatment receipt (National Commission
on Correctional Healthcare, 2002). While research has articulated that treatment
for physical and mental illnesses among offender populations may benefit the
larger public health, it appears that health-related referrals made while
incarcerated infrequently result in actual appointments (Hammett, Roberts &
Kennedy, 2001). Furthermore, offenders’ health problems often worsen after
release, and contribute to recidivism (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008). Thus, there is
a need to provide mental and physical health services to offender populations
while incarcerated and upon release.

Gender

Scholars have suggested that women present with different needs than
men in prison and upon reentry to the community (Byrne & Howells, 2002;
Covington & Bloom, 2006), although empirical support for this assertion has
produced mixed results (Makarios, et al., 2010). Women are more likely to be
incarcerated for drug-related offenses, and to have depression and substance
abuse disorders than men (Blitz, et al., 2005). Most studies have demonstrated
that women tend to reported poor psychological health, substance use, post-
traumatic stress disorder, self-esteem, physical and sexual abuse, and self-injury
and suicide more frequently than men (Byrne & Howells, 2002; Loughran &
Seewoonarian, 2005). Furthermore, Mallik-Kane and Visher (2008) found that
upon release from prison, women often had less family support and used substances at higher rates than men. Dodge and Pogrebin (2001) assessed the consequences of incarceration and parole for women and found that women reported significant stress related to the separation and loss of their children, abandonment by their partner and other relationship stressors, issues with family reunification, the stigma associated with a criminal background, finding employment, and family support. Thus, women may need additional assistance with family reunification/parenting support, mental healthcare, and substance abuse treatment than men.

It is clear that there are several factors that influence the prisoner reentry and reintegration processes. An additional, overarching factor that may influence the success of the prisoner reentry and reintegration process are state and federal policies that limit ex-offenders’ civil rights and opportunities. Recent research has argued that several policies, specifically in the areas of voting, employment, housing, education, and eligibility for public benefits, may impose restrictions on ex-offenders as they transition from jail or prison to the community. Thus, the following section reviews the literature on reentry policies that may hinder ex-offenders’ efforts toward successful community reintegration.

**Reentry Policy**

An estimated 47 million adults in the United States currently have a criminal record (Lucken & Ponte, 2008). Policy-level variables have recently become of interest to criminal justice researchers, as policy-level mandates may limit opportunities for ex-offenders’ employment, housing, welfare benefits, and
voting rights, among other areas (Ewald, 2012; Legal Action Center, 2009; Manza & Uggen, 2006; Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; Uggen, et al., 2004). Several researchers have asserted that social policies specifically impact offenders’ reentry and reintegration processes and also perpetuate the stigma associated with the label of ‘ex-offender’ or ‘ex-con’ (LeBel, et al., 2008; Maruna, 2001; Travis, et al., 2001). Therefore, it is important to examine how policy-level variables interact with individual-level outcomes to affect offender reentry and reintegration.

Researchers refer to policies and laws that adversely impact offenders as ‘collateral consequences’ (Ewald, 2012; Mauer, 2005; Manza & Uggen, 2006), ‘roadblocks to reentry’ (Legal Action Center, 2009), and ‘invisible punishments’ (Travis, 2002). Travis (2002) labeled the policies that impact offenders throughout their reentry and reintegration processes as ‘invisible punishments.’ In this context, ‘invisible punishments’ are laws that operate beyond the public view that are not considered a part of criminal sentencing, and are rarely explained during the formal sentencing process (Travis, 2002). ‘Invisible punishments’ and ‘collateral consequences’ impact all individuals who have had contact with the criminal justice system and are convicted of misdemeanor and/or felony offenses (Pinard, 2006). However, offenders and the general public are rarely aware of the continued sanctions and limitations imposed on ex-offenders (Dawson-Edwards, 2008; Heumann, Pinaire & Clark, 2005), and, although several have been suggested, few strategies have been successfully implemented to alleviate the barriers imposed by these policies (Henry & Jacobs, 2007; Legal Action Center,
2009; Pogorzelski, et al., 2005). Thus, policies and laws add an additional layer to the challenges related to the reentry and reintegration processes.

**Historical Context**

Several scholars have traced the history of social policies that affect prisoner reentry to various national initiatives that acted to extend the impact of the Jim Crow laws that denied African Americans the right to vote (Chin, 2002; Manza & Uggen, 2006; Mauer, 1999). Scholars have specifically asserted that disenfranchisement, or loss of voting rights, has historically been used and adopted for discriminatory purposes based on race (Chin, 2002; Mauer, 1999; Rose & Martin, 2008). As such, race-based theory argues that the purpose of disenfranchisement policies is to restrict African Americans’ voting rights (Pinard, 2010). Furthermore, early social policy decisions to prohibit substance use were driven, in part, by racial considerations (Chin, 2002; Pinard, 2010). Consequently, given the racial disparities in the criminal justice population, these penalties and their consequences disproportionately affect minority populations (Pinard, 2010). Disenfranchisement, or voting, policies have received the most attention in the literature, as removing an offenders’ right to vote leads to social inequality that is in contrast to democratic ideals (Dhami, 2005).

Some have argued that the loss of civil rights associated with a criminal conviction is inconsistent with the goal of reintegration, for the loss of civil rights limits ex-offenders ties to the community (Cardinale, 2004; Dhami, 2005; Manza & Uggen, 2006; Travis, 2002). The ‘Tough on crime’ and ‘War on Drugs’ initiatives of the 1980’s and 90’s saw an increase in the use of these and other
sanctions and the consequences associated with them (Pinard, 2006; Travis, 2001). For example, in the 1990’s there was an increase in the implementation of welfare, housing and employment bans for ex-offenders, as well as the utilization of bans related to education, parenting, and driver’s license restrictions (Travis, 2001).

Justification for the use of collateral consequences is grounded in the notion that collateral consequences increase public safety (Buckler & Travis, 2003). Furthermore, the courts have upheld the use of collateral consequences even though they are civil in nature but have punitive consequences (Dawson-Edwards, 2008). Researchers and policy-makers have argued that collateral consequences prevent the corrupting influence of ex-offenders and deter them from future crimes (Archer & Williams, 2006). In contrast, scholars have noted that providing services and opportunities for ex-offenders actually increases public safety, and there is some empirical support that providing employment, housing, and financial support to returning prisoners increases offenders’ chances for successful reintegration (Simonson, 2006).

Empirical support on the impact of state-level policies on outcomes for offender and ex-offender populations is sparse. Chiricos and colleagues (2007) demonstrated that being labeled a ‘felon’ versus having adjudication withheld significantly increased the likelihood of recidivism, and that this effect was larger for Whites and women whose first offense was at age 30 or above. They suggested that offenders who had the lowest risk for recidivism felt the strongest effect of the felon label. Unfortunately, few studies have examined the direct
impact of social policies on offender reintegration beyond the use of recidivism outcomes (Travis, 2001), as the evaluation of policies on offender outcomes is a research challenge (Visher & Travis, 2003).

The collateral consequences of a criminal conviction have been shown to exacerbate the challenges for ex-offenders’ successful community reentry and reintegration (Manza & Uggen, 2006; Mauer, 2005; Pinard, 2006; Travis, 2001; Wheelock, 2005). Policies may adversely impact ex-offenders voting rights, eligibility for jury duty and public office, and a felony conviction has been used as grounds for divorce, civil death, criminal registration, firearm restrictions, loss of parental rights, and welfare eligibility (Buckler & Travis, 2003). Policies related to housing, employment and public benefits may be the most detrimental as they are directly related to offenders basic needs (Pinard, 2010). Wheelock (2005) created a framework to explore the types of collateral consequences and outlined four broad areas of impact: civic restrictions, which included a loss of voting rights as well as restrictions on jury service and holding public office; service and aid restrictions, which included the loss of public assistance in the forms of scholarships and grants, welfare, public housing, and others; employment and occupational restrictions, which included bans on holding certain types of employment and occupational licensure; and other restrictions, which included loss of parental rights, the inability to travel freely, as well as immigrant deportation. In addition, it has been noted that collateral consequences in the United States are harsher and more difficult to overcome than in other countries, such as Canada, England, and South Africa (Pinard, 2010).
It is difficult to determine the impact of state policies on individual-level outcomes among ex-offenders’ because the development and enforcement of these policies varies widely across states (Buckler & Travis, 2003; Burton, Cullen & Travis, 1987; Love, 2006; Olivares, Burton & Cullen, 1996). For example, states impose various restrictions on offenders’ voting rights (Manza & Uggen, 2006; Uggen, et al., 2004), as Alabama sanctions a lifetime ban to voting that may only be lifted by a formal restoration of civil rights, while Maine and Vermont have no policies that affect the voting rights of offenders (Legal Action Center, 2009). Federal policies also adversely impact ex-offenders, as a felony drug conviction can limit eligibility for student loans and grants, housing, and welfare benefits; however, states can choose the extent to which some federal policies are implemented (Chin, 2002; Cooper, 2007; Demleitner, 2002; Levi & Appel, 2003). For example, the 1996 welfare reform (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act) placed a lifetime ban on the receipt of public benefits, such as food stamps and cash assistance, for individuals convicted of a felony drug offense. Although states have the option to ‘opt out’ of this ban, only 9 states have done so, while 33 others have modified the ban (Legal Action Center, 2009).

Drug offenders face additional state and federal policy-level barriers to successful community reintegration. Demleitner (2002) outlined specific consequences for individuals who had been convicted of drug offenses, which included the denial of welfare benefits, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families support (TANF), food stamps, subsidized or publicly funded housing, and
employment in certain occupations, such as nursing and physical therapy. Policy sanctions for drug offenders disproportionately affect women and minorities, as they tend to be convicted of drug-offenses at a higher rate than men and non-minorities (Demleitner, 2002). State and federal judges have the right to deny all or any ‘federal benefits’ to individuals convicted of a drug offense, which includes grants, contracts, loans, professional licenses—which totals to more than 750 benefits (Chin, 2002). Levi and Appel (2003) outlined that drug offenders are often disqualified from social services, which include housing, education, welfare benefits, and child welfare. For example, public housing and Section 8 eligibility guidelines consider drug use, and current renters with Section 8 vouchers can be evicted and lose their benefits based on a one-strike substance use policy (Levi & Appel, 2003). Unfortunately, the impact of these restrictions often works against strategies designed to help drug offenders, such as the implementation of drug court programs (Cooper, 2007).

It is also important to note that many social policies have a disproportionate impact on minorities (Chin, 2002; Demleitner, 2002; Pager, 2003; Pager, et al., 2009; Wang & Mears, 2010) and women (Demleitner, 2002; Freudenberg, 2002). For example, in some states, more than 30% of African American men are unable to vote (Manza & Uggen, 2006), and research has determined that African American men with a criminal record are significantly less likely than African American men without a criminal record and Caucasian men with a criminal record to be offered employment (Pager, 2003). African American women are also disproportionately impacted by policies related to
public housing, welfare benefits, and parental rights (Demleitner, 2002; Freudenberg, 2002; Levi & Appel, 2003). As such, parental rights are often terminated faster when parents are substance abusers, and this policy disproportionately affects minority women as evidenced by the large number of minority children involved with the child welfare system (Levi & Appel, 2003). Rose and Martin (2008) highlighted the consequences of the disproportionate impact of collateral consequences on minorities, and suggested that state and federal policies greatly reduce the ability of minority populations to obtain resources and the political power needed to promote community change. Thus, it is important to take these factors into account when examining the impact of state policies on ex-offender populations.

**Voting**

States have the right to implement policies that restrict the voting rights of ex-offenders. Given the wide variability in state policies, some states, such as Alabama and Mississippi, revoke voting rights of felons forever (Rose & Martin, 2008). Researchers have argued that limiting offenders voting rights reduces citizenship and weakens their ties to the community (Austin, 2005; Demleitner, 2002; Manza & Uggen, 2006; Uggen, et al., 2004; Uggen, 2007). Likewise, offenders have reported that they feel like ‘less of a citizen’ because they have lost the right to vote, even if for only while incarcerated (Cardinale, 2004; Uggen, et al., 2004).

Qualitative interviews with ex-offenders suggested 40% had voted prior to their felony conviction, but few were able to vote after their conviction.
Importantly, less than 10% knew about or were educated about their voting rights by court or parole staff (Cardinale, 2004). Given the large number of offenders returning to impoverished, concentrated areas, scholars have also examined how disenfranchisement affects the voting behavior of non-felon community members. For example, Bowers and Preuhs (2009) examined the impact of disenfranchisement laws on the political participation of non-felons and found that disenfranchisement laws greatly reduced the likelihood of voting in Black communities that were disproportionately affected by large rates of arrest, incarceration, and reentry.

**Employment and Education**

One area that is central to offender reintegration and is heavily impacted by restrictive policies is employment. Several studies have documented the impact of a criminal record on an offenders’ ability to obtain and maintain employment (Holzer, et al., 2001; Pager, 2003; Stoll & Bushway, 2007). Most states allow potential employers to ask about arrests that did not lead to conviction, as well as for information on criminal convictions regardless of how long ago they occurred (Archer & Williams, 2006; Harris & Keller, 2005; Legal Action Center, 2009). Thus, individuals with a criminal record may have to disclose their criminal histories to employers regardless of their guilt or how long ago the offense occurred.

A criminal record may also greatly limit employment opportunities and career choices as many states restrict occupational licenses for individuals with a criminal record (Kethineni & Falcone, 2007; Pager, 2003; Pager, et al., 2009). In
addition, reporting a criminal record on an employment application has been found to reduce the likelihood of a future job offer (Pager, 2003), however; the relationship between a criminal record and workplace crime is unclear (Harris & Keller, 2005; Kurlychek, Brame & Bushway, 2007). Pager and colleagues (2009) also found that personal contact with potential employers may act as a mediator to the hiring process, and that employers who were sympathetic to ex-offenders’ were more likely to extend an offer of employment. Research has frequently reported mixed results on employers’ willingness to hire ex-offenders and it appears that there is some discrepancy between what employers say they will do and what they actually do (Homant & Kennedy, 1982). Albright and Furjin (1996) found that many employers had a neutral attitude about hiring ex-offenders, however; as an ex-offender applicants’ education level increased, so did willingness to hire.

Several programs and strategies have been developed to increase the employment prospects of ex-offenders. For example, individuals with a criminal history are able to be bonded by the federal government, and employers of ex-offenders are eligible for a tax incentive (Kethineni & Falcone, 2007). Some states have also implemented “fair hiring practices,” however these laws only apply to occupations from which ex-offenders are not already excluded (Harris & Keller, 2005). Research has demonstrated that the use of government programs as an incentive to hire ex-offenders does increase employers’ willingness to hire (Albright & Furjin, 1996). Unfortunately, few studies have demonstrated that
government implemented employment initiatives increase the actual employment of ex-offenders (Jacobs, McGahey & Minion, 1984; Love, 2005).

Educational opportunities are also limited for offenders while incarcerated and upon release to the community. While incarcerated, offenders are not eligible to receive Pell Grants to help pay for secondary educational programs (Erisman & Contardo, 2005). Upon release, ex-offenders are ineligible for federal financial aid programs if they were convicted of a drug offense while previously receiving financial aid (Legal Action Center, 2009). It should be noted that the above policy was changed in 2005: prior to 2005, all ex-offenders with a drug conviction were ineligible for federal financial aid unless they were able to prove participation in substance abuse treatment programming (Legal Action Center, 2009). Although the policy has changed and increased educational opportunities for ex-offenders, many may be unaware of their eligibility for student aid. University policies may also negatively impact the educational opportunities for individuals with a criminal background. In a personal narrative, Oliver (2010) discussed the impact of his felony conviction on his ability to complete a doctoral program in a Southern university. A policy that prohibited anyone with a felony record from working at the university resulted in the loss of his stipend and tuition assistance (Oliver, 2010). Therefore, it is important to address and reduce the barriers to education for ex-offenders and to provide knowledge about the educational opportunities available to this population.
Criminal Records

Over the past ten years, there has been an increase in the availability and accessibility of criminal records and other background information. Research has examined how the accessibility of criminal records impacts the likelihood of future offending (Kurlychek, Brame & Bushway, 2006; Kurlychek, Brame & Bushway, 2007). Although maintaining public, easily accessed criminal records may increase public safety, research has noted that risk for recidivism peaks shortly after release from prison, and then is gradually reduced (Kurlychek, et al., 2007). Several studies have demonstrated that immediately after an arrest, a criminal record does predict future offending; however, after a period of six or seven years, the risk of a new offense is similar to or less than that of individuals with no prior record (Kurlychek, et al., 2006; Kurlychek, et al., 2007). These findings indicate that the use and accessibility of criminal records should be limited to a specific time period that reflects an offenders’ risk for reoffense.

Housing

There is a dearth of research on the impact of state-level housing policies on ex-offenders’ reentry and reintegration. Several researchers have postulated that a lack of housing increases ex-offenders likelihood of recidivism (Cowan & Fionda, 1994; Legal Action Center, 2009; Travis, 2002). States are able to use criminal histories to determine eligibility for public housing, such as Section 8, and many states consider arrests that did not lead to a conviction in their eligibility criteria (Legal Action Center, 2009). As such, research has postulated
that housing restrictions not only negatively affect ex-offenders, but also their families and communities (Clear, et al., 2001).

**Strategies to Reduce Policy Restrictions**

In order to address the negative impact of policy-level variables on the reentry and reintegration processes, scholars have suggested several strategies (Lucken & Ponte, 2008; Mauer, 2005; Petersilia, 2004; Pinard, 2010; Travis, 2002; Uggen, 2007). Uggen (2007) recommended that policy-makers reduce the number of restrictive policies that impact ex-offenders and also develop alternative sentencing strategies to reduce the number of individuals with criminal records. Travis (2002) suggested that collateral consequences be addressed through visibility, proportionality, and individualized justice, with an overarching goal of supporting community reintegration. Scholars have also argued that policies should use strategies to enhance the dignity of offenders, tailor the collateral consequences to the individual offense, and analyze the racially disproportionate impact of these consequences (Pinard, 2010; Simonson, 2006).

Additional research has articulated that the language of policies that restrict ex-offenders opportunities need to be made clear as the language of the law is often vague (Lucken & Ponte, 2008). Finally, it has been suggested that time-limits be placed on the use of criminal records in hiring decisions as the risk for reoffense decreases over time (Pager, 2006).

The ‘Ban the Box’ campaign is an example of a strategy that was designed to increase employment opportunities for ex-offenders. This campaign advocates for the removal of inquiry about criminal records on employment applications in
order to reduce discrimination against applicants with a criminal record (National H. I. R. E. Network, 2011). Employers who participate in this initiative are prohibited from inquiring or checking criminal backgrounds until a tentative offer of employment has been made (Henry & Jacobs, 2007). However, this initiative does have limitations, as implementation often affects only public, city-level job opportunities, and only applies to ex-offenders who are employment-ready and qualified for a position (Henry & Jacobs, 2007).

One promising policy approach designed to address the multiple issues associated with prisoner reentry was The Second Chance Act. The Second Chance Act was a major advancement in federal policy for addressing gaps in the transition from prison to the community, as a primary goal of this legislation was to provide funding for programs, services, and research designed to help reduce recidivism. Pogorzelski and colleagues (2005) emphasized that an additional objective of the Second Chance Act was to require states to revisit the policies that adversely impact prisoner reentry and reintegration, and to review and modify them to ease offenders’ transition to the community. Recent research has highlighted seven areas that continue to be adversely affected by state policies: housing, employment, public benefits, voting, parenting, driver’s licenses, and access to criminal records (Legal Action Center, 2009) in addition to holding office, gun ownership, privacy, and the right to serve on a jury (Ewald, 2012). Unfortunately, the penalties imposed on ex-offenders by state and federal policies have minimally, if at all, been modified.
The intersection of reentry policies and challenges to prisoner reentry suggest that policies create an additional, overarching component that influences successful community reintegration. One factor that may underlie the barriers to prisoner reentry and state and federal policies is the stigma associated with involvement in the criminal justice system. Thus, the next section outlines stigma and labeling theory, with specific attention to the impact of stigma and labeling on ex-offenders.

**Stigma**

Stigma is an interdisciplinary concept that has garnered much attention in the literature, especially in the fields of psychology, sociology, and criminology. In the most widely cited definition of stigma, Goffman (1963) asserted that stigma is an “attribute that is deeply discrediting” that “reduces the whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one” (p. 3). Several authors have expanded upon this definition and have conceptualized stigma as inclusive of social context as well as an individual’s social identity (Crocker, Major & Steele, 1998; Link & Phelan, 2001). For example, Crocker and colleagues (1998) explained that “a person who is stigmatized is a person whose social identity, or membership in some social category, calls into question his or her full humanity-the person is devalued, spoiled or flawed in the eyes of others” (p. 504). Further, Link and Phelan (2001) conceptualized stigma “…when elements of labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination co-occur in a power situation” (p. 367).

Goffman (1963) further classified stigma into three different types: tribal identities, abominations of the body, and blemishes of individual character. Tribal
identities are the racial/ethnic, religious, or national groups that one is born into and that society may regard as flawed (Goffman, 1963). Abominations of the body refer to physical deformities and illnesses that are generally visible, such as physical disabilities, while blemishes of individual character are moral transgressions, or weaknesses of will that are often used to describe substance abusers, criminals, prostitutes, and individuals with mental illness (Goffman, 1963). Within this context, blemishes of individual character are often referred to as concealable stigmas, or stigmas that are not visible to the naked eye (Goffman, 1963; LeBel, 2008; Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009). Goffman (1963) further asserted that concealable stigmas are, in a sense, more discrediting to the moral character of the individual than tribal identities or abominations of the body, because these stigmas are believed to be the result of an internal character flaw. Quinn and Chaudoir (2009) provided empirical support for this assertion, and demonstrated that an individual’s belief that a concealable stigma would be devalued or discriminated against by others led to increased depression and anxiety among college students.

Although stigma has been a well-researched area, there have been two major critiques of theory: 1) most theories are uninformed by the actual lived experiences of the individual, and 2) the theory has an individualistic focus and neglects the relationship between social and individual factors (Link & Phelan, 2001). In response to these critiques, research has attempted to expand upon and evaluate perceived stigma from the perspective of the individual (Link & Phelan, 2001). As such, perceived or anticipated stigma has been measured through an
assessment of what an individual believes ‘most people’ think about a stigmatized
group or how an individual believes society perceives a group to which the
individual belongs (Link & Phelan, 2001; LeBel, 2008). Perceived stigma has also
been referred to as ‘stereotype awareness’ in that members of a group are aware
of the negative attributes associated with their group membership (Major &
O’Brien, 2005). Another form of stigma is enacted stigma, in which individuals
report actual lived experiences of rejection or discrimination due to their group
membership (LeBel, 2008).

Concealable stigmas have an adverse impact on the well-being of
individuals and groups. As such, research has shown that this type of stigma may
lead to negative psychological and social consequences among individuals with
mental illness (e. g. Link, Cullen, Struening, Shrout & Dohrenwend, 1989;
Markowitz, 1998), and HIV/AIDS (e. g. Herek, 1999), as well as the poor
(Reutter, Stewart, Veenstra, Love, Raphael & Makwarimba, 2009), substance
abusers (Fortney, Mukerjee, Curran, Forney, Han & Booth, 2004; Luoma,
Twohig, Waltz, Hayes, Roget, Padilla, et al., 2007; Radcliffe & Stevens, 2008),
and offenders (Chiricos, et al., 2007; van Olphen, et al., 2009; Winnick & Bodkin,
2008). For example, Reutter and colleagues (2009) found that individuals living
in poverty in Canada often believed that society viewed them as a financial
burden, lazy, and irresponsible and often coped with this stigma by withdrawing
from social interactions with others. Likewise, Radcliffe and Stevens (2008)
examined heroin users’ perceived stigma for their substance use and found that
many heroin users did not report that they had a substance abuse problem because

they did not want to identify with the term ‘thieving junkie scumbag.’

Consequently, individuals who perceive stigma may be limited by the negative attributes of the stereotypes associated with the label assigned to their status.

One mechanism by which stigma operates is through labeling an individual with a negative attribute or stereotype. Labeling theory was developed as an attempt to explain behavior that deviated from social norms (Goffman, 1963; Lemert, 1967; Scheff, 1966). Original labeling theorists suggested that carrying a negative label would elicit negative responses from community members and would thus lead the labeled individual to perform future deviant behavior (Lemert, 1967; Scheff, 1966). Research has demonstrated carrying a negatively perceived label may often lead to future behavior that is closely aligned with the attributes of the label (Chiricos, et al., 2007; Golembeski & Fullilove, 2005; Harris, 1975; Link, Struening, Neese-Todd, Asmussen & Phelan, 2001; Markowitz, 1998; Schnittker & John, 2007). For example, Harris (1975) found that labeling offenders negatively impacted their perceptions of life chances, which, in turn, promoted their participation in future deviance.

Labeling theory had been highly criticized because it asserted that there was a causal relationship between deviant behavior and the label (Link, et al., 1989). In response to this critique, Link and colleagues (1989) proposed a five-step Modified Labeling Approach for individuals in treatment for mental illness that did not assume a causal link between labeling and future deviance, and instead, highlighted the consequences and outcomes of labeling. Within this model, it is recognized that not all labeled individuals will internalize the negative
attributes of the label (Link, et al., 1989). For individuals who do internalize the negative attributes of the label, Link and colleagues (1989) outlined three coping strategies that individuals who were mentally ill frequently used to manage their stigmatized identities: secrecy, education (preventative telling) and withdrawal. Secrecy refers to hiding one’s status, education refers to openly disclosing one’s status, and withdrawal refers to avoiding all social interaction to prevent disclosure (Link, et al., 1989). Research has found that the use of the withdrawal coping strategy may have a negative impact on individuals’ social ties and interactions (Perlick, Rosenheck, Clarkin, Sirey, Salahi, Struening, et al., 2001).

Link and Phelan (2001) argued that stigma and labeling were the result of several inter-related components. First, the label assigned to an individual is a negative attribute that is affixed by the dominant social, cultural, and political group, thus, the social norms and standards determine which labels carry stigma. The second component of stigma occurs when labeled differences are linked to widely-held stereotypes about the label. In this context, it is important to note that stereotypes are often automatic and operate under an individuals’ conscious awareness, thus, many individuals may not be aware of the stereotypes that they hold (Fiske, 2004). Third, language is used to separate the labeled (them) from the non-labeled (us) by linking the label to negative attributes. Finally, if the label is affixed and linked to stereotypes, the labeled individual will then experience social status loss and discrimination which may result in negative consequences such as social exclusion. Thus, individuals experience stigma when the fact that
they are labeled, set apart, and linked to undesirable characteristics leads them to experience status loss and discrimination (Link & Phelan, 2001).

**Stigma and Ex-Offenders**

The label of ‘ex-con’ or ‘criminal’ has been cited as one of the most negative labels an individual can carry due to society’s negative construal of criminal behavior (Albrecht, Levy & Walker, 1986) and because of the negative stereotypes associated with this label (Major & O’Brien, 2005). Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) demonstrated that community members hold negative stereotypes about ex-offenders and that these stereotypes are greatly influenced by political affiliation and confidence in the court system. Specifically, individuals with conservative political views and high confidence in the court system hold more negative stereotypes, such as perceived dangerousness, than individuals with liberal political views and less confidence in the court system. In addition, several qualitative studies have discussed the negative impact of stigma on offenders’ reentry process (Cardinale, 2004; Harding, 2003; Tiburcio, 2008; Uggen, et al., 2004; van Olphen, et al., 2009). For example, Harding (2003) found that ex-offenders managed their stigmatized identities in employment settings through use of strategies such as ‘no disclosure,’ ‘full disclosure,’ and ‘conditional disclosure.’ Unfortunately, these strategies did not all lead to positive outcomes, specifically in employment based settings: ‘no disclosure’ often led to being fired from the job when the criminal history was discovered; ‘full disclosure’ sometimes resulted in losing opportunities; and ‘conditional disclosure’ had variable results in that it was based on the strength of the relationship between the
employer and ex-offender, as well as the policies that were in place in the employment setting (Harding, 2003).

Interestingly, almost every position paper or empirical study on prisoner reentry and reintegration has highlighted the adverse impact of stigma related to the ex-offender label on the reentry process (Bahr, et al., 2005; Dodge & Pogrebin, 2001; Hartwell, 2004; LeBel, 2011; Mauer, 2005; Petersilia, 2004; Schneider & McKim, 2003; Schnittiker & John, 2007; Severance, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; Uggen, et al., 2004; van Olphen, et al., 2006). Qualitative studies have revealed that ex-offenders would value interventions to help them to address stigma, and would appreciate knowledge about the barriers they will face due to a criminal conviction (Shivy, et al., 2007). Schneider and McKim (2003) noted that stigma also greatly impacts the success of individuals who are on probation, as they found that probationers reported feeling stigmatized by employers, law enforcement, and community members, however; positive support from family and friends reduced perceived stigmatization. Furthermore, parolees frequently perceived that their employment opportunities were limited because they were a felon (Bahr, et al., 2005). In a cross-sectional study of ex-offenders in a reentry program, LeBel (2011) found that most ex-offenders perceived stigma related to being an ex-offender and reported several rejection experiences, namely in the areas of employment and housing, due to their ex-offender status (LeBel, 2011). Research has also found that male inmates reported high perceived stigma for the label ‘ex-con’ and high perceived stigma predicted endorsement of adverse coping strategies, such as secrecy and withdrawal (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008).
Some support for labeling theory has been provided through longitudinal research studies on juvenile delinquency (Bernburg, Krohn & Rivera, 2006; Klein, 1986). These studies indicate that labeling a juvenile as a delinquent predicts future offending (Bernburg, et al., 2006; Klein, 1986). Furthermore, research has demonstrated that labeling an individual as a ‘felon’ predicted higher recidivism than not receiving the ‘felon’ label (Chiricos, et al., 2007).

Given the dearth of empirical research in this area, there is a need to further examine perceived stigma and coping strategies among community-based, ex-offender populations (LeBel, 2011; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008).

The Modified Labeling Approach (Link, et al., 1989) is a five-step model (Beliefs; Official Labeling; Response; Consequences; Vulnerability) that outlined the labeling process for individuals who were mentally ill (Link, et al., 1989). Recently, this model has been applied to incarcerated men (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008), thus it may provide a conceptual framework to examine the adverse implications of stigma among ex-offenders. For example, first, an individual (non-offender) internalizes socially constructed ideas about the ‘ex-offender’ label and then perceives ex-offenders’ as devalued, or worth less in society (Step 1; Beliefs). If the individual is arrested and/or convicted of a crime, the individual receives a formal label (Step 2; Official Label), and the individual who has now been labeled an ‘offender’ will respond with a coping response of secrecy, education, or withdrawal (Step 3; Response). Consequently, if the ‘offender’ endorses the secrecy or withdrawal strategies, he or she would be less likely to receive the social supports and other resources necessary for reentry (Step 4;
Consequences) and without the needed supports and resources upon release, the ‘ex-offender’ would be more likely to recidivate (Step 5; Vulnerability).

In sum, stigma may have a negative impact on members of groups that are stigmatized, which includes individuals with past criminal justice system involvement. For those who have been formally labeled as a ‘felon’ or ‘misdemeanant,’ stigma may contribute to negative outcomes, such as social avoidance and exclusion as well as increased recidivism rates. However, there is a lack of research that explores outcomes beyond recidivism rates among ex-offender populations. Thus, additional research is needed in order to fully comprehend the intersection among prisoner reentry and reintegration, reentry policies, and perceived stigma and coping strategies among ex-offenders.
Rationale

Over the past 30 years, the United States has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of individuals who have been involved in the criminal justice system. Consequently, more than 47 million individuals have a criminal record (Lucken & Ponte, 2008), more than 1.6 million are incarcerated (Sabol & West, 2010), 5 million are under community supervision in any given year (Glaze, et al., 2010), and 12 million cycle through the county jail system (Minton, 2010). Furthermore, almost two-thirds of those who are incarcerated will return to prison or jail within the first three years following release (Langan & Levin, 2003). Given the large numbers of individuals involved in the criminal justice system, research has argued that support should be provided to offenders as they transition from prison to the community (Petersilia, 2001; Travis, et al., 2001).

Prisoner reentry has gained much attention, as proponents of this approach argue that incarcerated individuals have many needs that are not addressed while incarcerated or upon return to the community which may perpetuate the cycle of criminal justice system involvement (Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; Visher & Travis, 2005). Research has demonstrated that offenders frequently have low levels of educational attainment, limited employment histories, untreated substance abuse issues, and lack of housing (Harlow, 2003; Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001). Unfortunately, few offenders will participate in programs while incarcerated (Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001), and will return to the community with limited community supports (Clear, et al., 2001).
The ‘collateral consequences,’ and ‘invisible punishments’ of a criminal conviction are the state and federal social policies that compound the challenges associated with prisoner reentry (Legal Action Center, 2009; Mauer, 2005; Travis, 2002). For example, state and federal-level policies severely impact offenders’ opportunities for employment, housing, financial benefits, and education. Furthermore, the impact of these policies is challenging to measure, as the policies are imposed and implemented differently across states (Buckler & Travis, 2003; Burton, Cullen & Travis, 1987; Love, 2006; Olivares, et al., 1996). However, several researchers have documented the manner in which policies are differentially imposed and have suggested strategies to reduce the impact of these policies on ex-offenders’ opportunities (Mauer, 2005; Petersilia, 2004; Pinard, 2010; Travis, et al., 2001; Uggen, et al., 2004). For example, the Second Chance Act of 2007 provided funding for prisoner reentry and reintegration support. In addition, this national policy initiative required states to revisit their reentry policies; however, there is little evidence that states have done so (Pogorzelski, et al., 2005).

Although the limitations of reentry policies span a large area, two areas adversely affect by social policies, employment and housing, are integral to successful community reintegration. Research on prisoner reentry frequently discusses the impact of employment challenges on ex-offenders, as they often have limited work histories and are not prepared for the job market (Bahr, et al., 2005; Holzer, et al., 2003; Makarios, et al., 2010; Pager, 2003; Shivy, et al., 2007; Travis, et al., 2001; Uggen, et al., 2004). Furthermore, state policies often require
that ex-offenders report their criminal justice involvement on an employment application, which limits employment opportunities (Pager, 2003; Kurlychek, et al., 2006). Many offenders have also reported that they have unstable housing upon release to the community (Cowan & Fionda, 1994; Greenberg & Rosenheck, 2008; Pogorzelski, et al., 2005; Roman & Travis, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; Weiser, et al., 2009) which is compounded by policies that limit housing funds for individuals with a criminal record (Ewald, 2012; Legal Action Center, 2009; Travis, et al., 2001). Thus, there is a need to empirically demonstrate the relationship between state-level policies, employment status, and housing benefits among ex-offenders in the community.

Research has demonstrated that stigma may impact offender reentry and reintegration and be exacerbated by reentry policies. For example, studies have demonstrated that ex-offenders’ perceive stigma related to the ex-offender label (Harding, 2003; LeBel, et al., 2008; LeBel, 2011; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008) and that perceived stigma often leads to the use of adverse coping strategies (Harding, 2003; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). Furthermore, the use of adverse coping strategies, such as secrecy and withdrawal, may negatively affect ex-offenders social supports and community ties which may hinder attempts at successful reintegration (Perlick, et al., 2001; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). Unfortunately, there have been few studies that have examined the relationship between perceived stigma and coping strategies among ex-offenders.

Criminal justice scholars have called for research to examine ex-offender outcomes beyond indicators of recidivism (Lynch, 2006; Travis, et al., 2001) and
to integrate the social and community context with individual characteristics in
order to investigate the interactions between individual and community level
variables (Fleisher & Decker, 2001). Thus, the primary purpose of the present
study is to examine the impact of state reentry policies on ex-offenders’ perceived
stigma and the strategies they use to cope with that stigma. This study is grounded
in labeling theory (Link, et al., 1989), research on the impact of stigmatization on
ex-offenders’ reentry process (Chiricos, et al., 2007; LeBel, 2011; Lemert, 1967;
Pager, 2003; Uggen, et al., 2004; van Olphen, et al., 2009; Winnick & Bodkin,
2008) and research that documents the negative implications of restrictive state
policies on successful community reentry (Archer & Williams, 2006; Mauer,
2005; Pinard, 2006; Pogorzelski, et al., 2005; Travis, 2002). This will be the first
national study to examine the impact of state policies on individual outcomes
among a community-based sample of ex-offenders.
Statement of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: High perceived stigma for the ‘ex-offender’ label will predict increased use of adverse coping strategies (secrecy and withdrawal) and low use of education.

Hypothesis 2: State policies will moderate the relationship between perceived stigma and stigma coping strategies.

Hypothesis 3: Individuals who live in states with high policy restrictions for employment and housing will be less likely to be employed or to be receiving rental subsidies for housing than individuals in low policy restriction states.
CHAPTER II

METHOD

This exploratory study obtained a national, cross-sectional sample of men and women who lived in sober living homes throughout the United States and identified as ‘ex-offenders’ to demonstrate the relationship between perceived stigma, coping strategies, and state-level reentry policies. Research studies which examine policy-level variables on individual-level outcomes are often cross-sectional (Hatzenbueler, McLaughlin, Keyes & Hasin, 2010; Wang & Mears, 2010).

Participants in the present study were current residents of Oxford House. Oxford House is a national network of substance abuse recovery homes that provide a stable living environment for more than 12,000 individuals across 1,612 beds (Oxford House Inc., 2012). The only requirement for residence in an Oxford House is the desire to remain clean and sober, and criteria for continued residence include rent payment and non-disruptive behavior (Oxford House Inc., 2012). A unique aspect of Oxford House is that there are no staff members to oversee daily operations: house members assume roles within the house and are responsible for daily management (Oxford House Inc., 2012). Research has found that Oxford House residents have higher employment rates, as well as lower substance use and criminal recidivism (Jason et al., 2006). These outcomes are more pronounced for individuals who reside in the setting for six months or more (Jason et al., 2006). Prior research has shown approximately 80% of Oxford House members have had prior criminal justice involvement (Jason et al., 2007).
Overview

The total sample consisted of 508 men and women who lived in Oxford Houses located in 34 states. Most participants were women ($N = 344; 67.7\%$), White ($N = 366; 72.0\%$), and had completed at least some college ($N = 314; 61.9\%$). On average, participants were 39.85 years old ($SD = 10.74$). Participants reported that they had been in recovery from substance use for an average of 27.46 months ($SD = 41.24$; Median = 13.00) and had lived in Oxford House for an average of 13.21 months ($SD = 17.85$; Median = 6.00). Of the total sample, most ($N = 428; 84.6\%$) had been arrested at least one time. Of those who had been arrested, approximately 90% ($N = 384$) had been convicted of a crime, and 76% ($N = 327$) had been incarcerated.

For inclusion in the present analyses, participants were asked to self-identify as an ex-offender by answering “I consider myself to be an ex-offender” (Yes/No). Thus, although 84.6% ($N = 428$) of the total sample had been arrested at least one time, only 64% of those who had been arrested self-identified as an ‘ex-offender’ ($N = 272$) and completed the perceived stigma and coping strategies measures in the survey. This question was included based on stigma theory which claims that an individuals’ perceived social identity is an important characteristic of internalized stigma (Crocker, et al., 1998) as well as the postulation that not all individuals who receive a label will internalize the negative attributes related to that label (Link, et al., 1989; Link & Phelan, 2001). No definition for the term ‘ex-offender’ was provided.
There were no significant gender ($\chi^2(1, N = 497) = 1.43, p = 0.23$), ethnic/racial ($\chi^2(1, N = 492) = 1.92, p = 0.86$), marital status ($\chi^2(1, N = 495) = 4.39, p = 0.49$) or age ($t (490) = 0.22, p = 0.83$) differences between individuals who identified as ‘ex-offenders’ and individuals who did not. However, individuals who identified as ‘ex-offenders’ were more likely to have completed a vocational training program (9.6% vs. 3.6%) or their GED (10.3% vs. 5.4%) and were less likely to have graduated college (16.5% vs. 25.6%) than individuals who did not identify as ‘ex-offenders,’ $\chi^2(1, N = 495) = 16.50, p < 0.05$. See Table 1 for a comparison of demographic variables between individuals who did and did not identify as an ‘ex-offender.’ The remainder of this study describes the data from the subset of 272 individuals who identified as ‘ex-offenders’ and completed the following measures.
Table 1

Comparison of overall demographics and criminal history variables for ex-offenders and non-offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Ex-offenders</th>
<th></th>
<th>Not offenders</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biracial</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Married</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legally Married</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living as married</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;8th grade</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12th grade, no diploma</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.7*</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Training</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5.3*</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12.5*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant difference at p < 0.05 level.
Description of Sample

Participants were mostly women ($N = 176; 64.7\%$) and reported an average age of 39.80 years ($SD = 10.59$). More than half of participants had completed at least some college or had a college degree ($N = 154; 56.6\%$). Participants were White ($N = 195; 71.7\%$), African American ($N = 48; 17.6\%$), American Indian ($N = 11; 4.0\%$), Biracial ($N = 10; 3.7\%$), Asian ($N = 5; 1.8\%$) and Latino/a ($N = 3; 1.1\%$). Thus, approximately 28.3% ($N = 77$) were of minority status. Almost half of participants had never been married ($N = 126; 46.3\%$) and more than one-third were divorced ($N = 91; 33.5\%$). On average, participants had been in recovery for 25.88 months ($SD = 35.25; Median = 13.25$) and had lived in Oxford House for 12.45 months ($SD = 15.80; Median = 6.22$). As shown in Table 2, participants represented 31 states (See Table 2 for an outline of gender and ethnicity by state).

Participants reported 12.18 arrests on average ($SD = 19.95; Median = 6.00$). Almost all participants had been convicted of a crime ($N = 264; 97.1\%$): 67.3% had been convicted of a misdemeanor ($N = 183$) and/or 69.1% had a felony conviction ($N = 188$) while 39.0% had both misdemeanor and felony convictions ($N = 106$). Most participants had been incarcerated ($N = 240; 88.2\%$) for an average of 28.50 months ($SD = 46.79; Median = 12.00$). Approximately one-fifth of participants ($N = 51; 18.8\%$) had been convicted of a violent offense and slightly more than one-third were on probation or parole ($N = 97; 35.7\%$) for an
**Table 2**

*Ex-Offender Sample by State, Gender, and Minority Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Minority</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AK</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NV</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TX</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>19.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>272</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
average of 32.58 months \( (SD = 27.26; \text{Median} = 24.00) \) at the time the study was completed. Participants reported that it had been an average of 54.16 months \( (SD = 65.15; \text{Median} = 31.00) \) since their last criminal conviction.

**Materials**

**Perceived Stigma**

The Devaluation/Discrimination scale (Link, et al., 1989) is a 12-item, 6-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, with no neutral point) that measures how ‘most people’ would respond to members of a stigmatized group. Scores are averaged, and high scores indicate high internalized stigma. The scale was created for use with individuals who had mental illness (Link, et al., 1989), and the label ‘mental illness’ was replaced with ‘ex-offender’ for this study. Several researchers previously modified this scale and replaced ‘mental illness’ with ‘addict’ (Luoma et al., 2007) or ‘ex-con’ (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). Participants average score on this scale was 3.82 \((SD = 0.79)\) which was significantly above the midpoint (3.5) of the scale, \( t (268) = 6.61, p < 0.01 \), and indicated high perceived stigma for the ‘ex-offender’ label. In the present study, reliability estimates for the Devaluation/Discrimination Scale were adequate \((\alpha = 0.83)\). See Table 3 below for item-level descriptive statistics for this scale.
Table 3

*Reverse coded item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Most people would accept an ex-offender as a close friend.*</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Most people believe that an ex-offender is just as intelligent as the average person.*</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Most people believe that an ex-offender is just as trust-worthy as the average person.*</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Most people would accept an ex-offender as a public school teacher.*</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Most people feel that being incarcerated is a sign of personal failure.</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Most people would not hire a rehabilitated ex-offender to take care of their children.</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Most people think less of a person who has been incarcerated.</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Most employers will hire an ex-offender if he or she is qualified for the job.*</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Most employers will pass over the application of an ex-offender in favor of another applicant.</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Most people in my community would treat an ex-offender like anyone else.*</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Most women would not date a man who is an ex-offender.</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Most people will not take an ex-offender's opinions seriously.</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Reverse coded item
**Stigma Coping Strategies**

The Stigma Management scale (Link, et al., 1989) is a 17-item, 6-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, with no neutral point) that assesses three coping strategies for perceived stigma: Secrecy (Questions 1-5), Education (Questions 6-10), and Withdrawal (Questions 11-17). Link and colleagues (1989) demonstrated the factorial validity of this scale, as all items loaded onto their respective factors, except for one item which loaded onto both the secrecy and withdrawal subscales. This item was included on the withdrawal subscale as it had a higher factor loading on that scale. Average scores were computed for each coping strategy, and a high score indicated high utilization of that strategy. Similar to the process described above, this scale was modified to use the term ‘ex-offender’ rather than ‘mental patient.’ In the present study, participants average Secrecy scores were 2.98 ($SD = 1.14$), Education scores were 4.06 ($SD = 1.07$), and Withdrawal scores were 3.00 ($SD = 0.97$). Secrecy, $t (263) = -7.39, p < 0.01$, and Withdrawal, $t (259) = -8.37, p < 0.01$, scores were significantly lower than the midpoint of the scale, while Education scores were significantly higher than the midpoint of 3.5, $t (261) = 8.40, p < 0.01$. Reliability estimates across the three subscales were sufficient, Secrecy $\alpha = 0.82$; Education $\alpha = 0.80$; and Withdrawal $\alpha = 0.76$, and higher than what has been found in previous studies (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). See Table 4 for item level descriptive statistics for this scale.
Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics for Stigma Management Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In order to get a job, an ex-offender will have to hide his or her history of incarceration.</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. There is no reason for a person to hide the fact that she was incarcerated at one time.*</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If you have been incarcerated, the best thing to do is to keep it a secret.</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. If I had a close relative who had been incarcerated, I would advise him or her not to tell anyone about it.</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I rarely feel the need to hide the fact that I have been incarcerated.</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I've found that it's best to help the people close to me understand what incarceration is like.</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. If I thought a friend was uncomfortable with me because I had been incarcerated, I would take it upon myself to educate him or her about my incarceration.</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. If I thought an employer felt uneasy hiring a person who had been incarcerated, I would try to make him or her understand that most ex-offenders are good workers.</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. After I entered prison/jail, I often found myself educating others about what it means to be an offender.</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I would participate in an organized effort or group to teach the public more about incarceration and the problems of people who are incarcerated.</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>It is easier for me to be friendly with people who have been incarcerated.</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>If I thought that someone I knew held negative opinions about ex-offenders, I would try to avoid him or her.</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>After being incarcerated, it’s a good idea to keep what you are thinking to yourself.</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>If I was looking for a job and received an application which asked about a history of incarceration, I wouldn’t fill it out.</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>If I thought an employer was reluctant to hire a person with a history of incarceration, I wouldn’t apply for the job.</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>If I believed that a person I knew thought less of me because I had been incarcerated, I would try to avoid him or her.</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>When I meet people for the first time, I make a special effort to keep the fact that I am an ex-offender to myself.</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Reverse coded item

State Level Data

State Collateral Sanctions Policy Scores (Ewald, 2012) were used to evaluate the restrictiveness of State-level policies for individuals with former criminal justice system involvement. This scale rated state policies in eight areas with six of these representing legal restrictions: voting, holding public office, eligibility for jury service, driver’s licenses, Temporary Assistance for Needy
Families (TANF) benefits, and gun ownership. The other two subscales reflected state laws relative to employment and availability of arrest/conviction data. Each state policy area was rated between 0 and 1, with 1 representing the most restrictive score, and composite scores were created by summing scores in the eight areas, with higher scores indicating more restrictions. Most subscales were scored at regular intervals (0, 0.33, 0.66, 1); however, based on wide variability among state policies, there was some deviation from this scoring procedure (Ewald, 2012). See Table 5 for the policy scoring system by state.

Ewald (2012) drew heavily from the Roadblocks to Reentry scale created by the Legal Action Center (2009) and the state policy descriptions by Love (2005) for the Employment, Driver’s License, and Voting subscales. Two subscales that were included on the Roadblocks to Reentry scale were excluded: Housing and Parenting. These exclusions were based on policies that are implemented at the state-level versus the federal, county, or city level. For example, Ewald (2012) argued that housing policies are better measured at the county-level, as counties are able to choose the restrictiveness of their policies. Local governments have the power to determine crimes that exclude individuals from qualifying for housing opportunities while federal law restricts individuals convicted of sex offenses and drug charges from housing program eligibility (Ewald, 2012).
Table 5

Collateral Sanctions Policy Scores by State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Jury</th>
<th>Hold Office</th>
<th>Voting</th>
<th>Gun</th>
<th>DL</th>
<th>TANF</th>
<th>Privacy</th>
<th>EMP</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>6.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>5.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Jury</th>
<th>Hold Office</th>
<th>Voting</th>
<th>Gun</th>
<th>DL</th>
<th>TANF</th>
<th>Privacy</th>
<th>EMP</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>5.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>5.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>6.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Validity

Ewald (2012) examined the correlations among each of the subscales and the total score and found that all subscales were positively related to the total policy score and that the Voting subscale was highly correlated with the total policy score. These correlations among the subscales and total policy scores are presented in Table 6. To further examine the validity of the Collateral Sanctions Policy Scores, the relationship between these scores and several publicly available databases of state-level criminal justice data were examined. Data were drawn from the Sentencing Project’s (2011) report on the
Table 6

*Correlations between Ewald Policy Scores and Subscale Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Policy Score</th>
<th>Jury</th>
<th>Hold Office</th>
<th>Voting</th>
<th>Gun</th>
<th>Driver’s License</th>
<th>TANF</th>
<th>Privacy</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Policy Score</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.64**</td>
<td>0.67**</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.48**</td>
<td>0.54**</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>0.31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold Office</td>
<td>0.56**</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.42</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.40**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver’s License</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Denotes significance at the 0.05 level
**Denotes significance at the 0.01 level
percentage of individuals’ barred from voting in each state in 2010 (disenfranchisement rate) as well as the Bureau of Justice Statistics report of the number of incarcerated persons per 100,000 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009). In addition, data from the Bureau of Labor for state unemployment rates in 2009 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009) as well as the percentage of individuals’ living below the poverty level in each state from the Census data collection of 2008 were included in analyses. State-level data was chosen to be between the years 2005-2009 (except for the Disenfranchisement Rate, as there was no earlier publication available) as several of the Collateral Sanctions Policy subscale scores were derived from policies that were in place during that time period.

As shown in Table 7, total Collateral Consequences Policy scores significantly and positively correlated with State Disenfranchisement Rates (Sentencing Project, 2011) which indicated that as policy restriction scores increased, so did the percentage of individuals in each state who were restricted by voting policies, \( r(49) = 0.66, p < 0.01 \). The Voting \( (r(49) = 0.77, p < 0.01) \) and Holding Office \( (r(49) = 0.62, p < 0.01) \) subscales were also significantly and positively correlated with State Disenfranchisement Rates. Total Collateral Consequences policy scores \( (r(50) = 0.34, p < 0.05) \) and Holding Office scores \( (r(50) = 0.37, p < 0.05) \) significantly and positively correlated with the percentage of the population below the poverty rate. Total Collateral Consequences policy scores \( (r(50) = 0.60, p < 0.01) \), Holding Office scores \( (r(50) = 0.54, p < 0.01) \), Voting Scores \( (r(50) = 0.48, p < 0.01) \), and Driver’s License scores \( (r(50) = 0.34, p < 0.05) \) were significantly and positively associated with state imprisonment.
rates per 100,000 people (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009). There were no significant correlations between the Policy scores and 2009 state unemployment rates.

For the purpose of the present study, Policy total and subscale scores from 29 states (Washington D.C. was excluded from the Policy Score) were used as state-level predictors of individual-level outcomes. As shown in Table 8, Policy scores from the 29 states were similar to the 20 states not included in analyses. T-tests were performed to assess for differences in average scores across overall Roadblocks scores and subscale scores. No significant differences in average total or subscale Policy scores were found between the sample of 29 states and the 20 states not included in the present sample.
Table 7

*Correlations among Policy Scores and State level criminal justice data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>JU</th>
<th>HO</th>
<th>VO</th>
<th>GU</th>
<th>DL</th>
<th>TA</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>EM</th>
<th>DR</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>IMP</th>
<th>UNE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Policy Score</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.64**</td>
<td>0.67**</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.48**</td>
<td>0.54**</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>0.31*</td>
<td>0.66**</td>
<td>0.34*</td>
<td>0.60**</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury (JU)</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold Office (HO)</td>
<td>0.56**</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.62**</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.54**</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting (VO)</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.77**</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.48**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun (GU)</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
<td>-0.32*</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver’s License (DL)</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.34*</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF (TA)</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy (PR)</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (EMP)</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disenfranchisement Rate (DR)</td>
<td>0.36*</td>
<td>0.56**</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate (PO)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.64**</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisonment Rate (IMP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate (UNE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Denotes significance at the 0.05 level
**Denotes significance at the 0.01 level
Table 8

Comparison of means, standard deviations, and range for 20 states and 29 states

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Policy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>6.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold Office</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.92</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>-1.49</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver’s License</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-1.38</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Policy</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>6.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold Office</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver’s License</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Employment

One question, “Are you currently working,” was included to evaluate participants’ employment status (Yes/No; See Appendix A). At the time of the study, approximately 60% of participants ($N = 163$) were working either part-time ($N = 47; 28.8\%$) or full-time ($N = 115; 71.0\%$).

Housing

Participants were asked “How is your rent currently being paid,” and were asked to choose from the following answer categories: Self, Disability/SSI, Family/Significant Other, Rental Assistance Program, and Other (See Appendix A). Most participants were current in their rent payments ($N = 226; 83.1\%$). As shown in Table 9 below, rent was paid by several sources, with self-payment the most frequently endorsed ($N = 176; 64.7\%$) and family/significant others the second most frequently endorsed ($N = 32; 11.8\%$) source of financial support. Few participants reported that their rent was paid by a Rental Assistance Program ($N = 14; 5.1\%$)

Table 9

*Participants’ sources of rental income*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent Paid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>64.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSI/Disability</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/Significant Other</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Assistance Program</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Procedure

Data were drawn from two studies developed and implemented by the doctoral student called: “The Women’s Empowerment Study” (Hunter, Jason & Keys, 2013) and the “Men and Stigma Study.” Both studies utilized the same data collection procedures and were approved by the university Internal Review Board under exempt status. First, Oxford Houses listed in the Oxford House directory (Oxford House Inc., 2013) were telephoned and house members were asked to participate in the men’s or women’s study. Oxford Houses and recruiters with publicly available email addresses and who had Facebook accounts were also emailed and asked to participate in this study. Participants were offered an incentive of a raffle entry (20, $25.00 VISA gift cards for women and an additional 20, $25.00 VISA gift cards for men). Both surveys were anonymous, as participant contact information was not linked to the survey data.

Interested house members chose to participate online or by postal mail. Participants who participated by email provided their email address to the researcher during the phone call, and were then emailed a link to a secured online survey hosted by Survey Monkey (Survey Monkey, 2009). Most participants were interested in participating by mail and were mailed survey packets which included instructions, an information sheet, the survey, a separate sheet of paper for the raffle, and a postage-paid return envelope to return the survey and raffle information. Data were also collected for the Women and Empowerment study at the Oxford House National Convention in September of 2009 and Oxford House
recruiters who were employed by DePaul University assisted with data collection from Oxford Houses in Illinois.

**Data Collection Strategies**

Of the overall sample (508 participants), 91 (17.9%) completed the survey at the Oxford House Convention of 2009 or through an Oxford House recruiter; 148 (29.1%) participants completed the survey online; and 269 (53.0%) participants completed the study through the mail. There were significant differences across data collection strategies, as men were more likely than women to complete the survey online (55.0% vs. 16.6%) than through a recruiter (12.8% vs. 20.3%) or by mail (31.7% vs. 67.7%), $X^2(2, N = 508) = 81.91, p < 0.01$. There were differences among educational level and data collection strategy, $X^2(14, N = 506) = 29.22, p = 0.01$. Specifically, completing the survey with recruiter assistance was associated with not completing high school (34.1%) and not associated with a college degree (9.7%). Completing the survey online was associated with having a college degree (37.9%) or a graduate degree (75.0%) and was not associated with having less than a high school diploma (13.6%). In addition, Whites were more likely to complete the survey online (32.5%) than Minorities (13.1%) and Minorities were more likely to complete the survey with recruiters (37.2%) than Whites (10.7%), $X^2(2, N = 503) = 56.38, p < 0.01$.

There were no significant associations between data collection method and identifying as an ‘ex-offender,’ $X^2(2, N = 497) = 4.76, p = 0.09$, and the total sample differences in data collection methods were consistent among the subset of 272 participants who identified as ‘ex-offenders.’ Among participants who
identified as ‘ex-offenders,’ there were no significant differences for data
collection strategies on Perceived Stigma, $F(2, 262) = 0.31, p = 0.74$ or Secrecy,
$F(2, 267) = 0.29, p = 0.75$. However, there were significant differences among
data collection strategies for Education, $F(2, 265) = 3.36, p = 0.04$, as individuals
who completed the study with recruiter assistance ($M = 3.94; SD = 0.95$) and by
mail ($M = 3.97; SD = 1.15$) had lower scores than individuals who completed the
survey online ($M = 4.34; SD = 0.90$). There were also significant differences for
Withdrawal, $F(2, 263) = 3.90, p = 0.02$, as those who completed the survey with
the recruiters had significantly higher Withdrawal scores ($M = 3.29; SD = 1.01$)
than those who completed the survey online ($M = 2.79; SD = 0.88$) or by mail ($M
= 2.98; SD = 0.97$).

Recruitment across States

Across the 50 states, six states (Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Montana,
North Dakota and South Dakota) had no Oxford Houses at the time of data
collection. In addition, eight states had no women’s houses at the time of data
collection, and one state had no men’s houses (Utah). Several states had very few
Oxford Houses, such as Rhode Island ($N = 1$) and Ohio ($N = 1$). Overall,
participation was greater from states where there were more Oxford Houses.

Women and Empowerment

Data collection procedures for the Women and Empowerment Study
followed the strategies outlined above. A total of 1,314 surveys were mailed to
women’s Oxford Houses with individual response rates of 16.5% ($N = 217$) from
30.6% of the 180 Oxford Houses that were mailed the surveys. These response
rates included 48 women completed the study by mail \((N = 43)\) or online \((N = 5)\) which resulted in a total sample size of 344 women from 28 states (The original sample size was 296; Hunter et al., 2013). Recruiters located throughout the United States assisted with the data collection process and encouraged women who resided in Wisconsin, Delaware, Michigan, and Maine to complete the study. Although women from 28 states participated in the total study, only 26 of these states included women who identified as ex-offenders (respondents from Maine and West Virginia did not).

**Men and Stigma Study**

The Men and Stigma Study resulted in 164 participants from 27 states. However, participants from three states (Alabama, Maryland, and Pennsylvania) did not identify as ‘ex-offenders,’ resulting in at least one participant from 24 states. Although the Men and Stigma Study followed the same data collection procedures as the Women and Empowerment Study (mail and online surveys), several procedural difficulties were encountered. Men’s houses had much lower response rates (7.6% \((N = 677)\) individual response rate and 14.9% Oxford House response rate \((N = 87)\)) than women’s houses even with similar data collection strategies. Thus, a concerted effort was made to obtain email addresses from men, as this data collection strategy seemed to result in greater participation. Finally, Oxford House recruiters from Hawaii, Washington, New Mexico, Colorado, and Nebraska were contacted and helped to facilitate participation in this project.
The present study combined data from these two studies to perform data analysis. The same demographic variables and measures were administered in both surveys, and data collection methods employed the same procedures.
Data Analysis Plan

Missing data

Responses were first examined for patterns of missing data. As recommended by Graham (2009; 2012), cases where all items for the scales of interest (Perceived Stigma and Stigma Management) were missing were excluded from further analyses, N = 8. This exclusion lowered the number of states by one, as the participant from New York had not completed any of the items on the Stigma Management Scale. Following removal of the 8 participants with no item responses for at least one of the two scales, data were examined for patterns of missing data.

Of 264 participants, 234 had complete data points for all items on both scales and each item had a low percentage (< 5%) of missing values. Little’s test for missing data indicated that data were missing completely at random (MCAR; $\chi^2(582) = 586.46$, p = 0.44). Although sophisticated Missing Data Analysis techniques, such as Multiple Imputation (MI), have been recommended in the literature (Graham, 2009; Schafer, 1999), MI is complex for clustered multilevel data. Specifically, a large number of clusters are required for this procedure, and data is imputed within-cluster. Therefore, for the present study, the relatively small sample, low percentage of missing values, and small sample within-cluster led to a decision to average the available items in order to compute mean scores for the Devaluation Discrimination Scale and the three subscales of the Stigma Management Scale. This strategy has been discussed in the literature as justifiable
when the scale items form a well-defined domain and the reliability of the scale is high (Graham, 2009; Schafer & Graham, 2002).

**Multilevel Modeling**

**Overview**

Multilevel Modeling (MLM) is a data analysis technique that allows for the analysis of data with a nested structure, and a determination of the unique variance across clusters while also accounting for individual variations within clusters (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). The hypotheses for this study account for the nested structure of the data by using the Hierarchical Linear Modeling program (HLM; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). This analysis allows for an examination of the impact of state policies on the relationship between Perceived Stigma and the Secrecy, Education, and Withdrawal coping strategies among individuals nested in their respective states.

In the Level-1 model, \(Y_{ij}\) will be the dependent variable, with Perceived Stigma (\(\beta_{1j} ; \text{PStigma}\)) as the Level-1 predictor. \(R_{ij}\) represents the within-participant error term and \(\beta_{0j}\) represents the ‘average level’ of the outcome variable for an individual with a group-mean score of Perceived Stigma. The analyses will use the following equation for the Level-1 model:

\[
Y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} (\text{Perceived Stigma}) + R_{ij}
\]

The Level-2 equation is presented below:

\[
\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} (\text{Policy Scores}) + U_{0j}
\]

\[
\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11} (\text{Policy Scores}) + U_{1j}
\]

The mixed model equation for the full model is presented below:
\[ Y_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} \ast (\text{Policy Scores})_{ij} + \gamma_{10} \ast (\text{Perceived Stigma})_{ij} + \gamma_{11} \ast (\text{Policy Scores})_{ij} \ast (\text{Perceived Stigma})_{ij} + u_{0j} + u_{1j} \ast (\text{Perceived Stigma})_{ij} + R_{ij} \]

Where the first Level-2 equation (\( \beta_{0j} \)) represents the extent to which Policy Scores (\( \gamma_{01} \)) predict the outcome variable after controlling for Perceived Stigma, with \( U_{0j} \) as the error term. The intercept (\( \gamma_{00} \)) represents the ‘average level’ of the outcome variable for a hypothetical state with no restrictive policies. The second Level-2 equation (\( \beta_{1j} \)) predicts the slopes from the Level-1 analysis, and represents Policy Scores (\( \gamma_{11} \)) as a moderator of the relationship between Perceived Stigma and each outcome variable. The intercept (\( \gamma_{10} \)) represented the average outcome variable score for a state with zero Policy restrictions. Given the small number of states where both women and men and minorities and non-minorities responded, Gender and Minority Status will not be included in the multilevel analyses. All three models will follow the same equations with Secrecy, Education and Withdrawal as the dependent variables.

Assumptions

MLM assumes that all variables are normally distributed. As shown below in Table 10, all predictor and outcome variables were normally distributed. Histograms of the variables were also examined, and indicated that the assumption of normality had not been violated. In addition, MLM assumptions suggest that multicollinearity be examined, as variables should not be highly correlated with each other. The VIF and Tolerance for Perceived Stigma and each of the outcome variables were examined to test this assumption. Data did not
appear to be collinear, as the VIF values were less than 10 and the Tolerance was lower than 0.10 in all cases.

Table 10

*Descriptive statistics for predictor and outcome variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secrecy</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scores</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>6.62</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 11, aggregate predictor and outcome variables were not significantly correlated with state Policy composite or subscale scores. However, there was a significant negative correlation between withdrawal and education. Policy total scores were also positively correlated with TANF and Employment scores. Table 12 shows the means and standard deviations for Policy Scores and subscales by states.
Table 11

*Aggregate correlations between state and individual level variables (N = 29)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Stigma</th>
<th>Secrecy</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>PS</th>
<th>TANF</th>
<th>EMP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secrecy</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-0.37*</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scores (PS)</td>
<td>0.43*</td>
<td>0.44*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Denotes significance at the 0.05 level
**Denotes significance at the 0.01 level
Table 12

Means for predictor and outcome variables by state

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Stigma M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Secrecy M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Education M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Withdrawal M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AK</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>6.21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>6.53</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NV</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TX</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>6.62</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WY</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Size

Given the nested structure of the data, large sample sizes and a large number of clusters are generally recommended for MLM. Specifically, the Level 2 sample size is most important for identifying accurate estimates (Kreft, 1996; Maas & Hox, 2005). However, with unbalanced sample sizes within each cluster, there is also the potential for biased results (Mass & Hox, 2005). The HLM (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) software program allows for two types of estimation methods with continuous dependent variables: Restricted Maximum Likelihood estimation (REML) and Full Maximum Likelihood estimation (FML). REML is generally recommended for small samples with balanced clusters (i.e., an equal number of individuals in each cluster; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002); however, this approach does not allow for the comparison of model fit with likelihood ratio tests. In contrast, FML estimation is recommended for unbalanced cluster sizes (Garson, 2012). Furthermore, some statisticians have indicated that REML and FML provide the same, if not similar estimates (Snijders & Boskers, 1999). Thus, given the unbalanced within-cluster sample size and in order to compare fit indices across models, FML estimation techniques were employed.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Multilevel Modeling

An initial one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with Random Effects (the null or unconditional model) was conducted to examine the within- and between- group variance in each of the dependent variables: Secrecy, Education, and Withdrawal. This model was tested with no level-1 or level-2 predictor variables specified with the following equations:

Level 1: \(DV = \beta_{0j} + r_{ij}\)

Level 2: \(\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}\)

As shown in Table 13, the unconditional model resulted in almost no variability between states for each of the dependent variables. The values of sigma and tau allow for calculation of the Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC), which is the amount of variance between states for each dependent variable. The ICC was computed and reflected that merely 1.0% of the variance in the Secrecy coping strategy was explained at the group level, with 99.0% of the variance explained at the individual level. As shown in Table 13, the low ICC was consistent across each unconditional model. Thus, there was little to no variability across states in Secrecy, Education or Withdrawal scores.

Although there is no agreed upon cut off point for the value of the ICC, the general consensus indicates that a minimum value of 0.05 be achieved to justify the use of multilevel modeling (Bliese, 1998). Research indicates that a low value of the ICC could inflate the likelihood of Type I error (Bliese, 1998;
Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). In addition, the low number of level 2 variables (N = 29) and the unequal number of individuals who responded in each state may not provide enough power to complete the analyses. Thus, given the low value of the ICC for each of the dependent variables, the unbalanced sample size, and low number of level 2 states, a decision was made to test hypotheses 1 and 2 using Hierarchical Ordinary Least Squares Regression analyses.

Table 13

Unconditional Models for Secrecy, Education and Withdrawal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Secrecy</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 (Individual)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2.97(0.08)**</td>
<td>4.06(0.07)**</td>
<td>2.98(0.07)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance Components</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\sigma^2$</td>
<td>1.27(0.11)</td>
<td>1.14(0.10)</td>
<td>0.89(0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\tau_{00}$</td>
<td>0.02(0.03)</td>
<td>0.02(0.03)</td>
<td>0.01(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected fit statistics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviance</td>
<td>796.18(3)</td>
<td>762.97(3)</td>
<td>694.46(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hierarchical OLS Regression

To test Hypotheses 1 and 2, separate Hierarchical Regression Analyses were performed for the dependent variables of Secrecy, Education, and Withdrawal. Regression assumptions were tested in preparation for multilevel modeling. Gender and Minority Status (dummy coded) were first entered into each regression equation as covariates. Perceived Stigma was centered and entered into Step 2. Policy Scores were centered and entered into Step 3. Finally,
a Perceived Stigma X Policy Scores interaction variable was created and entered into Step 4.

Given the clustered, or nested, structure of the data, an adjustment was applied to the standard errors for the regression coefficients. Statisticians have argued that ignoring the clustered nature of the sample underestimates the standard errors and results in biased estimates (Hox, 1998; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Thus, several approaches to correct for clustering in samples where multilevel modeling is not possible have been developed. Most importantly, clustering in the sample design can increase heteroskedasticity and therefore violate a core regression assumption. Calculating cluster robust standard errors is the typical response to this issue, and has been widely used in policy and economic literature (e.g., Primo, Jacobsmeier & Milyo, 2007). The correction applied to the standard errors from the OLS Regression first applies the Huber-White correction for heteroskedasticity with an addition step to account for clustering in the data (Rogers, 1994). Clustered standard errors are also referred to as Roger’s standard errors. Given the limited availability of certain statistical software programs to calculated clustered standard errors, the software program Stata version 12 was used for all Hierarchical OLS Regression analyses.

Secrecy

A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Policy Scores on Secrecy when controlling for Gender and Minority Status. Gender and Minority Status were entered into Step 1, and this model was not significant, $R^2 = 0.01$, $F(2, 28) = 1.28$, 
Perceived Stigma was entered into Step 2, and was a significant predictor of Secrecy above and beyond Gender and Minority Status ($b = 0.61; SE = 0.09; CI = 0.37 – 0.85), $t(28) = 5.17, p < 0.01$. Gender was also a significant predictor of Secrecy in Step 2 ($b = -0.28; SE = 0.11; CI = -0.50 – -0.07), $t(28) = -2.67, p < 0.01$. Policy Scores were entered into Step 3 of the model, and were not significant predictors of Secrecy above and beyond Perceived Stigma, Gender, and Minority Status. However, Gender and Perceived Stigma remained significant predictors of Secrecy when controlling for Minority status.

The final model included an interaction term between Perceived Stigma and Policy Scores. The overall model was significant, $R^2 = 0.20, F(5, 28) = 8.13, p < 0.01$. Perceived Stigma was a significant predictor of Secrecy, such that a one point increase in Perceived Stigma was associated with a 0.60 point increase in the use of Secrecy as a coping strategy ($b = -0.60; SE = 0.10; CI = 0.40 – 0.79), t(28) = 6.12, p < 0.01$. Gender was also a predictor of secrecy, as women scored 0.28 points less than men on the Secrecy scale ($b = -0.28; SE = 0.10; CI = -0.48 – -0.78), t(28) = -2.84, p < 0.01$. Although Policy Scores did not have a significant main effect on Secrecy, the interaction between Perceived Stigma and Policy Scores was significant ($b = -0.19; SE = 0.08; CI = -0.36 – -0.03), t(28) = -2.36, p < 0.05).

A probe of the simple slopes for Step 4 of the hierarchical regression analysis tested for significant differences in slopes at one standard deviation above the mean, the mean, and one standard deviation below the mean of Policy Scores. These analyses were performed using the moderation probe designed by
Preacher (2011). The results for these analyses suggested that as Policy Scores increased, the slope of the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Secrecy became flatter. The simple slope was $0.40(0.11), t(23) = 3.58, p < 0.01$, at one standard deviation above the mean of Policy Scores; $0.59(0.10), t(23) = 5.90, p < 0.01$, at the mean of Policy Scores, and $0.78 (0.14), t(23) = 5.46, p < 0.01$, at one standard deviation below the average Policy Score. In addition, the simple intercepts for Policy Scores were significant. Individuals who lived in states with the lowest Policy Scores (-1 SD below the mean) had low Secrecy scores at low levels of Perceived Stigma (-1 SD below the mean; intercept = 3.00, $SE = 0.16$, $t(23) = 24.00, p < 0.01$), but the slope of this relationship at high levels of Perceived Stigma (+1 SD above the mean) was steep. In contrast, individuals who lived in high Policy Score states endorsed high use of Secrecy as a coping strategy at low levels of Perceived Stigma (intercept = 3.10, $SE = 0.10, t(23) = 30.94, p < 0.01$), and the slope of the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Secrecy was not as steep at high levels of Perceived Stigma. As shown in Figure 1, these relationships were consistent such that as Policy Scores increased at low levels of Perceived Stigma, the use of Secrecy as a coping strategy was higher; however, individuals in the lowest Policy Scores states reported the highest use of Secrecy at high levels of Perceived Stigma.
Figure 1

*Interaction between Perceived Stigma, Policy Scores, and Secrecy*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE(B)</th>
<th>SE(B)_{adj}</th>
<th>95% CI_{adj}</th>
<th>Δ R^2</th>
<th>Δ F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.53-0.07</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.24-0.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.28*</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.50--0.07</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>6.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.11-0.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>0.61**</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.37-0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.29*</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.50--0.08</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.10-0.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>0.61**</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.37-0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scores</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.14-0.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 4</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.28*</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.48-0.08</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.07-0.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>0.59**</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.39-0.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scores</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.12-0.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma X Policy Scores</td>
<td>-0.19*</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.36--0.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at p < 0.05; **p < 0.01. All standard errors are adjusted for clustering effects where df = 28.
A separate Hierarchical Regression Model was created to examine the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Policy Scores on Education while controlling for Gender and Minority Status. As shown in Table 15, Gender and Minority Status were entered into Step 1, and this model was not significant, $R^2 = 0.01$, $F(2, 28) = 1.68$, $p = 0.20$. Perceived Stigma was entered into Step 2, and was not a significant predictor of Education above and beyond Gender and Minority Status; although the overall model was significant, $R^2 = 0.03$, $F(2, 28) = 6.00$, $p < 0.01$. Policy Scores were entered into Step 3 of the model, and were not significant predictors of Education above and beyond Perceived Stigma. Gender, and Minority Status. In addition, the overall fit was not better than the previous step. The interaction term was entered into Step 4 of the model, and was not a significant predictor of Education scores. Thus, none of the predictor variables, Gender, Minority Status, Perceived Stigma, Policy Scores, or the interaction between Perceived Stigma and Policy Scores, were related to the use of Education as a coping strategy.

It should be noted that prior to the cluster adjustment of standard errors, Perceived Stigma was a consistent predictor of Education above and beyond all other variables in the model.
Table 15
Hierarchical Regression Model predicting Education Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE(B)</th>
<th>SE(B)_{adj}</th>
<th>95% CI_{adj}</th>
<th>Δ R²</th>
<th>Δ F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.06-0.54</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.50-0.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.25&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.04-0.55</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.55-0.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.50-0.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.26&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.03-0.55</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.56-0.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.50-0.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scores</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.16-0.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.05-0.56</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.57-0.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.45-0.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scores</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.16-0.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma X Policy Scores</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.12-0.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>*Significant at p < 0.05; **p < 0.01. All standard errors are adjusted for clustering effects.</sup>
Withdrawal

A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Policy Scores on Withdrawal when controlling for Gender and Minority Status. Gender and Minority Status were entered into Step 1, and this model was not significant, $R^2 = 0.01$, $F(2, 28) = 0.69$, $p = 0.51$. Perceived Stigma was entered into Step 2, and was a significant predictor of Secrecy above and beyond Gender and Minority Status ($b = 0.37; SE = 0.11; CI = 0.14 – 0.60), t(28) = 3.35, p < 0.01), such that for every point increase in Perceived Stigma there was a 0.37 point increase in Withdrawal above and beyond Gender and Minority Status. Policy Scores were entered into Step 3 of the model, and were not significant predictors of Secrecy above and beyond Perceived Stigma, Gender, and Minority Status. However, Perceived Stigma remained a significant predictor of Withdrawal when controlling for the other variables in the model, ($b = 0.37; SE = 0.11; CI = 0.15 – 0.60), t(28) = 3.36, p < 0.01).

As shown in Table 16, the final step included an interaction term between Perceived Stigma and Policy Scores as a predictor of Withdrawal above and beyond Gender, Minority Status, and Perceived Stigma. The overall model was significant, $R^2 = 0.12$, $F(5, 28) = 14.41, p < 0.01$. Perceived Stigma was a significant predictor of Withdrawal, such that a one point increase in Perceived Stigma was associated with a 0.36 point increase in the use of Withdrawal as a coping strategy ($b = -0.36; SE = 0.09; CI = 0.17 – 0.55), t(28) = 3.82, p < 0.01). Gender was not a significant predictor of Withdrawal, however; Minority Status was a significant predictor of Withdrawal at the $\alpha = 0.10$ level, such that
Minorities scored 0.28 points higher on Withdrawal than Whites ($b = 0.28$; $SE = 0.16$; CI = -0.57 – 0.62), $t(28) = 1.70, p = 0.10$. Although Policy Scores did not have a significant main effect on Withdrawal, the interaction between Perceived Stigma and Policy Scores approached significance at the $\alpha = 0.10$ level ($b = -0.19$; $SE = 0.12$; CI = -0.44 – 0.07), $t(28) = -1.50, p = 0.14$.

Given the overall significance of the hierarchical regression analysis and the interaction approaching significance, a probe of the simple slopes was conducted to test for significant differences in slopes at one standard deviation above the mean, the mean, and one standard deviation below the mean of Policy Scores. The results suggested that at high Policy Scores, the slope of the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Withdrawal was flat. The simple slope was $0.55(0.13), t(23) = 4.16, p < 0.01$, at one standard deviation below the mean of Policy Scores; $0.36(0.09), t(23) = 4.00, p < 0.01$, at the mean of Policy Scores, and $0.17 (0.17), t(23) = 1.03, p = 0.32$, not significant, at one standard deviation above the average Policy Score. In addition, the simple intercepts for Policy Scores were significant. Individuals who lived in states with the lowest Policy Scores (-1 SD below the mean) had low Withdrawal scores at low levels of Perceived Stigma (intercept = 2.88, $SE = 0.16, t(23) = 18.12, p < 0.01$), but the slope of this relationship at high levels of Perceived Stigma was steep. In contrast, individuals who lived in high Policy Score states endorsed high use of Withdrawal as a coping strategy at low levels of Perceived Stigma (intercept = 2.94, $SE = 0.12, t(23) = 25.49, p < 0.01$), and the slope of the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Withdrawal in high Policy Scores states was flatter at high.
levels of Perceived Stigma. As shown in Figure 1, these relationships were consistent such that as Policy Scores increased at low levels of Perceived Stigma, the use of Withdrawal as a coping strategy was higher; however, individuals in the lowest Policy Scores states reported the highest use of Withdrawal at high levels of Perceived Stigma.

Figure 2

*Interaction between Perceived Stigma, Policy Scores, and Withdrawal*
Table 16
Hierarchical Regression Model predicting Withdrawal Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>$SE(B)$</th>
<th>$SE(B)_{adj}$</th>
<th>95% CI$_{adj}$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta F$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-0.30-0.38</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.16-0.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.31-0.33</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>3.02$^1$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.06-0.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.14-0.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.31-0.33</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-0.09-0.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.15-0.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scores</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.13-0.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.29-0.32</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Status</td>
<td>0.28$^1$</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.57-0.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.17-0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Scores</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.10-0.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stigma X</td>
<td>-0.19$^1$</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.44-0.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at $p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$. Gender and Perceived Stigma X Policy Scores significant at $p = 0.06$. All standard errors are adjusted for clustering effects.
Summary

Consistent with Hypothesis 1, there was a relationship between Perceived Stigma, Secrecy and Withdrawal such that an increase in Perceived Stigma was associated with increases in both Secrecy and Withdrawal scores. However, in contrast to Hypothesis 1, Perceived Stigma did not predict the use of Education as a coping strategy. For Hypothesis 2, Policy Scores moderated the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Secrecy, such that individuals who lived in states with low Policy Scores reported the lowest Secrecy scores at low levels (-1SD) of Perceived Stigma. However, at high levels (+1SD) of Perceived Stigma, individuals who lived in states with the lowest Policy Scores reported the highest Secrecy scores and a steep slope, while individuals who lived in states with the highest Policy Scores reported the lowest Secrecy scores, and a flat slope. A similar pattern was found for Withdrawal. Policy Scores did not moderate the relationship between Perceived Stigma and Education. Despite significant individual models for secrecy and withdrawal, it is important to note that the changes in $R^2$ and F were not significant as variables were added to the models. Thus, both Hypotheses 1 and 2 were partially supported but should be interpreted with caution.

Hierarchical Logistic Regression

The final two analyses tested the relationship between Employment Policy scores on Employment Status (employed vs. not employed) and the TANF Benefit Policy scores on the likelihood of receiving public assistance (yes vs. no). These analyses used HLM 7 software with Penalized Quasi Likelihood estimation
(Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) and specified a Bernoulli distribution for each outcome variable because they were coded as zero or one, similar to a logistic regression analysis.

As outlined in the previous description of multilevel modeling, an unconditional, or null, model was first estimated to examine the variance in states in the likelihood of being employed. There was significant variation across states in the likelihood of being employed, $t(28) = 2.90, p < 0.05$, and the ICC warranted the use of multilevel modeling to examine a hierarchical model, ICC = 0.04. As shown in Table 17, Employment Policy scores did not significantly impact the likelihood of being Employed, $t(27) = 1.60, OR = 2.25; p = 0.12$.

Table 17

*Employment and TANF scores as predictors of Employment and Rental Assistance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Employment Null Model</th>
<th>Employment Model 1</th>
<th>Rental Assistance Null Model</th>
<th>Rental Assistance Model 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 (Individual)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.47(0.16)**</td>
<td>-0.02(0.32)</td>
<td>-3.03(0.37)**</td>
<td>-2.22(0.51)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 Employment TANF</td>
<td>0.81(0.51)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\tau_{00}$</td>
<td>0.13(0.37)</td>
<td>0.07(0.28)</td>
<td>0.83(0.91)</td>
<td>0.33(0.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected fit statistics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant at p < 0.10 level; **significant at p < 0.01 level*

The final analysis examined the impact of TANF Benefit Policy scores on the likelihood of receiving Public Assistance. The baseline model indicated that there was significant variation in the Receipt of Rental Assistance across
States, $t(28) = -7.88, p < 0.01$, and the ICC indicated that 25% of the likelihood in receiving Rental Assistance could be attributed to the State of residence. TANF Benefit Policy scores were entered into the analysis as a Level 2 predictor of the likelihood of receiving Public Assistance. The impact of TANF Benefit Policy scores and the likelihood of receiving Public Assistance approached significance. Specifically, individuals who lived in states with high TANF Benefit Policy restriction scores were 89% less likely to receive Rental Assistance than individuals who lived in high TANF Benefit Policy scores States ($b = -2.22; SE = 1.20; OR = 0.11; t(27) = -1.85, p = 0.08$).

Thus, Hypothesis 3 was partially supported, as Employment Policy scores did not influence the likelihood of employment across states. In contrast,
individuals who lived in states with high TANF Benefits Policy scores had a lower likelihood of receiving Rental Assistance.
CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION

The present study explored the relations between state-level policies, perceived stigma and stigma management strategies across a sample of men and women who self-identified as ‘ex-offenders.’ The goals of this study were to 1) document the relationship between perceived stigma and stigma coping strategies among a community-based sample of ex-offenders; 2) examine the impact of state-level policies on ex-offenders’ perceived stigma and coping strategies; and 3) test the observable effect of state policies on ex-offenders likelihood of employment and receipt of housing funds. Taken together, findings were consistent with stigma theory and provided preliminary support for patterns of relationships between state-level policies and individual level variables among those who identify as ‘ex-offenders.’ Further, results demonstrated that TANF benefit policy restrictions may have a direct impact on the likelihood for receiving public assistance.

High perceived stigma for the ‘ex-offender’ label was associated with increased scores on adverse coping strategies (secrecy and withdrawal). This finding is consistent with prior research on the relationship between perceived stigma and the coping strategies of secrecy and withdrawal among incarcerated men (Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). As labeling theory suggests, an individual who internalizes the characteristics associated with the stigmatized label, in this case ‘ex-offender,’ and perceives stigma associated with this label may cope in ways that are not conducive to successful reintegration. As such, individuals who
identify as an ‘ex-offender’ may perceive that they are devalued in the eyes of other people and society and conceal their ‘ex-offender’ status or limit social interactions and supports (Crocker et al., 1998).

The inclusion of policy restriction scores (Ewald, 2012) allowed for an examination of perceived stigma and coping strategies with attention to the state policy context. Policy scores represented a states’ policy climate in terms of restrictions in housing, voting, employment, privacy, gun privileges, TANF benefits, holding office, and serving on a jury (Ewald, 2012; Legal Action Center, 2009). Although analyses were limited by a small sample size and lack of power to detect significant differences, the patterns of the relationships between these variables suggested that state policy scores complicated the relationship between perceived stigma, secrecy and withdrawal. These patterns illustrated two ways that state policies might impact the relationship between perceived stigma and adverse coping. First, the intercepts differed among individuals who lived in states with high versus low policy restrictions. As such, individuals who lived in states with high policy restrictions endorsed higher secrecy and withdrawal scores at low levels of perceived stigma than individuals who lived in states with low policy restrictions. Second, individuals in states with low policy restrictions reported higher use of both secrecy and withdrawal than individuals in high policy restriction states at high levels of perceived stigma.

The patterns that emerged were in tandem with the literature on how policy restrictions affect individuals who internalize the ‘ex-offender’ label. In high policy restriction states, there are limits on obtaining a driver’s license,
housing benefits, as well as the types and availability of employment (Ewald, 2012; Legal Action Center, 2009; Love, 2005). Policies designed to inhibit successful reentry create a set of norms that may not be conducive to supporting re-entry and reintegration (Travis et al., 2001). In states where there are many policy restrictions, individuals may use secrecy and withdrawal to cope with the negative attributes associated with the ‘ex-offender’ label.

Research has demonstrated that secrecy and withdrawal may have severe and negative consequences. Keeping one’s status a secret may inhibit opportunities for social supports, education and employment (Harding, 2003; LeBel, 2011). For example, research found that individuals who did not disclose their ‘ex-offender’ status on an employment application and were hired for a position were often fired as a result of their non-disclosure (Harding et al., 1998). Furthermore, withdrawal from society may limit opportunities to engage in services and programming designed to assist individuals who are ‘ex-offenders.’ However, it is also quite possible that states that have high policy restrictions provide few programs and services for ‘ex-offenders’ to utilize. Future research should examine how the relationship between perceived stigma and secrecy impacts individuals’ who identify as ‘ex-offenders’ social supports and use of program/assistance. In addition, more research is needed to examine how state policies impact the availability of services to support prisoner reentry and reintegration.

Despite the negative implications of using secrecy and withdrawal to cope with the ‘ex-offender’ label, it is important to consider that the use of these
strategies may also have benefits for those individuals who live in high policy restriction states. Because the ‘ex-offender’ status is a concealable stigma that is not visible to the naked eye, keeping ones’ status a secret and/or withdrawing from social interaction may sometimes deter the impact of stigmatization. As such, if other people do not know that an individual is an ‘ex-offender,’ then the negative attributes associated with the label may not be attributed to the individual. Along these lines, it is possible that secrecy and withdrawal may act to protect the individual from the harmful effects of stigmatization. However, research has yet to examine these coping strategies as protective factors when the context of the environment is not conducive to support.

The second way that policy restrictions influenced the relationship between perceived stigma and adverse coping strategies was for individuals who lived in states with low policy restrictions. These individuals reported higher secrecy and withdrawal scores than individuals in high policy states at high levels of perceived stigma. This relationship was linear where individuals in low policy restriction states reported lower secrecy scores at low levels of perceived stigma but higher secrecy scores at high levels of perceived stigma than individuals who lived in high policy restriction states. As such, it appears that the relationship between individual-level perceived stigma and secrecy scores may be strongest for individuals who lived in low policy restriction states. In other words, the amount of stigma an individual perceived for the ‘ex-offender’ label influenced secrecy scores more than state policy restrictions at high levels of perceived stigma.
This finding was somewhat unexpected, however; it is consistent with theory on internalized stigma, as the impact of internalized stigma is strong and largely an individually-focused construct (Link & Phelan, 2001). Therefore, for individuals who live in low policy restriction states, it may be useful to design and implement interventions to reduce perceived stigma at the individual level. Interventions should be developed to identify appropriate methods and settings in which one may disclose ones’ status. Programs should also strive to support community inclusion. In this context, peer support specific to the ex-offender label may reduce perceived stigma (Maruna, 2001). Drug and alcohol treatment programs, including Oxford Houses, may be able to implement strategies to increase connectedness to the larger community and thereby reduce perceived stigma such as encouraging volunteer work and participation in community events. However, additional research is needed to more clearly elucidate how perceived stigma impacts secrecy and withdrawal among individuals who live in states that have low policy restrictions.

It should be noted that gender and minority status influenced the use of secrecy and withdrawal in different ways. Gender was a significant predictor of secrecy, as women had lower secrecy scores than men when accounting for perceived stigma and minority status. This finding indicates that women may be more open to talking about their status as an ‘ex-offender’ and may be less likely to practice non-disclosure. In contrast, minority status approached significance for withdrawal scores, which indicated that minorities may be more likely to use social isolation as a strategy to cope with the adverse impact of stigma than non-
minorities. It is well documented that minorities are disproportionately incarcerated and impacted by policy restrictions (Chin, 2002; Dhami, 2005; Pinard, 2010). Therefore, states should review their policies to 1) examine the disproportionate sentencing of minorities and 2) develop interventions to promote community inclusion among minority populations. This may include developing culturally relevant interventions and peer supports. Future research should further examine the impact of gender and race on perceived stigma and coping strategies to better design interventions to promote well-being and reduce recidivism.

In contrast with the present hypotheses, there was no significant relationship between perceived stigma and the education coping strategy. Although it was expected that high perceived stigma for the ‘ex-offender’ label would predict low education scores, this relationship was not supported in the present study. Nonetheless, the relationship between perceived stigma and education coping strategy scores was in the expected direction, and this was a negative relationship. In addition, education scores were negatively correlated with both secrecy and withdrawal coping strategy scores, even though they were not associated with perceived stigma.

There may be several reasons for the absence of the relationship between perceived stigma and the education coping strategy. First, education scores were significantly higher than the midpoint of the Stigma Management Scale (Link et al., 1989) which indicated that participants in this study had higher education scores than secrecy and withdrawal scores. In addition, all participants in this study lived in Oxford Houses. Characteristics of this recovery home include a
supportive environment where residents are encouraged to support each other (Jason et al., 2007). Oxford Houses may require that house residents tell their story to other house members in an effort to promote relationship building (Oxford House, Inc., 2013). In turn, this strategy may promote use of the education coping strategy. Future research should continue to examine predictors and outcomes of using education as a coping strategy for perceived stigma with attention to the contextual effects of the setting.

Given the lack of support for the relationship between perceived stigma and the education coping strategy, it was not surprising that state policy scores did not moderate this relationship. Consistent with the rationale provided above, Oxford House members may have disclosed their status as an ‘ex-offender’ to each other very frequently, thus promoting the use of education. While it was expected that individuals who lived in states with more restrictive policies would have lower education scores, because all respondents lived in similar settings, Oxford Houses, which may promote the use of education, it is plausible that the characteristics of this immediate setting had a greater impact on education coping strategy scores than more distal state policies. In addition, all participants were substance users and may have engaged in substance abuse treatment and support groups that could encourage educating others about their group membership. In addition, participants’ median time since their last criminal conviction was almost three years prior to their participation in this study. It could be that individuals use difference strategies to cope with stigma that change over time. Future research should examine the relationship between state policies, perceived stigma, and the
education coping strategy among self-identified ‘ex-offenders’ with a longitudinal
design and across other settings that might not provide the same types of supports
as Oxford House.

The majority of individuals who are incarcerated will exit prison/jail at
some point (Travis, 2001), therefore, providing an atmosphere that encourages
service utilization and positive supports may be important to recidivism reduction
(Maruna, 2001; Sampson & Laub, 1993). In fact, positive social support may act
as a protective factor against recidivism (Sampson & Laub, 1993; Maruna, 2001).
The use of secrecy and withdrawal as coping strategies may create additional
stressors on the reentry process that could interfere with community reintegration,
as keeping ones’ status a secret and withdrawing from social interactions are not
conducive to social inclusion. However, more research is needed to understand
these relationships and to identify strategies that support individuals who identify
as ‘ex-offenders’ navigate their social identities to successfully reintegrate into
society.

The final goal of this study was to examine the direct impact of
employment policy restrictions on the likelihood of employment. Prior research
suggested that employment barriers limit employment opportunities for
individuals labeled ‘ex-offenders’ (Holzer et al., 2003; Travis et al., 2001), yet
this relationship was not confirmed in the present study. In fact, the pattern of this
relationship suggested that as employment restrictions increased the likelihood of
employment was higher. It is important to again consider that this population did
not reflect most individuals who are exiting prison and/or jail. For example,
research has demonstrated that ‘ex-offenders’ tend to have low educational attainment (Coley & Barton, 2006), limited employment histories (Holzer et al., 2003), and little social support (Visher et al., 2009). In contrast, most participants in this sample had completed at least some college and all participants lived in Oxford Houses, which provide social support (Jason et al., 2007). Furthermore, Oxford Houses are frequently located in middle-class areas which is in contrast to the poverty-stricken and resource-less areas where most ‘ex-offenders’ return (Clear et al., 2001).

Literature on employment among ‘ex-offenders’ suggested that several factors, such as minority status, educational level, and work history impact their likelihood of employment (Clear et al., 2001; Freeman, 2003; van Olphen et al., 2006; Western, 2002). These factors may play a more immediate role in the ‘ex-offenders’ environment than state-level policies. In addition, it could be that other Oxford House members assisted house members in obtaining gainful employment. Oxford House members are sometimes able to direct members looking for employment to employment opportunities. Finally, it is notable that participants had been in the community for some time, as the median amount of time since the last criminal conviction was approximately 31 months. This length of time indicates more stability in the reentry process, as the highest risk for recidivism is within the first 12 months (Langin & Levin, 2002). Thus, future research should examine how state policies impact the likelihood of employment among individuals newly released from prison and/or jail as well as analyses of this potential relationship over time.
There was a significant relationship between TANF policy scores and the likelihood of receiving rental assistance among study participants. This indicated that individuals who lived in states with high policy restrictions were less likely to receive rental assistance than individuals who lived in states with low policy restrictions. Although this finding is promising as it concretely demonstrates how policy restrictions for housing support directly impact the assistance that individuals receive, caution should be used in its’ interpretation. There were only 14 individuals who received rental assistance, which is a relatively low number when compared to the total sample size. However, this trend indicated that states with higher policy restrictions for providing TANF benefits to individuals who are ‘ex-offenders’ does indeed impact the likelihood that individuals will receive rental assistance.

Housing is a basic need that is often denied to individuals who have criminal histories (Cowan & Fionda, 1994; Greenberg & Rosenheck, 2008; Pogorzelski et al., 2005; Roman & Travis, 2004; Travis et al., 2001; Weiser et al., 2009). Whether a landlord conducts a background check or an individual is disqualified from public housing benefits because of their criminal history, individuals are excluded from housing options that would greatly support their reentry and reintegration into the community. For individuals who live in Oxford House, payment of rent is required and non-payment is grounds for eviction (Oxford House, Inc., 2013). When state-level policy restrictions for TANF benefits are high, it might be that these individuals either 1) do not apply for benefits because they are disqualified (anticipated stigma) and/or 2) are rejected
from receipt of benefits after an application is completed. Neither of these situations benefits an individual who is attempting to reenter and reintegrate into society because they restrict the type of assistance that might most support continued community success. However, more research is needed to further parse apart whether individuals are not applying for assistance or if they are being denied after an application is completed. Furthermore, because participants in this study were all housed when they participated in this project, it is most important to examine how these policy restrictions impact reentry and reintegration trajectories for individuals upon their release to the community.

Limitations

The low number of states with individuals who participated in this study and the uneven distribution of participants within states precluded the use of multilevel modeling for data analyses. Despite this lack of power, hierarchical regression analyses with cluster-robust standard errors corrected for dependency in the data (Rogers, 1984) and results provided preliminary support for the relationships between state policies, perceived stigma and stigma management strategies among individuals who self-identified as ‘ex-offenders.’

Despite the patterns evident in the data, the present study had several limitations that should be discussed and addressed in future research. First, this was a cross-sectional sample of individuals who lived in Oxford Houses across the United States. Given the cross-sectional nature of the data, none of the relationships that are discussed above are of a causal nature. Future research should incorporate a longitudinal design in order to more fully capture how
perceived stigma and coping strategies change over time. In addition, because all respondents lived in Oxford Houses, it is highly possible that the setting characteristics had an influence on respondents that was not measured. Thus, future research should replicate these findings in other settings, such as reentry programs, and/or should follow individuals as they exit prison/jail to further elucidate the nature of these relationships and to examine how perceived stigma and coping strategies impact recidivism and other outcomes that are relevant to this population.

There are also additional variables that may have provided further insight and support for the relationship between state-level policies and individual-level outcomes. For example, an assessment of voting behavior would have allowed for an analysis of the impact of voting policy scores on voting behavior. Likewise, inclusion of questions to assess access to and use of community resources such as programs/services for ‘ex-offenders’ could have allowed for further investigations into how the use of certain coping strategies might impact the availability and use of community resources among individuals who identify as ‘ex-offenders.’ Future research should incorporate questions that measure behaviors that might be influenced by both policies and stigma in order to more fully understand how these relationships work.

In terms of data collection, there were several limitations that may have influenced the results in this study. Although similar participant recruitment methods were employed across the men’s and women’s studies, more women than men completed the study. There may be several explanations for this gender
difference in study participation which include the way that each study was presented to potential respondents.

During data entry for the Women and Empowerment Study, completed surveys revealed that two women chose not to complete the Devaluation/Discrimination scale because ‘Alcoholics Anonymous teaches not to think about what “Most people” think.’ Thus, even though both studies were created with the assistance of Oxford House members employed by the Center for Community Research, it may be that measuring perceived stigma using the Link et al. (1989) measures for a population who is heavily engaged in 12-step support groups may not have been the best way to evaluate perceived stigma. Future research should take this into account when measuring perceived stigma among participants who are highly engaged in 12-step support groups.

For the Men and Stigma study, the graduate student investigator received several phone calls and emails from respondents that raised several concerns about the study and may have impacted participation. First, many participants indicated that the survey was too long (5 pages double-sided). Second, several participants did not know what ‘stigma’ was, and declined to participate in the study after a general explanation was provided. Third, some participants expressed concern about the content of the survey. Specifically, these participants believed that the wording on the survey made assumptions about them and their group membership as both individuals in recovery and ‘ex-offenders.’ In addition, because no definition of the term ‘ex-offender’ was provided, several participants had difficulty answering that question. Overall, it appeared that the questions
about stigma were difficult for participants and potential participants to answer, and provoked a negative response. Thus, future studies should 1) take caution when including the word ‘stigma’ in the title of a study and 2) prepare for questions and concerns about stigma.

All participants were both in recovery from substance use and were ex-offenders, thus, it may be difficult to discern how their multiple identities or how living in an Oxford House might impact their responses on the survey. Furthermore, all participants self-identified as ‘ex-offenders’ rather than ‘felons,’ or ‘ex-cons.’ As such, some individuals who identified as ex-offenders may not have had a felony conviction. However, research has stated that some state policies also adversely affect individuals convicted of misdemeanor offenses (Pinard, 2006).

Another limitation of this project is the lack of diversity of the sample and the differences in characteristics of participants in the present sample versus those typical of the reentry population. Research has shown that minorities are over-represented in the criminal justice system, however; this was not reflected in the present sample. The present sample also had more women than men participants. Furthermore, characteristics of offenders’ needs were not well reflected in the present sample. Participants in the present study had higher levels of education, were housed, mostly White, and all were living in a supportive environment conducive to substance abuse recovery. In addition, family support and physical/mental health needs were not assessed. As this is an exploratory analysis, future research will hopefully examine the relationship among these variables in a
sample that better reflects characteristics of the ex-offender population. However, the present study provides justification to extend this investigation to a more rigorous research design with participants who better reflect the characteristics of the prisoner population. Additionally, future analyses could stratify the sample in order to create weights that would better represent the larger Oxford House population. The findings from this study are a first step toward a multilevel analysis that integrates state and individual level variables to examine how context impacts perceived stigma and coping among individuals who identified as 'ex-offenders.'

Taken together, these exploratory results suggest that more research is needed to identify how perceived stigma and state policies interact and impact the ways that individuals cope with perceived stigma for the ‘ex-offender’ label. The contextual effects of the setting as well as the operationalization and measurement of perceived stigma and coping strategies should be taken into account. Furthermore, multilevel modeling and hierarchical regression models with cluster-robust standard errors may not be the best method to examine the relationships among these variables. Thus, researchers should consider using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to demonstrate a better understanding of these relationships. In addition to incorporating a longitudinal design, it is possible that there are relationships that were missed in this study due to the design and lack of power. For example, it is likely that the individual areas of state policy scores (i.e. employment, TANF, voting, etc.) individually interacted with perceived stigma and coping strategies which then influenced individual
outcomes. More complete analyses of these relationships could incorporate additional behaviors, such as voting behavior and connection to community-based resources, which were not measured in the present study. Theoretical conceptualizations for perceived stigma and coping also need to integrate how the context of the setting may influence how individuals experience stigma for the ‘ex-offender’ label.

Theoretical Implications

Modified Labeling Theory (Link et al., 1989) emphasized that not all individuals who are labeled by society will internalize the negative attributes of that label. Evidence for this separation occurred in the present study, as not all individuals who had been arrested self-identified as ‘ex-offenders.’ In fact, although 80% of the larger sample had been arrested at least one time, merely half of these individuals self-identified as ‘ex-offenders.’ The present findings also lend support to the importance of examining the context of perceived stigma and coping strategies (Link & Phelan, 2001). It is possible that individuals cope with stigma differently in different settings, as in different states.

It is also important for future theory to delineate the proximal and distal contextual effects related to their variables of interest. For example, it is challenging to discern whether the Oxford House setting may have had more or less of an impact on perceived stigma and coping than state-level policies. However, results suggested a direct impact of TANF policy restrictions on the likelihood of receiving rental assistance among ‘ex-offenders.’ Theorists should attempt to articulate how distance from state-level policies are expected to impact
perceived stigma and coping, especially when assessing variables related to perception rather than discrete outcomes (such as employment and receipt of rental assistance).

**Practice Implications**

Prisoner Reentry programs should be aware of the state policies that impact individuals who have criminal records, even if those individuals do not identify as ‘ex-offenders.’ The present findings suggest that programs 1) attend to the policy climate of their state and 2) target interventions appropriately. This would mean that for individuals in states with high policy restrictions, providing programs that support community inclusion to minimize the use of withdrawal and teaching skills to support appropriate disclosure to deter the use of secrecy may be appropriate. These strategies may limit the use of secrecy and withdrawal in settings where these strategies are not conducive to successful reentry and reintegration.

**Policy Implications**

While the present analyses were simply exploratory, it appears that state policies influence how individuals cope with perceived stigma for the ‘ex-offender’ label. For both secrecy and withdrawal, patterns indicated that individuals who lived in states with higher policy restrictions had higher secrecy and withdrawal scores than individuals who lived in states with lower policy restrictions. As such, it may be worthwhile for states to review their policies that contribute to a stigmatizing view of individuals labeled ‘ex-offender.’ Review of policies and practices could provide funding for programs to ease the reentry
process and support community reintegration. Furthermore, states could eliminate practices that may increase perceived stigma for the ‘ex-offender’ label such as media campaigns that shed a negative light on incarcerated individuals. Providing education to policy makers about the impact of having a criminal record on well-being may also help to shift restrictions and change public policy in ways that support prisoner reentry and reintegration. Finally, restrictions related to receiving public benefits may be the most impactful (Pinard, 2010) as they exclude otherwise eligible individuals from supports for housing. Therefore, policies that restrict eligibility for TANF benefits should be eliminated.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

More than 47 million individuals have a criminal record (Lucken & Ponte, 2008), more than 1.6 million are incarcerated (Sabol & West, 2010), 5 million are under community supervision in any given year (Glaze, et al., 2010), and 12 million cycle through the county jail system (Minton, 2010). Furthermore, almost two-thirds of those who are incarcerated will return to prison or jail within the first three years following release (Langan & Levin, 2003). Given the large numbers of individuals involved in the criminal justice system, research has argued that support should be provided to offenders as they transition from prison to the community (Petersilia, 2001; Travis, et al., 2001).

Prisoner reentry has gained much attention in the literature, as proponents of this approach argue that incarcerated individuals have many needs that are not addressed while incarcerated or upon return to the community which may perpetuate the cycle of criminal justice system involvement (Petersilia, 2004; Travis, et al., 2001; Visher & Travis, 2005). The ‘collateral consequences,’ and ‘invisible punishments’ of a criminal conviction are the state and federal social policies that compound the challenges associated with prisoner reentry (Legal Action Center, 2009; Mauer, 2005; Travis, 2002). For example, state and federal-level policies severely impact offenders’ opportunities for employment, housing, financial benefits, and education. Furthermore, the impact of these policies is challenging to measure, as the policies are imposed and implemented differently across states (Buckler & Travis, 2003; Burton, Cullen & Travis, 1987; Love,
However, several researchers have documented the manner in which policies are differentially imposed and have suggested strategies to reduce the impact of these policies on ex-offenders’ opportunities (Mauer, 2005; Petersilia, 2004; Pinard, 2010; Travis, et al., 2001; Uggen, et al., 2004). For example, the Second Chance Act of 2007 provided funding for prisoner reentry and reintegration support. In addition, this national policy initiative required states to revisit their reentry policies; however, there is little evidence that states have done so (Pogorzelski, et al., 2005).

Stigma may impact offender reentry and reintegration and be exacerbated by reentry policies. For example, studies have demonstrated that ex-offenders’ perceive stigma related to the ex-offender label (Harding, 2003; LeBel, et al., 2008; LeBel, 2011; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008) and that perceived stigma often leads to adverse coping strategies (Harding, 2003; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). Furthermore, the use of adverse coping strategies, such as secrecy and withdrawal, may negatively affect ex-offenders social supports and community ties which may hinder attempts at successful reintegration (Perlick, et al., 2001; Winnick & Bodkin, 2008). Unfortunately, there have been few studies that have examined the relationship between perceived stigma and coping strategies among ex-offenders.

The primary purpose of the present study was to examine the impact of state reentry policies on ex-offenders’ perceived stigma and the strategies used to cope with that stigma. Exploratory findings were consistent with labeling theory (Link et al., 1989) as the results indicated a strong relationship between perceived
stigma and stigma management strategies. In addition, an interaction between state-level policy scores and perceived stigma occurred for the secrecy coping strategy and approached significance for the withdrawal coping strategy. Finally, individuals who lived in states that had high policy restrictions for housing subsidies (TANF) were less likely to receive housing assistance than individuals who lived in states with low policy restrictions.
REFERENCES


Chin, G. J. (2002). Race, the war on drugs, and the collateral consequences of criminal conviction. *Journal of Gender, Race, and Justice, 6*, 253-275.


http://www.hirenetwork.org/

Oliver, B. E. (2010). My sentence is over but will my punishment ever end.


*Criminology & Public Policy, 5*(3), 505-515.


Appendix A

Surveys
Demographic Questionnaire

1. What state do you live in? _______

2. What is your zip code? _______

3. What is your age? ______

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   - [ ] ≤ 8th grade
   - [ ] 9th-12th grade, no diploma
   - [ ] College Degree (Associate or Bachelor)
   - [ ] High School Diploma
   - [ ] GED
   - [ ] Vocational Training Program

5. What is your racial/ethnic background?
   - [ ] African American
   - [ ] American Indian/Alaskan Native
   - [ ] Anglo/White/Caucasian
   - [ ] Asian/Pacific Islander
   - [ ] Latina
   - [ ] Other (Specify) __________________________

6. What is your current legal marital status?
   - [ ] Never married
   - [ ] Separated
   - [ ] Legally married
   - [ ] Divorced
   - [ ] Living as married/common law
   - [ ] Widowed
7. Do you have any children? Yes______No______

8. How many of these children live with you?___

9. What type of transportation do you generally use?

☐ Own vehicle
☐ Rides from acquaintances
☐ Mass transit
☐ Taxicab
☐ Other (please specify)____________________________

10. Are you currently working? Yes_____No_______

11. If you are currently working, are you working:

☐ Part time (less than 32 hours per week
☐ Full time (32 or more hours per week)

12. How much money do you make per week? ______

13. Are you current in your rent? Yes_____ No______

14. How is your rent currently being paid?

☐ Self ☐ Disability/SSI ☐ Family/ Significant other
☐ Rental assistance program ☐ Other (please specify)________

15. Have you ever been arrested? (If NO please go to question #42)

Yes_____No______

16. If yes, how many times have you been arrested in your lifetime? _______
17. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Yes_______ No_______

18. If yes, were you convicted of a:
   □ Misdemeanor
   □ Felony

19. Have you ever been incarcerated? Yes______ No_______

20. If yes, for how many months have you been incarcerated in your lifetime?_______

21. Have you ever been convicted of a violent offense? Yes____No____

22. Are you currently on probation or parole? Yes____No____ If yes, for how long?_____

23. How many months has it been since your last criminal conviction?_________

24. Have you told your fellow Oxford House members about your experience as an ex-offender?
   □ Yes
   □ No

25. How helpful has it been to tell other Oxford House members about your experience as an ex-offender:
   □ Not at all helpful      □ Somewhat helpful      □ Helpful      □ Extremely helpful

26. Has anyone else in your Oxford House told you about their experience as an ex-offender?
   □ Yes
   □ No
27. Telling Oxford House members about my experience of being an ex-offender provides me with support:

☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Not sure  ☐ Agree  ☐

Strongly agree

28. What was your primary substance of abuse:
_______________________________

29. What was your secondary substance of abuse:
_______________________________

30. What was your third substance of abuse:
_______________________________

31. Do you have any family members who are currently or have been incarcerated? Yes____No____

32. Do you regularly participate in self help groups (NA, AA, CA)? Yes____No____

33. If yes, how many meetings do you attend a week? ______

34. Are you currently working with a sponsor? Yes_____ No_____

35. How many months have you been in recovery?_______

36. Do you currently attend religious services (church, temple, mosque)?
   Yes___ No___

37. How many months have you lived in this Oxford House? ______

38. How many beds are in your Oxford House?_______

39. Are you currently holding a leadership position in your Oxford House?
   Yes___ No___

40. If yes, please indicate your role:
   ☐ President    ☐ Treasurer    ☐ Coordinator
☐ Secretary    ☐ Comptroller    ☐ Other (please specify)______________

41. Is there an Oxford House chapter nearby? Yes_____ No_____  

42. Do you attend monthly chapter meetings? Yes_____ No_____  

43. How much do you agree that there are jobs available in your area:  
   ☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Not sure  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree  

44. How much do you agree that there are support groups available in your area:  
   ☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Not sure  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree  

45. I believe that I am a spiritual person:  
   ☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Not sure  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree  

46. I believe that I am a religious person:  
   ☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Not sure  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree  

I consider myself to be an ex-offender: Yes_____ No_______ (If no, thank you for completing this survey. Please do not complete the rest of the survey).
Devaluation/Discrimination Scale

If you are an ex-offender, please rate the questions based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Most people would accept an ex-offender as a close friend. _____
2. Most people believe that an ex-offender is just as intelligent as the average person. _____
3. Most people believe that an ex-offender is just as trustworthy as the average person. _____
4. Most people would accept an ex-offender as a public school teacher. _____
5. Most people feel that being incarcerated is a sign of personal failure. _____
6. Most people would not hire a rehabilitated ex-offender to take care of their children. _____
7. Most people think less of a person who has been incarcerated. _____
8. Most employers will hire an ex-offender if he or she is qualified for the job. _____
9. Most employers will pass over the application of an ex-offender in favor of another applicant. _____
10. Most people in my community would treat an ex-offender like anyone else. _____
11. Most women would not date a man who is an ex-offender. _____
12. Most people will not take an ex-offender’s opinions seriously. _____
13. Most men would be reluctant to date a woman who is an ex-offender. _____
Stigma Management Scale

*If you are an ex-offender, please rate the questions based on the following scale:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. In order to get a job, an ex-offender will have to hide his or her history of incarceration.  

2. There is no reason for a person to hide the fact that she was incarcerated at one time.  

3. If you have been incarcerated, the best thing to do is to keep it a secret.  

4. If I had a close relative who had been incarcerated, I would advise him or her not to tell anyone about it.  

5. I rarely feel the need to hide the fact that I have been incarcerated.  

6. I've found that it’s best to help the people close to me understand what incarceration is like.  

7. If I thought a friend was uncomfortable with me because I had been incarcerated, I would take it upon myself to educate him or her about my incarceration.  

8. If I thought an employer felt uneasy hiring a person who had been incarcerated, I would try to make him or her understand that most ex-offenders are good workers.  

9. After I entered prison/jail, I often found myself educating others about what it means to be an offender.  

10. I would participate in an organized effort or group to teach the
public more about incarceration and the problems of people who are incarcerated.

11. It is easier for me to be friendly with people who have been incarcerated.

12. If I thought that someone I knew held negative opinions about ex-offenders, I would try to avoid him or her.

13. After being incarcerated, it’s a good idea to keep what you are thinking to yourself.

14. If I was looking for a job and received an application which asked about a history of incarceration, I wouldn't fill it out.

15. If I thought an employer was reluctant to hire a person with a history of incarceration, I wouldn’t apply for the job.

16. If I believed that a person I knew thought less of me because I had been incarcerated, I would try to avoid him or her.

17. When I meet people for the first time, I make a special effort to keep the fact that I have been incarcerated to myself.