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Gender, Culture, and Prison Classification:
Testing the Reliability and Validity of a Prison Classification System

by

Aimée Ryan Bellmore

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Social Work and Social Research

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ABSTRACT

Research consistently shows actuarial classification instruments have equal or higher predictive validity than clinical judgment and can lead to more ethical and fair treatment of incarcerated men and women (Austin, 1983, 1986; Bonta, 2002; Clements, 1981; Holsinger, Lowenkamp, & Latessa, 2006; Meehl, 1954; Salisbury, Van Voorhis, & Spiropoulos, 2009). Best correctional practice recommends all objective classification systems are tested for reliability and validity to ensure they are effective for the population they intend to serve (Austin, 1986; Holsinger et al., 2006; Salisbury et al., 2009). This study examined the reliability and validity of the classification and assessment instruments currently used by Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility (Golden Grove), located on St. Croix in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI).

Golden Grove is a mixed-gender, mixed-security status prison managed by the USVI territorial government, and is subject to United States Federal laws and mandates. Data from archival files were used to assess the internal reliability, construct validity, and predictive validity of the classification and assessment instruments used with incarcerated men and women at Golden Grove ($N = 200$). Primary objectives of this study were separated into four main categories: 1) examine the construct validity of Golden Grove's custody assessment tools; 2) investigate the predictive validity of Golden Grove's custody assessment tools across gender; 3) determine reliability and assess to what extent the primary classification officer's decisions have higher predictive validity than the actuarial tool; and 4) investigate the relationship between items on the needs assessment form and level of custody (minimum, medium, or maximum).

Results were mixed but generally indicated weak reliability, construct validity, and predictive validity. Contrary to most research on gender and classification, a significant correlation between the initial custody score for incarcerated females and disciplinary reports ($r = .26, n = 56, p < .05$) indicated the initial custody tool predicted misconduct for maximum custody females better than for males. The mean number of disciplinary reports for maximum women ($M = 1.12$) was significantly higher compared to maximum men ($M = .46$). The classification officer overrode the instrument at a high rate for both the initial assessment instrument (44%) and the reassessment instrument (36.4%) rendering the objective assessment overly subjective. Overall, findings show the classification system at Golden Grove is not functioning as intended and improvements are recommended.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all people who have served time in jails or prisons. It is a societal responsibility to provide fair treatment to all human beings regardless of past behavior – and it is our duty to continually improve our understanding and delivery of justice, especially during this era of mass incarceration.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to my grandmother, father, and partner for their unwavering support over the last four years. Also, all members of my dissertation committee have been exceptional educators and role models. They offered their time, support, and expertise with enthusiasm and were willing to work at a distance while I conducted my research in the United States Virgin Islands. Finally, without the willingness of the staff at Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility in St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands, this project would not have been possible.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The United States prison population has exploded in the last four decades. Since 1975, the total number of incarcerated individuals has climbed from 380,000 to 2,304,113 with 7,225,800 offenders under correctional supervision (Glaze, 2010; Sabol, West, & Cooper, 2009). Now the United States has the highest rate of incarceration in the world (743 inmates per 100,000 residents) followed by the Russian Federation (582 inmates per 100,000 residents) and the United States Virgin Islands (561 inmates per 100,000 residents) (Walmsley, 2011). People of color are affected disproportionately and, while African-Americans represent only thirteen percent of the total population in the United States, prisons hold 3,161 black males per 100,000 inmates compared to 487 white males per 100,000 inmates (Sabol et al., 2009). One of the fastest growing subpopulation of prisoners is women, many who were the primary caregivers of their children upon arrest (Sabol et al., 2009). The ripple effect of mass incarceration on society has yet to be fully understood and the sociological explanations for this sudden carceral expansion are layered and complex (Garland, 2001; Tonry, 2004). Combined with increased sentences for drug and property crimes and punitive state and federal policies, accessible pathways to social service programs have been systematically shut down and our prisons have become a catch-all for the most vulnerable segments of society (Garland, 2001).

Understanding the causality of mass incarceration is important and many sociologists, social workers, and criminologists have provided critical analyses of the evolution of the penal-state mentality and the negative social consequences of this trend (Garland, 2001; Tonry, 2004; Wacquant, 2004). Scholarly contributions that examine

reasons for high rates of incarceration are necessary and may eventually drive policy changes that result in decreased rates of incarceration, but these processes take time and are not the primary focus of this dissertation. Meanwhile, regardless of innocence or guilt, over two million individuals have been stripped of basic liberties and placed in state and federal prisons and jails. During the period of incarceration, many prisoners begin preparation for successful re-entry into society and prison programming serves a critical role in increasing or decreasing the likelihood of recidivism (Bonta, 2002). Improved prison programming, assessment, and service delivery helps reduce recidivism, ensures the safety of the facility, ameliorates unnecessary pressure on prison guards and administrators, and results in more humane treatment for all offenders (Bonta, 2002; Gottfredson, 1987). This dissertation will focus on one aspect of prison service delivery: classification and assessment.

The United States prison system is the largest public program in the nation's history and the ability to classify, assess, and serve incarcerated individuals effectively is imperative (Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2006; Gottfredson, 1987). For any prison or jail, whether under county, state, federal, or U.S. territorial management, a reliable and valid classification system must be employed to predict risk and assess the needs of all inmates entering the institution (Andrews et al., 2006; Bonta, 2002). An effective classification system is the driver of prison service delivery and the consequences of ineffective assessment are formidable (Andrews et al., 2006; Bonta, 2002). Ultimately, how prisoners are classified determines justice, fairness, and opportunities for incarcerated men and women. The purpose of this dissertation is to evaluate the

classification system at Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility (Golden Grove) in St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands (USVI).

To date, corrections research in the United States has neglected the study of prisons outside the mainland. Territories such as American Samoa, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands (USVI), and Puerto Rico all have fairly high rates of incarceration with the USVI ranking third globally (Walmsley, 2011). Prisons managed by territorial governments are subject to United States federal laws and, therefore, can be seen as an extension of the United States prison system. Yet, cultural and demographic differences between the mainland United States and St. Croix impact overall prison management significantly.

This study examined the reliability and validity of the classification system currently employed by Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility (Golden Grove). Located on St. Croix in the United States Virgin Islands, Golden Grove is a mixed-gender, mixed-security status prison managed by the USVI territorial government. The internal reliability and predictive validity of the classification and assessment instruments used by Golden Grove to determine level of risk for incarcerated men and women was tested. Primary objectives of this study were separated into four main categories: 1) examine the construct validity of Golden Grove's custody assessment tools; 2) investigate the predictive validity of Golden Grove's custody assessment tools across gender, 3) determine to what extent the primary classification officer's decisions have higher predictive validity than the actuarial tool; and 4) investigate the relationship between items on the needs assessment form and level of risk (minimum, medium, or

maximum). This research contributed to the existing body of literature on prison classification and assessment and provided a unique piece of scholarship that addressed the needs of inmates serving time outside the mainland United States.

Following this introduction, Chapter Two will present an examination of literature related to prison classification and assessment, describe the classification system employed at Golden Grove, and introduce the culture context of the prison on St. Croix. Chapter Three will summarize the evolution of criminological theory and offer a more in-depth discussion of select theories related to classification of incarcerated men and women. Research questions, methodology, and results will be presented in Chapters Five and Six. The final chapter will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this project, provide recommendations for updating or changing the classification system at Golden Grove, and suggest areas for future research.

Classification, Social Justice, and Relevance to Social Work

Use of invalid or informal classification systems have resulted in inhumane treatment of prisoners (Kupers, Dronet, Winter, Austin, Kelly, Cartier, Morris, Hanlon, Sparkman, Kumar, Vincent, Norris, Nagel, & McBride, 2009). If objective prison classification systems are reliable and valid, they have the capacity to significantly decrease harmful discrimination in jails and prisons. One of the tenets of social justice and social work is to promote just and fair treatment for all human beings; incarcerated persons are no exception. Incarcerated men and women represent one of the most vulnerable segments of society and assessing treatment provision for prisoners is supported and encouraged by the social work mission.

Gender and Culture Caveat

Criminological researchers use the terms gender and body-sex interchangeably. Any study that does not refer to 'gender' is most likely a male-only sample. If an article does include 'gender' they are specifically discussing women, not necessarily characteristics of the social construction of gender that could be applied to men, women, or transgendered individuals. Some feminist researchers examine this construction, but very few delineate between gender and body-sex, and only one recent study explores the relationship between 'masculine' women and crime (Chesney-Lind & Eliason, 2006). In alignment with the language used in the literature, I have adopted the term, 'gender' to refer to body-sex and gendered characteristics, although I believe the terminology needs to be detangled and more concise.

In addition, it is common for researchers in this field to refer to non-white inmates as racially or ethnically 'different'. This terminology is Caucasian-centric and counter-intuitive considering people of color are overrepresented in prisons. With reservation, I will employ the same terms in this document parallel with the current protocol in the field of criminology.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

When an individual is convicted of a crime and enters prison, correctional staff assess, or classify, inmates into different levels of custody based on the likelihood of assault, escape, suicide, and recidivism. Various techniques and systems have been used to predict violent behavior and categorically differentiate between low, medium, or high risk inmates. Early methods of prediction include phrenology and ‘gut-level’ professional judgment, both of which were not validated by empirical data (Bonta, 2002; Rafter, 2005).

More recent approaches use actuarial tools composed of variables that demonstrated moderate to high levels of predictive validity, as evidenced by empirical research studies (Bonta, 2002). Instruments that contain predominantly static variables, such as age at time of arrest, race, and severity of current conviction, do not assess how an individual may change over time; therefore, these instruments are not considered as useful for guiding rehabilitation (Bonta, 2002). In contrast, dynamic variables assess that which can be changed over time, such as level of education, impulse control, and social skills and reflect a rehabilitative approach to prison management.

Dynamic variables demonstrate criminogenic need. Criminogenic need is defined as those dynamic risk factors that reduce the likelihood of re-offending when appropriate treatment interventions are implemented (Andrews & Bonta, 1994). Accurate assessment of criminogenic need identifies treatment goals and informs the overall rehabilitative process for inmates. For example, inmates who abuse drugs and alcohol are more likely to re-offend; therefore, drug and alcohol abuse is considered a criminogenic need

(Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004). Although gender, race, and ethnicity are static variables, they can help inform criminogenic need. For example, an Afro-Caribbean female inmate may have different criminogenic need than a North American, Caucasian, male inmate.

Accurate assessment of risk and need separates inmates into groups based on criminogenic need and custody level. Proper classification can guide treatment intervention, housing assignments, and overall management of inmates. If the system is valid and implemented correctly, violence within the institution and recidivism should decrease and effective programming should increase. Not all inmates need the same type of treatment and some inmates do not need treatment at all. Lowenkamp and Latessa (2004) discovered that when low-risk and high-risk inmates are grouped together for programming, treatment goals are not realized. Low-risk inmates and high-risk inmates often have different criminogenic need; high-risk inmates tend to need high levels of intervention and low-risk inmates do well with little or no treatment (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004). In fact, too much intervention with low-risk inmates has yielded increases in recidivism (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2004).

Prison assessment and classification instruments have been continually refined to reflect the results of empirical research. Variables once thought to carry significant weight in determining custody level, such as severity of the current crime or past history of disciplinary problems in prison, may not always have high predictive value. Also, some variables may predict well for men, but not as well for women. Due to constant changes in the characteristics of inmates, all assessment instruments must be validated for the population in which they will be used.

The Evolution of Prison Classification

Phrenology: Early Criminological Assessment

One of the earliest forms of criminological assessment was phrenology. Developed in the early 19th century, phrenology was a system of classification that claimed there was a relationship between the contours of the skull and criminal behavior (Rafter, 2005). The ‘organs’ of the brain were codified and, based on the size, predicted criminal conduct; the larger the ‘organ’, the more likely destructive, anti-social behavior would occur (Rafter, 2005). This was a dramatic departure from metaphysical assessment of the times in that phrenology held assertions based on positivistic measures, like empirical observation, induction, and deduction (Livianos-Aladana, Roho-Moreno, & Sierra-San Miguel, 2007; Rafter, 2005). Many scholars have published works on the *science* of phrenology, sometimes referred to as ‘bumpology’. Albeit from a modern-day perspective, phrenology seems archaic, but this practice was one of the first methods of organized prison classification and proceeded to influence criminological theory and practice for generations (Rafter, 2005). In hindsight, this era of criminological classification is somewhat embarrassing, but undeniably a precursor to future criminal taxonomy. As Rafter (2005) stated:

We can view [phrenology] as a discourse on the human brain that greatly advanced understandings of mind-behavior relationships, that advocated scientific methods but failed in some respects to meet the scientific criteria of its own day, and that formed the first coherent explanation of criminality (p. 68).

The impact of phrenology on prison classification can be seen today, largely because phrenologists advocated rehabilitation. If the brain's 'organs' decreased in size through behavioral intervention, then criminal behavior could be controlled (Rafter, 2005). Phrenologists recommended prisons develop a tiered classification system based on rewards for good behavior (Rafter, 2005), which is very similar to modern-day security classification (minimum, medium, maximum or Level I-IV). Also, phrenologists were the first to suggest that individuals convicted of a crime may vary in criminal responsibility: a serial killer may have different qualities than a thief (Rafter, 2005). In essence, this is the foundation of modern-day prison classification. As scientific methods were refined, ultimately, phrenology was pushed to the side to make room for other ways to predict and assess criminal behavior.

Professional Judgment: The First Generation of Classification

Following practices linked to phrenology, prison classification and assessment relied on professional judgment for decision making. The first generation (1G) of classification tools involved 'unstructured professional judgment' of risk and need (Andrews et al., 2006). During this era of assessment, criminologists employed questionable practices that were not substantiated by empirical evidence (Bonta, 2002; Gottfredson, 1987). Clinical and professional judgment resulted in inconsistent classification, bias, discrimination, and often created a more punitive environment for inmates (Austin, 1983; Clements, 1981; Bonta, 2002). Bonta (2002) pointed out that 28% of states still rely on House-Tree-Person (a Jungian-based psychological test) for influencing parole decisions. Although this assessment tool was undoubtedly useful for

some clinicians, it was never validated to predict risk and, therefore, should not be used to predict future criminal behavior. Meehl's (1954) influential work predates and endorses Bonta's concerns about the validity of professional judgment. Ultimately, clinical and professional judgment do not predict as well as objective tools that are statistically validated (Meehl, 1954). "Until some quantification, at least frequency counts and contingency measures, is applied to clinical evidence, we can have very little confidence in our claims" (Meehl, 1954, p. 137).

Research consistently showed objective classification tools had equal or higher predictive validity than clinical judgment; therefore, a movement toward objectifying assessment began (Bonta, 2002). Proponents believed this would ensure a fairer and less prejudiced approach to treatment of inmates (Austin & Hardyman, 2004; Bonta, 2002; Gottfredson, 1987). Lawsuits filed by inmates against state and federal prisons played a major role in mandating use of objective classification versus clinical or professional judgment (Clements, 1981). The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) recently argued that implementation of a valid objective classification system is essential to protecting inmate rights and that systems need to be updated and re-validated frequently (Kupers et al., 2009). Use of actuarial classification and assessment in prisons has become commonplace and is now a requirement for meeting American Correctional Association (ACA) standards (American Correctional Association [ACA], 2003; Andrews et al., 2006; Bonta, 2002). Objective classification not only leads to more ethical and fair treatment of incarcerated men and women, it guides prison resources more effectively (Austin, 1986).

Employing Objectivity

Prison systems moved away from clinical judgment toward objective classification as a means of assessing risk and predicting future criminal behavior in the latter half of the twentieth century. As early as 1965, Jesness (1988) attempted to develop objective classification procedures using the Jesness Inventory of Interpersonal Maturity Level (I-Level) with juveniles. In 1975, Wisconsin developed an objective classification system, the Case Management Classification (CMC) to assist probation and parole officers in assessing risk and developing case management plans (Lerner, Arling & Baird, 1986). In 1973, Quay proposed an empirical behavioral approach to classification that determined inmate management, programming, and housing assignments (Quay, 1973, 1984). Quay eventually developed the Adult Internal Management System (AIMS), which is still used today (Hardyman, Austin, Alexander, Johnson & Tulloch, 2002).

The push toward objectification was fueled by prison litigation, reduction of resources, and overcrowding (Austin, 1986; Clements, 1981). Prison litigation outcomes required fair and consistent treatment for inmates and reduction of resources demanded development of more efficient measures to assess and classify inmates (Austin, 1986; Clements, 1981). Yet, to be in compliance with the latest correctional practices, many prison systems appropriated new objective classification tools without understanding how to implement them successfully (Austin, 1986). Employing an objective classification system does not *guarantee* fair treatment, effective use of resources, or reduction in prison violence (Austin, 1983, 1986; Clements, 1981). All objective classification

systems must be tested for reliability and validity to ensure they are effective – one size does not fit all (Austin, 1986).

A reliable objective classification system ensures that all assessment tools produce the same results regardless of who is using the tool (Austin, 1986). Valid objective classification instruments use variables that have been statistically validated to predict future criminal behavior. If validated for the population it is intended to serve, objective classification effectively assesses risk (internal management of inmate, and risk of recidivism after release) and need (specific rehabilitative programming with the intent of reducing recidivism) for the purpose of categorizing offenders (minimum, medium, or maximum security status) (Andrews et al., 2006; Austin, 2003; Austin & Hardyman, 2004). Recidivism is defined as rearrest, reconviction with no prison time, or reconviction with prison time (Langan & Levin, 2002). Determination of security status dictates institutional placement, programming, housing, and other freedoms or restrictions (Andrews et al., 2006; Austin, 2003; Austin & Hardyman, 2004; Bonta, 2002; Brennan, 1987; Gottfredson, 1987). For example, an individual classified as ‘maximum security’ may not be eligible to participate in education classes, job-training programs, or participate in visitation with family members. In addition, an inmate’s classification status often determines eligibility for parole (Andrews et al., 2006; Gottfredson, 1987).

Bonta (2002) argues that classification systems can be used to justify extreme punishment or effective treatment and the underlying intent of assessment tools is not often explicit. In addition, criminologists, politicians, policy makers, and the general public have not agreed on the overall purpose of prisons (Rothman, 1978). Should

prisons have a punitive or a rehabilitative focus? Utilizing only static variables to predict risk lends itself to a punitive approach (Bonta, 2002; Brennan, 1987; Gottfredson, 1987). Assessment instruments that emphasize dynamic variables show a person's potential to change, and, therefore, support a more rehabilitative perspective (Andrews et al., 2006).

According to most researchers and administrators, prisoners should live within the least restrictive environment, which results in preferable rehabilitative conditions for the inmate and less expenditures for the institution (Austin & Hardyman, 2004; Bonta, 2002; Gottfredson, 1987). Yet, not all prisons adhere to this philosophy in theory or practice. Due to invalid assessment tools, prisoners can either be overclassified (placed in an overly-restrictive environment) or underclassified (given too much freedom) (Austin & Hardyman, 2004). The repercussions of underclassification can be fatal, as evidenced by prison violence, escape, and institutional misconduct (Austin & Hardyman, 2004). Results of overclassification include referrals to ineffective programming (not matched with criminogenic need), inability to participate in visitation with family members, assignment to maximum-security prisons, denial of parole, and inability to access educational opportunities and/or participate in job training (Austin, 2003; Austin & Hardyman, 2004; Bonta, 2002; Girard & Wormith, 2004; Wright, Salisbury, & Van Voorhis, 2007).

Types of Classification

In a broad sense, classification systems are separated into four categories: First Generation (1G), Second Generation (2G), Third Generation (3G), and Fourth Generation (4G). As discussed earlier, 1G assessment is based on subjective criteria and not

statistically validated (Austin & Hardyman, 2004; Bonta, 2002). Second generation (2G) offender assessment instruments are empirical, atheoretical, and generally use static variables: those things that don't change over time, such as age at time of arrest, severity of current conviction, and prior criminal history (Bonta, 2002). Third generation (3G) assessment tools are also empirical, but based in criminological theory (social learning theory) and add dynamic variables: those characteristics that can change over time, such as level of aggression, depression, or active substance abuse) (Bonta, 2002; Weinrath & Coles, 2003). Finally, the recent development of fourth generation (4G) objective classification tools intend to "strengthen adherence with the principles of effective treatment and to facilitate clinical supervision devoted to enhance public protection from recidivistic crime" (Andrews et al., 2006, p.8). In essence, 4G tools are designed to follow the inmate from intake to case closure and have a strong emphasis on case management (Brennan, Dieterich, & Ehret, 2009; Fass, Heilburn, Dematteo, & Fretz, 2008).

Although some prisons still use 1G and 2G classification instruments, researchers and scholars are advocating use of 3G and 4G tools. Commonly used 3G instruments include the Correctional Assessment and Intervention System (CAIS), the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R), and the Offender Intake Assessment (OIA) of Correctional Service Canada (Bonta, 2002). Common 4G tools include the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) and the Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS) (Andrews et al., 2006; Brennan et al., 2009).

Classification systems can employ a variety of different instruments that produce outcomes based on specific goals. For example, an External Classification System (ECS) is often used to determine custody level and facility placement (e.g. minimum, medium, maximum); an Internal Classification System (ICS) guides housing assignment, programming, and work assignments, and initial screening tool flags potential medical or mental health emergencies; general criminal risk assessment predicts risk of recidivism, needs assessment tools inform specific programming; and other assessment tools are designed for use with sex offenders or extremely violent and dangerous inmates (National Institute of Corrections [NIC], 2003). Common internal classification instruments include Adult Internal Management System (AIMS) and the Prisoner Management Classification (PMC) (Hardyman et al., 2002; Leeke & Mohn, 1986). The LSI-R, COMPAS, Salient Risk, and Client Management Classification (CMC) are considered general criminal risk assessment tools and often used with probationers and parolees (NIC, 2003). Instruments that have been validated for use with sex offenders include the STATIC 99, Rapid Risk Assessment for Sex Offence Recidivism (RRASOR), Minnesota Sex Offender Screening Tool – Revised (MnSOST-R), and the Sex Offender List Appraisal Guide (SORAG) (NIC, 2003). The Hare Psychology Checklist – Revised (PCL-R) and the Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG) are recommended for assessing violent and dangerous offenders (NIC, 2003). Most prisons use an ECS, which determines custody level, institutional placement, and advises basic programming needs, yet objective Internal Classification Systems are less common (Hardyman et al., 2002).

Combining a variety of different assessment tools based on the needs of a particular prison population ensures a comprehensive approach to classification.

Researchers are assessing if certain instruments that were initially designed to serve a specific population are valid across multiple populations (Brennan et al., 2009; Weinrath & Coles, 2003). For example, in Canada, administrators wished to employ a single instrument for parolees and inmates in custody (Weinrath & Coles, 2003). A study assessed the feasibility of this by comparing the predictive validity of the Primary Risk Assessment (PRA) and the Institutional Security Assessment (ISA). Results showed the ISA was better at predicting institutional misconduct and recidivism, and encouraged development of an integrated instrument (Weinrath & Coles, 2003).

Most 2G classification instruments are not refined enough to determine specific needs and allow for the classification officer to override if a special need is detected (Austin, Baird, Bakke, McCarthy, Steele, Buchanan, & Whitlow, 1989). Ultimately, inmates are placed either in general population with a custody assignment or in a special population category. Special population categories include, but are not limited to, the following: administrative/disciplinary segregation, protective custody, severe mental health, and severe medical (Austin & McGinnis, 2004). Based on nationwide data, roughly 80% of inmates are placed in general population (35-40% minimum, 35-45% medium, and 10-15% maximum) (Austin & McGinnis, 2004). Approximately 15% of inmates are placed in special population categories (5-6% administrative/disciplinary segregation, 1-2% protective custody, 1-2% severe mental health, and 1-2% severe medical) (Austin & McGinnis, 2004).

Regardless of type of instrument, the NIC (2003) recommends all classification tools are objective, reliable, and valid for both male and female inmates, easy for staff to use, and allow for overrides. Overrides allow staff to exercise professional judgment in certain situations; this flexible approach is a mainstay for all systems (Austin, 1983; Austin, 1986; Austin, 2003; Austin et al., 1989; Bonta, 2002; NIC, 2003). Both external and internal classification systems should be formally evaluated every three years and validated for use with the site-specific population (NIC, 2003). Reliability should be assessed annually for internal classification tools and the override rate should not exceed 15%; for external classification instruments, the override rate should not exceed 20% (NIC, 2003).

Due to the weight attached to classification, reliable and valid assessment is imperative and most researchers and practitioners agree that employing an accurate classification system is a crucial first step for any correctional institution (Austin & Hardyman, 2004; Bonta, 2002). Unfortunately, not all classification tools are effective and most validation research has been conducted with white, male-only samples (Blanchette & Taylor, 2007; Brennan, 2008; Coulson, Ilacqua, Nutbrown, Giulekas, & Cudjoe, 1996; Gobeil & Blanchette, 2007; Wright et al., 2007). To ensure the ‘blind-spots’ of actuarial assessment are explored, validation studies must be conducted with site-specific populations. Classification tools validated for use with Caucasian men are not always valid for men of color and women due to differing characteristics and needs (Blanchette & Taylor, 2007; Brennan, 2008; Coulson, et al., 1996; Fass, et al. 2008; Gobeil & Blanchette, 2007; Gover, Pérez, & Jennings, 2008; Heilburn, Dematteo, Fretz,

Erickson, Yasuhara, & Anumba, 2008; Holsinger et al., 2006; Wright et al., 2007).

Results from validation tests on two risk assessment instruments - the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) and the Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS) – are mixed and inconclusive, especially in regard to gender (Coulson et al., 1996; Fass et al., 2008; Holtfreter & Cupp, 2007). A debate has ensued between criminologists who favor gender/culture-neutral assessment tools and those who think gender/culture-specific assessment tools are more empirically valid (Blanchette & Taylor, 2007; Fass et al., 2008; Wright et al., 2007). Regardless, all researchers agree that classification tools need to be validated for the specific context in which they are to be used.

Classification Research: Empirical Validation Studies

Second Generation (2G) Studies

Early empirical studies of 2G instruments focused on validating specific variables that predicted risk and assessed meaningful differences between groups of inmates (Clements, 1981). Most 2G tools have between six and twenty-four weighted variables and assess a combination of the following: current offense, sentence length, offense severity, prior institutional behavior, detainers/warrants, prior criminal history, social demographic data, and drug/alcohol abuse (Austin, 1983; Clements, 1981). Points are calculated and cut-off scores determine risk and assign a security level. Security level combined with a needs assessment guides programming (Austin et al., 1989). Validation studies clarified and adjusted appropriate cut-off scores and weights for variables (Austin, 1983).

Austin (1983) researched objective classification systems used by the United States Federal Bureau of Prisons, California Department of Corrections, and the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). The Federal system used six variables; California used twenty-four variables; and the NIC used eight variables. All systems collected data on the current offense, detainers/warrants, and criminal record. The California system and the NIC collected information on social factors, such as age, education, and employment and assessed previous institutional behavior. Unlike the other two systems, California used both positive and negative weights to determine the final score. Results of inmates' custody assignments for all three facilities were similar, with over 50% of the inmate population receiving a minimum-security custody assignment; fewer than 10% were given a maximum-security assignment. Austin then applied each of the three objective systems to Nevada's traditional 1G classification process and the results were dramatic. At the time of this study (1983), Nevada relied on a classification committee composed of custody and program staff to determine institutional placement and custody level based on subjective criteria. The 1G minimum-security custody assignments were 13.5%, yet if one of the three objective systems were employed, Nevada's minimum-security custody assignments would have risen to 56.6%.

Using regression analysis, Austin (1983) explained the variance between the Federal, California, and NIC systems when applied to Nevada's prison population were largely determined by two factors: the inmate's current offense and the inmate's previous criminal history. Contrary to popular criminological theories of the time, Austin (1983) discovered that an inmate's previous institutional behavior had no influence on predicting

future behavior at this institution; this is probably due to the specific characteristics of Nevada's inmates. Sixty-two percent of inmates in Nevada's system were first time offenders, therefore, data on past institutional behavior did not explain variance. Also, two variables were redundant: sentence length and seriousness of offense. If both variables were included, the assessment was more conservative and resulted in fewer minimum-security assignments. Nevada decided on a more conservative approach and included both variables in their assessment tool to better fit with management strategies.

This early validation study is still relevant today as it emphasizes the importance of examining a tool within the context in which it will be used. Also, prisons can tailor classification instruments to harmonize with management philosophy – as long as the institution is operating within American Correctional Association [ACA] guidelines and/or constitutional minimum standards.

Third Generation (3G) and Fourth Generation (4G) Studies

Although this dissertation investigates 2G classification instruments, it is valuable to understand the evolution of classification validation studies, including the most recent work conducted by experts today. While there are many different types of objective classification tools, the LSI-R has been examined for validity and internal consistency more often than any other 3G or 4G instruments. For this reason, a brief summary of the most recent 3G and 4G studies will be presented with particular focus on the LSI-R. Validation studies that explored the Female Offender Critical Intervention Inventory (FOCI), the Security Reclassification Scale for Women (SRSW), and other new assessment tools for women will also be described. Methodology, research design, and

statistical analyses used to determine internal consistency, concurrent validity, and predictive validity will be summarized. Empirical studies that investigate female criminogenic need with the intent of developing gender-specific criminological theory will be discussed in Chapter Three.

LSI-R

The LSI-R contains 54 items grouped into 10 subscales. Sixty-seven percent of the variables are dynamic and 33% are static variables (Simourd, 2004). Validation studies were conducted with female offenders from England, long-term offenders, Native American offenders, African American male offenders, and Hispanic male offenders to determine how well the instrument predicts risk for women, varied cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds, and short versus long-term offenders. Other studies explored how well the LSI-R predicts recidivism, the usefulness of combining the LSI-R with self-report, and how well the LSI-R predicts risk compared to the COMPAS.

Methodology included archival and retrospective studies as well as cross-sectional studies. Sample sizes ranged from 100 to 975. Calculating Pearson's R, using factor analysis of scales, and meta-analysis of various risk-appraisal measures were common. Overall, results were mixed and further support the need to validate classification instruments for the population in which they intend to be used (Coulson et al., 1996; Fass et al., 2008; Girard & Wormith, 2004; Holsinger et al., 2006; Motiuk, Motiuk, & Bonta, 1992; Palmer & Hollin, 2007; Schlager & Simourd, 2007; Walters, 2006).

Research conducted with a mid-sized sample of English female offenders revealed a one-factor solution as compared to previous studies that showed a two-factor solution (Palmer & Hollin, 2007). In line with Andrews and Bonta, researchers suggest that the LSI-R's factor structure may depend on the population and setting in which it is administered (Palmer & Hollin, 2007). Results indicated that certain subscales of the LSI-R are less likely to influence risk of reconviction and some areas of the LSI-R are gender-neutral and other subscales may be gender-specific. In particular, female offenders scored higher on subscales like accommodation, companions, family and marital relationships, substance misuse, and emotional and personal problems. In contrast to male offenders, adverse and abusive experiences in childhood, abusive relationships in adolescence and adulthood, and experience of parenthood and single parenthood all greatly increase criminogenic need with female offenders.

Prior to Palmer & Hollin (2007), Coulson et al. (1996) assessed the predictive validity of the LSI for use with incarcerated females. Results showed the average score on the LSI for women was 15.5 compared to 20.9 – 25.1 for their male counterparts. LSI predictions were somewhat more reliable over chance scores and showed some promise for use with female offenders, especially for predicting recidivism among those who scored high on the LSI.

The LSI-R was also validated for use with long-term offenders (Simourd, 2004). The racial composition of the sample was primarily white (69%) with varied criminal history. Results confirmed strong internal consistency and predictive validity for evaluating risk with long-term inmates. Yet, the study showed the LSI-R has limited

ability to predict recidivism with long-term offenders and tends to underestimate re-conviction.

A comparison study evaluated the LSI-R and inmate Self-Report Inventory (SRI) and demonstrated effectiveness (Motiuk et al., 1992). The SRI showed adequate internal reliability and consistency with modest predictive validity. Researchers do not recommend replacing the LSI-R with the SRI, but the SRI can be used in conjunction with other tools to enhance prediction of risk and identification of needs.

Walters (2006) performed a meta-analysis of risk-appraisal measures (LSI-R, HCR-20, LCSF, PCL-R, VRAG) and self-report measures (BDHI, BHS, CPI-SO, CSS, MAI, MAST, MMPI, NAS, NEO-PI-R, PAI, PICTS, PQC, SAQ). Results revealed the strength of risk-appraisal measures, yet self-report measures showed promise. The two measures predict institutional adjustment equally, yet risk-appraisal measures were more apt to predict recidivism.

Using a large male cohort (N=975), a validation study was conducted on the LSI-R (3G tool) and the COMPAS (4G tool) (Fass et al., 2008). Results indicated the LSI-R and COMPAS had inconsistent predictive validity when tested on inmates from different racial or ethnic backgrounds (in comparison to the Caucasian population).

The predictive validity of the LSI-Ontario Revision (LSI-OR) was examined with a predominantly male-only sample (N=630) of prisoners, probationers, and parolees (Girard & Wormith, 2004). The Specific Risk/Need subscale on the LSI-OR showed a higher correlation with violent recidivism compared to other subscales.

Schlager and Simourd (2007) examined the psychometric properties and validity of the LSI-R for use with African American and Hispanic men to predict rearrest and reconviction. The sample consisted of 446 male parolees (75% African American and 25% Hispanic). Separating the sample based on race/ethnicity yielded a significant result for African-American men and reconviction ($r=.11$). Yet, the true significance is questionable and researchers only cautiously support use of the LSI-R with African American and Hispanic men (Schlager & Simourd, 2007).

As with any objective classification instrument, researchers continually emphasize the need to test objective classification tools for the specific population being served. This is especially true when the tool will be implemented to an under-researched group (Holsinger et al., 2006). A sample of 403 offenders (35% female, 65% male; 65% white, 35% Native American) revealed the LSI-R has the strongest predictive validity for white offenders (male and female), while Native American outcomes were not significant, especially for females (Holsinger et al., 2006).

Results from all studies on the LSI-R re-confirm the importance of considering gender differences and cultural context when assessing the predictive validity of objective classification instruments. Research on the LSI-R supports the argument that all objective instruments, regardless of generation, date of development, or effectiveness within the general inmate population must be re-tested. Validation and reliability are dependent upon context; this is particularly true for under-researched prison populations, such as Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility in the United States Virgin Islands.

COMPAS

The COMPAS is a 4G tool that was recently developed and differs from the LSI-R theoretically (Brennan et al., 2009). The LSI-R is grounded in social learning theory, while the COMPAS incorporates a range of theoretical constructs that enable the instrument to determine risk and need with more sensitivity, including differences in gender (Brennan et al., 2009). The COMPAS is guided by social learning theory, self-control theory, social control theory, and general strain theory and is divided into five major categories: criminal involvement, relationships/lifestyle, personality/attitudes, family, and social exclusion (Blomberg, Bales, Mann, Meldrum, & Nedelec, 2010). A recent study of the COMPAS analyzed predictive models for recidivism using Cox regression and results were promising (Brennan et al., 2009). Although the COMPAS predicted recidivism for men and women fairly equally, the study did not address variations in predictive validity by age, ethnicity, race, or other offender subgroups (Brennan et al., 2009). While results indicate the COMPAS is at least equal to other classification and risk assessment instruments for offenders, authors emphasize that validation is an on-going process (Brennan et al., 2009). Proponents of gender-specific classification advocate adding variables that address criminogenic need for female offenders to the COMPAS thereby resulting in a more robust tool for women (Brennan et al., 2009; Salisbury et al., 2009).

FOCI-R and women offenders.

Shearer (2003) discussed the needs of female offenders and advocates gender-specific assessment. He summarized a study completed by Bloom and McDiarmid (2000) that tested the reliability and validity of the Female Offender Critical Intervention

Inventory (FOCI). The FOCI contained 18 items that are scored on a three-point scale (never, sometimes, frequently). Female offenders were separated into four groups with a total sample of N=188. Factor analysis found a three-factor solution and they were labeled: substance abuse/lifestyle risk, personal abuse, and personal attributes. Ultimately, 15 items were divided into the three factors so that each factor became a five-item scale. Following this study, the FOCI was renamed the FOCI-R and it has preliminary reliability and validity for use with female offenders.

SRSW and women offenders.

Blanchette and Taylor (2007) used case files to develop and test a gender-informed Security Reclassification Scale for Women (SRSW). Results showed the SRSW has preliminary reliability and validity for incarcerated females in Canada. Compared to the classification system currently in use, the SRSW classified fewer females as 'maximum' and more as 'minimum'. A three-month follow-up suggested the SRSW was significantly more predictive of minor institutional misconduct compared to their previous system. Other validation studies on the SRSW were performed in Canadian and European prisons (Gobeil & Blanchette, 2007). Results were favorable and the SRSW equaled or outperformed clinical assessment. Authors suggest implementation of the SRSW will lessen the load placed on caseworkers and provide a more accurate and stream-lined approach to classification.

New assessment tools for women.

Van Voorhis, Salisbury, Wright, and Bauman (2008) validated two new classification/assessment tools for women. Researchers combined results from studies

conducted on dynamic risk factors with feminist criminological theory that emphasized gendered pathways to crime. The first tool is meant to be used in conjunction with a typical dynamic risk assessment, like the LSI-R, and is referred to as ‘the trailer’. The second tool is autonomous, but the development of both instruments was informed by focus groups, prison staff, and women offenders. Methodology combined interview and self-report and synthesized gender-neutral variables from the LSI-R with gender responsive variables. Gender-responsive variables, such as, child abuse, loss of personal power in relationships, family support, relationship support, parental stress, and family conflict proved to be predictive of institutional misconduct. Self-efficacy and adult victimization were less robust predictors for institutional misconduct, but adult victimization did impact adjustment for probationers. Many gender-neutral variables were also predictive of institutional behavioral problems and recidivism, such as substance abuse, anger, antisocial associates, and criminal history; education employment, and finances were predictive in probation settings. Both instruments need to be adapted for the population they intend to serve and researchers offer suggestions for implementation. Like other researchers, Van Voorhis et al. (2008), clarify the purpose for identifying high-risk females is not to further punish incarcerated women, but to provide important insight into treatment planning and service provision.

Summary of Classification Research

In sum, all objective classification tools should be validated for the context in which they will be used; this includes culture and gender. Although some studies indicate poor or mixed results, actuarial tools consistently have stronger predictive value

than clinical judgment. Research must continue to help refine instruments and better reflect the ever-changing prison population. This is especially important considering men of color, prison populations outside of the mainland United States and Canada, and women are under-researched populations. Inmates serving time at Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility definitely qualify as an under-researched group and this bolsters the need to conduct research on the current classification system. The Crucian community evolved in a very different way than communities in the mainland United States and a brief description of Crucian history will illustrate how Golden Grove is situated within a larger cultural context.

Classification at Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility

Golden Grove's current classification system is composed of an intake screening tool, initial custody assessment tool, custody reassessment tool, and a needs assessment form. See Appendices A-C for all classification instruments and the needs assessment form. This 2G system was developed by the Virgin Islands Bureau of Corrections in conjunction with the National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice in 1994 and has never been validated for the Virgin Islands inmate population (Aiken & Walcott, 1994). The National Institute of Corrections suggests revalidation every three years to account for changes in inmate populations (Austin & Hardyman, 2004). Golden Grove's Initial Custody Assessment Form contains seven weighted variables (Appendix A). Five variables are static: severity of current offense (range 0-7), serious offense history (range 0-5), escape history (range 0-6), prior institutional disciplinary history (range 0-3), and prior felony convictions (range 0-4). Two variables are dynamic:

drug/alcohol abuse (range 0-3) and stability factors (range -5-0). *Stability Factors* is one weighted variable that assesses current age, employment or involvement in education at time of arrest, and if the inmate lived in the Virgin Islands for at least twelve months prior to arrest. Older age, current school enrollment, employment, and residence for at least twelve month in the Virgin Islands are considered protective factors and reduce the custody score. See Appendix D for severity of offense measures.

On the Initial Custody Assessment Form, the highest possible score on the first three items is 19 and the highest possible score on all seven items is 29. The lowest possible score is -4 and indicates an inmate with low or no criminal history, no disciplinary infractions, no problems with drug/alcohol abuse, an age of 40 or older, employment or current school enrollment at time of arrest, and a home residence in the Virgin Islands for at least twelve months prior to arrest.

On the Custody Reassessment Form, the variables are slightly different. Five variables are static: severity of current offense (range 0-6), serious offense history (range 0-5), escape history (range 0-6), and prior felony convictions (range 0-2). Three variables are dynamic: number of disciplinary reports received (range 0-6), severity of disciplinary infractions (range 0-7), and stability factors (range -5-0). The first three variables are identical to the initial assessment, but the highest possible score is 17. The highest possible score on all seven variables is 32 and the lowest score remains -4. See Appendix E for severity of disciplinary infractions measures.

According to the Virgin Islands Bureau of Corrections Policy and Procedures for Inmate Records, Booking, Inmate Processing and Inmate Classification, all inmates must

go through an intake, booking, and classification process (Aiken & Walcott, 1994). During the intake and booking process, inmates are searched, identified and fingerprinted, showered, clothed, screened for medical, dental, and mental health problems and temporarily housed. Legal documents are organized and filed and a brief interview with the inmate is conducted to determine if he or she has enemies inside the prison. After the booking process, the inmate is ready to be classified. The policy states, “all inmates entering the prison system shall be classified in terms of the least restrictive level of custody required, housing assignment, and participation in appropriate inmate work programs” (Aiken & Walcott, 1994, p. 50). The Initial Custody Assessment Form (Appendix A) is used to determine the initial custody level and housing assignment. The custody level determines eligibility for work programs. For example, an inmate with a life sentence and/or a maximum custody level is not permitted to work outside the perimeter of the prison. The Initial Custody Assessment Form is filled out by the classification officer with or without the inmate present. The classification officer uses legal documents to answer questions on the form, adds up the scores associated with each variable, and the final score determines the level of custody. Five or less points indicates minimum security, but if the inmate has a warrant, detainer, parole or probation violation, or bond that exceeds \$100,000, the inmate’s custody level is moved to medium security. Those inmates who score 6-10 points are considered medium security and inmates who score seven or more on the first three variables or eleven or more on all variables indicate maximum security. At this point, the classification officer can determine if an override of the tool is necessary. Override factors include: need for protective custody,

psychological impairment, escape threat, serious violence threat, known gang affiliation, substance abuse problem, suspected drug trafficker, suicide risk, and severe medical problem. The classification officer must justify why an override decision was made and have a supervisor sign off in agreement. A Needs Assessment Form (Appendix C) is filled out to determine program needs. The Custody Reassessment Form (Appendix B) is used for standard review of custody levels every 12 months or when new information affecting inmate management is received. The variables on the Custody Reassessment Form are weighted differently than the Initial Custody Form to allow for reduced custody levels.

Policy and practice are not always identical. Although the classification policies and procedures are explicit, instructions were not always followed. Divergence from formal procedure may have an impact on assessing predictive validity and the problems associated with practice, process, and management will be discussed in the next section and the final chapter of this dissertation.

Context of a Crucian Prison

Empirical validation of classification instruments is crucial, yet a valid tool implemented incorrectly will look invalid. Quantitative researchers have mistakenly declared classification systems invalid and overlooked *how* the system is implemented (Austin, 1986). Staff resistance, miscalculation, and failure to use the system to assign inmates to appropriate housing and programming may result in what looks like an invalid system (Austin, 1986). Austin (1986) declared, “The absence of validation lies not in the

model's criterion variables (those items used to determine an inmate's custody level) but failure to use the classification system as designed" (p. 303).

Bellmore (2009) sought to understand the interplay between Crucian culture, prison leadership, and classification by conducting interviews with Golden Grove leadership. All interviewees used the term, *laid-back*, to describe the environment at Golden Grove and further investigation illuminated other themes that helped to explain why the prison classification system might not be functioning as intended.

Crucian Culture

Crucian is the term used by residents of St. Croix to define themselves and Crucian culture is a blend of dialect, custom, and identity unique only to St. Croix (Willocks, 1995). Not only are the demographics and culture on St. Croix different from the mainland United States, their culture is different from other Caribbean islands, including their close neighbors on St. Thomas and St. John, who are also a part of the United States Virgin Islands. See Figure 1 for a map of the Caribbean.

Figure 1. Map of the Lesser Antilles. Adapted from “Map of the Lesser Antilles,” by the Zoros, 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.zoro.co.uk/Page3/carib1.html>

The demographics of the United States Virgin Islands have changed little since colonial days and reflect a very different racial demography compared to the mainland United States (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Health, Division of Mental Health, Alcoholism, and Drug Dependency Services, U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Center for Substance Abuse Prevention [USVI DOH], 2007). St. Thomas and St. John have more white residents and fewer Latino residents compared to St. Croix. Crucian residents are 66% Black, 4% Caucasian, and 25% Latino (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Health, Division of Mental Health, Alcoholism, and Drug Dependency Services, U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention [USVI DOH], 2010). Poverty rates on St. Croix are nearly double that in the mainland United States with 35.8% of children and 32.7 % of adults living below the United States poverty level (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Human Services, 2007). Virgin Islanders have a lower rate of high school graduation compared to United States (60% versus 80%) and the second highest murder rate in the world (66 per 100,000) (Shea, 2011; USVI DOH, 2007). See Table 1 for the racial/ethnic composition of the Virgin Islands compared to the United States.

Some historical analysts blame the disorganized territorial government for education, crime, and poverty disparities while others blame the United States Federal Government for decades of neglect, mismanagement, and exploitation (Boyer, 2010). The United States of America bought the Virgin Islands from Denmark in 1917, but residents were not granted citizenship until 1927. This gap in citizenship status largely affected residents of African descent who did not wish to repatriate to Denmark and prevented them from leaving the islands for a full ten years. The United States Federal Government appointed governors with no input from residents; Virgin Islanders were not allowed to form a senate until 1936 and were not permitted to vote for Governor until 1970. To date, residents of the Virgin Islands are still not able to vote for the president of the United States (Boyer, 2010). Bellmore (2009) concluded that, “this relatively new U.S. Virgin Islands government continues to shape and reshape itself to satisfy the needs of its unique population while navigating its ambiguous colonial status as a territory (p. 8-9).

Table 1. Racial/Ethnic Composition of the Virgin Islands and the United States

		Virgin Islands	United States
Race	Black	76.2	12.9
	White	13.1	81.7
	Asian	1.1	
	Other*	6.1	1.2
	Mixed	3.5	0.0
	Total	100	100
Ethnicity	Non-Hispanic	86.0	87.5
	Hispanic	14.0	12.5
	Total	100	100

*US “Other” race includes Amerindian and Alaska native (1%), and native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (0.2%). Source: VI State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup, 2007 (US Census Bureau, Census 2000).

Due to a long history of exploitation and/or slavery by seven different nations (Spain, France, Netherlands, Knights of Malta, England, Denmark, United States), Crucians do not readily trust outsiders (Bellmore, 2009; Boyer, 2010). The Federal Court may order Golden Grove to employ a valid classification system, but prison administrators and officers generally mistrust the intent and usefulness of these recommendations (Bellmore, 2009). This does not mean trust can never be developed between outsiders and Crucians; it just may take some time. An excerpt from a participant in Bellmore’s (2009) qualitative study illuminated this point:

Even though some people will look at me and I look like I’m from the states - I can have a strong dialect here depending on what I’m doing. It’s just one of those things to let them know I’ve been here for quite some time. It helps establish trust - it takes a really long time to really develop the trust - and even then you’re still an outsider. I don’t think that will ever change. - Michelle (Bellmore, 2009).

A combination of Crucian identity, mistrust of outsiders, egalitarianism, strong kinship ties, and geographical boundaries contribute to a *laid-back* approach to prison administration at Golden Grove (Bellmore, 2009). St. Croix is 27 miles by 8 miles with a population of roughly 60,000 (Willocks, 1995). Most generational residents are descendants of African slaves and strong familial bonds, based on equality and mutual respect are valued and encouraged (Bellmore, 2009; Boyer, 2010). The push to build egalitarian relationships (non-hierarchical) may, in part, be a reaction to previous years of hierarchical relationships (slavery) and the agrarian economy that sustained residents for centuries. The following excerpt from an interviewee in Bellmore's (2009) study illustrates this concept well:

The community evolved in a very specific and stylistic way – compared to St. Thomas which had 5000 slaves – you're really talking a very different population... While here on St. Croix – not that you didn't have families that ended up with means – but the elitism is, I think, a little different – so you can get people in power who don't meet those traditional norms. It's almost like you work hard and you get to a good position or place. – Ellis (Bellmore, 2009, p. 18).

The likelihood of blood relationships between officers and inmates at Golden Grove is extremely high (Bellmore, 2009). Prisons are paramilitary organizations that function by following a hierarchical chain of command. Yet, egalitarianism in Crucian culture combined with the likelihood of familial relationships between officers and inmates creates tension (Bellmore, 2009). For example, a young officer may be ordered to supervise his uncle, brother, cousin, or father. Officers may feel they can assess their

friend or family member more accurately than a foreign and impersonal classification system. One interviewee in Bellmore's study stated:

The power structure here is really weird. [In prisons in the mainland] there's a pecking order, but we don't have a defined structure at all. It's a mismatch to me.
– Patricia (Bellmore, 2009, p. 20).

Non-hierarchical relationships, kinship bonds, egalitarianism, and an inverse power structure at Golden Grove can be obstacles to successful implementation of a new classification system if not acknowledged. Awareness and discussion of cultural differences is important and participation in, rather than rejection of, non-hierarchical relationships may help the organization implement a new system:

Rather than eliminating *laid-back* relationships between inmates and staff (which may not be possible), perhaps inmate-staff connections need to be exercised more judiciously and classification may aid in this transition. If the classification tool is doing its job, maximum and super-maximum inmates will be accurately identified and staff will be able to exercise more rigid boundaries with this population. Yet, in order for this to occur, training on how classification, boundaries, and security interface is essential for all prison staff (Bellmore, 2009, p. 29).

Bellmore's (2009) study demonstrated potential obstacles to implementing the current classification system correctly. Austin (1986) advised researchers to conduct process analyses to determine the difference between an invalid tool and incorrect

implementation. Results from Bellmore's study suggested implementation issues may confound results and caution should be exerted when interpreting results.

CHAPTER III: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Criminological theories are numerous and varied and have informed the development of a range of classification tools. Common theories include: social learning theory, control theories, general strain theory, functionalist theory, institutional-anomie theory, deprivation theory, and importation theory (Belknap, 1996, Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Cullen, Wright, & Blevins, 2008; Gottfredson, 1987). Theories describing the etiology of women and crime (including characteristics of female criminals) include the theories listed above and the following: power-control theory, feminist theories, conflict theory, labeling theory, cycle of violence theories, life-course theories, feminist pathways perspective, and gender-responsive perspectives (Belknap, 1996; Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Brennan, 2008; Chesney-Lind, 2006; Cullen et al., 2008; DeHart, 2008; Garcia Coll, Miller, Fields, & Mathews, 1998; Gover et al., 2008; Mageehon, 2008; Pollack, S., 2007; Wright, Caspi, Moffit, & Silva, 2007).

According to Cullen et al. (2008), core criminological theories include social learning theory, control theory, and general strain theory. Macro-level theories (Institutional-Anomie, collective efficacy, and race/ethnic inequality theories), theories of power and peace (radical criminology, feminist theories, and peacemaking criminology), life-course theories, and theories of societal reaction (deterrence theory, restorative justice, and effective correctional intervention theory) encompass the breadth of non-core criminological theory (Cullen et al., 2008). This dissertation will primarily focus on social learning theory and critical criminology theories, yet other theories will be introduced when they overlap with the primary discussion.

Classification and Underlying Theoretical Constructs

Some classification studies claim to be atheoretical, yet, upon closer examination, underlying theoretical principles are evident. For example, given that the LSI-R is grounded in social learning theory, any validation study is presenting empirical evidence through that theoretical lens. Golden Grove's classification tool is composed of mostly static, *gender-neutral* variables, which will not be effective for guiding rehabilitation or illuminating gendered pathways that lead to criminal behavior (Bonta, 2002). In contrast, dynamic variables assess criminogenic need and provide critical information (Bonta, 2002).

Golden Grove's initial classification tool may be largely absent of dynamic variables, but the reclassification instrument is able to measure behavioral change based on disciplinary infractions while incarcerated. The theoretical construct underlying the classification tool is not clearly identifiable compared to more sophisticated third and fourth generation instruments, but a very simple behavioral incentive program is key to the overall classification system. For example, inmates who committed low-level crimes and have no criminal history will likely be classified as minimum. Yet, if inmates have behavioral problems and receive many disciplinary reports, their custody level could rise to maximum. Determining custody level only based on the severity of the crime committed does not necessarily predict violent behavior.

Social learning theory and critical criminological theories, which include feminist perspectives, will be the primary focus of this chapter. Social control theory, self-control theory, and general strain theory will be introduced briefly as a part of the discussion of

social learning theory. The juxtaposition of theories is intentional and the differences between theories will be emphasized. This does not mean theoretical overlap is impossible, but it illustrates the philosophical divisions between scholars and how theory is often applied in classification research. Theoretical discussion will be brief, selective, and emphasize the current status of theories as they apply to classification, culture, and gender.

Social Learning Theory and Other Core Criminological Theories

Empirical testing of the full model of social learning theory began in the 1970's, yet research confirmed major tenets of the theory as early as 1937 as evidenced by Sutherland's research on thievery (Akers & Jensen, 2008; Sutherland, 1939). Research supported the idea that criminals tend to learn behavior by exposure to other criminals (Akers & Jensen, 2008; Sutherland, 1939). Sutherland developed differential association theory, which became a major precursor to social learning theory (Akers & Jensen, 2008; Kissner & Pyrooz, 2009). The relationship between criminal behavior and association, reinforcement, imitation, and other learning-related influences has been thoroughly researched and has yielded predominantly positive results (Akers & Jensen, 2008). At this point in time, social learning theory offers a robust explanation of criminal behavior as evidenced by the volume of empirical studies that support its claims (Akers & Jensen, 2008). Yet, social learning theory is not just an explanation of why criminals commit crimes; protective factors are described and brought forth as equally important considerations (Akers & Jensen, 2008). Empirical studies often compare social learning

theory with self-control theory and social control theory; therefore, a brief description of the latter two theories will be provided.

Self-control theory, minimizes social causation and claims that individual self-control is the greatest predictor of criminal behavior (Cheung & Cheung, 2007). Self-control theory was developed by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) and is rooted in early theories of deviance (Ozbay, 2008). Also referred to as the *general theory of crime*, this account of criminal behavior claims to be gender-neutral and culture-free and challenges the assumptions of social learning theory (Cheung & Cheung, 2007; Wright et al., 1999). These contentious claims sparked research and debate and resulted in numerous empirical studies that juxtapose social learning theories and self-control theory in an attempt to ascertain which has more predictive value. Some researchers encourage synthesizing social learning theory and self-control theory (Church, Wharton, & Taylor, 2009; Wright et al., 1999). Perhaps criminal behavior is predicted by a combination of individual self-control and external social factors, like peer association.

Interestingly, Hirschi's earlier work accepted social causality. Known as social control theory, this is still one of the most influential sociological theories on the etiology of crime. Social control theory emphasized the importance of social bonds in preventing or promoting criminal behavior (Wright et al., 1999). Ultimately, social control theory posits what prevents crime: social control. In the absence of social control, individuals are more likely to participate in criminal activity, while pro-social bonding reinforces traditional social norms and; therefore, exerts social control on behavior (Church et al., 2009). Other studies merge concepts from social control theory, emphasizing the

importance of social bonds in childhood in combination with concepts from social learning theory (Church et al., 2009).

Social learning theory asserts that criminal behavior is learned through interactions between social environment, biological factors, personality characteristics, and emotional disposition (Holtfreter & Cupp, 2007). According to this interpretation, social learning theory may integrate aspects of self-control theory; as evidenced by the inclusion of personality characteristics and emotional disposition. The most commonly studied construct related to social learning theory is peer association and the primary domains of the theory include differential association, definitions, differential reinforcement, and imitation (Akers & Jensen, 2008). Differential association describes influences of peer association (Akers & Jensen, 2008). Definitions are an individual's subjective moral determinations, which include rationalizations, justifications, and excuses for participating in behavioral patterns outside the accepted societal norm (Akers & Jensen, 2008). Differential reinforcement accounts for the process by which individuals weigh the benefits and consequences of their actions (Akers & Jensen, 2008). Finally, imitation refers to behavior that is mimicked after engaging in direct or indirect observation (Akers & Jensen, 2008; Bandura, 1977). A more in-depth discussion of differential association theory, as a domain of social learning theory, and how it interfaces with social control theory and self-control theory follows.

Differential Association Theory, Social Control Theory, and Self-Control Theory

Initially developed by Sutherland (1939) and incorporated into social learning theory, differential association indicates direct or indirect association and interaction with

individuals who engage in certain types of behavior that result in development of norms that are dependent on specific social context (Akers & Jensen, 2008). In essence, interaction with delinquent peers will increase the likelihood of delinquent or criminal behavior. If delinquent peer groups are formed in childhood and maintained through adulthood, individuals are more likely to associate criminal behavior as the norm rather than pro-social behavior (Church et al., 2009).

A recent study analyzed gang involvement through the lens of differential association theory and self-control theory (Kissner & Pyrooz, 2009). Researchers critiqued Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) assertion that lack of self-control predicated gang membership and that gangs tended to be loosely organized groups of delinquent individuals incapable of having strong relationships. Results indicated differential association measures predicted gang membership more so than self-control measures, yet an inverse correlation between length of gang membership and self-control existed.

Yet another recent study evaluated the predictability of certain concepts related to differential association theory and determined that association with delinquent peers, regardless of race, is a strong predictor of future delinquent behavior (Church et al., 2009). Researchers encouraged combining principles of differential learning theory and social control theory, not to be confused with self-control theory, to offer a more comprehensive approach to understanding initial onset and continuing involvement in criminal behavior (Church et al., 2009). This is not surprising, considering social control theory accepts social causation as a predictor of criminal behavior.

There are inherent differences between self-control theory and differential association/social learning theories as explanations for deviance. Self-control theory underemphasizes social factors and places responsibility on the individual's ability to exert self-control and minimizes the influence of social factors on deviance and crime (Cheung & Cheung, 2007). According to self-control theory, social selection begins in childhood and is influenced by the personality characteristics of the child, specifically, the child's ability to exert self-control (Wright et al., 1999). The ability to control oneself is the primary predictor of participation in criminal behavior from an individual-level perspective (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). In contrast, differential association/social learning theory examines causality from a societal perspective, not just from the standpoint of the individual (Akers & Jensen, 2008). These contrasting theoretical approaches have yielded a deluge of studies that attempt to validate or invalidate each theory (Baron, 2003; Brownfield & Sorenson, 1993; Burton, Cullen, Evans, Alarid, & Dunaway, 1998; Grasmick, Tittle, Bursick, & Arneklev, 1993; Mason & Windle, 2002; Polakowski, 1994; Wright et al., 1999).

Wright et al. (1999) suggested integrating concepts from self-control and social learning theories. Researchers examined measures of low self-control as well as peer association to determine which were more likely to predict criminal behavior. Results showed that the effect of self-control was largely mediated by peer association. As a predictor of number of convictions, level of self-control was less robust compared to social bonds/peer association. Yet, low self-control in childhood predicted poor social bonds, low self-control in adolescents, and delinquency, which all predict involvement in

crime. In conclusion, Wright et al. (1999) found that social causation, as measured by social bonds/peer association was a significant predictor of crime while social selection, as measured by level of self-control had both direct and indirect effects on crime. Both theoretical models have value and may, in fact, complement each other and researchers could benefit from integrating constructs (Wright et al., 1999).

Cheung and Cheung (2008) conducted a recent study that assessed the cultural relevance of self-control theory, social bonding, differential association, strain, and labeling theories to Hong Kong adolescents. General strain theory suggests crime is caused by stressors, such as loss of money, job, relationship, etc. (Agnew, 2008). While labeling theory asserts that individuals have a propensity to react to societal labeling, which, in turn, increases the likelihood of criminal behavior (Cheung & Cheung, 2008). Low self-control was found to be a predictor of delinquent behavior as well as a predictor of weak social bonds (measure of social control theory), delinquent peer association (measure of social learning theory), educational deficiencies (measure of general strain theory), and negative labeling by parents and teachers (measure of labeling theory). Similar to Wright et al. (1999), by integrating constructs and measures, Cheung and Cheung revealed a complimentary theoretical overlap. They argued that integrating theory may result in a more comprehensive approach that may have predictive power across culture.

Ozbay (2008) studied the impact of self-control theory as a predictor of deviant behavior for male and female Turkish students. Other constructs, such as monetary strain (general strain theory), school commitment, deviant peer association (social learning

theory), social class (general strain theory), and age were analyzed as well. Results showed low self-control predicted delinquent behavior for both males and females, in line with self-control theory. However, monetary strain and school commitment were significant for males only and gender socialization in Turkey may explain these results. The researcher concluded that general strain theory and social bonding theory are gender-specific for males, yet did not offer a comprehensive analysis detailing how Turkish gender socialization may differ compared to other cultures. Measures of social learning theory were also significant in predicting deviant behavior and, similar to other researchers, Ozbay (2008) showed the predictive value of diverse theoretical constructs.

Importation and Deprivation Theories: An Integrated Approach?

Gover et al. (2008) sought to understand gender differences in factors relating to prison institutional misconduct as measured by underlying theoretical constructs that are loosely related to both social learning theory and self-control theory. Deprivation theory claims environmental context of prisons has an impact on behavior (social causation). The prison itself sets up a negative tension between staff and inmates. Importation theory emphasizes the internalized characteristics an inmate prior to entry into prison (social selection). Male and female inmates (N=247) completed a 145-item self-report survey and results showed predictors for men and women are different. Poisson regression models indicated that measures of importation and deprivation theories significantly influence institutional misconduct, but in different ways for men and women. Multivariate analyses revealed four correlates between importation measures and females. Older women were less likely to incur infractions, non-white females and those

with at least a high school degree were more likely to have disciplinary reports, and women who were previously incarcerated were less likely to have infractions. Similarly, four factors related to deprivation theory were correlated to institutional misconduct. Contrary to other studies, sentence length had a negative correlation to misconduct, length of stay was correlated to an increase in infractions, positive interactions with staff were associated with an increase in misconduct, and perceived safety decreased the mean number of institutional infractions. Although some findings are counter-intuitive, results indicate differences between men and women and support the hypotheses that females take different pathways to crime and different criminogenic needs compared to males.

Summary of Core Theories

Clearly, more research on integrating theoretical models, testing constructs in a variety of different cultural settings, and gender comparisons need to be conducted. Criminologists need to better understand risk potential and criminogenic need for non-Western populations and women. To date, studies have showed inconsistent results and criminological theory that explicitly examines the etiology of women/girls and crime need to be expanded (Belknap, 1996). Social learning theory continues to be a viable theory, yet, clearly, it is not the only comprehensive explanation for predicting criminal behavior. Core criminological theory directly informs prison policy development and classification systems; therefore, theory should continue to be tested for relevance, usefulness, and practical applicability (Lynch, Schwendinger, & Schwendinger, 2008).

Critical Criminology

Conflict theory, feminist theories, and radical criminology address structural inequalities based on class, race, and/or gender and all fall under the rubric of critical criminology (Cullen et al., 2008). In contrast to functionalist theory, scholars argue that shared societal norms are fictitious and usually dictated by those in power (Weitzer, 2002). Originally, conflict theory was informed by Marxist philosophy to critique capitalist structures, but today it shares common ground with various feminist theories that critique paternalistic and misogynistic structures that influence individual behavior (Belknap, 1996).

Compared to social learning theory, which is considered a traditional core criminological theory, perspectives borne from critical criminology are considered new and unexplored (Cullen et al., 2008). Yet, acknowledging that individual behavior cannot be separated from social structures or historical happenings is not new and these ideas have informed radical and feminist theories for decades (Miller & Mullins, 2008; Mills, Kroner, & Hemmati, 2003). Nevertheless, criminologists are just beginning to consider feminist critical theories as primary versus secondary explanations of crime and delinquency (Cullen et al., 2008). According to some researchers, failure to examine ‘gendered pathways’ to crime will result in incomplete theoretical explanations and further marginalize females from criminological discourse (Miller & Mullins, 2008). For example, many studies have shown that differential association with antisocial peers increases delinquency; but results cannot be generalized to girls as well as boys, especially since samples have been overwhelmingly male (Cullen et al., 2008). In

addition, analysis of the impact of large scale environmental and social injustices may play a significant role in understanding the etiology of crime (Lynch et al., 2008).

Feminist theories and radical criminology offer a categorically different approach to the field and challenge traditional thinking. Exploring these perspectives may trigger a new approach to prison management, classification, assessment, and the overall function of the justice system.

Feminist Theories

Contrary to core criminological theories' claims of gender-neutrality, feminist criminologists assert the impossibility of neutrality and advocate gender-responsiveness and gender-specific examination (Miller & Mullins, 2008; Wright et al., 2007). The primary focus of traditional theories is to understand crime and criminality; gender is an afterthought (Miller & Mullins, 2008). Feminist criminology places gender discourse at the forefront and analyzes crime and criminality through that specific lens (Miller & Mullins, 2008). Due to the ever-changing definition of what it means to be female within a specific societal context, theorists must constantly expand and update theory so it maintains relevant (Miller & Mullins, 2008). Theorists are faced with the daunting task of understanding all aspects of social identity as it relates to gender; therefore, feminist criminologists must integrate and respond to traditional theoretical discourse rather than reject previous work simply because gender was not the focus (Miller & Mullins, 2008). Unfortunately, feminist criminological scholarship has not had as great an impact on policy development and classification in comparison to traditional theory largely due to

the low number of incarcerated women (Miller & Mullins, 2008; Van Voorhis et al., 2008, Van Voorhis, Wright, Salisbury, & Bauman, 2010). Slowly this trend is changing.

One of the first criminological theories to explicitly include gender from the onset was power-control theory (Belknap, 1996). Scholars and researchers emphasized the importance of examining the origins of delinquency with girls and women by investigating class, family, and power relationships (Belknap, 1996). John Hagan and associates are credited with the development of this theory and their focus on differing delinquency rates based on patriarchal vs. egalitarian homes showed that girls raised in egalitarian homes were more prone to delinquency (Belknap, 1996). Hagan, Gillis, and Simpson's (1985) research critiqued sociological and criminological theories of delinquency and maintained the strongest predictor of criminal behavior is gender, yet class continued to have a weak correlation. Hagan et al. (1985) performed the first empirical study that examined the relationship between class, gender, and delinquency. Since 1985, the rate of female incarceration has increased at a far greater rate than male incarceration and Hagan's analysis may not account for present day circumstances.

According to Miller and Mullins (2008), the major tenets of feminist criminology were put forth by Daly and Chesney-Lind in 1988 and emphasize social, historical, and cultural interpretations of gender. Gender is not synonymous with biological sex; gender is a construct. What it means to be male or female is constantly shifting based on societal and cultural norms. Feminist criminologists argue that how men and women are socialized directly informs pathways to crime and criminogenic need (Heimer & Kruttschnitt, 2006). For example, for female offenders, research shows a link between

economic marginalization and crime (Heimer, Wittrock, & Ünal, 2006). When women are less economically advantaged, compared to men, the gender gap in crime decreases - women experiencing poverty are more likely to commit both violent and non-violent crimes (Heimer et al., 2006). For women offenders, poverty is a criminogenic need and should be addressed during the period of incarceration. This does not mean poverty is not a criminogenic need for men, but it appears to be a stronger predictor for women. Unfortunately, many classification tools do not assess economic issues for offenders (male or female) and lack of intervention in this area may contribute to recidivism and risk. The correlation between poverty and crime outside of prison has been examined for decades, yet the relationship between lack of financial resources and disciplinary problems while incarcerated has not been explored. Research can help identify criminogenic need for men and women and determine how risk and need may differ based on gender, race, culture, age and other factors. Classification tools must incorporate findings from research to refine instruments and increase the overall usefulness of assessment methods.

To increase the potential effect of feminist theory on prison practice, more empirical studies must be conducted so that comprehensive theoretical models, which reflect the current population of female inmates, can be developed (Belknap, 1996; Chesney-Lind & Eliason, 2006; Garcia Coll et al., 1998). Due to the rapid growth of women prisoners, understanding gender-specific needs and assessment are at the forefront of criminological research (Van Voohris et al., 2008). Recent studies have contributed to the development of feminist criminological theory and are beginning to

directly inform classification and assessment instruments for women (Salisbury et al., 2009; Van Voorhis et al., 2008; Van Voorhis et al., 2010).

Studies on the relationship between female victimization and female crime have informed the feminist criminological discourse. Research has indicated very high levels of victimization among incarcerated women (Dugan & Castro, 2006). Incarcerated women have a high likelihood of re-victimization and failure to address treatment needs of this vulnerable population may result in poor adjustment to prison and increased rates of recidivism (Dugan & Castro, 2006; Islam-Zwart & Vic, 2004). Islam-Zwart and Vik (2004) investigated how female inmates with a history of sexual abuse adjust to incarceration. Results revealed, as expected, that the effects of childhood and adult sexual assault are correlated to adjustment problems while incarcerated. Prison administrators could use this information to penalize victims of sexual abuse or target treatment needs. For example, a variable on history of sexual abuse could be added to the classification instrument and place the female offender in a higher custody level and limit her freedom during the period of incarceration. Or, known sexual abuse survivors could be placed in specific housing units with officers that have special training in trauma and abuse and referred to effective programming that may help the inmate understand cycles of victimization and cope with the consequences of past abuses.

Men and women respond differently to incarceration and these differences may be attributed to gender socialization and play a role in identifying criminogenic need. Casey-Acevedo and Bakken (2001) sampled 123 female inmates with disciplinary records and found a correlation between sentence length and institutional misconduct.

They also noticed these infractions usually occurred during the early part of the sentence. While during the latter part of the sentence, women were less likely to commit institutional offenses. This study also focused on female inmates' adjustment to prison life and the development of 'family' groups while incarcerated. These data reflect underlying female criminogenic need, specifically the need for relationships with others. In the same vein, Thompson and Loper (2005) analyzed differences in adjustment patterns for short-term, medium-term, and long-term offenders. Results showed that long and medium-term offenders experienced greater feelings of conflict and had more institutional infractions than short-term inmates. Incarcerated men and women adjust to prison differently and classification instruments could be refined to best detect gender variance with criminogenic need.

Heilburn et al. (2008) conducted a study with a sample of female offenders (N=886) and male offenders (N=1,435) who had been released from prison and assessed before re-entry into the community. Results showed that female offenders had significantly higher companion and financial deficits. In line with other researchers exploring criminogenic needs for women, research suggested that social and financial risk factors had great influence on female recidivism and gender-specific rehabilitation approaches need to be researched, practiced, and added to classification and assessment tools.

Wright et al. (2007) used a fairly large sample of female offenders (N=272) and determined how gender-responsive needs (trauma, abuse, mental health, parenting, relationships, and self-concept) impact institutional misconduct. Researchers argued that gender-responsive needs assessments had greater predictive value for women in

comparison to gender-neutral needs (employment, education, substance abuse, antisocial attitudes, and antisocial associates). Gender-responsive needs assessments were theoretically grounded in *pathways perspective*, which claimed that women generally take different *pathways* to crime (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). Results showed that gender-responsive needs are highly correlated to institutional misconduct. The combined risk and needs assessment had the strongest predictive power. Results from this study contributed to the existing body of research on gender-specific assessment and validated underlying theoretical constructs in line with the *pathways perspective*.

Van Voorhis et al. (2008) reinforced the validity of feminist criminological scholarship by developing tools informed by feminist research. In particular, gendered pathways to crime were considered and variables addressing trauma, victimization, abuse, mental health, intimate relationships, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and parental stress are considered gender-responsive and have predictive validity.

Perhaps, since the rate of female incarceration is increasing at a faster pace than male incarceration, feminist criminological theoretical models will play a bigger role in informing prison policy and assessment development. Although great strides have been made in the last two decades, more empirical studies are needed and will undoubtedly contribute to the growing discourse. It is unlikely this trend will reverse; if anything testing theoretical constructs that support better assessment of incarcerated women will become a major domain, or core theory, of criminology rather than a peripheral perspective.

Radical Criminology

As with feminist criminology, radical criminology falls under the rubric of critical criminology and is considered a theory of power and peace (Cullen et al., 2008; Lynch et al., 2008). Although empirical studies that support some tenets of radical criminology have largely been ignored by prison classification and assessment experts, theoretical constructs may provide a unique perspective when applied to culture and social organization on St. Croix. Furthermore, Cullen et al. (2008) published a summary of research conducted by leading radical criminologists and supports inclusion of this perspective in modern-day discourse on crime. Although no classification tools have been directly informed by radical criminology; a very brief introduction to this theory will be presented due to its potential effect on future criminological research.

Radical criminological scholars challenge traditional theorists and argue that core theories have not offered a comprehensive explanation of crime and criminality, nor have they made an impact on reducing crime; in contrast, the crime rate has exploded over the last three decades (Lynch et al., 2008). Consequently, advancement of radical criminology is not only justified, but may add crucial information to discourse in the field.

Radical criminology assesses the impact of the political-economic-environmental context on crime (Lynch et al., 2008). In line with conflict theory, inequitable social structures are examined. For example, situational placement of communities near environmentally hazardous areas may affect human behavior (Lynch et al., 2008). Stretesky and Lynch (2001) conducted a study that addressed the relationship between lead exposure and homicide in the United States. They used a large sample (N=3111)

and determined that homicide is associated with those communities that have high levels of lead concentrations in the air. While this does not demonstrate direct causality, the association is significant. Researchers argued that exposure to environmental toxins (such as lead poisoning) can lead to a host of behavioral problems (such as low self-control and anti-social behavior), which are predictors of crime (Lynch et al., 2008; Wright, Dietrich, Ris, Hornung, Wessel, Lanphear, Ho, & Rae, 2008).

Lynch et al. (2008) argued that minorities, especially African-Americans, and low-income communities in the United States are more likely to be exposed to environmental hazards and toxic chemical accidents than white or higher-income communities. Radical criminology also asserts that during difficult economic times more crime legislation is passed, specifically targeting minority populations (Lynch et al., 2008). Other common themes explored by radical criminologists include the impact of Marxist theories of production on the etiology of crime, anthropological studies on class, culture, and crime, and medical and epidemiological studies that address the relationship between exposure to toxins and human behavior (Lynch et al., 2008). Results from radical studies need to be acknowledged and incorporated into existing theory; potential influence on prison management and overall function of the justice system is formidable and supports a shift toward justice-oriented action.

St. Croix is home to the second largest oil refinery in the western hemisphere and pollution is a daily concern for many Crucians (Boyer, 2010). In May 2011, Hovensa, the oil refinery, admitted responsibility for several toxic discharges that resulted in school and business closures and hospitalization for some adults and children (Shea, 2011). On

June 4, 2011, affected Virgin Islanders met with the United States Environmental Protection agency to discuss the health consequences of decades of pollution, such as headaches, nosebleeds, asthma, and chronic illness (Shea, 2011). A request was sent to the Center for Disease Control to assess the long term effects of pollution from the oil refinery on the health of Virgin Islanders (Shea, 2011). According to radical criminologists, exposure to environmental toxins, poverty, and crime are related and must be explored. Upon discovery of the long term effects of pollution on human behavior, or the relationship between health problems and financial well-being, classification instruments could be refined in answer to emerging criminogenic need.

Labeling Theory

Labeling theory is not considered a core criminological theory and may fit best under the rubric of critical criminology in that it emphasizes the impact of external labels on individual behavior (Bench & Allen, 2003). Although the ideas presented in labeling theory are not new to criminology, application to classification research has not been common. Tannenbaum (1938) was one of the first scholars to argue that after criminals have been labeled and classified, their behavior will reflect the label they received. If a criminal is labeled *maximum custody* and is expected to misbehave, he or she will act according to this expectation (Bench & Allen, 2003). Labeling theory became popular in the 1960s and was often used by criminologists and sociologists to explain the origins of criminal behavior and how this behavior is perpetuated (Blumer, 1969; Bynum & Thompson, 1992; Wilkens, 1964).

Generally, theorists have examined the impact of negative labels on behavior, but positive labels may encourage pro-social behavior. Bench & Allen (2003) sought to determine the consequences of positive labeling on inmate behavior. If a maximum-custody inmate receives a medium-custody label, will he be more or less likely to participate in prison misconduct? A double-blind procedure was used to randomly assign 200 inmates into three groups: medium-security (control group one), maximum-security (control group two), and an experimental group. The experimental group was comprised of inmates who were initially classified as maximum-security and, for the purpose of the study, their custody levels were changed to medium-security. The dependent variable was measured by disciplinary reports. Results indicated there were no statistical differences between groups and inmates assigned to the experimental group behaved just as well as those in the other groups. In sum, the tenets of labeling theory were upheld in this study and could shed light on classification processes.

Labeling theory may be a very appropriate theory to apply to prison management at Golden Grove. Given the likelihood of familial or historical relationships between staff and inmates, many inmates at Golden Grove have been labeled by the community since childhood and this information is common knowledge (Bellmore, 2009). Informal and formal labeling by officers absolutely informs how inmates are managed and, for inmates at Golden Grove, the consequences of long-term labeling may be inescapable given the lack of anonymity on St. Croix. Results of labeling may have positive and negative ramifications. For example, due to the effects of positive labeling, some officers may blindly trust an inmate they have known their entire lives and this phenomenon may

contribute to the *laid-back* attitude toward security at Golden Grove (Bellmore, 2009). Conversely, the classification officer may have knowledge of an inmate's deviant reputation in the community and, as a result, override his custody score. Inmates at Golden Grove may be subject to two types of labeling processes: formal custody level as determined by the classification instrument and informal labels given by the community throughout the inmate's lifetime. The interactive effects of both processes and how this impacts classification and management of inmates at Golden Grove will be explored further in the final chapter.

Purpose of Study

This study examined the reliability and validity of classification instruments currently employed by Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility (Golden Grove). Located on St. Croix in the United States Virgin Islands, Golden Grove is a mixed-gender, mixed-security status prison managed by the USVI territorial government. The internal reliability and predictive validity of the classification and assessment instruments used by Golden Grove to determine level of custody for incarcerated men and women was tested. Primary objectives of this study were separated into four main categories: 1) examine the construct validity of Golden Grove's custody assessment tools; 2) investigate the predictive validity of Golden Grove's custody assessment tools across gender; 3) determine to what extent the primary classification officer's decisions have higher predictive validity than the actuarial tool; and 4) investigate the relationship between items on the needs assessment form and custody level (minimum, medium, or maximum). This research adds valuable information to the existing body of literature on

prison classification and assessment and provides a unique piece of scholarship that addresses the needs of inmates serving time outside the mainland United States.

Research Objectives

The primary research objective was to assess the reliability and predictive validity of the classification tool employed at Golden Grove for incarcerated men and women.

Research objectives were separated into four main categories:

1. Examine the construct validity of Golden Grove's Custody Assessment Tools.
 - a. Analyze the factor structure of Golden Grove's Custody Assessment Tools.
 - b. Test the internal reliability of Golden Grove's Custody Assessment Tools.
 - c. Examine the construct validity of Golden Grove's Custody Assessment Tools across gender.
2. Investigate the predictive validity of Golden Grove's Custody Assessment Tools across gender.
3. Determine to what extent the primary classification officer's decisions have higher predictive value than the actuarial tool.
 - a. Determine how often the classification officer overrides the tool.
 - b. Determine how often the classification officer is correct.
 - c. Determine how often the classification tool is correct.
 - d. Explore the extent to which the classification officer overrides the tool based on the gender of the offender.

4. Investigate the relationship between items on the Needs Assessment Form and level of risk (minimum, medium, or maximum).

Detailed descriptions of research objectives and data analysis strategies are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V: METHODS

Research Design and Sample

This retrospective study used a combination of current and archival files to assess the internal consistency and predictive validity of the initial classification and reclassification tools. Random sampling, as determined by the roll of dice, resulted in drawing every seventh file for analysis for men between 1994 and 2010. Due to the low number of incarcerated women, every file for females was examined during the same time period. Consequently, the sample represents the full range of time in which the objective classification tool has been in use at Golden Grove.

A random sample of 144 males and all 56 females, giving a total of 200 inmate files, were analyzed. All data were extracted from the case files and information was largely based upon forms used by Golden Grove staff. Most data were retrieved from the Golden Grove Initial Custody Assessment and the Custody Reassessment scales. Some demographic data, such as, place of birth and residence, were taken from police arrest reports and booking reports. Information on disciplinary reports was extracted from incident reports, disciplinary hearing reports, and the Custody Reassessment scale. Intake date and length of sentence were found in both the Court sentencing documents and classification sentencing calculation forms.

Data collected on disciplinary reports were limited to the last two years of an inmate's sentence or, if the inmate was currently incarcerated, two years prior to the data collection date (4/16/10). The date the inmate received the disciplinary report, the severity of the infraction, and a qualitative description of the offense were recorded. All

infractions, regardless of severity were included, and they were measured dichotomously and by the number received. Severity of infractions were divided into four categories as determined by Golden Grove policy: highest, high, moderate, and low. For example, a highest severity offense is homicide and assault, a high severity infraction is unauthorized use of a telephone, a moderate offense is refusing to work, and a low offense is gambling. See Appendix E for a comprehensive list of infractions and corresponding severity level. See Table 2 for frequencies and percentages of disciplinary measures.

Measures

Golden Grove's classification tools and policy were implemented in 1994 by James Aiken (Director) and Kurt Walcott (Warden) with technical support from correctional expert, James Austin. See Appendices A-E for classification and assessment scales. Aiken and Walcott did not note the origins of the assessment tools, but a report published by Austin and colleagues in 1989 revealed the probable source (Austin, et al., 1989). The document outlined a newly developed objective jail classification system and the assessment tools and instruction are nearly identical to that used by Golden Grove.

In the late 1980s, Austin and colleagues conducted a 30-month study, funded by the Jail's Division of the National Institute of Corrections, to update classification and assessment practices for all jails in the United States. An objective classification system and user's manual was developed and pilot tested in three jails in Florida, Kansas, and Oregon. The final work product included five components: inmate screening form, initial custody assessment scale, custody reassessment scale, initial inmate needs assessment

form and the inmate needs assessment form. The user's manual also contained modification options for the custody assessment scales. For example, authors advised that the variable on drug/alcohol abuse may be deleted, but changes may necessitate the revision of the point ranges. Unfortunately, the process by which Austin et al. (1989) determined appropriate weights for the initial custody assessment and reassessment instruments is unknown.

It is clear that Aiken and Walcott intended to use the objective classification system for both sentenced inmates and pre-trial detainees as evidenced by the language used in the Golden Grove Classification Policy. For example, all forms require staff to indicate if the interviewee is a detainee or sentenced inmate. In addition, the policy outlines rules specifying when to classify detainees versus inmates. Yet, it is unclear if Aiken and Walcott were aware that the system was developed for jails only, not prisons. Only data from the sentenced inmate population was used for this dissertation.

All inmates and detainees entering Golden Grove must proceed through the receiving and discharge unit (R&D). An inmate may be transferred from another institution (e.g., the mainland United States) or may enter the facility following an arrest made by the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD). The classification process for all inmates/detainees at Golden Grove requires initial screening, initial custody assessment, and the initial needs assessment. Custody re-assessment and needs re-assessment are used for long-term detainees every six months and every twelve months for inmates. In addition, all inmates/detainees will be re-assessed within 48 hours before an inmate leaves disciplinary segregation or within 48 hours of receipt of new information (e.g.

fight, escape, gang-related behavior). Data for all forms are gathered from documents, inmate interview, staff observation, and police inquiry.

The initial screening form is completed at booking with the inmate/detainee present and is designed to screen for possible medical or mental health problems that may prohibit housing assignments within the general prison population. The form contains a series of categorical questions related to substance abuse, suicide, mental health, and medical health. The inmate/detainee and the interviewer sign the form indicating all questions were answered truthfully.

Following the initial screen, the classification officer, with or without the inmate present, completes the initial custody assessment form. The assessment instrument is composed of seven weighted variables associated with predicting risk (Austin et al., 1989). See Appendix A to view the Initial Custody Assessment Form. The first three items identify those inmates/detainees that are most likely to be a serious threat to the institution: severity of current conviction (range 0-7), serious offense history (range 0-5), and escape history (range 0-6). A score of seven or higher on the first three items will automatically require a maximum-security assignment. The subsequent four items are: institutional disciplinary history (range 0-3), prior felony convictions (range 0-4), alcohol/drug abuse (range 0-3), and stability factors (range -5-0). An inmate/detainee with five or fewer points on items 1-7 is assigned minimum-security, unless he/she has a detainer/warrant, in which case the custody level is increased to medium. Six to ten points on items 1-7 results in medium-security assignment and eleven or more points on items 1-7 indicates a maximum-security level. The classification supervisor or Director

can choose to override the scale, yet this should not happen more than 5-15% of the time (Austin & Hardyman, 2004). There are two types of override: discretionary and non-discretionary. Non-discretionary overrides are based on institutional policy and discretionary overrides are subjective decisions made by the classification officer or qualified professional staff (Austin & Hardyman, 2004). For example, Golden Grove does not allow inmates with life sentences to be classified as minimum; therefore the classification officer may override the instrument in these select cases. If overrides are routine, the classification system may not be operating properly and should be adjusted. The custody re-assessment is virtually identical to the initial custody assessment tool, except the variables are weighted slightly differently.

Inmate/detainee needs assessments should be completed in conjunction with custody assessments. This instrument provides information intended to guide current or future programming based on assessing six different categories: health, emotional stability, education, vocational skill, substance abuse, and mental ability. The scale ranges from one to three; one indicating major impairment and three indicating no disruption of functioning.

Following the initial screen and initial custody assessment, the inmate/detainee is given a housing assignment and referred to case management for programming. Security status determines housing assignment and program eligibility. For example, a minimum-security inmate/detainee should not be housed with maximum-security inmates/detainees. Also, a maximum-security inmate should not be assigned to a work detail outside the perimeter of the prison.

The Custody Reassessment Form (Appendix B) is used for standard review of custody levels every 12 months or when new information affecting inmate management is received, such as a disciplinary infraction. The variables on the Custody Reassessment Form are weighted differently than the Initial Custody Form to allow for reduced custody levels: severity of current conviction (range 0-6), serious offense history (range 0-5), and escape history (range 0-6). A score of seven or higher on the first three items will automatically require a maximum-security assignment. The subsequent four items are: number of disciplinary reports received (range 0-6), severity of disciplinary reports (range 0-7), prior felony convictions (range 0-2), and stability factors (range -5-0).

Participant Characteristics on Key Variables

Demographics, criminal history, classification information, and data on disciplinary reports are disaggregated by gender and presented in Table 2. All 200 participants received an initial classification score and 132 inmates were reclassified. At the time of data collection (April, 2010), 17% were currently incarcerated and 83% had been released. Fourteen percent ($N = 8$) of the females and 18% percent ($N = 21$) of the males were currently incarcerated and 85% ($N = 48$) of the females and 81.9% ($N = 118$) of the males had been released at the time of data collection. All participants served at least six months prior to release and the range of time served was between 6 months and 440 months ($M = 70.4$ months, $SD = 74.9$ months). Racial identifiers were found on the Initial Custody Assessment Form and only four options were available for selection: Black, Puerto Rican, White, and Other. Demographics indicate that 68% identified as Black, 26% Puerto Rican, and 4% White; one case was racially identified as *other*.

Although no information on ethnicity was available, data on place of birth indicated that 40% were Crucians, 12% were St. Thomians, 1% was St. Johnian, 5% Puerto Ricans, 29.5% were born on other Caribbean islands, and 11.5% were born in the mainland United States. The age at intake ranged from 14 to 63 for the total sample ($M = 30.5$ years, $SD = 8.9$ years). For females, the ages at intake ranged from 18-63 ($M = 30.24$ years, $SD = 9.02$) and for males, the ages at intake ranged from 14-55 ($M = 30.73$, $SD = 8.96$).

For the full sample, the severity of the current conviction, determined by the initial classification instrument, was low = 9.5% ($n=19$), moderate = 39.0% ($n=78$), high = 13.0% ($n=26$), highest = 38.0% ($n=76$). For females, the severity of current conviction was low = 25.0% ($n=14$), moderate = 51.8% ($n=29$), high = 8.9% ($n=5$), highest = 14.3% ($n=8$). For males, the severity of current conviction was low = 3.5% ($n=5$), moderate = 34.0% ($n=49$), high = 14.6% ($n=21$), highest = 47.2% ($n=68$).

Reclassification occurred in 66.0% of cases ($N=132$). The initial custody assessment assignments for this group were 46.9% minimum ($n=62$), 3.0% medium ($n=4$), and 49.2% maximum ($n=65$). After reclassification, the custody levels as determined by the instrument were 76.5% minimum ($n=101$), 9.8% medium ($n=13$), and 13.6% maximum ($n=18$).

Initial classification raw scores ranged from -3 to 13 ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 3.36$) and reassessment scores ranged from -2 to 15 ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 4.3$). See Table 3 for mean, standard deviation, and range of all variables on the Initial Custody Assessment and Custody Reassessment instruments.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic, Criminal History, Classification, and Disciplinary Measures

	Females (N=56)		Males (N=144)		Total (N=200)	
Variable	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender	56	28.0	144	72.0	200	100.0
Age at Intake						
24 or younger	13	23.2	46	31.9	59	29.5
25-39	33	58.9	71	49.3	104	52.0
40 or older	9	16.1	26	18.1	35	17.5
Not reported	1	1.8	1	.6	2	1.0
Mean: 30.24 (females) 30.73 (males)						
Race						
Black	35	62.5	101	70.1	136	68.0
White	7	12.5	1	.7	8	4.0
Puerto Rican/Hispanic	12	21.4	40	27.8	52	26.0
Other	-	-	1	.7	1	.5
Not reported	2	3.6	1	.7	3	1.5
Place of Birth						
St. Croix	16	28.6	64	44.4	80	40.0
St. Thomas	9	16.1	15	40.4	24	12.0
St. John	-	-	2	1.4	2	1.0
Puerto Rico	2	3.6	8	5.6	10	5.0
Other Caribbean Island	11	19.6	48	33.3	59	29.5
Mainland United States	17	30.4	6	4.2	23	11.5
Other	1	1.8	1	.7	2	1.0
Incarceration Status						
Incarcerated	8	14.3	26	18.1	34	17.0
Released	48	85.7	118	81.9	166	83.0
Maximum Sentence						
Less than 24 months	33	58.9	20	13.9	53	26.5
25-48 months	8	14.3	21	14.6	29	14.5
49-120 months	7	12.5	45	31.3	52	26.0
More than 120 months	6	10.7	68	47.2	63	31.5
Missing data	2	3.6	1	.7	3	1.5
Severity of Current Conviction						
Low	14	25.0	5	3.5	19	9.5
Moderate	29	51.8	49	34.0	78	39.0
High	5	8.9	21	14.6	26	13.0
Highest	8	14.3	68	47.2	76	38.0
Serious Offense History						
None or low	47	83.9	112	77.8	159	79.5
Moderate	6	10.7	20	13.9	26	13.0
High	1	1.8	5	3.5	6	3.0
Highest	-	-	4	2.8	4	2.0
Institutional Disciplinary History						
None or minor	56	100.0	138	95.8	194	97.0
One or more in last two years	-	-	4	2.8	4	2.0
One or more in the last year	-	-	2	1.4	2	1.0
Prior Felony Convictions						

	Females (N=56)		Males (N=144)		Total (N=200)	
Variable	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	52	92.9	111	77.1	163	81.5
One	2	3.6	23	16.0	25	12.5
Two or more	2	3.6	10	6.9	12	6.0
Drug/Alcohol Abuse						
None	56	100.0	140	97.2	196	98.0
Moderate	-	-	1	.7	1	.5
Severe	-	-	3	2.1	3	1.5
Stability Factors						
Four stability factors	2	3.6	7	4.9	9	4.5
Three stability factors	4	7.1	19	13.3	23	11.5
Two stability factors	11	19.6	48	33.3	59	29.5
One stability factors	16	28.6	48	33.3	64	32.0
No stability factors	23	41.1	21	14.6	44	22.0
Initial Custody Level (tool assignment)						
Minimum	47	83.9	65	45.1	112	56.0
Medium	1	1.8	9	6.3	10	5.0
Maximum	8	14.3	70	48.6	78	39.0
Override on Initial Custody						
Assessment tool						
Yes	10	17.9	78	54.2	88	44.0
No	46	82.1	66	45.8	112	56.0
Override type						
Higher than tool	8	14.3	73	50.7	81	40.5
Lower than tool	2	3.6	3	2.1	5	2.5
Final initial placement after override						
Minimum	46	82.1	56	38.9	102	51.0
Medium	2	3.6	5	3.5	7	3.5
Maximum	2	3.6	20	13.9	22	11.0
Administrative Segregation	3	5.4	53	36.8	56	28.0
Protective Custody	3	5.4	10	6.9	13	6.5
Custody Reassessment						
Minimum	13	72.2	88	77.2	101	76.5
Medium	3	16.7	10	8.8	13	9.8
Maximum	2	11.1	16	14.0	18	13.6
Override on Reassessment tool						
Yes	2	11.1	46	40.4	48	36.4
No	16	88.9	68	59.6	84	63.6
Final placement after reassessment						
override						
Minimum	12	66.7	63	55.3	54	40.9
Medium	4	22.2	19	16.7	4	3.0
Maximum	1	5.6	18	15.8	16	12.1
Administrative Segregation	1	5.6	9	7.9	51	38.6
Protective Custody	-	-	5	4.4	7	5.3
Number of disciplinary reports while						
incarcerated (24 months)						
None	45	80.4	97	67.4	142	71.0
One	7	12.5	33	22.9	40	20.0
Two or more	4	7.1	14	9.7	18	9.0

Variable	Females (N=56)		Males (N=144)		Total (N=200)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mean: .38 (females); .49 (males)						
Severity of disciplinary reports while incarcerated (24months)						
Low	-	-	1	2.1	1	1.7
Moderate	3	27.3	3	6.4	6	10.3
High	8	72.7	40	85.1	48	82.8
Highest	-	-	3	6.4	3	5.2

Table 3
Mean, Standard Deviation, and Range of Initial Custody Assessment and Custody Reassessment Instruments

Variable	Females			Males			Total		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Initial Custody Assessment									
Initial Custody Score	1.9	2.8	-3-7	4.7	3.3	-2-13	3.9	3.4	-2-13
Severity of Current Conviction	2.5	2.3	0-7	4.7	2.4	0-7	4.1	2.6	0-7
Serious Offense History	.19	.62	0-4	.45	1.2	0-6	.38	1.1	0-6
Escape History	-	-	-	.04	.50	0-6	.03	.42	0-6
Disciplinary History	-	-	-	.10	.48	0-3	.07	.41	0-3
Prior Felony Convictions	.21	.82	0-4	.60	1.2	0-4	.49	1.1	0-4
Alcohol/Drug Abuse	-	-	-	.07	.44	0-3	.05	.37	0-3
Stability Factors	-1.0	1.1	-3-7	-1.6	1.0	-4-0	-1.4	1.1	-4-0
Custody Reassessment									
Custody Reassessment Score	4.7	4.6	-2-15	4.2	4.3	-2-15	4.3	4.3	-2-15
Severity of Current Conviction	2.5	2.5	0-6	4.1	2.3	0-6	3.9	2.4	0-6
Serious Offense History	.06	.24	0-1	.16	.73	0-5	.15	.68	0-5
Escape History	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Disciplinary Reports	1.4	1.7	0-4	.71	1.4	0-4	.81	1.5	0-4
Severity of Disciplinary Reports	2.4	2.7	0-7	1.3	2.4	0-7	1.4	2.5	0-7
Prior Felony Convictions	.06	.24	0-1	.17	.52	0-4	.15	.49	0-4
Stability Factors	-1.7	.75	-3-0	-2.3	.89	-4-0	-2.2	.89	-4-0

Analysis

Preliminary Analysis

Golden Grove's Initial Custody Assessment Scale, Custody Re-assessment Scale, and disciplinary infractions were analyzed. Before conducting statistical analyses, data were examined to check for missing values.

Data outliers were assessed and incorrect data were corrected by returning to the file to crosscheck (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Extreme distribution of variables was noted and was not used with certain statistical tests if assumptions were violated. Univariate and multivariate outliers were detected by running frequencies. Extreme cases, such as coding sentence length for individuals serving multiple life sentences, were coded in two different ways to accurately reflect time sentenced versus time served. For this study, life without parole was quantified as 80 years, life sentences were quantified as 20 years, and any concurrent sentences were added. For example, an individual may have been sentenced to three concurrent life sentences, which results in a total sentence length of 60 years. A 'time served' variable was created by subtracting the intake date from the date of data collection.

Assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were checked by examining individual variables, bivariate scatterplots, and investigating residuals in analyses involving prediction (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Skewness and kurtosis of distributions and linearity and homoscedasticity were determined and collinearity and multicollinearity were assessed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Statistical Analyses

The primary objective was to test the reliability and validity of Golden Grove's 2G Classification system for incarcerated men and women. The construct validity of the Initial Custody Assessment Scale and Custody Reassessment Scale was analyzed and a correlation matrix was produced to assess the appropriateness of factor analysis. Bivariate analyses, using the Pearson product-moment correlation, summarized the relationship between variables. T-tests, ANOVA, and chi-square tests for independence determined significant differences between groups.

Bivariate analysis.

Bivariate analyses, or the Pearson product-moment correlation, determines the strength and direction of relationships between two continuous variables or one continuous and one dichotomous variable (Pallant, 2007; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Pearson correlation coefficients (r) will show a range of values between -1 and +1 (Pallant, 2007). Cohen (1988) suggests the following guidelines for interpretation: $r=.10$ to $.29$ indicates a small relationship, $r=.30$ to $.49$ shows a medium relationship, and $r=.5$ to 1.0 indicates a large relationship.

Pearson's correlation was used to assess the relationship between security level and number of disciplinary reports received for men and women separately.

Between groups analyses.

There are a number of different statistical techniques for assessing significant differences between groups. Parametric methods assume normally distributed scores, while non-parametric techniques are more appropriate for smaller samples or when ordinal variables are used (Pallant, 2007). The following parametric tests were used: t-

tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). One non-parametric analysis, chi-square, was also employed.

Statistical significance is dependent on effect size, or strength of association, and demonstrates the amount of total variance in the dependent variable (Pallant, 2007; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). *Partial eta squared* and *Cohen's d* are two common statistics used to determine effect size; the first uses values between 0 and 1 to describe the percentage of total variance and the latter uses standard deviation units to show the differences between groups (Cohen, 1988; Pallant, 2007). A small effect size, as determined by *partial eta squared* and *Cohen's d*, is .01 or 1% and .2 respectively. A medium effect size, as determined by *partial eta squared* and *Cohen's d*, is .06 or 6% and .5 respectively. A large effect size, as determined by *partial eta squared* and *Cohen's d*, is .138 or 13.8% and .8 respectively.

Independent-samples t-tests.

Independent-samples t-tests are used to compare the mean scores of two different groups (Pallant, 2007). One categorical and one continuous variable is needed and all assumptions required for parametric tests were assessed prior to analysis. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the comprehensive custody scores (continuous variable) for incarcerated males and females (categorical variable).

One-way analysis of variance.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to compare mean scores between two or more groups on a single dependent variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The categorical independent variable must have at least three categories and one continuous

variable is needed (Pallant, 2007). ANOVA was used to explore the impact of security classification (minimum, medium, maximum) on the number of disciplinary reports received.

Chi-square test for independence.

The chi-square test for independence is a non-parametric technique used to analyze the relationship between two categorical variables (Pallant, 2007; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Frequencies and proportions were compared using a 2 by 2 crosstabulation table (Pallant, 2007). For 2 by 2 tables, the effect size is determined by the *phi coefficient* (ranges from 0 to 1) and Cohen's (1988) recommendations (small effect = .10, medium effect = .30, large effect = .50) (Pallant, 2007). Percentages showed how often the classification officer overrode the custody assessment instrument by gender and security level.

CHAPTER VI: RESULTS

Results will be presented by research question and followed by a brief interpretation. A comprehensive discussion of results will be reserved for the final chapter. Overall, data show weak reliability, construct validity, and predictive validity.

Before answering specific research questions, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the raw comprehensive custody scores for incarcerated males and females. There was a significant difference between scores for males ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 3.26$) and females ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 2.76$; $t(117) = 6.06$, $p < .00$ two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 2.78, .95% CI: 1.87 to 3.69) was moderate (eta squared = .06). Results suggest women have lower custody assignments than men and the instrument is classifying men and women differently based on data from variables on the scale. Unlike many classification instruments that overclassify women, this instrument appears to be sensitive in this specific area. Implications will be explored further in the discussion section.

Research Objectives

Research Objective One

The first research objective, “*Examine the construct validity of Golden Grove’s Initial Custody Assessment Tool*” required assessment of the intercorrelation between variables. The correlation matrix shown in Table 8 indicate the correlation between coefficients is less than .3; the KMO value was 5.10 and the *Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity* was significant at ($p=.000$). Based on these results, factor analysis was not employed. Although one correlation coefficient exceeds .3, relationships between other variables are

not strong enough to warrant factor analysis. Results indicate weak intercorrelation between items on the initial assessment scale and suggest items are not measuring the same underlying construct. This does not mean certain items are not correlated. Prior felony convictions is negatively correlated with severity of current conviction; this suggests that many inmates at Golden Grove are first time offenders, have no felony criminal history documented, or have committed only misdemeanor crimes in the past. Disciplinary history is correlated with severity of current conviction and stability factors are negatively correlated to prior felony convictions and drug/alcohol abuse. Although correlations between variables are clearly present, the strength of the relationship is not sufficient and indicates an overall problem with the structure of the scale. See Table 4 for a correlation matrix of items on the Initial Custody Assessment scale.

Table 4
Correlation Matrix: Items on Initial Custody Assessment Scale

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Severity of Current Conviction	1.00						
2. Serious Offense History	-.024	1.00					
3. Escape History	-.058	.040	1.00				
4. Disciplinary History	.155*	.075	-.012	1.00			
5. Prior Felony Convictions	-.195**	.411**	-.031	.035	1.00		
6. Alcohol/Drug Abuse	-.063	-.035	-.010	-.023	.062	1.00	
7. Stability Factors	.048	-.099	-.036	.093	-.244**	-.193**	1.00

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Research Objective Two

The second objective investigated the predictive validity of Golden Grove's Initial Custody Assessment Tool across gender by analyzing the relationship between custody level and the number and severity of disciplinary reports. Descriptive data on disciplinary reports will be presented followed by a bivariate analysis of items on the Initial Custody Assessment scale. Refer to Table 2 for frequencies and percentages of disciplinary reports. See Table 5 for qualitative descriptions of disciplinary reports and Table 6 for bivariate analyses.

During the time of incarceration, 58 (29%) inmates received at least one disciplinary report in the last two years and 142 (71%) inmates did not receive any disciplinary reports within the last two years. Of those who received disciplinary reports, 51.7% were initially classified as minimum ($N = 30$), 3.4% were initially classified as medium ($N = 2$), and 44.8% were initially classified as maximum ($N = 26$). Eighty-one percent of inmates who received disciplinary reports were male ($N = 47$) and 19% were female ($N = 11$). The level of disciplinary reports (mild, moderate, high, highest) received by females was 27.3% moderate ($N = 3$) and 72.7% high ($N = 8$); males received 2.1 % mild ($N = 1$), 6.4% moderate ($N = 3$), 85.1% high ($N = 40$), 6.4% highest ($N = 3$). The custody reassessments for those with disciplinary reports resulted in 56.3% minimum ($N = 27$), 16.7% medium ($N = 8$), and 27.1% maximum ($N = 13$). Ten inmates received disciplinary reports but were not reclassified. Results indicate a high percentage of severe infractions take place at Golden Grove. See Appendix E for measures of severity.

A qualitative string variable showed descriptions of infractions and results are

presented in Table 5. At times, several different descriptions of misconduct resulted in only one disciplinary report; therefore, number of disciplinary reports will not match with qualitative counts. Qualitative data show the majority of prison infractions involve drug use, fighting, and possession of cell phones. Certain types of disciplinary reports were only received by women and others only by men and some descriptors were not available. Implications will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Table 5
Qualitative Description and Count of Disciplinary Reports

Type of Disciplinary Report (Qualitative)	Females	Males	Total
	Disciplinary Reports	Disciplinary Reports	Disciplinary Reports
	Number	Number	Number
Alcohol Intoxication/Positive Drug Screen/Drug Possession	1	24	25
Theft		1	1
Possession of Cell Phone	7	2	9
Disorderly Conduct	4	4	8
Indecent Exposure	1		1
Fighting	2	8	10
Refusal to Comply with Orders	2	2	4
Obscene Language	1		1
Sex with another inmate	2		2
Threats	1	6	7
Verbal Abuse		1	1
Drug Trafficking		1	1
Assault		5	5
Possession of Contraband		3	3
Attempted Escape		1	1
Destruction of Property		1	1
Possession of a Weapon		1	1
Disrupting an Officer		1	1

A bivariate analysis of items on the Initial Custody Assessment instrument and disciplinary reports are presented in Table 6. Initial results indicate the initial assessment

tool is a better predictor of prison misconduct for women than for men. Overall, there are very few significant correlations between items on the scale and prison misconduct and one variable correlated with outcomes in the opposite direction than expected (stability factors for men). Possible explanations for this result will be explored in the discussion chapter.

Table 6
Relationships Between Items on the Initial Custody Assessment Tool and Disciplinary Reports (Pearson r , one tailed)

Variable	Females		Males		Total	
	-----		-----		-----	
	Disciplinary Reports		Disciplinary Reports		Disciplinary Reports	
	Y/N	Number	Y/N	Number	Y/N	Number
Initial Custody Assessment						
Initial Custody Total Score	.26*	0.17	0.02	-0.05	0.12	0.03
Severity of Current Conviction	.25*	0.22	-0.03	-0.07	0.09	0.03
Serious Offense History	-0.08	-0.09	0.02	-0.05	0.02	-0.05
Escape History	-	-	0.12	.14*	0.11	.12*
Disciplinary History	-	-	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Prior Felony Convictions	0.09	-0.01	-0.03	-0.01	0.02	-0.07
Alcohol/Drug Abuse	-	-	0.03	-0.02	0.03	-0.01
Stability Factors	-0.06	-0.05	.15*	.16*	0.06	0.08

Note: Y/N = prevalence data; number = frequency data; only significant correlations are shown. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of security classification (minimum, medium, maximum) on the number of disciplinary reports received. There was no statistically significant difference between groups at the $p < .05$ level in the number of disciplinary reports received: $F(2, 190) = .635, p < .53$. This result suggests custody level has very little to do with

predicting prison misconduct for the entire sample. Several explanations for this result will be proffered in the discussion.

Each security level group was analyzed separately by the number of disciplinary reports for the full sample and by gender. For the full sample, the mean raw custody score for each group was (Minimum (n=112) =1.5, Medium (n=10) =5.3, Maximum (n=78) =7.2). The mean number of disciplinary reports received by each group was (Minimum (n=112) = .45 Medium (n=10) = .20, Maximum (n=78) = .53).

When gender was accounted for, the mean raw custody score for males was (Minimum (n=65) =1.89, Medium (n=9) =5.2, Maximum (n=70) =7.4) and for females was (Minimum (n=47) =.97, Medium (n=1) =6.0, Maximum (n=8) =7.0). The mean number of disciplinary reports for males (Minimum (n=65) =.59, Medium (n=9) =.22, Maximum (n=69) =.46). The mean number of disciplinary reports for females (Minimum (n=45) =.26, Medium (n=1) =0, Maximum (n=8) =1.12). See Figure 2 for a graphical display of disciplinary reports (DRs), custody scores, and gender. The difference between maximum men and maximum women is notable and somewhat unexpected. The sample for maximum women is very small, but it does represent all maximum women who have served time at Golden Grove since 1994. As noted above, this difference suggests the classification tool is predicting misconduct for maximum women better than any other group. Theoretical implications will be discussed in the next chapter.

Due to the low number of inmates classified as medium, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine if there is a significant difference in the number of

disciplinary reports received by minimum-security-level compared to maximum-security-level inmates. There was not a significant difference in scores for minimum-security-level ($M = .46$, $SD = .95$) and maximum-security-level, $M = .94$, $SD = .95$; $t(181) = -.57$, $p < .57$ (two-tailed).

Figure 2
Mean Number of Disciplinary Reports and Custody Scores by Security Level and Gender

The rate of disciplinary reports for maximum inmates was tested via chi-square test for independence and there was no significant relationship ($p < .36$). Therefore, for the entire sample, those who are classified as maximum are not more likely to receive a disciplinary report than those classified as minimum/medium (see Table 7). Results

change when the sample is disaggregated by gender. A chi-square test for independence indicated a significant difference between maximum and non-maximum-custody women and disciplinary reports with a medium effect size, $\chi^2(1, n = 56) = 3.4, p < .04$, Fisher's exact test, $\phi = .31$. See Table 8 for results.

Table 7
Chi-square Test for Independence: Custody Level and Disciplinary Reports

		Disciplinary Report		Total	
		No	Yes		
Custody Level	Minimum/ Medium	Count	90	122	
		Expected	86.6	35.4	122.0
	Maximum	Count	52	26	78
		Expected	55.4	22.6	78.0
		Total	142	58	200

$\chi^2(1, n = 200) = .85, p = ns$

Table 8
Chi-square Test for Independence: Maximum-Custody Women and Disciplinary Reports

		Disciplinary Reports		Total	
		No	Yes		
Maximum Custody	No	Count	41	48	
		Expected	38.6	48.0	
	Yes	Count	4	8	
		Expected	6.4	8.0	
	Total		45	11	56

$\chi^2(1, n = 56) = 3.4, p < .04$, Fisher's exact test, $\phi = .31$.

Research Objective Three

The third research objective explored to what extent the relative predictive value of the primary classification officer's decisions versus the actuarial tool. For the *Initial Custody Assessment Scale*, override was used 44% of the time. Override cases were 88.6% male and 11.4% female and resulted in final assignments of minimum=102, medium=7, maximum=22, administrative segregation=56, and protective custody=13. Chi-square tests determined how well the classification officer's decisions predicted prison misconduct. See Table 9 for custody assignments made by the instrument compared to those made by the classification officer.

A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference between the classification officer's final custody assignments and disciplinary reports for the full sample, $\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 2.3, p = ns$.

Table 9

Classification Instrument Assignments and Classification Officer's Assignments

	Classification Instrument Custody Assignment	Classification Officer Override and Final Custody Assignment
Initial Assessment		
Minimum	56.0% (n= 112)	51% (n=102)
Medium	5.0% (n=10)	3.5% (n=7)
Maximum	38.5% (n=78)	11.0% (n=22)
Administrative Segregation	0	28.0% (n=56)
Protective Custody	0	6.5% (n=13)

A chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) showed a marginally significant relationship between initial custody override and disciplinary reports, $\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 3.5, p < .06$, with a small effect size, $\phi = .14$ (Cohen, 1988).

The prevalence ratio was calculated (1.6) and indicated that receiving disciplinary reports were about one and a half times more likely for those who the classification officer overrode on the initial custody tool. This suggests the classification officer is choosing to override potentially problematic inmates, but it is a modest effect size and a non-significant trend level relationship. See Table 10 for results.

Table 10
Chi-square Test for Independence: Initial Override and Disciplinary Reports

		Disciplinary Reports		Total
		No	Yes	
No Override	Count	86	26	112
	Expected	79.5	32.5	68.0
Initial Override	Count	56	32	88
	Expected	62.5	25.5	132.0
Total		142	58	200

$$\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 3.5, p < .06$$

A chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) showed a significant relationship between gender and initial custody override, $\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 20.1, p < .00$, with a medium effect size, phi = -.34 (Cohen, 1988). See Table 11 for results. The prevalence ratio was calculated (3.03) and indicated that overrides on the initial custody tool were about three times more likely to occur with male inmates compared to female inmates and indicates the classification officer is more likely to assign higher levels of custody to men compared to women. The classification officer may anticipate misconduct with men more so than with women, or she may not see the

need to override women given the space constraints at Golden Grove. Practical and theoretical implications will be discussed in the next chapter.

Table 11
Chi-square Test for Independence: Gender and Initial Override

		Initial Override		Total	
		No	Yes		
Gender	Male	Count	66	78	144
		Expected	80.6	63.4	144.0
	Female	Count	46	10	56
		Expected	31.4	24.6	56.0
		Total	112	88	200

$$\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 20.1, p < .00$$

Reclassification of inmates should occur every 12 months for all sentenced inmates or when new information is received about an inmate, such as a disciplinary report. Therefore, a relationship between those who had been reclassified and disciplinary reports was expected. A chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) showed a significant relationship between reclassification and disciplinary reports, $\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 9.2, p .002$, with a small effect size, $\phi = .23$ (Cohen, 1988). See Table 12 for results. The prevalence ratio was calculated (2.40) and indicated that those who had been reclassified are almost two and a half times more likely to receive a disciplinary report compared to those who hadn't been reclassified. This result sheds light on this research question only when the relationship between initial overrides and reassessment are examined.

Table 12

Chi-square Test for Independence: Reclassification Group and Disciplinary Reports

		Disciplinary Reports		Total
		No	Yes	
Reclassification	Not Reclassified	Count	58	68
		Expected	48.3	68.0
	Reclassified	Count	84	132
		Expected	93.7	132.0
Total		142	58	200

$$<\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 9.2, p < .002$$

A chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) showed a significant relationship between initial custody override and reclassification, $\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 13.9, p < .00$, with a small effect size, $\phi = .28$ (Cohen, 1988). See Table 13 for results. The prevalence ratio was calculated (2.16) and indicated that those who received an override on the initial custody tool were about twice as likely to be reclassified. Results indicate the classification officer could be overriding inmates she identifies as potentially problematic. The relationship is not strong, but it does exist. Those who are reclassified are more likely to participate in prison misconduct. During the initial assessment, the classification officer is able to identify a portion of these inmates and override their initial custody assignments to a higher level. Interestingly, the direct relationship between initial override and disciplinary reports is not as strong as the relationship between initial override and reassessment.

Table 13

Chi-square Test for Independence: Initial Custody Override and Reclassification

		Reclassification		Total
		No	Yes	
Initial Custody Override	No	Count	51	112
		Expected	38.1	112.0
	Yes	Count	17	88
		Expected	29.9	88.0
	Total		68	200

$$\chi^2(1, n = 200) = 13.9, p < .00$$

A chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) showed a significant relationship between life sentence and initial override, $\chi^2(1, n = 197) = 13.5, p < .00$, with a small effect size, $\phi = .27$ (Cohen, 1988). Although this does not answer this research question directly, it does suggest the classification officer is placing inmates into categories she believes will be most predictive of future misconduct or she may be following institutional policy. The classification officer is more likely to place an inmate with a life sentence into a higher custody level. See Table 14 for results. Explanations and theoretical implications will be discussed in the following chapter.

Table 14

Chi-square Test for Independence: Life Sentence and Initial Override

		Initial Override		Total
		No	Yes	
Life Sentence	Yes	Count	98	156
		Expected	87.1	156
	No	Count	12	41
		Expected	22.9	41
	Total		110	197

$$\chi^2(1, n = 197) = 13.5, p < .00$$

Research Objective Four

The final objective sought to determine the relationship between items on the *Needs Assessment Form* and level of risk. Unfortunately, the *Needs Assessment Form* was rarely filled out and statistical analyses were not able to be used. Lack of data indicates implementation and/or management problems. Other explanations will be offered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII: DISCUSSION

Major Findings

The primary objective of this dissertation was to assess the reliability and validity of Golden Grove's classification system. Results were mixed but generally indicated weak reliability, construct validity, and predictive validity. The classification officer overrode the instrument at a high rate for both the initial assessment instrument and the reassessment instrument rendering the objective assessment overly subjective. Overall, findings show the classification system at Golden Grove is not functioning as intended and improvements are recommended. This section will discuss possible explanations for results, theoretical implications, and specific recommendations to improve the classification system at Golden Grove.

Construct validity.

Factor analysis was not appropriate due to the lack of robust intercorrelation between items on the initial custody assessment scale. This finding suggests the variables on Golden Grove's classification instruments are not necessarily measuring the same underlying construct: risk of exhibiting institutional misconduct. Factor analysis is frequently employed to determine internal consistency on prison assessment instruments. The LSI-R, FOCI-R, and the SRSW have all shown strong construct validity, thereby ensuring the instruments are measuring what they intend to measure (Blanchette & Taylor, 2007; Gobeil & Blanchette, 2007; Palmer & Hollin, 2007; Schlager & Simourd, 2007; Shearer, 2003).

Although intercorrelation was not strong enough to employ factor analysis, there were significant correlations between select variables. There was a weak positive correlation between disciplinary history and severity of current conviction ($r = .15$, $n = 200$, $p < .05$). Most assessment tools include these specific variables and expect a significant relationship (Austin, 1989). The lack of a strong relationship could be due to the high number of first-time offenders who have no recorded disciplinary history, unless they served time at Golden Grove as a pre-trial detainee.

A significant negative correlation between severity of current conviction and prior felony conviction existed. This finding suggests this may be the first serious conviction for many inmates at Golden Grove. Prior felony convictions were also significantly correlated to serious offense history – this is expected and somewhat redundant.

Stability factors were negatively correlated with prior felony convictions and drug and alcohol abuse. This significant finding suggests the stability factors on this scale (age, level of education, and residence in the Virgin Islands for at least 12 months before arrest) may be related to past criminal history.

Data collected on prior felony convictions and serious offense history was limited; 81.5% of the sample had no prior felony conviction and no or low serious offense history. A number of different possibilities explain the lack of recorded data of prior felony convictions: this may be the inmate's first crime, the inmate may have committed crimes outside of the United States Virgin Islands, or the records were not provided by the VIPD or the Court. At this time, Golden Grove does not have access to

the National Crime Database; therefore crimes committed outside of the USVI are known only if the inmate divulges this information.

Other items on the scale, like escape, drug/alcohol abuse, disciplinary history, and stability factors were also dependent on accurate record-keeping and inmate self-report. In sum, the items on the scale were not strongly correlated and this illuminates a potential problem with the construct validity of classification instrument.

Predictive Validity

The Initial Custody Assessment tool predicted disciplinary reports for maximum-security female inmates as evidenced by a significant correlation between the initial custody score and disciplinary reports ($r = .26, n = 56, p < .05$). The mean number of disciplinary reports for maximum women ($M = 1.12$) was significantly higher compared to maximum men ($M = .46$). These results must be interpreted cautiously due to the small sample size of maximum-custody women ($n = 8$). Although this sample represents every maximum-custody female since 1994, it is too small to warrant confidence in the overall predictive validity of the tool. Nevertheless, this finding contradicts most research on gender and classification. It is more common for maximum-custody women to receive fewer disciplinary reports than maximum-custody men resulting in overclassification of female inmates (Salisbury et al., 2009). Different management styles of male and female inmates may best explain this difference. For example, a brief analysis of the qualitative data on disciplinary reports in Table 5 shows infractions committed by women were less violent. Women did receive disciplinary reports for fighting, but not assault. Other infractions for women included sex with another (female)

inmate and disorderly conduct and indecent exposure were extra charges added to the initial source of misconduct. Women committed only one out of 24 drug/alcohol infractions. Destruction of property, assault, drug trafficking, attempted escape, and possession of a weapon were infractions committed by male offenders only.

Female inmates are managed differently at Golden Grove. The numbers are extremely low and allow for direct supervision by officers. For example, an officer in the female dorm is responsible for supervising 9-13 inmates, while an officer in a male dorm is responsible for supervising 32 inmates. At times, when the facility is short staffed, an officer in a male dorm may have to supervise 64 inmates. In essence, it is more difficult to break a rule and get away with it if you are a female inmate.

Incarcerated women may be labeled differently than men. For example, use of obscene language from a female inmate was documented, but not for any male inmates. I doubt incarcerated men never use obscene language, but perhaps they are not disciplined for this misconduct. It is possible that officers perceive women using foul language differently than men. The effects of labeling based on gender socialization, within a Crucian context, and the repercussions on inmate management are likely profound. More research needs to be conducted in this area to determine if incarcerated men and women are issued disciplinary reports in a fair and just manner.

For male inmates, there were no significant correlations between security level and number of disciplinary reports received. Minimum-security inmates were just as likely to receive disciplinary reports as maximum-security inmates. One explanation is that the initial custody assessment tool is inaccurately classifying male offenders; this

notion is further supported by the extremely low number of inmates classified as medium and extremely high number of maximum-custody inmates. See Table 14 for national averages for custody placements compared to Golden Grove.

An alternate explanation is that the relaxed security at Golden Grove has an impact on the disciplinary process and the number of disciplinary reports received may not be a good indicator of actual behavior. Also, due to the high likelihood of familial ties between inmates and staff, some inmates may misbehave and receive little or no punishment (Bellmore, 2009). As mentioned above, male and female inmates are managed differently. Due to the high inmate to officer ratio for incarcerated men, direct supervision is less likely and may result in undetected misconduct.

The initial custody assessment tool assigned men to higher security levels than women. Females committed less serious crimes, had shorter sentences, and fewer disciplinary infractions and the custody tool was sensitive enough to reveal significant differences based on gender. The effect size between groups was moderate and indicated the assessment tools are classifying women into lower custody levels than men. Therefore, gender is a proxy for custody assignment; if an inmate is male he will likely be assigned to a higher custody level. Yet, higher custody level is predictive of misconduct for maximum-security women, not for men. Therefore, the tool's assignments for men have very weak predictive value.

At Golden Grove, the instrument classified women into maximum custody 14.3% of the time compared to 48.6% of the time for men. For incarcerated men and women, the initial assessment placed the majority into either minimum or maximum custody; only

5% were assigned to medium custody. The national estimates for medium custody assignments are 35-45% (Austin & McGinnis, 2004). Reclassification results showed a more even distribution, but those assigned to medium custody remained low (9.8%); minimum assignment was high (76.5%); and maximum assignment was average (13.6%). Findings indicate the weighted variables may need to be adjusted to reflect the inmate population at Golden Grove.

Results from reclassification seemed to mirror national averages slightly better as evidenced by a higher distribution of minimum and medium cases and a lower distribution of maximum cases. This indicates the reclassification tool is performing as it should; a decrease of security level generally correlates negatively with time served. Yet, disciplinary reports are not a good predictor of reassessment custody levels either; except for maximum women.

In sum, the predictive validity of Golden Grove's Initial Custody Assessment for maximum-custody women shows promise, but the small sample size limit generalizability. In addition, management strategies for incarcerated men and women are wholly different and may confound results. For men, the predictive validity of classification instruments is weak and this can be due to inadequate data, improper implementation, skewed weights, or inappropriate variables. Most likely, a combination of all the above explanations is associated with invalidity. Although the instruments show some sensitivity to custody assignments for women, this significant finding does not negate the need to update the classification instruments. Golden Grove's assessment

tools may have more predictive value than subjective assessment, but the instruments fail to assess criminogenic and rely on data from mostly static variables.

Classification officer's decisions.

The same classification officer has been employed at Golden Grove since 1994 and this individual was responsible for all classification assignments of sentenced inmates. The classification officer is responsible for the final custody assignment of the inmate and may choose to override the objective assessment. The classification tool determines three options for custody based on objective criteria: minimum, medium, and maximum. The classification officer has six options: minimum, medium, maximum, administrative/disciplinary segregation, protective custody, and mental health. At Golden Grove, administrative/disciplinary segregation (lockdown) and protective custody limit the freedoms of inmates more so than any other custody assignment, including those classified as maximum. The officer never placed an inmate in the 'mental health' assignment category, and this is probably because inmates with severe mental health issues are frequently sent off-island for services.

Criteria for any override, including placement in administrative segregation and protective custody, may be discretionary (subjective) or non-discretionary (institutional policy). The classification officer was required to override the instrument if an inmate with a life sentence was assigned to minimum custody. The override rate for those with a life sentence was 70.7% and chi-square results indicated a significant association between life sentence and initial override; this finding suggests many of the overrides were non-discretionary and unavoidable. Yet, the override percentage for those without a life

sentence was 37.2% and indicates the classification officer was also using discretionary overrides above the recommended rate (Austin & Hardyman, 2004). Due to overrides, 34.5% of the total population at Golden Grove was assigned to a special population category at the time of initial classification – this more than doubles the national average. High numbers of special population inmates place an unnecessary burden on prison resources. Administrative/disciplinary segregation and protective custody require more security equipment, correctional staff, and special services, such as meal delivery. This finding identifies a potential drain on the institution and more investigation needs to be conducted to determine why the classification officer is assigning a large percentage of inmates to special population categories without documented criteria. See Table 14 for a comparison of the United States and Golden Grove on custody assignments.

Override rates tend to classify inmates into higher custody assignments than the tool recommends. This is particularly true for reassessment; the tool recommended minimum security placement for 76.5% (n=101) of inmates and the officer's overrides resulted in minimum security for 40.9% (n=54) of inmates. Perhaps a combination of institutional policy and subjectivity account for the high rate of overrides. Although the high override rate indicated a problem with the overall system, the process may be justified.

Table 15

Classification Custody Levels Comparison: U.S. National and Golden Grove

Custody Level	U.S. National %	Golden Grove %
General Population	80	65.5
Minimum	35-40	51
Medium	35-35	3.5
Maximum	10-15	11
Special Populations	15	34.5
Administrative/disciplinary segregation	1-2	28
Protective custody	1-2	6.5
Severe mental health	1-2	0
Severe medical	1-2	0

Source: Classification of High-Risk and Special Management Prisoners (Austin & McGinnis, 2004).

Those inmates who had overrides on the initial assessment tool were about one and a half times more likely to receive disciplinary reports. As expected, those who were reclassified were over two times more likely to receive disciplinary reports. Interestingly, those who received an initial override were twice as likely to be reclassified. Inmates were reclassified for two reasons: length of time at the institution or disciplinary infraction. It seems the classification officer tried to target problematic cases and frequently made subjective decisions to increase custody assignments and sometimes she was correct. This does not indicate the classification officer has strong predictive validity or that she predicts better than the instrument, but there may be wisdom to her practices. She is identifying problematic inmates and predicting they will receive more disciplinary

reports than the population she does not override. The restrictive management practices for administrative segregation, protective custody, and maximum-security inmates do not prevent misconduct; conversely, misconduct is expected from these populations.

A significant association between gender and initial override suggested the classification officer is more likely to override male inmates. Male inmates committed more serious offenses and had more disciplinary infractions; therefore, the determination to refrain from overrides for females seems justified. In essence, being female at Golden Grove is a protective factor for high custody assignments, but being female is not a protective factor for receiving disciplinary reports. As stated earlier, the number of female inmates is very low at Golden Grove and management of this population requires fewer resources and staff than the male population. Female inmates are segregated in a closed housing unit and do not have free access to the compound. Therefore, from a management perspective, custody level does not restrict or grant freedoms for women like it can for men. All women are treated like maximum-security inmates and receive close, direct supervision.

The absence of completed needs assessment forms indicates a systemic failure. This form was designed to assess criminogenic need and, without this information, the entire assessment system was compromised. Sole reliance on data from the custody assessment tools (static variables) stymied rehabilitative management efforts. Criminogenic need may have been addressed on a case-by-case basis when staff members took it upon themselves to investigate the needs of a particular inmate, but failure to follow through with a formal assessment process likely led to many inmates falling

through the cracks. Golden Grove has gone through periods of low staff employment and scarce resources. For example, there have not always been case managers or a viable programs department. The classification officer may have thought it pointless to fill out a form that was going to be filed and never used. Recently, Golden Grove resurrected their programs department and hired several case managers and mental health workers. The needs assessment form may now be useful. In particular, data collected on drug and alcohol abuse seems to be insufficient and incorrect. The highest number of disciplinary infractions were related to drug or alcohol use inside the prison, yet the Initial Custody Assessment tool and the needs assessment form indicate no drug or alcohol problems. Clearly, this matter needs to be investigated and a more accurate method of collecting data on inmate needs must be established.

The classification system needs to be updated at Golden Grove, but other management concerns must be addressed before implementation of a new system. For example, inmates who misbehave must receive disciplinary reports and an inmates assigned to maximum custody must be managed differently than inmates assigned to minimum custody. These changes require major shifts in management philosophy and infrastructure. Officers and other staff members have relied on subjective methods to determine custody level, criminogenic need, and management approaches. There may be inherent wisdom guiding some of these procedures. Undocumented, subjective criteria used to make decisions about how best to manage inmate's needs to be objectified with the staff at Golden Grove and added to the classification instruments. This process is also referred to as practice-based evidence and may prove useful to the system at Golden

Grove (Fox, 2003; Friesen, in press). Undocumented practices that have good outcomes versus those that don't need to be examined. Practiced-based evidence can inform evidence-based practice to produce more effective assessment instruments and management practices that reflect what works best unique communities.

Relevance of Criminological Theory to Virgin Islands Inmates

Clearly, more research must be conducted to determine the relevance of various criminological theories to Virgin Islands inmates. Demographic differences between the United States mainland and the United States Virgin Islands indicate the need to test the validity of theoretical concepts before making assumptions of generalizability. Underlying components of social learning theory, self-control theory, social control theory, general strain theory, labeling theory, feminist theories, and radical criminology should be examined for relevance to the Crucian community. For example, peer association may not be as strong of a predictor of criminality on St. Croix because associations tend to be layered and complex due to intertwined family histories, the physical boundaries of the island, and a strong Crucian social identity that intentionally separates itself from statesiders (Bellmore, 2009). The likelihood that a peer or family member will serve time at Golden Grove is very high (Bellmore, 2009). Application of feminist theories seems appropriate, but researchers should not assume that the struggles faced by women from the mainland have the same effect on women from the Virgin Islands.

Labeling theory may play a significant role at Golden Grove. Inmates are managed based on reputation more so than classification level. If an inmate was trusted

in the community, he or she will likely receive the same status in the prison. Conversely, if inmates are seen as deviant community members, they will not be trusted in the prison. Labeling may affect the classification officer's use of overrides. If she has personal knowledge about an inmate, she may feel a moral obligation to include this in her decision-making processes. The limited degrees of separation and lack of anonymity between staff and inmates make labels unavoidable. To what extent labeling affects the management of inmates is unknown but needs to be explored.

Furthermore, radical criminology may illuminate different pathways to crime on St. Croix. St. Croix is home to the second largest oil refinery in the Western hemisphere and the effect of pollution on the community is unknown (Boyer, 2010). As a territory/colony of the United States, St. Croix is allowed some tribal autonomy, but ultimately the United States will determine the future course of the islands with or without the consent of the citizens of the Virgin Islands, especially considering residents do not have the right to vote in presidential elections (Boyer, 2010). Moreover, the demographic inverse compared to the United States may confound any theories that address race inequalities (Bellmore, 2009). If environmental justice issues are related to criminal causality, it is important to use this information judiciously. Simply because a person is exposed to lead or other toxins does not mean he will become a murderer. Any correlation between toxic environments and crime needs to be used as leverage to decrease exposure to harmful substances and stop environmental abuse in the most impoverished areas of the country. Theory is important in that it provides guidance for

research and policy development, yet caution should be exerted when applying theory that has only been tested with samples from the mainland United States.

Limitations of Study

As with any research study, there are several unavoidable limitations: (a) limitations in the variables collected, (b) accuracy of self-reported data, (c) accuracy of data collected by prison staff, (d) retrospective design, and (d) characteristics of the sample and the reservation in generalizing results to other populations.

All variables were derived from inmate forms located in prison files. Secondary analysis of data limited the depth and specificity of the investigation largely because the variables were not created for the purpose of this study. Certain answers to questions were undeterminable given the constraint of the variables themselves.

Most data were collected by prison staff or reported by the inmate directly. It is common for self-report to contain errors. Inmates (and most people) lie, give half-truths, or fail to recollect the past correctly. In addition, prison staff and administrators make mistakes when filling out forms and it is common for data to be incorrect or missing. Nevertheless, studies have shown self-report data to be just as reliable as other types of data collection (Motiuk et al. 1992) and should not be dismissed altogether.

A retrospective design is not optimal for testing the reliability and validity of a classification and assessment system. It is best to implement a system and then conduct a longitudinal study to determine effectiveness. To work toward implementation of a new system, a validation study on the current system is a logical first step. It is recommended

that results from this study immediately inform development of a new system and a longitudinal study should be launched concurrently.

Results from this study should not be generalized to other populations and is meant to serve the Crucian inmate population only. Yet, the methods used to obtain the results are absolutely transferable and will contribute to validation research on prison classification.

Importance to Social Work

As discussed earlier, use of invalid or informal classification systems have resulted in inhumane treatment of prisoners (Kupers et al., 2009). If objective prison classification systems are reliable and valid, they have the capacity to significantly decrease harmful discrimination in jails and prisons.

While objective assessment tools have more robust predictive power than subjective assessment, the wisdom of intuitive decision-making should not be disregarded. Emphasis on objectivity, evidenced-based practices, and empirical data is important, but has created tension within the social work community – especially in reference to the gap between research and practice. Practitioners know the value of subjective wisdom and must employ creativity when working with people. Not all evidenced-based practices make sense for every client and sometimes adjustments are appropriate and necessary. Practiced-based evidence may add invaluable information to Golden Grove’s classification process. The classification officer’s practice should not be disregarded; instead, her methods should be documented, studied, and tested.

Objective classification tools are akin to evidenced-based practice and they allow some room for practical wisdom (about 5- 15%). If evidenced-based practices and classification instruments are continually validated for the population in which they intend to serve, a more robust and fair system will result. In addition, if practice wisdom or subjective criteria are understood and documented, this information can help to create more refined and sensitive variables. A great example of this premise is seen in the research conducted on gendered pathways to crime. Practice informed theory and subsequently led to more refined assessment tools for incarcerated women. This type work bridges the gap between research and practice emphasizes the importance of blending subjective and objective approaches to helping diverse populations.

In this world of rapidly shifting cultural mores, bridging the gap between research and practice is even more pressing. Our understanding of social phenomena is limited, time-sensitive, and dependent on a complex interaction between micro-level individual identities and macro-level social, cultural, and gendered organization. Social workers must continually adapt to new definitions of what it means to treat a person or population with fairness and justice.

One of the tenets of social justice and social work is promoting just and fair treatment for all human beings; incarcerated persons are no exception. Incarcerated men and women represent one of the most vulnerable segments of society assessment of treatment provision for prisoners is in accordance with social work values. Very few studies have been conducted outside the United States and this is the first study of its kind

conducted in the Caribbean. Social work advocates ethical research that includes minority populations so that Western values are challenged and not considered the norm.

Recommendations to Golden Grove and Implications for Future Research

The primary objective of this dissertation was to assess the reliability and validity of Golden Grove's classification system. Results indicated weak reliability and validity. Yet, as Bellmore (2009) discovered, Golden Grove does not separate inmates based on classification assessment, tends to have lax security, and the physical structure of the facility has major infrastructure issues that influence prison management. The classification implementation process must be assessed both qualitatively and quantitatively to fully understand the effectiveness of the system as a whole (Austin, 1986; Bellmore, 2009).

Ultimately, this study was pragmatic and necessary for Golden Grove and can have an immediate impact on prison service delivery. Results illuminate important information to service providers and policy makers and can inform development of a more effective classification system. Research findings demonstrated the ineffectiveness of the current system and several problems need to be addressed before decisions can be made about implementation of a new system.

First, inmates must be housed based on security level and the disciplinary system at Golden Grove must be updated. Without an accurate measure of institutional misconduct (number of disciplinary reports), it will be impossible to assess the effectiveness of any classification system. Data show the Initial Custody Assessment Scale has some

predictive validity for women, but not for men. In addition, an extremely high percentage of men are classified as maximum-custody; much higher than national averages. In contrast, the Custody Reassessment Scale seems to correct some of the inadequacies of the Initial Custody Assessment Tool, but the high percentage of overrides on reassessment (36.4%) to higher custody levels may negate these corrections. Austin et al. (1989) recommend adjusting weights of items on the scale to fit the population. The weights used on the reassessment scale could be applied to the initial assessment and results should be analyzed. This minor change may result in a complete shift of custody assignments that will benefit inmates and staff. If management problems are successfully addressed, Golden Grove will benefit from an updated classification system.

Golden Grove needs a valid internal classification system, such as the Adult Internal Management System (AIMS), to determine custody level in conjunction with an assessment tool to that is sensitive enough to assess criminogenic risk and need. It is possible to employ a 3G tool, such as the LSI-R, and train case managers to assess all inmates during intake and throughout their sentences. Yet, the LSI-R may not be sensitive enough to address gendered pathways to crime. Although the female population is small at Golden Grove, these women deserve appropriate assessment and treatment. One viable option is to use the LSI-R in combination with ‘the trailer’ – the new assessment tool created to assess dynamic risk factors for women (Van Voorhis et al., 2008). New assessment instruments will be very useful only if they are continually tested for validity within this special population.

Due to the requirements of Federal Consent Decrees on Golden Grove, more resources have been allocated to the institution. Golden Grove is poised to make significant changes that can have a positive impact on prison management and a valid classification system can play a crucial role in this transition. A valid classification and assessment system will help improve the treatment of incarcerated individuals at Golden Grove, clarify allocation of resources, and provide enhanced safety and security to prison staff and the Crucian community.

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APPENDIX A

VIRGIN ISLANDS DETENTION AND CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES INITIAL CUSTODY ASSESSMENT SCALE

Revised 1/20/94

I. IDENTIFICATION

Inmate Name (Last, First, MI): _____ Inmate ID#: _____

Status:	Race:	Sex:
☐ Detainee	☐ Black ☐ Puerto Rican	☐ Male
☐ Sentenced	☐ White ☐ Other	☐ Female

II. CUSTODY EVALUATION

Score

1. SEVERITY OF CURRENT CHARGES/CONVICTIONS
(Use the Severity of Offense Scale in Appendix 1; rate most serious current charge/conviction, including any detainers/warrants)

• Low	= 0	• High	= 5
• Moderate	= 2	• Highest	= 7

2. SERIOUS OFFENSE HISTORY (Use Severity of Offense Scale in Appendix 1; rate most serious prior conviction that occurred in past 5 years)

• None or Low	= 0	• High	= 4
• Moderate	= 1	• Highest	= 6

3. ESCAPE HISTORY (Excluding current charges — only count past 5 years)

• No escape or attempts	= 0
• Walkaway or attempted escape from minimum security facility or failure to return from authorized absence	= 3
• Escape or attempted escape from medium or maximum security setting	= 6

MAXIMUM CUSTODY SCORE (Add items 1, 2, and 3) Subtotal: _____
SCORE OF 7 OR HIGHER, ASSIGN TO MAXIMUM CUSTODY; (Always complete remaining items, but do not total score if inmate has already been assigned to maximum custody.)

If the score is 7 or Higher, Assign to Maximum Custody

4. INSTITUTIONAL DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

• None or minor with no segregation or lock down time	= 0
• 1 or more major disciplinary reports and/or time in segregation during the period of time from 2 years ago to 1 year ago	= 2
• 1 or more major disciplinary reports and/or time in segregation during the past year	= 3

5. PRIOR FELONY CONVICTIONS (Excluding current charges)

• None	= 0
• One	= 2
• Two or more	= 4

6. ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE

• No social, economic or legal problems related to abuse	= 0
• Abuse resulting in social, economic or legal problems	= 1
• Abuse resulting in assaultive behavior	= 3

7. STABILITY FACTORS (Deduct indicated points)

• Age 24 or younger	= 0
• Age 25-39	= -1
• Age 40 or older	= -2
• Employed or attending school for 6 months prior to arrest	= -1
• Lived at Virgin Islands address for 12 or more months prior to arrest	= -1

COMPREHENSIVE CUSTODY SCORE
Add Items 1-7

Total Score: _____

III. SCALE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Revised 1/20/94

A. CUSTODY LEVEL INDICATED BY SCALE

- 5 or fewer points on items 1-7 = Minimum
- 5 or fewer points on items 1-7 with detainer/warrant = Medium
- 6 to 10 points on items 1-7 = Medium
- 7 or more points on items 1-3 = Maximum
- 11 or more points on items 1-7 = Maximum

B. CHECK ALL THE SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS WHICH APPLY TO THIS INMATE:

☐ Protective Custody	☐ Known Management Problem
☐ Psychological Impairment	☐ Suspected Drug Trafficker
☐ Mental Deficiency	☐ Suicide Risk
☐ Escape Threat	☐ Medical Problem
☐ Serious Violence Threat	☐ Physical Impairment
☐ Known Gang Affiliation	☐ Other (specify): _____
☐ Substance Abuse Problem	

C. OVERRIDE OF SCALE CUSTODY LEVEL IS RECOMMENDED

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, state rationale: _____

D. RECOMMENDED CUSTODY LEVEL OR SPECIAL CUSTODY ASSIGNMENT

• Minimum	• Segregation Housing
• Medium	• Protective Custody
• Maximum	• Mental Health Housing

Classification Specialist Name _____ Date _____

Classification Specialist Signature _____

IV. CLASSIFICATION SUPERVISOR REVIEW OF SCALE OVERRIDE

A. APPROVAL/OVERRIDE OF CUSTODY LEVEL OR SPECIAL CUSTODY ASSIGNMENT

- Approved • Disapproved

If disapproved, state rationale: _____

B. FINAL CUSTODY LEVEL

• Minimum	• Segregation Housing
• Medium	• Protective Custody
• Maximum	• Mental Health Housing

Classification Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____

V. INMATE HOUSING ASSIGNMENT: _____

APPENDIX B

VIRGIN ISLANDS DETENTION AND CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES CUSTODY REASSESSMENT SCALE

Revised 1/20/94

I. IDENTIFICATION

Inmate Name (Last, First, MI): _____ Inmate ID#: _____

Status: ☐ Detainee Race: ☐ Black ☐ Puerto Rican Sex: ☐ Male
☐ Sentenced ☐ White ☐ Other ☐ Female

Reassessment Date: ____/____/____ Classification Specialist: _____
mo day year

Reassessment Reason: 1 - Routine 2 - Disciplinary 3 - Other

II. CUSTODY EVALUATION

Score

1. SEVERITY OF CURRENT CHARGES/CONVICTIONS (Use Severity of Offense Scale; rate most serious charge/conviction, including any detainers/warrants) _____
 - Low = 0 • High = 4
 - Moderate = 1 • Highest = 6
2. SERIOUS OFFENSE HISTORY (Use Severity of Offense Scale; rate most serious prior conviction that occurred in last 5 years) _____
 - None or Low = 0 • High = 3
 - Moderate = 1 • Highest = 5
3. ESCAPE HISTORY (Excluding current charges — only count escapees in past 5 years) _____
 - No escape or attempts = 0
 - Walkaway or attempted escape from minimum security or failure to return from authorized absence = 2
 - Escape or attempted escape from medium or maximum security setting = 6

MAXIMUM CUSTODY SCORE (Add Items 1, 2, and 3)

Subtotal: _____

SCORE OF 7 OR HIGHER, ASSIGN TO MAXIMUM CUSTODY; (Always complete remaining items, but do not total score if inmate has already been assigned to maximum custody.)

4. NUMBER OF DISCIPLINARY CONVICTIONS (Since last classification) _____
 - None = 0 • Two = 4
 - One = 2 • Three or more = 6
5. MOST SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY CONVICTION (Use Disciplinary Severity Scale; since last classification) _____
 - None = 0
 - Low = 1
 - Moderate = 2
 - High = 5
 - Highest = 7
6. PRIOR FELONY CONVICTIONS (Excluding current charges) _____
 - None = 0
 - One = 1
 - Two or more = 2
7. STABILITY FACTORS (Deduct indicated points) _____
 - Age 24 or younger = 0
 - Age 25-39 = -1
 - Age 40 or older = -2
 - Employed or attending school for 6 months prior to arrest = -1
 - Lived at Virgin Islands address for 12 or more months prior to arrest = -1

COMPREHENSIVE CUSTODY SCORE
Add Items 1-7

Total Score: _____

III. SCALE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Revised 1/20/84

A. CUSTODY LEVEL INDICATED BY SCALE

- 5 or fewer points on items 1-7 = Minimum
- 5 or fewer points on items 1-7 with detainer/warrant = Medium
- 6 to 10 points on items 1-7 = Medium
- 7 or more points on items 1-3 = Maximum
- 11 or more points on items 1-7 = Maximum

B. CHECK ALL THE SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS WHICH APPLY TO THIS INMATE:

☐ Protective Custody	☐ Known Management Problem
☐ Psychological Impairment	☐ Suspected Drug Trafficker
☐ Mental Deficiency	☐ Suicide Risk
☐ Escape Threat	☐ Medical Problem
☐ Serious Violence Threat	☐ Physical Impairment
☐ Known Gang Affiliation	☐ Other (specify): _____
☐ Substance Abuse Problem	

C. OVERRIDE OF SCALE CUSTODY LEVEL IS RECOMMENDED

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, state rationale: _____

D. RECOMMENDED CUSTODY LEVEL OR SPECIAL CUSTODY ASSIGNMENT

• Minimum	• Segregation Housing
• Medium	• Protective Custody
• Maximum	• Mental Health Housing

Classification Specialist Name _____

Date _____

Classification Specialist Signature _____

IV. CLASSIFICATION SUPERVISOR REVIEW OF SCALE OVERRIDE

A. APPROVAL/OVERRIDE OF CUSTODY LEVEL OR SPECIAL CUSTODY ASSIGNMENT

- Approved • Disapproved

If disapproved, state rationale: _____

B. FINAL CUSTODY LEVEL

• Minimum	• Segregation Housing
• Medium	• Protective Custody
• Maximum	• Mental Health Housing

Classification Supervisor Signature _____

Date _____

V. INMATE HOUSING ASSIGNMENT: _____

APPENDIX C

VIRGIN ISLANDS DETENTION AND CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES INITIAL INMATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT FORM

I. IDENTIFICATION

Inmate Name (Last, First, MI): _____ Inmate ID#: _____

Status: ☐ Detainee ☐ Sentenced Race: ☐ Black ☐ White ☐ Puerto Rican ☐ Other Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Assessment Date: ____/____/____ Classification Specialist: _____
mo day year

HEALTH

1 Limited physical capacity, acute illness; needs hospitalization or outpatient treatment	2 Mild disability or illness; outpatient treatment required; non-strenuous work	3 No problems which limit housing or work assignments	Code
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EMOTIONAL STABILITY

1 Severe impairment; danger to self, others; needs hospital environment	2 Moderate impairment; requires monitoring, individual or group therapy	3 Emotionally stable; no indications of mental illness	Code
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EDUCATION

1 5th grade or below reading, math skills, needs remedial or special education classes	2 No H.S. diploma; needs adult education or GED program	3 High school diploma, GED or equivalent	Code
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VOCATIONAL SKILL

1 No discernible skill; needs training	2 Limited skills; ability to hold semi-skilled position; needs training	3 Possesses marketable skill or trade	Code
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SUBSTANCE ABUSE

1 Frequent abuse resulting in social, economic or legal problems, needs treatment	2 Occasional abuse causing disruption of functioning	3 No disruption of functioning or legal difficulties	Code
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MENTAL ABILITY

1 Serious disability limiting ability to function; needs sheltered living, work situations	2 Mild disability limiting educational, vocational potential	3 No discernible disability	Code
--	--	-----------------------------	------

OTHER: (1) describe _____
Code

INITIAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

PROGRAM CODE

PRIORITY CODE*

1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____

- * Priority Codes: 1 - Urgent, immediate need
2 - Problem directly related to criminal behavior; high priority
3 - Problem resolution would enhance ability to succeed in community

APPENDIX D

VIRGIN ISLANDS OBJECTIVE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM OFFENSE SEVERITY SCALE

HIGHEST (include attempts and aiding and abetting)

Aggravated Rape (attempt included)
Kidnapping
Robbery 1st
Assault 1st
Voluntary Manslaughter
Rape 1st
Murder 2nd
Mayhem
Manslaughter
Sodomy
Carnal Abuse
Arson
Escape

HIGH (include attempts and aiding and abetting)

Possession of a Dangerous Weapon
Unlawful Sexual Contact- no injury or rape
Controlled Substance with Intent to Distribute
Introducing Narcotics into a Prison
Domestic Violence
Robbery 3rd
Robbery 2nd
Burglary 1st

MODERATE (include attempts and aiding and abetting)

Attempted Escape from Custody
Grand Larceny
Burglary 3rd Degree
Assault 3rd Degree
Possession of Controlled Substance
Possession of Stolen Property
Attempted Robbery
Breaking and Entering
Auto Theft
Possession of a Unlicensed Firearm
Discharging a Firearm
Embezzlement by Public Official
Illegal Entry into the U.S.

LOW (include attempts and aiding and abetting)

Withdrawing; Delivering Worthless Checks
Revocation of Probation
Parole violation
Destruction of Property
Contempt of Court Order
Attempted Possession of Stolen Property
Disturbing the Peace
Unauthorized use of a Motor Vehicle
Action for Support
Driving without a License
Obtaining Money or Property by False Pretense
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
Tampering With a Vehicle

APPENDIX E

VIRGIN ISLANDS OBJECTIVE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM DISCIPLINARY SEVERITY SCALE

HIGHEST (Include Attempt, Aiding and Abetting)

Killing
Assaulting any Person
Escape
Attempting or Planning Escape
Setting a Fire
Possession or Introduction of an Explosive or any Ammunition
Possession or Introduction of a Gun, Firearm, Weapon or
Authorized Tools
Possession, Introduction, or Use of Narcotics, Paraphernalia, not
Prescribed by the Medical Staff
Rioting
Encouraging Others to Riot
Counterfeiting, Forging, or Unauthorized Reproduction of Any
Document, Article or Identification, Money, Security, or
Official Paper
Giving or Offering Any Official or Staff Member a Bribe, or
Anything of Value

HIGH (Include Attempt, Aiding and Abetting)

Fighting With Another Person
Threatening Another With Bodily Harm
Extortion, Blackmail, Protection: Demanding or receiving money or
any thing of value
Destroying, Altering, or Damaging Government Property, or the
Property of Another Person
Tampering With or Blocking any Locking Device
Misuse of authorized Medication
Possession of Property Belonging to Another Person
Possession of Anything not Authorized
Possession of Any Officer's or Staff Clothing
Mutilating or altering Clothing Issued by the Government
Engaging in, or Encouraging, a Group Demonstration
Encouraging Others to Refuse to Work or Participate in Work
Stoppage
Refusing to Obey Any Properly Authorized Order of Any Staff
Member
Lying or Providing a False Statement to a Staff Member
Conduct Which Disrupts or Interferes With the Security or Orderly
Running of the Institution
Being in an Unauthorized Area
Failure to Follow Safety or Sanitation Regulations
Failure to Stand Court
Interfering With the Taking of Count
Making Toxicant
Being Intoxicated

Unauthorized Use of Mail or Telephone
Unauthorized Contacts With Public
Correspondence or Conduct With a Visitor in Violation of Posted

MODERATE (Include Attempt, Aiding and Abetting)

Engaging in Sexual Acts With Others
Making Sexual Proposals or Threats to Another
Wearing a Disguise or Mask
Stealing
Adulteration of Any Food or Drink
Refusing to Work
Malingering, Feigning an Illness
Failing to Perform Work as Instructed by a Supervisor
Participating in an Unauthorized Meeting or Gathering
Using Any Equipment or Machinery Which is Not Specifically
Authorized
Using Any Equipment or Machinery Contrary to Instruction or
Posted Safety Standards
Smoking Where Prohibited
Using Abusive or Obscene Language
Being Insanitary or Untidy
Tattooing or Self Mutilation
Giving Money or Anything of Value to, or Accepting Money or
Anything of Value From: Another Inmate, a Member of his Family,
or his Friend Without Proper Permission and Authorization

LOW (Include Attempt, Aiding and Abetting)

Indecent Exposure
Loaning of Property or Anything of Value for Profit
Unexcused Absence From Work, or Any Assignment
Preparing or Conducting a Gambling
Possession of Gambling Paraphernalia