

# A Prisoner's Daughter: An Autoethnographic Account of the Effect of Incarceration on the Families of White Collar Offenders

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Boston College Electronic Thesis or Dissertation, 2012

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# **A Prisoner's Daughter:**

An Autoethnographic Account of the Effect of Incarceration on the Families of White

Collar Offenders



Senior Honors Thesis

Boston College Sociology Department

Scholar of the College Candidate

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April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction_____	2-6
Literature Review and Background_____	7-18
Chapter 1: The Arrest_____	19-33
Chapter 2: Back to School_____	34-48
Chapter 3: The In-Between_____	49-67
Chapter 4: The Media_____	68-76
Chapter 5: The Long Drive_____	77-87
Chapter 6: Inside the Walls_____	88-100
Conclusion_____	101-107

Drimal

## **Introduction**

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009 my father was arrested in our home, and taken by the FBI to the federal courthouse in Manhattan to be arraigned on charges of insider trading. That day, and the events surrounding my father's legal issues, sentencing and subsequent imprisonment had a huge impact on the woman I have become, and the intellectual interests I have developed. My story will be closely detailed in the following chapters, from the moment I learned about my father's arrest, to my first experience with visitation. I hope to offer an honest picture of my own experience through the lens of a sociologist so as to provide a novel insight into the experience of one family.

It is hard to discuss my study without bringing in the personal implications this research has on my life. When I began this project and first drafted my literature review, my father was home. Months later, he is serving a 66-month sentence in a rural Pennsylvania Federal Prison Camp. I know as an undergraduate this research does not have very far-reaching implications, but I hope that I will be able to return to this topic later in my career, and potentially create work that has the ability to inform policy. Ultimately, I hope that my work as a graduate or professional could produce valuable evidence to help inform sentencing matrices for non-violent criminals. This project really began as a personal exercise of understanding. As a sociologist, I wanted to better conceptualize my own situation through research and learning. These early research practices made me aware of the massive gap in literature surrounding incarceration and families, particularly the complete dearth of information surrounding families of white collar or financial criminals.

Drimal

I began to construct theories, not based upon my readings or research, but largely based upon my own experience and the greater experience of my family unit. Throughout the research process, I would read journal articles and publications hoping to find some bit of research that mimicked or spoke to my own feelings and experience. I found nothing. The research that dealt with families did so in a very dry and disconnected way that functioned to dehumanize the experiences of the respondents or subjects. The bulk of research was quantitatively based, in order to paint a picture to inform policy using statistical evidence.

I soon realized that my personal project would make an excellent senior honors thesis, and I began my summer with this in mind. Coming into the fall semester, my awareness of sociological research was rather limited, and I was only able to conceive of my project as a qualitative interview-based exercise, or a quantitative data dependent endeavor. So I went into my research assuming that I would have an interview based research project aimed at answering the questions: What is the effect of incarceration of the primary wage earner on family dynamics, attitudes and relationships? How do these families change and develop in order to fill the place of the incarcerated member, and what mechanisms do they use to cope with the loss of the family member. I theorize that the extreme emotional and financial upheaval experienced by the families of these non-violent offenders functions to cause extensive harm to these people, creating a new sect of victims or “socially dead people.” (Patterson, 1982) Essentially, I aim to address an additional level of victimization to the crime and punishment model.

Though this project was incredibly interesting and exciting, I soon came to the harsh realization that my sample was small, disparate, and often unwilling to discuss their

Drimal

experiences. Before learning about personal or auto ethnography as a valuable and reputable method, I struggled with my own voice, and how I wanted to it come forth in my paper. I wanted to be upfront with my insider status and my potentially biased perspective, but I felt that doing so would take away from the scientific value and credibility of my work.

Then, for one of my required thesis courses I read *Speaking of Sadness*, by David Karp. I was immediately inspired by the upfront and present approach that Karp took to his writing. For the first time, I recognized that insider status provided me with an incredibly unique perspective that was a powerful strength rather than a weakness. From that point, I knew I wanted to be transparent about my experience and the way it informed my positionality and research in general. I was fortunate enough to be studying under Professor Karp, who first suggested that I consider autoethnography as a method, and I have not looked back since.

Autoethnography is defined as “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience.” (Ellis, Adams, Bochner, 2011) As this project began as an emotional rather than scientific exercise, like many early autoethnographers I sought to “concentrate on ways of producing meaningful, accessible, and evocative research grounded in personal experience, research that would sensitize readers to issues of identity politics, to experiences shrouded in silence, and to forms of representation that deepen our capacity to empathize with people who are different from us.” (Ellis, Adams, Bochner, 2011) Professor Karp helped me to realize that my story was valuable, and could provide novel information to the field.

Drimal

Autoethnography is a valuable method because it allows for a thorough and intense understanding of an insider position, often leaving few questions for the reader. This method gives both insiders and outsiders a chance to better understand the culture or situation they are studying. In the case of the families of white-collar criminals, the autoethnographic method provides a complete and personal picture of the experience on a micro-level. This act of biography is enhanced by the sociological analysis with which it is married. Autoethnographers go beyond the medium of biography and into sociological research by fusing their own experience with an informed knowledge of existing research, interviews with other cultural members, and potentially examining relevant cultural artifacts. (Ellis, Adams, Bochner, 2011)

Autoethnography will work best for my particular project because it will allow for a new perspective to be added to the existing literature, and will allow for thorough and honest portrayal of events from an insider perspective. As C. Wright Mills posits, the sociological imagination is the part of the general perspective that translates private troubles into public issues. (Mills, 1959) It is clear that the practice of autoethnography is thus intimately connected with the sociological imagination, as a way to bridge the gap between private issues and public discourse.

The best thing about writing is its ability to force you to put concrete words to ideas. For my thesis, so much of what has ended up on paper began as a loose, nameless feeling or idea that existed inside of me without a name. Giving life to my ideas has given me the opportunity to better understand my experience and myself and has allowed me to heal in many ways. I hope that my account of my experience can inform the greater sociological

Drimal

community and help others to better conceptualize the experience of incarceration for those on the periphery.



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## **Literature review and background**

White Collar crime has become a colloquial term to describe a financially motivated, economic, non-violent crime committed for illegal monetary gain. But it started out as the thematic focus of research by criminologist Edwin Sutherland as “crime committed by a person of respectability and high social status in the course of his occupation.” (p. 9, Sutherland, *White Collar Crime*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1949) Sutherland’s definition, while expanded by subsequent investigators, set the stage for sociological and legal inquiry into crimes done in the course of otherwise legitimate business activities.

Much of the following literature review provides background information on the existing literature dealing with families and incarceration. The bulk of this research was carried out prior to my decision to use autoethnography as my method. Some of my theories have been made a bit irrelevant, largely due to their overarching nature—I do not feel comfortable making extensive or extreme statements based on my experience, and the experience of those I interviewed, alone. I do, however, believe that these theories are both valid and interesting, so I have made the decision to keep them in the literature review as a way of spawning new ideas.

It has been established that the children of incarcerated parents are more likely to face consequences of their parent’s imprisonment including dropping out of school, delinquency, and subsequent incarceration. (Dallaire, 2007) In 2007 there were 1.7 million children in America with an incarcerated parent, which means one in 43 American children have a parent in prison (Mumola, 2009); a figure that differs greatly

Drimal

across racial lines. Of the 1.5 million incarcerated people in 2007, 51.6% were parents. (Mumola, 2009) Of these parents, nearly half have never had a visit from their child while in prison; this finding indicates that children of incarcerated parents typically live too far to see them very often, if at all. (Mumola, 2009)

Visitation and communication is an aspect of the experience, for all family members left behind. Depending upon the type of prison and its security level, visitation can be a very traumatic and emotional experience. Federal prisoners are allowed four hours per month of visitation, a minimum that can be extended at the discretion of the Warden. (BOP Visiting Regulations) Items such as drawings, pictures, letters and notes are not permitted in federal visiting areas, and physical contact beyond a greeting hug or handshake is not allowed. This includes interactions between inmates and their children, as children are not allowed to be held, sit on their parent's lap etc. If children become overly emotional, they will be asked to leave. (BOP Visiting Regulations) Many prisons have a point system, where inmates are put under a point system that effectively restricts monthly visits to a maximum of four. Communications of other means are even more rigorously restricted, with phone calls limited to several minutes a day in a very public area, and emails and letters are also opened and monitored. This means that all interactions between families are depersonalized and non-private and thus alters the context and strength of interpersonal interactions between the incarcerated individual and their family.

These restrictions on family interactions and relationships are one way that imprisonment functions to create the "social death" of incarcerated individuals. Norwood (2009) defines social death as "a series of losses—loss of identity and loss of

Drimal

the ability to participate in social activities and relationships that eventually culminates in the perceived disconnection from social life.” (Norwood, 7) Although Norwood discusses social death within the context of terminal or degenerative illness, this concept also arises in the context of slavery and imprisonment. (Patterson, 1982) The first step towards social death is desocialization and depersonalization, or social negation, followed by the reintroduction into a new community as a ‘nonbeing.’” (Patterson, 38) I want to explore the ways in which social death extends to the experience of isolation and stigmatization experienced by the families of incarcerated individuals, and extends past the incarcerated member onto his or her family. This idea has not been dealt with in literature, and it will be the focus of my research. I will examine the ways in which this concept can be applied to my family’s experience, but will make no greater claim at knowledge. I think this concept, in particular, merits closer and more thorough examination, and I would ultimately like to test this theory in later, more comprehensive work.

Communication and physical interactions are dealt with substantially in the existing literature. Naser (2006) discusses the negative impacts of the limited communication between prisoners and families and its subsequent affect on prisoner reentry. Naser conceptualizes family connectivity as a major factor contributing to recidivism, and even though this is not the primary focus of my research, it provides an excellent framework. Naser suggests that that prisoners and their families would be well served by corrections policies that remove barriers to contact during incarceration and perhaps even encourage contact through the establishment of programs specifically designed to reinforce positive relationships with the family members they are likely to rely on after their release from

Drimal

prison. (Nasser, 28) While Naser affirms “family members experience serious hardships during the period of incarceration and after their family member’s release” (Nasser, 28) this point is used to reflect the experience of the prisoner, not of his or her family.

Arditti’s research has very similar aims in that it provides “documentation that incarceration does social and economic harm that goes well beyond the individual inmate and extends to his or her family” (Arditti, Schute 2003; 202) associated difficulties include economic risk, strain associated with single parenting, and adjustment problems for children. It insists that the harsh policy of incarceration for non-violent offenders has a higher societal toll, and is unsound policy. I believe that my results will reinforce Arditti’s findings, but will extend these realities to a different socioeconomic group. Arditti’s sample consists of “survivor caregivers” (a term I will borrow throughout my study), which refers to the newly minted “temporary single parents” who are left as the primary caregiver for children. (Lowenstein, 1986)

Carlson and Cervera (1992) found that wives of incarcerated men experience a great deal of strain, including feelings of guilt and stress because of pressure to fulfill the multiple roles of the incarcerated man and be “both parents.” Women and families also experience a myriad of emotions regarding the process of visitation. Incarceration is highly correlated with divorce, and men who are incarcerated “attain the divorce rate of 50 percent experienced by the general population in about one-third of the time.” (Braman, 2003)

A major gap in the literature available on incarceration and families is that most research focuses exclusively on extremely high-risk families or felons, families of lower

Drimal

socioeconomic status, and families of color. The majority of scholarship works to inform social policy and adjustment programs that exclusively serve underprivileged families. For example, several researchers outline their express goal to help inform government welfare programs. (Arditti Schute, 2003) While studies aim to point out failings and provide possible solutions, few do so in a compelling way. It seems that the studies with the potential to influence policy are often very dry, and do not work to preserve the voice or experience of participants. I think this lack of humanity weakens the bulk of literature, but putting real experiences into statistics, enabling an increased level of commodification rather than the purported goal of finding justice. Criminological sciences have traditionally employed research to satisfy the dominant state, and thus support the status quo. To humanize research might undermine the ultimate goal of the research institution, thus has been mostly avoided as a practice.

Another big gap in the research available is the lack of attention paid to the family unit as a whole. In many studies, the family is broken up into small one-on-one relationships; father and child, husband and wife, mother and child. However, there is little research describing the interconnectivity and fluidity of family relationships and roles. This is not unsurprising, as the majority of research is carried out in order to inform or affect policy. However, in order to appreciate what Carlson & Cevera (1992) refer to as “secondary victimology” of these families or “hidden victims,” I believe the family unit must be investigated as a cohesive whole, not as a series of interpersonal interactions. Christian (2005) does consider the family as a fluid and cohesive unit, but ultimately fails to delve further into this concept.

With regards to this secondary victimization, the offending family member’s actions

Drimal

function to victimize the family just as the prosecutorial forces of the criminal justice system and the entire punitive enterprise. Particularly in the case of insider trading and crimes “against the market” where there is no discernable victim, the family of these offenders is most often the party hurt by these acts. While the offender is culpable, so is the entire punitive enterprise that values retribution over true justice, and refuses to take into account the true effect incarceration has on families and society as a whole.

I am more concerned with the ways in which all relationships change—whether that be a child/spouse with the incarcerated parent, or the “survivor care giver” and the child. (Lowenstein, 1986) The complexity and unique nature of each relationship, specifically the ways in which these relationships evolve around the experience of imprisonment deserve more complete research and exploration.

A majority of existing scholarship focuses exclusively on the experience of the children of incarcerated parents. Lowenstein (1986) focuses on the experience and trauma that affects the children of incarcerated first-time offender fathers. Lowenstein finds that 60 percent of families studied had children with emotional or behavioral issues stemming from the loss of their father. Lowenstein focuses on creating linkages between the experience of the “survivor care giver” and a single parent, through “temporary single parenthood” but does not provide concrete data that would support such a connection. (Lowenstein 1986) Hagan (1999) presents a similar narrative, in which the children are the primary victims of incarceration, as the process “diminishes the quality” of the children who are left behind by causing negative socialization, depression, violence and withdrawal. (Hagan, 1999) Hagan also focuses primarily on urban communities and families of lower socioeconomic strata in particular.

Drimal

Similarly, research tends to isolate certain interactions or aspects of the experience of incarceration. For example, (Christian, 2005) focuses specifically on the difficult experience of visitation, particularly the trials and tribulations surrounding travel. Barriers to visitation are outlined, which include travel expenses or time, and emotional or physical energy. (Christian, 2005)

The issue of stigma is extremely prevalent in the existing literature. This stigma, however, is explored as closely connected with the stigma of government assistance or welfare. (Aditti Schute, 2003; 202) The level of stigma that comes from the individual community is not thoroughly explored, particularly in a way that could account for the differences experienced by families of repeat offenders compared with first time offenders. For example, it is clear that the family of a rapist/murder or perpetrator of a violent crime would face extreme stigma from their community, particularly if the act of violence occurred within the community confines. However, it is not clear the way stigma affects families in communities where crime and imprisonment is more commonplace, compared with a community with a relatively low incarceration rate. My study will explore the relationship of stigma with “uncommon incarceration” particularly within the context of white-collar crime.

I theorize that while white collar criminals are often more wealthy (both in terms of finances and education), their crimes are more highly stigmatized within their community, thus carry with them a higher level of shame than in communities where more members have experienced incarceration. Obviously, this depends upon the nature of the crimes committed. Crimes against immediate community members, particularly ones involving violence or extreme disenfranchisement, are extremely stigma laden.

Drimal

Additionally, different types of white-collar crimes hold different types of stigma for the family involved. As Pierre Bourdieu explains, much of the shame and stigma experienced by white-collar families stems from the loss of social and cultural capital. (Bourdieu & Passerson, 1977)

On the other hand, when an experience is more common within a certain community, it tends to hold fewer stigmas. For this reason, I hypothesize a greater level of stigma for financial crimes, as the “typical” white-collar offender hails from a community in which prison is extremely abnormal. In poorer communities, where there is a higher likelihood of imprisonment, the experience might hold comparatively less stigma. Perhaps this stigma is not more intense, but rather, a different experience. Additionally, the loss of the primary wage earner will have an effect on the financial situation of any family, thus the families of white-collar criminals will almost always face a major lifestyle change.

While connections can be made between the experience of loss felt by families of incarcerated individuals and those that lose family to other experiences, such as military service, divorce or death; these situations are markedly different as a result of the stigma experienced. Schoenbauer (1986) notes that while families who lose a loved one to death are often drawn closer together by the loss and the external outpouring of community support, “loss of a family member because of incarceration, however, seldom draws a family closer nor does it elicit sympathy from others; family members are forced to face the difficulties of separation alone.” (Schoenbauer; 580) This connection to stigma makes the experience of loss unique and lonely in comparison to other forms of loss. According to Lowenstein (1986), the degree of trauma associated with the imprisonment is associated to the degree of stigmatization associated with the crime. (Lowenstein,



Drimal

1986)

One extremely helpful component of *Speaking of Sadness* was the idea of a “career” of depression that involves discernable stages. (Karp, 1996) Although the career concept was not Karp’s creation, it was my first exposure to the idea and subsequently helped me to articulate aspects of my own research that I had been previously unable to express. Borrowing from Everett Hughes’ definition, a career is defined as “the moving perspective in which the person sees his life as a whole and interprets the meanings of his various attitudes, actions, and the things which happen to him.” (Karp, 1996; p. 16) The career model is applied to the depression experience from the lens of personal identity—it essentially describes the process of one’s self-identification as clinically depressed, marked by significant personal developments over time.

This concept has helped to inform my project by giving a name for something I had been leaning towards since its inception. Not unlike depression, the process of “becoming” a family member of an incarcerated individual is marked by major development and critical experiences over time. This career is marked by learning of the arrest, dealing with the implications of the trial and/or legal process, adapting to the life changes that naturally come out of such a career, and then coming to the point where one must accept and truly “become” a family member of a prisoner. I place quotation marks around the word “become” in order to properly emphasize the fact that this process is more internal than external for my project. Yes, one becomes the family of a prisoner the day their loved one goes to jail. However, the journey towards self-identification as such is less simple, but follows a discernable pattern. The concept of a “career model” has helped inform the

Drimal

structural flow of my project, and can be seen in the vignettes I have chosen to illustrate in subsequent chapters.

One particular chapter in *Speaking of Sadness* outlined the experiences of family and friends of depressed persons. The voices that Karp gave power to in this chapter spoke to me more clearly than most parts of the work. It functioned to shed light on the experiences of those in the periphery of a depressive career, and actually inform the reader of their own career as the loved-one of a depressed person. The use of small vignettes to capture the four narratives was incredibly valuable, both personally and for my project. I am planning on using a similar format for my own thesis project, and the mixture of narrative or biography with analysis and review helped me to realize that this sort of “micro” research can be both valuable and (for lack of a better word) scientific. The way literature and theory were woven into the narrative structure of each mini-chapter was particularly helpful.

Goffman discusses the interactions of people in a dramaturgical model (Goffman, 1959) This project is, in many ways, a way to understand how the actors change when the stage changes—meaning, how I changed and developed as the events of my father’s arrest and subsequent imprisonment unfolded. Actors change their character when in different situations or with different actors, and this project examines the ways in which the actors in my life evolved over the course of this experience.

Ultimately, the goal of my project is to provide an outlet for the stories and experiences of my family so as to include white-collar families in the narrative established by existing research, and also to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the

Drimal

universality of this experience across both class and race. When it comes to white-collar crimes, and even the families of prisoners in general, there is a dearth of relevant research, and the research that has been conducted often lacks a human element that I think is essential to really fostering change in this broken system. Most studies are quantitative, not qualitative—and the voice of the respondents is rarely if ever present. Many of the studies involving prisoners' families deal specifically with inner city fathers and their children, or with children born into prison. I have not been able to find any studies on white-collar criminals, or on their families. I hope that my research will be able to fill this void, and help to enhance our collective knowledge on this topic. Additionally, I hope this study will properly advocate and speak for the people who are suffering most of whom suffer alone, and potentially help others to find value in my words and experience.

Each of the chapters represent crucial moments or developments in my career as the daughter of an incarcerated white collar criminal, and the ways in which my identity has shifted as a result of my experience. The first chapter *The Arrest* outlines my experience learning about my father's arrest and the events of that first day. It also includes the accounts of my mother and brother, as well as the experience of another woman who was the daughter of a white-collar criminal. The second chapter, *Back to School*, outlines my transition into my new identity or role, and the ways in which it created conflict and change in the life I had established. *Back to School* also includes accounts of the transition experienced by my mother and brother. The third chapter, *The In-Between*, outlines my experience in court, and dealing with the reality of my father's inevitable incarceration through counseling and self-discovery. The fourth chapter, *The*

Drimal

*Media*, provides personal commentary on my experience with the media coverage of my father's case, with particular emphasis on the role of message boards and public discourse. The fifth chapter, *The Long Drive*, deals with the day I drove my dad to prison, and the process of saying goodbye and coming to terms with his incarceration. The sixth and final chapter, *Inside the Walls*, discusses my experience with visitation, and the ways in which my experience differs from that of my family.

Drimal

## **Chapter 1: The Arrest**

I went to bed the night of November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009 a happy and normal sophomore in college, but the next morning everything changed. That morning I was woken by my Aunt Liz, who had somehow gotten into my dorm room. Startled and confused, I barely had a moment to consider why she could possibly be in my dorm at 7am. She said, “Maybe we should go in the bathroom to talk” so I rolled out of bed and followed her into my disgusting college dorm bathroom. Immediately, an intense feeling of dread overcame my entire being—who had died? What situation would merit my Aunt traveling 30 minutes to fetch me, and could not be communicated over the phone, or at a godlier hour? “No one’s dead. Everyone’s fine. But your dad has been arrested.”

Those words turned my blood to ice. What did that mean? I started crying. Why me? What had he done? Would he be gone forever? Would I ever be able to hug him again? What do I do?

The powerlessness and confusion that overwhelmed me in those moments was insurmountable. I told my direct roommate, Erika, as I packed in a haze. What does one wear to court? Do I even own clothes that are both nice and modest? This entire thing had come as such a shock. The day before I had been on the phone with my parents trying to figure out if I should study abroad at the London School of Economics for my junior year, concerned mostly with their ability to fund such an endeavor. In October of that year, my dad’s boss, Raj, had been arrested on charges of insider trading. On the phone with my mom, I made a joke—“I hope dad wasn’t involved, because you know he can be a real idiot sometimes.” My mom immediately told me off for making such a statement,

Drimal

and I had brushed the interaction aside as my mom's classic paranoia. I was more concerned that my dad would likely lose his job, and with it, my funding for school.

As I sat in the car between bouts of tears, I thought back to that moment and wondered about its significance. Was my mom being paranoid, or were her concerns founded? I called my best friends from home, hoping to tell them before they could hear from someone else. The words came out, but sounded like something out of a melodrama—"my father's been arrested by the FBI."

I finally got through to my mom; all we could share were tears. I had the strength to pull myself together long enough to ask one question—"why?" In the 19 years I had spent on this earth, I had never known my mom to cry. On the phone I could barely make out her voice through her grief. She was trying to pull everything together for my brothers—17 and 10 at the time—but could barely function. We would meet at the courthouse; his arraignment could be anytime after 11AM.

I changed in the car, putting on my black jeans (the closest thing I had to slacks for the November's cold) and a blazer—the jeans were dirty from the previous weekend, and I worried about looking sloppy in court—would they kick me out? I had never been in a courtroom before, mostly because I had never known anyone to have legal difficulties. I had never even been pulled over before, and the idea that my dad was somewhere in handcuffs and behind bars was incomprehensible.

We drove for what felt like a lifetime, even though my aunt was speeding like a demon to get me there in time for the arraignment. When we finally arrived at the courthouse, it all moved so quickly that it felt like a blur. I remember finding my mom and brother,

Drimal

supported by my mom's best friends and sisters. My mother is one of the strongest and most resilient women I know. A former district attorney for the city of Manhattan, she never slouched, never retreated and always acted as a pillar of strength for everyone around her. In this moment, she was unrecognizable. Weak from grief and stress, my mom could barely hold herself up and was fighting back a constant stream of tears. I soon found out that the FBI had approached my father in the days leading up to his arrest informing him they had enough evidence to arrest him on insider trading, and asked him to wear a wire on his other boss, who happened to be one of his best friends. He refused, and after this refusal it became clear that he could be arrested at any point.

Then my dad's attorney came in. She introduced herself to me, but I was too consumed in my own grief to really process the interaction. I think I gave her a grunt or nod of acknowledgement, and then went back to burying my head in my mother's shoulder as if I were a child.

Hearing this, I became incredibly guilty. Just the night before I had been so self concerned, calling my parents and asking about going to LSE when they were waiting for the FBI to take my dad away. I had been at school, drinking, worrying about boys, going out and relaxing, all while my family was waiting for the hammer to fall. I felt so ashamed of my behavior and my childish entitlement. This moment marked a major shift in my consciousness, the first real moment in my career as a daughter of a white-collar criminal. I went from whining about going on a ritzy abroad program, to begging to put school on hold to move home and help out. The day of the arrest functioned to completely alter my consciousness. Instead of living each day for myself, I wanted to be home with my family.

Drimal

We finally found the courtroom where my father's arraignment would be held, and the waiting began. We sat through about six arraignments before seeing my father; several tax fraud cases, two interstate drug smuggling cases, and one gang member who had a Spanish translator. Seeing the defendants stand up in front of the judge felt like a strange episode of *Law and Order*. Even though I knew for a fact that my father was somewhere in the building, soon to be in the same place as the other defendants, I simply could not believe it. My father was always this larger than life and somewhat mythic figure. Though I was aware of his flaws, even as a college student I felt he had this air of infallibility, that he would always be there to protect me or pick me up when I fall.

Then, the judge said my dad's name. Drimal, Craig.

My dad came out from the main entrance to the court, escorted by a court officer. I had never seen him look so sad and aged—he was the shell of the man I knew. My dad was one of the most well dressed and fashion-conscious men I have ever encountered—he spent more time getting ready in the morning than most women I know. As he walked into court he looked particularly disheveled. Wearing an oversized flannel and work boots, he looked more like a lumberjack than a trader. Beyond his clothing, my dad just looked so powerless and frail, his face looked lifeless and drained of color as if he had been crying for hours. Not that seeing my dad cry was anything new—he has always been very in touch with his emotions, the kind of guy who routinely cries during insurance commercials. But this was different. He seemed defeated and empty—a shell of the man I knew.



Drimal

The judge read out the charges and we each wept—for the uncertainty, the strangeness and the fear. It felt like a scene out of a movie, or a bad dream that might end if only I willed it hard enough. My aunt had prepared me in the car that there was a chance they might not let him leave with us, or that there might be issues with bail. I understood about bail proceedings, but I simply could not wrap my head around the idea of my father needing bail. The time came, and my father pled not guilty, and the judge set bail at \$500,000. I immediately felt like I was going to throw up--\$500,000? My parents could barely pay for me to go to school, let alone find something worth \$500,000. Luckily, we had amazing family friends in the court who were there to support us and my father, all of whom offered to help with bail. Two of my dad's friends ended up putting parts of their houses up for bail, along with our own house so that my dad could come home with us that day.

The most bizarre part of the entire day was leaving the courthouse. My father's attorney warned us that there was a hoard of reporters outside the courthouse, and my dad, who was pretty much dressed in pajamas, freaked out. He and my brother switched clothes so my dad had a nicer looking sweater on as we walked out. To this day, I have never seen anything like it. We open the door to around fifteen reporters flashing cameras with bright lights and screaming questions at us. My mom and I stood closely by my dad while the reporters followed us down the street.

Once we finally lost the hoard of flashing lights and screams, we realized we were close to a restaurant we used to frequent back when we lived in the city, we call it The Thai Restaurant in our family. Looking at each other, we realized just how hungry we were, and slipped in for dinner.

Drimal

A tradition was born.

We sat together in this normal place, on very abnormal circumstances, and just took the time to be a family. This was the first time I was able to really see my dad and talk to him after watching him in court, and it felt so wonderful to be sitting next to him eating at my favorite place. He made jokes and we talked about anything but what had happened that day—it was as if it had all been pretend, and we were allowed to be a family again and just forget.

I know it might be odd for some people to understand, but from the moment I heard my father was arrested I began my career path as a victim of white-collar crime. In my own narrative, the perpetrator was the government and the FBI, not my father. While I appreciate the nuances of insider trading, and the indirect effect theorists assert it has upon our market, I never felt as though my father had acted in an immoral way. I was angry with my dad for trusting the wrong people, and for being so stupid. To this day I believe he did not understand what he was doing. One of my dad's best traits as a man is his ability to trust others and his unwavering loyalty. It is what makes him so kind and accessible, but it is what ultimately led him into a situation where he made bad decisions.

My dad was accused of insider trading, which means he traded on information that had come from a non-public source. In insider trading law, it does not matter if you do not know the information is insider, because it should be reasonably assumed to be so. My father was four people down from the “insider leak,” meaning a lawyer at a company told someone, who told someone, who told my dad's friend, who told my dad. Under the law, the distance from the “tippee” does not matter, and he is equally at fault as the second

Drimal

person in line. Insider trading is considered illegal because it involved theoretically stolen property of companies, and hurts consumer confidence in the market. There are many arguments for the decriminalization of insider trading, as well as for a more comprehensive and clear statute. Historically, insider trading was punished with financial fines, probation, and only in extreme cases, jail time. This paper will not attempt to undermine insider-trading statutes, but rather will try to shed light on the comparatively extreme punishment of incarceration for a crime without a victim.

Growing up as the daughter of a gambling addict, I am a seasoned professional when it comes to financial instability. My father's game of choice was the stock market, and nearly five times in my living memory he won big, then quickly lost it all. We would spend a month or so enjoying the fruits of his labor, only to have it disappear, often with our savings or house along with it; monopoly money, my mom called it. He was always chasing a lifestyle of expectations left behind by his father's memory, and his brother's success. We would be well off, move to a new house, only to lose the house and downsize within a few years. As I got older, my mom informed me that this was due to my father's gambling problem. When I was born he would gamble away my mom's paycheck at the races, and by the time I was seven he had shifted to the stock market. I was aware of this flaw, but I loved him despite it. He had never let me down in the ways that matter—he always supported me, came to all of my sports competitions, and spoke to me all the time. He taught me to be a strong, confident woman, and to respect myself always. I know that my father's involvement in this case was directly connected to his gambling problem. His sentence was so high because he made (and subsequently lost) so much money on these questionable trades. The prosecutors took these huge trades as a

Drimal

sign that my dad knew his information would yield results, when in fact; my father had lost so much more in tips from this source than he earned.

My fathers gambling problem also led him to make risky trades and skirt the line. My father has always been the screw up of his family. Eight years younger than his siblings, he was the baby who was always compared to his successful older brother. My dad suffers from dyslexia and ADHD (traits he passed on to my brothers and me), making school difficult. He is an exceptionally creative person, with a gift for working with others, and would have had incredible success outside the white-collar career path. My dad would have made an excellent carpenter, builder or personal trainer, but these paths were considered inferior in the eyes of his family. Under familial pressure, my father spent his entire life trying to emulate his older brother—the dream child whose father set him up in a lucrative career. My dad studied African History at BU, and was extremely unqualified to be a trader, even though he was trading with our family money for no salary. My dad made friends through his gym, where he was a racquetball trainer, and these men helped get him a desk at a hedge fund. At Galleon, my dad was the bona fide servant—he went on coffee runs, had to cover for guys who were cheating on their wives, and even had to hold his bosses guns while they hunted. It never made much money, but he trusted the friends who gave him that position and were experts at trading to give him advice on the market. With this wide-eyed innocence, my dad began to trust the wrong people. Since my dad had no personal expertise, he made trades entirely based on advice he heard on the floor of the hedge fund. Sometimes these tips proved lucrative, other times they were disastrous.

Drimal

Stigma is an element that will be discussed thoroughly in the subsequent sections of this project. When starting this project, I theorized that white-collar crimes are more highly stigmatized as white-collar families typically come from communities where crime and imprisonment is very uncommon. I thought that the novelty and strangeness of the experience would cause more social stigma from the community than would be experienced by a family hailing from a community in which crime is more commonplace. Certain theorists would disagree with this interpretation, but as a daughter of a white collar criminal I do believe that stigma is experienced in a very intense way.

As I mentioned in my introduction, this project started out as a research and interview based endeavor. Though I altered my methods, I was so moved by the interviews I undertook that I felt as though the stories they told should have a place in my project. Like myself, each family member of an incarcerated individual, particularly a white collar criminal, undergoes formative events that construct a career model of their experience. The most common thread I found throughout my research, personal experience, and the interview process was the nearly universal condemnation of FBI practices. Though I was not home for the arrest, the story told by each of my family members exposes an extreme and traumatic experience, one that irrevocably changed everyone who was awoken on that Thursday at 4 in the morning.

*“It came pretty much out of nowhere. It was the morning before school around 4am. I awoke to the dog barking louder than he normally does. The next thing I knew, I saw a lot of lights outside and heard a lot of loud voices. I looked out my porch window and saw there were two or three cop cars in our driveway. That’s when I saw the FBI guy at our door.*

Drimal

*Mom told me to go upstairs and take the dog. So I took the dog up to my room, and then everything kind of settled after that. Mom and I were recuperating in the living room and filled me in on everyone. I was 17, a senior in high school.” (Tucker, 19)*

On the morning of November 9<sup>th</sup>, my family lay sleeping in their beds, only to be awoken by bright lights flooding into every window of the house. My little brother, Austin, who was 10 at the time, had crawled into bed with my parents after having a bad dream. The following is my mother’s account of the arrest, as outlined in a letter to a civil rights attorney regarding my father’s case and the FBI’s overstepping during the investigation:

*“My family and I are traumatized by this event and the knowledge that my privacy was so violated for so long during the investigation for this prosecution. I have very disturbing recurring dreams, especially of my home being invaded, and am suffering other physical ill effects for which I am being treated. Just looking out my window in the morning when I wake up, or am otherwise in bed, reminds me of that arrest and violations of my privacy every day and I have lost confidence in my right to privacy and do not feel safe. My father was so shaken afterwards that I had to send him away just before Christmas.*

*When the agents invaded my home at that early hour, our 10 year old was asleep with us in our bedroom, my 86 year old father, who has a heart condition, was in his room, and my 17 year old son, who was just recovering from a long struggle with severe anxiety, stemming from his*

*struggles with learning differences, was asleep in his room. My husband and I were awakened by the harsh lights coming into our bedroom window from outside. When we looked out of the bedside windows facing the back of the house, we were blinded by the numerous lights as the bullhorn announced that it was the FBI. As I hurried out of my room to open the front door, while my husband began to dress, halogen lights were continually pointed into my eyes through the windows that line the path out of my room and down the short hallway leading to the stairs. As I descended they continued to point lights directly into my eyes through a long two-story window along the stairs, blinding me and making it very hazardous and difficult for me to see the steps as I hurried down to the front door, and on which they were impatiently banging as they hollered.*

*We have two dogs, a German shepherd and a Staffordshire terrier. Had they acted aggressively to the onslaught, they may have been shot. Nevertheless, I opened the door without hesitation, given the overwhelming show of impatience and force. As soon as I opened the door, numerous agents filed into the house and several of them went immediately upstairs where my bedroom and children's bedrooms are located, not asking permission to enter, or otherwise announcing their intentions, or requesting that my husband come downstairs in order to be arrested. I wondered if they were going to search the house, or take our files, or our personal computers, not knowing what to expect, since so many of them streamed inside. As one my dogs came down downstairs in*

Drimal

*response to the intrusion, agents were spreading around my living room and kitchen area. I noticed some of them touched their weapons, eyeing the Staffordshire in particular, who was sniffing some of the agents.*

*I stood there crying silently, barely dressed and attempting to cover my chest with my arms and assured them the dogs were friendly. When asked, I told them we had no weapons in the house. I begged them not to wake my boys up or my father who was in his bedroom downstairs and has high blood pressure and a heart condition. I was worried my 17 year old son, if woken abruptly at this time of night, would become overly upset and possibly be hurt by the agents. Although he had become aware that the FBI had threatened to arrest his father earlier that week and he had received some peremptory counseling at school as a result of the events that occurred during the weekend with the FBI, I worried this would undermine all the progress he made the past year. We had not informed my youngest son, or my daughter, a student at Boston college, in order to spare them undue worry as long as possible.”*

While I was not there for the actual arrest, this narrative is so ingrained in my consciousness that I feel included in this experience. Whenever I go to my parents’ home, I feel the tension of that invasion. I see the way it affected my mother, father and brothers and I feel that violation as if I had experienced it first hand.

*“Well, when I first realized my husband was probably getting in trouble was when the FBI came and told him they’d been listening in on his*



Drimal

*conversations for a couple of years. My whole world changed. I felt I couldn't even talk in my house. When he was arrested a few days later in the early hours I just felt unsafe, I'm still not feeling safe. A lot of bad memories. It's caused me to have a lot of really bad dreaming. It brought up a lot of bad feelings from when my father was away, and other bad feelings related to traumatic experiences I've had. Kind of like, reared their ugly heads and made me feel ill." (Arlene, 56)*

The following is an account by a woman, Michelle, whose father was arrested for his involvement in a political corruption scandal. She was an adult at the time, working as a DA in the North Eastern United States. Prior to our meeting, I expected there to be commonalities between our experiences, but due to her father's status as a law enforcement official, I expected there to be a higher level of respect. Michelle's father has since finished his prison sentence, but she was kind enough to share her story as the daughter of a white-collar criminal.

Interviewer: How did the FBI act on the day of the arrest?

*"Um, badly. So we knew it was going to happen, we had been in touch with the attorney's—and my father was going to surrender—I mean, Jesus Christ. So, I remember one morning, and it was during the week, probably around 7:00, them banging and banging on the door. And I remember my father running into the shower, because he didn't want to be taken out because there was a Herald Reporter waiting on the front porch. So. I had some choice words, I'm sure I had F-bombs. But I was nervous because*

## Drimal

*they were in bulletproof vests, and my poor mother was petrified. My father was taken in, and I went to work. And I think about this, I went to work because I was running a meeting in the DA's office. I ran the meeting, then I turn to the ADA and I said, Marty, um my father was arrested this morning and he was like "WHAT?! GO!" I just didn't know what to do. My mother went with family immediately to follow him to court, but that was, it was so ridiculous how that happened and to also have a Herald reporter. It's awful. The feds are horrible. They're so different than the state level. I loved being a prosecutor—love it. I feel that it is the moral compass between the feds compared with the state is just... awful." (Michelle, a 47-year-old academic)*

Michelle's experience was very similar to that of my family. But I was even more shocked to hear that the FBI entered her home in such a brazen fashion because her father was in law enforcement. From many years of watching procedural cop dramas, and from having both police officers and prosecutors in my own family, before our interview I anticipated a much different experience. I was under the impression that law enforcement officials tend to extend professional courtesy to one another, particularly in such a difficult situation as an arrest. Instead, the FBI exploited her father's crime and arrest for political gain, through such unnecessary and disrespectful acts as alerting a reporter to document his "perp walk." This man, like many white-collar criminals, was not considered a danger. He had no firearms in his house, had a long career as a civil servant, and his daughter was a district attorney living from home. He expected to be arrested, and would have immediately turned himself in if a warrant was issued for his arrest

Drimal

The question remains: why does the FBI use such extreme and unnecessary force to arrest non-violent and compliant defendants? How are these tactics tied to the politically salient nature of white-collar crimes and arrests? This project will not attempt to answer these blaring questions, but rather, bring them to light.

## **Chapter 2: Back to School: Life After the Arrest**

The most confusing part about the week following my father's arrest was going back to school. I felt I had changed so much in those few days, but I was going back to a place that had not changed one bit. After my aunt came to get me, my roommates became suspicious about the circumstances of my situation and started to ask questions. Erika, my best friend and direct roommate, was the only one who knew—but being the loyal friend she is, she would not treat my situation as if it were a piece of salacious gossip. Despite Erika's attempt to keep my dad's arrest private, the Internet helped to fill in the blanks for the rest of my concerned roommates.

At what point does true concern turn into a desire to know a juicy piece of gossip? I cannot comment on the exact moment that this transformation occurs, but I can say that it took the form of gossip for most of the girls in my “eight-man.” Within hours, my phone was buzzing with text messages of condolences. I knew the girls would be talking in the apartment in my absence, and that knowledge made me extremely uncomfortable. I would say that coming back to school with everyone knowing one side of my dirty laundry was the worst part of my transition.

The worst part about my roommates hearing the news without my consent was the stigma. I felt powerless in the situation because I was not able to control the way in which my friends heard about my dad. These were girls with whom I was close, but who had never met my family or known me outside of the social context of Boston College. They knew some of the more superficial or surface aspects of my identity—that I am loud, outgoing, a bit messy, unfiltered and nerdy. They did not know much about the ways in

Drimal

which my family is intimately tied into my personal identity. It was so important to me that I be able to explain the circumstances surrounding the arrest to my friends, because it was so vital that they not demonize my father by accepting the media's portrayal as fact. If they were thinking my father was a crook or had done what the FBI and media said he did, that they were judging a huge part of my life and my person. My dad raised me for the first eight years of my life, and so much of what I like about myself I see in him; his outgoing personality, his looks, his morality, his sense of humor and his ability to love.

For this reason, I felt a burning desire to defend my father at all costs. If people could not know my dad, I would let them know what an amazing man he was. I think my instinct to defend my father or clear his name is intimately connected with my conception of my family and myself as victims. My father's best friend, a man who I have hugged, seen regularly and known my entire life (he bought me one of my first stuffed animals) was caught by the FBI doing some illegal trades. Instead of being arrested, he told the FBI that he could get them my dad's bosses "no problem" through my dad. He then went on what is called a fishing expedition to catch my dad saying or doing something with a trade that could be deemed illegal. Listening to the wire recordings taken by this man, it is so obvious that he is reading from a script and trying to ask leading questions to get my dad to admit to some sort of illegal activity. Half the time, my dad is barely paying attention and just blindly grunting assent. These recordings were deemed significant enough to merit a wiretap, which started with my father's phone and was extended all the way to the owner of my father's hedge fund.

My dad trusted the wrong people, had the least substantial finances, and was too ignorant to know what was really going on. Instead of asking 'why,' he blindly followed the men

Drimal

that brought him in their fold, as if he felt he was undeserving of their advice. As I mentioned earlier, my father was unqualified to be trading, and felt that those around him were of expert status, and often naively followed their advice. Two years later, the FBI approached my dad saying they had all this evidence against him, and asked him to wear a wire on his other boss. My dad, being the honorable and loyal man he is, refused. In doing so, he set up the inevitability of his own arrest. I believe my father's refusal to cooperate was intimately tied to his loyalty as a friend, rather than his fear of becoming a "snitch." He could not imagine exploiting his friend for his own benefit, and could never live with himself if he was responsible for ruining someone's life the way his was ruined. This type of loyalty is what made him more vulnerable to following the lead of other wrongdoers. This is less a function of his ties to his work community, but rather the friendships he valued and believed to be true.

We think that much of the FBI's extreme treatment of my father's case has to do with the politically salient nature of the crime. Wall Street is not particularly popular, and it seems the average American does not have the financial wherewithal to discern the difference between an unemployed personal day trader and Bernie Madoff. I believe that the whole abstract nature of the financial enterprise, particularly of late, leads many laymen to suspect people at all levels of some sort of wrong doing. People are very suspicious of all levels of the financial enterprise, and when an arrest is issued, many jump to the assumption of intentional wrongdoing and hyper-criminality that is associated with figures like Madoff. On top of it, I believe that Dave Slain, the man who wore a wire on my dad, told the FBI that he would be a sure thing, and that my dad would make their case. When that fell through, I think it rubbed many a gun-totting agent the wrong way,

Drimal

which is why he received so little leniency considering how far down the “tipping line” he was.

When I arrived at BC, my friends surprised me with a dinner ordered from my favorite place. This was very touching, particularly as my mom had told me that there was a big chance I would not be able to go back to BC because the SEC might freeze all of our assets any day. Not a week earlier I had been on the phone begging my parents to let me go to LSE for a year, and now I did not know if I would be returning to BC come January.

I knew my dad was an idiot, but it felt like the FBI was trying to punish *me* for my father’s stupidity. The idea of my father in jail was crazy enough without being told that we will lose our house, all of our belongings, and my ability to finish my education with my friends. It was not fair. Why me? Why us? Who else has to deal with this type of stress and ambiguity? I felt isolated, angry and victimized. These emotions spiraled into extreme anxiety—I would wake up in the morning feeling like I could not breathe, or feeling complete apathy towards life. Some days I did not have the strength or will to force myself out of bed to shower, and I had absolutely no desire to go out and pretend like I was normal, as if I was the same Alex I was on Halloween. Some days I could get into the shower, but then I would completely breakdown and cry on the floor.

While my roommates were initially understanding and supportive of my situation, their outward kindness and patience for my sadness dwindled within a month. Most of the girls felt awkward asking about my dad, or even talking about it, so we just did not speak about it. It was often the elephant in the room, and I realize that most of my friends

Drimal

probably did not understand how to react to my emotions. It went from caring to mere tolerance. I was no longer the fun, crazy friend with whom they had wanted to live. I quickly became a boring bum who had to worry about things like money and the future. "Lame."

In many ways, my family was victimized by our experience, and continues to be victimized by my father's incarceration. However, upon reflection, I had initially constructed a much larger and more personal narrative of victimization. Suddenly, I had no money and could not even consider going on spring break or spending \$30 on a ticket to a party. I could not go shopping with my friends, could not get my nails done, and in many ways, I felt like I could not relate to them. While my reality was that I could not spend money on anything but the essentials, I felt the need to separate myself from wealthy activities. Had I wanted to, I could have continued to go places with my wealthy friends and put on a façade, but I felt an aversion to my former life. I was jealous that my friends were able to buy a dress on a whim, that they could afford to go to every party or go out every night. I wanted to live a life with no responsibilities or worries. I was jealous that they could afford to get lower grades, because their parents would help them get a job after school, or at least support them until they got on their feet.

I was both jealous and judgmental. I wanted so badly to live with such freedom and carelessness, but I knew that my grades would be the only thing I had to create my foundation for my future. When my focus shifted away from my social life and towards my academic success, I realized that there was very little I had in common with most of my friends. I wanted to get all A's, and those were not the priorities of my friends. As much as they pushed away from me, I had pushed away from them. In the largely social



Drimal

context of Boston College, social commonalities and linkages most often create friendships. Once those linkages are severed or altered, it becomes difficult to maintain relationships in a new context. I was no longer willing to “play my part” as my character had evolved beyond that role.

I look back to that Halloween weekend—the last collegiate social event I attended before my father was arrested—with such longing and nostalgia. In just one week’s time my entire foundation was rocked, and I had to rebuild around my new reality. I was happy, carefree and a little reckless. The biggest issue in my life at that point was that I had to be Luigi for one of the nights of Halloween weekend because one of my roommates abandoned another who was planning to be Mario. My awareness of this shift really came out into the open in the days and weeks following the arrest.

Coming back from home, I immediately felt different and isolated. I admit that I was culpable for my own isolation, but it still hurt to know that my friendships could fade away because I was having a personal crisis. That previous summer, I had ended a three-year relationship with my high school sweetheart. Peter was the nicest guy I had ever known, and in the time we dated he became my best friend and his family was my surrogate family. I went into my sophomore year free and unencumbered by a relationship, and was excited to explore myself as an individual rather than part of a pair. I am not trying to convey an image of myself as some philandering party girl over indulging in the infamous BC hookup culture, but I wanted to experience life outside of my relationship. The worst thing I did during my three months of happy single-dom was kiss a boy on Halloween on the dance floor—these sort of random interactions are

Drimal

extremely normalized by my peers, but as a perpetually involved person, I never dabbled in such risqué nonsense.

When my dad was arrested, one of my biggest concerns was that I would rekindle a relationship with Peter in order to feel safe or cared for. Peter was like family, and breaking things off with him was one of the most difficult things I have ever had to do. I knew in my head that getting back with Peter would be a comfort to me, but I did not want to move backwards, and forced myself to remember the reasons why I ended things. We were at the point where he had transferred to BC to be with me, he was about to go abroad, then I would go abroad, then he would graduate, then I would graduate, then we would move in together. I felt as though I was on a speeding train and if I did not jump off now, I never would.

I made sure to avoid Peter, which became easier as the semester went on and finals came around. Peter was going abroad in January, and once that came it would be easy. Had Peter stayed at BC that semester, we would have gotten back together and my life would be very different right now. I believe that avoiding Peter was a positive move on my part, but ultimately my desire to fill the void left by Peter and widened by my father's arrest came out.

My dad had made me promise that I would not let this derail my life; that I would not turn to alcohol to numb the pain, but try to exercise when I felt overwhelmed or anxious. From the day of my dad's arrest, I ran everyday until Christmas. Even on the days where the depression felt like it would consume me, I forced myself to get out of bed and go for a jog. Exercise turned into my catharsis, and I credit this promise to keeping my head on

Drimal

straight during the most difficult of days. I began to miss Peter, and had thoughts about rekindling things with him. But I began to realize that this desire was not about Peter, but about me. I wanted to feel the same way I did when I was with Peter—happy, carefree and hopeful about the future. I wanted to revert to my teenage splendor and happiness, and feel the way I did before my dad was arrested. So much of my experience has been trying to analyze and understand these random desires that have popped up. I realize now that so much of what I did that first year was a direct response to my dad's arrest. I was transitioning to the new role into which I had been thrust, and I would often try to reach out and preserve aspects of my old life, even in small ways.

I was needy, emotional and vulnerable, and I met this very nice, but completely not my type, guy. Tom was 6'6", nerdy, awkward, and incredibly safe. It was obvious that he had little experience with girls, and that he was completely infatuated with me. Though I regret to say it, I took advantage of this kindness, and formed a relationship with Tom. I was very upfront about what I was going through, and he was more than willing to be my emotional crutch. Tom helped me through my grieving period, by being a sort of temporary boyfriend. It was so great to feel loved by someone, even if I could not love him back. Our relationship lasted until the spring, when I began to realize just what I had been doing. I think this realization came once I began to heal, and accept my dad's future imprisonment and legal situation. I overcame the initial shock, and finally accepted what my life had become—and I no longer needed the support of an emotional crutch. It was cruel, but I believe I was fair to Tom—I told him about my emotional state and the fresh wounds of the trauma, but he decided to pursue something more. I do not believe I was

Drimal

consciously “using” Tom, but I acknowledge that the emotional turmoil I was experiencing had changed me.

The stigma involved with letting one’s boss, professors, or teachers know that you cannot go to work or school because your father is surrendering to prison is very intense. The telling of my family’s sadness has become very normalized for me (to the point where I am writing my senior thesis on the topic), but for other members of my family this was not the case. My brother Tucker was 17 and in his senior year of high school when my father was arrested, and he was not afforded the same anonymity as me, considering I was in a college with an undergraduate population as large as my entire town. Since my father’s arrest, I found that being blunt about the situation was the best way to navigate through school. No one was going to penalize me for going to support my dad in court, or judge me for being emotional when he was sentenced. My academic experience throughout my father’s legal situation was wholly positive—I received outward support from some otherwise cold professors, and was given full administrative support from both BC and my abroad institution.

For my 10-year-old brother, going back to school the day after my dad was arrested was more trying than it ever should have been. Austin did not really understand what happened with my dad, just that he was in trouble but that “everything would be fine and it would go away.” The next day, he goes to school only to have a girl in his class brandish the New York Post cover story with my dad’s mug shot plastered on the cover. I was home when we heard about this, and were naturally disgusted by this 10-year-old’s actions, but mostly by her parents’ choice to inform her and essentially enable her bullying of my baby brother. My mother was too devastated to call these strangers about

Drimal

their indiscretion, and my dad was too embarrassed to face the judgment. It was Tucker, 17 at the time, who made a move. The girls' older sister was in his class, and he told her about what her sister had done and how inappropriate it was. This was the first instance of Tucker having to take on my father's role as parent, something that has become a regular occurrence in our home.

The first time Tucker had to go back to school:

*“Um. Just kind of still numb. I wouldn't say numb but shocked. I went to school the morning he was arrested because I remember seeing my friends and knowing none of them knew. My girlfriend kind of knew what was going on because I told her. She reacted like anything else that someone is going through in their life—not really sure how to react towards the person who is going through it. That was probably the hardest part—the people around me adapting to the experience. I didn't really want people knowing very much. But living in Weston, everyone knew. You kind of turn on this questionnaire mentality—people asked about what was going on, they acted like they wanted to hear all the details but in reality they just wanted to hear “oh, everything's alright.” When someone goes through a crisis like that they tend to vent, I personally didn't know how to answer with anything other than the truth.*

*I wasn't really embarrassed in any form. In my particular situation I wasn't really too embarrassed, I was too shocked by the whole experience to care all too much about normal situations. I know my dad and I knew*

*any opinion someone would acquire due to this thing would be skewed. I guess there was a bit of anger when parents would give me the interpretation of the matter. People would be like, “Your dad’s a good guy and I’m sorry that this is going on.” It made me angry because that was the last thing I wanted to talk about, and people who I wasn’t close with brought it upon themselves to converse about the whole thing. The transition between everyday life and now this kind of unknown territory was the hardest part because, still to this day I really don’t remember what it’s like to live without this hanging over my head. It completely changed everything. To be honest I really don’t remember it because I mentally blocked it all out. This was a hard time because it was my senior year, and I was kind of really just trying to have a good time and look forward to next year and make the most of my time. I guess I kind of took myself out of the family and submerged myself in school and athletics and my friends. I wanted to ignore or forget what was going on. Every time you would think about it or ask yourself about it, you couldn’t help but feel like it was made up. Dad was there for the whole two years, so it was hard to have the whole thing register because he was there, he wasn’t in jail. The whole thought of dad going to jail seemed fake—not even fake but made up in your head. Like a dream. Like did I make this up in my head? Is this really happening? It was hard to find the energy to really be happy in school, and with everything around you. I put on this act—you become two different people in a sense. You put on a blank expression—you act*

*like everything's all right. I remember breaking up with my girlfriend afterwards because she couldn't handle everything. I think it was both the way I was acting or how it made me feel and what it made me become, and also that she really couldn't handle it. She came from this perfect typical Weston family, and her parents were embarrassed that their daughter was dating me. It was shameful to her. She never wanted to go to my house, she felt weird around my family. She felt weird around me—it was like all the time we were together didn't matter. She couldn't handle it. When you're dealing with pain and chaos, you really lose the ability to open up or feel. I was incapable of being with someone. It's uncharted territory. It's not like cancer or a dead grandparent. It's something that kids from our area are not conditioned to deal with. Never in our lives had we ever had a peer go through this, and this is one of the hardest parts. If we lived in an area where mobsters exist or prison is more normal and accepted and your dad's friends served time. People wonder what are your true values or qualities, if your father was cheating in a sense. You become a bit of a social outcast. It's pretty hard for one to deal with the whole thing without having distractions. I was drinking a lot, partying a lot, trying to forget and be free. You make the most of the situation and overtime you get to deal with it in the best way possible. Your friends really don't, they think you don't want to talk about it because you don't, but at the same time you would like them to. You want to know that they care enough to ask, but you don't want to talk about it.”*

Drimal

Tucker and I dealt with the experience in almost opposite ways. He became hyper social and threw himself into his friends, whereas I became more withdrawn. This is probably a result of our personalities, our relative proximity to the crisis, and our ages. Tucker was living at home; he had absolutely no escape from the constant reminder of my father's depression and the inevitable future of jail time hanging over his head. At BC, there were days where I could pretend everything was normal to the point that I would forget. In many ways, I believe that being separated from the crisis made me more pensive about it. I would feel guilty to indulge in moments of happiness or frivolity. In many ways I punished myself for being away from my family, and made sure to remind myself of what was going on at home in order to maintain my connection with the crisis. In contrast, Tucker went out of his way to forget.

My mother has to function in a professional world despite her grief, and has to deal with notoriety in some unwanted areas.

*“I think that’s a big concern of mine—that I have an employer who knows my situation. But where I work, nobody really knows and I kind of feel like I have to suffer silently. Sometimes I wish people knew because it might explain me more. When I first started my job, when anybody would enter my presence without me knowing, I used to be startled really easily and I think people thought I was a nervous Nelly. But it was really the result of the night the FBI came into the house, I couldn’t explain it. I told one guy who works next to me, he hears the calls I have to make. And I just feel better for someone to know, not to feel sorry for me, but just to understand. I sit on the train; I don’t really talk to people. But a couple of*



Drimal

*times I've cried on the train. It was just tears coming down. They all probably think somebody died or I'm divorced. I never really like told anyone... you know at the airport how people talk to you, and I just feel like those are usually times that you meet strangers. But I'm not like this lonely soul searching for solace. Like, years ago when I was separated from Daddy I felt like I had to tell everyone. This is more like, I don't want people to think that I'm coming on to them or that I'm available or.... And uh, I don't know. It's kind of, going into the Market in my town, people know. And it's awkward for them."*

My mom has to carry the burden of role change and responsibility. She went from being a stay at home mom, to being a single working parent in a very short period of time. She does not have the luxury of calling her boss and telling him she's having a bad day. Regardless of how she feels, she has to be an adult and a parent, and get out of bed every morning to support her son. When my dad was arrested, my mom was beginning research on a book about the Cuban Revolution, a long time project that was a dream of hers. Everything she had in her life had to be forgotten, and she had to find work and still take care of the house.

My mom was able to keep everything together via extreme denial and hopefulness. She maintained an outwardly positive outlook on every issue, even when the worst seemed evident. At first she said the lawyers would have the charges dropped, then it was FBI oversight that would get the wiretaps expunged. Later it was my dad would get house arrest, then he would only get a few years. Now she is writing his appeal after no civil rights attorneys would take our case, hoping above hope that something positive will

Drimal

come out of it. When we went to visit my dad on Easter, all she could talk about was how he could come home with us in a few months. As much as I know these sorts of ideas are a form of self-preservation, I quickly began to act out against them. For the first year I was on board with my mom's positivity, unable to really come to terms with the clear reality in front of us.

While at school there were moments where I would revel in the anonymity that a large university like Boston College could provide. I would spend days where I would pretend to be privileged, pretend to be normal, or pretend that nothing was wrong. Throughout these days of pretending, I never really 'forgot' nor was I able to morph back into my old role. It never felt honest, and underneath the farce was the 'real' Alex.

To this day I have many friends who have no idea about my dad. These relationships are both limiting and liberating—limiting in the sense that there are people in my life who do not really know or understand me, and liberating because I have the ability to be “normal” and not have the specter of my father's incarceration looming over every topic. Most of these people are new friends with whom I am only superficially close, and old friends with whom I have lost consistent touch. Initially, being around my old friends who had no idea was comforting, because I was able to play my old role without anyone questioning its validity or my new traits. Now I have come to the point where those interactions feels artificial and stressful—I have fully embraced my new role or persona, and the idea of pretending to be the same person I was at 19 is tiresome and unsatisfying.

Drimal

### **Chapter 3: The In-Between**

Between my father's arrest in November of 2009 and his prison sentence beginning on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 there were two years of waiting, hopefulness, dread, and depression.

The first hearing came quickly, and was a completely different procedure than the arraignment. My aunt drove me down; this time I had the opportunity to plan ahead instead of being woken in the early morning. I felt more prepared for what was going to happen, and this preparedness gave me more confidence. We ended up arriving in the court over an hour before the hearing was scheduled to begin, because when my dad gets nervous he needs to get somewhere overly early. So we sat in the courthouse's cafeteria, eating bad bagels in the city where bad bagels are sinful, and waiting for the clock to move.

After an hour we were finally led to the courtroom, where we awkwardly waited outside with some of the other codefendants. No one was allowed to talk because it might look conspiratorial, so we all looked at our feet like one would do when surrounded by strangers on a crowded subway car. When the doors were unlocked, we sat in the front row right behind my dad, close enough to touch him. Being separated from him still gave me anxiety, and I had flashes of images from his arraignment—seeing him in handcuffs, crying, and the grief. The judge finally got to his seat, he was thin faced and thick browed with a no-nonsense swagger about him. He seemed bored to be there, and responded with angry retorts to each side's requests, giving an illusion of bipartisanship. From start to finish the first hearing was about 15 minutes, and dealt with the time line and other

Drimal

procedural elements. We walked out as a family past the reporters outside and had some Thai food for lunch.

With each hearing came more confidence, as if I had gradually built up a tolerance for seeing my dad sit in the defendants' chair. Gradually, there were fewer and fewer families in the court, until by the fifth hearing when we were the only family in attendance. The reporter presence, too, dwindled, and after a few hearings we could walk to the Thai restaurant unencumbered by flashbulbs. The hearings felt less punitive, and as though we had more agency than in the arraignment because we could plan and prepare for them. We could walk in as a family and walk out as a family, and this quickly became routine and even almost normal.

The hearings were instrumental in helping me realize that I want to be a constitutional lawyer. I realized law was something that could work for me when I was interested in even the most boring elements of the hearings. Even as I experienced extraordinary fear and grief, I sat and observed the arguments, trying to appreciate the small nuances of each word and gesture. I soon recognized that I wanted to be on the other side of the courtroom. I wanted to understand why the judge decided to uphold the wiretaps and how judicial decisions are weighed in situations where there is no true legal precedent. This desire to better understand my own situation formed the focus of my undergraduate honors thesis, and hopefully will help lay the groundwork for future study of this experience.

Drimal

## **The Hearings**

Though I did not want to go abroad after my father's arrest, my parents aggressively encouraged me to continue with my plans as if everything was same. Instead of expensive LSE for a year, I opted to go to Berlin for the spring semester of my junior year. I studied through NYU both because it was more affordable than the BC programs, and because I liked the idea of being in an entirely new environment.

When I went to Germany I was in a new school with all new people, none of whom knew anything about my family. This was my first opportunity to fully fall into my new character without external pressure to conform to my old. I made great friends very quickly, and was really happy with the new stage I could occupy outside of the Weston or Boston College context.

Then my home life came crashing down. After months of silent deliberating, my father's judge called for a hearing to review FBI misconduct in the wiretaps of my family. At this point I had been in Berlin for a month, and was starting to get used to life without the constant news of my father's case. Frankly, I had begun to enjoy the lack of progress—both negative and positive—and was taking advantage of my chance to live in the present instead of constantly obsessing about the dark and frightening future.

The entire case against my dad was produced through wiretaps on his and his co-defendants' cell phones. My dad was the first tap ordered, and he was thus instrumental in the government's case against all other defendants. This was the first time that wiretapping and other organized crime techniques were used against white-collar criminals. These tactics have been used against mafia and organized crime organizations

Drimal

for years, as is memorialized in classic gangster movies like *Goodfellas*. That being said, many of the tactics are built for mass conspiracy and used against career criminal types. The taps were only issued against my father and his business discussions, but obviously everyone in my family calls my father and those conversations were also recorded, The issue was that the FBI made no effort to minimize the non-relevant taps, meaning they knew conversations were irrelevant to their investigation and instead of hanging up after the 30 seconds to which they are legally limited, they continued recording sometimes as long as 10 minutes. No one in my family was being investigated, yet the taps recorded many conversations outside of legal limits.

At first, the government did not release all of the taps to the attorneys, but released them in bulk to the attorneys of a tangentially related case. That is when we found out something was wrong. It started when one of my father's codefendants (who had much more money and thus a massive legal team working on finding exculpatory evidence on the taps) came up to him and said he heard a "crazy fight" between him and me. I knew exactly what he was talking about, because even in my rebellious teenage years, I rarely fought with my parents. The fight in question was the worst I have ever had with either of my parents, and it is a big point of shame to this day. I said horrible, immature and hateful things to my dad, things I would do anything to take back. He had told me I could never visit my boyfriend who was away at college in Michigan, and that I should break up with him before he dumped me because "college boys are dogs." Five years later, I see where he was coming from—he was trying to get me to break up with my high school boyfriend so that I could plan my own future unencumbered. But at the time, I hated him.

Drimal

Instead of leaving this fight in the past as a distant and shameful memory, it is immortalized on an FBI recording that could one day go to public record.

After hearing about that fight, we became inquisitive. It seemed that these sorts of oversights were frequent throughout the sloppy investigation, and more and more conversations were discovered. The wiretaps were taken the fall of my senior year of high school when I was 17 years old. When I realized that the FBI had listened to fights I had with my dad, even though they knew I was 17, not a suspect, and his daughter, they continued to listen just for what seems to be voyeuristic interest. My crazy, wacky family became some form of entertainment to the agents listening along. Discussions about my brother's depression, my teenage outburst and even my parents' marital problems were listened to illegally.

With this knowledge, my father's attorney requested suppression of the wiretaps based on oversight. The judge countered that while unethical, the only recordings that could be considered illegal were those between my father and mother, as they constituted private spousal interaction. In our legal system, spousal confidentiality is held to the same legal level as that of doctor patient, priest penitent, and attorney client privilege. This decision was made by the time I left for Berlin, and within a few weeks the Judge called for a hearing on the FBI misconduct in the wiretaps. Immediately, the government threatened my dad that if he went to the hearing they would ask for ten years instead of four to five. Hopeful as my mother is, she thought this meant the government was nervous about what might happen, and was pulling a "power-play" to muscle my dad into an easy guilty plea. We opted to go to the hearing.

Drimal

With all of this going on at home it was really difficult to have my anonymity persist in Berlin. I needed to open up to my new friends and give them the opportunity to be there for me. What made telling them easier was that in the few weeks we knew each other, we had become very close. We would have dinner and drinks together almost every night, and hang out during the day or go on trips as a group. They had all heard me talk about my dad, they knew the type of person he was from my stories or anecdotes from my childhood. They had heard me open up about my dad, and my core group of friends had even met him on Skype. I gave them the standard preamble to my story—making sure they understood the context and extent of the allegations, and making sure to emphasize the goodness of my father and the way he was betrayed and set up by his closest friend.

My friends were amazing; they were sympathetic, understanding and non-judgmental. They wanted to help me in anyway they could and always made sure I was all right before a big day at home. Most of all, they protected me. They knew when each hearing was approaching, and they knew how homesick I became and would plan dinners, movies or just bombard me with attention. This was so different than the reactions I received from my roommates at BC. Where my BC friends ignored everything or felt burdened by my depressive moments, my Berlin friends were there for me no matter what. I think the big difference between my Berlin friends and my BC friends was the environment and context in which we formed our friendships. In Berlin, we bonded over intellectual intersections rather than our favorite variant of mixed drink.

My dad went to the hearing, and while the judge claimed gross misconduct on the part of the FBI, he made no legal remedy for this offense and upheld everything saying there was “a civil remedy.” This had been our last hope, and it became clear that pleading guilty



Drimal

was the smart thing to do. However, civil remedies are rarely granted in situations where the judge rejects suppression, and no attorney would take on a hopeless case. Without an attorney, hopes for a civil remedy were lost. In the end, we went to the hearing and all we earned was an extra year of time from the prosecutor.

Finally, my dad realized it was time to plead guilty. The federal court system has well over a 90 percent conviction rate, mostly because the majority of defendants opt to plead guilty instead of risk getting extra time for going to court. The federal courts are very forward with their policy that going to trial and “wasting time” is enough to add on to a defendant’s time. In the federal system, defendants must serve at least 85 percent of their time, which is in stark contrast to the state system where inmates are regularly released without serving even half of their time. In essence, federal defendants are punished for seeking a fair trial and defending themselves, and the strict nature of sentencing creates a degree of fear, limiting justice. I think the government limited justice by creating an environment of fear that impedes defendants’ from accessing their rights.

This was the most difficult part of my entire semester abroad. I missed being home and seeing my family, but being apart from them for this was horrible. I was so distraught that I spoke with the director of my program who offered to book me a flight home and arrange to finish my classes from the US. The worst part about my dad pleading was that we did not believe he was guilty. I so wanted him to defend himself in court and be able to explain certain discrepancies and convince people he was good. There were charges against him that were entirely unfounded, and some that were more difficult to explain, but I believed that it was his right to defend himself against his accusers. For example, my dad had no idea that there were lawyers involved or being paid off for tips. He had

Drimal

only worked with one guy, and stupidly trusted that his tips were good. In his plea, however, he was required to say that he knowingly paid off lawyers and that he knew the information was insider, neither of which was true. Essentially, he had to perjure himself in order to enter in his plea. My dad is an honest and honorable man, and he said the most difficult thing was standing up and lying to a courtroom like a coward.

Having my father plead guilty was a major event in my career towards becoming the daughter of a white-collar criminal. Instead of being able to say “he’s fighting the charges” or “he’s innocent” I had to explain the much more complex process of pleading guilty. Instead of having a few people assume his innocence, his guilt was taken as truth because he reinforced the validity of the accusations. Suddenly, my identity shifted. Instead of fighting this great evil that was stacked against us, I realized that justice could not prevail and that my father would definitely go to prison. The small ounce of hope that had kept me afloat throughout the case was choked out, and replaced by dread. This was going to happen on August 31<sup>st</sup>.

In an odd way, this closure was nice. I had spent over a year and a half waiting day-by-day for any sort of development, gradually losing hope over time. This plea meant that until August 31<sup>st</sup> for his sentencing, nothing new would happen. We could just act normal for the next few months and try to ignore the impending doom. I finally had an answer, and though it was not what I wanted, it was still an answer—an end.

### **Counseling:**

Things were very scary at first, and I took advantage of BC’s counseling services to talk about my dad. It was a great catharsis to sit in a room and tell a stranger absolutely

Drimal

everything about my dad and about the case without having to keep up a false strength or emotional distance. The woman I met with, who I later learned was a graduate student, could not have been much older than 22. She told me I was allowed to feel vulnerable and that I was allowed to have moments of weakness, two pieces of very helpful advice. I usually would try to uphold a strong façade to my friends and even to myself, but being told that my sadness and emotions were allowed. Inside I was destroyed by what was happening, but my brain was telling me that I was being ridiculous—my dad was not dying, and thus my grief made no sense. Embracing my emotions as legitimate was one of the most important things I did with regards to my own healing.

After a few visits, I felt like we did not have anything else to talk about. I was going to continue hurting over my dad, and nothing this woman told me was going to change that. I felt like I had learned all I could from this woman, and I preferred crying alone or dealing with my anxiety in other ways.

I did not get professional help again until I was abroad in Germany. Towards the end of my semester it became clear that my dad would have to plead guilty or else go to court with odds heavily stacked against him. At that point, the Feds were throwing around numbers as high as eight years, which could go as high as ten if we were to lose in the putative federal court system. My dad, the experienced gambler, played it safe for the first time in his life—instead of throwing away extra years in what would be a farcical trial, he opted for the safer path of pleading out.

This led to a shift in my personal definition, and was a major step in my “career” that I needed to talk through with a professional. For each of the major events in my father’s

Drimal

legal saga, and my own career model as the daughter of a white-collar criminal, I sought professional guidance. In Germany, this stress was compounded by the fact that I was isolated from my family at a time when I so needed to be with them. I spoke with the doctor about my guilt at being away, my need to hide my emotions from my dad to keep him strong and stop him from feeling guilty, and my fear at what incarceration would really mean. It was helpful in that I had a formal outlet to speak about my dad, but it was also frustrating, as I had to start from the beginning and explain everything to this new person to help him understand. As much as it was frustrating, this catharsis was necessary as it freed me from the pain of compartmentalizing my life.

**Sentencing:**

The sentencing date of August 31<sup>st</sup> altered the mood of the entire summer. This was a time of enormous pressure in my life—I had to work 60 hours a week as a waitress to help earn money, I had to study for the LSATs in October, I had to prepare for senior year and all of its pressures. On top of all of my responsibilities, I felt a strong need to be at home with my dad as much as possible to enjoy the last months I would have with him around. The summer was winding down, and the dreaded day—the day that seemed so long away when it was set in April—finally arrived.

I had not been to court since before I left for Berlin, and I was nervous to be back in the room and feel those feelings once again. For the sentencing I had to write a letter on my dad's behalf, which was a project I began right after he was arrested in 2009. Writing that letter was one of the most difficult and emotional tasks I have ever performed, and it

Drimal

never felt perfect—how could I distill my father down to two pages? I have attached the letter below.

*August 11, 2011*

*To the Honorable Judge Sullivan,*

*I am writing to tell you a little something about my father, Craig Drimal. I learned of my father's arrest whilst in my dorm at Boston College. That Thursday morning, my Aunt Liz came into my dorm room at 8 AM and then my world fell apart. Ever since my father's arrest, my life has changed dramatically. I immediately wanted to move back home and postpone my education. My father would not hear a word of it; he told me the last thing that he wanted was for me to derail all of my hard work on account of him.*

*My father has always been my rock—early in life, he took care of me while my mother worked, and ever since we have shared a special bond. Growing up, I was your quintessential Tom Boy, and a major Daddy's girl. My brother, Tucker, and I learned to wrestle, caught crabs in our backyard creek, fished, kayaked, and learned to throw the perfect spiral. My dad never treated me differently because I was a girl, and as a result, I have grown up to be a strong and confident woman.*

*Even when my dad started working during the day, he maintained a constant and powerful presence in my young life. Whether it was sleeping in the car in Stamford so that I could perform in Cinderella when I was*

*eight, or driving up to Vermont at 3 AM so that I could make my ski race and still go to my best friend's Bar Mitzvah, my Dad always puts his agenda aside to support me. He has always made our interests his own, watching me run track in high school, coaching my peewee soccer, and coaching my brothers in Lacrosse and Football. Now that I am excelling in college, he has become enthusiastic about my experience in academia—always pushing me to excel, but never pushing too hard.*

*My Dad is the most open and emotional person I know, and has always taught me that being emotional makes you more powerful, and that it is not a sign of weakness. When I think of my Dad, I cannot help but recall long car rides singing Billy Joel together, or having swimming competitions in the backyard. Whenever I hear our song, Billy Joel's Lullaby, I cannot stop myself from welding up.*

*I have been lucky enough to have the constant support of a father who loves me, and who has always supported me in my journey throughout life. Losing my father would be the most devastating event of my life, and I fear it would undermine the development and wellbeing of my little brother. Even more, I feel that prison would change my dad, and could take away from the amazing person that I know.*

*I know my father has made mistakes, but throughout this entire ordeal, he has made sure to reinforce his tried and true morality—never take risks, always ask questions, and let everyone you love know them.*

Drimal

*My dad is my best friend in the world. Whenever anything happens in my life, I seek his advice and love. Even though I have been in Germany this spring studying, we talk every single day and I tell him everything. I have been blessed with a hands-on and loving father, and I believe that my brother, Austin, and the world in general, would greatly benefit from having him around.*

*My father is blessed with a unique ability to love the world and the people around him, and growing up, he has worked tirelessly to instill this gift within me. Ever since his arrest, dad has been working at the Jewish Home in Fairfield, a home for the elderly. Every time I come home from college, my dad takes me with him to talk to the women there, go to the hair salon, and hear some incredible stories. Seeing my dad in this environment—something that is really his element—has been a great gift.*

*I want my Daddy to watch me graduate from college, and then law school; I want my Dad to see me become the woman he has raised me to be. Most of all, I want my baby brother, Austin to be able to have memories with my Dad. I want Austin to get the chance to grow into the type of man my father is—kind, compassionate, loving, friendly, and outgoing.*

*Respectfully,*

*Alexandra Villamia Drimal*

Drimal

The sentencing was incredibly tense, and we all tried to keep our emotions in check so as to not upset my dad. I wanted to uncontrollably weep, but I knew that would only agitate my dad and ran to the bathroom to splash water on my face. Entering the court was terrible. We all sat holding hands and crying, but my dad had to stand alone in front of the judge. The government has a standard sentencing matrix for insider trading that is mostly based off of the sum of illegal earnings charged. The prosecutor argued (and won) for additional charges of monetary gain against my father, by including a charge that was completely legal and happened before the wiretappings in the final count against my dad. This extra charge pushed him above a mark that would give him over five years of prison time. It happened so quickly, and it was so strange to see such a major decision made with such ease and without substantial evidence. From there, the judge spoke about “his job,” acting as if he was speaking to my father, but really playing to the reporters in the room. He made claims like “you are one of the wealthiest men in America,” “you live in Connecticut” and “you went to college” as if they were counting against my dad. First of all, my family was never even close to being one of the “wealthiest in America” and living in Connecticut by no means makes you more privileged. It was absurd.

He then went on to dismiss my father’s gambling addiction, saying that since he did not regularly go to the track or a casino he was not a real gambler. This was a major blow because we were arguing, rightly so, that the reason my father made the most money among the defendants was because of his gambling addiction. He put everything we had into his trades, a tactic that proved fruitful in a good tip, but disastrous for a bad choice. Weeks after making all the money that sent him to prison, he lost it all on an



Drimal

overleveraged trade from the same source. His losses were never discussed, and both the judge and the media operated as if we still had all of this money.

When looking at our tax returns, he said “how could you list zero income but still have \$40,000 in expenses” as if he had never heard of credit cards or debt. We were living off the equity in our home and selling jewelry, furniture and clothing to pay for food. He made no mention of the hardships we endured because that would function to humanize our situation, and would not play well into the narrative he was constructing for reporters. He mentioned my letter, saying it “touched him as a father” but then said that the massive support our community gave my father made him feel better about giving my dad more time because he would have the support system to handle prison. My dad’s history of volunteerism and community activism meant nothing, and it seemed the judge had already decided against my father from ‘go.’

When his long speech ended, he ended up giving my dad 66 months in prison, which was on the high end of what the sentencing matrix outlined. Hearing that number was crushing. 66 months beginning on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011. How long was that? How long would he be away? Where would he go? What did this really mean? There were so many questions in that moment, but the only thing I could articulate was sadness through tears. My mother and I held each other, sobbing deeply at the injustice, the fear, and the closure. It was over. The moment that had defined our lives for almost two years had come and gone, and the regret seeped in. Why hadn’t we just pled guilty back in 2009 when they were offering three years? Why did my dad refuse to wear a wire when he could have saved all of us from this grief and destruction? I tried to push regret away, and stop asking “what if?” because I knew this line of thought would destroy me.

Drimal

**Family disappoints:**

One of the most disappointing aspects of my father's arrest was the reaction of my Uncle Chuck, who is my father's older brother by eight years. Chuck is my godfather, growing up, he and his family lived only 20 minutes from our home and we spent every weekend together during my childhood winters. His daughter, Chloe, is the closest thing I have to a sister. I love him like another parent, and he has known my family and me better than most of my relatives. When my father was arrested, everything changed. Despite the fact that he lived 20 minutes south, he did not show up at my father's arraignment. Worse, he did not call in the following days. My uncle owns a lucrative oil company, and has many friends in very high places—but he could not be bothered to help my father secure competent legal advice. I could not understand why he was nowhere to be found, when every other member of my extended family shrouded us in support.

My parents raised me to believe that family is everything, and you should fight for those you love. My parents are the most kind and generous people I will ever know, and whenever they had the ability they would help anyone in need. For example, when I was in middle school my mom's younger sister went through a terrible divorce from an emotionally abusive husband. He had made her choose between him and college, and she chose him and moved across the country. When he left her, she had two children under the age of 5, no education and absolutely no resources. It was a complete "no brainer" for my parents—Titi Debbie moved in with us immediately. Her children became my siblings, and my parents helped her get a college education and treated her children like their own. In my house, fortune meant nothing if you could not help those you love.

Drimal

Perhaps this comes from my mother's Latina upbringing—but I do not really believe that, because that belief system is integral to my father's identity.

In contrast, my uncle is of a completely different mind. When I was four years old, we were living in my grandparents' house, which was the only thing keeping us off welfare. My dad was struggling, and my mom was trying to support us on a meager salary. My uncle went on a crusade to convince my grandparents to kick us out so we could stop getting a "free ride." This sort of mentality is completely at odds with my moral code—I cannot even begin to understand that line of thought. How could family care so little? My sadness quickly devolved into anger once I realized the type of person my uncle was.

So much of the stress surrounding my father's case was financial. Immediately upon his arrest we were warned that the government would seize everything, and that I would not be able to continue school. In response to this, my mother diverted the money left by my recently deceased grandmother into my Boston College account, enabling me to finish my time at BC. The loss of our house and the seizure of our possessions have yet to happen, though it has been imminent throughout the entire ordeal. I was angry with my uncle, but my anger did not stem from his refusal to help with out financial issues, but from his callous and heartless actions throughout.

My uncle owns his own company, and knew the type of financial struggle we were going through. He knew we were underwater with legal bills, had no income, and no resources. His response was to hire my dad as his personal driver. Though he is worth millions upon millions, he hired my dad at the standard price to drive him to the airport whenever he needed. The "salary" my father made from these trips—which always seemed to fall on

Drimal

Easter, Christmas Eve or one of our birthdays—amounted to just over \$2000 in a year. I was angry because he really believed that he was “saving” us by making my dad his part-time, on-call servant.

As time went on and he did not show up at any of my dad’s hearing, I could not handle it. I could not pretend to worship him like the rest of my family, and I was angry with my dad for letting his brother treat him that way. I was disillusioned by the way he acted, by the distance he created and by the submission with which my father interacted. My brothers think that my anger towards Chuck is really misplaced anger I feel towards my father, but I disagree with this diagnosis. I am not angry with my dad—anger is not an emotion I feel regularly. While I can understand their anger towards my dad, I do not blame him because I know he was just trying to help make a better life for all of us, and I know his gambling addiction led him to make compulsive and irresponsible decisions. I am not angry with my dad because since his arrest, he had worked tirelessly to improve the things about himself that made him susceptible to such grave errors. He attends Gamblers Anonymous every week, has been going to therapy to talk about his issues, and worked as a driver to try and help out. I am sad for my parents and my family, and I am disillusioned by the system that I once held in such high esteem. I am angry that my father’s brother, my godfather, was so openly ashamed of our family that he hid away in the shadows. I respect his freedom to feel angry with my father for being foolish, but it is the shame that bothers me. It bothers me that he did not value family enough to rally in support of my father, it bothers me that when he did come to my father’s sentencing, that he and his wife sat apart from us.

Drimal

While it was my uncle's belief system and personality that contributed to his distant and unsupportive approach, I would consider the disintegration of this relationship to be a result of stigma. He felt stigmatized by his association with my father, and clearly felt a strong need to publically separate himself from his black sheep sibling. Perhaps this is a result of his relative standing in society, as an extremely wealthy businessman. Instead of rallying in support, he fled. The shame created by my father then extended through my entire immediate family, making us all risky or undesirable relationships that could be severed. I wrote Chuck an email telling him how I felt, and why I was angry with him. He has never responded, and told my father that I was "dead to him." Things are still strained between Chuck and me, though I hope one day he can overcome his anger and accept me for who I am.

Drimal

## **Chapter 4: The Media**

One of the most difficult parts of my father's arrest and subsequent imprisonment was dealing with the media, and subsequent public attention paid to the case. From the moment I walked out of the courthouse after my father's arraignment and experienced being chased by reporters, I was keenly aware of the enormous involvement of the media throughout this case.

Typing my father's name into Google on the way to his arraignment, there were already dozens of news articles about his arrest. I could read what he was being charged with, who else was involved, and little tidbits such as where we lived. After the arraignment the news outlets overflowed with both inflammatory and salacious stories about my dad and his "co-conspirators." His picture was plastered across the Wall Street Journal, and his arrest made the front page of our small town newspaper. From a girl who has enjoyed relative anonymity my entire life, having my father suddenly thrust into the spotlight of public scrutiny was an incredibly difficult transition. The worst part was that the media functioned to remove my agency in disclosing my family's trauma to others. To this day you Google "Drimal" and my articles about my dad cover the screen.

Worse than the media articles themselves were the comments posted by normal people under the articles. These comment boards are where some of the most vile and hateful ideas expressed go to thrive. This is not all together uncommon—as a celebrity gossip junky, I am quite familiar with the comment board culture and its viciousness. Celebrities would talk about public scrutiny or the pain that came from self-Google-ing and I had always rolled my eyes at them—these people wanted fame, they wanted adoration, but

Drimal

they could not handle the obvious criticism that would come with their notoriety. Suddenly it was my dad and my family being trashed online.

We were not public figures, my dad did not physically harm anyone or steal from anyone, and we were not the wealthy thieves portrayed by the FBI. But suddenly we were ‘news’ and the vultures descended. It began with the expected assumptions of his guilt and our wealth—I was ready to read that. It was when these assumptions devolved into gross hatred and violent rhetoric that I broke down.

All of the quotes below were taken from the public message boards of the Wall Street Journal, Reuters, Bloomberg, BusinessWeek, Forbes and Market Watch. The names are those used on each site, and the ‘likes’ refer to the number of people who agreed with the post.

Reading the blog posts and comments was so difficult because to me it represented the way the public looked at my father and my family. People assumed we were rich, entitled jerks, who stole without any care and drove around in expensive cars. People assumed my mom was a trophy wife or a gold digger and that my dad was a crook. Reading these posts, I wanted so badly to take everyone on and challenge their perceptions of my dad. I wanted to retort, and wanted to make them feel as badly as they had made me feel. I wanted to defend my father’s honor and get “the real” story out there. It became clear to me that this was how the world viewed my family and me. Surrounded by friends and family in a caring environment like BC, I only received sympathy for my plight, but here were hundreds of vicious posters trolling the Internet calling for my rape or my family’s complete disenfranchisement.

Drimal

I felt stigmatized and upset enough without the Internet presence, but once I realized what exactly people were saying I became even more depressed. I would sit in my room read these terrible comments and cry. Cry because I never asked to be a part of this, cry because no matter what the truth was or what type of man my father is, these strangers would continue to hate him. These comments even made me question the sincerity of my friends and greater community—if so many people had no problem vilifying my father for trading on tips that turned out to be insider, were any of my friends' reactions sincere? Did those around me secretly condemn my father and judge me by association?

Many people took to attacking my mother's character and innocence, criticizing her looks, her morals. There were obviously posts about my dad that were in bad taste (the worst of which I posted below) calling for him to be sodomized in prison. Those were to be expected. It was the criminalization of my family that really hit home. People actually believed that I deserved to suffer because my dad traded on a tip that three people before him had gotten from an inside source. While insider trading has an affect on the market and is considered a crime against "the market" it is not a crime that is afflicted upon any individual. While I personally believe the insider trading statute needs to be completely reworked in order to include clear lines delineating legal trades from the illegal, and needs to be universally enforced, this is not the place for my legal analysis of the validity of the statute. However, from a moral standpoint it is nearly impossible to argue that my father caused as much public harm as a rapist, a murder, an embezzler, a Ponzi schemer or a con artist. In reality, Tucker, Austin, my Mom and I were the only real identifiable victims of my father's trading.



*“I am troubled by the fact that the convict’s wife’s a former prosecutor. The convict pled guilty. And you wanna complain about a 3:45 am arrest. Huh. The convict’s wife’s got PTSD. OK. But the trouble is, the PTSD is the result of her husband’s conduct — conduct which it would seem difficult to believe she had no idea about until 3:45 on that fateful day. When a former prosecutor is in the house, I expect they will prevent or influence household members (like spouses) to refrain from felonious conduct, including insider trading. I don’t waste time wondering about whether the “feds” should have brought tea and cookies when they arrested the now-convict. I only wonder how nice the convict’s insider trading income was while the rest of America suffers in this lousy economy.”*

*“The arrogance of this family is appalling. They expect to use the system to live an extravagant life by ripping everyone off and then be protected by the system? It unfortunate that more people like them don't get caught.” (3 likes) Thomas Felker*

*“his hedge fund wife is not a hotty. he completely missed the boat on that one.”*

*“Go ahead and rally around your little white collar criminals and give them all the comfort and support you want, just leave me out it. Nobody cares about the poor crackhead’s “innocent spouse and children” do they? The only person who brought this lady down and the only one she*

*has to blame is her louse of the husband who thought he was above the law.”*

*“Typical gold-digger chick. Well, maybe she shouldn't have married the little criminal jerk in the 1st place. Nobody heard her complained when she was enjoying the wealth generated from his criminal activities...”*

*“No James, you are wrong about that: She is to blame: Being a former prosecutor, odds are very strong that she has some very bad karma that is now biting her in the butt: Everyone knows, or should by now, if they have an iota of awareness and intelligence, that police and especially prosecutors, are the worst criminals on the planet: Surely in her role as a prosecutor, she framed a number of innocent victims (it is part of their job description, if you didn't know). Bottom line here: "Karma's a female dog.”” (3 likes) John Kinnucan*

*“Not sure why this lady is complaining. We pay for everything in life. She for sure enjoyed the fruits of his illegal activities, but when it came time to answer for his actions she whines...” Alex Hand*

*“Her husband is the one to blame for her family's suffering.” (3 likes)  
Pamela Melton*

*“Then if you were so worried about your privacy, maybe you shouldn't have married a dishonest crook!” (3 likes) Gian Cossa*

Drimal

*Chip Skowron: “see you soon big guy, save the top bunk for me! can I park my Ferrari in the valet lot? Love ya!” (re: dad’s sentencing)*

*“Drimal is a common thief, don’t let the \$2000 suit fool you. The fact that he (and all of them) were making millions was not enough. I don’t begrudge anyone from making large amounts of money – legally, honestly and ethically. The greedy pigs were satisfied and had to steal more. Hopefully they will all get the Ned Beatty treatment (Deliverance) in prison. Maybe he can discuss this over the phone with his wife.”*

One post, that has since been removed, suggested that I, too, deserved to be “gang raped” for thinking I could be a lawyer and for my culpability for my father’s crimes. People posted some of the most horrible things I have ever read, without any reservations or ethical restraint. Some people even posted with what seem to be their real names. Though these comments were incredibly offensive and compounded the difficulty of an already impossible situation, they made me think, “What are the limits to these comments? What is it about the Internet that spawns such disgusting ideas, and why do mainstream media outlets allow for calls of sexual assault on their message boards?” I doubt these people would have the audacity to say those hateful and disgusting things to my face, or even voice them aloud in public, but put them behind a computer and the hate flows like water.

How could complete strangers with very little evidence or supporting knowledge make such gross leaps and assumptions? At what point do comments cross the proverbial “line” and become illegal? Certainly most of the comments I posted were unethical, and each of them hurt me enough to remember them years later.

Drimal

The Internet provides an outlet for unsubstantiated and uncensored commentary. This freedom is what makes the Internet so incredible, and this is in no way a critique or call for a limitation on these forms of expression. However, it is clear that the anonymity this modern form of communication provides can prove exploitative, and in many ways erodes the established culture of face-to-face interactions. The average person would not be able to function in society if they threw out convention and “made a scene” (Goffman, 1959) everywhere they went.

Road rage is a well known phenomenon, in which normal and well balanced people act boldly or aggressively towards other drivers because they feel the disconnect of the windshield is enough to redefine standards for interaction. I myself have been susceptible to this phenomenon. Driving from home to Boston, I find myself (a usually mild tempered and polite young woman) swinging expletives at passing drivers, tailgating and overreacting in general. I would never operate with such rudeness and malice in a face-to-face interaction, but the anonymity and the level of physical disjunction alters the standard discourse and creates a new ‘stage.’ I believe the Internet functions in a similar way. People are not held back by societal conventions that function to restrict ideas or thoughts, and no personal filter is necessary because there are no social repercussions for actions online. Just as people refrain from picking their nose in public to avoid scrutiny, but might “dig in” while in the comfort of their own home, people online feel the comfort of privacy and thus feel no need to withhold or restrict thought.

After my own experience with the hatred that can come off of the Internet, I am much more aware of the use of message boards and the types of people who frequent them. If you peruse CNN’s website, and look for any article dealing with women, homosexuality,

Drimal

race, and especially President Obama, there are awful comments underneath. Recently, the shooting of Trayvon Martin and the delayed arrest of George Zimmermann sparked a significant amount of hate-filled dialogue on both sides of the case. Message boards provide an outlet for the common man to dialogue about important issues, even if they are uninformed and in their underwear.

In today's modern age, the Internet is an unavoidable bastion for information and interaction. The freedom it provides users is one of the amazing things about it, but the 24-hour news cycle leaves space for more opinionated and inaccurate ideas to flourish. One of the reasons I experienced such negativity from my dad's case was its political saliency. It was no accident that the charges were brought when they were, right after the crisis of 2008, arresting people on Wall Street was in line with public demand. This was a great way for politically motivated people in the government to take advantage of public opinion, and encouraging unfavorable portrayals of my father and my family helped to serve the government's agenda.

The media attention and public opinion helped to foster an environment in which people were "out for blood" and my father seemed to fit the bill. Insider trading has been around for decades, but has become politically salient of late. The media helped to construct a narrative about the "Galleon Case" tying together disparate and unconnected cases through a hedge fund, making it seem as if the three separate cases were a part of some massive conspiracy of fraud and illegal activity. In a separate case, my father's boss was arrested, tried and convicted of insider trading and sentenced to 11 years in prison—the longest sentence in history for this type of crime. Before the crash of 2008, these crimes were considered less serious, and punished with more reasonable prison sentences, fines

Drimal

and probation sentences. Flash-forward, and three trades were enough to send my dad to jail for 66 months, and make him a reprehensible career criminal.

While I do not believe the relative inattention paid to insider trading by law enforcement was a positive element, I think there needs to be less extreme punishment and criminalization when considering financial crimes. We are an overly punitive society, and could benefit from a reconceptualization and reorganization of our existing incarceration and criminal justice practices. So much of why I wanted to study white-collar families stems from my own experience, but is informed by my research of incarceration in general. Incarceration is meant to punish the criminal, while simultaneously removing them from society as a protective measure. Perhaps extreme financial fines and career restrictions would provide enough punishment and even deterrence for future insider traders. I believe insider trading should remain a crime, but that the laws should be enforced in a more uniform and consistent manner. Additionally, I do not believe anyone benefits from the incarceration of insider traders, but rather it functions as a drain on federal resources, and extends the punishment well beyond the scope of the crime. Obviously, my belief on this topic must be taken as non-expert and personally biased, for it is impossible for a sociologist to fully disconnect themselves from their life experiences.

Drimal

## **Chapter 5: The Long Drive**

Depending upon the personal relationship to the inmate, the type of prison, and the vicinity of the prison to family, the experience of visitation varies greatly from person to person. In my personal experience, my father was placed in Schuylkill, Pennsylvania in a minimum-security satellite camp adjacent to a medium security corrections institution. Schuylkill is nearly 200 miles away from my family's home in Connecticut, and around 350 miles away from Boston College.

When the time came for my father to surrender to prison, I was the only one who was willing to take the long drive down to drop him off. We had a tradition from when I was little that he would always be the one to pick me up or drop me off for any big trip. Every summer for sleep away camp, vacations, and college—my dad was always there. I decided that I wanted to keep this tradition alive, and be “that person” for my dad. My mother, who had to work the next day, thought the experience would be far too emotional for her; my brother had a big midterm that day. Like many daughters of white-collar criminals, I had no prior experience with prison. I was scared, but I felt a burning desire to be with him in his final moments of freedom, and to be able to feel like a little girl—safe in my father's arms—one last time.

Driving down was one of the most surreal and oddly normal moments of my life. It was right at the beginning of what ended up being a ten-day blackout following a freak fall snowstorm that left most of Connecticut powerless. My mom kept saying that mother earth was mourning along with us, and my dad was pissed that he could not enjoy his creature comforts during his last day on the outside. I hooked up my laptop and my whole

Drimal

family lay in bed watching Seinfeld DVDs powered by our miniscule generator. Moments of laughter were punctuated by tears as we each independently realized that this would be the end of such moments.

Snowy night turned to day and the day had finally arrived. Before we got into the car that Halloween, I had to witness my father saying goodbye to the rest of my family. It felt oddly voyeuristic watching each embrace, all while I knew I would have him for several, precious hours longer. I watched my stoic mother break down; my baby brother pink-faced with no tears, tear ducts dry from a night of crying in private. It was like looking into my own future, knowing that by 2PM I would be going through the same rituals.

My father and I made jokes about my mom, talked about my thesis for a while, argued about my brother's future. The normalcy was periodically punctuated by a sudden influx of tears and emotion. I kept my eyes glued on the clock, dreading each passing minute that brought us closer to 3 PM—the time he was required to turn himself in. I felt regret for every memory I had tarnished with my juvenile selfishness—the days I wouldn't wake up for first tracks skiing, the hikes I slept through, the time I yelled at my dad for waking me up to kiss me goodbye before work. It felt as though I was grieving the loss of my closest family relationship.

While I understood my father was not dying, but merely moving to a different place for a short while, it was hard for me to imagine what his imprisonment would do to our strong relationship. Since my father's arrest he and I had become much closer than ever. I think my personal maturity combined with his suddenly open schedule allowed for us to foster an extremely close bond. My dad really thrived as a stay at home parent, and he would



Drimal

call me a few times a day just to talk about life. He helped me when I was upset or stressed, and always made me laugh even when the day seemed darkest. Whenever I was having a difficult time or needed advice, I would immediately call up my dad to vent and ask his opinion.

I could understand his outright need to be normal, or to at least pretend while he still could, and I was grateful for the opportunity to talk about myself, or nothing at all, and pretend for a few fleeting moments that we were looking at colleges together, or visiting my aunt. We joked about what meals he would eat when he got out, how big my little brother would be, where I might be living, etcetera.

The landscape started to change, and the hours sped by. The reality of saying goodbye was seeping in, and the realization that my dad would be walking into a scary, cold place was hitting me. We stopped for gas, and my dad got out to buy a pack of Juicy Fruit.

When my mother was seven years old, her father was sent to prison in connection with the Bay of Pigs. He was a Cuban ex-Pat who had fought alongside Che and Fidel during the Revolution, but left as soon as he realized that the government was leaning away from social democracy and towards communism. During the revolution, he was briefly arrested for running guns from Texas into Cuba. Years later, the CIA approached him to be a part of the Bay of Pigs or else go to prison. Refusing to betray his country, he opted to go to federal prison for a year. My mother's earlier memories involve visiting her dad in jail, and having to say goodbye too many times. The anxiety attached to these memories defined my mother's experience throughout my dad's legal situation.

Drimal

In federal prison, you walk in with the clothes on your back, which are sent home to your family following your processing. When my mother was a girl, she vividly remembers the day her father's clothes were sent back to them. She smelled them and cried, looking through his pockets for small mementos from her dad. Inside, she found a half full pack of Juicy Fruit. "I remember laying in my parents' bed, holding my dad's clothes and just, just crying and crying. Then I found the Juicy Fruit, and I just lay there for hours, chewing the gum until it hardened... it was as if the gum were my last connection to my father. I hoarded that gum for months, trying to make it last and chewing it only when I missed him most." (Arlene, 56) A few miles from the prison, my dad made me pull over so he could buy a pack of Juicy Fruit. I had not heard the story at that point, so my dad told me that he wanted to put some Juicy Fruit in his pocket so when my mom got his clothing she could feel happy or close to him.

Then it came. We pulled off the highway and followed the GPS down "Prison Road." Then came the water works. I have always been terrible with goodbyes, and even though I knew I could speak to my dad and visit him at times, it really felt like I was saying goodbye for good. Looking back, I realize my fear was of change, particularly the ways that my dad might change after he walked through the tinted front doors of the medium-security prison. My dad had to surrender himself in the medium security prison, which was larger and handled the more organizational aspects of the prison. The prison was huge with big watchtowers, cement walls sprinkled with barbed wire and guards with guns. It was everything I thought prison would be, and it terrified me to think that my dad would be in a place like that if for even a second. I was scared that my father would

Drimal

change, that our strong relationship would change, and that my life would change. My father and I are very close, and my biggest fear was losing the man who raised me.

We got out of the car, talked for a bit, and the tears came. We both cried and hugged, and I cried knowing my dad would not be able to see me graduate college, would not help me move into my first apartment, would not be home for holidays or be able to talk to me when I am sad. I was scared of what he would be like the next time we embraced outside of the prison walls. Would I lose my father? Would my children get to know the man I love, who made me the woman I am, or would they only see a distant shadow? I was scared that my dad might hurt himself, or be hurt by someone while inside. In that moment, I wished I could take back every mean thing I ever said to him, I wished I had spent more time with him. Even though in my head I knew this was not forever, in my heart it felt like goodbye.

After several failed goodbyes, my dad decided he should go. It was time. Hysterical, my boyfriend, Sam, had to come hold me. He shook my father's hand; my dad sucked in the tears, and walked away. We sat there in the car for a while. I was in and out of one of those crying bouts that permeate the soul. I ran out of tears, but my chest remained tight and my grief unbearable. I stayed in that car, parked in front of the prison until I saw my dad being escorted through the fences and across a field. I yelled for him, but he did not hear. Then he was gone. If Sam had not come with me, I would have been stranded in that unseasonably snow covered Pennsylvania town. Instead, I slowly drifted off to sleep after exhausting myself with tears. I had terrible dreams of losing my father, to death, aliens, and spies until I woke up two hours later. In one of the dreams, I went to visit my

Drimal

dad in jail and they told me it had been a huge mistake—he was dead, not in jail. The fear overwhelmed me and I woke up hysterically crying.

Having your father go to jail changes the way you think about your personal time line. As a 22 year old woman, I should be focused on the big landmarks—get into law school, graduate, get a job, get married, have kids, etcetera. While marriage and kids are far from my mind, I think about the future with regard to where my dad will be when I experience new things. When I graduate from Boston College he will be in his 7<sup>th</sup> month, 59 left to go. When I start law school he will be in his 11<sup>th</sup> month, 55 left to go. When I graduate from law school he will be in his 43<sup>rd</sup> month, 23 months to go. I plan out where I want to live based on its vicinity to my dad—I got into the University of Michigan Law School, but cannot even consider it as I will be able to see him once a year, if at all. It forces me to think long term about all of my relationships—was that handshake between Sam and my dad their last? What happens if he does not get out until I am 27? What if I want to get married or engaged? How could I do that with my father in jail? Would Sam or my perspective fiancé have to ask for my hand in a jail cell?

While no two stories are the same, I suspect there are elements in my story that reflect more general patterns of the experience in a sociological sense. For example, the difficulty of transportation, timing, and especially the crucial experience of saying goodbye. Regardless of the charges against the offender, if someone has the opportunity to make bail, the people they love have to go through the emotional transition of saying goodbye and of accepting the new definitions that will come with the loss. One of the women I interviewed told me that her father, a former law enforcement officer, refused to let his wife or daughter drive him to prison, opting instead for an old friend. For my

Drimal

mother and two brothers, the experience of ‘goodbye’ was very different than my own, drawn out journey to Pennsylvania. For many families, there is no way to bring their loved one to prison, and they must instead turn themselves in at a local FBI holding center. Indigent offenders, or offenders who have no one who can drive them to surrender (which is usually required on a business day) are forced to go to the “tombs” often with much more dangerous offenders, much earlier than their scheduled day of surrender.

My family’s relative privilege—we have a car, own our home, and have attended university—allowed for a comparatively easy journey for our goodbye. My mother was able to get her boss to give her the day off so she could emotionally recover. My brother Austin was allowed to stay home from his 8<sup>th</sup> grade class schedule. My brother, Tucker, was able to arrange with his college dean to push back an important presentation. Our relative placement in society afforded each of us the ability or luxury to collect ourselves and heal from our sadness.

I recognize that our status allowed for certain comforts not enjoyed by the families of most prisoners, but at the same time, we each had to deal with my father going to jail in very private and intense ways. My mother lost her husband of over 30 years—a man she loved and never spent more than a few nights away from since they met during their sophomore year at BU in 1976. While both Tucker and I were losing our father, our baby brother Austin was losing his daddy. Just on the cusp of puberty, he was only 10 when my father was arrested, and 12 when he drove out of our driveway for the final time. Austin will have to navigate the already murky waters of growing into a man without a father, and with a mother who works 70 hour weeks to put food on the table and keep clothes on his back. Austin will never get the normal and comfortable high school

Drimal

experience both Tucker and I had, and worst of all, he will not get to grow into a man under my father's watchful eye. My dad always made himself available for us regardless of what he was doing with work or life—if we had a sports game, a big dance, or any Kodak moment, he was there.

Austin will be 18 years old when my father gets out of jail, at the earliest. This means that my dad will miss his high school graduation, his prom, every high school lacrosse game, his first relationship, his first heartbreak; he will not be able to teach him to drive, talk to him about girls, or be there for any Christmas or birthday. The only times they will have physical contact are Saturdays and Sundays, from 8-3 every few months. At this point, my mother cannot afford to keep our house, nor can she afford to keep a car, so these visits will become less frequent. For Austin, the transition to a new home will be most difficult. My mom cannot afford to stay in our old town, and Austin will be starting high school in a new place with new people who have never met my dad. Despite the stigma involved with imprisonment, my dad is a well-known and loved member of the Weston community. He coached football since 1998, volunteered with the elderly, and came to every high school sporting event during my tenure at Weston. While people judged him and were uncomfortable with his legal troubles and imprisonment, people were outwardly kind.

While we did experience stigma from our community before my dad left for prison, I believe it would be much worse had my father been uninvolved or unknown. There were changes in the way people treated us—my parents no longer were invited to dinner parties, my dad was asked to stop coaching football and was not allowed to volunteer etc. The biggest change came from people who were not particularly close with my family,

Drimal

and our decline in socioeconomic status created a shift in the way others perceived us. Those outside my father's volunteer and friendship sphere, people in Weston acted coldly, spread gossip and treated him like a pariah. To some people, my father had brought shame to the Weston community, and was thus no longer worthy of acknowledgement. While no one was ever aggressively oppositional to my father, there was a general awkwardness underlying every public interaction.

In this new town and new school, Austin is going to have to deal with being the only child of a "single" working mother, as well as the stigma of explaining just where his father was. Of all of us, Austin is the most quiet and reserved. Unlike my father and myself, he does not outwardly express his feelings or emotions, but rather, keeps them bottled up inside. Unlike Tucker, he does not struggle with anger, but deals with his emotions privately without taking them out on other people in the family. He tries to be a good son to my mother, and often makes her dinner for when she gets home from work at 8PM. In many ways, he has to be so much more mature than I ever had to be at that age. In the last six months, he has surpassed me in height by a few inches, and weight by three stone.

As an adult, I am not in the situation where I need to divulge my dad's story without my free will. I have my good friends who know, and wherever I live I will be around at least a few people who know my dad and support me. As a child, Austin will be in the position where rumors will spread. Everyone will know about the new kid whose dad is locked up, and this could very well ostracize him from making new friends. Worst of all, he will have to deal with people who have never met my father making snap judgments on his character. I can just imagine Austin, a little boy in his heart who is becoming a man,

Drimal

getting into a fight to defend my dad. I hope nothing like that ever happens to him, but children can be horrible, and I expect the worst.

However, saying goodbye and physically bringing my dad through his journey into incarceration helped me to pass into a new phase of my career—for the first time, I could say my dad was in jail. It was as if I had been in this cocoon or chrysalis phase—I knew where it would inevitably lead, but I had not quite gotten there yet. It was that day—that moment—that I fulfilled my inevitable destiny and realized my career as the daughter of an incarcerated insider trader. I knew that all of the fears I had been obsessing over would come into being, and even though this moment was incredibly significant in my personal narrative and my career, it was oddly quick and small. After two years of build up for goodbye, he was gone.

Beyond the limitations on communication, things felt oddly familiar. It reminded me a lot of the passing of my paternal Grandma. She had been sick for many years, and was racked with dementia and other physical ailments. She was completely deaf, could not feed herself, and had lost her personality. Everyone knew she was going to pass “any day now,” so when she finally let go no one was surprised. In many ways, we considered it a blessing that her suffering had ended and she had finally met her fate. Like with my Grandma, I think losing my father had a similar affect. I had been mourning his imprisonment for two years, dealing with it in everyway. When he finally went away, I thought I would be in an extremely depressed state, much like I had been when he was first arrested in 2009. Though I was inconsolable when we said goodbye, it felt like the beginning of a new chapter. Everything in our lives up until October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 was focused on my dad going to jail. First, if it would happen, then how long would last, and



Drimal

finally when it would happen. November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 marked the beginning of everything else. Instead of mourning his fate, we shifted our focus onto our own futures for the first time.

Drimal

## **Chapter 6: Inside the walls**

Before my father even pled guilty or was sentenced, I became obsessed with the details of what visitation would be like. I went on online forums for families of prisoners to read first hand accounts; I obsessed over the visiting manuals of the prisons I thought would be the most likely contenders. Despite my age, I have always been a major daddy's girl. I love the feeling of security that comes from a fatherly hug, or the ability to sit on my dad's lap to cry if everything gets to be too much. While reading the visitors regulations, I became disturbed by the limits on family affection—one manual, for Fort Devens FCI, restricted affection beyond a hug hello, and forbade children from sitting on their father's lap during the visit.

I had my first post-surrender contact with my father three days after watching him walk into the doors of Schuylkill. I had finally felt OKAY enough to drive back to Boston for class on Thursday, when I got a call from an UNKNOWN number. My heart raced, I began to weld up and had to pull over into the appropriately named “breakdown lane” on the highway. It was my dad. The emotions I felt in that moment were perhaps the most complex I have ever experienced—joy at hearing his voice, sadness that he was away, fear that something would go wrong and I would not hear from him for days. I managed to keep myself together for a good few minutes, just hearing my dad's voice and feeling the safety and warmth of its familiarity.

I grew used to these interactions—I was applying to law school and finishing up my senior year, and before my dad went away he had been my rock of advice and guidance. I made him promise to call me as much as possible, and he agreed. These small

Drimal

interactions are what have kept me afloat since losing my dad to prison. Even though I was able to physically bring him to Schuylkill and knew what it looked like and where it was, until visiting him I always feared for his safety and sanity.

My family uses two phrases when discussing dad's imprisonment: my dad is away, or we lost my dad. I tend to favor "my dad is away" because it sounds more routine and less dramatic than, "we lost my dad"—the phrase favored by Tucker. Saying that my dad is away to friends who know is easier than saying, "my dad is in jail," and is vague enough that it shields me from unwanted questioning from others.

When my dad was first arrested, I was resigned to put school on hold and go home to be with my family. My father expressly forbade it. My parents even tried to get me to commit to a yearlong study abroad program because they did not want me to alter my life plans because of my father's legal difficulties. Soon, the most important thing for both my parents was to maintain a semblance of normalcy and continuity in my education. My mother pawned jewelry and artwork to send me abroad; after hearing me mention a big dance my friends were going to that I could not afford, my dad offered to sell his gym equipment to help pay for my ticket. While I refused most of these offers, I made a point to withhold things from my parents so they would not feel pressure to help me "fit in." I was able to convince them I preferred the inexpensive single semester program in Berlin to the full year at LSE, and I began to sell some of my clothes on EBay to help pay for food or other expenses.

One of my biggest fears before my father was even sentenced was what visitation would be like. I read and researched the details and regulations of every prison where my father

Drimal

could be sent, and it soon became this obsessive and methodical ritual I practiced when things seemed bleak. During the days where it was hard to get out of bed, I usually would allow my depressed thinking to lead me to the Federal Bureau of Prisons website. I would sit for hours, mostly feeling sorry for myself and imagining myself visiting these seemingly unreal places.

This ritual was one of the biggest inspirations for what became my senior thesis. I was struck by the fact that even in low or minimum-security prisons, there was intense regulation and limitations to visits. Visits are the primary way that families interact during the period of incarceration, and in the federal court system, they can be very difficult. Unlike state prisons where there are few options where an offender can be sent, inmates in federal prisons can be placed in any institution across the country. Usually, there is a 500 mile radius applied, which means that a prisoner must be placed within 500 miles from his or her home. One can opt to request a particular assignment, but the actual placement is at the discretion of the judge. If there is no room in your first choice, the judge can pick any institution.

My father requested Schuylkill Federal Prison Camp, a minimum-security satellite camp attached to a medium security Federal Corrections Institution. The decision to choose Schuylkill, which is a four-hour drive from my family home in Connecticut, came at the suggestion of my father's older brother. There were many options that were much closer to our home, or that offered better opportunities while inside, but my dad decided that he would rather go with the safe choice than gamble and end up somewhere completely foreign. My Uncle had an acquaintance at Schuylkill, and knowing someone on the inside made my dad feel safe.

Drimal

The only time I was ever angry with my father was when he decided to go to Schuylkill. I had spent the bulk of the summer on personal pursuits—working 70 hours a week at a restaurant to help pay for my living expenses at BC, studying for the LSAT, and occasionally taking the time to act like an irresponsible college student. I had not really given much attention to where my father would go, as I was trying to drown out the reality of my situation with other distractions. Once I realized Schuylkill was so far away, and understood that there were many other options, I exploded with anger at what I considered to be my father's selfishness. I felt he cared more about knowing someone on the inside than about seeing us. I was angry at the lack of research he put into the process, I was angry with my uncle for suggesting a prison so far away, but I was most angry with my father for caring so little about seeing me.

Realizing that my dad could be in a facility that was only an hour away, but opted to go to Schuylkill, made me hate him. I wanted to feel as though our family had a fighting chance at staying intact and close, and knowing that my father elected to go over four hours away rocked me to my core. I screamed, I called him names and I cried as if I were a child throwing a temper tantrum. I felt like prison would be similar regardless of where he went, but the major variable would be how often we could be together. With my mom working, me going to school and the expense of driving a nearly 9 hour round trip from Connecticut, or a nearly 14 hour trip from Boston, I knew we would rarely be able to see each other. I was so mad with my father for choosing himself over us—himself over having and sustaining a relationship with my baby brother.

It was with these emotions and preconceived notions that I went to visit my dad for the first time. Tensions were extremely high as it was my entire family packed into a car after

Drimal

Thanksgiving. It was our first big holiday without dad, and my mom did not feel up to cooking. Thanksgiving is my absolute favorite holiday, and it is my mother's cooking and family that makes it for me. This was the first big holiday that my dad was missing, and it did not feel right. We went to a random family friend's house, where we were each forced to partake in their family tradition—essentially, my brothers and I were forced to talk about what we've learned from my dad's arrest, and speak in his name. I was forced to sit at the kids' table (the next oldest person outside of my siblings was 12), schmooze all night with people I have never met nor will I ever meet again, and eat food that was all together foreign fare for a Thanksgiving feast. Beyond those annoyances, I was so envious of this family's unity. They were able to practice all of their traditions, laugh, be together and reminisce. I felt robbed that my father could not be with us, that he had to be alone on the one holiday that means 'family.' Needless to say, the Drimal children were pissed. It was this tension that carried us over into the next day.

The drive was long and grueling, with Tucker exploding in bouts of anger periodically through the night. Tucker and I have a particularly volatile relationship, and when he is stressed or upset he responds with anger and vitriol. My mom nearly broke down three times during the drive after Tucker and I exchanged verbal blows. I was focused on studying for the LSAT, which was the following weekend. I had put such enormous pressure on myself to succeed despite my dad being in jail—to be "that girl" who made it against all odds. I threw all of my energy into studying for the LSAT, because getting into a good law school was my only way of helping my family. I wanted to help put Austin through college and help buy my parents a new house in which they could start

Drimal

fresh. I stayed up until 2 in the morning, doing LSAT practice problems in the bathroom, and thinking about the morning.

My mom seemed on the verge of nervous breakdown the whole trip. I knew that her memories of visiting her father in jail as a child were rearing their ugly heads, and I tried to keep my cool and not get into it with Tucker. I was so excited to see my dad, my mom was nervous, Tucker was angry and Austin was keeping quiet in the back of the car. We all were dealing with this big ‘first’ in our own ways, and the extreme variance in each of our personalities kept producing clashes. After a long night, we finally went to sleep. 7AM came quickly, and I could sense all of the tension bubbling to the surface. We had no idea what the visit would be like, what the procedure would be, or what to expect at all. Bleary eyed, we shoveled some “continental breakfast” down our gullets, and got into the car to drive the 30 minutes to Schuylkill Federal Prison Camp. It felt like I was the only one who was excited, but there was a nervous energy bouncing through the car. We pulled up to the camp, which looked like an underfunded boarding school—drab colored cement buildings lined an open field, with no bars, fences or watchtowers in sight. I had passed the FCI when I dropped off my dad, but I had not taken much notice nor realized what it was. We had a brief fight about making sure we had a clear bag to put our quarters and IDs into, and my mom almost had a meltdown when she thought she lost dad’s ID number (which was required for entry). We walked through glass doors and had to sign paper saying we had no drugs and that we were who we claimed to be.

While waiting for a pen, I looked through the second row of doors and saw my dad waiting for us. The feeling in that moment was unexplainable. I had never cried from happiness, but I think that was the first time. My hand started shaking and I just wanted

Drimal

to burst through the door and see my dad, and make sure he was real. We had to wait behind two other families, which I can only equate to standing in line to eat when you are absolutely famished. Finally, we were given the signal to enter. We walked into a little room where a guard was stationed. We handed him our paperwork and IDs, and for some reason I felt nervous. In my mind it almost felt like he was a bouncer at a nightclub and I was showing a fake ID—I felt for sure he would send us away and we would not see my dad. He was much more polite than I expected, and did not make me feel lesser or stigmatized. Finally, he gave his nod of assent, and we walked out. There was dad. To this day, that is the best hug I have ever received. A month before I was standing outside hugging him goodbye, and now here I was hugging him again, and he was real. It felt like a gift.

Everyone got their turn to say hello, and we found some seats. The visiting room was chaos embodied. This was Thanksgiving weekend, so it was filled of families visiting their loved ones. The room was a long rectangle with white painted cinderblock walls and a tile floor. It looked oddly like my middle school cafeteria. There were vending machines with smelly microwavable foods and some beverages, bathrooms for visitors sans locks, and an outdoor area for visitors on what I assumed were nicer days. The entire left wall was glass overlooking the medium security prison—almost making everyone appreciate where they were that much more, by realizing how much worse it could be. I was struck by how many small children were running around. There was a children’s playroom in one corner right next to a room labeled “For Attorney Client Meetings.” There were around four dozen plastic chairs lined up in rows across the room, so families could sit next to one another or knee-to-knee. We choose an open spot in the middle—I



Drimal

sat next to my dad, Austin on the other side, and Tucker and my mom faced him. We sat in a tight circle, so close and connected that there were moments where it felt private, despite the dozens of others around us.

We talked about ourselves, our trip, dad's food habits and experiences, and my brothers' sports, etcetera. He drilled me on LSAT prep, praising me for getting a 173 the night before, but trying to give me a classic pump-up talk to "find those 7 points" I lost somewhere. It was so weird to be having such normal conversations in such an abnormal and foreign place. Then I realized, this is our new normal, just as it is normal to all the other families around us; the little girls in their Sunday best visiting their daddies, the boys playing with trucks on the floor, the wives holding their husbands' hands, the friends talking about good times.

My dad was different—quieter, more careful. Every time I started to people watch he would knock me with his foot and give me a look. There was sadness about him; he was a defeated version of his usual self. He looked older, more thin but less healthy. I studied his face with the knowledge we would have precious few moments like this in the coming years. I tried to remember the mole that we share above our ears, the scar across his face from running through a glass door after the ice cream man as a boy. I selfishly wanted him all to myself, I wanted to vent about my life and stresses, and had trouble giving everyone else an opening. At the same time, I was the only one who was being affectionate—everyone else seemed nervous about being too close, or self conscious about showing emotions. My brothers kept badgering me for breaking in and out of tears, as I kept realizing that I would have to leave and say goodbye all over again.

Drimal

I just wanted to sit as a family, close my eyes and forget. Forget the last two years; forget where we were and what we had been through. I wanted to pretend we were all going to see a movie together or going on one of our classic family bike trips. I wanted to believe my dad would leave with us, and if I wished hard enough I could wake up from this bad dream. As difficult as the financial fall from grace had been, I would give up everything to get my dad out of this place and just run. I felt like a little girl, not a 21-year old woman.

Having to leave was the worst and most difficult thing I had ever done. We managed to stay from 9am until 3pm, which is when visiting hours are over. We had talked about everything and nothing, fought about stupid family things, and just acted normal—well, as normal as one could act inside a prison. My dad had to get up at 11 for the prisoner check that occurs every four hours, and just having him stand up and walk away was difficult. As 3pm approached, dad warned us that he would have to get up again, but this time he would not be allowed to return. During the visit it felt so great and so normal to be in my father's company that I could not confront the idea that it would end, but as 3 came closer, it did. My dad suddenly led us out of the room, hoping to catch a moment of privacy before the 3PM check so that we could hug and cry. Pulling away was so hard. Watching my dad walk back into the prison, not come with us to the car, I wanted to act like a three year old and chase him down the hall. But I was not three. I had to leave and I had to say goodbye.

*“What surprised me was I expected to hear metal clanging and bars shutting and seeing prison bars but I didn't. For the first part of the visit I had trouble, well I was with my children. I felt my husband was really*

*nervous and guarded physically. He probably wasn't used to being touched even in the 29 days I could see that he was a little jumpy, you know, from physical and eye contact—maybe afraid to be upset? It's obvious that he's afraid to let his emotions out in front of all his "peers" in jail—for whatever reason that might show weakness. I felt like an observer. I observed my husband. I observed other couples, other families. I observed his interactions with the kids, which, you know I noticed and I was happy that Austin had a lot of physical contact with him. Which was really good. And um, I wasn't surprised with my daughter because she expresses emotion much more easily than my sons do and than I do. Uh, I felt kind of, I guess because I'm older, I just felt confused, or not, like what am I supposed to do be like making out? Or wanting to make out like some of the couples. I mean ordinarily [I would want to do that] I wanted to be closer, and eventually we got closer but at first Craig was a little uncomfortable. And I think that as a family when you're all there you don't want to usurp each other's time together, and certainly I feel like, as head of the household, its like standing in the back of the line and letting other people eat first. I think I would like to have some visits, where I have time to talk alone, but right now its more important for my children to go. Because I can express myself to Craig in writing, for the most part, you know 30 years together you kind of know. And I know there's a lot of opportunity; I mean he's there for a long time. There'll be time for that."*

*(Arlene, 57)*

## Drimal

For my mother, visitation was an incredible stressful and odd experience. She had visited her own father in prison as a child, and that experience was traumatic and created a great deal of fear. The most difficult part for my mom was figuring out the appropriate way to interact. The prison provided a new stage on which my parents needed to perform, causing them to second guess the roles they had filled for over 30 years. What role is more important, that of mother or that of wife? What is expected? How do others interact? The federal prison system does not allow conjugal or extended family visits, a policy that obviously limits the level of intimacy and privacy afforded to families during visitation. Sexual intimacy aside, the non-private nature of the visiting room limits meaningful conversation, and puts pressure on families to conform to the established code of behavior set by the other actors in the room.

*“Visiting him is probably one of the hardest things. The first time I went to visit it was exhausting. You’re expecting metal detectors; you’re expecting the worst. And you get there and there’s not a whole lot of visually negative stuff. You sense a lot of sorrow. You’re surrounded by people you never thought you would be surrounded by. The first time I saw dad... wow... it’s odd. There are no words to describe it really. I just wanted to look at him, like a painting I didn’t really know what it means. It’s foreign, weird. It’s like seeing a dead body for the first time. You don’t really know if it’s dead or not, or if it’s real. It’s just kind of, I don’t know. I’ve gone to see him three times. The second time was weird; I knew what it was like. I realized wow this is for real, fuck. The third time was the best because I was with my uncle. My dad acted a lot more happy that time. And my*

Drimal

*uncle told me stuff about my dad that made me realize why he did things.”*

*(Tucker, 19)*

For Tucker, the visit was incredibly difficult. Tucker has very complex feelings towards my dad, particularly anger with what my dad did, and mostly the way he acted after his arrest. My father was very depressed and withdrawn, and often susceptible to bouts of rage. Unfortunately, Tucker and my father clashed often. My uncle fed Tucker stories about my dad’s irresponsible past and how he deserved to be where he is—in jail. I am not a fan of my uncle’s perspective, but I recognize Tucker’s need to have a more stable and reliable male role model in his life. Tucker is like my dad in so many ways, both the good and the bad. I think Tucker fears becoming my father, and he is now going through a period of intense self-rejection to purge himself of those qualities reminiscent of my father. Tucker’s proximity to the arrest and the fall out has provided him with a much different experience than my own.

Austin remained quiet about his feelings towards visitation and my father until our Easter visit to prison. As I mentioned in other sections, Austin is a “tween” budding into a full-blown teenager. For the first time, Austin spoke out. “Why do we have to go to Pennsylvania, this is just great. Great! Having to drive down to see my dad in jail. I am so mad at dad; I don’t want to see him. It’s not fair. Why do I have to move and lose my friends, I never did anything wrong.” He is growing and maturing while my father is away, but their relationship is stuck in the place it was before my dad left. The biggest struggle for them will be to open up to one another and truly know one another throughout my dad’s time away, otherwise, he will come out of jail and be in the mindset that Austin is a child, when in fact he will be close to adulthood.

## Drimal

Visitation is incredibly difficult and emotional for all families, but it is the only time during a period of incarceration that a family can spend time together. We are fortunate enough that the visits in Schuylkill are more relaxed—we can touch, hug, and sit close together without a guard yelling or getting in trouble. There are fewer restrictions, but almost no privacy. My father does not feel comfortable crying in front of his fellow inmates, so he is restricted in his ability to express his emotions to each of us, and we are restricted from feeling that sort of love. Interactions have to be more formal than usual, and it is difficult to make the most of a rare visit and keep up a façade at the same time. For those people who are not as good at accessing their emotions as I am, visitation is a difficult and frustrating process. The public nature of these private and precious interactions effectively limits the quality of time spent, and hinders the maintenance of true ties between family members.

Drimal

## **Conclusions**

My father has now been in prison for six months, and it has not gotten any easier. While I have the fortune of living away from home and partaking in the distractions of college life, my family continues to suffer from the arrest and imprisonment. My mother is weeks away from losing our house to foreclosure, and is at the desperate point of putting the house on the market “as is” to try and preserve her credit, even if we sell at a loss.

After my dad was sentenced I decided to get a dog, whom I named Ruby after my father’s nickname. Ruby has been a great comfort to me during the tumult that has been my senior year. From stresses about my future, missing my father, or anger at my situation, Ruby has been a sort of companion animal to help me through it all. I try to avoid the use of anti-anxiety medication, and heal in a more natural way, and the love of an animal helps that process greatly. Adopting Ruby was a highly symbolic and personal action, as having a dog and losing my father are both significantly adult moments, and Ruby has been a surrogate for my father in many ways. It was important that my dad meet Ruby before he left, and I am so grateful to have memories of my father helping me house train my dog, teach her to swim and love her in general.

Since my first visit in November, I have had the opportunity to see my dad two more times, despite the fact that I aimed to go every month. The cost of transportation, the distance of travel and the long period of time each journey takes have made it nearly impossible for me to fit a visit into my ideal schedule. Our conversations have become less frequent, from once a day to two times a week. Despite my greatest effort, I already feel that my dad and I are less close than we were when he went away. The sheer

Drimal

difficulty that communication entails functions to limit the quality and quantity of our interactions, and though I try to share every aspect of my life over the phone, I can sense hesitation on my father's part to be so open and vulnerable in the very public phone area. He shares very little about himself, and it has been months since I have heard or seen the bubbly and fun-loving man who raised me. I hope he is not gone, but can become comfortable enough to come out once again in the future.

Though I do not think my father's guilt is central to my experience, I will briefly address the charges he pled, and discuss insider trading as it relates to my father. According to the government's currently applied definition of insider trading statute, my father did insider trading. He confessed to six counts of conspiracy and securities fraud and admitted to trading on insider information pertaining to 3Com and Axcan and passing insider information to a Galleon associate, resulting in \$6.47 in illegal profits. Other charges concerned the use of insider tips involving Kronos and Hilton that supposedly resulted in over \$5 in illegal profits. Both 3Com and Axcan were confirmed to be insider trades, and while my father never knew they were insider, he should have had a reasonable idea that they were illegal sources. The other trades (Kronos and Hilton) remain ambiguous—while they came from his source that had provided the two illegal trades, they were made months earlier, before the taps and on information that the defense proved had been reported on in well-known financial blogs. Part of my father's plea was to admit to Kronos and Hilton, which he truly believed were entirely legal trades. He was also required to admit to knowledge of a conspiracy, and say that he paid off lawyers for the information, which was not the case. If he refused to plead to all charges, he would be forced to go to court and face significantly more time in prison.



Drimal

I will argue that the insider trading statute, as applied to my father—a tertiary tippee—is overly vague. Additionally, I believe my father that he did not know the information was insider, and I think knowledge should be an important factor in the statute, which it is not. Trading on insider information, whether it is known to be insider or not, is illegal. I find it unreasonable that the government could hold someone legally culpable when they did not have knowledge of the information's origins. This, of course, is my opinion, which is naturally informed by my positionality as the daughter of a convicted insider trader. However, I think the sentencing and fines incurred—66 months in prison and over \$14 million in fines—does not fit the crime, and is overly excessive. While I am not in the position to argue for the decriminalization of insider trading, I will make the argument for a cultural reassessment of our communal values and mores. Is society truly better off with my father in jail? I can say for certain the answer is 'no.' The fact that my father will likely serve more time than pedophiles in possession of child pornography is appalling and functions as a commentary on our national values. We currently have more of our citizens in prison than any country in the world, yet we refuse to reflect upon what we are doing wrong or changing the system. When my father was sentenced I felt the injustice rock me to my core—if I were raped today, that man (if he were even caught and prosecuted) would likely gain freedom before my father.

In our hyper competitive society, the force to innovate and 'be the best' propels the system of capitalism we hold so dear, but we refuse to acknowledge the ways in which these forces pervert our morality. In the trading world what my father is sitting in prison for was extremely commonplace, but very seldom addressed. In fact, many argue that the entire day trading enterprise is based on research that federal prosecutors would deem

Drimal

insider. With the current culture in place (though it was rocked to its core by my father's arrest and the dozens of people indicted along with him), it is impossible to fairly delve out punishments in a just way. Obviously, my father was used as an example, which is why the media pushed his case so heavily, and why he received so much time. Though my thesis is focused on the effects of incarceration, not insider trading, it is impossible for this autoethnographer to write about one without the other.

Borrowing from Goffman's dramaturgical model of interaction, (Goffman, 1959) this paper is heavily influenced by the notion of what happens to actors when their roles are suddenly and drastically altered? How do these actors cope with the change within themselves—how they conceptualize their identity, how they interact with their previous environment or stage, and how they interact with other actors. The change in identity that comes from the arrest and subsequent incarceration of a family member is a long and daunting process, and this paper attempts to catalogue the tumultuous journey towards self-understanding and self-acceptance after this major shift in status.

In sum, this thesis was structured around major defining moments or events in my "career" as the daughter of a white-collar criminal, and the ways in which my identity has shifted as a result of my experience. The first chapter *The Arrest* outlines my experience learning about my father's arrest and the events of that first day. It also includes the accounts of my mother and brother, as well as the experience of another woman who was the daughter of a white-collar criminal. It goes over the first major shift in my identity and the way I dealt with my new reality.

Drimal

The second chapter, *Back to School*, outlines my transition into my new identity or role, and the ways in which it created conflict and change in the life I had established. *Back to School* also includes accounts of the transition experienced by my mother and brother. The contagious spread of shame and “guilt by association” with my father’s alleged “deviance” is outlined, and illustrates the ways in which the experience of incarceration can function as a form of collective punishment for every member of the family. There is also commentary on the role of gossip as a form of social control, and the way in which class privilege operates on BC’s campus.

The third chapter, *The In-Between*, outlines my experience in court, and dealing with the reality of my father’s inevitable incarceration through counseling and self-discovery. The chapter fills the longest period of time, and is broken down into important subsections. These subsections underline important developments in my own identity reformation, as well as the theoretical implications that come with the realization that a loved one *will* go to prison.

The fourth chapter, *The Media*, provides personal commentary on my experience with the media coverage of my father’s case, with particular emphasis on the role of message boards and public discourse. I address the role of the Internet, as not only an unprecedented forum for uncensored communication and potentially democratic dialogue, but also an outlet for resentment and irresponsible outpourings of rage. Knowing that anyone can everywhere “Google” not only information about the case but also hateful expressions of anger also amplifies the experience of stigma and being judged.

Drimal

The fifth chapter, *The Long Drive*, deals with the day I drove my dad to prison, and the process of saying goodbye and coming to terms with his incarceration. This chapter is incredibly personal, and discusses the ways in which the event coincided with an acceptance of my identity as the daughter of a federal prisoner. There is also discussion on the experience of surrender across different socioeconomic lines, and how class privilege makes the process simultaneously easier and more difficult.

The sixth and final chapter, *Inside the Walls*, discusses my experience with visitation, and the ways in which my experience differs from that of my family. It deals with not only the process of dealing with sadness, but also systemic social stress leading to tensions between my father and me, my brother's anger at my father and his fear of becoming like him, and the haunting effects of my mom's memories of her own father's incarceration. The most significant sociological aspect of this chapter is the ways in which incarceration puts private family interactions and moments and situates them in a public place filled with unknown strangers. This is a major way that incarceration functions as a form of collective punishment for each inmate's family.

This project also touches on other experiences that can exist outside the context of incarceration, such as how personal identity is influenced by public opinion, the power of the media and the position of the Internet in our culture, and the power and regulation of knowledge.

Though my paper is an autoethnographic account, I believe there is a level of universality in my experience that has not yet been explored by the sociological community. For so long, incarceration was explained from one angle, with one politically pointed aim of the

Drimal

researcher. I hope my account of my “career” can provide novel information about the experience of incarceration from those who are left behind. It is important, too, to conceptualize incarceration as the entire legal and punitive experience. Incarceration does not begin with the surrender at the correctional facility, but rather, begins with the initial arrest. From that point forward, the family and defendant exist in a prison-centric world; looking forward to the inevitable conclusion that is forced separation. While the emotions and experiences are largely my own, it is important to understand the potential for intersection with other experiences of incarceration.

I hope this paper will serve as a foundation for the future acquisition of knowledge, and perhaps serve as a beacon of hope for others experiencing similar forms of separation. Ultimately, the goal of my project is to provide an outlet for the stories and experiences of my family so as to include white-collar families in the narrative established by existing research, and also to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the universality of this experience across both class and race.

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