

Jails

3



Reed Saxon/Associated Press

Learning Outcomes

After reading this chapter, you should be able to

- Articulate what jail facilities are and who resides in them.
- Describe jail history and the evolution of the contemporary jail.
- Explain the pretrial detention process and the “jailing process.”
- Describe modern jail design and management issues.
- Analyze the problem of mental illness among jail inmates.

Introduction

This chapter examines the history of jails and explores their common purposes and functions. We begin our investigation by defining what a jail is. We then explore the historical antecedents to the modern jail, focusing on the origin and development of jails in American society. We explore the role of the jail in 19th-century America, discuss the 20th-century jail, examine pretrial detention and the jailing process ("rabble management"), and review some modern jail management concerns, including jail conditions, jail design, and the problem of mentally ill inmates. Over time jails have evolved; they have served a specific role in society, but this traditional purpose is being questioned in the 21st century.

3.1 Jails: Basic Facts and Figures

Jails are designed to temporarily house two types of people: **pretrial detainees** and **sentenced offenders**. Pretrial detainees are awaiting a criminal trial and have not been convicted; sentenced offenders, meanwhile, have been sentenced to time in jail (usually for less than 1 year) as a punishment.

Jails come in different sizes, depending on the size of the jurisdiction, and they fluctuate in population, depending on the number of arrests and nature of the offenses (see Table 3.1). Small jails might have capacity for fewer than 100 inmates, while large jails can house 250 inmates or more. As of the end of 2016, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (Zeng, 2018) reported that there were 704,501 inmates being held in jails across the United States. On any given day, a single jail may house thousands of inmates, such as the Los Angeles County Jail or Rikers Island in New York City, which together house over 33,000 prisoners.

Table 3.1: Percentage of jail capacity occupied, by size of jurisdiction, 2016

Jail jurisdiction size	Average daily population ^a	Rated capacity ^b	Percentage of capacity occupied ^c	Percentage of jail jurisdictions operating at more than 100% of rated capacity
Total	731,300	915,400	79.9%	16.5%
49 or fewer	21,400	38,400	55.6**	7.0**
50–99	36,300	51,400	70.7**	19.0
100–249	107,000	126,700	84.4**	25.6**
250–499	107,100	129,900	82.4**	21.9**
500–999	138,800	173,100	80.2	20.4**
1,000–2,499	171,300	209,100	81.9**	15.7
2,500 or more*	149,500	186,800	80.0	13.8

*Comparison group.

**Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

^aSum of all inmates in jail each day for the calendar year divided by the number of days in the year.

^bMaximum number of beds or inmates assigned by rating official to a facility, excluding separate temporary holding areas.

^cThe average daily population divided by the rated capacity.

Source: "Table 5: Percent of Jail Capacity Occupied, by Size of Jurisdiction, 2016," in "Jail Inmates in 2016," by Z. Zeng, 2018 (<https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ji16.pdf>).

The number of inmates held in jails remained stable between 2011 and 2016 (Zeng, 2018). Approximately 80% of jails were at 80% capacity in 2016, while 17% of jails were operating at full or above full capacity. While this may seem high, consider that in the 1990s and early 2000s, jails averaged close to 100% and 92% capacity, respectively (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1995). Overall, these changes indicate a significant drop in the jail population over time.

Much of the change in jail population capacity can be attributed to communities building more jail space during the latter part of the 20th century, thereby accommodating more inmates. As a community's response to crime changes, the size of the prisoner population will change accordingly. Communities vary in how they respond to crime; hence, different communities will have different jail populations, both in terms of type and number of prisoners (Klofas, 1990). More importantly, many communities have built regional jails to share the costs associated with housing jailed prisoners (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011b). Overall there has been a decrease in the number of jail facilities in the United States, from 3,376 facilities in 1999 to 3,283 facilities in 2006 (Stephan & Walsh, 2011). There has also been a change in the primary use of jails as holding tanks for the impoverished, disenfranchised, and mentally ill. Increasingly, communities are embracing the idea that jails can be more than just warehouses—they can be places of treatment and crisis intervention, where the cycle of criminality can be broken (Stinchcomb, 2011). This latter ambition is a tall order for jails, since they have typically served a warehousing purpose for much of their history. Only time will tell if the contemporary jail is able to move beyond its basic custodial mission. To better understand this past, we now turn to the subject of jail history.



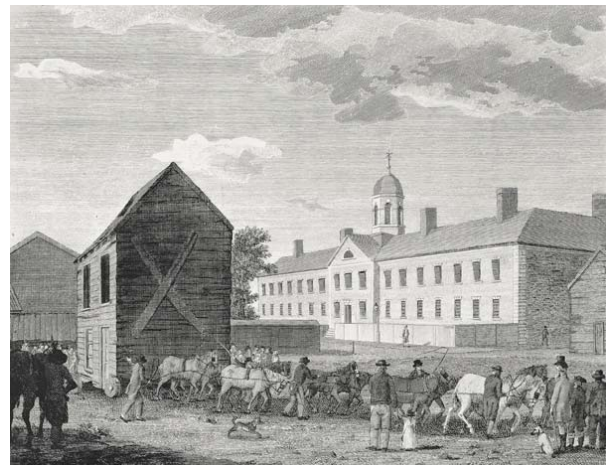
Jim West/age fotostock/SuperStock

Jail cells are very basic accommodations, since they are only designed to detain inmates for a short time. How might jail cells differ from prison cells?

To better understand this past, we now turn to the subject of jail history.

3.2 Historical Foundations of the Jail

The **Walnut Street Jail**, built in 1790 in Philadelphia, is typically regarded as America's first local jail (Rothman & Morris, 1997). While other institutions existed prior to the establishment of the Walnut Street Jail, it was the first jail to be used for correction and punishment. The jail represented a radical change from commonly accepted methods of dealing with social outcasts, deviants, the poor, or mentally ill. The Walnut Street Jail was built around the time that institutionalization was beginning to gain ground in the United States (the early 19th century), when methods outside of the home came to be viewed as more effective for addressing common social ills, such as crime, poverty, and mental illness (Rothman, 1971).



Encyclopaedia Britannica/Universal Images Group/Getty Images

The Walnut Street Jail was the first jail in the United States.

The Jacksonian Era: 1820-1850

Reformers who espoused institutionalization were known as the *Jacksonians*. They represented what is referred to as the **Jacksonian era** in American history, a period firmly entrenched in the belief that institutions of confinement were the solution to the 19th century's growing crime and deviancy problems (Rothman, 1980). These reformers paved the way for the development of the jail and other institutions of confinement. Their views were shaped by the fact that cities were growing at a rate faster than communities were able to handle, and the attendant problems could not be addressed by employing traditional methods of social control. Thus, the jail, along with prisons later in the 19th century, served as a new and radical way to deal with social problems.

These institutions were intended to be places where criminals, deviants, vagrants, and the mentally ill could be housed and dealt with outside of the community. In this way, the jailed social outcast was "out of sight and mind" for most people. The growth and acceptance of institutionalization became widely recognized as a progressive way to deal with society's most problematic individuals, such as the mentally ill, the sick and neglected, the poor, or criminal offenders. As a result, jails became part of a network of institutions that proliferated throughout the early 19th century. These institutions of confinement were a reaction to the cruelty and barbarousness of earlier methods of social control, such as corporal and capital punishment, and were viewed as humane alternatives to the more draconian methods of dealing with deviants.

In fact, Goldfarb (1975) has suggested that the creation of the early jail, specifically the Walnut Street Jail, was directly related to what early religious reformers—the Quakers—viewed as outrageous and cruel ways to deal with the poor, the ill, and the criminal. Institutionalizing such people in jails and prisons was viewed as more humane. As Rothman (1971) has stated, however, this justification became part of the repertoire of those who favored institutionalization. Somewhat ironically, in promoting institutionalization as a method of social control, reformers argued that their intent was to avoid reverting to cruel and inhumane practices. Thus, the history of cruelty and violence against the weakest elements in society fostered a belief in the idea that institutionalization was the only civilized way to deal with them. As a result, jails continued to proliferate throughout 19th-century America.

However, did jail systems really offer a humane alternative to the lash or the hangman's noose? Some social historians have suggested that the cruelty associated with corporal and capital punishments became embedded in jails and prisons (Rothman, 1971). In other words, while institutions may have moved away from physically punishing criminal offenders, a newer form of brutality emerged in jails. In fact, jails have historically represented a type of punishment and confinement that is quite distinct from other confinement institutions. As Goldfarb (1975) states, "There was no coherent architectural history or planning of the jail institution; nor has there been much variation in the function and design of the jail to the present time" (p. 10). In short, the jail was viewed as a holding tank; nothing more, nothing less. Jails were built with the sole intention of housing people who could not be handled in any other way. Later sections of this chapter explore how 20th-century jail architecture changed the nature of the jail.

Jails From 1850-1900

The jail was useful to urban America's growing cities, where the socially deviant or the poor could be controlled simply by warehousing them. The jail also helped control many criminal gangs that increasingly roamed the western United States. To address the growing lawlessness, more and more communities began to build jails. Many of these were no more than makeshift structures intended to house criminals for very short periods of time.

By the end of the 19th century, most American cities and counties had established jails. The sheriff was in charge of the jail, which remains the case in most counties today. The jail became more critical to communities when crime proliferated and urban centers expanded. As community populations grew, so too did jail populations. Managing these offenders became the jail's central purpose (Irwin, 1985).

The 20th-Century Jail

As the 20th century progressed, jails increasingly focused on **rabble management**, which describes the process of warehousing offenders who threaten the social order largely due to the offensiveness of their behavior, rather than their abject criminality. "Rabble management" is not exclusive to jails. The entire criminal justice system, beginning with police, serves to control those whom society finds offensive. The rabble class poses many problems (vandalism, loitering, littering, inappropriate public behavior, etc.); hence, maintaining order in the community and minimizing "broken windows" (Kelling & Wilson, 1982; Kelling & Coles, 1996) is a key function of the police. In this way rabble management is consistent with the broader goals of maintaining community order.

Irwin (1985) defines rabble as those "mostly detached and disreputable persons who are arrested more because they are offensive than because they have committed crimes" (p. xiii). The rabble class is composed of individuals who might be described as public nuisances: the derelicts, the drunks, the vagrants, the mentally ill, and the homeless. Thus, rabble management involves removing from city streets those individuals who are offensive yet perhaps not necessarily dangerous upon closer examination of their crimes.

In the 20th century those rounded up as part of rabble management were headed for a brief stint in the county jail. This is how the jail came to serve its primary function of controlling those who are the most socially offensive yet actually pose very little threat to society. Moreover, since jails are primarily composed of "rabble," their conditions have typically been poor. In fact, jail is often considered the



Mandel Ngan/©2012 AFP/Getty Images

People who are offensive to society are referred to as “rabble.” Do you think such people deserve to be arrested and put in jail? Why or why not?

and 26% of jail inmates reported having experiences that met the threshold for serious psychological distress. In another examination of five jails over two time periods, however, Steadman, Osher, Robbins, Case, & Samuels (2009) found severe mental illness to be much lower: 14.5% for male prisoners and over 31% for female prisoners. While the research findings vary across studies, the data does not paint a rosy picture about the composition of offenders in jail. It is clear that jails house those who are poor and suffer from many problems related to substance abuse and mental illness.

worst place to be confined, even worse than prison, although those in jail have committed relatively less serious crimes. A majority of people in jail are pretrial detainees who are awaiting trial and have not been determined guilty of a crime. Ironically, they are forced to live in conditions much worse than those found in many state prisons, where convicted felons are sent.

Irwin (1985) argued that in the 20th century, American jails evolved to become institutions of social control for not only the most offensive but also those who make up the underclass—the people who have the least social power and are the most accepting of jail life. These include petty hustlers, derelicts, junkies, “crazies,” and outlaws—many of whom have had previous experiences with the criminal justice system and are considered “disreputable” by the general public. These factors led Irwin (1985) to suggest that *offensiveness* is the critical variable in jail inmates’ crimes and the reason why jails are filled with those who are the least powerful in society.

Who Makes Up Those in Jail?

Recent demographic profiles of jail inmates support the claim that jails do in fact house the most marginalized and disenfranchised members of society. For example, data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (Zeng, 2018) indicate that in 2016 non-Hispanic Blacks were incarcerated at 3.5 times the rate of non-Hispanic Whites; in 2000 non-Hispanic Blacks were incarcerated at almost 6 times the rate of non-Hispanic Whites. These figures indicate disparity among different members of society.

Then, couple this information with prearrest income data and other relevant socioeconomic indicators. According to Rabuy and Kopf (2015), in 2014 the median annual income for male jail inmates prior to their arrest was \$19,650. In comparison, nonincarcerated individuals’ median income was more than double that (\$41,250). In addition, a majority of jail inmates had never married prior to arrest (57.6%); just under 54% had not completed high school (Bronson & Berzofsky, 2017); and 29% were unemployed (James, 2004). Interestingly, jail inmates also have long records of illegal drug usage, with nearly 69% using drugs regularly prior to incarceration (James, 2004). Clearly, then, it seems that a sizable number of jail inmates are from what would be called the underclass—those members of society who are the most disenfranchised and alienated from conventional norms and values.

Equally devastating is the fact that many jail inmates suffer from some type of mental illness. According to Bronson and Berzofsky (2017), from 2011 to 2012, 14% of state and federal prisoners

Applying Criminal Justice: How to Define the “Rabble Class”

This chapter introduced the concept of “rabble” to discuss who is confined in jails, defining the rabble class as being composed of petty offenders, the homeless, the poor, and the mentally ill. This definition is problematic, however. Obviously, not everyone in jail fits this description. Jails also house more affluent and socially stable people who have been arrested, say, for public intoxication or drunk driving. Are such people part of the rabble class? Should they be treated differently?

Is Irwin correct to say that “rabble” is a social status defined by an offender’s degree of social offensiveness, rather than criminal seriousness? Can the jail escape its history of rabble management—and if so, how? What would you do to change or move away from the notion of jail as a place to manage society’s rabble? Is such a move possible or even desirable? As you read subsequent chapters, think about the concept of rabble management in jails and how the rest of the corrections process is affected by such a characterization.

3.3 Contemporary Jail Management Issues

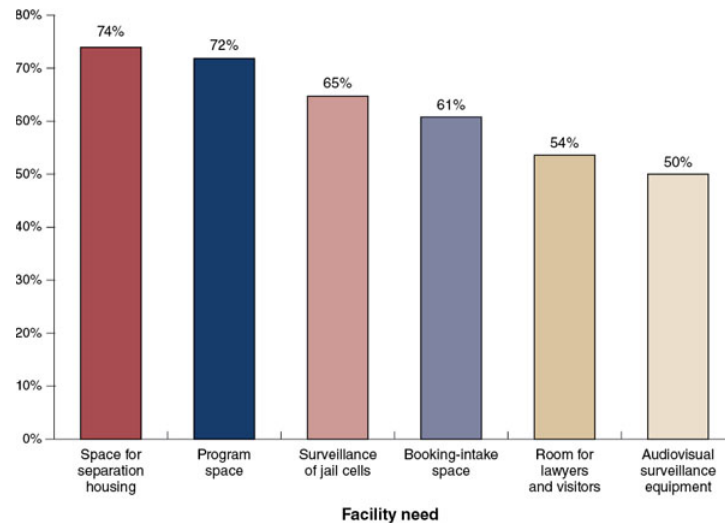
The jail of the past was a product of a number of forces. This remains the case today, though contemporary jails experience new issues that require the attention of jail managers. This section explores the conditions in jails and the three types of jail design.

Conditions in Jail

The conditions of most contemporary American jails are quite poor; despite many cities' attempts to improve conditions, many jails, on the whole, are terrible places to be. In the 1980s, according to the National Institute of Justice (1988), jail managers cited conditions as a major area of concern and identified six major areas that required immediate attention. Figure 3.1 shows the percentage of jail managers who indicated a specific area was problematic; note that many of these issues persist today.

Figure 3.1: Jail facility needs

Jail managers are faced with many issues; finding adequate space to house inmates is chief among the most pressing problems.



From Nation's Jail Managers Assess Their Problems, by Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1998, Washington, DC: US Department of Justice.

The major problematic areas are space for separation in housing (74%), program space (72%), and surveillance of jail cells (65%). It is well known that many jails lack the space to adequately house their number of inmates. This problem becomes compounded by the poor quality of food, unsafe living conditions, and an indifferent correctional officer staff. Given these conditions, it seems clear why many argue that jails are the nation's worst institution, and why Goldfarb (1975) felt compelled to describe them as the "nation's dumping ground" (p. 2).

Recently, many jail administrators have called for more resources and attention to be given to the country's ailing and outdated jails. This thinking has spawned interest in designing jails so as to make them more manageable. Jail management and design became a very important matter in the 1990s and remain significant in the 21st century. Many cities, particularly large urban centers, have invested huge sums in constructing new jail facilities or have collaborated with other communities to build regional jails. Jail managers and those interested in jail reform regard these as important investments.

Jail Design and Management

Jail management and design has captured the attention of many interested in corrections. U.S. jails have featured three categories of jail architecture over the past 200 years (Nelson, 1986). Each differs in structure; in addition, each proposes a different philosophy and management approach to the jail's operation.

Linear/Intermittent Surveillance

The **linear/intermittent surveillance** jail design, illustrated in Figure 3.2, features an architectural style that is linear or at right angles to the surveillance area. The structural design and management philosophy emphasize limited interactions between inmates and correctional officers—hence the name "intermittent surveillance." Central to this approach is the belief that the relationship between correctional officers and prisoners should be minimal; at best, interaction only occurs when officers conduct counts.

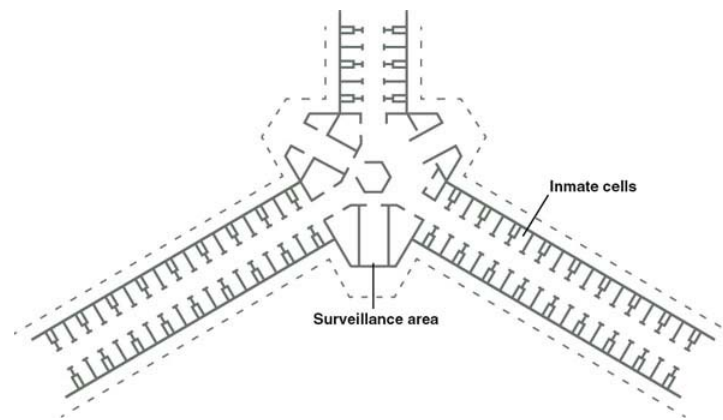


Getty Images News/©2012 Getty Images

Here, a prisoner is escorted by an officer during his bail hearing. The *Salerno* decision significantly changed bail procedures. Do you think bail should be used as a means to protect public safety?

Figure 3.2: The linear/intermittent surveillance jail design

The linear/intermittent jail design emphasizes limited interaction between inmates and officers.



Adapted from "Changing Concepts in Jail Design and Management," by W. R. Nelson, in D.B. Kalinich and J. Klofas (Eds.), *Sneaking Inmates Down the Alley: Problems and Prospects in Jail Management* (p. 169), 1986, Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

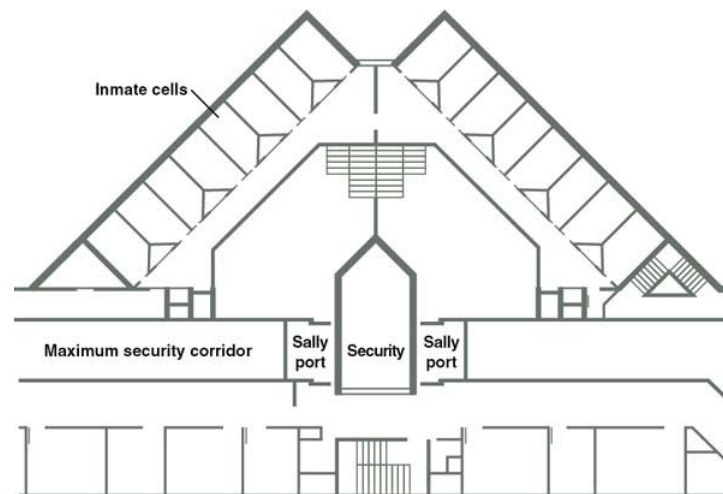
This traditional approach to jail design and management sought to isolate the inmate from the correctional staff. Remember that jails were historically viewed as holding tanks that expected minimal interaction between inmate and custodian. In fact, many contemporary writers believe that a number of the problems associated with jails can be traced to their rather antiquated design and management (Kerle, 2003). However, this is less the case today. Newer approaches to jail design aim to help correctional officers more effectively supervise prisoners.

Podular/Remote Surveillance

The **podular/remote surveillance** design requires that correctional officers have no direct interaction with jailed prisoners (see Figure 3.3). In this design, officers monitor inmates from a pod within the housing unit which, in most jails, gives them a 360-degree view of the cell block. Officers do not interact with inmates directly, except when responding to requests for services or to leave the housing unit. This approach to jail design and management has been described as "second generation" because it is viewed as the next alternative to the more traditional "first generation" linear/intermittent surveillance design. The podular/remote surveillance management philosophy is reactive in that it assumes that inmates will act in a violent or unpredictable manner. Thus, the officer is separated from the inmate through the podular design; if trouble occurs in the housing unit, the officer is protected by a fixture, and more officers can be summoned in an emergency.

Figure 3.3: The podular/remote surveillance jail design

Also known as the "second generation" jail, the podular/remote design acknowledges that some interaction between inmates and officers, albeit limited, is required.



Adapted from "Changing Concepts in Jail Design and Management," by W. R. Nelson, in D.B. Kalinich and J. Klofas (Eds.), *Sneaking Inmates Down the Alley: Problems and Prospects in Jail Management* (p. 170), Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Podular/Direct Supervision

The final type of jail design, shown in Figure 3.4, is known as the **podular/direct supervision** approach. Under this design, inmate and officer are placed in the same housing unit with no structural separations. This design has its origin in the "functional unit" concept developed for federal institutions in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Its fundamental premise was to have inmates occupy single cells in a self-contained area that was under the direct supervision of staff. The idea quickly spread to other institutions and was the operating principle behind the construction of federal Metropolitan Correctional Centers built in the mid-1970s (Zupan, 1991).

In the podular/direct supervision approach, the housing unit contains up to 50 cells, each of which is occupied by one inmate. Unlike the other two approaches, this model attempts to be proactive in its management philosophy, relying on officers' skills and



Frank Perry/©2012 AFP/Getty Images

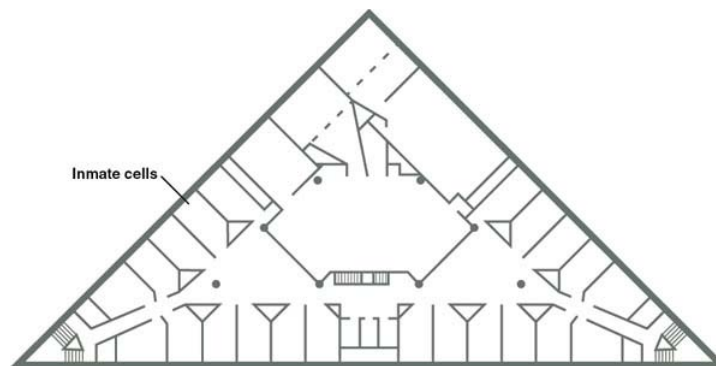
The Progressive period focused on rehabilitation, such as teaching skills inmates could use upon integration back into society. Do you think this sort of program is beneficial or too lenient? Not all jails require prisoners to interact with correctional officers. Some officers simply observe inmates using computers and video cameras. Do you think this system is more or less effective than others discussed?

training to control and supervise inmates. Therefore, this approach requires correctional officers to be properly trained.

Given this, many have argued that the podular/direct supervision model is only as good as the staff that is implementing it. In short, correctional officers are at the core of this type of jail design and management. Improperly trained officers would be unable to achieve the conditions expected of this contemporary jail, such as enhanced safety for inmates and officers. While the linear/intermittent and podular/remote models are reactive and only minimally involve the correctional officer, the podular/direct model makes officers the cornerstone of effective jail management and directly involves them in maintaining control and security. As some have suggested, the new generation philosophy makes the correctional officer's role more rewarding (Klofas, Smith, & Meister, 1986).

Figure 3.4: The podular/direct supervision jail design

Correctional officers are key to the success of the podular/direct supervision jail design.



Adapted from "Changing Concepts in Jail Design and Management," by W. R. Nelson, in D.B. Kalinich and J. Klofas (Eds.), *Sneaking Inmates Down the Alley: Problems and Prospects in Jail Management* (p. 171), Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Direct Supervision Principles

Most importantly, as stated by Nelson (1986), the new generation design enables managers and administrators to overcome many of the jail's classic problems. Institutions that employ the direct supervision model subscribe to eight general principles of operation: safety, control, communications, supervision, manageability, classification, just treatment, and effective personnel. By providing better jail design and management, contemporary jails can become more than the neglected institutions they have been in the past.

In fact, research by the National Institute of Corrections (1987) has shown the benefits of the new generation concept of jail management. In its examination of the Manhattan House of Detention, the institute found that assaults, violence, and the physical destruction of property were all reduced under the new generation philosophy when compared to the traditional design and management approach. Other research has also indicated that correctional officers are supportive of the podular/direct supervision concept once they experience the visible changes the model brings to the jail (Lovrich & Zupan, 1987; Wener, 2006).

The National Institute of Corrections (2010) stresses that direct supervision principles are very important to the effective operation of modern jail facilities. These principles emphasize effective prisoner control, effective supervision, competent staff, safety of staff and inmates, manageable and cost-effective operations, effective communication, classification and orientation, and justice and fairness in operations. O'Toole, Nelson, Liebert, and Keller (2004) offer an outcomes-based assessment strategy for jails seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of their direct supervision operations. Typical outcomes include lower levels of vandalism, graffiti, assault, dangerous contraband, and suicide among inmates and increased safety for both inmates and staff.

3.4 Pretrial Detention and Jailing Process

Pretrial detention is a mechanism whereby the court ensures a defendant remains in its custody until trial.

Pretrial detainees bring a specific set of challenges for jails. For example, their legal standing compared to convicted and sentenced prisoners can be complicated. Consider that one of the most controversial issues in jails is strip searches of pretrial detainees. In *Florence v. Board of Chosen Freeholders of County of Burlington et al.* (2012), the Supreme Court affirmed the decision of a lower court to allow pretrial detainees to be subjected to invasive strip searches. The court ruled that the institution's need for safety and security, especially regarding smuggled contraband, took precedence over an individual's right to privacy. The rights of both legally convicted offenders and those awaiting trial are examined in Chapter 5.

Another problematic issue is that of preventive detention and bail. Since the landmark case of *United States v. Salerno* (1987), the Supreme Court has upheld the legality of detaining someone prior to trial if he or she poses a threat to society. This preventive detention justification changed the nature of bail. Prior to the *Salerno* decision, bail was used to guarantee a defendant's appearance at a trial. Under *Salerno*, the court expanded the options available to courts and prosecutors to guarantee appearance and promote public safety. The United States has had a long history of reforming bail procedures in an attempt to make the criminal justice process more fair. The results of many efforts, such as the 1984 Federal Bail Reform Act, were either positive or negative, depending on one's point of view. Walker (2011) argues that bail reform efforts allowed many less serious offenders who posed no aggregate threat to the community to be released from jail prior to trial. However, there have always been isolated incidents in which a person on bail committed a particularly serious and heinous crime.

These issues highlight the various processes that affect jails and the offenders housed in them. No two offenders are alike; all offenders have different backgrounds and experiences with the criminal justice system. Most importantly, no two people respond to the jail experience in the exact same way. Irwin (1985) has written about the problems that inmates experience once incarcerated in jail. These problems center on four distinct processes: disintegration, disorientation, degradation, and preparation. Each process further removes an offender from the community and firmly entrenches him or her in the rabble lifestyle. As Irwin (1985) states:

Going to jail and being held there tends to maintain people in a rabble status or convert them to it. To maintain membership in conventional society and thereby avoid rabble status, a person must sustain a conscious commitment to a conventional set of social arrangements. When persons are arrested and jailed, their ties and arrangements with people outside very often disintegrate. In addition, they are profoundly disoriented and subjected to a series of degrading experiences that corrode their general commitment to society. Finally, they are prepared for rabble life by their experiences in jail, which supply them with the identity and culture required to get by as a disreputable. (p. 45)

Therefore, the jail serves to—albeit unintentionally—introduce inmates to a lifestyle that is antisocial and unconventional. This may be particularly true of pretrial detainees, who may become alienated from a system and society that treat them like criminals when they have not yet been found guilty of a crime.

Disintegration

The **disintegration** process, by which the inmate loses all ties to the external world, involves three separate consequences (Irwin, 1985). The most tangible loss associated with being jailed is that of property, such as clothing, cars, and all other personal items. Often an inmate is unsure of when, or even if, he or she will get these items back. Losing personal property marks the beginning of the disintegration process and signifies to the inmate that he or she is no longer a member of the free community.

A second serious deprivation for many inmates is their loss of social ties to the outside world. While inmates are allowed to make a certain number of phone calls a day, this does not adequately replace or even serve to maintain relationships with loved ones on the outside. Being cut off from friends and loved ones is to be expected in jail, but the experience is made worse by very limited communication with the outside world. The disintegration process is accelerated when the inmate has no one to communicate with. Communication tends to center on the jail "grapevine," but this does not meet the inmate's social needs.

Finally, one loses the "capacity to take care of business" (Irwin, 1985, p. 51) when incarcerated. The inability to effectively manage one's life while behind bars can be devastating both for pretrial detainees and for jailed inmates. For a typical prisoner, the average stay in jail prior to trial is about 6 months (Kerle, 2003)—a significant loss of time. Pretrial detainees cannot defend themselves as well as if they were released on bail prior to their trial, and very few inmates or detainees are able to handle their legal affairs while incarcerated. Some, for example, may have holds or detainers from other jurisdictions, and in many situations, being detained may prevent them from being able to resolve the pertinent issues involving these holds. As a result, they are further removed from the community, and the disintegration process continues.

Disorientation

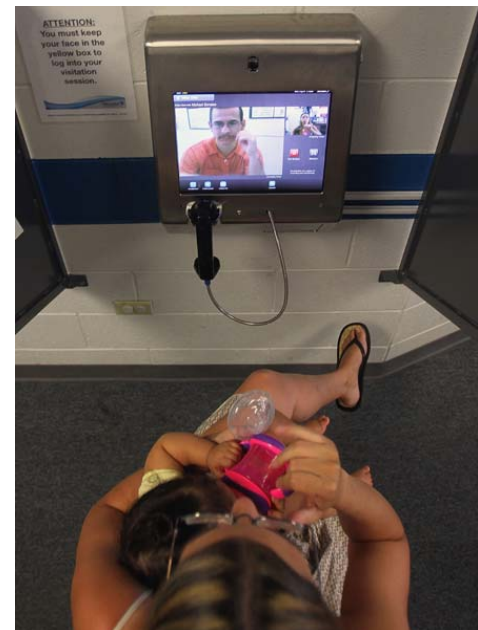
The process of **disorientation**, by which the inmate loses his or her identity and sense of self, is underway throughout the entire jail experience. From arrest to booking to being placed in the jail's "holding tank," disorientation occurs with such intensity that the inmate is rendered ill equipped to deal with the experience. This is particularly true among first-time offenders who are not experienced with jails. During this stage of the jailing process, the

Inexperienced Inmates

Many of those who enter jail will only receive a citation for minor offenses. Deputies often have to explain the booking process to these arrestees who are not familiar with the system. Do you think that arrestees who are only booked with citations experience disintegration, disorientation, degradation, and preparation as much as those who are sentenced to serve time in jail?

Inexperienced Inmates

From Title: *Lockdown: Multnomah County Detention Center*
(<https://tod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=100753&xtid=40799>)



Drew Nash/Times-News/Associated Press

Being separated from family is a major part of disintegration. Even though visitation is allowed, separation still exists due to the lack of privacy and intimacy during visits.

inmate becomes more conscious of the fact that he or she has been arrested and is incarcerated. In addition, the jail's typically poor conditions leave an indelible impression on the inmate.

Most importantly, the jail inmate becomes "self-disorganized" (Irwin, 1985, p. 63) to the point that he or she feels alienated and powerless. For first-time offenders, the jail experience warps their sense of the outside world and in some cases may introduce them to a rabble lifestyle that they permanently adopt. For most, however, the jail experience wears off upon release, although it is never fully forgotten. Moreover, for those who return to jail, the experience shapes their subsequent adjustment to jail and may "propel them further outside" (Irwin, 1985, p. 66) mainstream society.

Degradation

Many have argued that doing time in jail is one of the most degrading experiences anyone can go through; far worse than being in prison (Rothman, 1971; Goldfarb, 1975). The **degradation** process, by which the inmate is demeaned, begins with arrest and culminates with the inmate's placement in jail. Along the way, the defendant must endure many humiliating experiences, most of which are tied to the jail's routine activities. This includes being strip-searched in the presence of other inmates and staff, insulted by police and deputy sheriffs who run the jail, and verbally harassed by other prisoners.

Jail staff aim to minimize these experiences, but this can be difficult for many reasons (Cornelius, 2008). For one, the culture of the jail and the staff who run it may normalize such behaviors or make them seem acceptable. For example, many deputy sheriffs view being assigned to work the jail as either a punishment for some wrongdoing on road patrol or as an initiation for rookie deputies, with the result that they may take their feelings out on the inmates. For most deputies, working in a jail is a temporary assignment, one which they do not initially choose. They are often placed there when they begin their law enforcement careers, and very few have an interest in working in the jail long-term (Kerle, 1998). More importantly, staff indifference toward inmates can be part of their adaptation to working in such an environment. By denying and degrading the inmate, the officer is reinforcing some of his or her own preconceived biases and stereotypes or finding a way to cope with the working environment. Even the most well-intentioned individual can become callous and indifferent to inmates' needs, and in a surprisingly short amount of time. Yet this does not have to be the case. Much has been written on how jails can be run more professionally and become more positive working environments (Stinchcomb, Applegate, Kerle, & Stojkovic, 2012).

Preparation

After the inmate's ties to the outside world have disintegrated, and after he or she has become disoriented from the jail experience and has been sufficiently degraded, he or she is ripe for assimilation into the rabble existence. In this process, known as **preparation**, the inmate creates an identity that incorporates the criminal lifestyle. Preparation, according to Irwin (1985), involves three steps. First, the inmate overcomes the psychological barrier that separates the rabble class from other reputable members of society. This barrier is removed after prolonged interaction with other members of the rabble class. Soon the inmate starts to believe that jail life is not as bad as when it was first experienced. In short, the jail inmate adapts to and accepts the rabble mentality. Associated with the removal of this psychological barrier are attitudes and behaviors—such as being wary and opportunistic—that enable the inmate to survive in jail. The "loss of conventional sensibilities" (Irwin, 1985, p. 85) is a necessary part of adopting the rabble mentality.

A preparation process occurs in most jails, whereby the values and attitudes of the jail become part of the inmate's existence. Similar to the general process of adapting to prison, the second step toward the rabble mentality is recognizing the cultural cues at work in the jail. This includes communicating like and accepting the behaviors of those who are the most respected members of the jail setting. For the rabble, as Irwin (1985) describes, this means discussing life on the streets, the decisions of the courts, and what is occurring in prisons, or "the joint." The process of preparing for the rabble existence is powerful and affects all inmates differently. Their differential attachment is contingent on past experiences with jails and the rabble class. Prolonged interaction with the rabble class will encourage identification with and acceptance of their norms, values, and attitudes and may be one of the most negative consequences of jail confinement.

Finally, the preparation process enables members of the rabble class to establish a network of social relationships that endure once they are released into the community. In other words, the rabble class continues to know and interact with each other on the streets. Ostensibly, the preparation process provides the released offender with the necessary connections to continue a criminal lifestyle. In effect, an offender's status as a member of the rabble class is reinforced by doing jail time and connecting with others who are in the same predicament. Being released from jail or detention, therefore, is a mere physical change for many inmates—a geographic shift from the jail to the streets. Because they have adopted the rabble mentality, they are primed to continue a life of crime and deviance and are supported in such endeavors by other members of the rabble class.

The most definitive work done on the rabble hypothesis was conducted by two researchers who examined a particular subclass of rabble—the homeless. Fitzpatrick and Myrstol (2011) analyzed data from 47,592 interviews conducted with jailed adults in 30 cities as part of the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program. They found that the homeless population was overrepresented among arrestees and those booked into the jail and was much more likely to be arrested for low-level crimes and property offenses. The homeless represent those members of society who have experienced higher rates of alcohol and drug abuse and mental health issues. In effect, the jail has become the "new" mental health facility for those who are not treated through traditional mental health institutions. As noted by Faust (2003), "the three largest de facto psychiatric facilities in the United States are now the Los Angeles County Jail, Rikers Island in New York City, and the Cook County jail in Chicago" (p. 6). Fitzpatrick and Myrstol (2011) suggest that pursuing a policy of rabble management through incarcerating the homeless is a choice rather than an imperative and that the jail, as well as other components of the criminal justice system, could move beyond rabble management to positively intervene in the lives of the incarcerated. Stinchcomb et al. (2012) make a similar argument and note that some jails are starting to develop new organizational identities that stress human service and treatment for offenders. We will see an example of this type of effort later in the chapter.

The following interaction reviews Irwin's four processes of jailing and assesses students' ability to correctly identify the characteristics of each process.

IRWIN'S FOUR PROCESSES OF JAILING

Drag each process from the right column to its matching description in the left column.

- Loss of property
- Loss of social ties to the outside world
- Loss of ability to "take care of business"

- "Self-disorganization" associated with feelings of alienation and powerlessness
- Continuous throughout jailing period
- Especially difficult for first-time offenders

- Humiliating jailing experiences, including:
 - strip searches
 - insults
 - harassment

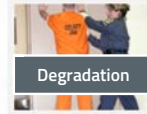
- Psychological transition from reputable society to rabble class
- Adoption of rabble class mentality
- Creation of rabble class relationships that are maintained after release



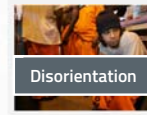
Disintegration



Preparation



Degradation



Disorientation

SUBMIT

3.5 Mental Illness Among Jail Inmates

Many inmates in the contemporary jail suffer from some type of mental illness. According to Bronson and Berzofsky (2017), in 2011 approximately 44% of jail inmates were diagnosed with a mental health issue such as major depressive disorder or bipolar disorder prior to being incarcerated. Other research indicates that mental illness among jail inmates ranges from mild depression to major mental illness categorized as serious psychological distress (Bronson & Berzofsky, 2017). Unfortunately, very little is known about what mental health services are provided to jail inmates (Steadman, McCarty, & Morrissey, 1989; Stinchcomb & McCampbell, 2008). Most of the existing research focuses on the prevalence of mental illness among jail inmates and indicates that the problem is significant.

Inmates' mental health issues are compounded by additional problems that are also found in high rates among jailed inmates, such as suicide and drug and alcohol addiction (Cornelius, 2008). For example, one survey of jail inmates (Bronson, Stroop, Zimmer, & Berzofsky, 2017) indicated that from 2007 to 2009, over two thirds met the criteria for drug dependence or abuse. According to James and Glaze (2006), over 50% of inmates reported engaging in binge drinking and 80% reported using one of four illicit substances—marijuana, opiates, methamphetamines, or phencyclidine—prior to incarceration. Similarly, Green, Miranda, Daroowalla, and Siddique (2005) sampled 100 female prisoners and found a high incidence of lifetime trauma (98%), current mental disorders (36%), and drug and alcohol problems (74%). Ultimately, it is clear that both mental health issues and substance abuse issues are pronounced in jail settings.

More importantly, the existing research only reveals the number of inmates diagnosed with mental illness and does not reflect on the *causes* of such mental health issues. Gibbs (1987) has argued that much of what is known about mental illness in jail settings is based on person-centered explanations that suggest that mental health problems are brought into the jail by inmates. His research, in contrast, suggests that many mental health problems experienced by inmates can be traced to environmental causes. That is, mental health problems may stem from the jail setting itself, or, if an inmate is predisposed toward mental illness, the jail setting can exacerbate the situation. By implication, therefore, the environmental view requires that those who work in the jail modify the setting so that mental health problems do not worsen; they should also take measures to limit the potential for inmates to develop mental health problems.

The Role of the Correctional Officer

The correctional officer can help inmates alleviate the everyday stresses of jail life (Lombardo, 1985; Callahan, 2004). Correctional officers can be trained on how to teach inmates to cope with the stresses of the jail environment. Over time, working closely with mentally ill inmates familiarizes correctional officers with behavioral cues that are consistent with psychological distress (Lombardo, 1985; Gallanek, 2015). Correctional officers with such training can work with prison psychologists and counseling staff to identify inmates in need of psychiatric treatment. Not only can this strategy help inmates cope with jail, it can also enable the officer to expand the correctional role to include other forms of human service delivery (Toch & Klofas, 1982).

Limited funds and a professional culture that often stresses surveillance and control make it very difficult for correctional staff to maintain mental health support services (Drapkin, 2010). Most jails across the country have limited mental health services for inmates, and it is unclear whether the ones that exist adequately meet inmates' needs (Koons, Burrow, Morash, & Bynum, 1997). Nevertheless, there has been much attention paid to the plight of mentally ill inmates in jail, and many jails have developed policies to deal with the problem. This has forced them to reconsider their mission and pursue strategies that move beyond warehousing offenders toward other goals more consistent with reform.

The Crisis Intervention Team Model

One approach to jails' mental health crisis is called the **crisis intervention team (CIT)** model. This strategy recognizes the importance of enlisting mental health professionals to help jails address prisoners' mental health issues. CIT has its roots in law enforcement attempts to more effectively deal with the mentally ill they encounter in the community (Steadman et al., 2001; Watson & Fulambarker, 2012).

Initially, CIT was launched to help law enforcement better address the needs of the mentally ill and to allow people suffering from mental illness who are suspected of breaking the law to be quickly transferred to an appropriate facility with a crisis team, thereby allowing the police to resume their regular duties (McGuire & Bond, 2011). Others have suggested that CIT can also be used in jails to more effectively manage difficult prisoners who have high mental health needs (Kerle, 2012). The goal of CIT is not only to redirect offenders out of jail but to change the way society conceives of jails. Research suggests that jails could provide treatment options that would reduce inmates' criminal behavior, drug abuse, and recidivism (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2000).

The jail's mission must be refocused so it better addresses offenders' needs and ultimately serves the public in a more effective way. This will be challenging given the jail's history and traditional purposes. Recent research suggests that the time has come for jails to refocus their mission and direct limited resources toward dealing with offenders in ways that have scientific merit and produce tangible results (Stinchcomb et al., 2012). Furthermore, research indicates that investing in treatment, including jail treatment programming, can produce a return on investment of 12:1 (Travis, 2005). This means for every dollar spent, society will see a \$12 reduction in costs associated with substance abuse crimes, criminal justice expenditures, and health care.

Applying Criminal Justice: How to Manage the Mentally Ill in Jails

Ken Kerle, the former editor of *American Jails Magazine*, has stated that the greatest challenge facing 21st-century jails is the sizable presence of mentally ill offenders. This chapter described the various estimates of mental illness among jail inmates and how some jails—such as the Los Angeles County Jail, which has over 22,000 prisoners, many of whom suffer from mild to severe mental illness—have become the largest mental health facilities in the United States.

When County Jail Becomes the Local Mental Hospital

State budget cuts forced many of Portland's mental health facilities to close. As a result, the mentally ill often end up in jail, as the psych ward at the local hospital often asks the Multnomah County Jail to take aggressive drug users and mental health patients. Do you think there is a better way to handle these types of cases? If so, what kind of solutions can you think of?

When County Jail Becomes the Local Mental Hospital
From Title: Lockdown: Multnomah County Detention Center
(<https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=100753&xid=40799>)

Are jails equipped to provide mental health services to prisoners? Are jail personnel qualified to provide such services? What are the difficulties of being a primary provider of mental health services in a jail? What are other options for dealing with the mentally ill in jail? The chapter mentions one promising strategy: the creation of CITs to work in jails. What are the strengths of this approach to managing mentally ill offenders? What are some of its limitations?

In addition, what role should other agencies, such as departments of mental health, play in helping jails provide mental health services to inmates? Should community agencies and families assume more responsibility for managing mentally ill offenders, both inside the jail and outside in the community?

Some have argued that jails are the final repository for people no one wants. Is this true about the mentally ill in jails? Others have argued that jails have no choice but to become more than just a place to manage society's rabble. This view suggests that jails can be a place where mentally ill offenders can receive effective treatment. Do you agree or disagree, and why?

A design and philosophy of maximum interaction between prisoners and staff within a housing unit.

podular/remote **surveillance**
[http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto](http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto)

A design and philosophy of limited and controlled interaction between prisoners and staff in a housing unit.

preparation
[http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto](http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto)

A process by which the inmate creates a self-identity that incorporates the criminal lifestyle as a result of the jailing process.

pretrial **detainees**
[http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto](http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto)

Individuals who are in custody awaiting a criminal trial and have not been convicted.

pretrial **detention**
[http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto](http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto)

The detention of offenders in the jail prior to an actual trial.

rabble **management**
[http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto](http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto)

The role of the contemporary jail as defined by both society and the criminal justice system as a place to warehouse offenders who pose a threat to the social order largely due to their offensiveness, not their criminality.

sentenced **offenders**
[http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto](http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto)

Persons sent to jail, usually for no more than 1 year, as determined by a court.

Walnut **Street** **jail**
[http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto](http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto)

The first jail in America, built in Philadelphia in 1790.

Web Resources

The official website of the American Jail Association. A great resource for materials and information regarding jails.

<http://www.aja.org> (<http://www.aja.org>)

The official website of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). The NIC has excellent materials and training sessions regarding all aspects of jails in America. The site is geared toward the correctional professional.

<http://www.nic.org> (<http://www.nic.org>)

The National Alliance on Mental Illness provides excellent materials on the causes and treatment of mental illness. It provides information and produces materials to address mental illness in the community, including materials for jails and prisons.

<http://www.nami.org> (<http://www.nami.org>)

The Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration is dedicated to providing research, information, and services to people struggling with substance abuse issues and mental health issues.

<http://www.samhsa.gov> (<http://www.samhsa.gov>)

Additional Resources

This monograph focuses on issues of mental illness in corrections and proposes strategies to introduce treatment within jail facilities.

American Psychiatric Association. (2004). *Mental illness and the criminal justice system: Redirecting resources toward treatment, not containment*. Arlington, VA: Author.

This book provides the basic concepts and operations associated with jails.

Cornelius, G. F. (2008). *The American jail: Cornerstone of modern corrections*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Group.

This book was the first of its kind to explore jail operations from a practical point of view.

Kerle, K. (2012). *Exploring jail operations* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

This book provides critical information regarding the major issues facing correctional institutions in the 21st century.

Pollock, J. (2005). *Prisons: Today and tomorrow* (2nd ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett.

This two-volume set examines the management of special populations in jails and prisons.

Stojkovic, S. (2005, 2010). *Managing special populations in jails and prisons* (Vols. 1 and 2). Kingston, NJ: Civic Research Institute.

4

Imprisonment



Ann Johansson/Associated Press

Learning Outcomes

After reading this chapter, you should be able to

- Describe early conceptions of the prison social system.
- Explain the functional/deprivation model of prison social organization.
- Explain the importation model of prison social organization.
- Explain contemporary conceptions of imprisonment.
- Identify modern explanations of doing "hard time."
- Describe both the private agenda and public agenda of correctional officers.

Introduction

“This is our home. . . . What you got to remember is that we live here. This prison is nothing but a mini-society that we run. The guards are only here for a job. We are here twenty-four hours a day.” This quote from the movie *Other Prisoners* highlights the importance of the prison social structure and its influence on a prison’s everyday workings. From correctional officers to “new fish” inmates, each individual involved in a prison is immersed in its social world. Many scholars have attempted to understand the effects the prison world has on those who interact within it. This chapter discusses various ideas about the origin of prison social structures and the internal and external factors that influence them.

In our discussion, we will examine models that attempt to explain the character and formation of inmate societies, highlighting the most important aspects of each. We show how each model contributes something different to the discussion of prison social structures and imprisonment as well as how prisoners’ roles make each model significant.

Our examination of prison social structure begins by exploring early conceptualizations of the prison world. From there we look at the functional/deprivation model of inmate social systems, a model that has significantly contributed to the research literature. This model was heavily influenced by the discipline of sociology and remains a major explanation for the social structures that exist behind prison walls. Then we explore another model of inmate social systems that was created, in part, by an ex-offender. This model, known as the *importation model*, argues that influences external to a prison are the most critical when trying to understand and explain its social structures.

The chapter then examines some contemporary ideas regarding how prison social structures are created. Prisons today are quite complex and require other models to fully explain their social workings. We examine these contemporary ideas and comment on their relevancy to understanding prison social structures and imprisonment in general. We also explore the research literature on correctional officers, raising some key issues that face these criminal justice professionals. Finally, we conclude by exploring some contemporary ideas about prison management and its relation to prisoner social systems. These ideas are at the forefront of thought about how prisoners’ social systems should be controlled by prison officials.

4.1 Early Conceptions of Prison Social Organization

Our understanding of prison social structures was quite limited until the mid-20th century. It was clear that people who ran institutions of confinement were aware of many of the key elements of what we would call a social system today, such as roles, differentiation, organization, and complexity. Nevertheless, an investigation of the prison's own unique social structure did not begin until 1940, when Donald Clemmer published his now classic piece, *The Prison Community*. In it, Clemmer argued that prisoners formed social arrangements inside the institution similar to those found on the outside. More importantly, Clemmer argued that through institutionalization, inmates experience a process whereby traditional values, beliefs, and attitudes were stripped from them and replaced by the prison's cultural values, which are often based on manipulation, deceit, and criminality.

Prisonization

Clemmer's analysis suggested that prisoners changed their behavior upon being incarcerated. This change, which Clemmer called **prisonization**, involves the adoption of specific behavioral patterns that are consistent with a prison's culture. Clemmer argued that a prisoner becomes increasingly removed from conventional and accepted behaviors and actions the longer he or she is under the influence of prison society. In addition to suggesting that prisoners internalize unconventional attitudes in prison, Clemmer also argued that these antisocial attitudes become more firmly entrenched the longer a person is institutionalized. In effect, the longer the incarceration experience, the more prisonized the inmate becomes; and the more prisonized the inmate, the more difficult it is to reach and reform him. Clemmer argued that the length of time served is a key factor that affects the degree to which an inmate loses his or her belief in and acceptance of traditional values, beliefs, and attitudes.

Testing the Prisonization Hypothesis: Wheeler

To test Clemmer's hypothesis, many early researchers examined the influence of time served on prisoner behavior, as well as the relationship between time served and the acceptance and internalization of the prison culture. For example, Stanton Wheeler (1961) sought to test the degree to which prisoners become prisonized over time and how that affects their allegiance and conformity to the prison staff's expectations. Did an inmate who had many contacts with the prison social system exhibit more of a prisonized experience than the inmate who had fewer contacts with the prison social system? In addition, how did an inmate's allegiance to the prison social system vary by degree of time served? Were there differences between inmates who had served shorter sentences compared to those who served longer ones in terms of their allegiance to staff expectations? Wheeler's analysis largely supported the prisonization hypothesis put forth by Clemmer.

Wheeler found that the degree to which inmates became prisonized was directly related to their involvement in the informal social system of the prison. Inmates also experienced a sense of role conflict as they became more assimilated into the social system. Wheeler (1961) states:

The inmate who values friendship among his peers and also desires to conform to the staff's norms faces a vivid and real role conflict. The conflict is not apparent or perhaps is not felt so intensely during the earliest stages of confinement, but with increasing length of time in the prison the strain becomes acute; inmates move to resolve the strain either by giving up or being excluded from primary ties, or by a shift in attitudes. (p. 704)

Wheeler also argued that the degree of assimilation to inmate culture was contingent on the "career phase" in which inmates found themselves. This concept, known as **differential attachment**, suggests inmates assimilate in a U-shaped pattern, whereby greater allegiance to conventional attitudes and staff norms are experienced in the early and late phases of confinement, and there is less acceptance of such norms in the middle phase of incarceration. In other words, inmates who had served less than 6 months were generally very accepting of staff expectations and conformed to them, whereas those who had served more than 6 months and had more than 6 months left were the least accepting and conforming. Thus, the more removed a prisoner is from the community, the less accepting he or she is of staff expectations and, as a result, the more pronounced the prisonization. Research suggests inmates behave this way out of self-interest; most show conformity with staff expectations toward the end of a sentence as a means to ensure release from the institution.

Wheeler's research essentially agreed with Clemmer's prisonization hypothesis but indicated it was not necessarily the case for all inmates. He went on to suggest that prisoners need to be dealt with according to their phase of incarceration. His research suggests that inmates are prisonized and "deprisonized" and that a direct, linear progression into negative behavior patterns is not always the result of length of time served. Instead, inmates' adaptive patterns are complex and require other types of research to determine how they cope with their environments.

Testing the Prisonization Hypothesis: Garabedian

Peter Garabedian (1963) continued the investigation into the prisonization process by examining the social roles and socialization processes present in the prison community. Like Wheeler, Garabedian sought to examine the complexities associated with prisonization but also aimed to identify role types exhibited by inmates. He found essentially five role types: *Square John*, *Right Guy*, *Politician*, *Outlaw*, and *Ding*. These role types represent prisoners' adaptive responses to problems endemic to the prison setting.

Square Johns are most in tune with the conventional attitudes and values of the prison's staff and its society. They seek to do their time with as few problems as possible and in accordance with the expectations of the staff.

Right Guys are most opposed to the expectations of the staff; they are viewed as the prisoner most in tune with the expectations and demands of the inmate society and ultimately the most respected. According to Garabedian, both the Square John and Right Guy roles subordinate their individual interests to the collective interests of the group. It is the group that counts, not the individual.

Politicians are the keenest type of inmate and have usually committed crimes that involved manipulation and deceit. They tend to interact with both inmates and staff.

Outlaws are the most feared type of inmate. They have resorted to violence or will use it to get what they want from others. They tend to be isolated from other inmates and staff because of their penchant for physical confrontations.



© Columbia/courtesy Everett Collection

Movies like *The Shawshank Redemption* illustrate the idea of prisonization: that it is hard to return to society after a long imprisonment. In what ways do you think movies stereotype prison life?

Finally, the Dings are those who have no other social characterization that clearly defines their behaviors. In many cases, according to Garabedian, they have committed nonviolent sex offenses. They tend to fade into the background of the inmate culture and are isolated from meaningful inmate and staff contact.

These role types respond to the prison environment in differentiated and unique ways. Like Clemmer and Wheeler, Garabedian found that an inmate's degree of prisonization varies by role type. For Dings, the early phase is the most important; for Right Guys and Square Johns, the middle phase; and for Outlaws, the late phase. Politicians were not found to have a critical phase during institutionalization. Prisoners' differential form of adaptation by role type not only suggests that inmate social systems are complex but also reinforces the idea that uniform treatment programs may not be the most effective for changing the behaviors of inmates who hold different roles.

The early research on prisons and the prisonization process suggests not only that adapting to the prison environment is a complex process but also that a prison's social structure produces behaviors and role types that vary over time. Accordingly, it would be reasonable to ask whether prison social systems vary by both time and location. For example, is the prisoner social system of a medium security institution the same as that found in a maximum security penitentiary—and do these systems remain constant over time? The early evidence suggested that prisoner social structures represent prisoners' complex adaptation to their individual environments. As such, prison social structures may be viewed as prisoners' unique attempts to cope with their environment. Or they may be the function of attitudes, beliefs, and values that prisoners bring into the institution by virtue of being incarcerated. These two views seek to answer the most fundamental question about how prisoner social structures develop: "How and why do these social structures originate in the prison environment?" To provide an answer, we must explore the two major models of inmate social system development: the *functional/deprivation* and *importation* models. We begin with the functional/deprivation model.

4.2 The Functional/Deprivation Model of Prison Social Organization

In 1958 sociologist Gresham Sykes published *The Society of Captives*, which provided comprehensive and enlightening accounts of prison life and how incarcerated men adapted to it. Today this small work is considered a classic in prison literature, since it put forth a major conceptual model for understanding prisoner social systems: the **functional/deprivation model**.

This model observes that prisoners interact with and adapt to the prison setting by developing rules and regulations that enable them to cope with its unique demands. As a result, prison behavioral patterns are directly *functional* to the environment of the prison. All prisoner behaviors are viewed as responses to the regimen imposed by the institutional setting. Sykes wanted to know how and why prisoners respond to prison the way they do, and he sought to identify and classify related behaviors.

To answer these questions, Sykes went to a maximum security prison in New Jersey and observed the adaptation patterns exhibited by prisoners. He found three fundamental adaptive processes at work. First, he argued that prisoners experience **pains of imprisonment** by virtue of being placed in the institution. These pains are unique to an inmate's particular prison environment, and the prisoner social system revolves around trying to cope with these pains individually and collectively.

Second, Sykes found that prisoners create clearly identifiable **argot roles** in prison. Note that these labels are now largely considered outdated by most modern correctional scholars and professionals. However, Sykes's intent at the time was to describe specific identities and expectations for the prisoners who assume them. Take, for example, the prisoner who is aggressive toward other inmates. Known as the "gorilla" in the prison of the 1950s (and as Garabedian's "outlaw" in the 1960s), this person resorts to the threat or use of force to get what he or she wants from other prisoners. Like the pains of imprisonment, these argot roles represent functional responses to the deprivations experienced in prison.

Finally, Sykes argued that there is a relationship between prison stability and inmates' social organization. Understanding control in a prison requires an examination of the role the inmate social system plays in providing stability. A prison's stability is inexorably tied to prisoners' social organization and how they adapt to the day-to-day contingencies of prison life.

The Pains of Imprisonment

Inmates essentially experience five pains of imprisonment; each one is a deprivation experienced simply by virtue of being in prison.

Deprivation of Liberty

First and foremost, prisoners experience the deprivation of liberty. The most visible and deeply felt pain, this deprivation is the most obvious, since the inmate cannot leave the prison; and in fact, the deprivation of liberty is a prison's central purpose. The inmate is in the state of "involuntary seclusion of the outlaw" (Sykes, 1958, p. 65). He or she is not only restricted from making decisions about the ability to move at will but, more importantly, is rejected by the community through being placed in prison. The inmate must find a way to cope with the label of prisoner (both within prison and upon being released). Often, the prisoner "copes" by rejecting the society that has placed him or her in prison.

Deprivation of Goods and Services

Second, prisoners are deprived of most goods and services when incarcerated; they no longer have access to many of the amenities they enjoyed when they were free. In this process, the prisoner is stigmatized as less of a social being, in society's eyes. In a world where material possessions are critical to the definition of oneself, a rather poor disposition is created and perpetuated by being incarcerated—a prisoner is denied the basic items that general society uses to define success or even acceptance. In short, as Sykes (1958) suggests, "[The prisoner] must carry the additional burden of social definitions which equate his material deprivation with personal inadequacy" (p. 70).

Deprivation of Sexual Contact

Third, prison settings typically deprive an inmate of her or his preferred sexual activities. Because of the physical limitations imposed by prison, it may be impossible for some prisoners to adopt their preferred sexual roles while incarcerated. As with material possessions, denying an inmate's sexual expression restricts an important part of his or her identity. Heterosexual prisoners who engage in same-gender sexual behaviors while incarcerated are reflecting *functional* adaptations to a setting in which their preferred means of sexual expression are denied. Interestingly, since the 1950s a few states—California, Connecticut, New York, and Washington—have instituted conjugal visits as a way to alleviate this form of deprivation (Goldstein, 2015).

Denial of Autonomy

Fourth, prison denies inmates their autonomy. Autonomy refers to one's ability to make daily decisions about one's life. In prison, however, practically all decisions are made for the inmate; as a result, he or she is at the mercy of the wishes of the correctional staff. This situation of dependency reduces many prisoners to a state of childhood, in which they are unable to make even rudimentary decisions about their lives. In this sense the custodial regimen is demeaning and repulsive to many inmates; it violates their self-image as people who can make their own decisions. By being denied this opportunity to make their own decisions, prisoners are forced to live dependent lives.

Deprivation of Security

Lessons Learned in Prison

Offenders discuss how they have learned to appreciate the little things in life. They miss family, the variety of life outside the prison, and being able to make their own choices without a strict routine. Are there specific pains of imprisonment that present greater hardships than others?

Lessons Learned in Prison

From Title: *Inside Folsom* (<https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wid=100753&xid=39084>)

Finally, while in prison, inmates are deprived of security. Most prisoners do not feel safe in an environment where dangerous people have been placed. As one inmate put it, "The worst thing about prison is you have to live with other prisoners" (Sykes 1958, p. 77). Indeed, many prisoners feel that the institution is not safe and secure and that they could be victimized at any time. Moreover, many inmates experience constant conflict with other inmates who seek to gain favors or property and test them for weakness or strength. This pressure strains an inmate's self-image, producing a deep-seated anxiety. How an inmate reacts to these challenges affects his or her reputation among other inmates.

Taken together, these five pains of imprisonment are focal points around which inmates' social interactions revolve. In response, Sykes (1958) suggests that an inmate can either function as a participant in a "war of all against all" (pp. 82-83) or bind him- or herself into a position of cooperation with other inmates to alleviate the pains of imprisonment.

Through this lens, the prison social structure represents a compromise between individuals seeking to cope with the pains of imprisonment and a collective body of inmates who negotiate informal rules regarding how they address the pains of imprisonment. It is the mixture of these two positions that defines the nature and extent of a prison's social system. Additionally, the prisoner social world functions as a mechanism by which to adapt to the "rigors of confinement." These rigors "can at least



Nanine Hartzzenbusch/Associated Press

Loss of security is another major pain of imprisonment. This photo shows weapons confiscated from inmates after a prison sweep. How might this specific pain of imprisonment influence prisoner behavior?



David Goldman/Associated Press

Being denied autonomy, such as the ability to decide when and what to eat, is one of several pains of imprisonment. In your opinion, is it necessary to deprive inmates of their autonomy? Why or why not?

be mitigated by the patterns of social interaction established among the inmates themselves" (Sykes, 1958, p. 82).

Applying Criminal Justice: Prison Gangs and Drugs

Research has documented the existence and prevalence of prison gangs. In most prisons, gangs are a part of the social system and have proved to be very difficult to control, especially because such gangs have many members spread across different institutions. Not only do prison gangs exist in the big states of California, Texas, Florida, and Illinois, they also pose a problem for correctional systems at all levels of government (federal, state, and local).

A 2010 study by Winterdyk and Ruddell of prisons systems with nearly 2 million U.S. inmates revealed that not only had prison gangs increased in number, they had also become more "disruptive and sophisticated" (p. 731) over the previous 5 years. The study indicated that there were no obvious ways to address the problems these gangs cause. One complaint lodged in this study was that a lack of rehabilitation opportunities for inmates was "one shortcoming in the range of gang management strategies in most jurisdictions" (Winterdyk & Ruddell, 2010, p. 730).

Among the more serious issues associated with prison gangs is their distribution of illegal drugs. As discussed earlier, the deprivation of goods and services is a significant adjustment for prisoners; when the inmate social system serves to distribute items to prisoners, it provides a way to ameliorate the harsh conditions of confinement. How do drugs affect prisoners' attitudes toward their surroundings? Is there a way to offer prisoners an alternative to prison gangs and illegal drugs that is more prosocial? Or are prison gangs too powerful, especially in their ability to distribute illegal drugs? How might correctional officials combat prison gangs and drug distribution?

The following interaction reviews Skyes's five pains of imprisonment and assesses students' ability to correctly identify the characteristics of each pain.

SYKES'S FIVE PAINS OF IMPRISONMENT

Select the *three* characteristics associated with **deprivation of liberty** and drag them into the box below.

Deprivation of liberty

Inmate is housed with dangerous people	Characterized by "involuntary seclusion"	Stress related to power struggles and challenges from other prisoners	Inmate is unable to leave at will
Central to the purpose of imprisonment	Forced dependence on correctional staff	Can undermine prisoners' ability to adopt preferred sexual roles	Inmate is unable to make decisions for him- or herself

[SUBMIT](#)

Social Roles in Prisons

Surprisingly, there has been scant research on inmate social groups over the past several decades. Most prison research has focused on negative actions without conscious regard for how social groups function or how they affect prisoners and those whose job it is to keep them in check.

One study (Chong, 2013), however, investigated social groups in California prisons with the aim of understanding how they function. The most striking finding was that racial segregation continues to be the main social grouping in California prisons. Chong also found that the leaders of such groups hold great sway in terms of how inmate populations function and the degree of peace they are able to experience.

Just as leaders emerge in every social setting, whether it is readily apparent or not, leaders exist in the inmate community as well. The inmate community regularly has leaders representing their respective groups and there is a tremendous amount of communication at the level of leadership that affects the inmate community and determines many social occurrences. (Chong, 2013, p.36)

Leaders determine whether there will be war or peace among groups in the complex social networks of modern prisons.

Prison Social Organization and Stability

The functional/deprivation model highlights the importance of the relationship between the formal structure of the prison and the informal workings of the prisoner social system. The inmate social system forms in response to the prison's structures and processes; yet at the same time, the inmates' social world is a critical component of the smooth operation of the prison. To deny this reality is to fail to accept the kinds of power that prisoners have in a correctional setting. As Sykes (1958) suggests, when prison staff cannot maintain control through a more formal system of rules and regulations, they may rely instead on a series of accommodations. He states:

Unable to count on a sense of duty to motivate their captives to obey and unable to depend on the direct and immediate use of violence to insure a step-by-step submission to the rules, the custodians must fall back on a system of rewards and punishments. (Sykes, 1958, p. 50)

Because of this give-and-take relationship between correctional officer and inmate, the correctional officer provides a modicum of control that is critical to the mission of the institution. In this way the system of informal rewards and punishments serves the central need of the prison: stability. Moreover, guards must deal with the fact that prisons have many inherent weaknesses that make total prisoner compliance nearly impossible to achieve. To begin with, throughout the course of their workday, guards can develop close, trusting relationships with the prisoners. While guards may not completely trust prisoners, they learn to respect the inmates as *people* who happen to be in prison, as opposed to *criminals* who have been incarcerated. Daily interactions tend to soften guards' perception of inmates, and this makes it more difficult for a guard to demand and expect total compliance from an inmate.

Second, reciprocity is foundational to the role of a guard. Largely due to an imbalance between the demands of the role and the resources available to meet these demands, guards cannot accomplish all the functions required of them. As a result, many inmates serve to carry out functions that are assigned to guards. For



Ann Hermes/© 2011 Christian Science Monitor/Getty Images

The dynamics of a women's prison tend to be different from those of a men's prison. Why do you think this is the case?

example, keeping the cell block clean is a correctional officer duty, but is often given to an inmate as part of his or her duties. Under this arrangement, the cell block is kept clean, the officer is happy, and the inmate is able to work and may receive favors from the officer, such as more time out of his or her cell. This reciprocity can, in turn, force some guards to turn their backs on rule violations or to be less demanding of inmates when it comes to enforcing policies and procedures. Take our previous example: the officer may allow the inmate to possess contraband items, such as food taken from the cafeteria to be consumed in the cell block, which is against the prison's rules. The officers exercise discretionary authority in a way that legitimizes the reciprocal relationship between correctional officer and prisoner. In this way the guards' authority may be somewhat eroded, but the daily tasks of the job end up getting done.

Finally, a guard is evaluated on how well he or she maintains control over the cell block. By providing rewards and benefits to prisoners, a guard provides more certainty to the prison environment and exerts greater control over the population. Navigating the inmate social system using give-and-take arrangements becomes a critical component of the prison's formal structure. More importantly, the guard is placed in the middle of an inmate social system that thrives on the reciprocity between the correctional officer and the inmate. Therefore, the coercive power presumably inherent in a correctional officer's role is diminished by the structural qualities of the prison.

The social organization of prisoners is invariably tied to a prison's stability. Keeping inmates in line requires administrative staff and custodial officers to balance the demands of the inmate body with the formal policies that define order in the prison. Research literature on the adequacy of the functional/deprivation model has been plentiful. Beginning with Sykes in the 1950s and continuing well into the 1960s, the functional model has been used to examine a number of phenomena in prisons, including prisoners' sexual behaviors and drug habits (Akers, Hayner, & Gruninger, 1974), the informal system of contraband distribution (Williams & Fish, 1974; Gleason, 1978; Kalinich, 1986), and how prisoners adjust to the pains of imprisonment (Street, Vinter, & Perrow, 1969; Tittle, 1969; Thomas, 1977). All of this research supports parts of the functional/deprivation model and suggests it is useful for explaining how inmate social systems develop and the purposes they serve in the prison environment. Unfortunately, however, prison socialization has not been a topic of recent research. As Kreager and Kruttschnitt (2018) have observed, "Inmate social organization was once a central area within criminology that stalled just as incarceration rates dramatically climbed" (p. 261).

4.3 The Importation Model of Prison Social Organization

While the functional/deprivation theory of inmate social organization examines how the prison environment influences the inmate social system, the **importation model** suggests that prisoners' experiences and attitudes prior to incarceration are critical to understanding their adaptation processes. In a seminal piece published in 1962, ex-offender John Irwin and sociologist Donald Cressey presented the importation model's basic principles.

Irwin and Cressey (1962) did not deny the pains of imprisonment nor the prisonization ordeal as described by the functional/deprivation model; rather, they argued that prisoners' adjustments to these institutions are a function of adaptive patterns learned prior to incarceration and are not functionally related to the prison structure. In addition, they believed that these modes of adaptation can be tied directly to specific role types. The prison social system, they suggested, is composed of clearly identifiable roles and referent subcultures, or what Irwin and Cressey called the thief subculture, the convict subculture, and the legitimate subculture.

Thief Subculture

According to Irwin and Cressey (1962), the **thief subculture** is composed of individuals who hold specific values common to thieves everywhere. These include the notion that criminals should neither trust nor cooperate with police, not betray other thieves, be reliable and coolheaded, and be "solid" in the eyes of other inmates. Irwin and Cressey describe how the thief subculture thrives on the idea that an individual must have the requisite skills to be a good thief but, more importantly, will defend the honor of being a thief. In-group loyalties to the thief subculture are more important to other prisoners than one's criminal skill. Finally, the thief subculture supports and lends advice to those group members who are unfamiliar with the workings of the prison or the inmate social system. In effect, the subculture works toward resolving conflicts among group members in prison and guides members on "how to do time" behind bars.

Convict Subculture

Unlike the thief subculture, the **convict subculture** is uniquely tied to the workings of the prison. These are individuals who have had extensive experience with jails and prisons and are familiar with their deprivations. The central tenet of the convict subculture is utilitarianism, and its goal is to manipulate the prison system for personal advantage. Members of the convict subculture work toward acquiring wealth and attaining positions of power within the inmate social system. Most importantly, members of the convict subculture have a long record of confinement, usually one that goes back to juvenile institutions. Their extensive experience with prison systems enables them to transition from institution to institution. Finally, Irwin and Cressey argue that the emphasis on manipulation and utilitarian values is not a product of the prison environment. Rather, these values reflect an ethic acquired prior to incarceration and are consistent with beliefs held by many "hard-core" members of lower socioeconomic classes, from which most prisoners come.

Legitimate Subculture

Unlike the thief and convict subcultures, the **legitimate subculture** views institutional rules and regulations as part of doing time. These are the inmates who seek status by following the approved mechanisms of the prison's administration, such as being involved in the institutional newspaper or its inmate council. They are minimally involved in the inmate social system and usually do their time with as little trouble as possible; they are typically the least problematic inmates for prison officials. In addition, members of this subculture make up a large portion of many prison populations. In the early 1960s Irwin and Cressey estimated that close to 40% of the total inmate population belonged to the legitimate subculture. It is difficult to say what percentage of the inmate population belongs to this subculture today, since there have been massive changes both in the scale and scope of incarceration and in the nature of the inmate social system. The influence of gangs, drugs, and violence on prisons has also significantly altered the traditional notions of the prisoner social system.

Follow-up studies have supported the importation model (Wellford, 1967; Schwartz, 1971; Thomas, 1975), and many have attempted to incorporate this perspective, along with the functional approach, into an integrative model of the prisonization process. Proponents of both the importation and functional models have recognized the utility of employing tenets from each approach to explain the dynamics of the inmate social system. Like the functional model, the importation perspective has provided some deep insight into how prisoner social systems function, yet it too has limitations on the extent to which it can explain the system's various activities.

For example, it is not clear that all prisoners can be classified into one of these three prison subcultures. The prison social structure is more complex and dynamic than was originally stated by Irwin and Cressey. This led Irwin (1980) to comment on the prison's changing social structure. No longer was the prison primarily composed of three predominant subcultures, he argued. Instead, the prisoner social system was thought to be composed of groups or gangs of prisoners, each with their own identity and purpose. As a result of this thinking, more contemporary explanations of the inmate social system have emphasized the role of gang and racial affiliations. This contemporary view has served to support or even expand the importation hypothesis more than it has served to critique it, however. While the original importation model suggested the prevalence of three subcultures, the more contemporary view suggests that the inmate social system is much more factionalized and fragmented, defined by gang membership and ethnic or racial identification. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis of the prisoner social world requires a broader examination of the prison.

The following interaction reviews the importation model of prison socialization and assesses students' ability to correctly identify the characteristics of each prison subculture.



Kevin Anderson/Lawrence Journal-World/Associated Press

Inmates in the legitimate subculture participate in approved activities, such as the prison choir. Why do you think so many inmates take part in the legitimate subculture?

IMPORTATION MODEL OF PRISON SOCIALIZATION

Drag each subculture type from the right column to its matching description in the left column.

- Distrust of and lack of cooperation with police and correctional staff
- Cool-headedness and loyalty to others in own subculture
- Guiding new inmates on "how to do time" behind bars



- Tied to the workings of the prison
- Ability to manipulate prison system
- Long-term experience in correctional institutions



- View that rules and regulations are part of prison experience
- Use of acceptable means to achieve status within prison
- Minimal participation in inmate social system



SUBMIT

4.4 Contemporary Conceptions of Imprisonment: Stateville

In an influential book titled *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society*, James Jacobs (1977) argued that prisons could no longer be understood as an entity outside the realm of society's other institutions. The book took into account that in the past, much of what occurred in prisons was hidden from the general public. In more contemporary times, however, Jacobs argued that the prison could no longer be viewed as an institution beyond the public's purview. Rather, it had moved from the periphery of society to a more visible position. In addition, Jacobs argued that the prison had become more accountable; the public could now examine prison officials' practices and conduct. Jacobs suggested that prison functions and operations have become open to public scrutiny; in fact, it was in the 1970s that prison officials first began needing to justify their actions to the public and the watchful eyes of the judiciary. To make his argument, Jacobs used the case of the Stateville penitentiary (located in the state of Illinois) to show how changes in prison administration were occurring across the country.

Jacobs argued that the Stateville penitentiary underwent a series of stages that redefined its purpose and changed the structure of the inmate social system. Part of his argument is the idea that the changing prisoner social world affects the prison environment, and administrative reactions to these changes are what contribute to the development of the modern prison. His analysis shows how the prison has been influenced by the workings and representations of general society. No longer is the prisoner social structure explained relative to singular models, such as those provided by the functional and importation models. Instead, analysis of the prisoner social system must include the role of broader social events that define such a structure.

Jacobs thought there were a number of events and processes that defined the character and direction of the Stateville penitentiary over a 50-year period. Two central stages emerged from his analysis: the development of an authoritarian regime at the prison from 1925 to 1970 and the search for a new equilibrium after 1970.

The Authoritarian Regime (1925–1970)

Early on, the Stateville penitentiary was dominated by the will and charisma of one man: Warden Joseph E. Ragen. Ragen became warden during a period in which political partisanship and outside influence were causing chaos within the prison. He held the position from 1936 to 1961 and brought to it his own personal philosophy on penal operations that served as the cornerstone of his administration. He made it clear that he was in charge of the prison. In fact, both inmates and staff were aware of Ragen's power, and he gained the compliance of both groups. Jacobs (1977) summarizes Ragen's 25-year tenure as warden in the following way:

Joe Ragen's 25 year "rule" of Stateville was based upon the patriarchal authority he achieved. In the vocabulary of both employees and inmates, "he ran it." The "old boss" devoted his life to perfecting the world's most orderly prison regime. He exercised personal control over every detail, no matter how insignificant. He tolerated challenges neither by inmates nor by employees nor by outside interest groups. He cultivated an image which made him invincible to his subordinates as well as to prisoners. (p. 29)

Ragen's leadership at Stateville changed the internal machinations of the inmate social system. Fear and intimidation were commonplace; staff adapted strident strategies to control the inmate population, including by cultivating prison "rats," men who leaked information to guards about the activities of other inmates. Ragen was notorious for instilling fear into the inmate body through various expressions of his power. In addition, he kept the institution out of the public eye by keeping it quiet, orderly, and peaceful. The internal composition of the prison also changed during this period; the inmate population went from having a majority of White prisoners to a majority of Black prisoners in the late 1950s and early 1960s. As a result, the rules and regulations of the inmate social system began to change.

It was in the early 1960s that the prison began to experience great change. Ragen retired in 1961, but it was changes in the social structure of external society that affected Stateville the most. With the growth of the civil rights movement and the changing expectations of minority groups, the prison—like other social institutions—needed to respond to these changes. In most prisons across the country, officials did so by repressing and suppressing inmate leaders and those who challenged the authority of institutional policies and procedures. This approach only created tension in prisons, particularly among those prisoners who viewed the institution as a representation of a repressive and racially divided society. As a result, prisoner social systems became fragmented, and racial divisions were common. It was prison officials' search for equilibrium in the 1970s that dominated administrators' institutional agendas, including at Stateville.

The Search for a New Equilibrium (1970–1975)

The search for equilibrium at the Stateville penitentiary began with a transformation of the prison's organizational structure. Jacobs (1977) argued that changes at the prison were fueled by three sources: the creation of a Department of Corrections; the cultivation of an educated administrative staff; and the hiring of civilian personnel such as teachers, counselors, and social workers.

Department of Corrections

The state of Illinois created a separate Department of Corrections tasked with overseeing the operations of all institutions. This enabled the activities of all Illinois prisons to be monitored and controlled through one centralized office. By centralizing its power, the Illinois Department of Corrections significantly reduced the local autonomy of prison officials. As a result, the prison was no longer under the sole control of the warden and his administrative staff.

Educated Administrative Officials

Associated with this centralization of authority was the development of a staff of highly educated professionals who were considered an elite corps of administrative officials. In short, the central office became a bureaucracy with all the attendant rules and regulations. This bureaucratization fostered a new approach to prison operation. Unlike in the past, when wardens had local control and could run things the way they saw fit, the new philosophy in Illinois (and the rest of the country) was that administrative personnel should be professionalized through education and training. At this point, as Jacobs (1977) states, Stateville penitentiary transformed "from a patriarchal organization based upon traditional authority to a rational-legal bureaucracy" (p. 73). This search for equilibrium made clear that the central office sought to find a new way of doing things.

Teachers, Counselors, and Social Workers

The prison began to hire more civilian personnel to serve as teachers, counselors, and social workers. These professionals took issue with the prison system's authoritarian and patriarchal structure and its total control over employees. As a result, they demanded that changes be made to decision-making and rule-making processes.

The Legal System, Gangs, and Guards

The centralization of authority, the rise of professional managers, and the involvement of more civilians in day-to-day operations heralded more problems than solutions regarding how to run the prisons. As a result, the Illinois Department of Corrections encountered major problems between 1970 and 1975, including the intrusion of the legal system, the penetration of gangs, and the transition of the guard force. Each of these problems posed serious tests to the newly formed professional managers who headed the Illinois Department of Corrections.

The legal environment demanded that the administration fundamentally change how it ran the prison, and it kept correctional administrators busy trying to comply with court orders. In addition, the rise of the professional administration heralded much intrastaff conflict, which produced fertile ground for the proliferation and penetration of gangs in the prison. As Jacobs states, gangs could only flourish in an uncertain organizational environment where maintenance and control functions went unmet. Therefore, Jacobs (1977) states, "it was only in the context of this organizational crisis that the gangs were able to organize, recruit, and achieve dominance" (p. 138).

Moreover, the guard force at the Stateville penitentiary went through several changes, many of which directly affected the operation of the prison. According to Jacobs (1977), the introduction of a reform-minded administration drove the growth of public employee unionism, and the racial integration of the staff caused many divisions among those who worked in the prison. It was clear that the prison was being affected by the changes in the external environment and that many of these were not well received by the traditional guard force. Racial integration of the staff, for example, produced much animosity between White officers who were already employed at the prison and newly recruited Black officers, who often sympathized with the plight of prisoners. These conditions fostered an environment in which staff had no control over the inmate social system. The prisoner social world at Stateville had become truly out of control; violent and aggressive prisoner gangs ran the penitentiary. The result was that staff lost all institutional control, and relationships between guards and key elements of the inmate social system critically deteriorated.

Clearly, any attempt to impose a pure bureaucracy on a prison has limits. Yet the reforms that have been adopted by American prisons over the past 4 decades have drastically altered how inmate social systems function. Can prisons be run without the kinds of relationships that Sykes and other functional/deprivation proponents argue are inherent in the prison structure? Or can we instill other management techniques that improve prisoners' conditions while maintaining the kind of control required in a prison? These questions continue to challenge correctional administrators today.

The remainder of this chapter will examine opposing viewpoints on how prisons can be managed so they can serve as useful social institutions that produce more law-abiding citizens. Fundamentally, our goal is to explore how inmate social systems can be positively changed. The next section offers specific suggestions for how prisons can become places where inmates can learn to cope and mature. Under this view, the correctional officer is considered an integral part of a prisoner's rehabilitation process. The final section explores a control model of prison management, one that emphasizes administrators' greater involvement and accountability in monitoring prisoner social systems.



Kiichiro Sato/Associated Press

Here a reading teacher works with an offender. As outsiders, civilian personnel working in prisons during the 1970s brought new perspectives on how prisons should be run. In your opinion, were these efforts beneficial?

4.5 The Modern-Day Experience of Incarceration: 1980–Present

Today the prisoner social world is much more complex and requires a different approach to understand how prisoners cope with the experience of being incarcerated. One work that has received considerable attention in this area is Robert Johnson's *Hard Time*. Johnson (2002) states, "Prisons are nothing if not painful, yet the implications of this stark fact have never been fully appreciated by reformers" (p. 39).

Put simply, understanding the modern penitentiary requires accepting the fundamental premise that prisons were designed to be painful, and that being incarcerated requires inmates to feel pain. This view is similar to what the functional/deprivation model described. Yet the view offered by Johnson is that inmates' "pains of imprisonment" are much more psychological than physical and constitute the **hard time** that they experience. Therefore, the critical question for understanding the contemporary prison is, "How do prisoners cope with hard time—the psychological pain—they experience?"

Mature Coping

According to the functional/deprivation model, the inmate social system's primary purpose is to alleviate the pains of imprisonment. Johnson, however, suggests that the contemporary ways in which prisoners cope with these pains are much more diverse and have no consistent pattern of adaptation. Moreover, he suggests that the fundamental purpose of prison management is to help prisoners cultivate mature and conventional ways of adapting to prison, with the hope that such behavior patterns will be exhibited upon release. Prison's fundamental purpose, therefore, should be to teach prisoners socially acceptable ways to cope with an inherently painful experience. As Johnson (2002) states:

Prisoners must cope maturely with the demands of prison life; if they do not, the prison experience will simply add to their catalog of failure and defeat. Mature coping, in fact, does more than prevent one's prison life from becoming yet another series of personal setbacks. It is at the core of what we mean by correction or rehabilitation, and thus creates the possibility of a more constructive life after release from prison. (p. 56)

Mature coping is essentially composed of three skills that prisoners must learn: recognizing that there are common problems regarding adjustment, refusing to resort to violence or deception, and caring for oneself and others.

Recognize Common Problems of Adjustment

Prisoners must recognize that there are common problems with adjusting to prison life. This requires the prisoner to in turn recognize that there are both acceptable and unacceptable ways of responding to such problems. Facing a problem demands that an individual react in a way that is acceptable, not only within the constraints of the prison but also to the general public. Many prisoners have lived lives of illusion and fantasy, but such mechanisms are not acceptable among mature people who must confront and deal with their problems in a realistic and reasonable fashion. Prisoners must learn this skill if they are to successfully cope with and adjust to prison.

Refuse to Resort to Violence or Deception

Prisoners must also avoid resorting to violence or deception if they are to maturely cope with the prison experience. For many prisoners, violence and deception have been guiding principles in their interactions with others. In the long run, however, such approaches are doomed to fail. In fact, being incarcerated typically results from the long-term futility of relying on such coping mechanisms. The mature individual does not seek to hide behind deception nor resort to violence when aggrieved. Instead, the mature individual learns acceptable ways of interacting with others and accepts society's rules for resolving conflicts.

Care for Oneself and Others

The prisoner must learn that caring for oneself and others is an important aspect of successfully adjusting to prison. A prisoner must view his or her experience in the context of the broader community of individuals, all of whom are seeking to adjust and cope with the pressures of everyday existence. In the words of Johnson, Rocheleau, and Martin (2016), interactions must feature a sense of "altruistic egotism" (p. 22), whereby there is equal concern for oneself and other individuals. In this way individuals learn to respect the community and live within the parameters of acceptable behavior that it defines. Only through cooperative and agreed-upon rules can the community survive. This principle applies to both the prison community and the outside social community, and it is a prison's job to help prisoners learn the value of showing concern for others.

Niches

The sad fact is that these principles tend not to be reinforced in prison contexts. Therefore, Johnson makes a distinction between the prison's **public culture**, which suggests that manipulation and force are the best coping strategies, and its **private culture**, which supports adjustment and mature adaptation to prison. The prison community has failed when the public cultural norms are in opposition to mature coping among prisoners. Therefore, correctional administrators are faced with the herculean task of reconciling the demands of the public culture with mature coping strategies to deal with problems appropriately, avoid deception and violence, and care for oneself and others.

This is no easy task, yet Johnson (2002) suggests it is possible for prisoners to learn mature coping strategies, since many inmates have no desire to exclusively or wholeheartedly accept the norms of the prison's public culture. Instead, they have developed adaptation strategies that minimize interactions within the prison's public culture and primarily exist within their own "range of ecological options that support life 'off the yard'" (Johnson, 2002, p. 66). These options are also referred to as **niches**, which can consist, for example, of inmates who are from similar cities or towns, participate in the same recreational activities, or share a religious affiliation. Niches allow inmates to bond with other like-minded inmates and support each other in addressing problems associated with incarceration. Niches can serve as mechanisms for adapting to the prison experience and provide inmates with a way to successfully adjust to the prison setting outside the prison's public culture.

Such niches are vast and can be very diverse. There is no single, monolithic niche or inmate social system that serves to help all inmates deal with the pains of imprisonment. The public tends to regard prisons as places of violence and deceit, with attendant norms that support such values. However, prisons house a number of private cultures that can support prisoners' mature adjustment to the pains of imprisonment. The diversity of such private prison cultures is what makes them uniquely distinctive and effective in supporting prisoners' adjustments.

At present, however, many prison niches can *only* help prisoners reduce their stress and therefore do not help them learn acceptable ways to cope with prison life. In

short, they are merely havens from the stresses produced and reinforced by the prison's public culture. Niches tend to *avoid* the problems associated with prison life. The goal, however, should be to teach inmates appropriate ways of *facing* problems in order to get them to adopt acceptable behaviors and adjust to the prison setting. One way to accomplish this is to include all actors in the process of developing prisoners' healthy adjustment, including those in charge of overseeing and controlling prisoners—correctional officers. If prisoners are to adjust successfully to 21st-century prisons, then no other role is as pivotal as that of the correctional officer. This important point will be addressed in a later section.

Three-Strikes Legislation

Legislation of the late 1980s and early 1990s had a profound impact on prisons' social structure and imprisonment more generally. For the first time in U.S. history, prison populations experienced unparalleled growth (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2012b). Nothing more directly affected this growth than the three-strikes legislation, which was passed in California after the 1993 murder of 12-year-old Polly Klaas, who was abducted from her home at knifepoint and later strangled. Her murderer—Richard Allen Davis—was a recently released prisoner. Based on the premise that criminals should be punished more severely for recurring criminal activity, the California law sought to increase penalties for offenders who had a history of committing felonies.

While three-strikes legislation was adopted by several states, California's statute was the most rigorous. Under its law, a third "strike" earns the offender a mandatory sentence of 25 years to life. The estimates vary, yet the total cost of this initiative reaches well into billions of dollars, and in California alone, it was estimated that the law would force the state to build 80 new prisons at a cost of \$21 billion (Koetting & Schiraldi, 1994). By mid-1996 the legality of three-strikes legislation had been questioned by many appellate courts, both in California and across the country.

In 2012 California adjusted its three-strikes statute, requiring that an offender's third strike be a serious felony. No longer could offenders be given a sentence of 25 years to life for stealing a piece of pizza as their third strike (which is what had occurred in the first three-strikes case, in 1994). It is estimated that over 3,000 offenders have been sentenced under the 1994 law and are serving life sentences. When the 2012 law allowed offenders to be released if they did not have a violent conviction, the state predicted it could save upward of \$150 million to \$200 million (Lagos, 2011). Surprisingly, although California reduced its prison population by 30,000 inmates from 2012 to 2015, the costs associated with incarceration have not decreased. The lack of savings has been blamed on court-mandated spending increases, inflation, and increases in staffing for institutions (Respaut, 2016).

On the national level, court challenges to mandatory, repeat offender laws like three strikes often fail; this has led some to call for laws to be restructured in both state legislatures and U.S. Congress, as was done in California (Barkow, 2012). The effects of mandatory sentencing laws on prison social structure and prison management have been profound.

Growth in Prison Populations

Irwin and Austin (1994) argue that the most direct effect of such legislation has been the massive growth in prisoner populations, which has had deleterious effects on prisons' social organization. Figure 4.1 shows the growth in prison populations over a 30-year period beginning in 1980. Unlike the prisons of the 1980s, those of the 1990s saw the inmate social system become intensified and stratified; warring factions now compete for control of the prison yard. Furthermore, prison crowding has exacerbated already tenuous social relationships between keeper and kept, such that prison control is much more difficult to maintain.

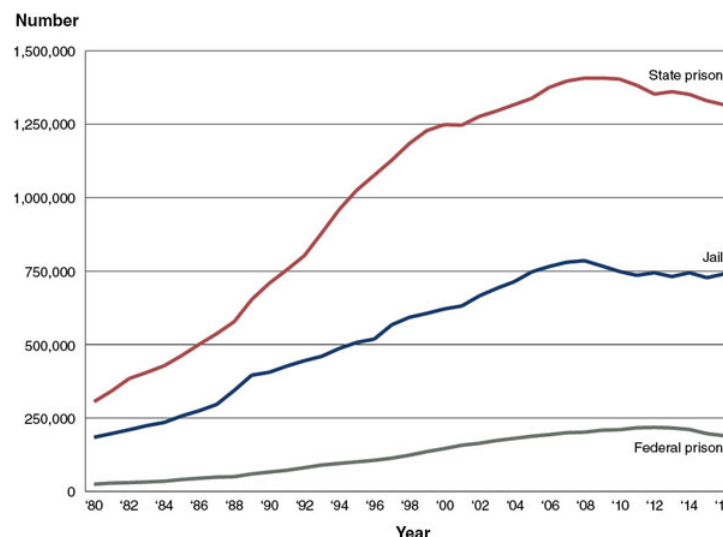


Damian Dovarganes/Associated Press

Niches are often organized around activities or religious affiliations and address issues related to imprisonment. These inmates are participating in a seminary training program. How do you think this might encourage their successful adaptation to prison life?

Figure 4.1: Incarcerated adult correctional population, 1980–2016

The number of incarcerated adults increased steadily from 1980 through 2016, with moderate decreases occurring during the last few years.



From "Figure: Total Adult Correctional Population, 1980-2016," in "Key Statistic: Total Correctional Population," by Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018 (<https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=kfdetail&iid=487> (<https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=kfdetail&iid=487>))

Increased Violence

Violence, especially ethnic and racial violence, has escalated in prisons (Irwin & Austin, 1994). "Tougher laws" have both increased the number of incarcerated offenders and made in-prison violence more likely. The prison social organization has become even further fragmented, such that gang activity and control over limited prison commodities has become fierce. In many prisons, the escalation of violence can be traced to mandatory sentencing (Irwin & Austin, 1994). Moreover, the contemporary prison has imposed greater restrictions on the freedom of prisoners to move about, largely due to overcrowding and the resulting limited available space and resources. In addition, the proliferation of prison rules and regulations has made the process of "doing time" more cumbersome and difficult for inmates. The combination of less freedom, overcrowding, fewer prison activities, and a more formalistic regimen of control has significantly altered the prison social organization (Haney, 2010). Some have suggested this has resulted in a climate in which increased violence is an acceptable survival strategy for many prisoners (Silberman, 1995).

The Prisoner's Response

How do prisoners respond to such conditions? Many become crippled by the prison experience and feel alienated, powerless, and hopeless. This does not bode well for society, since the vast majority of these people will be released into their communities feeling angry, underskilled, and uneducated. Their prospects for succeeding in conventional society are drastically reduced, and their chances of returning to prison are very high.

The trend across the United States during the 1990s was to address these concerns by taking more punitive approaches to incarceration. Only at the start of the 21st century did people begin to question the efficacy of get-tough approaches and their effect on prisoners, both during their time in prison and after their release. In 2001, for example, the Council of State Governments noted the need for prisons to change their focus because of the spiraling costs of imprisonment and the negative conditions more punitive practices created for prisoners. The council also recognized that most prisoners would be released to the community. The council has worked hard to create useable mechanisms for states to address prisoner reentry (Council of State Governments, 2005).

Understanding that overcrowding has become problematic for prison administrators, many state legislators have succumbed to pressure from both correctional officials and the public to build *more* restrictive facilities to address potentially violent and disruptive inmates who cannot function in the traditional prison. These facilities are designed to restrict the movement of prisoners such that control is maximized and prisoner amenities are minimized.



Chris McLean/Pueblo Chieftain/Associated Press

High-maintenance prisoners are sent to super-max prisons, such as the federal penitentiary at Florence, Colorado. Do you think these types of prisons can successfully control troublesome inmates?

educational and recreational needs, and a punitive correctional philosophy supported by many political leaders, it is not clear how prisons will operate without the threat of a super-max facility to handle the most difficult inmates.

Since the mid-1990s more devastating critiques of the super-max prison have emerged. Haney (2008) provides the most serious critique, concluding that in the "toxic ideological atmosphere" (p. 961) of the 1990s, states rushed to build super-max prisons with a punishment philosophy that stressed personal responsibility and denied how the role of wider social forces affect crime and criminals. More importantly, this toxic environment had devastating effects on the prison, polarizing prisoners and officers. Officers now viewed their role as one of simply managing and warehousing prisoners in ever-growing facilities. The

Race Riot at Pelican Bay State Prison

Footage from a riot at Pelican Bay State Prison shows a Hispanic gang attacking a rival African American gang. Violence is a constant threat among racial groups and gangs in maximum security prisons. What possible solutions might help decrease the number of violent incidents in prison?

Race Riot at Pelican Bay State Prison

From Title: *Survival of the Meanest* (<https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wid=100753&xid=40813>)

Super-Max Prisons

Unlike the past, when there was tacit negotiation with prisoners and inmate leaders regarding control in the prison setting, the prison managers of the 1990s sought to end such arrangements and construct facilities that are maximally restrictive and punitive and are directed toward those leaders of the prison social structure who pose the greatest threats to prison security. These facilities, known as **super-max prisons**, are designed to prevent interactions among inmates and restrict their physical movement. Inmates are confined to their cells for up to 23 hours a day. This strategy aims to achieve greater control over the prison. Research into the effectiveness of super-max prisons has been critical, however, and concerns have been raised about the humanness of such an approach to managing problematic prisoners, many of whom suffer from serious mental health problems (Lovell, 2008; Haney, 2010).

The vast majority of prisoners are not placed in such facilities; they are reserved for the most difficult inmates, who tend to be drug dealers, prison gang leaders, and offenders who have violent histories. The best known super-max facilities are Pelican Bay prison in California and the federal penitentiary at Florence, Colorado; however, many states have constructed their own versions of the super-max prison. Research on the effects of these prisons has been sparse, yet critics argue that although their intended effect has been to reduce the power of the inmate social system by locking down inmate leaders in restrictive conditions, the unintended consequences have been so profound that questions must be asked about their efficacy and their costs, both financial and human.

In *Madrid v. Gomez* (1995), the federal court issued a sweeping indictment of the Pelican Bay prison and how in some cases it tortured prisoners to gain their compliance. Critics say that these types of tactics produce such long-term psychological damage to prisoners that the prison's usefulness must be reexamined. Correctional officials, on the other hand, point out that given the trend to incarcerate offenders for protracted periods of time, fewer resources to address inmates'

inmate social system became even more fragmented as prisoners attempted to deal with their situations through gang affiliation (for protection), drug activity (for pleasure and profit), and racial identity (for protection and identity). The result has been a “culture of disdain” (Lovell, 2008, p. 993), whereby inmates’ lives are forever changed, disruptive and disturbed behavior is normative, and there is greater violence among inmates and between inmates and staff.

From a prisoner’s perspective, the prison social system totally collapsed under the weight of the conditions described above. Hassine (1999) provides one of the most descriptive portrayals of what it is like to exist in an overcrowded and violent prison, where individual adjustment and survival is next to impossible. He documents the eroding social system of control among inmates, confused and overworked correctional staff, and limited budgets for anything other than confinement and control. His writings are based on his experience being incarcerated in the Pennsylvania prison system for more than 20 years. His account describes a prisoner social system and prison system in total disarray. Others have offered similar “insider” perspectives into the prison of the 21st century (see Ross & Richards, 2003).

Since the prison’s traditional social system has fragmented, correctional officials have been hard pressed to come up with solutions to their problems. The negotiations and practices of the past kept the prisoner social world in check; inmate leaders dealt with correctional officers and prison managers in an informal way to control and stabilize the prison. With the formalization of prison policies, increased crowding, more prisoners serving longer sentences, and few incentives to change, it is not clear how the prison social system of the 21st century will be made more tractable. We will examine this issue later in the chapter.

Applying Criminal Justice: *Prison Rape*

In 2003 the U.S. Congress passed and President George W. Bush signed the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) into law. The law was created to address the problem of prisoner sexual assault. Its purpose was not only to develop initiatives to address the problem of prison sexual assault but also to collect systematic information and promote performance standards for correctional systems to be held accountable to reduce prison sexual assault and report it when it occurred. Institutions and states that do not comply with PREA standards can face a 5% reduction in federal funding for each year the state is in noncompliance.

As you reflect on what you have learned in this chapter, consider the many questions raised by this law. For example: What will be challenging about investigating and reporting prison sexual assault? Are the reported figures (it is estimated that from 3% to 20% of the prisoner population is sexually assaulted) reliable measures of prison sexual assault? Additionally, since prisoners cannot make willful choices in prison regarding sexual relations, does all prison sex count as sexual assault? What role does the inmate social system play in the prison sex trade? Is prison sex a response to the deprivations of incarceration, as suggested by Sykes? Is sexual assault in prison similar to sexual assault on the outside? What other distinctions should be made regarding sex and sexual assault? Will answers to any of these questions make reporting prison sexual assault more problematic—and if so, what type of accountability scheme should be devised for prison officials?

What New Inmates Learn in Prison

Western Youth Institution in Morganton, North Carolina is a maximum security prison for youth offenders. The teens in this video discuss incidents of violence and rape inside prison walls, as well as encounters with gangs and corrections officers. According to what these inmates say—and don't say—what function does prison rape serve? How will the legislation discussed in *Applying Criminal Justice: Prison Rape* help?

What New Inmates Learn in Prison

From Title: *Hard Time: Teens in Maximum Security Prisons*
(<https://tod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=100753&xtid=10173>)

4.6 Correctional Officers at Work

While a plethora of research has been conducted on the workings of inmate social systems, until recently, very little had been produced on correctional officers and their work environments. Traditionally, very few studies have been done into the role of correctional officers; most research focused only on the backgrounds of those people who entered the field. However, since the 1980s much research has investigated correctional officers and the bases for their attitudes and perceptions of their work environments. Most of the early research examined correctional officer attitudes, but later research examined the organizational determinants of these attitudes.

Individual Determinants of Correctional Officers' Attitudes

Much research focused on two different types of determinants of correctional officers' attitudes. The first line of research investigated officers' individual backgrounds and how they correlate with officers' attitudes toward prisoners, taking into account variables such as race, gender, age, age of entry into correctional officer work, and education. Findings have been inconsistent with respect to attitudes among correctional officers. For example, Toch and Klofas's (1982) study of four prisons in New York found that non-White officers were significantly more likely to prefer detached relationships from inmates. Other research, however, found that with respect to race, there were no differences between White and non-White officers regarding custody issues but that Black officers were more supportive of rehabilitation when compared to White officers (Cullen, Lutze, Link, & Wolfe, 1989).

Research by both Jurik (1985) and Cullen et al. (1989) found that gender did not affect correctional officers' attitudes regarding prisoners. However, research concerning age and education generated less consistent findings. While Poole and Regoli (1980) found that there was a negative relationship between education and custody, neither Crouch and Alpert (1982) nor Jurik (1985) found evidence of a relationship between education and attitudes toward prisoners. Similar findings exist regarding the effect of a correctional officer's age when hired. Overall, the research suggests that an officer's race, education, or gender have no bearing on his or her attitude toward inmates. Like prisoners, correctional officers tend to be a disparate group of individuals who hold no singular attitude toward prisoners.

However, more recently, a study by Wooldredge and Steiner (2016) determined that correctional officers' sex and race

mattered for shaping an officer's pride with co-workers, consideration of transferring to another facility, and perceptions of co-workers' job satisfaction, but only as they were linked to perceptions of sexism and racism. Perceptions of safety also mattered. Yet, levels of inmate crime and victimization were irrelevant for shaping attitudes. Positive attitudes were also more common in facilities housing higher risk populations, and in facilities for men. (p. 576)

Organizational Determinants of Correctional Officers' Attitudes

The second line of inquiry focuses on organizational determinants of correctional officer attitudes. This research tends to focus on variables such as role conflict, shift worked, job stress, frequency of inmate contact, and perceptions of danger. Similar to the findings regarding individual determinants of correctional officer attitudes, research into organizational determinants of correctional officer attitudes shows no consistent pattern. While Smith and Hepburn (1979) found greater punitive attitudes among correctional officers in minimum security units, Jurik (1985) found the exact opposite in her research: There was more support for programming and rehabilitative efforts among correctional officers in minimum security units. Finally, Cullen et al. (1989) found no relationship between working in a maximum security unit and support for either custody or rehabilitation. Again, these same inconsistencies are also found when one examines other organizational determinants of correctional officers' attitudes, such as job stress, shift worked, and frequency of contact with prisoners (Farkas, 2001). Yet research conducted by Lambert, Barton-Bellessa, Hogan, and Paoline (2012) concluded that correctional officers' orientation (either support for punishment or support for rehabilitation) does affect the degree to which they view themselves as "organizational citizens" committed to the prison. Interestingly, the researchers found that correctional officers who were oriented toward punishment were less committed to the prison.

The research makes clear that correctional officers—like prisoners—are not a homogenous group. Some correctional officers are punitive, while others are more supportive of rehabilitation. The reasons for this diversity, along with the sources of correctional officer attitudes and how they can be influenced, are not so clear. What is clear is that correctional officers' attitudes are diverse and influence their interactions with prisoners. The work of Johnson (2002) can shed light on how the private and public cultures of correctional officers influence their attitudes toward inmates.

Public vs. Private Agendas

That correctional officers have diverse and often divergent attitudes toward prisoners may stem from their various agendas. On the one hand, correctional officers have a **public agenda**, one that reinforces the stereotype that officers are "hacks," "screws," and "thugs." This view is often portrayed in the media but represents just a small percentage of officers. This rather pejorative worldview has captured the attention of not only the public but also correctional administrators.

It is equally important to examine what Johnson (2002) refers to as correctional officers' **private agenda**, which regards the role of correctional officers as more complex than the public agenda might indicate. The private agenda emphasizes that correctional officers have multiple roles, one of which includes a desire to help prisoners adjust to the prison setting. This notion—that correctional officers seek to be effective agents of change—is often out of line with the predominant view portrayed in popular media and many segments of society.

Correctional officers can be change agents in three ways: by providing goods and services to prisoners, by acting as their referral agent or advocate, and by helping them adjust to the institution (Johnson, 2002). This view of the correctional officer requires some different thinking from both correctional administrators and the general public. In this view, correctional officers are not seen simply as custodians; rather, they represent the front line of correctional work, underscoring the importance of human interaction and its utility to the operation of the institution. Those who advocate for this approach to the correctional officer role claim that interactions with prisoners will change and the prison will operate on the earned authority of the keeper rather than the iron fist of coercion.

Governing Prisons: Human Service or Control?

Much of what is known about prison and prisoners comes from sociological research, especially the literature on prison social structure and how inmates adapt to their incarceration experiences. In addition, much of the research has provided either direct or indirect suggestions as to how the prisoner society should be governed.

Take, for example, the functional/deprivation model of inmate socialization discussed earlier in this chapter, which states that prisoner society is a direct response to the pains of imprisonment imposed by the prison's structure and administration. To alleviate these pains, prisoners enter into social relations with each other and develop symbiotic relationships with correctional officers and administrators to keep order and control. Moreover, correctional administration officials need to be aware of the inmate social system and recognize its leaders, as well as promote compromise between inmate leaders and prison officials. In effect, given the way prisons are designed, the give-and-take relationship between inmate leaders and prison management is inevitable.

However, what if prison sociology has taken us down the wrong path? What if it has focused too much attention on inmate society and too little on effective correctional administration? Could it be that both functional and importation theories of inmate socialization have accentuated and even inflated the power of inmate societies or inmate subcultures? What if prisons can be governed in largely the same ways as other governmental bureaucracies or private companies? These questions explore how prison social structure can be modified so that prison officials can most effectively govern prisons, rather than prisoners.

Such questions have been raised by DiIulio (1987) in his provocative book, *Governing Prisons*. His work represents a break from the traditional explanations of prison social structure and correctional administration. Through a comparative study of three major systems (California, Michigan, and Texas), DiIulio argues that effective correctional administration can be achieved in the contemporary prison. His approach differs from the work of others in that he suggests correctional administration must begin and end with the managers of the institutions. He does not consider the traditional sociological literature on prisons as persuasive or compelling; rather, he argues that prison officials must wield control. To operate prisons with the implications suggested by traditional sociology is unacceptable and will never restore order and service. In short, he considers sociological views of the prison as unacceptable when it comes to prison management.

DiIulio further argues that the foundation for effective correctional management lies in correctional administrations' ability to direct and lead institutions. In his view, governing prisons requires that the governed be subject to the control of the government. In prison, the government is composed of the wardens and correctional staff; inmate societies should not control the prison's social dynamics. While DiIulio does not deny the existence of inmate societies, he does not think they are relevant to the operation of the prison's social structure. Clearly, prisoners form social systems behind bars, but correctional officials should control such systems to the benefit of all who live in (prisoners) and run (staff) the institution. In this way prisoner social structure is dictated by the administration of the prison. Achieving that balance can be found in three distinct models of prison governance: the control model, the responsibility model, and the consensual model.

The Control Model

According to DiIulio, the Texas Department of Corrections provides the best example of a **control model** prison. Under this model of management, control is centralized in the hands of correctional officials, including line-staff personnel. The objectives of such a system are orderly, rule-oriented, clean prisons. Through a system of rules and regulations, the correctional staff—not the prisoners—maintain control of the inmate social system and dictate the prison's day-to-day operations.

Some may argue that the control model represents the worst form of prison management, particularly from the perspective of the prisoner. How can one, for example, suggest that bureaucratic routines alone will address prisoners' needs? In fact, it could be equally argued that intensive rules and regulations may be perceived by many prisoners as oppressive and therefore counterproductive to promoting effective long-term change. As Johnson (2002) suggests, "attributing correctional benefits to bald custodial control perhaps has always been more a rationalization than a rational correctional agenda, and it simply reinforce(s) the legitimacy of the authoritarian regime" (p. 77).

While DiIulio (1987) has argued that custody is a precursor to treatment, it is not clear how requiring inmates to be clean shaven and properly dressed promotes long-term change. While getting inmates to have clean faces and wear proper prison attire is a laudable goal, there is no reason to believe that such behavior will help them internalize the behavior patterns that are consistent with societal expectations. In other words, a prison system may produce nice-looking institutions and prisoners, but it may not necessarily educate prisoners in a way that promotes constructive change.



Tom Pennington/Fort Worth Star-Telegram/McClatchy-Tribune/Getty Images

The Responsibility Model

According to DiIulio, Michigan's prison system is a good example of the **responsibility model** of prison management, which emphasizes the idea that while incarcerated, prisoners should have as much control over their lives as possible, so long as doing so upholds the institution's security needs. This model's central tenet is that inmates learn responsible behavior while incarcerated, typically through examples offered by correctional staff. In addition, the responsibility model deemphasizes the authority of correctional staff and tries to encourage individual growth and expression among prisoners.

The Consensual Model

Compared to the control and responsibility models, the **consensual model** of correctional management allows prisoners to be more involved in the operations of institutions. According to DiIulio, a good example of this model comes from the Californian prisons of the 1960s and 1970s. A retreat from this model of prison



Scott Olson/Getty Images News/© 2011 Getty Images

In the private agenda view, correctional officers can function as agents of change. Do you believe it is possible for correctional officers and inmates to have positive relationships? Why or why not?

According to Dilulio, Texas prisons best exemplify the control model. Here, new prisoners in a Texas facility await health screenings. Which of Dilulio's models do you prefer?

management occurred when the prison population skyrocketed, leading to a major Supreme Court decision (*Brown v. Plata*, 2011; see Chapter 2). The model's fundamental premise is that effective correctional administration requires the consent of the governed. In this way prisoners are viewed as an integral part of prison

management and administration, not in a formal sense, but in the view that no prison can be run without the cooperation and consent of those who are being incarcerated. Of the three models, the consensual model subscribes more to the lessons espoused by prison sociology, and in Dilulio's opinion, it suffers from them. With no coherent correctional principles and practices, the consensual model cannot be objectively evaluated, as can the control and responsibility models.

However, evaluating any of Dilulio's three models of prison management is difficult. There has never been any assessment of the models, nor has any empirical research been undertaken to support his assertions (Stojkovic, 1990). Nevertheless, his ideas have generated debates on how best to run and manage prisons, a topic that had been typically overshadowed by the early literature on prisons that tended to minimize prison management and highlight the power of the inmate social system. However, there has been little discussion of the inmate social system in the 21st century. Research questions have focused more on how best to manage prison facilities.

Conclusion

This chapter examined a central topic in corrections—prisoner social systems. We have presented several views regarding the origination of inmate social systems, attempting to highlight those points that enhance our understanding of the phenomenon. To date, the literature extensively explored the social worlds of prisoners and their workings. Whether we ascribe to the functional/deprivation model, the importation perspective, or both depends on our assumptions and examination of the empirical evidence.

Much of what is known from the research suggests that both approaches—functional/deprivation and importation—are supportable, at least in part. It is true that prisoners suffer from the pains of imprisonment, yet much less is known about how they cope with said pains; if they rely on an indigenous social structure or learned behavioral patterns imported from outside the correctional facility, or both. Therefore, contemporary examinations have explored not only the questions of origination and adaptation to prison but, more importantly, how the prison is part of broader society.

At present, we are trying to discover what the proper role of the prison should be in society and where prisoner social systems fit in this bigger picture. Some would say that prisons need to be more focused and committed to delivering human services, while others argue that the priority should be to restore control over the prison's social order and to help prisoners with their personal rehabilitation. However, these views need not be mutually exclusive; future research is required to determine what the prison's most effective role will be as we move forward.

The 21st-century prison is full of complexity. Although prison populations initially grew in the beginning of the century, they are now beginning to shrink, and the states and the federal government must figure out how to address the growing number of prisoners who are returning to communities. Later chapters will explore the topic of prisoner reentry by examining community corrections, parole, and probation.

Careers in Corrections: Daily Routine for Inmates

Inmates, and the correctional officers who work with them, must adhere to strict schedules. In this Careers in Corrections video, you will get a sense of what a typical day might entail. As you watch, consider what sort of impact these routines might have on both inmates and correctional officers.

Key Ideas

- Prisoners adapt to their incarceration experience.
- The functional/deprivation model of prisoner socialization, offered in the 1950s, constitutes a major model for understanding how prisoners adapt to the prison experience.
- The major contributors to the functional/deprivation model were Donald Clemmer, Stanton Wheeler, Peter Garabedian, and Gresham Sykes.
- An alternative to the functional/deprivation model is the importation model of prisoner socialization, offered by John Irwin and Donald Cressey in the 1960s.
- The modern view of prisons, advanced in the 1970s, stresses that they have become more influenced by factors in the free world, to the extent that they represent a microcosm of larger society.
- The contemporary view of the prison, advanced in the 1980s and 1990s, stresses that they must be places where prisoners feel pain and that prisoners have a wide variety of adaptive mechanisms to cope with imprisonment, including by forming niches.
- Questions regarding the best ways to manage or govern *prisons*, rather than managing *prisoners*, have become important in the 21st century.

Critical-Thinking Questions

1. According to Gresham Sykes, why is it that prison officials cannot have total control in prisons? How would you empower correctional staff personnel as they go about their day-to-day responsibilities?
2. To what extent do you think the prisonization process exists? Why?
3. What input—if any—should groups outside of prisons have regarding how the prison is managed? Would greater oversight by external bodies make prisons a better and safer place?
4. How would you address the problems of prison gangs, prison violence, and drugs in prison?
5. What do think about the use of super-max prisons in managing problematic prisoners?

Key Terms

Click on each key term to see the definition.

argot **roles**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

Roles assumed by prisoners as a result of their incarceration.

consensual **model**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A model of prison management that stresses inmate participation.

control **model**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A model of prison management that stresses security and prisoner discipline.

convict **subculture**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A group of prisoners who believe in the inmate code because of their lengthy incarceration.

differential **attachment**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

Varied responses to the adoption of the inmate code, depending on the part of the prison sentence being served.

functional/deprivation **model**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A model of inmate social systems that lists and describes the experiences of prisoners and how they adapt to the prison environment.

hard **time**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A period of difficulties or hardship.

importation **model**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A view of the prison social structure that suggests not only that the mechanisms of adaptation to prison are learned prior to incarceration, but that these modes of adaptation can be tied directly to specific role types. These role types make up three referent subcultures: the thief subculture, convict subculture, and legitimate subculture.

legitimate **subculture**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

The group of inmates who hold legitimate values as expressed in society.

niches
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

Small groups of prisoners who band together to assist one another during their imprisonment.

pains **of** **imprisonment**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

The psychological difficulties experienced by prisoners due to their incarceration.

prisonization
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A process of adaptation to the prison by prisoners.

private **agenda**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A belief among correctional officers that their role is to help prisoners adjust to the prison setting.

private **culture**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

Beliefs held by prisoners that support adjustment and mature adaptation to the prison.

public **agenda**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A perspective among correctional officers that promotes toughness and is punishment oriented toward prisoners.

public **culture**
<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

Beliefs held by prisoners that manipulation and use of force are the best strategies to adjust to the prison.

responsibility**model**

<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

A model of prison management that stresses cooperation among inmates and prison officials in order to instill positive and responsible behaviors among prisoners.

super-max**prisons**

<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

Facilities designed to deal with the most dangerous of prisoners by preventing any interaction among inmates and restricting their physical movement.

thief**subculture**

<http://content.thuzelearning.com/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Stojkovic.5118.18.1/sections/cover/books/Sto>

The group of prisoners who hold the values of thievery and crime.

Web Resources

A website designed to promote contacts between prisoners and people on the outside with the intent of fostering relationships on many different levels.

<http://www.convictpenpals.com> (<http://www.convictpenpals.com/>)

A website dedicated to fostering relationships between inmates and people in the free world.

<http://www.meet-an-inmate.com> (<http://www.meet-an-inmate.com/>)

A website for correctional professionals and those interested in understanding corrections from differing points of view. It helps promote greater awareness regarding the corrections field.

<http://www.correctionsone.com> (<https://www.correctionsone.com/>)

Additional Resources

A revealing portrait of how doing time in the modern prison affects prisoners and their hopes of changing toward positive social values.

Carceral, K. C. (2003). *Behind a convict's eyes: Doing time in a modern prison*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

A description of correctional officer work and prison from the perspective of a journalist turned correctional officer.

Conover, T. (2000). *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing*. New York, NY: Random House.

A riveting series of accounts from a long-term prisoner regarding the effects of prolonged incarceration on a person. The author died in 2012 while still a prisoner.

Hassine, V. (1999). *Life without parole: Living in prison today*. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing.

A descriptive profile of contemporary incarceration from the perspective of a new prisoner.

Lerner, J. (2010). *You got nothing coming: Notes from a prison fish*. Dublin, Ireland: Transworld Publishers.

The growing literature of current and former convicts is revealed in this book. The authors, both former prisoners, stress the importance of the prisoner perspective in understanding prisons.

Ross, J., & Richards, S. (Eds.). (2003). *Convict criminology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.