

DICTIONARY  
OF  
AMERICAN  
PENOLOGY

AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE

VERGIL L. WILLIAMS

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An Introductory Guide

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To those women in my life  
who ignore my faults

Velma Williams  
Colleen Jeffries  
Pat Pinkston  
Darla Youts

and to

Del and Jean Williams

# PREFACE

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This reference work is designed for use by several different types of readers: (1) the college student at an undergraduate level; (2) the graduate student specializing in criminal justice; (3) the concerned citizen interested in prison reform; (4) the careerist in corrections; and (5) inmates in penal institutions.

The undergraduate college student will find a broad range of topics to introduce him to the variety of subjects germane to penology. Professors find that students new to a subject have a rather narrow concept of the possibilities inherent in a field of study. This reference work can serve as an introductory guide to these novice students; by turning the pages, they can quickly learn how diverse the issues and numerous the subtopics in the field are. More important, the new student of penology can use this guide to learn the basic facts in the many areas of inquiry. These basics can serve not only as the meat of short reports, but also as the foundation for longer research papers, since each entry offers references to the literature available on the topic.

The graduate student will find that much time is saved with this type of fact file at hand. This guide pulls together information from more than 400 sources into one reference work and allows the serious student to quickly refresh his memory, for no one can be expected to remember all the details of the many areas of penology. The bibliography should be especially helpful to graduate students who would attain depth in a topic.

The concerned citizen interested in prisons and prison reform can use this guide to identify the issues in the field, to get some feel for reforms that are being instituted in various places in the system, and to locate other groups interested in improving prison conditions. The descriptions of the system are useful for this purpose.

The professional in the field will find this work to be a useful fact file identifying prison locations and capacities, outlining key arguments in controversies, and in general, providing a convenient reference for the hundreds of facts needed in the normal course of business.

Inmates in correctional institutions will find the book useful, particularly the addresses of groups that provide personal assistance. In addition, the inmate, as one who is most affected by correctional policies, can benefit by learning how the procedures and processes have evolved.

The focus of the material is on contemporary penology. History is injected only where the author deems it vital to an understanding of present circumstances. The decade of the 1970s has been an exciting time to compile a work on penology because of the major shifts in ideology in the field. In the 1960s there was a surprising amount of consensus among penologists. Prisons authorities would adopt additional therapeutic programs as fast as they could make legislators understand that rehabilitation in the institution would be a bargain. Fewer people, it was held, would be sent to prison as community-based corrections became ever more popular. As more use was made of probation, parole, and options such as work release, the existing prison system would hold fewer inmates.

The 1970s brought an end to the optimism of the previous decade. Community-based corrections did absorb increasing numbers of offenders, but the prisons did not become half deserted as expected. Only the most violent prisoners were incarcerated. Still, the number of violent inmates seemed to grow yearly, and by the latter part of the decade, the system was overcrowded despite massive efforts to expand the use of community-based programs for nondangerous offenders.

Overcrowding became a serious problem. Self-doubt on the part of many penologists became evident as new areas of controversy arose and the old consensus of the 1960s disappeared. Although riots and the threat of riots stem partly from the overcrowding that was not supposed to have occurred, important factions of penologists and interested observers still believed there should be a moratorium on prison construction. Others, seeing the daily pressures caused by overcrowding, fought for new facilities.

The contemporary focus of this work captures the essence of these ideological disputes and presents the issues in an orderly manner, enabling the reader to make intelligent decisions about which faction he is most compatible with. Slightly more than half of the entries are devoted to the ideological disputes in American penology today, custodial and administrative devices important in assuring the day-to-day safety and security of prisons, significant events in the recent history of American penology, and selected therapeutic and rehabilitation approaches directed toward changing the behavior of the offender. A

minute number of the entries provide profiles on the most influential personalities in penology today. These profiles are meant to be representative of the hundreds of influential people who might have been selected for inclusion. Those for whom a full profile entry has not been included have not been neglected; they are the authors of the more than 400 separate pieces of literature that have been used as the basis for the entries found herein. Thus, their work and their influence makes this book possible. The reader will find their names mentioned both in the entries and in the bibliography.

Another category of entries, making up some 36 percent of the length of this book, includes those describing federal and state prison systems and a few entries on individual prisons that are discussed separately because of the publicity they have received over the years. The entries on correctional systems provide basic information on their administrative structures, the location and capacity of individual units, facilities for housing male and female adults and juveniles, and in selected cases, the special problems and prospects of the systems. Whether the entry consists of only a terse statement of basic facts or the basics plus a more elaborate discussion of problems and prospects depends solely on whether material on problems and prospects was available in the prison literature, not on any judgment of the relative importance of a system.

These categories of entries make up the alphabetical entries that constitute about 90 percent of the book. The remaining 10 percent is devoted to appendices, bibliography, and the index. The appendices present addresses of organizations, agencies, and correctional systems as well as statistical data. I have attempted to make the bibliography and index more comprehensive than those in the average book to aid in this work's value as a reference. Although dozens of entries are cross-referenced, I felt an extra-large index would be helpful because fads result in different names being used at different times for the same events. A good index can overcome this problem and enable the reader to find material easily.

The prison literature available has shaped the tone and nature of this work, and thus it seems appropriate to comment on the special characteristics of the resource material available. A decade ago, there were many gaps in the literature. Now, there are relatively few areas where at least some quality research is not available. The more than 400 sources cited in this work reflect that good selection of quality research reports. There is, however, a dearth of current material, and there would be none at all except for *Corrections Magazine*. A newcomer among the prison journals, it has already carved out a place for

itself by conducting annual prison population surveys and doing similar reporting to keep us up-to-date on recent developments in American prisons. Even the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, a subdivision of the U.S. Department of Justice, has come to depend on *Corrections Magazine* for many of the tables it publishes in its annual *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics*. The reader will find that I have used *Corrections Magazine* as a source in some 15 percent of the entries in order to make the information as timely as possible, and I am grateful to the editors for performing this important function.

Vergil L. Williams



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John Ortiz Smykla wrote the entry on "coed prisons." He is an authority on this emerging field of inquiry.

# CONTENTS

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<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xvii
Abolitionists	3
Administrative Remedy Procedure	4
Alabama Correctional System	6
Alaska Correctional System	8
Alcatraz	10
American Correctional Association	11
Architecture	13
Argot	17
Arizona Correctional System	18
Arkansas Correctional System	19
Asklepieion Therapy	21
Attica Correctional Facility	22
Attica Uprising	24
Auburn Silent System	28
California Correctional System	32
Carlson, Norman A.	35
Chaplaincy Services	36
Classification	38
Coed Corrections	41
Colorado Correctional System	43
Community Treatment Centers	45
Conjugal Visitation	47
Connecticut Correctional System	50
Count	52
Deinstitutionalization	54
Delaware Correctional System	55

Disparity of Sentences	56
District of Columbia Correctional System	58
Eastern Penitentiary	61
Federal Center for Correctional Research	63
Federal Correctional System	65
Federal Prison Industries, Inc.	68
Female Offenders	71
Florida Correctional System	73
Fogel, David	76
Fortune Society	78
Functional Units	79
Furloughs	82
Georgia Correctional System	84
Good Time	86
Graduated Release	87
Grievance Procedures for Inmates	88
Guided Group Interaction	90
Halfway Houses	93
Hawaii Correctional System	94
Homosexuality in Female Prisons	95
Homosexuality in Male Prisons	98
Idaho Correctional System	101
Illinois Correctional System	101
Indeterminate Sentences	103
Indiana Correctional System	106
Inmate Subculture	107
Iowa Correctional System	110
Irwin, John Keith	111
Jackson Prison	114
Johnson, Elmer Hubert	115
Just Community	117
Justice Model of Corrections	118
Kansas Correctional System	121
Kentucky Correctional System	122
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA)	126
Leenhouts, Keith J.	129

Lockdown	131
Louisiana Correctional System	133
McKay Commission	135
Maine Correctional System	137
Martinson, Robert M.	138
Maryland Correctional System	140
Massachusetts Correctional System	142
Media in Prisons	144
Medical Model of Corrections	146
Michigan Correctional System	148
Minnesota Correctional System	150
Mississippi Correctional System	152
Missouri Correctional System	152
Montana Correctional System	154
Moral Development Theory	155
Moratorium on Prison Construction	156
Mutual Agreement Program	159
National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice Planning and Architecture	162
National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD)	164
National Education—Training Program for Colleges-Professionals- Citizens (NETP)	165
National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice	167
National Prisoners Reform Association (NPRA)	168
Nebraska Correctional System	170
Nevada Correctional System	171
NewGate Program	171
New Hampshire Correctional System	174
New Jersey Correctional System	174
New Mexico Correctional System	176
New York City Correctional System	179
New York State Correctional System	180
North Carolina Correctional System	183
North Dakota Correctional System	187
Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR)	188
Ohio Correctional System	189

Oklahoma Correctional System	191
Ombudsmen in Prison	192
Oregon Correctional System	194
Parole Contracts	196
Pennsylvania Correctional System	196
Pennsylvania System of Prison Discipline	199
Plastic Surgery	202
Pleasanton Youth Center	203
Political Prisoners	205
Pragmatists	207
Principle of Less Eligibility	208
Prisoners' Unions	211
Program for the Investigation of Criminal Behavior	213
Property Offenders Program (POP)	215
Recidivism	217
Rector, Milton G.	219
Reeducation of Attitudes and Repressed Emotions (ROARE)	220
Restitution Center	222
Rhode Island Correctional System	224
Right to "No Treatment" Controversy	225
Serrill, Michael S.	228
South Carolina Correctional System	230
South Dakota Correctional System	232
Status Offenders	233
Synanon	235
Tennessee Correctional System	239
Texas Correctional System	240
Transactional Analysis Therapy	242
Utah Correctional System	245
Vermont Correctional System	246
Virginia Correctional System	247
Ward Grievance Procedure of the California Youth Authority	249
Washington State Correctional System	251
West Virginia Correctional System	254
Wisconsin Correctional System	254
Work Release	256

	<i>Contents</i>	xi
Wyoming Correctional System		258
<i>Appendix A</i>		
Prison Reform Organizations		259
<i>Appendix B</i>		
Addresses of State Planning Agencies		271
<i>Appendix C</i>		
Prison System Addresses		280
<i>Appendix D</i>		
United States Government Statistics Pertaining to Correctional Activities		289
<i>Bibliography</i>		504
<i>Index</i>		518

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# A

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**ABOLITIONISTS.** “Abolitionists”—persons or groups interested in prison reform—represent a wide variety of viewpoints and approaches to prison reform. They share one basic belief, that is, that prisons cannot rehabilitate offenders and that, in some cases, prisons should not even try to rehabilitate them. In general, abolitionists contend that prisons, even if well staffed and adequately funded, can harm offenders.

Although the abolitionist philosophy developed only in the 1960s and early 1970s, its basic argument, that prisons cause harm to offenders, was used by various reform groups more than a century ago. Unlike the contemporary abolitionists, however, earlier reformers, such as John Howard, proposed that correctional institutions could be designed and staffed to be more humane and more therapeutic. In contrast, the abolitionists do not believe that institutionalization can be therapeutic under any circumstances. Some, like David Rothenberg of the Fortune Society (*q.v.*), believe that the move to build new therapeutic prisons has aggravated the problems of corrections rather than solving them. Rothenberg describes the new prisons as “pastel fascism.”

Jerome Miller is one of the more active and visible representatives of the abolitionist school of thought. Working within the system, he has been able to put his philosophy into practice and has attracted national attention by closing all juvenile institutions in Massachusetts. Miller later attempted to close juvenile institutions in Pennsylvania. Miller believes that those reformers who are fighting to improve conditions within the institutions will ultimately fail. He maintains that fast, massive social change is the only effective means of reform.

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) (*q.v.*) is the largest and most powerful abolitionist group today. The NCCD has advocated community-based corrections since its founding in 1907 as the National Probation Association. Its 1973 policy statement placed the NCCD in the abolitionist group with its declaration that no “non-dangerous” offender should be incarcerated. The NCCD rather narrowly defines “dangerous” offenders as those with persistent records of violence and evidence of mental disturbance. The group