

CHAPTER 8

Prisons



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KITCHEN SUPERVISOR SEXUALLY ABUSES TWO MALE INMATES

The kitchen supervisor in a federal prison in Phoenix, Arizona, Carl David Evans, sexually abused two male inmates whom he supervised ("Kitchen Supervisor Gets Prison Time," 2014). He would separately take the two inmates into a food storage area of the kitchen and give one of them a package of cigarettes (which in turn they could then sell for as much as \$150 to other inmates) in exchange for sex. After the FBI

learned of the abuse of one of these inmates, they placed a video camera in the storage area and caught Evans and the inmates having sex on camera.

Evans pleaded guilty to five of the federal charges against him in February 2013. He was sentenced to 36 months in prison, 3 years on supervised release, and a \$5000 fine ("Kitchen Supervisor Gets Prison Time," 2014, p. 20).

Test Your Knowledge

Test your present knowledge of prisons by answering the following questions. Check your answers on page 336 after reading the chapter.

1. The incarceration rate in the United States remains the highest in the world. (True or false?)
2. Most inmates serve out their sentence in maximum security prisons. (True or false?)

(Continued)

Test Your Knowledge (Continued)

3. Minimum security prisons make up about two-thirds of all prisons. (True or false?)
4. What are the typical attributes of a supermax prison from an inmates' perspective?
5. What factors describe a medium security prison? How is it similar to and different from maximum and minimum security prisons?
6. What is the definition of a total institution?
7. What are prisonization and importation in the prison context?
8. What are the pains of imprisonment (as per Sykes, 1958)?
9. What are gangs, and what role do they play in the prison subculture? How might their existence and ability to flourish in prisons be related to the pains of imprisonment?
10. Why does violence exist in prisons?
11. Transgender inmates, particularly in men's prisons, are more likely to be sexually assaulted than any other group of inmates. (True or false?)

Learning Objectives

- ❖ Understand the differences between types of prisons
- ❖ Know what factors affect the operation of prisons
- ❖ Be able to explain what prisonization, mortification, importation, pains of imprisonment, and mature coping are and how they influence inmate behavior
- ❖ Explain what prison gangs are and why they exist in prisons
- ❖ Know the reasons why violence, riots, and sexual assaults occur in prisons and some strategies for their reduction
- ❖ Understand why care for aging and physically and mentally ill inmates in prisons has become such an issue
- ❖ Recognize the need to respect the needs of LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex) inmates

Introduction: The State of Prisons

It has become axiomatic to say that correctional programs and institutions are overcrowded, underfunded, and unfocused these days. For the better part of 40 years, the drug war has raged on, mandatory sentencing has had its effect, and probation and parole caseloads and incarceration rates have spiraled out of control. As a consequence, though spending on corrections had until recently steadily, and steeply, climbed, it was and largely still is nearly impossible for most states and localities to meet the needs for programs, staff, and institutions. So they do not. As a consequence, the corrections experience for staff and offenders continues to be shaped by shortages.

However, in the last 10 years, there has been a reconsideration of the drug war: At the time of this writing (summer 2014), recreational marijuana has been legalized in two states (Colorado and Washington) and medical marijuana has been legalized in several others. It is likely that many more states will move to legalize marijuana in the near future. As is discussed in Chapter 5 of this book, a few years ago Congress reduced the sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine. The effect of these two changes, marijuana legalization and reduced sentences for crack

cocaine, has been to reduce correctional populations. In addition, several states have rescinded their mandatory sentences for drugs and other crimes (e.g., three strikes and you're out laws), which is also limiting time spent in prisons (Garland et al., 2014). The focus on correctional treatment away from retribution and deterrence as sole justifications for prisons and other forms of corrections has also reduced populations (some things do work for some people and often treatment works best in the community). Finally, the cost of corrections for states and localities, particularly after the recession of 2007 hit, has caused those governmental units to shutter prisons and jails and to rethink the use of prisons, the most expensive correctional option (Cullen, Jonson & Stohr, 2014). The collective effect of these changes in law and policy has been decarceration in several states and localities.

Having written this, and as has been discussed already in this text, it has always been somewhat true that the corrections experience has tended to be shaped by shortages. With the exception of the recent past, if it has been built, or in the case of probation and parole, offered, they will come—because, as with all corrections sentences, they are forced to. Cases in point, almost immediately after the first American prisons were built, the Walnut Street Jail (1790), the Auburn Prison (1819), the Western Pennsylvania Prison (1826), and the Eastern Pennsylvania Prison (1829) were full, and within a few years, they were expanded or new prisons were under construction.

To say that crowding and corrections have always been linked, of course, is not to dismiss the negative effects of overfilling institutions. Certainly, despite some decarceration we are seeing across the United States, the combined incarceration rate for jails (238) and prisons (474) remains the highest in the Westernized world at 712 per 100,000 U.S. residents as of 2012 (calculated using the population for jails and prisons in 2012 [Glaze & Herberman, 2013] divided by the U.S. Census estimate of the population [312.8 million] on January 1, 2012). By way of comparison, this rate was 748 in 2009 (West, 2010, p. 4). As indicated in Chapter 6, jails at midyear 2013 were about 82% full, whereas prisons were running at 109% of capacity in 2008 (the latest year for which we have data at the time of writing; Minton & Golinelli, 2014, p. 3; Sabol, West, & Cooper, 2009). We expect that the decreases in the rate of incarceration has likely led to a much lower rate of capacity for prisons currently than this 109% figure would suggest, but even if it is now at 100%, this does not leave much room for flexibility in classification.

In this chapter, we discuss the structure and operation of prisons. The inmate subculture that flourishes in prisons and the violence and gangs that bedevil them will also be reviewed. The nature of the correctional experience for individuals incarcerated in prisons is somewhat different from what those in jails or community corrections encounter, and those differences are explored here.

❖ Prison Organizations

Classification

As inmates enter the prison system from the courts, they are usually assessed at a classification or reception facility based on their crime, criminal history, escape risk, behavioral issues (if any), and health and programming needs. Women and children are classified in separate facilities from adult males. This assessment includes the review of materials related to the inmate, by reception center personnel, and tests and observation of the inmate regarding his or her dangerousness and amenability to treatment. After being assessed by prison personnel for a period of weeks or months, inmates are sent to the prison that the personnel believe is the best fit, based first on security needs, followed by space available, and finally the inmate's needs. Inmates generally have no control over which prison they are sent to. Once they have done some time, inmates may request that they be moved to a facility that is closer to their family and friends, but such considerations are not a priority for classification and are more an option for adult males, as the facilities available for transfer for adult females and juveniles are much more limited because there are fewer of them.



COMPARATIVE Corrections

CANADA'S DEBATE REGARDING SOCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMMING VERSUS MORE PRISONS

In an editorial from the Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail* from March 2011, the writer described the “Pathways to Education” program for youth that is being funded by Canada’s national government, with some support from businesses (Fabri, 2014). Instead of more incarceration for troubled youth, which is a more typical American response to juvenile delinquency and which has been adopted by the Canadian government to some extent, this program, founded in 2001 and developed by a community health center in Toronto’s inner city, provides mentoring and support for these youth and mandatory tutoring for those whose grades fall below a predetermined threshold. Troubled youth also have access to free lunches and bus

tickets should they need them. They get a \$1000 a year that they can use toward postsecondary education. According to an assessment done by the Boston Consulting Group, the program cut the drop-out rate of 700 troubled youth from 56% to 12% and increased college attendance to the level of 80% from 20%. Ninety-three percent of those eligible for the program were enrolled, and the assessors determined that there was a \$600,000 lifetime benefit to society for each of these enrollments. At the time of this editorial, the program was available in 16 locations, in four provinces, and was slated to be up and running in 20 locations by 2016.

Prison Types and Levels

Prisons were and are used for long-term and convicted offenders who are to be simultaneously punished (experience retribution), deterred, and reformed (rehabilitated) while being isolated (incapacitated) from the community and, for most, reintegrated back into that community. As the number of prisons has expanded across the United States, their diversity has increased. Rather than just an all-purpose maximum/medium security prison, as was the norm when prisons were first built, there are state and federal prisons with myriad security levels, including super maximum, maximum, medium, and minimum. There are prisons for men, for women, for men and women, for children, and for military personnel. Prisons come in the form of regular confinement facilities, but also prison farms, prison hospitals, boot camps, reception centers, community corrections facilities (sometimes known as work release or day reporting facilities), and others (Stephan, 2008).

As indicated in Table 8.1, as of 2005 (the latest Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities data available at the time of writing), there were 1,821 state and federal prisons in the United States, 1,406 of which were public and 415 were under private contract with either a state or the federal government (Stephan, 2008, p. 2). Most prisons were operated or under contract with the states (1,719) rather than at the federal level (102). Although only about one-fifth of the prisons in the United States are designated as maximum security, because of their size they hold about a third of the inmates incarcerated in this country (Stephan, 2008, pp. 2, 4). In contrast, medium security prisons constitute about one-fourth of prisons, but hold two-fifths of inmates—again, perhaps because of their relatively large size compared to minimum security prisons, which are about a half of all prisons, but hold only about one-fifth of inmates (Stephan, 2008, p. 4). These data do indicate that the popular and academic depictions of maximum security prisons as the norm in America are incorrect.

Prisons: Correctional facilities used for long-term and convicted offenders.

■ TABLE 8.1 State and Federal Correctional Facilities

All	Public	Private	Max	Med	Min
1,821	1,406	415	372	480	969

Source: Stephan (2008).

Supermax Prisons

When states were first building prisons, they tended to be a combination of a maximum and medium security type (think industrial and big house prisons). The exterior of these prisons was very secure, but internally inmates were given some, though restricted, freedom to move about and were often expected to do so for work, dining, and related purposes. **Supermax prisons** (the slang term for super maximum security prisons) developed later, and arguably the first of these was at the federal level with the Alcatraz Prison, which was built in 1934 to hold the most notorious gangsters of its era (featured in In Focus 8.1). Others argue that the first full-fledged supermaxes did not develop until the 1980s and were part of the “get tough on crime” movement that promoted more severe punishment (e.g., see Mears, 2013). Today, supermax prisons at the federal and state level are not all operated exactly the same way, though certain characteristics do appear to be common: Inmates are confined to their windowless cells 23 hours a day, except for showers 3 times a week (where they are restrained) and solo exercise time a couple times a week; they eat in their cell, and often it is nutraloaf (a bland, but nutritious food that requires no utensils); if any limited rehabilitation is provided, the treatment personnel stand outside the cell and talk to the inmate within; physical contact is prohibited unless inmates are in restraints (Pizarro & Narag, 2008). Moreover, their confinement is usually lengthy, not for a day or a week or even a month, but for a year or more (Mears, 2013).

Supermax prisons:
High-security prisons that hold those who are violent or disruptive in other prisons in the state or federal system.

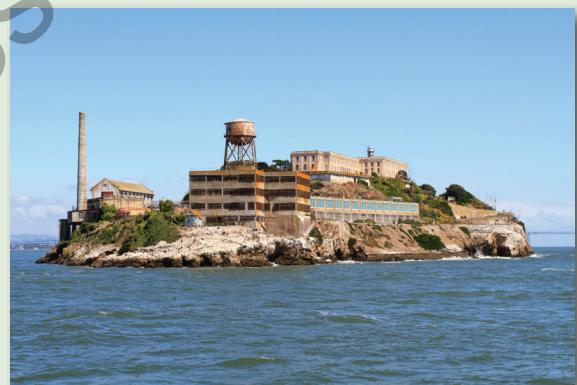
IN FOCUS 8.1

Alcatraz: The United States' First Supermax

As Ward and Kassebaum (2009) note in their book *Alcatraz: The Gangster Years*, when Alcatraz was first opened as a federal prison in 1934, it was created in response to a perceived national crisis. This crisis involved gangsters and outlaws who were terrorizing communities with kidnappings, bank and train robberies, and organized crime. Moreover, there were a number of scandals where these gangsters and outlaws were effectively corrupting state and federal prison officials and staff through intimidation and with their money, contacts, and infamy.

Corrupt and poorly managed, state and federal prisons of the time were widely perceived as coddling influential felons by permitting special privileges and allowing them to continue involvement in criminal enterprises from behind bars, while flaws in their security systems offered inmates opportunities for escape (Ward & Kassebaum, 2009, p. 2).

Al Capone, one of the most notorious gangsters of this era, when incarcerated at the Eastern State Penitentiary in Pennsylvania, was provided by the warden with a single cell, furnished like a home; a cushy library clerk job; unlimited visits by family and friends; and use of the telephone to contact his lawyer, crime partners, and politicians. Though he and his gang were implicated in a number of murders and graft of all sorts, he was able to evade prosecution for most of those crimes, and it was a tax evasion conviction that landed him in federal prison.



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Photo 8.1

Alcatraz Prison

Alcatraz, on an island in the San Francisco Bay, was created to end the undue influence on incarceration that the Capones of the world exerted. “Surrounded by cold ocean currents, it was intended to hold the nation’s ‘public enemies’ to an iron regimen, reduce them to mere numbers, cut them off from the outside world, and keep them locked up securely for decades” (Ward & Kassebaum, 2009, p. 2). News reporters were prohibited from interviewing Alcatraz staff or inmates, and staff were told not to talk to reporters or they would be fired. Visits were limited to a

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few blood relatives, and then only once per month and through a guard-monitored telephone. Inmates were not allowed to talk about their life on the inside during those visits. That life was very controlled and monotonous and consisted of strict adherence to silence at night, work (when earned as a privilege), and not much else. No effort was made to rehabilitate these inmates, as they were supposed to be the most incorrigible troublemakers of all federal prisoners. There was no commissary, so there was no underground economy in goods. Inmates were out of their cells from 6:30 in the morning, if they had a job, until 4:30 in the afternoon. From then on, all they had were small crafts, reading, letter writing, and time for reflection.

In practice, over the 30 years of its existence (it closed in 1963), Alcatraz never lived up completely to the ideal, though Ward and Kasseebaum (2009) claim it may have rehabilitated a number of inmates. The maintenance of silence, except at prescribed times, had long since been abandoned. Many inmates had attempted escape, inmates held strikes to protest conditions, and a few inmates and staff were

assaulted—including a warden—or killed by inmates in fights and escapes (it is possible that two men did succeed in escaping, but there is some debate about this). The internal controls were never as harsh or effective as they were supposed to be, either, though more than one inmate of the early years characterized incarceration there as tantamount to being buried alive (Ward & Kasseebaum, 2009). Ex-inmates also talked to reporters once released, and the gunfire, fires, and sirens from the various events were noticed and speculated on by San Francisco reporters across the bay. Moreover, as there were not enough notorious and incorrigible inmates in the federal system to fill Alcatraz, about two-thirds of its inmates were less dangerous and influential than had been planned for (Ward & Kasseebaum, 2009, p. 459). Yet Alcatraz became the model for other federal and state supermaxes that followed as, for the most part, it had avoided most of the corruption and violence apparent in other prisons, and it had, for the most part, effectively controlled the gangsters and outlaws of its time (Ward & Kasseebaum, 2009).

Alcatraz closed in 1963, and other federal supermaxes in Marion, Illinois (opened in 1963 to take some of the Alcatraz inmates), and later Florence, Colorado, in 1994, took its place. States began building supermaxes in earnest in the 1980s and 1990s, in reaction to the felt need to control more dangerous and disruptive inmates and to “get tough” with them (Mears, 2008, 2013; Olivero & Roberts, 1987; Richards, 2008). It is estimated that a total of 44 states, holding some 25,000 inmates, had some form of a supermax (Mears, 2013, p. 684), though definitions of what a supermax is does vary across the states (Naday, Freilich, & Mellow, 2008). As with Alcatraz, these supermax prisons at the federal and state levels are supposed to hold the most dangerous offenders, violent gang members, those who cannot behave well in lower-security prisons, and those who pose an escape risk.

Because of the heightened security requirements, incarceration in a supermax is expensive at about \$50,000 per year as compared to \$20,000 to \$30,000 to incarcerate an adult male in lower-security prisons (Richards, 2008, p. 18), and because of the materials used in their construction, they are at least 2 to 3 times more expensive to build than a “regular” prison (Mears, 2008). The research indicates that wardens believe that the presence of a supermax in a prison system deters violent offenders, increases order and control, and reduces assaults on staff in the other prisons in that system, not just in the supermax itself (Pizarro & Narag, 2008). Several states (e.g., Texas, Colorado, and California) have claimed that violence decreased in their systems once they opened a supermax. Sundt, Castellano, and Briggs (2008) reported that inmate assaults on staff decreased in Illinois once the supermax was opened in that state, though there was no effect for inmate assaults on inmates. Clearly, there is room for more systematic examination of the data, as in this study, of these and other issues as they relate to supermaxes.

For instance, critics and some researchers claim that inmates’ mental health is impaired after a stay in a supermax because of the sensory deprivation, and there is some evidence to support this assertion (Mears, 2013). There is also evidence that supermaxes are sometimes used to incarcerate those who are merely mentally ill or who have committed more minor infractions (Mears, 2008; O’Keefe, 2008). In addition, the effect of incarcerating less serious or mentally impaired offenders in a supermax, as King, Steiner, and Breach (2008) note, can be a self-fulfilling prophecy of

exacerbating inmate mental and behavioral problems through such secure and severe confinement (note the story of the mentally ill inmate held in the Dona Ana County, New Mexico jail that appears at the beginning of Chapter 6). On the other hand, there are researchers who have found evidence that such a stay had a calming effect on inmates, allowing them to reflect on their wrongs and how they might change their behavior (e.g., see Ward & Kassebaum, 2009). Pizarro and Narag (2008) note, however, that the evidence is weak on both sides of this argument and that more, and more rigorous, research is merited before we know the true effect of supermaxes on inmates or on prison systems.

Maximums, Mediums, and Minimums

State and federal and military laws, traditions, and practices differ on how each type of prison operates, but some generalizations about how prisons with different security levels operate are usually accurate. Those prisons with the greatest internal and external security controls are the super maximums, and next in security are the **maximum security prisons**. Inmates in supermaxes, and less so in regular maximum security prisons, are often locked up all day, save for time for a shower or recreation outside of their cell, and they are ideally in single cells deprived of other sensory stimulation. Visits and contact with the outside are very restricted. The maximum and supermax exterior security consists of some combination of layers of razor wire, walls, lights, cameras, armed guards, and attack dogs on patrol.

As the states that have a supermax usually only have one, maximum security prisons are responsible for holding most of the serious offenders, and those who could not handle themselves in the relatively freer environment of the medium and minimum security prisons. The latter type of inmate might be able to qualify for a medium or minimum security level classification, but instead is in maximum security because the inmate is unable to control his or her behavior.

In many states where the death penalty is legal, their death row is located at a maximum security prison. Death rows are usually wholly separate areas of the prison, sometimes in a different building, and often have their own separate designated staff and procedures. (For a more involved discussion of the death penalty, see Chapter 16.)

Maximum security prisons may have the same exterior security controls as supermaxes, but inside inmates are not locked down as much, though the treatment and work programming is much more constricted than in the medium security prisons. Maximum security inmates may or may not be double-bunked, depending on the crowding in the institution, and unless under some special classification, they have some access to the yard (a large gathering area for inmates), the cafeteria, and the chapel. Visiting and contact with the outside world are less restricted than in the supermax, and inmates are usually not in some kind of restraint when it occurs.

In **medium security prisons**, the exterior security can be as tight as it is for the supermax and the maximum security prisons, but internally the inmate has many more opportunities to attend school, treatment, and church programming and to work in any number of capacities. There is also greater diversity in rooming options, from dormitories to single cells, with the preferred single or double cells used as a carrot to entice better behavior. Visiting and contact with the outside world are less restricted. Some medium security inmates may even be allowed to leave the institution for work-related deliveries or on furloughs, though this is much more common in minimum security prisons.

Medium security prisons will hold a mix of people in terms of crime categories, all the way from the convicted murderer doing life, but who programs well, down to the lowly burglar or drug user who is awaiting transfer to a lower-security prison or who is engaged in the substance abuse programming that the prison affords. Medium security prisons are more likely to have a college campus

ETHICAL ISSUE

What Would You Do?

You are a correctional officer in a supermax prison in “most states” USA. You understand the stated reasoning for such prisons in your state “to house the worst of the worst” inmates with behavioral problems and to separate gang members. You have been on the job for a few years, and you generally like your colleagues and workplace. However, you have noticed that the mental stability of some of the inmates you supervise has deteriorated the longer they stay in this prison. You have reported these problems to the medical officer in charge of the medical unit for the prison, and she and your supervisor have discouraged you from making further reports because the unit is already full and staffing is short. Is there anything else you can do? What do you think would be the best response to this problem and why?



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Maximum security prisons:
Prisons where both external and internal security are high and programs and contact with other prisoners and visitors are very limited.

Medium security prisons:
Prisons that have high external security, but less restrictive internal security and more opportunities for programs.

type interior, with several buildings devoted to distinct purposes. There might be a separate cafeteria building, a separate programming and treatment building, a separate gym and recreation building, and separate work and housing buildings. Medium security prisons are heavily engaged in industrial work such as building furniture, making clothing, and printing license plates for the state. In some cases and states, the goods produced in the prison are sold on the open market.

Minimum security prisons have a much more relaxed exterior security; some do not even have a wall or a fence. Inmates are provided with far more programming, either inside the institution or outside in the community. The housing options are often as diverse as in the medium security prisons, and inmates can usually roam the facility much more freely, availing themselves of programming, recreation, the yard, the chapel, and the cafeteria at prescribed times. With the recognition that inmates in a minimum security prison will often be free within a year or two, visiting options are more liberalized to make the transition from prison to the community smoother. Work is promoted, and inmates are often encouraged, or in the case of work release facilities with a minimum security classification, are expected, to work in the community.

Inmates confined to minimum security prisons are usually “short timers,” or people who are relatively close to a release date. These could be people who have been classified directly to this prison or work release facility because they received a sentence of a year or two and because they are not expected to be an escape risk or behavioral problem. Whether they can work might also be a consideration in classification, as this is often a central element of these prisons. Other inmates who might do time in a minimum security prison or work release facility are more serious offenders who have moved through, or “down,” the other classification levels and are relatively close to their release. Minimum security prisons thus also hold the most serious offenders, including murderers, rapists, and child molesters, along with those convicted of burglary and substance abuse and trafficking offenses. The difference is that in minimum security prisons, all such offenders, no matter their offense, are believed to be a good risk for behavior and in need of preparation for their imminent release.

❖ Prison Value?

Placing someone in prison is a very expensive decision, costing states and the federal government at least \$20,000 per year for adult males and more than double that for women and children (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011). In the past, this cost was not always considered by policy makers intent on locking up those who had offended even in relatively minor ways. Instead, as discussed in preceding chapters, prisons and other means of “correcting” were created to achieve retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, rehabilitation, and reintegration. (Note: Cullen and Jonson [2012, pp. 10–12] would add restorative justice or “reducing harm” for the victim, the community, and the offender, and early intervention or “saving children,” to this list of theoretical goals for correctional entities.)

Whether retribution is achieved by imprisonment and, if so, how much imprisonment is needed to achieve it, is a philosophic and ultimately a subjective matter left to judges and juries and social commentators. Achieving incapacitation is a much more tangible objective, however. When a person is removed and kept away from a community, as he or she is when incarcerated in a jail or prison or to a lesser extent when the individual’s movements are restricted on probation or parole, it is obvious that incapacitation has been achieved. There is even evidence that incapacitation is related to reduced criminality in the range of 3 to 6 crimes per year for some criminals (Owens, 2009; Sweeten & Apel, 2007).

However, measuring whether corrections has had the effect of deterring or rehabilitating is not always obvious or easy to do. We do know that imprisonment for more than a year has not been consistently linked to reduced crime, and thus imprisonment does not appear to deter. Instead it may prove criminogenic in that it exposes the incarcerated to deviant attitudes and beliefs and stigmatizes the individual, thus limiting their future employment and social opportunities (Nagin, Cullen, & Jonson, 2009). However, as will be discussed in the chapter on Programming and Treatment (Chapter 15), there is solid evidence that when done correctly, some treatment programs, even in prisons, can reduce recidivism. Therefore, any positive “value” of imprisoning must be assessed based on what is a desirable outcome; the research on whether it can be achieved in a prison, and in these trying economic times, the financial cost of achieving that goal or goals.

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Minimum security prisons: Prisons with relaxed external and internal security created for lower-level felony offenders who are not expected to be an escape or behavioral problem.

❖ Attributes of the Prison That Shape the Experience

Total Institutions, Mortification, Importation, Prisonization

Once classified to a given prison, whether maximum or otherwise, the inmate experience is shaped by several factors, including the *operation* of it. One central component of that operation is the “totality” of the organization.

As will also be discussed in Chapter 9 in reference to staff, Erving Goffman (1961) coined the term “total institution” to describe the nature of mental hospitals, but also prisons, in the United States in the 1950s. For 1 year, he served as a staff member (athletic director’s assistant) and did ethnographic research in a federal mental health hospital in Washington, D.C. While avoiding sociable contact with staff, he immersed himself in the inmate world, or as much as he could without being admitted to the hospital, and what he observed allowed him to learn a great deal about that kind of institution and about roles for staff and inmates.

Goffman (1961) defined a **total institution** as “[a] place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life” (p. xiii). Another key component of this total institution is the defined social strata, particularly as that includes “inmates” and the “staff” (Goffman, 1961, p. 7). Specifically, there are formal prohibitions against even minor social interactions between these two groups in a total institution, and all of the formal power resides with one group (the staff) over the other group (the inmates).

This definition is directly applicable to prisons, even today, though it more aptly described both prisons and jails of the past. For prison inmates, the institution is where they live, and often work, with people who are like themselves, not only in terms of criminal involvement, but also largely in terms of their social class and other background characteristics. Though there is some ability to visit with others, the mode and manner of this contact with the outside world are quite limited in prisons and are also dependent on the security status of the institution (e.g., whether it is a work release facility or a maximum security prison). The formal rules of prisons also closely control inmate behavior and movement. As already mentioned, another key formal attribute of total institutions governs interactions between staff and inmates. Simply put, staff are to restrict such interactions to business only and are to parcel out information only as absolutely necessary. As Goffman (1961) put it, “Social mobility between the two strata is grossly restricted; social distance is typically great and often formally prescribed” (p. 7).

How do these aspects of total institutions affect the lives of inmates? In the 1950s, Goffman (1961) believed that total institutions had the effect of debilitating their inmates. As he saw it, upon entrance

Total institution: A place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life.

Photo 8.2

Visiting hours at the Youngstown Prison, Ohio. An inmate’s access to significant others is limited to visiting where touching is only minimally sanctioned (e.g., a brief kiss or hug at the beginning of the visit).



© George Steinmetz/Corbis

into the institution, the inmate may become *mortified* [known as **mortification**], or suffer from the loss of the many roles he or she occupied in the wider world (see also Sykes, 1958). Instead, only the role of “inmate” is available, a role that is formally powerless and dependent.

In addition, though each person entering a prison *imports* (known as **importation**) aspects of his or her own culture from the outside, to some extent inmates are likely to experience **prisonization**, whereby they adopt the inmate subculture of the institution (Carroll, 1974, 1982; Clemmer, 2001). Couple this mortification, and subsequent role displacement, with the prisonization into the contingent inmate subculture, and you have the potential for the new inmate to experience a life in turmoil while he or she adjusts, and some difficulty when reentering the community.

Pains of Imprisonment

Part and parcel of this inmate world are what Gresham Sykes (1958)—based on his research in a New Jersey maximum security prison—described as the **pains of imprisonment**. Such pains include “the deprivation of liberty, the deprivation of goods and services, the deprivation of heterosexual relationships, the deprivation of autonomy, and the deprivation of security” (pp. 63–83). Inmates in a prison (or jail) are not free to leave, or even to move about the institution without the permission of their keepers (staff). But for Sykes, the worst of the liberty restrictions meant that inmates were cut off, for the most part, from family and friends. They cannot call whomever they like or visit with whom they want, when they wish to do so. As many inmates are functionally illiterate, and poor, they also have difficulty writing letters and affording the postage. This deprivation of contact with family members, particularly their children, is a severe pain that many inmates experience when, as an artifact of their incarceration, they are unable to have regular interactions with their own children or to have any control over their child’s environment on the outside (more about this in the chapter on gender, Chapter 11) (Gray, Mays, & Stohr, 1995; Stohr & Mays, 1993).

As to the pain related to goods and services, inmates are required to surrender all of their property upon entrance into the prison system and, in most cases, they cannot have it back until they leave. The property they are allowed to legally possess is very limited and monitored closely by staff. Relatedly, they cannot choose who will cut their hair or where they will get their nails done, nor can they choose their doctor or schedule a visit. As Sykes (1958) noted—and this is perhaps even truer today in many prisons because of court intervention—most inmates’ basic needs for food, shelter, space, and health care are met, yet it is the perception of deprivation in this material society that matters, too.

In light of the greater knowledge we have regarding sexual orientation of human populations today, as opposed to 50 years ago, we might amend Sykes’s (1958) “deprivation of heterosexual relations” to a more generalized *deprivation of sexual relations*. An inmate’s access to significant others in the wider world is limited to visiting where touching is only minimally sanctioned (e.g., a brief kiss or hug at the beginning of the visit). Though much is made of conjugal visits for prison inmates, in reality there are few prisons that allow these, and a minuscule number of inmates even in those prisons are granted access to such visits. A very few prisons do allow conjugal visits between inmates and their gay or lesbian partners. Though, as with the free population, there are likely to be 3% to 5% of prison inmates who are gay or lesbian (see a brief discussion related to this topic later in this chapter), sexual intimacy between same-sex inmates is against the rules, though it does occur, and illegal as well between same and opposite sex staff and inmates.

Autonomy for the inmate is also severely restricted in the rule-bound prison world. When, how, where, and with whom they live, eat, work, and play are all determined by the rules of the institution. Inmates can make few choices regarding their lives while imprisoned, and all of those choices are shaped by their imprisonment.

Due to their imprisonment, inmates are thrown together with others, some of whom are aggressive and violent or become so in a prison environment, perhaps particularly in the maximum security environment that Sykes was studying. Because of the circumstances surrounding incarceration in a supermax, but also to a lesser degree in medium and minimum level prisons, inmates are deprived of their security, a basic human need as defined by Maslow (1943/2001). Quoting an inmate in his study, Sykes (1958) repeated that “the worst thing about prison is you have to live with other prisoners” (p. 77), meaning that even if one is prone to violence or manipulation (termed an “outlaw” inmate by Sykes [p. 77]), and not all inmates are, it is unnerving for even an outlaw inmate to have to live with others who are also so inclined. This lack of security, according to Sykes, can lead to anxiety

Mortification: Process that occurs as inmates enter the prison and they suffer from the loss of the many roles they occupied in the wider world.

Importation: Occurs when inmates bring aspects of the larger culture into the prison.

Prisonization: The adopting of the inmate subculture by inmates.

Pains of imprisonment: The deprivation of liberty, goods and services, heterosexual relationships, the autonomy, and deprivation of security.

**Photo 8.3**

Inmates in the yard at Mule Creek State Penitentiary in California.

July 19, 2006 Mule Creek SP/CA Corrections Flickr

on the part of inmates and the belief that at some point they, whether an outlaw among outlaws or not, are likely to be forced to fight to defend themselves or to submit to the abuse of others.

Sykes (1958) argued that these pains, though not physically brutalizing, have the cumulative effect of destroying the psyche of the inmate. In order to avoid this destruction, inmates in prisons may be motivated to engage in deviance while incarcerated as a means of alleviating their pain. So bullying other inmates, involvement in gangs, buying items through the underground economy, and homosexual acts might all be motivated in fact by the need for some autonomy, liberty, security, goods and services, and sexual gratification (Johnson, 2002). Extrapolating from this point, the extent to which female inmates form pseudo-familial relationships may be a means of alleviating the pain experienced due to the separation from children and other close family members (Owen, 1998).

One final note regarding the pains of imprisonment: Sykes (1958) did not believe that all inmates experienced or perceived these pains in the same way. He acknowledged that the way in which one experiences these pains does vary some by individual and by background, as well as by the prison in which one is incarcerated. However, he argued that at least among the inmates he studied, there was a consensus that "life in a maximum security prison is depriving or frustrating in the extreme" (p. 63).

❖ The Prison Subculture

Prison subculture, or a subset of culture with its own norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and even language, tends to solidify when people are isolated from the larger culture and when members have regular and intense contact with each other for an extended period of time. In other words, it would appear that the "total institution" nature of prisons provides the perfect environment for an inmate subculture to form. Accordingly, the degree to which a correctional environment fits the definition of a "total institution" will determine the extent to which a client subculture exists. It is also possible that the shared experiences of deprivation, as detailed by Sykes (1958), can further solidify a subculture for inmates.

Thus, research on inmate subcultures has tended to focus on prison inmates and specifically on medium or maximum security prison inmates. This is not to say, of course, that those in a jail or a minimum security prison do not have distinguishable "norms, values, beliefs, and language" which sets them apart from the wider community, but it is much less likely. By definition, the longer inmates are in an institution, associating with others like them, and the more "total" the institution is in its restrictions on liberty and contact with "outsiders," the more subjected inmates are to the pains of imprisonment, and the more likely they are to become "prisonized" in that they adopt the inmate subculture.

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Prison subculture: The norms, values, beliefs and even language of the prison.

Indicators of such a subculture, as identified by prison researchers, include prescribed values and defined roles for inmates (Clemmer, 2001; Owen, 1998). For instance, Clemmer in 1940 (reprinted in 2001) broadly defined criminal subcultural values as including “the notion that criminals should not betray each other to the police, should be reliable, wily but trustworthy, coolheaded, etc.” (p. 7). Also emphasized among these values are ultra masculinity and displays of toughness, and solidarity among inmates and against staff (Lutze & Murphy, 1999; Sykes, 1958). Accordingly, the types of roles (inmate typology) that Sykes and Messinger (1960) and Sykes (1958) described for adult male prison inmates in their own argot, or language, are detailed in In Focus 8.2. Though these researchers identified these roles for inmates in prisons over 50 years ago, current researchers still see them in prisons of today. Of course, any given inmate might be expected to change roles from time to time during his or her incarceration, or to engage in more than one role simultaneously.

IN FOCUS 8.2

Inmate Roles Identified by Sykes (1958) and Sykes and Messinger (1960)

- **The right guy:** The inmate who fully supports and embraces the inmate code.
- **The rat or squealer:** The inmate who “snitches” on others to staff. Usually such inmates are despised by other inmates as they violate the prohibition in the inmate code regarding this sort of behavior. Because they are so disliked, rats are vulnerable to attacks by other inmates.
- **The center man:** The inmate who agrees with the prison rules and procedures either because he is trying to curry favor from staff or because he believes that is the correct way to behave.
- **The tough:** The inmate who is aggressive, has anger issues, and is touchy, and so is willing to fight at will.
- **The hipster:** The inmate who aspires to be a tough, but who is really all talk and little action. He chooses his victims selectively to be sure he can in fact conquer them, whereas the tough will fight both the weak and the strong.
- **The gorilla:** The inmate who may be as aggressive as the tough, but uses that aggression, or just the threat of it, to gain something from other inmates.
- **The merchant or peddler:** The inmate who engages in the underground black market to supply illicit goods and services to other inmates for material advantage.
- **The weakling:** The inmate who is vulnerable to exploitation by others and cannot stand up to them. Someone who submits to the coercion, or threatened coercion, of the gorilla.
- **The fish:** The inmate who has just arrived and is not yet adjusted to the ways of the prison.
- **The wolf:** The inmate who aggressively and sexually pursues other inmates. He is believed to play a “masculine” role. There is no emotion or connection in the sexual act for the wolf; rather, he pursues men in the prison and rapes them.
- **The “fag”:** The inmate who plays the passive, though not unwilling, role in the sexual relationship with another inmate. He is believed to play a “feminine” role. (Note: The authors of this text acknowledge that the term “fag” is derogatory, and the assumption that male and female roles are tied to aggression and passivity is dated and limiting, but this term and these assumptions are the ones used by Sykes [1958] and Sykes and Messinger [1960], who were repeating the argot used by inmates of the late 1950s. As Sykes explains, inmate argot was often meant to be derogatory and inflammatory as it marked and labeled the roles of others.)
- **The punk:** The unwilling inmate who is coerced or bribed into the passive sexual role vis-à-vis other inmates. This inmate does not adopt the “feminine” role.
- **The ball buster:** The inmate who continually struggles against the system and staff, despite the futility of it, often to the point of foolishness.
- **The innocent:** The inmate who repeatedly claims his innocence of the crime for which he is incarcerated.
- **The square john:** The inmate who does not become prisonized, but identifies with the free world values of staff and the outside community.

These roles are played out in the prison in a criminal subculture, which becomes a “convict subculture” for Clemmer (2001) when such inmates seek power and information so that they might get the goods and services they desire to alleviate those pains of imprisonment. Owen (1998) noted that some women engage in a version of this subculture and these roles, although it might be tempered by the relationships they had and the goods and services they needed (more about the different roles women inmates adopt in Chapter 11). Notably, both Clemmer and Owen found that a significant portion of inmates in the male and female prisons they studied were not at all interested in being involved in the convict subculture or the “mix” of behavior that can lead to trouble in prisons. Such inmates, in the argot identified by Sykes (1958) and Sykes and Messinger (1960), were “square johns.” These inmates either chose to not connect to the inmate subculture, or they held on to more traditional and legitimate values from the larger culture.

More recent research confirms that inmates are not as solidly aligned against staff as the early works would indicate (Hemmens & Marquart, 2000; J. B. Jacobs, 1977; Johnson, 2002; Jurik, 1985a; Jurik & Halemba, 1984; Lombardo, 1982; Owen, 1998). Many inmates identify with free world values, as much or more than “inmate values” and inmate subculture.

Other recent researchers and writers on prisons (e.g., see Conover, 2001; Johnson, 2002; Rideau, 2010) find that staff and inmates engage in more personal and informal relationships with each other than is formally acknowledged, a reality that Sykes (1958) noted as well. The diversification of staff by race, ethnicity, and gender has changed the old dynamic between staff and inmates, making staff less dissimilar to inmates and the inmate world less “masculinized” than it was previously (for a more involved discussion of these matters, see Chapter 11: Women and Corrections, and Chapter 12: Minorities and Corrections), perhaps continuing to break down some of the more formal barriers between staff and inmates in a total institution.

Research, observations, and personal experience as a teacher, student-inmate, attendee, and governor (warden) in a male prison in the United Kingdom led Crewe, Warr, Bennett, and Smith (2014) to theorize that emotionally restrained “tough-guy” depiction of inmates in prisons does not fully describe the “emotional geography” of such places. Rather, these researchers claim there are certain subcultural zones where a wider range of emotions is allowed because the circumstances of such places allow it. One such zone in the prison is the visiting room where interactions with families require more open emotional exchanges and allow for shows of vulnerability by inmates. Classrooms and chapel were other areas where comradeship and the sharing of ideas and even personal experiences and beliefs broke down the typical emotional barriers that are present in prisons.

❖ Gangs and the Prison Subculture

Gangs, or groups of people with similar interests who socialize together and who may engage in deviant or criminal activities, are a common phenomenon in jails and prisons. According to the U.S. Department of Justice (2014) website, gangs in prisons and jails are by definition engaged in criminal activities and are connected through members and criminal involvement with communities. Prison gangs have a hierarchical organizational structure and a set, and often strict, code of conduct for members. As reported by the U.S. Department of Justice (2014):

Prison gangs vary in both organization and composition, from highly structured gangs such as the Aryan Brotherhood and Nuestra Familia to gangs with a less formalized structure such as the Mexican Mafia (La Eme). Prison gangs generally have fewer members than street gangs and are structured along racial or ethnic lines. Nationally, prison gangs pose a threat because of their role in the transportation and distribution of narcotics. Prison gangs are an important link between drug-trafficking organizations (DTOs), street gangs, and OMGs [outlaw motorcycle gangs], and are structured along racial or ethnic lines. Prison gangs typically are more powerful within state correctional facilities rather than within the federal penal system. (p. 1)

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Gangs (prison): Groups of people with similar interests who socialize together and support each other, but who also engage in deviant or criminal activities. Prison gangs have a hierarchical organizational structure and a set, and often strict, code of conduct for members.

Photo 8.4

A California prison inmate displays his tattoos.



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Correctional scholars and practitioners believe gangs are so ubiquitous in corrections because they meet the needs of inmates for security, goods and services, power, and companionship. They lessen the pains of imprisonment by providing protection in numbers and the potential to respond with force to any threats an inmate might face. They are conduits for the supply of illicit goods like tobacco, drugs, alcohol, and sex in prisons and jails. They also provide some substitution for the diminished relationships that inmates have with those family and friends on the outside.

The history of gangs in prisons is a long one. Sykes (1958) noted that the first investigation of the New Jersey State Prison, in 1830, found what they called a "Stauch-Gang," which was firmly entrenched there and engaged in terrorizing both inmates and staff, while also planning escapes (p. 92). Ward and Kassebaum (2009) also point out the importation and exportation of gang-related criminal activity between state and federal prisons and the streets in the 1920s. J. B. Jacobs (1977), in his history of the Stateville Prison in Illinois, observed that prison gangs have existed in that state for decades, as imports from the streets of Chicago, though he thought their ferocity and strength increased in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The prison gangs of today are almost too numerous for correctional authorities to keep track of, but do tend to have in common a criminal focus. According to the Florida Department of Corrections (FDOC) (2014), most prison gangs these days recruit their membership based on ethnicity or race. Both the federal government and the FDOC report that gangs are much stronger in male prisons, and gangs will conspire with others, even rival gangs, so as to provide protection and increase their criminal reach (e.g., the Aryan Brotherhood might sometimes work with members of the Black Guerrilla Family—despite the racial hatred of their members for each other—if it will increase their drug sales). The FDOC website identifies the six major prison gangs in the United States as follows:

1. Neta (Puerto Rican-American/Hispanic)
2. Aryan Brotherhood (white)
3. Black Guerrilla Family (black)
4. Mexican Mafia (Mexican-American/Hispanic)
5. La Nuestra Familia (Mexican-American/Hispanic)
6. Texas Syndicate (Mexican-American/Hispanic)

Because of their underground engagement in prison crime and the rivalries that develop between gangs, even those with members of the same ethnic backgrounds (e.g., the Mexican Mafia and La Nuestra Familia) are sworn enemies. Moreover, both the Mexican Mafia and La Nuestra Familia are rivals of the Texas Syndicate. Because of these rivalries, jails and prisons constantly have to consider gang membership in classification decisions. Whether it is fights over turf, protection of members, or some other issue, the presence of gangs and gang activities leads to disruption and even murder in prisons. For instance, according to the FDOC (2014), the Aryan Brotherhood (AB) disruptions of prisons include the following:

- The main activities of the AB are centered on drug trafficking, extortion, pressure rackets, and internal discipline.
- Prison activities include introduction of contraband, distribution of drugs, and getting past facility rules and regulations.
- Traditionally, targets have been non-gang inmates and internal discipline.
- From 1975 to 1985, members committed 40 homicides in California prisons and local jails, as well as 13 homicides in the community.
- From 1978 to 1992, AB members, suspects, and associates in the federal system were involved in 26 homicides, 3 of which involved staff victims.

Because of the threat prison gangs present for the security of the institution and the safety of staff and inmates, managers try to control or suppress gang involvement in their facilities. The first step in this process is the identification of gang members and their leaders. Once identified, correctional staff will try to separate members and leaders from each other. However, given the crowding of most prisons and prison systems, it is almost impossible to always employ the separation tactic as a means of control and suppression. Therefore, what they are often left with is the monitoring of gang activity and, as much as possible, punishing or neutralizing gang members and reducing their impact on a given system.

❖ Violence

Why Prisons Are Violent

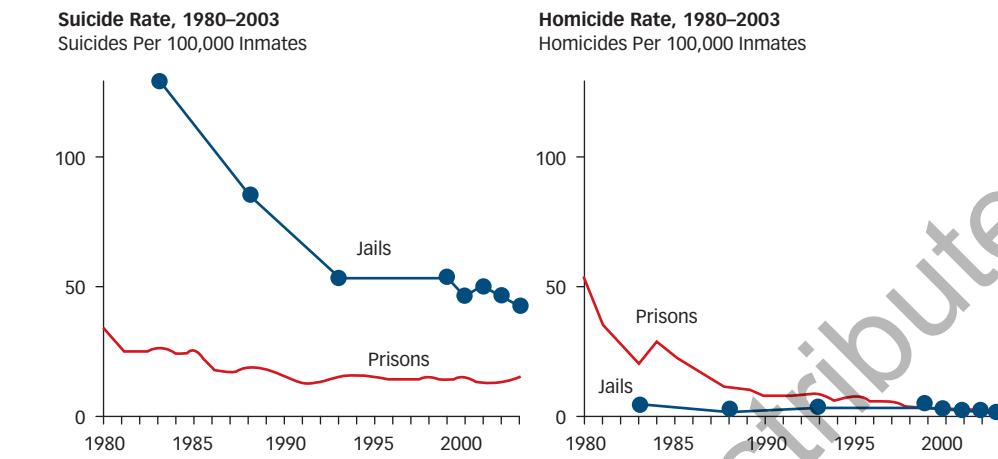
Violence is endemic to prisons. There is violence in prisons because incarcerated people are there unwillingly; forced to do things they normally would not do, with people they may not like; and most important of all, some of them are inclined to be violent. According to Bureau of Justice Statistics researchers Carson and Golinelli (2013), about 53% of the state prison population in 2011 were incarcerated for violent offenses. As was mentioned earlier, prisons as a whole are running at or over capacity. Maximum and medium security prisons tend to hold more inmates convicted of violent offenses or who have problems with following the rules in prisons, and as a result they are more likely to experience violent outbursts. Research by Meade and Steiner (2013), in which they used a representative national sample of adult male inmates, indicates that inmates who were exposed to violence, or who were physically victimized, prior to incarceration were likely to have more problems with adjustment while incarcerated. The researchers also found that abuse as a child—not an uncommon experience for many inmates—was associated with maladjustment while in prison. Add to this mix the presence of gangs and their willingness to use force to achieve their criminal ends, and the possibility of violence in prisons rises.

ETHICAL ISSUES

What Would You Do?



As an experienced counselor in the prison you work at, you are often given the more “difficult” inmates to work with. You are told by the prison intelligence officers that you may have a number of gang members on your caseload. One younger inmate by the name of Jacob, whom you have spent some time with, has told you of his affiliation with one of the gangs in the prison. He has also emphasized that though he is a member, he is not involved in any illegal activities. He is programming well and has a responsible job in the facility. As best as you can tell from your contacts with other inmates, Jacob is not involved in any criminal activities. You know that if you tell the intelligence officer about this inmate’s affiliation, however, there is a good chance that Jacob will be placed in segregation or moved to another facility. What do you think would be the best response in this instance and why?

FIGURE 8.1 Violence in Prisons and Jails, 1980–2003

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics (2010).

The Amount of Violence

With the exception of deaths due to violence, it is difficult to determine the exact amount of violence in prisons. Correctional institutions tend to underreport its incidence, and there is variation across facilities about what constitutes violence (Byrne & Hummer, 2008). Relatedly, inmates are reluctant to report the violence they experience or witness to staff. With these caveats regarding official statistics in mind, Stephan and Karberg (2003) found, using data collected from correctional institutions around the United States, that the number of assaults on staff and inmates increased in state and federal prisons from 1995 to 2000 and that the size of the increase was greatest for private institutions. They do note, however, that the rate of assault on staff (or the number of assaults per staff person) decreased slightly during this time period. We also know, based on the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) data presented in Figure 8.1, that both the suicide and homicide rates in jails and prisons have decreased from 1980 to 2003. More recent BJS data (2000–2011) indicates that the suicide rate in jails has continued to decline, while in prisons it has remained stable at 2002 levels (Noonan & Ginder, 2013).

Sexual Assaults

As was discussed in Chapter 6, the amount of sexual violence in prisons and jails, based on inmate surveys and official statistics, is becoming increasingly clear. The Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA) requires that the BJS collect data yearly on the amount of prison rape that occurs. In 2013 this meant that a 10% sample of the 7,600 jails, prisons, community-based and juvenile facilities were included (BJS, 2014, p. 1). The findings from this research indicate that

- the allegations of sexual victimization increased from 2005 to 2011, more in prisons than in jails
- 10% of the allegations in 2011 were substantiated (meaning were found to be true after an investigation)
- 52% of the substantiated incidents involved only inmates, while the other 48% involved staff and inmates
- injuries were reported in 18% of the inmate only victimizations, whereas less than 1% of the staff and inmate victimizations involved injuries
- female staff committed more than half of the substantiated incidents of sexual misconduct (BJS, 2014, p. 1).

The data indicate that 4.0% of prison inmates reported experiencing sexual victimization in 2011–2012 (63,400), which was perpetrated by either other inmates or staff (BJS, 2014, p. 3). Whether

the number of such assaults is trending up or down and why it might be more prevalent in some facilities than others are matters yet to be determined by more longitudinal research. Certainly, though horrific for the inmate experiencing it, and keeping in mind the likely underestimation of victimization, a 4% sexual victimization does not fit the “myth” of sexual victimization that many people believe regarding prisons, a myth that predicts that everyone, particularly young males, who goes to prison will be raped (Fleisher & Krienert, 2009).

It might well be that this myth has more than a grain of truth in it, in that prison rapes are under-reported or that in the past it was much more common. The percentage of those raped or sexually assaulted may have declined, the way the rate of prison assaults appears to have done (though not the number) over the years as corrections has become less “total” in its isolation and operation, and as the courts have recognized some inmates’ rights and training of staff has increased. As Byrne et al. (2008) note, there are many factors (e.g., staffing levels and crowding) whose effect on violence is not yet established in the research.

Though it might be a myth that all who enter prisons, or even most, will be raped, the research by the BJS indicates that fully 80,600 inmates in prison and jails were victims of sexual violence in 2011–2012 (Beck et al., 2013, p. 8). And it is true that certain groups are much more likely to be raped in prisons than other groups. As was discussed in the Chapter on Jails, females, non-heterosexuals, and the mentally ill are much more likely to be victims of sexual assault in prisons and jails than are other inmates.

Rioting

Rioting is another form of violence. It is group violence. Rioting presents a direct threat to the security of the institution and the inmates in it and is often met with reciprocal force by the staff and administration of the prison. Prison riots have existed as long as there have been prisons—in fact before there were prisons. Recall the Newgate “prison” of Connecticut (see Chapter 2), where inmates were confined to a copper mine for much of their incarceration. Inmates at Newgate repeatedly rioted throughout the history of its operation. In fact, virtually every maximum and medium security prison, with any longevity, has experienced some form of rioting by inmates. Rioting, and violence in general, is engaged in by inmates to achieve some end like better food or housing or power, or inmates might riot out of anger or frustration. When violence is used to achieve some end, it is known as *instrumental violence*, but when it is just an angry outburst, then it is known as *expressive violence*. Of course, inmates engaged in violence or a riot could be involved for *both* instrumental and expressive reasons. An inmate who wants to protest the overcrowding of his or her institution may riot to let the world know about the conditions of confinement (instrumental violence), but he or she might also be angry about the effect such crowding has on housing and the ability to sleep and become violent as a means of expressing it. When enough inmates engage in this violence together, it is called a riot.

The two most notorious instances of inmate rioting to date occurred in the **Attica** (New York) **Prison Riot** of 1971 and the **New Mexico Prison Riot** of 1980. At Attica, the riot began with a spontaneous act of violence by one inmate against an officer when the officer tried to break up a fight. The violence spread when other inmates became involved the next day to avenge the punishment of the two fighting inmates (Public Broadcasting Service [PBS], 2000). The riot also spread because inmates were frustrated and angry about the overcrowded conditions and lack of programming for inmates, among other problems with the conditions of confinement; even showering and toilet paper were rationed. There were charges of racism by the mostly African American inmates regarding their treatment by the mostly white staff at Attica as well (Useem & Kimball, 1989). Add to this the student protests against the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement that had roiled the country outside of the Attica prison walls in the late 1960s/early 1970s, and it was clear why there was tension within them.

As the prison staff were unprepared to respond to a riot, the inmates easily took over the Attica prison, burning some buildings and eventually congregating in one yard with their 40 hostages (PBS, 2000). In the negotiations between the inmate leaders and the administration, the inmates asked for better food, health care, and the ability to practice their religion. A number of observers, composed of politicians and media members, tried to intervene in the negotiations, but to no avail. Some inmates killed three other inmates and one hostage, which also impaired the ability to negotiate. Moreover, Governor Nelson Rockefeller, who was considering a run for the White House at the time, did not want to appear soft on crime by being too soft on the rioting inmates.

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Attica Prison Riot (1971): The bloodiest prison riot in American history, it was sparked by inmate frustration over overcrowded conditions, lack of programming, racism, and other conditions of confinement. Ended when the prison was retaken by state police and correctional staff leaving, 10 hostages and 29 inmates dead or dying and another 80 inmates with gunshot wounds.

New Mexico Prison Riot (1980): This prison exploded in a riot over the conditions of confinement and crowding. The state eventually retook the prison; however, over 3 days, 33 inmates were killed by other inmates. Numerous other inmates, along with staff hostages, were beaten or raped and millions of dollars in damage was done.

In the end, the inmates and administrators could not come to an agreement (the inmates wanted amnesty for the rioters) and eventually, on Governor Rockefeller's orders, the prison was stormed by the state police and by correctional staff. Tear gas was dropped from police helicopters into the occupied yard, and the inmates and their hostages were indiscriminately fired upon with shotguns by the staff and police. As a consequence, 10 hostages and 29 inmates were dead or dying when the prison was secured, and another 80 inmates had gunshot wounds (Useem & Kimball, 1989). It was the bloodiest prison riot in American history. Inmates, even injured ones, were then beaten and humiliated (forced to stand naked in the yard for hours), and medical care was delayed or denied.

The state indicted 60 inmates for a number of crimes including sodomy and murder arising out of the riot, but only eight inmates were convicted (Gonnerman, 2001, p. 1). Years of legal wrangling eventually led to the \$8 million award by the state of New York to the inmates who were beaten or tortured after the riot (PBS, 2000). In 2005, the state paid out another \$12 million to the survivors and families of employees killed in the aftermath of the riot (Kirshon, 2010).

In 1980, the New Mexico Prison also exploded in a riot over the conditions of confinement, which were deplorable, and crowding, which was at epidemic levels. Despite repeated warnings that a riot was going to occur, the administration and staff failed to adequately prepare. When a staff member slipped up in a security measure when locking down a dormitory for the night, he was grabbed, along with his keys, and inmates quickly advanced through the prison, taking control of several cellblocks, including the pharmacy and shops. Drugs and weapons were readily available as a result, and brutal inmate-on-inmate violence ensued. Some of this violence was particularly focused on inmate snitches and child molesters who were housed in a separate cellblock. Rioting inmates broke into this cellblock and gruesome and vicious assaults and murders of these inmates were committed. The state eventually retook the prison without the resulting bloodshed that happened at Attica. However, over the course of 3 days, 33 inmates were killed by other inmates. Numerous other inmates, along with staff hostages, were beaten or raped, and millions of dollars in damage was done (Useem, 1985; Useem & Kimball, 1989). In the aftermath of this riot, New Mexico was sued several times. The state did build a number of medium and minimum security prisons following the riot, which eased the overcrowding at the main facility.

❖ Solutions: Strategies to Reduce Violence, Mature Coping and Social Support

Strategies to Reduce Violence

There are some scholars and social commentators who argue that prisons and jails are naturally violent institutions, essentially for the same reasons that we wrote in the foregoing that they can be incubators for violence (e.g., they hold violent people involuntarily, etc.). But there is evidence that the degree of violence differs markedly from institution to institution and from group to group (Beck et al., 2013). If this is true, that one prison or jail is more or less violent than comparable institutions which hold similar types of inmates (i.e., security level and inmate history of engaging in violence), then it is implied that it is not that violence is endemic to prisons or jails per se as it is that how the institution operates creates and fosters violence. Therefore, it occurs to us that there are strategies which might be used to reduce violence, such as:

- Professional Subculture: Promote a professional environment or one where staff are well trained, well educated, and versed in ethical behavior. Promote those up the career ladder who model these values for the institution (see Stohr & Collins, 2014).
- Personnel: Hire potentially professional people (people with education and ethical values) and train them well and pay them a wage that will entice them to stay. Training should include the latest research on how to spot and reduce violence in corrections (see Rembert & Henderson, 2014).
- Supervise: Promote ethical supervisors who have proven their abilities on the job. Value and facilitate further training, education, and development for them. Then keep the span of control

(the number of persons a supervisor is responsible for) within reason so that supervisors can know and influence what is going on around them. Discipline or fire those who violate ethical standards of the institution (see Stohr & Collins, 2014).

- Classification: Pay careful attention to inmate histories and proclivities for violence and separate inmates based on this intelligence. Neutralize criminal gangs so that their influence does not heighten the level of violence in the facility. As much as possible classify inmates so that their needs can be met (e.g., work training, proximity to family and their communities, treatment to address their needs, etc.) (see Mears, Stewart, Siennick, & Simons, 2013).
- Activities: Provide opportunities for inmates to stay busy in prosocial activities like work, education, treatment, recreation, art, religious engagement, or niches where they are more likely to experience prosocial values. This will benefit them and communities. Also provide opportunities for inmates to use their talents and abilities (see the discussion of mature coping and niches following, and see also research by Rocheleau, 2013; Wooldredge and Steiner, 2014).
- Formal Grievance Procedures: Ensure that there are formal grievance procedures in place where inmates can report on perceived deficiencies in the operation of the facility and which they can use to vent their concerns. Just having the ability to vent, and knowing one is heard, can often be enough to alleviate anger and thus violence. Grievance procedures also provide the opportunity for inmates to report on real deficiencies in the prison operations (see Rembert & Henderson, 2014).
- Ombudsman: Larger facilities or prison or jail systems may be able to staff an ombudsman position; such a person can investigate serious complaints by staff or inmates and work to resolve them.
- Open Architecture: When building a new jail or prison, or when significantly remodeling them, try to improve the openness of the facility so that sight lines are clearer in living units, as violence is more likely to occur when it cannot be seen (e.g., see the discussion of podular/direct supervision jails in the chapter on jails and see research by Wooldredge & Steiner, 2014).
- Official Reporting: Support the official reporting of violence to auditors at the local, state, or federal level. Note the discussion of PREA in the chapter on jails and the requirement of reporting sexual abuse and assaults in prisons and jails. Sometimes jail and prison managers do not know that their facility is an outlier in terms of the amount of violence that occurs there. Having official reports gets this information out into the sunlight and makes it more likely that there will be efforts to reduce the violence in facilities which have more of it.
- Involve Policy Makers and the Public: Keep policy makers and the public apprised of the amount of violence that occurs and why it occurs and enlist their support and assistance in solutions that would reduce it.

Mature Coping

Prison violence, whether by individuals or groups of rioters, occurs in part because some inmates are not capable of interacting, or do not know how to interact, with others without violence. In his research on corrections, Johnson (2002) noticed that despite the mortification, prisonization, and pains experienced to different degrees by incarcerated individuals, some were able to adjust prosocially, even to grow, in a prison setting. Though the exception rather than the rule, he noted that some inmates developed another means of adjusting. This alternative means of handling incarceration, or supervision in the case of probationers and parolees, is **mature coping**. As identified and defined by Johnson,

Mature coping means, in essence, dealing with life's problems like a responsive and responsible human being, one who seeks autonomy without violating the rights of others, security without resorting to deception or violence, and relatedness to others as the finest and fullest expression of human identity. (p. 83)

Mature coping: The ability of some inmates to adjust pro-socially and to respond to problems responsibly and without resorting to violence.

As indicated by this definition, the offender needs to learn how to be an adult with some autonomy in an environment where formally the individual has little power (although the informal reality may be different, and his or her status is almost subhuman by wider community standards). Moreover, offenders must accomplish this feat without doing violence to others—though Johnson (2002) allows that violence in self-defense may be necessary—and they need to exercise consideration of others in their environment.

Johnson (2002) notes that mature coping is relatively rare among the inmate population for a number of reasons. He argues that inmates are typically immature in their social relations to begin with, which, of course, is one of the reasons they are in prison in the first place. Because of impoverishment, poor or absent or abusive parenting, mental illness, schools that fail them or that they fail, offenders enter the criminal justice system with a number of social, psychological, and economic deficits. They are often not used to voluntarily taking responsibility for their actions as one would expect of “mature” individuals, nor are they typically expected to “[el]mpathize with and assist others in need,” especially in a prison or jail environment (Johnson, 2002, p. 93).

Secondly, Johnson (2002) argues that for inmates to maturely cope, it is helpful if they are incarcerated in what he terms a *decent prison*. Such a facility does not necessarily have more programming, staffing, or amenities than the norm, though he thinks it might be helpful if it did; rather, such institutions or programs would be relatively free of violence and would include some opportunities so that inmates might find a *niche* (defined below) to be involved in. In order for inmates to find this niche, however, decent prisons need to include some opportunities for inmates to act autonomously.

Being secure from violence, like autonomy, is basic to human development. In fact, according to Maslow (1998), if the security need is not fulfilled, it will preoccupy offenders and motivate them to engage in behaviors (e.g., bullying or gang activity) that they normally might avoid if they were not feeling continually threatened (Johnson, 2002). Then, assuming that the offender perceives that he is relatively safe, there need to be prosocial activities, including work, school, athletics, church, treatment, or art programs, which provide some sort of means for positive self-value reinforcement. Such places are termed *niches* by Johnson, and the opportunities they afford provide redress for the mortification and pains that offenders, particularly those who are incarcerated, experience.

IN FOCUS 8.3

The Story of Wilbert Rideau



Wilbert Rideau, an African American, grew up poor to laborer parents in Lawtell, Louisiana, in the 1940s and 1950s. The family moved around the segregated state from small town to small town looking for work, eventually settling in Lake Charles, Louisiana. His father drank, womanized, and abused his mother and later the children; he abandoned the family when Wilbert was a teenager, and his family went on welfare.

Lake Charles of the 1950s was segregated and restricted the opportunities of African Americans to advance in any profession. After he was denied advancement at his low-paying job at a sewing shop, and as a means of leaving town for better opportunities, Wilbert Rideau attempted to rob a nearby bank. The robbery went horribly wrong. He kidnapped three bank employees, killing one and shooting another, in the botched bank robbery attempt. Once caught, almost immediately after committing the crimes, he was nearly lynched instead of being tried, his confession was coerced, the evidence presented was

false, and he had inadequate counsel. But he admitted that he had committed the murder, had shot another woman, and had kidnapped three people.

In 1961, at the age of 19, Rideau was convicted and received a death sentence. He then spent 10 years on death row at the Angola Prison in Louisiana. He was eventually released to the general population of the prison when the *Furman v. Georgia* (1972) Supreme Court case invalidated death sentences around the country. He served the rest of his sentence, another 33 years, at the infamous Angola prison, and during most of it was the editor of the *Angolite*, an inmate newspaper.

In his book *In the Place of Justice: A Story of Punishment and Deliverance* (2010), Rideau discusses how as an inmate he grew—you might say he maturely coped—by finding a niche at the *Angolite* and doing work that was worthwhile. He won critical acclaim for the uncensored writing about prison life that he was allowed to present to the world by one forward-thinking

warden. Once this pattern of an uncensored prison paper had been established, other subsequent wardens were reluctant to shut him down, though they tried. Because his writing became known in the outside world, and Rideau was even allowed by several wardens to leave the prison to talk to community groups, he had a form of power that allowed him access to wardens and directors of prisons. According to Rideau, he used this access to help some inmates, to avert violence against inmates, and to steer wardens in the direction of treatment and programming. He also had plenty of time to regret his crimes and to reflect on

not only the racism he had confronted in his life, but also his own racial stereotypes. He observed the workings of the inmate code in prison and learned to walk a fine line between upholding it and staying within the rules.

Rideau was released from prison in 2005 after a court found that his original trial had been mishandled. He had spent a total of 44 years in jails and prisons since his conviction, when the norm for his crime was less than 10. He lives with his wife whom he met 20 years before on one of his speaking gigs outside of prison. She had spent many years of her life working to free him.

Social Support

Social support is a necessary element to successful existence in this world. Humans for the most part are social animals in need of the assistance of others, such as families, friends, neighbors, schools, churches, nonprofits, and governments to grow and thrive. Inmates in prisons and jails perhaps need more social support to succeed than most Americans. They usually come from poor backgrounds where their education was limited, they have few job skills, and socialization in prosocial behavior may have been lacking. Upon release they will be dependent on family and friends, should they be lucky enough to have some, who are stretched financially and emotionally themselves. Former inmates will leave the prison relatively unskilled, with a GED or less, and the stigma of being an "excon." They will have financial obligations for their children, for fines imposed as part of their sentence, and often they will have to pay for their own supervision in the community. Their needs will be multi-faceted and many, and to succeed they will depend on private and public sources of support.

Lin (1986, p. 18) defined social support as "the perceived or actual instrumental and/or expressive provisions supplied by the community, social networks, and confiding partners." Cullen (1994) modified this definition to include both formal and informal delivery of this support. Instrumental support is material and includes the exchange of goods or money. Expressive support is more emotional and is the kind supplied by family and close friends. It is thought that the greater degree to which inmates experience social support, whether instrumental or emotional, from whatever source while in prisons, the more likely they are to change their behavior while incarcerated (fewer infractions of the rules and less violence) and in the larger community (reduced recidivism) (Woo et al. 2014). Currently the research in this area is more suggestive than solid, but if evidence indicates that social support reduces deviance of inmates while incarcerated, then when released, it would make sense that correctional institutions develop ways to provide social support to inmates or allow others from the community to do so (Beare & Hogg, 2013; Hamilton, Kigerl & Hays, 2013; Hochstetler, DeLisi, & Pratt, 2010; Lutze, Rosky, & Hamilton, 2013; Mears et al., 2013; Reisig, Holtfreter, & Morash, 2002).

❖ Special Populations

The Elderly and the Physically and Mentally Ill

As mentioned in the chapter on jails, the number of the elderly in jails and prisons is increasing at an exponential rate. As America ages and mandatory sentences and other such laws lengthen sentences, correctional populations are graying. There are a number of collateral consequences that derive from this fact, most of them unintended:

PERSPECTIVE FROM A PRACTITIONER

Michael Klein, Correctional Officer

Position: Correctional Officer (2006–2009)

Agency: Indiana Department of Corrections, Wabash Valley Correctional Facility

Education: MA in Criminal Justice; currently completing a PhD in Criminal Justice

Previous experience in criminal justice: Juvenile Correctional Officer, Private Security, Social Services

What are the duties and responsibilities of a correctional officer: Maintaining safety and security of facility, mediating offender disputes, ensuring your personal security, ensuring safety of offender, and ensuring the safety of your fellow officers.

What are the characteristics and traits most useful for a correctional officer: Patience, courage, ability to work as a team member, understanding, ability to keep calm in disturbing situations, and a strong stomach.

My typical workday as a correctional officer: First, I would enter the facility and go through a security check. I would then arrive at my post, greet the prior shift of officers, and sign into the logbook. I had several different positions within the WVCF, and my activities varied by position. If I worked in a cell house there would be the initial rush of complaints, concerns, and questions from the offenders. I would then try my best to maintain a smooth shift as 100 offenders milled freely about me. If I worked in segregation there was lessened offender contact, but there were a lot more messy situations to contain. The daily activities of a correctional officer are both banal and uncertain. You never really know what to expect.

My advice for future correctional officers: Keep your cool, stay out of bad situations, and ask for help. Working in corrections is something that each officer has to figure out for himself or herself. Just be sure to think things through before making any rash judgments.



1. The cost of incarceration increases to accommodate the extra medical care needed for older people.
2. Elderly inmates are less able to work in, or for, the prison, making them a further economic drain on the system.
3. Elderly inmates may require housing that is separate from younger inmates who may prey on them.
4. Elderly inmates, particularly those who have spent much or all of their adult lives in prisons, are less likely to have a supportive family or friends waiting for them on the outside, which makes the development of a parole or reintegration plan even more challenging for them.

As elderly inmates necessarily present such a drain on state and federal correctional budgets, it might make sense for states to rethink the sentencing laws and correctional practices that led to the graying of prison populations nationally (more about this rethinking in the last chapter of the book). To not do so is to support the continued exponential growth in correctional budgets at the expense of all other budget priorities.

The number of ill people incarcerated in America's prisons and jails has grown in tandem with the number of elderly inmates. At this juncture, more than 33% of inmates in jail, 44% in state prison, and 39% in federal prison report an illness more serious than a cold or the flu (Maruschak, 2008, p. 1; see also 2006). According to a 2004 survey of state and federal prison inmates by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the two most prevalent medical problems for prison inmates were arthritis and hypertension (Maruschak, 2008). Women and elderly inmates in prisons, as in jails, report more

medical problems than do other inmates. And heart disease and suicide accounted for most of the deaths in jails, while cancer and heart disease claimed over half of those who died in state prisons from 2011–2012 (Noonan & Ginder, 2013, p. 1).

The extent of medical care provided for such inmates depends on the jurisdiction, with some larger counties and some states, and the Bureau of Prisons at the federal level, providing better care than other jurisdictions. According to that 2004 study, about 70% of the state and 76% of the federal prison inmates with medical problems reported seeing a medical professional at the prison about their illness, and more than 80% reported receiving a medical exam since their admission (Maruschak, 2008, p. 1). However, even in those jurisdictions that can afford to, and do, provide decent medical care, it is often minimal. Dentistry typically consists of pulling teeth rather than crowning or even filling them. Not much preventive medical care is provided, and the common response to complaints is the provision of medication.

Most larger jails have a section devoted to their inmates with medical complaints. Larger prisons or prison systems often have buildings or whole institutions devoted to inmates with medical maladies. The staffing of such sections, buildings, or institutions again varies by jurisdiction and the ability and willingness to pay the high cost for qualified staff (Vaughn & Carroll, 1998; Vaughn & Smith, 1999). Working in a jail or prison medical facility has not usually been the first choice of medical personnel, and so it is not surprising that it might be hard to recruit and keep the best personnel.

The number of mentally ill inmates has also grown in America's prisons, though not to the same extent as it has in the jails (see Chapter 6). As jails became dumping grounds for the mentally ill after mental health hospitals closed in the 1970s, some of these inmates with chronic mental illnesses have found themselves in a prison environment (Slate & Wesley Johnson, 2008).

The **deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill** in the United States came about as a result of the civil rights movement and the related effort to increase the rights of powerless people (Slate & Wesley Johnson, 2008). Too many people were civilly committed to mental health institutions for years without any legal recourse or protection, it was thought. In addition, the pharmaceutical company Smith, Kline, & French (now GlaxoSmithKline) pushed its drug, Thorazine, as a potential "cure" for some mental illnesses with state legislators who were eager to save money by closing mental health institutions (Slate & Wesley Johnson, 2008). As legal restrictions on civil commitment of the mentally ill spread across the country, and as state legislators believed the claims (which turned out to be unfounded) of the pharmaceutical company, states and counties closed their mental health hospitals or reduced their capacities significantly. Congress passed the Community Mental Health Act in 1963, which ended much of the federal support for mental health hospitals. Instead, Congress was to fund less restrictive institutional alternatives such as halfway houses, but outpatient facilities were either underfunded or shunted away by community members who did not want such facilities in their neighborhoods (Slate & Wesley Johnson, 2008). Thus, an unintended consequence of this deinstitutionalization movement was that there were few public services available in communities to assist the mentally ill and their families. Jails, and then prisons, became the *de facto* mental health patient dumping ground.

Unfortunately, and as with those who have major medical problems, most prisons and jails are ill-equipped and ill-staffed to handle mentally ill inmates. There are difficulties in diagnosis, management of people who do not understand how to behave in a prison, programming and developing appropriate prison employment, and in devising a reentry plan (Slate & Wesley Johnson, 2008). Any treatment programming available has long waiting lists. Sometimes staff



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Photo 8.5

The number of ill people incarcerated in America's prisons and jails has grown in tandem with the number of elderly inmates.

Deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill: This happened in the United States as a result of the civil rights movement and the related effort to increase the rights of people involuntarily committed to mental hospitals.

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Photo 8.6

Transgender jail inmates, exercising separately from the main jail inmate population.

is also unknown, but is likely 1% or less. Based on these estimates, we might reasonably expect that similar percentages for each group are represented in prisons. In addition, as heterosexual relations are formally restricted in prisons, there is some percentage of male and female inmates who engage in homosexual relations while incarcerated, though they may never have done so when they were free. Lieb and his colleagues (2011) found that the number of men who have ever had sex with men in the free community ranges around 6.4%. We might expect, therefore, that the number of men who engage in sexual relations with other men while in prison is likely around 6% or higher.

As with gays and lesbians, the exact number of transgender and intersex people in communities is unknown, as they often keep their feelings on this matter hidden, knowing they might be marginalized (Tewksbury & Potter, 2005). In prisons, the number of transgender inmates is also difficult to know, although large male prisons will often house many (Sexton, Jenness, & Sumner, 2010). Jenness and her colleagues (2007, as cited in Sexton et al., 2010) found in their study of transgender female inmates in California prisons that they are much more likely than other inmates (59% as compared to 4.4% for non-transgender inmates) to report being sexually assaulted while in prison (a report which is backed up by PREA inspired research by the Bureau of Justice Statistics [Beck et al., 2013]).

Protecting sexual orientation and gender identity minorities in prisons presents a challenge for administrators, particularly in male prisons. Male bravado and posturing to show strength and ward off attacks is common in male prisons, which makes males who are unable or unwilling to put on such fronts targets for abuse or predation. If one is a transgender inmate in a male prison, or a person who was once biologically male, but through dress, hormonal treatment, and/or surgery is now a female, the challenges mount. Not only must administrators be concerned about the safety of the inmate, but they must also figure out a way to accommodate her needs for privacy, medical treatment, and housing. As noted in the chapter on jails, PREA regulations are now requiring greater consideration of the privacy, respect, and medical needs of transgender and intersex inmates as they have been a particular target for abuse in jails and prisons, particularly transgender women in men's prisons (Routh et al., 2014; Sexton et al., 2010; Stohr, 2014).

In women's prisons, as with racial and ethnic minorities, there appears to be more acceptance of both lesbian and transgender inmates; part of this greater acceptance may have to do with the

Gender identity: The gender one identifies with, rather than the sex one is born as.

need to be concerned that the mentally ill inmates require protection from predation, and to protect other inmates, they will need to keep an eye on the violent outbursts of mentally ill patients as they might injure others (Wood & Buttaro, 2013). Some studies link PTSD with an assault history, propensity for revictimization, violent behavior, substance abuse, and mental illness, so it is no surprise that there needs to be trauma-related treatments available for the mentally ill in prisons as well (Wood & Buttaro, 2013).

Needless to say, the cost of providing medical and mental health care to an aging and ill correctional population is cost-prohibitive. However, as these inmates are unable to access such services in communities, due to their incarceration, such costs must be borne.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Inmates

The true number of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) inmates in corrections is not known. According to Gary Gates (personal communication, March 14, 2011), a demographer with the Williams Institute at the University of California Los Angeles School of Law, estimates, based on surveys that query people about their sexual orientation and **gender identity** (the gender one identifies with, rather than the sex of one's genitalia when born), suggest that about 3% to 5% of the free community are gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Gates notes that the number of transgender (and likely intersex) people in the community

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sense that women inmates have direct experience with marginalization and therefore are more understanding of those who vary from the norm in sexual orientation or gender identity. Or it might have to do with the lesser need of women in prisons to defend themselves physically from predation of other inmates; the frequency of violent and sexual attacks in women's prisons, as far as this can be determined, is much lower than it is in men's facilities (Britton, 2003).

Summary

- ❖ Prisons come in various shapes and security levels.
- ❖ To varying degrees, inmates experience mortification and pain related to their status, and as humans they will behave in either pro- or antisocial ways to lessen that pain.
- ❖ Inmates adopt certain roles and engage in certain behaviors because they are prisonized and adopt the subculture, or because they import aspects of the culture from the outside community into the prison.
- ❖ "Total institutions" exist to different degrees, depending on the security level and operation of prisons.
- ❖ Gangs and violence are one way that inmates "adjust" to their environment and have their needs met and their pain alleviated.
- ❖ Strategies to reduce violence exist and can be practiced by agencies interested in reducing violence.
- ❖ Mature coping is one way that correctional clients can fruitfully "adjust" and perhaps reform in that environment.
- ❖ Social support, even when inmates are on the "inside," may potentially have prosocial effects (e.g., reduce violence) while inmates are in the prison and once they leave.
- ❖ Special population inmates present unique challenges for administrators interested in meeting their needs and keeping them safe in the correctional environment.

Key Terms

Attica Prison Riot (1971) 151
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 Gangs (prison) 147
 Gender identity 158
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Mature coping 153
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Discussion Questions

1. Which prison, from our history of prison chapters, most reminds you of super maximum security prisons? What were the problems with this historical prison? Based on what we know of that prison from our history, what problems do you foresee arising with the supermax prisons of today?
2. Define what a total institution is and how it might vary by type of correctional arrangement (e.g., probation, parole, jail, prison) and inmate status.
3. Inmate subcultures are thought to be related to the concepts of prisonization, importation, and the pains of imprisonment. Discuss how and why this might be so.
4. What are the attributes of gangs that make them appealing to inmates in prisons? How might that appeal be reduced by prison managers?
5. What are some of the difficulties that correctional organizations might face in employing the strategies to reduce violence? Who would you expect to support these strategies and who would not?
6. How might correctional clients configure their environment to ensure their own reform? How might we, as citizens, assist them in that endeavor?
7. What might be the most effective strategies for managing special populations in prisons?

Useful Internet Sites

Please note that the sites listed can be accessed at edge.sagepub.com/stohressentials2e.

American Correctional Association: www.aca.org

American Friends Service Committee (a Quaker organization interested in correctional reform): www.afsc.org

Bureau of Justice Statistics (information available on all manner of criminal justice topics): <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>

Federal Bureau of Prisons: www.bop.gov

The Sentencing Project: www.sentencingproject.org

The Williams Institute—UCLA School of Law: www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute

Vera Institute (information available on a number of corrections-related topics): www.vera.org



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