



## Public Library Services to Correctional Facilities

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A SURVEY OF recent literature concerning libraries in correctional facilities leads to an important conclusion. It is that, during the 1970s, one of the most significant trends has been the accelerated growth of services to institutions by public library systems and local public libraries. Stout and Turitz label this relationship "the public library connection."<sup>1</sup> LeDonne discusses the trend in her article in this issue of *Library Trends*. Gruensfelder, director of operations for the Chicago Regional Office of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, agrees that correctional institutions should receive their library services from public library systems and states that community safety may be improved through the relationships formed between public libraries and the correctional systems.<sup>2</sup>

A recent study prepared for the State Library of Ohio, entitled *Trend Toward Partnership; A Study of State Institution and Public Library Cooperation in Ohio*, is representative of reports funded by LSCA grants which outline advances and suggest further goals in the integration of library services between institutions, including correctional facilities and public libraries.<sup>3</sup> In his introduction to this report, the State Librarian chronicles a typical relationship: in 1940, library services to institutions was one of the ten programs of the Ohio State Library; in 1967, a Library Consultant for Institution Libraries was appointed; during the years of 1968-75, the State Library Board approved fifty-seven grants, totaling almost \$500,000 for library services in state institutions; and in 1975, the State Library Board funded a study of accomplishments and future goals of public library services to state facilities.<sup>4</sup>

This final article in an issue of *Library Trends* concerned with library services to correctional facilities is an analysis of the factors which have influenced the extension of public library services into correc-

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tional institutions. Appropriate examples of services and citations to the literature are included.

### FACTORS PROMOTING PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES TO CORRECTIONAL LIBRARIES

From the literature and through informal communications with librarians, this writer has identified seven factors which have influenced this acceleration of public library services to correctional facilities. They are:

1. Growing awareness of the need for public libraries to serve the disadvantaged;
2. Inclusion of recommendations for services by public libraries in library standards for correctional facilities, public library systems, and state library agencies;
3. Accelerating trend toward cooperation among all libraries into organized systems and networks;
4. Recent court rulings on prisoners' rights to read and to have access to legal materials;
5. Declarations by prisoners of a desire to have access to public library materials and information;
6. Realization by correctional sociologists of the necessity for the incarcerated to maintain contacts with society and to have reentry briefings; and
7. Appropriation of federal, state, and local funds for correctional library services.

### PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES TO THE DISADVANTAGED

During the 1960s, public libraries in the United States began vigorous programs to extend services to the disadvantaged: those citizens in the population who, because of lack of education, economic circumstances, or geographical location, were not participating in the benefits of public library services. In addition, the members of society confined to institutions—correctional facilities, hospitals, nursing homes—were included in the library's larger public. A realization by public librarians of the need to serve the disadvantaged was one of the first factors to encourage public library services to correctional facilities. Brown, in introducing a section on the institutionalized in her book about library services to the disadvantaged, explains that inmates of correctional institutions are twice disadvantaged: they are

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alienated both from society and from the educational and recreational facilities of society.<sup>5</sup>

Of all the possible relationships which may exist between correctional facilities and public libraries, no relationship appears more logical, more feasible, than that between public libraries and county and city jails. Some public libraries have served local jails for many years,<sup>6</sup> but the availability of federal funds for pilot programs has increased the linkages between public libraries and those disadvantaged adults and children who are residents of local detention facilities.

During the American Library Association 1976 Midwinter Meeting, the ALA council passed a resolution affirming support of public library services to inmates of local jails and detention centers.<sup>7</sup> In the resolution, ALA went on record in encouraging public libraries to provide service to everyone within their "taxing districts," including adults and youth in local correctional facilities.<sup>8</sup>

In 1974, staff members of the Maine State Library conducted a national survey of county jail libraries. In the survey, thirty-six states reported jail libraries, at least in some county facilities. To the question: "Are any of the jails served by public libraries in the community?" thirty-two respondents indicated that library services to jails in their states had been initiated by public, county, or regional libraries.<sup>9</sup> A year earlier, the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table Task Force on Service to Prisoners had compiled a list of sixty-seven jail library service programs.<sup>10</sup> State surveys of jail libraries also have been taken in Arkansas<sup>11</sup> and in California.<sup>12</sup>

Descriptions of public library services to jails indicate varied programs. Stout and Turitz report on several jail libraries in their *Wilson Library Bulletin* article.<sup>13</sup> In a discussion of national and Texas jail library development, Mounce describes four Texas public library programs, outlines problems in establishing jail services, and makes recommendations of professional responsibilities toward jail library services.<sup>14</sup> Additional descriptions of public library services to jails are available in issues of the publication *Inside/Outside*<sup>15</sup> and in a bibliography of materials concerning jail library services, compiled in 1976 by the outreach consultant of the Texas State Library.<sup>16</sup>

One of the earliest examples of public library programs to jails is provided by the Los Angeles County Public Library. In 1912, the county library began service to jails under contract with the sheriff's department. All Los Angeles County jails and selected "Juvenile Halls" receive public library branch services. In 1975, the library

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began audiovisual services to ten county correctional institutions. The program, funded by an LSCA grant, provided cassette players and super-8mm film projectors, tapes and cartridges for individual inmate use in facility libraries, as well as 16mm film projectors and sound filmstrip projectors. At the end of the project year, it was anticipated that full audiovisual services would continue in six of the ten institutions. Funds for the audiovisual program will come from the sheriff's department and the probation department, contractors for other library services.<sup>17</sup>

#### LIBRARY STANDARDS RECOMMEND PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES

The realization of the propriety to serve correctional facilities from public libraries is evident in the current library standards. A second causal factor which has promoted a relationship between correctional facilities and public libraries is the inclusion in library standards of suggestions of cooperation. In all of the library standards written during the 1960s and 1970s, recommendations are included for public library cooperation in services to correctional institutions. In the *Minimum Standards for Public Library Systems*, published by the American Library Association in 1967, specific mention is made of a library system's responsibility to serve, among others, "inmates of hospitals and institutions."<sup>18</sup> The standards include an outline of service requirements: "Ease of access, new techniques of service, specialized materials, staff with special competence, and financial support within or in addition to the annual budget."<sup>19</sup> The standards further suggest that services may be given either in the institution or in the public library, sponsored by the library acting independently, or in conjunction with other agencies.

The American Association of State Libraries' *Standards for Library Functions at the State Level*, published in 1970, emphasizes the role of the state library agency in the integration of institutional libraries into the total state library community. These standards suggest that it may be necessary for public libraries or state libraries to assume complete responsibility for library services within institutions on a contractual basis (although at that date, the writers emphasized permanent responsibility should be assumed by the individual institution) and strongly urge that public libraries or other adjacent libraries function as sources for special services and for materials.<sup>20</sup>

In a recent draft of the "Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions," formulated by the American Correctional Association's Committee on Institution Libraries, the authors include among the

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reasons for new standards a trend toward "more emphasis upon community involvement with the correctional institution and its programs."<sup>21</sup> In Section 2.6 of the standards, the agency responsible for library service is defined as "public libraries, public library systems, departments of corrections, correctional institutions, state libraries, etc."<sup>22</sup>

In the "Library Standards for Juvenile Correctional Institutions," an almost identical definition appears for "agency responsible for library service."<sup>23</sup> It is: "the public library, public library system, department of corrections, state libraries, etc."<sup>24</sup>

Two useful compilations of guidelines exist for jail libraries. These include suggestions for relationships between public libraries and local correctional facilities. The first, entitled "Jails Need Libraries, Too; Guidelines for Library Service Programs to Jails," was written by an AHIL committee. The guidelines suggest that: "Public libraries have a responsibility to serve all the residents of the community. About 75 per cent of jail inmates are residents . . . and will ultimately return to life in that county."<sup>25</sup> The second compilation of guidelines, written for county jail standards, was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on County Jail Library Standards of the Illinois State Library. These guidelines include the statement: "Public libraries are responsible for providing library service to all persons living within their taxing areas, including residents of jails."<sup>26</sup> The authors of the guidelines suggest an arrangement by which the local public library will provide general services and materials, while the jail may provide funding for legal materials.

#### LIBRARIES COOPERATE IN SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS

The trend to organize all libraries into systems and networks is another factor which has promoted cooperation between public libraries and correctional institutions. In 1934, Theodora Kellogg described how the Seymour Library (Auburn, N.Y.) supplied duplicate copies of fiction titles to the library of Auburn Prison. By June 1933, she wrote, the number of books in the Auburn Prison collection had increased to 175.<sup>27</sup> In contrast, the 1965 survey of libraries in state-supported and federal correctional facilities for adults noted that collections in all state correctional libraries in eight states and in all federal institutions contained at least ten volumes per resident, the standard for correctional libraries.<sup>28</sup> While the numbers of volumes had increased by a large ratio during these intervening thirty years,

most of the collections which were examined in the 1964 survey were found to be from "50 to 90 per cent substandard or obsolete."<sup>29</sup>

In order to improve the quality of existing collections and to provide current services to facilities without collections, state library agencies have turned increasingly to public library systems; many of these systems may now provide such services as rotating collections, branch libraries, interlibrary loan, and special services such as discussion groups, storytelling, and film series.

The draft standards of service to adult correctional institutions contain a concise summary of the role of the system in correctional services:

The institution library should have cooperative interlibrary affiliations with the various segments of the library community. It is impossible for the institution library to have a collection broad enough to meet all requests. By utilizing the collections of libraries participating in a cooperative library network, the correctional library can provide the same access to materials for its users as the free citizen finds through his public library.<sup>30</sup>

The plan for library services to correctional institutions in Illinois may serve to illustrate how public library systems, coordinated into a statewide network, may serve residents. In Illinois, planning for service to institutions began in 1965, funded by an LSCA grant. First, the State Library Institutional Consultant worked with a library consultant for the newly reorganized Department of Corrections. In turn, the Department of Corrections requested state general revenue funding to support institutional library services, contracted by the state library with the various Illinois public library systems. From 1971 until 1975, the beginnings of programs were supported by LSCA, the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission, the Illinois Department of Corrections, and individual public library system funds. Beginning in fiscal year 1975, the programs have been supported by state revenue funds as well as by LSCA funds.<sup>31</sup> For the fiscal year 1976, a total of \$647,214 was provided by the state in supplemental grants to public library systems to serve correctional facilities.<sup>32</sup>

A summary of services for correctional facilities in two public library systems for 1976 illustrates the Illinois plan. In the Corn Belt Library System, services for two facilities included the following activities: acquisition of books, periodicals and sound recordings for residents and staff; photocopying of legal materials; publication of a monthly newsletter for one facility; and a film series.<sup>33</sup> The Shawnee

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Library System serves the Marion Federal Penitentiary and four state correctional institutions. Services to the facilities included general public library services, assistance with educational programs, and access to legal materials (within the facilities and from the Southern Illinois University School of Law Library).<sup>34</sup>

#### PRISONERS' "RIGHT TO READ" AND LAW COLLECTIONS

A fourth factor in the development of public library services to correctional institutions has been the rulings on recent court cases concerning the provision of library services to prisoners. At least four cases have provided rulings which support adequate library collections and services in prisons and jails—collections and services unlikely to be available without the cooperation of public libraries. In the first case, *Coffin v. Reichard*, the court ruled that prisoners retained all the rights of free citizens, except all the rights taken from them by law. The other three cases relate specifically to county jails. The decision in *Brenneman v. Madigan* stated that persons in pretrial detention must have access to the same tax-supported community services as did those persons free on bail. Library services and reading materials are mentioned. In *Collins v. Schoonfield*, the court ruled that the jail library collection was inadequate for indigent inmate readers. It further directed the jail officials to study the matter, according to a constitutional need. Finally, in *Jones v. Wittenberg*, the court ruled that the sheriff must provide library services to prisoners.<sup>35</sup>

In his article in this issue of *Library Trends*, Werner discusses court cases which have provided legal bases for the provision of legal reference services and materials in correctional institutions. As early as 1972, the San Francisco Public Library budgeted \$10,000 for legal materials in the city and county jails.<sup>36</sup> The Cook County Jail project is another example of public library legal services to jails.<sup>37</sup>

If, as LeDonne and Werner suggest, the basic legal resources in individual institutions may be provided by microfiche collections, additional legal resources may be obtained through systems of interlibrary loan. Libraries in Illinois are presently members of a statewide interlibrary loan network through their relationships with public library systems.<sup>38</sup>

#### PRISONERS RECOMMEND PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES

Another factor which has promoted the partnership of public libraries and correctional libraries has been the expressions of sup-

port from prisoners. An example of this support is a letter written to *Publishers Weekly* editors. In it, the writer, a prisoner at the Federal Correctional Institution in Lompoc, California, presents an articulate appeal for local public library service. He urges that all prison library services be provided by public libraries; through these services he foresees increased communication with society.<sup>39</sup>

Other prison writers suggest similar services. Clontz advises state or public library agencies to assign staff members to coordinate library activities in institutional libraries, and to assist inmate committees in book selection.<sup>40</sup> In an article in the recent *Wilson Library Bulletin* issue on prison library services, members of the Inmate Library Committee of the California Training Facility at Soledad describe branch libraries which they established in addition to a central library, with the aid of LSCA funds. For special requests, they rely on items available through loans from the local public library and the California State Library.<sup>41</sup>

#### INMATE NEEDS TO REMAIN IN CONTACT WITH SOCIETY

One of the more recent trends in the sociology of corrections is to provide prisoners with access to society, both during incarceration and upon reentry into the community. This goal is reflected in standards for libraries, in surveys of prisoner information needs, and in conferences. It is an important factor in promoting the growing alliance between public libraries and correctional facilities. The public library, with its community relationships and, in recent years, its efforts to provide community information and referral services, is the logical agency to provide in-prison information and reentry information, in addition to recreational, educational, and legal materials. In section 2.3.4.4 of the draft "Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions" appears the following statement: "The Collection shall include materials helpful in preparing inmates for reintegration into the community. Such materials should include information on community resources, job opportunities, educational and vocational training opportunities, general information, reference works, etc."<sup>42</sup> In a brochure entitled "Jails Need Libraries, Too; Guidelines for Library Service Programs to Jails," information needs of prisoners are listed. Among these needs are those concerning family problems, such as divorce or adoption of children, and care of other dependents.<sup>43</sup>

In a Workshop on Jail Library Service prepared by consultants from the California State Library during the Second National Jail



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Manager's Seminar in 1974, an attorney who works with corrections identified difficult civil problems of inmates as: landlord-tenant problems, job separation problems, income tax problems.<sup>44</sup>

In an answer to the attorney, LeDonne has described a second type of information which the correctional library should supply. It may be described as-reentry information:

There are all kinds of information that should be provided for people in jail. . . . They need to have information about community resources, about job markets, about educational opportunities . . . . They can also be informed about places where they can get satisfactory recreational and social contact.<sup>45</sup>

From a survey of a sample of inmates from the Maryland State Division of Correction, Vogel identified four categories of prisoner information needs. These needs were: sources of prison rules and regulations, channels for communication with families and with agencies to provide family support services, legal materials, and materials and assistance for educational and vocational planning and training.<sup>46</sup> In her conclusion to a report of the survey, Vogel writes:

The needs of inmates described above could suggest a number of ways that libraries can expand their services beyond the casual reading collection level and even beyond the increases in accessibility that many inmates desired[:] . . . special displays and topical bibliographies . . . greater depth and breath of collections . . . special files on job opportunities, community resources, GI benefits and family services.<sup>47</sup>

In August 1976, Vogel and an inmate group from the Maryland Penitentiary hosted a conference entitled "Exploring Information and Communication Needs of Inmates." Among the suggestions to improve communication inside the prison was an information and referral service in the library.<sup>48</sup>

One example of public library service in reentry information is the service established between the Napa County (California) Library and the county jail, which is located across the street from the library. Library and Correctional Department staff cooperate in providing reentry services.<sup>49</sup> Finally, in the "Library Recommendations for County Jail Standards," there is a statement which succinctly describes the public library's continuing role in the reentry process: "Referral services to the public library most convenient to place of residence or employment when the resident leaves the jail."<sup>50</sup>

## INCREASED APPROPRIATIONS FOR CORRECTIONAL LIBRARIES

Of all the factors which have encouraged a growing relationship between correctional facilities and public libraries, none has had a greater influence than the federal funds, which since the late 1960s have been available. The histories of prison library services written by MacCormick<sup>51</sup> and by Rubin,<sup>52</sup> the analysis of citations on prison libraries by Gillespie,<sup>53</sup> and the special section on institutional libraries which appeared in the spring 1966 issue of the *AHIL Quarterly*<sup>54</sup> all emphasize the lack of adequate library services before the availability of federal grant funds.

During the following ten years, 1966-77, federal funds, which have been made available through several programs, have made it possible for state libraries to hire institutional consultants, to write statewide plans for service to institutions, to finance pilot programs (increasingly through public libraries), and to encourage the state and local funding of correctional library services.

In a recent *Bowker Annual*, Hughey explains the present Library Services and Construction Act titles.<sup>55</sup> Into Title I, Library Services, the early Title IV-A, State Institutional Library Services and Title IV-B, Library Services to the Physically Handicapped, have been combined with other public library services since 1971. During fiscal year 1973, LSCA funds provided slightly over \$2,000,000 for the funding of state institutional library services; in fiscal year 1974, the total was over \$2,500,000.

Appropriations have been used for state library consultant salaries; for the establishment and improvement of library services; for library personnel; for equipment and materials; for workshops, in-service training, and institutes; for public library services; and for the organization of library systems among all types of libraries and institutional libraries.<sup>56</sup> In addition, Title III, Interlibrary Cooperation, provides for union lists of resources, networks for acquisitions, reference and interlibrary loan, and increased coordination among libraries of all types within a geographic region.<sup>57</sup>

A second source of federal funding for correctional libraries is LEAA, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, which has been involved in ninety projects during the years 1971-76 and has awarded more than \$4,500,000 in grants for four types of library projects: prison law libraries; library services to aid reentry for prisoners, often to improve educational standards; general library materials and services, including statewide programs; and library services and materials for correctional personnel.<sup>58</sup>

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In addition to LSCA and LEAA funds, other federal sources have been available. In some states, Elementary and Secondary School Act funds have been appropriated for use in juvenile institutions and for educational materials in adult facilities. To a smaller degree, Social Security Act grants and CETA funds have also been used for libraries.

The result of federal funding, uncertain though it is from year to year, has been to provide money for state consultants for institutions, for state surveys, and for pilot programs. In addition (and probably more important), it has enabled state library agencies, librarians, and volunteers to demonstrate the value of library services for correctional facilities. In several states, and, it is to be anticipated, in more states, the demonstration projects have aided in the passage of state legislation to provide for correctional libraries. State support of public library services to correctional institutions in Illinois was based upon programs which were planned and begun with federal funds.

Because it may be necessary in many states to write LSCA grant proposals to the state library through public library systems, correctional institutions and public libraries cooperate in grant applications. The Texas State Library has received an LSCA Title I grant for \$375,000 to be used for library services in institutions. To receive funds, proposals must be written jointly by public libraries and state or local institutions; grants may be awarded only to the public libraries. Prisons, jails, and halfway houses are three of the acceptable facilities included in the list of institutions eligible for funds.<sup>59</sup>

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This article has been a survey of factors which have influenced the growing relationship and cooperation between public libraries and correctional facilities: (1) a growing awareness of the need for public libraries to serve the disadvantaged; (2) the inclusion of recommendations for services by public libraries in library standards for correctional facilities, public library systems, and state library agencies; (3) an accelerating trend toward cooperation among all libraries into organized systems and networks; (4) several recent court rulings on prisoners' rights to read and to have access to legal materials; (5) declarations by prisoners of a desire to have access to public library materials and information; (6) the growing realization by correctional sociologists of the necessity for the incarcerated to maintain contacts with society and to have reentry briefings; and, finally, (7) appropriation of federal, state, and local funds for correctional library services.

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The future relationship between public libraries and correctional facilities appears promising. The public library can be the agent through which all of the nation's library resources are available to the residents and staff of detention institutions. Librarians who are assigned to correctional facilities can maintain contacts with other public librarians and may draw upon the special skills of all the public library staff.

In correctional facilities, public librarians have a captive audience—a segment of society probably unfamiliar with library services. It is an opportunity to learn of the interests of the residents and to introduce public library services to them. In addition, public librarians can learn to recognize the special informational needs of the residents and be prepared to contribute to their successful reorientation into society. Finally, the residents themselves may preserve and enhance their integrity as individuals through a stable relationship with an agency of society.

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