



Introduction

JANE POOL

WHEN CHARLES DICKENS wrote about the ills of Victorian England, he included abuses common in the prisons of his day. The scientific and technological advances of the twentieth century have greatly improved the living conditions of Dickens's fellow Englishmen and, indeed, of all persons living in the Western world. Unfortunately, much of the alienation which existed in the 1800s between persons confined in jails and the free citizenry continues to exist today. Prisons and jails remain crowded, with little opportunity for minor or first-time offenders to be rehabilitated. Persons convicted of major crimes face an isolation from society which may make it impossible for them to return successfully to the outside world.

Because of an increasing awareness of the individual needs and rights of prisoners, brought about partly by riots and uprisings in correctional institutions, reformers have sought to improve the prison environment. Architecture, educational facilities, legal rights of prisoners, visitation rights and "open" prisons, and reentry are all pertinent topics for discussion. This issue of *Library Trends* has been written to serve as a review and synthesis of the current correctional facility library scene: environment, history, standards, training and research, and finally, service patterns in different types of facilities.

In order to assess the state of library services in jails and prisons correctly, it appears appropriate to examine the corrections environment. The first article in this issue consists of a discussion of prison sociology: history, contemporary practice and future directions. The author writes succinctly of the dehumanizing effect of crowded prisons and contrasts her goal for the future—a "closed institution," designed to aid inmates to reenter society successfully.

The second article contains a survey of the information needs of prisoners as revealed in the published literature. In her survey, the

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author notes that inmates appear to be eager for newspapers and magazines concerned with national and international news, read more materials than do members of the general public, and request materials on a wide variety of subjects. Again, as in the first article, the writer emphasizes the issue of inmate participation: in selection committees, in book discussion groups, in access to legal materials, and in contact with outside library agencies through local public libraries and interlibrary loan services.

In the third article, the author discusses current education for correctional librarianship. He, like the writers of the first two articles, places emphasis on the concept of the library as an agency to facilitate successful inmate return to society. In the area of research concerning prison libraries, he mentions significant studies and suggests concentration of future research in the areas of literacy studies, use of various media, and the characteristics of inmate populations.

In 1974 an important study, *Survey of Library and Information Problems in Correctional Institutions*, was published by the Institute of Library Research at the University of California at Berkeley. The author, Marjorie LeDonne, reviews the study of its findings in the fourth article of the current *Library Trends*. In addition, she uses the conclusions to focus on advances in correctional librarianship during the past three years in the areas of the study's hypotheses: adequacy of library services, staff resources and coordination, and cooperation with public library services. It is in the area of cooperation with public libraries that she notes the greatest advances.

Quite possibly the most explosive issue concerning correctional facility librarianship concerns law collections for use by inmates. Recent court decisions have held that prisoners are entitled to access to legal literature. The following article includes a survey of recent court cases and a discussion of standards for law libraries in correctional facilities. The author endorses the concept of an adequate legal collection available to prisoners and advances the theory that, in addition, it is necessary to provide access to attorneys and to information outside the prisons for poorly educated inmates.

Many countries, in attempting to rehabilitate or aid prisoners to return to society, provide libraries in their correctional facilities. In a survey of overseas library programs for prisoners, the author of the sixth article reviews trends and cites specific examples. Although several countries have no libraries in their prisons, other nations provide correctional library services which parallel those in the United States.

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The remaining three articles deal with library services to correctional facilities within the United States. The seventh article surveys prison libraries: current standards and future trends of correctional accreditation. It brings up to date and expands the *Library Trends* article of October 1972, written by Andree Bailey, "Standards for Library Service in Institutions in the Correctional Setting."

The next article is a discussion of library services for juvenile offenders, a segment of the correctional population too often overlooked. The author surveys the problems and notes examples of individual programs.

The final article concerns public library services to correctional institutions. For years, some state libraries have provided services to state prisons and some local public libraries have provided library services to jails, often on a contractual basis. While isolated examples have existed for many years, the trend for state libraries, public library systems, and local public libraries to provide library services to correctional institutions has accelerated rapidly during the 1970s. In this article, the editor outlines factors which have influenced the extension of public library services into correctional facilities and discusses pertinent examples of services.

On February 15, 1977, the editor learned that it would be necessary to locate a substitute author for the last article. Faced with deadlines, she decided to write it. In addition to the authors of the articles which appear in print, she would like to thank Susan Madden, Joan Stout, and Mary Power for their suggestions of pertinent literature.

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