Chapter 8

PRISON LIFE

Introduction to Corrections
CJC 2000
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Describe the characteristics of prisoners in state and federal prison.

Explain the elements of prison life that define the incarceration experience, and apply deprivation or importation theory to each of these symptoms.

Identify the benefits and challenges of having inmates work while incarcerated.

Clarify the key ways prisoners use the sub rosa economy for profit.
CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

8.5

Compare and contrast security threat groups and play families in terms of their structure, purpose, and management.

8.6

Summarize the various forms of individual-level inmate violence, including assault and sexual assault.

8.7

Identify how collective violence is part of prison life by comparing the riot in Chino, California, with Attica regarding predisposing factors, triggering events, length, and how it ended.
Describe the characteristics of prisoners in state and federal prisons.
Key Terms

Disproportionate

Bureau of Prisons
Disproportionate

When the group under study has a substantially greater or lesser percentage than exists in the larger population.

Source: money.cnn.com
Where federal prisoners go when they have violated an incarcerable federal offense.

Source: af11.wordpress.com
8.1

Prisoners

Who is in the nation’s prisons?
Learning Objectives

After this lecture, you should be able to complete the following Learning Outcomes

8.2

Explain the elements of prison life that define the incarceration experience, and apply deprivation or importation theory to each of these elements.
Prisonization

The process by which the prisoners learn the norms of life in prison. **Used by Clemmer in 1966.**

Source: af11.wordpress.com
Inmate Subculture

A society with its own norms and values defined by inmates with the most power and influence.

Source: www.huffingtonpost.com
Big House

A maximum security penitentiary with a convict subculture, lasting between the early 1800s until about 1980.

Source: hauntedbighouse.com
A regimented facility that is physically separate from the larger society and meets the survival needs of its occupants.

Source: northlight.org
Deprivation Model

Assumes that prison culture developed out of the pains of imprisonment through adaptations that prisoners make to circumvent these losses.

Source: beforeitsnews.com
8.2 Importation Model

Assumes that prison life is an **extension of street life** of marginalized people from impoverished communities who dominate the prison.

Source: beforeitsnews.com
Key Terms, cont.

- Inmate Code
- Prison Argot
- Players
- Squares
- Snitch
- Punk
- Fish
Inmate Code

A system of **unwritten rules** that **directs** inmate behavior.

Source: theatlanticcities.com
Prison Argot

Also called “prison-proper,” the language, slang, and physical gestures used to communicate meaning in prison.

Source: mafiatoday.com
8.2

Players

Prisoners who embrace mainstream prison culture that values manipulating and intimidating others.

Source: businessinsider.com
Inmates who oppose mainstream prison culture by being well-behaved and who take advantage of every self-improvement program they can to keep themselves bust, also known as bootlickers.

Source: sureshotbooks1.blogspot.com.com
Inmates who are targeted by predatory inmates because they have passed along information to staff that has gotten another inmate in trouble, also known as player haters.

Source: hedgefundoperationalduediligence.com
Punk

Inmates who are targeted by predatory inmates because they are perceived as physically or mentally weak and afraid to fight back.

Source: amamdphto.com
First-time inmate that is vulnerable because he or she has not yet been prisonized.

Source: blog.mlive.com
Learning Objectives
After this lecture, you should be able to complete the following Learning Outcomes

Identify the benefits and challenges of having inmates work while incarcerated.

8.3
Key Terms

- Institutional Maintenance
- Trustys
- Agriculture
- Prison Industry
- Open Market
- Sheltered Market/Government/State Use Model
- Free Enterprise
Institutional Maintenance

Unskilled jobs that inmates are assigned in order to assist with daily prison operations (food preparation, laundry, cleaning).

Source: azcentral.com

Accounts for 70% of work in NORTHERN prisons.
8.3

Trustys

Minimum-security level inmates who earn the status through not causing behavioral problems.

Source: vytrueliscom
Outdoor field work jobs involving prisoners’ growing crops and raising livestock; prevalent in southern states.

Source: cnn.com
A skilled job within the prison that provides inmates training while incarcerated (manufacturing, construction, auto repair, welding, etc.).

Source: dc.state.fl.us
8.3

Open Market

Prison-made products are sold, either by private companies or by the state, to prospective buyers.

Source: classwarfareexists.com
Restricts the sale of prison-made products only to other state and local government markets, also known as the government or state use models.

Source: af11.wordpress.com

Source: mysteryreadersinc.com
Free enterprise

A private sector entrepreneurial model of doing business.

Source: nbcnews.com
8.3

Prisoner Work

- Institutional Maintenance
- Agricultural
- Prison Industry
Learning Objectives
After this lecture, you should be able to complete the following Learning Outcomes

8.4
Clarify the key ways prisoners use the sub rosa economy for profit.
Key Terms

- Sub Rosa Economy
- Commissary
- Merchants
- Jailhouse Lawyers
- Contraband
- Crews
Sub Rosa Economy

Underground economy based on negotiation and exchange of goods and services between prisoners without the use of cash.

Source: sheriff.piattcounty.org
8.4 Commissary

Snacks, hygiene items, and other items available for purchase at the prison store.

Source: www.springfieldnewssun.com
8.4 Merchants

Inmates who control scarce resources by running a prison store.

Source: globalvoicesonline.com
8.4

Jailhouse Lawyers

Inmates who use their legal knowledge and skills to **write writs and grievances.**

Source: lifeofthelaw.org
8.4

Contraband

Forbidden items that compromise institutional safety and security.

Source: blogs.browardpalmbeach.com
Small cliques of prisoners that spend time together, but there is no initiation, or formal alliances, some crews can be networked and predatory, but they are more loosely associated and are not an institutional security threat.

Source: blogs.reuters.com
The Sub Rosa Economy

Underground Trading in the Prison
Compare and contrast security threat groups and play families in terms of their structure, purpose, and management.
Key Terms

State-raised Youth

Security Threat Group

Play Families
State-raised Youth

Inmates who grew up in youth prisons and who tend to be more violent than the average prisoner.

Source: bbc.co.uk
8.5

Security Threat Group

An organized group whose activities are predatory and criminal and whose presence in a correctional institution/agency poses a real and imminent threat to the security and safety of staff and inmates.

Source: www.streetgangs.com
8.5

Play Families

Relationships among women prisoners that mimic the structure, terminology, and function of families in general society.

Source: izismile.com
8.5

Prison Groups

State-Raised Youth

Security Threat Groups (STGs)

Women’s Groups
Learning Objectives
After this lecture, you should be able to complete the following Learning Outcomes

8.6

Summarize the various forms of individual-level inmate violence, including assault and sexual assault.
When officers know about a situation and don’t take action to prevent it.

Source: www.huffingtonpost.ca
In 2003, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) attempted to **measure the incidence of prison rape** in federal, state, and local institutions.

Source: American History X
Learning Objectives
After this lecture, you should be able to complete the following Learning Outcomes

Identify how collective violence is a part of prison life by comparing the riot in Chino, California, with Attica regarding predisposing factors, triggering events, length, and how it ended.
8.7

Key Terms

- Voluntary Lockdown
- Disturbance
- Prison Riot
- Predisposing Factors
- Triggering Event
Voluntary Lockdown

When prisoners refuse to leave their cells.

Source: prisonjobs.com
Disturbance

An altercation involving three or more inmates, resulting in official action, but where staff control of the facility is maintained.

Source: seycovelaw12sentencing.wikispaces.com
Prison riot

A situation involving a large number of inmates making a forcible attempt to take control of a sizable area of the prison for a substantial amount of time.

Source: glogster.com
8.7

Predisposing factors

Underlying conditions that occur over an extended period of time and provide the foundation for a riot.

Source: sites.duke.edu
8.7 Triggering event

One or several specific events that sparked the riot.

Source: peopleslawoffice.com
8.7

Inmate Violence

Individual

Group
Most prisoners are young males with low skills and education. Women are disproportionately low in their representation, and non-U.S. citizens compromise one in four federal prisoners.

The inmate subculture is derived from deprivations lost on incarceration, as well as importation of street behaviors.

Most inmates are assigned to some type of work while incarcerated.

The sub rosa economy is an underground trading network prisoners use for gaining of goods.
Security threat groups are widespread in men’s prisons with a formal structure and rigid rules. Women’s prisons groups are primarily play families, which are more of a mentoring group than a threat to facility security.

PREA was passed to help with the problems of individual violence within correctional facilities. Assault and sexual assault are the most common forms of individual violence.

Collective violence includes voluntary lockdowns, disturbances, and riots.