Summary and Major Findings of Articles Reviewed in This Issue


This article reviews an instrument that can be used to provide a quick review of correctional program quality. This instrument - the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory (CPAI) - has been used in a variety of correctional settings nationwide, and has the potential to identify general strengths and weaknesses of treatment programs.


This article presents a provocative critique of drug treatment in prisons, arguing that treatment policies and practices often rest upon questionable premises. The author, a top official of a prominent criminal justice body, challenges corrections officials to closely examine the assumptions upon which treatment is based.


This article examines popular attitudes towards rehabilitation as a goal of correctional systems. It finds that although public support for rehabilitation has declined from earlier decades, it still retains legitimacy among the general public.


This article reports on the impact of a therapeutic community (TC) on factors that place recently released offenders at risk for transmission of HIV. The TC experience was found to reduce risky behaviors such as intravenous drug use and increase protective behaviors such as condom use.


This article presents a discussion of the development of the Prison Behavior Rating Scale, which measures various components of psychological disturbance among prisons inmates. The scale was found to be reasonably reliable and...
valid, although further refinement may be needed.


This article reports on a national study of prison chaplains, exploring their roles and duties within the prison setting. This study finds that chaplains spend a great deal of their time on administration and coordination of religious activities, and on non-religious counseling of inmates. Relatively less time was spent on direct ministry.


This article explores the problem of inmate civil rights litigation, and offers an alternative model of prison management in response to this problem. The authors conclude that inmate lawsuits result largely from the inability of inmates to influence prison policies outside of the courtroom. They argue that more open and participatory prison management policies would contribute to a reduction in such litigation.

**Detailed Reviews**


This article reports on the use of an organizational analysis instrument - the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory (CPAI) - to review the quality of prison programs. This article provides insight into a tool that can be used to complement more formal outcome evaluations. The authors discuss the growing importance of program evaluation within correctional settings. This importance derives in part from the reality that most inmates will be released to society; there are limits on the extent to which the state can prevent re-offending through incapacitation. Thus, treatment continues to play an important role within the criminal justice system, despite some popular and political sentiment that "nothing works".

The authors argue that one of the primary reasons for skepticism regarding rehabilitation is the frequent failure to properly evaluate and assess program quality. While program evaluation often provides insight into whether treatment programs impact indicators such as recidivism, there is often little attention paid to how and why a program produces a given outcome. Thus, evaluation may tell correctional officials that a program works, but without telling them what it is about the program that makes it work. The program remains a black box.

The concern for producing policy and program-relevant evaluation research has lead to greater use of techniques such as process evaluation. Process evaluation, while providing rich contextual detail about a program, can be expensive and time consuming. As an alternative, tools such as the CPAI have been developed to allow correctional administrators to benchmark their programs against "best practices" associated with effective programs. The CPAI scores the processes and structure of correctional programs in six categories: Implementation, Assessment, Treatment, Staffing, Evaluation and Other.
The authors discuss their conclusions about program strengths and weaknesses in these categories, based upon their use of the tool in fifty correctional programs nationwide. They find that the most common problem areas for correctional programs include: inadequate aftercare, incomplete or inconsistent assessment of offenders, lack of solid theoretical grounding for programs, insufficient staff training, and failure to evaluate. The authors conclude that instruments such as the CPAI can provide correctional administrators with some broad insight into the operations and quality of their programs, and can even contribute to decisions about which programs would benefit from formal outcome evaluation.

This article provides a good review of an analytical tool that can be useful to correctional administrators. The one gray area concerns the validation of the CPAI as a whole instrument. It would be very interesting to see more data on the correlation between CPAI scores and outcome evaluations. The instrument does have face validity, though, as it was designed on the basis of practices identified in the literature as effective. The CPAI was the central focus of the recent International Community Corrections Association conference at State College.


This article, written by the Executive Vice-President of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, presents a critical discussion of prison-based drug treatment programs. The author argues that criminal justice policy makers would do well to examine more closely some of the assumptions underlying drug treatment programs.

The author begins by noting that popular and academic writing on crime and corrections frequently makes the case that drug abuse and crime are intricately interwoven. He cites as an example the well received study recently released by Columbia University/CASA, which claimed that nearly three-quarters of all incarcerated offenders have serious drug or alcohol problems. The CASA study also made rather bold claims for the economic benefits that can be derived from drug treatment in prisons, in terms of reduced criminal activity. Studies such as these conclude that prison based drug treatment programs should be expanded.

The author takes to task what he views as three central, and possibly flawed, assumptions underlying conclusions drawn by studies such as CASA. These assumptions are (1) that most inmates are drug abusers, (2) who will continue to commit numerous crimes related to their drug abuse, (3) unless they are exposed to treatment that will be effective at reducing drug use and related criminal activity.

Briefly, the author argues that, while many inmates have used drugs, the number who can rightly be characterized as addicts is overestimated. Using federal crime statistics and victimization surveys, he also questions the number of crimes that can reasonably be attributed to drug addiction. He argues that estimates of criminal activity and economic "multipliers" used by studies such as CASA are too
high. Perhaps most significantly, he also argues that scholars and practitioners overestimate the number of inmates capable of benefiting from drug treatment. He notes that the most intensive types of treatment (e.g. therapeutic communities), which are commonly thought to be the most successful at reversing addictive behavior, are off-limits to much of the inmate population. On a related note, he asserts that evidence for the effectiveness of intensive treatment programs such as TC's is mixed. He argues that we do not know how effective these programs are.

In sum, the author argues that claims made in support of prison-based, intensive drug treatment programs have been overstated. While not rejecting the concept of treatment, he argues that justifications for these programs must be built upon more solid ground. He suggests that drug treatment should be used *instead* of prison, where appropriate. Much of his position on this issue seems to be based upon the premise that prisons are not good settings for drug treatment. Rather, prison should be the stopping point for offenders whose crimes are driven by their addictions, and who are not responsive to pre-incarceration treatment.

The primary weakness of this article is the extent to which the author takes the CASA study to be representative of the central assumptions of the correctional treatment community. Rather, beliefs within the correctional community about offender drug use are probably more diverse than indicated by the CASA study. This issue notwithstanding, the author makes a set of provocative arguments about treatment in prisons. While some of his claims are drawn to extremes, this piece does serve to remind us of the importance of periodically reviewing the premises upon which we base our programming and policy decisions.

This article reports on a public opinion poll conducted in southern Ohio that inquired into the extent to which the public perceives offender rehabilitation to be possible and desirable. The results are compared to previous surveys. This article provides interesting insight into how the public interprets the concept of “corrections”.

The authors note that the work of rehabilitation once held great promise and esteem within our society. Indeed, Pennsylvania was one of the leading forces in prison reform and rehabilitation, with the “Eastern” model. Beginning in the 1970's, there was something of a backlash against the practice of rehabilitation. Liberals argued that treatment and counseling resources were inequitably distributed. Conservatives argued that rehabilitation undermined (or at least competed with) the goals of punishment and containment. Critics of rehabilitation, especially on the right, cited popular opinion polls to support their positions. The claim was made that the public no longer cared for rehabilitation and treatment; punishment was enough.
The authors acknowledge that the “penal harm” movement has been a significant development in American corrections over the past twenty years. They cite polling data that shows a drift in the popular psyche towards retribution. Moreover, they note that legislative approaches to crime and corrections are driven by this popular sentiment, embodied in laws such as “three strikes”.

The authors question the conclusion drawn by many that rehabilitation is no longer an important goal for prison systems. Despite the polls showing popular support for punishment and containment, they note that other studies have found that rehabilitation retains support among the people. The authors assert that this seeming conflict between rehabilitation and punishment in the popular mind needs to be examined more closely.

They report on the results of their opinion poll sent to 400 individuals in and around Cincinnati, Ohio in 1995, yielding a response rate of 60 percent. This survey was modeled after previous surveys of popular opinion regarding the management of prisoners. In sum, it asked respondents about what they thought should be the main emphasis of prisons, and gauged their support for and belief in rehabilitation. Findings for this study were compared to findings of similar, earlier surveys.

The authors found that support for rehabilitation declined from 58 percent in 1986 to 37 percent in their current study. Support for punishment increased by roughly the same margin. Public opinion regarding the primary goal of prisons was divided between containment (37 percent), rehabilitation (33 percent), and punishment (27 percent). Thus, while public support for rehabilitation has declined, its importance in the public mind is roughly on par with punishment and containment.

While overall support for rehabilitation was lukewarm, support for specific elements of rehabilitation was strong. For example, over 80 percent of respondents favored allowing inmates to earn “good time”, and to be paid for work done within prison. Large margins also favored continuing treatment programs currently in place, especially psychological counseling and education. Moreover, most respondents indicated a belief that treatment could help the majority of offenders. Treatment benefit was doubted only in regard to violent and sex offenders.

The authors concluded that rehabilitation is “tenacious”. It has managed to retain an appreciable measure of public support even in the face of growing support for punishment and containment. This research may also indicate that the public is somewhat uncertain about what should be the main focus of correctional institutions.

This study appears to be well done, although the sampling methodology is limited. It is unclear how these findings could be generalized to the nation as a whole. Further, the response rate produced a rather small sample, which diverged somewhat from the demographic profile of the Cincinnati region. Thus, the reader should take these findings as suggestive, rather than definitive. These caveats notwithstanding, this research presents insight into popular attitudes towards corrections.
This article reports on the impact on HIV risk behaviors of a therapeutic community for inmates on work release in Delaware. This article demonstrates the interaction of programs for drug treatment and HIV education, and shows how such programs affect behaviors that put offenders at risk for transmission of HIV.

The authors discuss the issue of HIV infection in prison, noting that it is a special problem in Delaware. Delaware has the seventh highest rate of AIDS per capita. Moreover, ten percent of all individuals who have contracted AIDS in the state were diagnosed in prison. Drug injection is a common means of transmission among this population, although drug-related sexual activities also contribute to transmission. Thus, the control of risk factors associated with HIV transmission presents a challenge to correctional managers. Indeed, the authors note that incarceration presents a unique opportunity to educate this population about risk factors, and to attempt to change dysfunctional behaviors that lead to infection.

The authors explore the impact on HIV risk factors of treatment and education programs in the Delaware prison system. Specifically, they assess a therapeutic community (TC) for offenders on work release from the state prison system. The CREST TC provides six months of residential treatment to male and female inmates. While drug and alcohol treatment is the primary focus of CREST, residents also receive extensive HIV/AIDS education and counseling.

As the authors were not able to measure changes in actual HIV infection rates among CREST graduates, they instead examined changes in HIV risk factors. These include intravenous drug use (IDU), condom use, sex in exchange for drugs and number of sex partners. Data were collected from CREST residents shortly after they entered the program, and repeatedly upon their release back into society. The findings for this group are compared to findings for a comparison group of work release inmates who did not participate in a TC as part of their work release. Offenders were followed for up to eighteen months after completion of work release.

The authors found that the CREST program did have a positive impact upon offenders’ HIV risk factors. Compared with the non-TC work release group, the CREST participants reported lower levels of IDU and trading sex for drugs, and higher levels of condom use. There was no statistically significant difference between the two groups on the number of sex partners. Thus, the authors conclude that the CREST program does have an impact on three of four behaviors thought to put offenders at high risk for transmission of HIV.

This study appears to be very well researched, and is nicely reported. The one piece that is missing from this report is a fuller discussion of changes in offender risk factors over time, to supplement discussions of comparisons between treatment and non-treatment groups. In other words, to what extent did risk factors associated with individual offenders change after participation in CREST?
any event, this article provides interesting insight into the effectiveness of strategies and programs designed to control the spread of AIDS among offenders. It provides evidence that attitudes and behaviors that put offenders at risk for HIV transmission can be changed through programming.


This article reports on the development and use of the Prison Behavior Rating Scale, which is designed to measure psychological disturbance among prison inmates in Scotland. While this article is more of a technical report on how the scale was tested and validated, it does provide insight into a tool that might have some use for correctional administrators in the United States. It also reveals how prison officials in another nation perceive problems common to all prison systems.

The author begins by noting that psychological disturbances among inmates is a major concern for correctional officials. Disturbed inmates are thought to be at greater risk for recidivism, tend to serve longer sentences, and are more likely to have violent interactions with other inmates and staff. Thus, the accurate measurement and description of psychological disturbance can greatly aid the classification process.

An effective tool to measure psychological disturbance would have numerous benefits for prison managers. It would facilitate the monitoring of a given inmate’s behavior over time, would allow comparisons across different populations of inmates, would assist in assessing changes in inmate living conditions, would assist in overall classification, and would protect vulnerable inmates.

The author reviews other behavioral rating systems, such as the Adult Inmate Management System (AIMS) and discusses their limitations. The Prison Behavioral Rating Scale (PBRS) was modeled in part on the AIMS, and is intended as an alternative. He then presents a technical discussion of the development and validation of the PBRS.

Based upon testing among Scottish inmates, the PBRS was found to be a reasonably reliable and valid measure of psychological disturbance. It measures three primary components or dimensions of psychological disturbance among inmates: Anti-Authority, Anxious-Depressed, and Dull-Confused. This scale sorts disturbed inmates into these three categories. The author also discusses correlations between these categories and types of offender. For example, scores on the Anxious-Depressed scale were higher for sex offenders and for inmates held in protective custody.

This research appears to be well conducted and reported. The discussion of the reliability of the PBRS is somewhat equivocal, though, indicating that additional work may be needed before the scale could be widely applied. It would also be useful to test the scale on prison populations of other nations, to determine how widely applicable it might be. In any event, this scale is another tool that could be useful for the management of inmates.

Jody Sundt and Francis T. Cullen. 1998. "The Role of the Contemporary Prison Chaplain." The...
This article reports on a national survey of prison chaplains, exploring their roles and duties within the prison setting and their perceptions of their work. In doing so, this article presents an interesting treatment of a seldom explored aspect of correctional management.

The authors begin by noting that little research has been done on the office of the prison chaplaincy, with the last major study being conducted over forty years ago. They then review the historical role of the prison chaplain. Ministering to the spiritual needs of inmates has always been the stock-in-trade of the chaplain. They note, though, that early in the history of the prison, the chaplain undertook many tasks that are now the responsibility of specialists. These tasks included operating prison libraries, organizing prison schools and teaching inmates, creating programs for inmates (including pre-cursors of modern drug and alcohol treatment) and even maintaining statistical records for the prison system.

As the prison modernization and reform movement developed over the past century, many of these tasks were shifted to other professionals. The chaplain, while continuing in the ministerial role, took on new functions of counseling and management of volunteer clergy. The latter task grew in importance, as the religious make-up of the nation became more diverse, requiring a broader range of religious counseling within prisons.

Regardless of the changes to the prison chaplaincy, the authors make the case that the chaplain has always been an important figure in the prison environment. In order to remedy the deficit of research on the chaplaincy, they undertook a survey of over 400 prison chaplains in 1997, yielding a response rate of 58 percent. They gathered data on the duties and role perceptions of modern chaplains, and explored the possibility that chaplains may experience role ambiguity and conflict due to changes in the chaplaincy. They compare their findings to a very similar survey conducted in 1956.

The authors found that the typical chaplain responding to their survey was a well-educated white male in his fifties, with approximately ten years of experience as a prison chaplain. These chaplains reported that they spent most of their time on administration of prison religious activities, supervision of religious and other volunteers, non-religious counseling of inmates, and ministerial duties. Ministry actually accounted for relatively little of their time, as they were heavily occupied with administrative and counseling activities. Other, less common duties included censoring inmate mail, teaching, showing visitors through the prison and ministering to staff. There was little change from the 1956 survey, although contemporary chaplains report spending more time helping inmates prepare for release than was the case forty years ago.

The chaplains reported that they believed inmate counseling and ministry to be their most important and valuable roles within the prison, although they did not spend as much time on these activities as they would like. Administrative duties were seen as less important, although they consumed much of the chaplains’ time. Thus, this study found some degree of conflict between the secular and sacred roles of the office. This finding is perhaps not surprising, given the growth of large bureaucratic organizational structures in all public agencies over the past century. This conflict was mitigated for
those chaplains who reported having supportive superiors within the prison administration.

This study appears to be well done, with no major identifiable shortcomings. It provides a solid update to a topic not widely explored. It should be of interest both to prison chaplains and to those who work closely with them.


This article reports on a survey of state attorney’s general, exploring their experiences with inmate lawsuits. Particular emphasis is placed upon lawsuits dealing with classification issues. The authors offer a model of inmate management as a means of reducing such lawsuits. This piece provides an interesting treatment of an issue that is of increasing concern to most correctional systems.

The authors note that inmate civil rights lawsuits have placed a steadily increasing burden on correctional systems and courts nationwide. They indicate that in 1993, inmate lawsuits constituted nearly one-quarter of the civil docket in United State District Courts. To explore the growth in these lawsuits, the authors surveyed the attorney’s general of all fifty states and the District of Columbia, resulting in a response rate of 64 percent. The attorneys were asked about the volume and nature of inmate civil lawsuits within their jurisdictions.

The authors found that the majority of the responding attorneys reported that their agencies were handling over 200 inmate civil rights lawsuits at the time of the survey. Only five of the states reported having fewer than 100 active cases at the time of the survey. Class action suits were also commonly reported. The attorneys indicated that classification issues were prominent in these suits. Most notably, due process and classification criteria were common foci of these suits.

The survey also explored specific classification issues reported to be prominent in inmate lawsuits. Classification of protective custody inmates, job assignments for HIV positive inmates and employment, housing and programming for handicapped inmates were the most commonly reported classification issues reported by the responding attorneys.

Having examined the status of inmate civil rights lawsuits, the authors then note that the vast majority of these cases are ruled in favor of the state. Inmates can expect to be successful in less than five percent of their suits. The authors discuss at length the paradox that inmates continue to file large numbers of civil suits even though they have little chance of success.

The authors argue that such lawsuits are often brought by inmates seeking voice in decisions that affect their day-to-day lives within the prison. Even when inmates recognize that a suit is probably futile, they view the suit as a means of challenging correctional practices or decisions that have resulted in some perceived harm. The authors conclude that inmate lawsuits are an inevitable
outgrowth of correctional policies that exclude inmates from participation in inmate management.

As an alternative to the predominant model of prison management, the authors propose a political community model, which would place great emphasis upon due process and responsiveness in the classification process. As far as possible, inmates would also be afforded greater opportunities to become involved in decision-making processes affecting their classification and programming. The authors assert that such a model would produce a prison environment that would reduce the felt need for inmates to rely upon litigation to express themselves.

This article presents a provocative response to the growing problem of inmate litigation. While the arguments advanced by the authors do have a face validity, they do seem not to acknowledge that prison management is by no means monolithic. Some prison systems are, and have historically been, open to inmate participation. To some extent, most prison systems probably rely upon such participation in some facets of their operations. It would be interesting to study the relationship between prison management style and inmate litigation. Such a study would provide further empirical insight into the authors’ claims.
Reviews are indexed by primary topic, and reference in parentheses the issue where the full review is found. Some reviews may fall into multiple categories.

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**Classification and Inmate Management**

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**Treatment and Rehabilitation - General**


