INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONS

Outline
Current Trends
Philosophies of Punishment
Outlooks on Corrections
The Role of Criminological Theories
Corrections Programs

Objectives
● To provide you with an understanding of the breadth and depth of corrections
● To acquaint you with the various philosophies and goals of punishment
● To reveal to you the role of criminological theory as a means to understand offenders
● To provide you with a contemporary view of corrections and a prospective look into its future
● To give you an overview of the various subjects explored in this textbook

© 2014 John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Published 2014 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
INTRODUCTION

What comes to mind when you hear the word corrections? Do you think about prisons with massive stone walls and downtrodden inmates like those portrayed in dozens of movies? Perhaps you think about chain gangs, inmates in orange jumpsuits picking up trash along a highway, or prisoners in white uniforms hoeing in a line in a field. Do these images accurately reflect contemporary corrections?

The answer is yes, to a degree. But today corrections encompasses much more than the custodial supervision of convicted offenders inside or outside a secure facility. According to the US Department of Justice, at the end of 2010, an estimated 7.1 million adults in the United States (1 in 48 adults) were under some type of correctional supervision (Glaze 2011). Of this total, 4.06 million adults were on probation and another 840,676 were on parole. The rest, nearly 2.3 million adults, were confined in prisons and jails.

Probation. Parole. Prisons. Jails. These are critical components of corrections in the twenty-first century, but they are by no means the only components. According to the US Department of Justice, corrections “includes all government agencies, facilities, programs, procedures, personnel, and techniques concerned with the intake, custody, confinement, supervision, or treatment, or presentencing or predisposition investigation of alleged or adjudicated adult offenders, delinquents, or status offenders” (1981, 53). As used in this textbook, corrections refers to all government actions intended to manage adults who have been accused or convicted of criminal offenses and juveniles who have been charged with or found guilty of delinquency or a status offense.

In this chapter, we explore the philosophical and practical underpinnings of contemporary corrections. In order to gain a better understanding of our nation’s formal response to criminals, we examine the philosophies that provide the foundation for “correcting” convicted offenders. Then we review the public and political attitudes that shape contemporary corrections policy, and the effects of those attitudes. Next we explore the explanations for crime that criminologists have developed over the past several centuries. Their theories will be especially useful when we start to consider the methods of treating convicted criminals. We conclude the chapter with a look at the nation’s corrections programs. Before we begin our exploration of the essentials of corrections, however, we turn to an overview of current trends.

CURRENT TRENDS

Between the early 1980s and the end of the century, the United States experienced an enormous increase in the number of individuals under the supervision of adult correctional programs. In 1980, fewer than 2 million people were under any form of institutional or community supervision. As noted above, the nation’s correctional systems reported more than 7 million detainees, inmates, and supervisees in 2010. As Figure 1.1 shows, between 1980 and 2007, the climb in the number of people age 18 and older under some form of supervision, especially in prisons and on probation, was steady and unrelenting. Beginning in 2009, after a 2 year plateau, the numbers started to move downward, led mainly by declines within the probation and jail populations.

Comparisons of prisoners by race and ethnicity yield controversial results (Guerino, Harrison, and Sabol 2011; Humes, Jones, and Ramirez 2011):

- In 2010, blacks accounted for 13.6 percent of the roughly 309.3 million people in the United States, or about 42 million individuals, but 40 percent of the inmates in state and federal facilities were black.
- About 50.5 million people, 16.3 percent of the total US population in 2010, were Hispanics, but they constituted 20 percent of the prison population that year.
- Non-Hispanic whites accounted for most of the remaining 196.8 million US residents in 2010, 63.7 percent of the total, but whites made up just 35 percent of the inmate population.

Another way to examine the racial and ethnic distribution of inmates is to look at incarceration rates,
the number of people in a secure facility for every 100,000 (referred to in this text as per capita) people in a specific racial or ethnic group. Those rates confirm the race and ethnic disparities found within the nation’s prison populations. For example, in 2010, the incarceration rate for every 100,000 black males in the United States ages 25 to 29 was 8,932 (down from 10,376 in 2002); among Hispanic males in the same age group, the rate was 3,892 (up from 2,394 in 2002); and among white males, the rate was 1,437 (up from 1,229 in 2002) (Glaze 2011; Harrison and Beck 2003).

Since 2000, the rates for blacks and Hispanics have generally gone down, while those for non-Hispanics whites have increased, pushing the overall per capita incarceration rates for all racial and ethnic groups up from 476 in 2002 to 500 in 2010. Stated another way, and assuming current incarceration rates do not change, about one in three black males, one in six Hispanic males, and 1 in 17 white males are expected to go to prison during their lifetimes (Bonczar 2003).

We also find disproportionate rates for conditional release: three in ten probationers and four in ten parolees are black; and one in about eight probationers and nearly one in five parolees are Hispanic (Glaze and Bonczar 2011). Whites account for more than half of probationers but only four in ten parolees. Blacks and Hispanics as a group make up 43 percent of the nation’s probationers and 57 percent of the parolees, well above their combined proportion in the general population. Since the late 1980s, the trend has been toward fewer black and Hispanic probationers and more black and Hispanic parolees, something we would expect given the explosion in incarceration rates for racial and ethnic
PHILOSOPHIES OF PUNISHMENT

In this book, we look at many different corrections programs, agencies, and institutions. Each one is guided by a punishment philosophy, a set of beliefs that defines both the potential and the limitations of corrections treatment. Throughout history, different philosophies have dominated the corrections field at different times. In this section, we explore the origins of these sometimes contradictory philosophies.

RETRIBUTION

One of the oldest correctional philosophies is retribution. In simplest terms, retribution is the belief that punishment must avenge for a harm done to another. Archaeologists have unearthed written codes dating back more than 3,500 years that clearly are based on retribution. For example, the Code of Hammurabi, which dates back to the eighteenth century BCE, provided, “If a man destroy the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye. If he break a man’s bone, they shall break his bone. If a man knock out a tooth of a man of his own rank, they shall knock out his tooth.” Likewise, the Law of Moses stipulated that “thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe” (Exod. 21:23–25). From such harsh rules has come the lex talionis, the law of retaliation or revenge, a legal principle that requires a response in kind for crimes committed (Encarta World Dictionary 2009).²

The ancient concept of retaliation has aroused renewed interest since the 1970s. In the mid-1970s, the criminal justice system’s ability to effect prosocial changes in criminals came under severe criticism (see the discussion of rehabilitation later). Simultaneously, a derivative of the lex talionis emerged. This new rationale for punishment, called just deserts or retributive justice, suggests that criminals earn society’s wrath and deserve to be punished for the sake of punishment (Fogel 1975). Whether they learn to change (rehabilitation) or are frightened away from their criminal behaviors (deterrence) is irrelevant. They simply deserve punishment, much as those who violated laws in the days of the lex talionis deserved punishment. Only the forms of punishment are different, not the reasons for using them.

In the 1990s, critics of the corrections system suggested that the retributive justice philosophy had evolved into a philosophy of penal harm—the belief that punishment, particularly incarceration, should be uncomfortable. Since the 1980s, the prison population in the United States has increased at a far
Observations note that prisons in the United States have undergone three decades of growth. This statement appears to be true internationally as well. For example, in 2000, Germany allocated the equivalent of $1.25 billion for new prison construction. This expansion plan was to increase prison capacity in the eastern German states by 50 percent and in the western states by 25 percent.

In general, the prison population in European nations grew 20 percent during the 1990s, but in more than half of these nations (not counting very small states) the prison population grew by 40 percent. In Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia, the rate of growth was between 60 and 85 percent. The prison population in the United States grew by 65 percent over the decade. By comparison, Canada’s prison population grew by only 12 percent. The Australian prison population grew 50 percent; in New Zealand, the growth rate was 38 percent. In South Africa, the prison population increased by 33 percent between 1990 and 1999. Even Japan, a nation with historically low crime rates, saw prison populations grow by 10 percent in the 1990s. In 86 of the 118 nations for which figures are available, the prison population increased in the last decade of the twentieth century.

Why are we seeing widespread growth in incarceration rates? The answers are complex and go beyond growth in crime rates. Roy Walmsley (2009) suggests five possibilities:

- the increasing belief in many countries that prison is the most effective response to crime;
- an increased fear of crime;
- a general loss of confidence in the criminal justice system;
- disillusionment with positive treatment alternatives (prison is a negative alternative); and
- a growing need for retribution.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the United States, with just 5 percent of the world’s population, has roughly 20 percent of the world’s 9.9 million prison inmates. Nearly half of all sentenced prisoners are held in the United States. Moreover, although Western European nations have experienced dramatic prison population increases, the custody rate per 100,000 residents in most of these nations is less than 100. In the United States, the per capita rate for individuals held in state or federal prisons or in local jails is currently 732—the world’s highest rate.

Sources: Austin and Irwin (2001); Clear (1994); Glaze (2011); Walmsley (2001, 2009).

SPOTLIGHT ON INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS: THE INCARCERATION BOOM, A WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON

greater rate than the prison system’s ability to deal with it. The chief mechanisms of change were mandatory sentencing laws and restrictions on or even the abolition of discretionary parole.3 “By promoting prison overcrowding and its related evils, the penal harm movement has clearly extended degradation, provocation, and deprivation well beyond the act of imprisonment to the daily conditions of confinement” (R. Wright 1996, 135).

DETERRENCE

The deterrence philosophy assumes that certain and severe punishment can “discourage future crime by
INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONS

of years, other studies found that rehabilitation is a viable basis for corrections (see, for example, Cullen and Gilbert 1982).¹

If rehabilitation can work, why was such a gloomy picture painted in the 1970s? We have several possible answers. First, correctional treatment programs often were created with no evaluation component. Only after a few years of operation did someone (usually a funding agency) decide that it might be a good idea to find out whether a program was working. In the absence of formal evaluation criteria, assessments were based on anecdotal evidence or intuition, and often they were wrong. Many treatment programs were assumed not to work, often in the absence of hard evidence.

Second, many treatment program evaluations during the 1960s and 1970s made use of inadequate statistical techniques. Some of the programs that initially appeared not to work proved to work on reexamination.

Third, some treatment programs were almost designed to fail. They had no theoretical underpinnings, and their designers and implementers had only vague notions about what the programs should achieve. A number of the juvenile justice diversion programs system fit this category (Decker 1985). The stated purpose of these programs was to divert certain juvenile offenders from the formal process of adjudication, but no one specified where these youngsters should be diverted to.

In summarizing the research on rehabilitation, Joseph Rogers and Larry Mays (1987, 519–20) made several key points, ones that are no less relevant after nearly three decades:

- No treatment program works with every possible offender.
- Some programs may not work with any offenders.
- Some programs have a high degree of efficacy; that is, they work with a broad range of offenders.
- Unfortunately, some offenders cannot be rehabilitated.

Participants in correctional rehabilitation programs, much like clients of drug and alcohol treatment

the offender and by others” (US Department of Justice 1988, 90). This definition owes much to the writings of Cesare Beccaria, Jeremy Bentham, and other eighteenth-century philosophers.

Notice that there are two important dimensions here. The first is specific deterrence, the assumption that punishment dissuades the offender from repeating the same offense or committing a new one. The ultimate form of specific deterrence is the death penalty: we know with certainty that people who are executed for their crimes will not commit other crimes in the future.

Although specific deterrence may be very important in contemporary corrections, the second dimension—general deterrence—seems equally important. Specific deterrence would punish the individual offender so that he or she will not commit another offense; by contrast, general deterrence would punish the individual to prevent others in society from committing the same or similar crimes. This philosophy assumes that people can learn through the experience of others that punishments meted out to others serve as object lessons for the rest of us.

REHABILITATION

The most prominent correctional philosophy in this country for many years was rehabilitation, the belief that “providing psychological or educational assistance or job training to offenders” makes “them less likely to engage in future criminality” (US Department of Justice 1988, 90). Rehabilitation is based on the notion that people—whatever their age or their crime—can change. The key to change is treatment—individual and group counseling, drug and alcohol treatment, remedial education, and vocational education.

Between the 1950s and the 1970s, rehabilitation was the philosophy most frequently promoted by penologists, people who systematically study punishment. However, in the mid-1970s, an assessment of correctional programs brought the efficacy of rehabilitation into question (Lipton, Martinson, and Wilks 1975). Some critics wondered whether rehabilitation worked; others went even further, arguing that “nothing works” (Martinson 1974). In a matter
programs, get better when they want to get better and work towards that goal.

**ISOLATION**

*Isolation* is a very old correctional philosophy that has served two purposes throughout recorded history. The first is isolation as punishment: offenders were incarcerated in dungeons or towers to separate them from most human contact. The second is what we call the “rotten apple” response to criminal offenders: offenders were isolated to protect the rest of society from “spoiling.” In this way, prisons and jails became dumping grounds for people society rejected because they were dangerous or simply unpleasant (see Welch 1996). What may also have been at work here is a defense mechanism of sorts. Inmates have low visibility: they are out of sight, out of mind. Criminals who are in jail are not a threat to law-abiding citizens, nor are they a reminder of the law’s failure to protect those citizens.

**INCAPACITATION**

The contemporary version of isolation is *incapacitation*, “separating offenders from the community to reduce the opportunity for further crime while they are incarcerated” (US Department of Justice 1988, 90). At the core of this philosophy is the work of Marvin Wolfgang and his colleagues. Their Philadelphia birth cohort studies identified a group of high-risk and high-rate offenders (Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin 1972), who were later labeled “career criminals.” An assortment of strategies—in particular, selective incapacitation—was developed to address the problems created by persistent offenders (Walker 2011).

At the heart of *selective incapacitation* lies the assumption that career criminals can be identified early on, as preteens or teens. Once these offenders are identified, the full force of the criminal justice system is brought to bear on them. Policymakers use selective incapacitation to ensure that career criminals are caught, convicted, and sentenced to a significant period of incarceration. The goal of policymakers is to reduce the crime rate substantially by removing persistent offenders from society for most if not all of their crime-prone years.

As some critics have pointed out, the career-criminal concept and the selective incapacitation approach are based on assumptions that are open to interpretation and challenge (Greenwood 1982; Walker 2011). The early identification of career criminals has been problematic. Also, selective incapacitation assumes that there is a finite number of high-rate criminals, and that if we catch those who are most persistent, no others are going to take their places. Both national and state governments have pursued this expensive strategy despite the lack of consensus on its value. Why? One answer may be that the image of the career criminal frightens the public, which creates an opportunity for savvy politicians. The upshot is that we are likely to continue to see references to career criminals and programs designed to deal with them for years to come.

**REINTEGRATION**

In the late 1970s through the early 1980s, most corrections professionals began to focus on reintegration. *Reintegration* recognizes the fact that a high percentage of the people in prison—probably more than 90 percent—eventually get out (Travis 2000). Once they get out, many of these offenders have a difficult time making a transition back into society. They must readjust to their families, to work, and to the label *ex-con*. Therefore, something must be done to help them make the transition from institutional life back into society.

The reintegration process is important for the inmate who has been released and for society. Most former inmates who fail to reenter society commit new crimes, usually within months of their release. By helping them make the transition to the free world, the corrections system can prevent crime and the offenders’ eventual return to prison.

**RESTITUTION**

*Restitution* entails “having the offender repay the victim or the community in money or services” (US Department of Justice 1988, 90). Restitution was
designed as an alternative to incarceration (Cromwell and Killinger 1994, 279–80), but in many jurisdictions today, judges incorporate restitution orders into probation conditions. Critics argue that restitution has become a probation add-on, a way of making probation more punitive, and part of the general trend toward requiring greater accountability from offenders.

**ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIRE ACCOUNTABILITY**

- **Accountability** requires offenders to repay or restore victims’ losses, much like restitution.

**COMMUNITY PROTECTION**

- **Community protection** weighs both public safety and the least costly, least restrictive correctional alternative.

**COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT**

- **Competency development** emphasizes remediation for offenders’ social, educational, or other deficiencies when they enter the correctional system.

As Bazemore emphasizes, the key is balance: each of these elements should play an equal role in correcting deviant behavior (see Box 1.2).

What is the state of contemporary corrections? Do any of these philosophies underlie current correctional programs? Actually they all do in one form or another. Does one of them dominate? The answer is probably no. Much like the mental health field 30 or 40 years ago, contemporary corrections is caught

**RESTORATION**

The most recent philosophy to gain followers in the field of corrections is **restoration** (see Box 1.2). Restorative justice, or the balanced approach, has been applied to juvenile and adult offenders (Armstrong, Maloney, and Romig 1990; Maloney, Romig, and Armstrong 1988). According to Gordon Bazemore (1992), the approach is based on three key elements:

- **Restorative justice** sound like a “New Age” correctional philosophy, cooked up by liberals at the end of the twentieth century? In fact, restorative justice’s foundations can be seen in the practices of the ancient Greeks, Arabs, Romans, and Germanic peoples after the fall of Rome. The idea of restoring community harmony and balance after a crime has been committed is also found in numerous religious tracts associated with, among others, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, and Confucianism.

Restorative justice is more than a philosophy; in many nations, it is a series of practices designed to change people’s behavior. For example, in 1998, six Belgian prisons implemented restorative-justice programs that were intended to create a more positive prison culture. We will see in Chapter 7 that the culture inmates create in prisons tends to be negative and anti-authoritarian, not environments in which prosocial goals are likely to be met. In the Belgian prisons, restorative principles helped prisoners begin dealing with the aftermath of their crimes more personally and more openly while they were in prison. Inmates were encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. Through individual counseling and group work, staff members helped offenders recognize the physical, psychological, and emotional consequences of their offenses. Staff members also gave victims a brochure that described prison life for the offenders and the likely outcome of incarceration. Finally, the staff worked to end polarization between victim aid services and offender aid services, to build bridges between them and to explore the possibility of victim–offender communications while offenders were jailed. The pilot project was a success, and today each of Belgium’s 30 prisons has a counselor who works to introduce restorative-justice concepts and practices inside the facility.

**SPOTLIGHT ON INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN BELGIAN PRISONS**

Does restorative justice sound like a “New Age” correctional philosophy, cooked up by liberals at the end of the twentieth century? In fact, restorative justice’s foundations can be seen in the practices of the ancient Greeks, Arabs, Romans, and Germanic peoples after the fall of Rome. The idea of restoring community harmony and balance after a crime has been committed is also found in numerous religious tracts associated with, among others, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, and Confucianism.

Restorative justice is more than a philosophy; in many nations, it is a series of practices designed to change people’s behavior. For example, in 1998, six Belgian prisons implemented restorative-justice programs that were intended to create a more positive prison culture. We will see in Chapter 7 that the culture inmates create in prisons tends to be negative and anti-authoritarian, not environments in which prosocial goals are likely to be met. In the Belgian prisons, restorative principles helped prisoners begin dealing with the aftermath of their crimes more personally and more openly while they were in prison. Inmates were encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. Through individual counseling and group work, staff members helped offenders recognize the physical, psychological, and emotional consequences of their offenses. Staff members also gave victims a brochure that described prison life for the offenders and the likely outcome of incarceration. Finally, the staff worked to end polarization between victim aid services and offender aid services, to build bridges between them and to explore the possibility of victim–offender communications while offenders were jailed. The pilot project was a success, and today each of Belgium’s 30 prisons has a counselor who works to introduce restorative-justice concepts and practices inside the facility.

**SOURCES:** BRAITHWAITE (1999); NEWELL (2001); WINFREE (2002).
in a “model muddle” (Siegler and Osmond 1974). The problem: in trying to make themselves all things to all people, some corrections programs end up employing conflicting or competing elements. At the root of this muddle are political realities and public pressure—the topic we turn to next.

OUTLOOKS ON CORRECTIONS

Ask anyone in the criminal justice field today about the current public policy direction on crime, and you will likely get the same answer: punishment, punishment, and more punishment. Thomas Bernard (1992, 3–6) described a predictable cycle of responses to offenders, from lenient to harsh.5 When people perceive that correctional treatment programs are too lenient, too soft on criminals, they call for harsher treatment. That is what is happening today. The public and policymakers generally feel that leniency contributes to criminality and that the only response to increased criminality is tougher punishment. So we find ourselves in the get-tough-on-crime part of the cycle.

Fueling that response is the belief that we are experiencing a crime wave. But the reality is that crime rates in most categories fell during the 1990s. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the per capita violent crime rate peaked at slightly above 758 in 1991, dropping consistently throughout the rest of the decade and the first 5 years of the twenty-first century (Federal Bureau of Investigation 2011). In 2010, the per capita rates increased slightly for violent crime, but were still well below 404 per capita. For property crime rates, similar reductions were observed during this same period, dropping from a high of 5,140 in 1991 to 2,942 in 2010 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2011). The idea that a crime wave is sweeping the nation is largely a myth, and many would argue that the source of that myth is the media, which have helped spread and perpetuate the fiction of more than one crime wave.

When people believe that crime is on the rise, they turn to policymakers for solutions. That is what happened in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Politicians responded with get-tough-on-crime laws, key among them mandatory sentences for drug-related and other crimes. Those new laws, in turn, created a need for more jails and prisons. In the end, we have made more laws, made punishments more severe, and put more people behind bars. But at what cost do we pursue this policy? The economic costs of housing millions of offenders are staggering: they run to billions of dollars. And the social costs to offenders, to their families, and to society are incalculable.

Throughout much of our nation’s history, prison incarceration rates changed slowly, over decades. For example, between 1870 and 1925, the per capita incarceration rate ranged from a low of 61 to a high of 79 (Cahalan 1986). In 1930, the rate moved above 100 and generally stayed between 110 and 115 until the late 1970s (Cahalan 1986). Then, the United States embarked on an “imprisonment binge” (Austin and Irwin 2001, 1). In the last two decades of the twentieth century, the incarceration rate rose from 138 to 461 per capita; between 1980 and 2010, the number of people in state and federal prisons went up over fourfold, from 329,821 to 1,509,475. By the end of the twentieth century, the United States was incarcerating people at the highest rate of any nation, a characterization that held through the first decade of the twenty-first century (see Box 1.1).

Table 1.1 shows the adult inmate population of the United States from 1980 to 2010. That population increased dramatically in both the absolute number of prisoners in federal and state prisons and local jails, and in per capita incarceration rates. In 1980, the nation’s prison and jail systems held 501,886 inmates. By 1985, it had grown to nearly three-quarters of a million in population. Twenty-five years later, in 2010, the inmate population was 2,258,203, more than four times the size of the 1980 correction system and three times that of the prison population reported in 1985. The incarceration rate increased 50 percent between 1980 and 1985, followed by another 133 percent increase between 1985 and 2010, and the peak rate to date was even higher in 2007! The federal prison system grew faster than either state or local systems: from 23,779 in 1980 to 198,339 inmates in 2010, an increase of more than sevenfold. By the end of the first decade in the twenty-first century, the US Bureau of Prisons operated the largest single prison
INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONS

The point is that the get-tough-on-crime movement is not compatible with government downsizing and cutbacks, and the reality is that a clash between these two forces is looming.

THE ROLE OF CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORIES

When some students read or even hear the word theory, their minds snap shut and learning stops. To sneak theory into their work, writers and professors resort to trickery. They use terms like framework, concept, and philosophy. The authors of this textbook are not above this kind of trickery. Witness our description of the philosophies that underlie punishment. Deterrence, for one, is also a theory, as are most of the other philosophies we describe in this chapter.

Our current task—to help you understand why people commit crimes—is best achieved by...
FROM FREE WILL TO DETERMINISM

Criminologists have spent more than 200 years applying philosophy and science to the study of crime. Modern criminology, the scientific study of crime and criminals, is often dated from Cesare Beccaria’s (1738–1794) late eighteenth-century attempts to apply what we now call deterrence theory to crime (see Chapter 2 for a discussion of this famous penal philosopher and early criminologist). Beccaria believed that people are rational beings endowed by their creator with free will and so are responsible for their own actions. Without certain and swift punishment that accords the unwanted act the required amount of severity, some people simply choose crime. The idea that criminals willfully choose to violate the law largely directed the study of crime for nearly a century.

In the 1870s, Cesare Lombroso (1836–1909) reported a criminological application for Charles Darwin’s evolutionary theory. Criminals, according to what became known as the Lombrosian or Italian school of criminology, have few choices to make because their criminal tendencies are innate. Criminal behavior, then, is the result of biological determinism. Criminals are genetic misfits or biological throwbacks to earlier, primitive, and more violent beings.

Lombroso’s ideas, first published as The Criminal Man in 1876, spawned a generation of deterministic anthropologists, psychologists, and economists. As determinists, these social scientists believed that forces beyond the individual’s control were the source of criminal behavior. And as positivists, they looked for answers in measurable aspects of the human condition. Criminal anthropologists carried on the work of early biological determinists as they grappled with the external measurable signs of internal crime inducing characteristics. Psychological determinists looked for forces in the human mind that could explain criminal conduct. Economic determinists, and later social determinists, believed that the distribution of wealth and the treatment of certain segments of society based on economic stratification created conditions ripe for criminality.

The implications of determinism for correctional practice are intriguing. If criminals are born, then society can do little to change them and prisons should function primarily as warehouses, storing this dangerous segment of society. However, if economic or social forces precondition certain people to become criminals, then changing those forces could alter an individual’s pathway to crime. During the late nineteenth century, advocates of social change spoke out for social engineering, which in effect would rescue those placed by accident of birth in poor economic conditions. But Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) and some other sociologists railed against tinkering with society. Spencer, a social Darwinist, believed that government should not attempt to alter the lives of society’s less fortunate in a substantial way. “The quality of society,” he wrote, “is physically lowered by the artificial preservation of its feeblest members [and] the quality of a society is lowered morally and intellectually by the artificial preservation of those who are least able to take care of themselves” (1864, 313).

CRIME, CRIMINALS, AND DETERMINISTIC FORCES

Biological determinism did not disappear in the wake of conflicting evidence in the early twentieth century. In the late nineteenth century, it was widely believed that feeblemindedness was related to crime. The late-twentieth-century version of this idea alleges a link between intelligence and crime: the less intelligent the individual—measured by IQ score—the more likely he or she is to behave criminally. Other, more complex causal sequences link intelligence and crime by way of school performance and socioeconomic status. One contemporary
INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONS

some members of our society welcome race-based explanations no matter how weak the evidence.

Neopositivists would argue that school performance mediates between IQ scores and crime-proneness (Hindelang 1973). Youngsters with low IQ scores who later fail in school have higher delinquency rates and are more likely to commit crimes than are those with equally low IQ scores who manage to complete their schooling.

The correctional implications of IQ scores are built into the system. Nearly every convicted offender is subjected to some form of IQ testing. The scores are then used to determine subjects’ mental functioning, likelihood of success in correctional treatment plans, and inmate classification (that is, low-functioning individuals may need special housing to avoid exploitation by other inmates). Although we are not sure what is being measured by IQ tests (Bartol 1991, 132), they continue to shape correctional practice and criminological discussions on the causes of individual criminality (Bartollas and Conrad 1992; Champion 2001).

Proponents of modern biological determinism insist that certain criminal behaviors have their origins in biochemical imbalances. For example, the crimes committed by drug addicts and alcoholics may be symptoms of other biochemical problems, among them a biological tendency toward addictive disorders (Gold, Washton, and Dackis 1985; Goleman 1990). Other biological determinists have attempted, with limited success, to link crime and hormone levels: for example, low levels of estrogen in women and high levels of testosterone in men. In one of the more interesting arguments about the role of biochemical imbalances, Lee Ellis (1991) asserts that criminals’ blood exhibits low levels of a naturally occurring enzyme, monoamine oxidase (MAO). MAO helps regulate several key neurotransmitters, including those in the brain. Ellis observed that MAO is generally lower in three groups: males, youths and young adults (in their teens and twenties), and African Americans, three groups that are over-represented in the criminal population.

Before we rush to order regular doses of MAO for members of these groups, it is important to note that the association between MAO and antisocial behavior is modest at best. Moreover, the idea that
INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONS

we can treat criminals with chemicals is not new: chemical therapies for criminals have been around for decades (Berman 1938; also see Hippchen 1982). Certain prison inmates could not be managed without the use of chemicals; and some parolees and probationers have chemical therapies included as a release condition. Many sex offenders are given hormone treatments in the belief that the hormones can control their sexual obsessions and so their conduct.

In addition to very real questions about the effectiveness of chemical therapies in controlling unwanted behavior, numerous moral and ethical dilemmas surround the forced or proactive treatment of offenders and people in at-risk groups. Can a democratic society subject its members to intrusive and disruptive biochemical treatments based on a probability that they might offend? Are we punishing people for what they might do? At what point does our collective need to feel safe outweigh individual liberties? And even if we can force treatment, should we?

Finally, psychological determinists believe that defects of the mind cause all misbehavior, including crime. Freudian psychoanalysts link human misbehavior to developmental issues originating with the following parts of the human psyche: the id (the unconscious source of primitive and hedonistic urges), the ego (that part of the mind influenced by parental training and the like), and the superego (that part of the mind that is concerned with moral values). According to August Aichhorn (1925), the superego takes its form and content from children's efforts to emulate their parents or parental figures. Sometimes, the superego fails to develop properly, leaving only the ego to control the id's impulses. The problems usually stem from an abnormal relationship with parents or parental figures. Excessive control during a child's formative years can result in a superego that is too rigid and inflexible. Thinking bad and doing bad are often confused. The individual with an excessively controlling superego seeks punishment as a way of dealing with unconscious guilt. The person with a weak superego is unable to control aggressive, hostile, or antisocial urges. Given this set of psychological factors, crime is nearly inevitable.

Whether an individual has an overly strong superego or a very weak one, the prescribed treatment is the same. Through dream analysis and free association (talking about the first thing that comes to mind), the person with a poorly developed superego is made aware of the problem. With the guidance of a therapist, the individual eventually develops an appropriate superego and the inappropriate behavior stops.

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

An offshoot of behaviorism, behavior modification has perhaps the broadest practical implications of any psychological explanation of behavior. It begins with the premise that all behavior is the result of learned responses to various stimuli (Skinner 1974). From this perspective, deviant and criminal behaviors are inappropriate learned responses. Behavior is shaped by the presence or absence of various reinforcers, which stimulate behavior, and punishers, which retard or extinguish behavior. Because most crime involves a great deal of risk and very little reward, the role of behaviorism in causing crime mystifies some people. Psychologist Hans Eysenck explains: “An action followed by a small but immediate gratification will tend to be repeated, even though it is followed by a large but delayed painful consequence” (quoted in Taylor, Walton, and Young 1973, 47).

What is the practical role of behavior modification in corrections? Two forms have dominated the field over the past 30 years. The first, reality therapy (RT), holds the offender accountable for his or her actions. In practice, RT is paternalistic and even authoritarian, which may explain its popularity with correctional workers. The therapist's moral standards must become the client's moral standards (Bersani 1989). The therapist develops a close relationship with the client and uses praise and concern as reinforcers, and the withdrawal of both as punishers. Through a lengthy interactive process, the client comes to see the error of his or her ways and, to gain favor with the therapist, ultimately behaves differently.

The second form of behavior modification program is built around a token economy. Good behavior earns the client rewards. Among the more important rewards for convicted criminals are such
INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONS

things as early parole, temporary work or educational release into the community, and institutional privileges (including access to exercise or entertainment and better working conditions). Bad behavior yields punishments—for example, the loss of rewards, temporary isolation, or lower-paying and less-rewarding work.

Finally, psychology also provides insights into one of the most intriguing puzzles observed by correctional workers. Some “perfect” prison inmates—those who rarely complain about prison life or cause trouble for prison authorities—make poor candidates for release back into the community. Why? One answer may lie in arousal theory. That theory recognizes that some criminals have no conscience. Psychopaths (or sociopaths) commit crimes with no thought of conventional morality or of the consequences of their actions. According to Ellis (1990), because of a genetic defect, the brain functioning of psychopathic criminals quickly becomes habituated to incoming stimuli. Low-arousal psychopaths find ordinary activities boring. When they take risks or commit crimes, they are looking to maximize their sensory stimulation. People with this disorder may literally be immune to efforts to alter their behavior. Low-arousal criminals receive little benefit from learning or punishment in most institutional environments because the existing stimulation barely keeps them awake (Bartol and Bartol 2011; Chesno and Kilmann 1975). By contrast, the world outside prison presents these people with too many stimuli, far more than they can manage without resorting to inappropriate behavior.

CRIME, CRIMINALS, AND SOCIAL FORCES

In the early twentieth century, sociologists emerged as major players in the ongoing quest to understand crime and criminals. These social scientists disavowed biological and psychological determinism, claiming...
they were too narrow and individualistic in orientation. Crime was a societal problem, not, as psychologists suggested, an individual problem.

In many sociological theories, crime is viewed as a consequence of social forces. Consider, for example, the contributions of the Chicago school of sociology to the study of crime. Looking at the relationship between greater Chicago and its inhabitants, social ecologists at the University of Chicago in the 1920s and 1930s believed it was the geographic area, not the people who inhabited it, that held the answer to understanding crime. They said crime emerged in certain communities because of disturbed, distressed, or incomplete social connections (Shaw and McKay 1942). These neighborhoods exhibited high mobility, as one ethnic group replaced another in conditions of extreme poverty, and as a result a lack of cohesiveness. City government largely ignored schools and parks in these areas to the point that they were deteriorating; and other public services were virtually nonexistent. Social ecologists claimed that this social disorganization found expression in criminal behavior.

Social disorganization explains the cause of criminal behavior; the cultural transmission thesis explains the persistence of criminal and other deviant values in successive generations. Together, these two components of social ecology helped shape an entire group of theories.

Edwin H. Sutherland, an early proponent of social ecology, summarized his ideas about the cultural transmission of criminality in his differential association theory (Sutherland and Cressey 1974). According to Sutherland, criminal values and behaviors are learned through social interactions. He called those values and behaviors definitions, and he suggested that those who become criminals are exposed to more definitions that support breaking the law than to definitions that support complying with the law. He believed that the sources of procriminal (and prosocial) definitions vary along four dimensions. Some sources—parents and childhood friends, for example—have an impact on early social development; they have high priority. Some sources are encountered with greater frequency than others. Often, exposure to certain sources lasts longer than exposure to others, so the former have greater duration. Finally, the relationships with some sources have greater intensity than others because the individual respects those sources or has a stronger emotional tie to them.

Given the centrality of learning to the acquisition of criminal values and behaviors, could a person learn other, noncriminal ways? Donald Cressey, Sutherland’s student and coauthor, believed that differential association could effect change.

Cressey (1955) advocated that offenders be exposed to prosocial definitions in a group context within correctional settings. Unfortunately, Sutherland left unexplored the means by which learning occurs. For example, we do not know why criminals learn certain definitions and not others—despite their exposure to great masses of information throughout their lives. This missing element makes it difficult to apply Sutherland’s and Cressey’s principles to a correctional setting.

Robert Burgess and Ronald Akers (1966) proposed that the missing element is operant conditioning: reward mechanisms encourage some definitions, whereas punishers extinguish others—concepts borrowed wholesale from behaviorism. In later refinements of his social learning theory, Akers (1985, 1992) articulated two central ideas. First, learning occurs through two mechanisms: imitation, which involves modeling behavior after that observed in others; and differential reinforcement, the operant-conditioning principle that people retain and repeat rewarded behavior and extinguish behavior that is punished. According to Akers, criminals learn motivating definitions—what he called discriminative stimuli—that either cast criminal behavior in a positive light or help neutralize the “undesirableness” of the behavior (1985, 50). In this way, thieves, for example, come to believe that burglary is an honorable vocation and that their victims, perhaps because they are rich or insured, do not deserve concern.

Victim–offender confrontation programs, which can be components of nontraditional settlements of violent and property crimes, have links to social learning theory. In addition to any other conditions for release into the community, offenders may be required to meet their victims, assuming the latter are willing. Therapists believe that offenders’ discriminative stimuli are broken down by such
meetings, especially when the offenders begin to see victims as human beings and understand their suffering. Offenders often find these confrontations very stressful, and few participants leave these meetings without being affected in some way.

Other correctional applications of social learning theory include **therapeutic communities**, residential programs in which offenders work together to change the attitudes and behaviors of all group members. In this case, reinforcements and punishers come from the offenders’ peers, who are also engaged in the therapeutic process. Such communities offer those who want to change their attitudes and behaviors a supportive forum for expressing their best human emotions. These programs have been successful with both prison-confined and community-based felons (Wexler, Lipton, and Johnson 1988; Yablonsky 1989).

In line with the cultural transmission thesis, some researchers adopted a **subcultural hypothesis**: that crime largely emerges from delinquent or deviant subcultures. For example, delinquent youths may band together in gangs that reject both society and its values, reducing the impact of society’s rejection of them (A. K. Cohen 1955). Alternatively, it might be that members of lower socioeconomic classes share similar concerns, including thrill-seeking behavior that may be illegal (Miller 1958). Still other subculturalists pointed to the existence of violent subcultures in society (Wolfgang 1958; Wolfgang and Ferracuti 1967). For these groups, violence becomes an accepted and expected way of dealing with all sorts of problems, especially questions of honor and manhood (Wolfgang and Ferracuti 1967).

Cultural transmission or social learning theorists, particularly Sutherland and Akers, base their explanations of crime and deviance on a single assumption: people learn to be deviant just as they learn to be conventional. Proponents of **social control theory** say that society provides the “social glue” that binds people together. Without this glue, people tend to engage in individual hedonistic activities, many of which violate the law. Social control theory is rooted in the work of Émile Durkheim (1897), a French sociologist who believed that many of society’s ills, including crime, derive from times when the social fabric of society is weakened by war, economic changes, or other crises. He described the effect of this weakened state as **anomie** or a generalized sense of normlessness. During periods of major social and economic change, he insisted, society appears to reject laws and other norms, and crime, suicide, and other socially disturbing behaviors are more prevalent.

Durkheim viewed anomie as a societal condition, not something that could be observed in the individual. Two criminologists took different aspects of Durkheim’s work and applied it to individual behavior. The first, Robert K. Merton (1957), believed that anomie is the result of the rift between culturally defined success (status and financial security, and the luxuries they provide) and limitations on the individual’s ability to achieve that success (education, thrift, and hard work, for example). Merton developed several categories of adaptation to describe the individual’s response to anomie. **Conformists** try legitimate means, including hard work and discipline, to achieve culturally valued goals. When they meet barriers, they stand face-to-face with the **anomic trap**: they can accept their fate, work hard, and achieve little; or they can turn to another adaptation. **Innovators**, unlike conformists, use illegitimate means to achieve success. Although Merton identified other adaptations, innovators pose the most direct problems for the criminal justice system.

The implications of Merton’s theory for corrections are straightforward but difficult to implement. Giving offenders the means to confront a life in which the deck may be stacked against them certainly has direct ties to Merton’s anomie theory. That is, people facing the anomic trap must be offered legitimate alternatives that normally are not available to them. Increased educational opportunities or job training, both of which are found in correctional settings, provide good examples of legitimate alternatives.

Control theorist Travis Hirschi (1969) was a second criminologist influenced by Durkheim’s work, in particular the discussion of the forces that hold society together. Hirschi believed that the **social bond** is the sum of the forces in a person’s social and physical environment that connect that person to society and its moral constituents. The latter include social institutions—for example, family, school, and the law. Hirschi identified four types of ties between individuals and social institutions:
• **Attachment** is the affection for and sensitivity to members of social groups. Without attachments, the individual is free to deviate.

• **Commitment** refers to the individual’s stake in conformity—how devoted he or she is to conventionality.

• **Involvement** is the extent to which the person engages in conventional activities.

• **Belief** explores the idea that the correctness of norms is variable, that norms (and laws) may not hold the same significance for all people in a society. The greater the belief in the society's norms, the lower the chance of delinquency.

Indeed, Hirschi believed that the probability of law-violating behavior is directly proportional to the extent to which any of these elements of the social bond are weakened.

As for correctional practice, convicted criminals may be among the most “debonded” individuals in society. If the social bond can be reestablished, and that is not a given, then rebonding would have to occur across all four dimensions. Consider our brief discussions of reintegration, restoration, and restitution. These philosophies and social bonding theory all imply that offenders must be made a part of the society from which they came, and that the links between offenders and the community must be reestablished (or, some would argue, established for the first time). The central warning of social bonding theory is that any treatment or rehabilitation program must address all aspects of an offender’s relationship to the community. Moreover, conditions of probation or parole release must necessarily limit an offender’s contacts with known criminals and prior criminal associates. By minimizing negative distractions, the system encourages conventional bonding.

### REVIEWING CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORIES

We have tried to accomplish three goals in this condensed discussion of crime theories. First, we have suggested a wide range of possible answers to several of the difficult questions people who work in the criminal justice system ask: Why do certain people commit crimes? Why do some stop? Why do others continue even after they are punished?

What do we do with the answers? This question leads to our second goal for this review of theories: understanding offenders’ responses to the correctional system, their values, attitudes, outlooks, perspectives, and rationalizations. These theories also have the potential to inform correctional workers about what to expect from offenders placed in their charge. Certainly experience can give valuable insight, but theories yield far more systematic understanding of criminals’ lives in general and of convicted offenders specifically. That is, theories can make the transition from civilian to correctional worker smoother for both keepers and kept.

Finally, an understanding of both philosophies of punishment and theories of crime helps penologists design better methods for treating offenders through prison-based therapeutic communities, conditional release, and other programs. (See Box 1.3 on the role of power in “causing” crime.) If society cannot change offenders’ extra-institutional behavior—that is, if rehabilitation or deterrence is neither possible nor practical—then the goal of corrections at a minimum should be the proper, adequate, and humane treatment of those under correctional authorities’ control. Before you dismiss these views as the ramblings of do-gooders, consider this: if you treat human beings as wild animals, abusing them at every turn, they tend to respond as wild animals.

Now consider this: more than 90 percent of inmates are released into the community. Humane treatment is not just a moral issue; it is a practical matter too.

### CORRECTIONS PROGRAMS

The United States has 51 correctional systems, a system in each state and a national system. If we add the District of Columbia and local systems in metropolitan areas like Los Angeles County and New York City, the number is even higher. Each of these criminal justice systems—and each system’s corrections component—is different from the others, but we can identify three general categories of corrections programs: community-based programs, intermediate-sanctions, and institutional-placements.
In the late 1960s and early 1970s, several important criminological theories emerged that attacked the dominant social structural, biological, and psychological theories for supporting the status quo. A growing and vocal group of criminologists said the study of crime should include the dimension of power: Who has it? Who doesn’t? Who uses it? And to what ends?

Some of these critics, including Howard Becker and Edwin Schur, suggest that the state’s power to label those accused of crimes is perhaps the greatest power and potentially the greatest evil. The label is proof of the state’s authority to arrest, try, convict, and sentence lawbreakers. Ultimately, the truth of the label is irrelevant. Labeling theorists warn us that even people who are falsely accused can succumb to a label’s power and become what the state calls them.

Other power-based theories of crime are rooted in Marxism. Marxists believe that the criminal justice system serves the interests of the wealthy (the capitalists), those who own the means of production and feed off the labor of the workers (the proletariat). Criminals, according to Richard Quinney and other neo-Marxists, are either victims of the system or freedom fighters, struggling against an unjust system. Later Marxists, including William Chambliss and Robert Seidman, redefined the relationships among capitalism, law, and crime: state authority emerged not simply as an instrument of oppression, but as an instrument for ensuring the long-term dominance of capitalism as a way of life.

Theories that speak to the state’s power to arrest, try, convict, and sentence criminal offenders have important implications for policy, but implementing policy changes may be difficult, especially if the Marxists are correct. It is unlikely that a system with a vested interest in the status quo would adopt what Marxists are calling for: revolutionary changes in the balance of power.

But labeling theory raises different issues. For example, we know that a negative label has the power to change a person’s life, to make that person become what he or she has been labeled. If we can avoid labeling young offenders, if we can keep them out of the system early on, we may reduce the likelihood of their committing future crimes. Schur describes what he calls radical nonintervention, that society and its agents of social control should overlook minor delinquent acts (for example, criminal trespass, petty vandalism, and shoplifting where restitution is made) to avoid labeling youngsters and possibly setting them on the path toward more serious criminality when they are older.

Labeling theorists also advocate for deinstitutionalization: they would like to see secure confinement abandoned as a punishment. Prisons for young offenders, goes this argument, are ill equipped to bring about change; instead, they are more likely to lead juvenile offenders deeper into the world of delinquency and crime. That effect is strengthened when young people leave the institution with the label ex-con. Deinstitutionalization programs for juvenile offenders have been tried on a limited scale with some success. Of course, both radical nonintervention and deinstitutionalization face an uphill battle for acceptance in a nation obsessed with punishment for its own sake.

Sources: Becker (1963); Chambliss and Seidman (1982); Quinney (1970); Schur (1973).
COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS

Traditional programs of probation and parole are examples of community-based corrections efforts. These programs treat offenders in the community, under supervision and restrictions, rather than in an institution. Some penologists suggest that it is more effective to treat offenders in a natural environment, where the support systems established by their probation or parole officer can help them confront day-to-day problems and adjust to a life without crime. As discussed later in this book, this thinking is not always borne out, for various reasons.

Community-based programs can also include residential placement in a group home or halfway house (halfway in for probationers and halfway out for parolees). The assumption here is that the offender’s original living arrangement is neither acceptable nor desirable. Group homes and halfway houses provide shelter, structure, and more constant surveillance than traditional probation or parole, and residents have a built-in support system and accountability group.

INTERMEDIATE-SANCTION PROGRAMS

Intermediate-sanction programs are among the fastest-growing programs in contemporary corrections. These programs fall somewhere between traditional probation and incarceration on the corrections continuum (Latessa and Allen 1999). Split sentences and intermittent confinement are two forms of intermediate sanctions: both require individuals convicted of crimes to serve brief periods of confinement in a local, state, or federal facility, followed by a period of community supervision. Intermediate sanctions, then, are both alternatives to incarceration and alternative forms of incarceration.

Not everyone agrees that court-ordered community service and restitution programs are intermediate sanctions. There is general agreement, however, that intensive probation supervision, house arrest, and electronic monitoring—all of which we discuss in later chapters—are examples of intermediate sanctions (Castle 1991; Gowdy 1993).
INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONS

INSTITUTIONAL-PLACEMENT PROGRAMS

The area most closely associated with corrections is secure institutional confinement. Even here we find a variety of programs (US Department of Justice 1988, 58, 96). For example, offenders can be placed in jails, workhouses, or penal farms. And state and federal institutions range from low-security camps, farms, and ranches (often for juveniles or young offenders) to the most secure prisons.

Prisons in the United States typically fall into one of three security classifications: minimum security (inmates are relatively free to move around the facility), medium security (some freedom of movement within the institution), and maximum security (few or no opportunities for movement within the institution). To these traditional categories, some states have added minimum restrictive security or close security, two concepts discussed in Chapter 6. The decision to place a convicted criminal in an institution with a lower or higher security classification is a function of the severity of the offense and the likelihood of the offender’s attempting to escape. Some facilities have been designed for more than one security level.

This brief overview is a reminder that corrections concerns a vast array of programs that operate in any number of settings, from the community to the most secure institution. We examine all of the various facets of corrections as we progress through this book.

SUMMARY

We expect corrections to achieve many goals in contemporary society. As a part of the American justice system, it touches the lives of millions of people every year. The key points to note from this chapter are the following:

● No universal agreement exists about what the word corrections means, and what exactly we are attempting to correct.
● In some ways, it is easiest to think of the corrections component of the criminal justice system as comprising a vast array of loosely connected agencies that fit within community responses, intermediate sanctions, and institutional placements.
● Generally speaking, there has been an explosive growth in the number of people under some form of correctional supervision during the past three decades.

● There are a variety of punishment philosophies, which include retribution, deterrence, rehabilitation, isolation, incapacitation, reintegration, restitution, and restoration.
● Criminological theories can help us understand the nature of human behavior and the appropriate responses to criminality. Most of these theories can be characterized as biological, psychological, or sociological. However, theories dealing with power and economics also have become prominent.

THINKING ABOUT CORRECTIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES: WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1 Examine the trends in correctional populations since 1980 (Figure 1.1). The “slippage” of the past few years aside, what is the best way to characterize this graph? Now go online and find both a trend analysis for crime in the United States and victimization in the United
States (Note: They come from two different data sources), and characterize crime in the United States since the 1970s and 1980s. How do you reconcile the three different trends?

2 Think about the ways retribution may appear in modern correctional practices. Write a brief synopsis (2 to 3 paragraphs) taking a position about why retribution is or is not a legitimate correctional philosophy today. Explain your reasoning carefully.

3 In some ways, rehabilitation has fallen out of favor with the general public and even with some of those people who work in the corrections field. Prepare a 2 to 3 page summary about whether rehabilitation is a viable corrections goal. What programs today (institutional or extrainstitutional) still exemplify rehabilitation? Does it matter whether the offenders involved are juveniles or adults?

4 Search online for the term *restorative justice*. How many “hits” did you get? Develop a short paper explaining the key concepts that appear on many of the web sites that discuss restorative justice. Especially consider whether there is any consistency in the use and meaning of the term.

5 Go online and find the figures for your state’s current prison population and the costs associated with housing these inmates. If this information is not available online, check your college or public library for a recent copy of the corrections department’s annual report. As a last resort, you might contact a local representative of the state corrections department (from a nearby prison or probation and parole office) to see if he or she can provide you with this information. Are the figures easy to obtain? Is there a problem with using gross (aggregate) figures to calculate the per-inmate per-year cost? If you are able to obtain these figures, prepare a short paper (one page maximum) comparing these costs with your costs to attend college or university.

**KEY TERMS**

- anomic trap
- anomie
- arousal theory
- behavior modification
- biological determinism
- corrections
- criminology
- cultural transmission thesis
- deinstitutionalization
- deterrence
- differential association theory
- differential reinforcement
- discriminative stimuli
- disproportionate minority contact (DMC)
- ego
- general deterrence
- id
- imitation
- incapacitation
- isolation
- *lex talionis*
- operant conditioning
- penal harm
- penologists
- positivists
- psyche
- psychological determinists
- psychopaths
- radical nonintervention
- reality therapy (RT)
- rehabilitation
- reintegration
- restitution
- restoration
- retribution
- selective incapacitation
- social bond
- social control theory
- social disorganization
- social learning theory
- specific deterrence
- subcultural hypothesis
- superego
- therapeutic communities
CRITICAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is being corrected in corrections, or is the term itself being misapplied?

2. How do you feel about a murder victim’s next-of-kin asking to view the execution, pull the switch, or activate the syringes?

3. What is the difference between isolation and incapacitation? Is one more important than the other? Why or why not? If so, to whom?

4. Are there real limits to restitution? Do you think restitution is fair? Why or why not?

5. What three terms would you use to describe most nineteenth-century criminological theories? Justify the use of each term.

6. Are you offended by any of the forms of determinism described in the chapter? If yes, identify them and explain why you find them offensive.

7. Are we victims of our biology, or are we victims of our minds? Explain your answers.

8. How have twentieth-century sociologists helped us understand the social forces that produce criminals and criminal behavior? Distinguish between theories that explain the emergence of criminals and those that explain the crime rate.

9. Why is it important to understand the forces that shape our perceptions of crime, justice, and corrections?

10. Two of the boxes in this chapter address the international nature of corrections. What kinds of things have you learned about corrections from an international perspective that you did not know before? What kinds of things do you hope to learn?

NOTES

1. Although the gross number of people under supervision is instructive, especially if we are looking at growth or trends, the per capita rate—the rate per 100,000 people within a given racial or ethnic group—is more useful in making comparisons within groups or between years. The gross numbers tell us, for example, that the prison population increased between 1980 and 2010, but they do not tell us how much of that increase was linked to growth in the overall population. The per capita rate allows us to hold constant the increase in population. In our comparisons here, we have based the per capita rates on every 100,000 residents; the rates could also be calculated for a specific group (every 100,000 adults, for example, or every 100,000 people under age 18).

2. Literally, lex talionis translates from the Latin to mean the law of talion, the latter meaning exchange.

3. Discretionary parole is granted by a parole board, after a review of an inmate’s criminal and institutional history and other relevant facts. Many of the jurisdictions that have eliminated discretionary parole instead mandate the supervised release of inmates who have served a defined portion of their sentence.

4. While this phrase has long been attributed to Mar-tinson, a careful reading of his 1974 work reveals that it was not so much that nothing worked as we cannot tell what does work, given the shortcomings in the evaluation literature.

5. Although Bernard focused on the juvenile justice system, his work applies to the adult justice system as well.

6. We are aware of a long tradition of crime “theories” going back to the mark of Cain, original sin, and other Judeo-Christian accounts of evil. There were also numerous attempts in the Middle Ages and the Age of Enlightenment to explain criminal conduct as possession by the devil or other evil spirits. There were even some interesting but inconclusive ideas about evil faces reflecting evil minds (the term for this is physiognomy). Equally interesting
and discredited were the phrenologists, who believed that bumps on the head indicate criminal propensities. Our focus here is largely on the last 100 years of “scientific” criminology.

For psychologists, this term refers to the totality of the human mind, conscious and unconscious.

Merton identified two other adaptations. Retreatists, those who abandon both legitimate means to success and cultural goals of success for their own, usually more hedonistic, means and goals, could also be a source of trouble for the criminal justice system. In addition, rebels, who actively challenge all rules, including means and goals, are potentially thorns in the side of authority and, hence, problems for the justice system. We focus here on innovators to facilitate the discussion.

This condition could be linked to either social learning or social bonding. From a social learning perspective, criminal cronies are potential sources of procriminal definitions. From a social bonding perspective, ties to criminal cronies could weaken the bond to conventional society.

**REFERENCES**


INTRODUCTION TO CORRECTIONS


Fogel, David. 1975. “... We are the living proof ...” The justice model for corrections. Cincinnati, OH: Anderson.


Greenwood, Peter, with Allan Abramse. 1982. Selective incapacitation. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.


