

Soc. 447 - Correctional Systems

Homework Assignment: 8

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Ch. 13

Essay: #1

List the four main reasons prisons are overcrowded and how do you think we can control this issue.

There are four main reasons for overcrowding in the prison systems. Schmallegger and Smykla, authors of the text sections in the 21st century describe these four reasons.

The first reason for overcrowding being the increase in imprisonment. I see this first-hand in the prison I am in. With the zero-tolerance laws they have in South Dakota, a common felony, possession of a controlled big ingestion, typically a very common charge that most of us women are in for. This law rendering the charge of a session solely if a controlled substance is in their possession has lead to there being a huge increase of number of people going to jail or coming to in.

A second reason Schmallegger and Smykla point out for overcrowding are the changes in federal and state sentencing. These laws require more offenders to serve longer terms in jail or prison. This a very true reality. Again, an example of my initial charge, a possession charge controlled is a class 3 felony. That means up to five years. Getting a five year prison sentence for what

'as in my system, I feel is way too much time. I received this charge in 2014. Looking back since then, I wish much have sat most of the time in prison. I was ordered to sit 35% of 3 yrs with 2 yrs suspended. I lost my automatic date and ended up sitting 23 months until 2016. My friends and family in California to Arizona still can't believe I received so much time for what was solely in my system.

The third reason for overcrowding given is the increase in imprisonment for drug and violent offenses. Again, I can personally say the time given for drug offenses is severe. There is a very small percentage of women here for violent offenses. The ones that are, they are serving significant time.

The last reason given for overcrowding given by our authors is the fact that a prison industrial complex has emerged. Tension is usually high in over crowded prisons. Riots are a result of impulsive outbursts. Experts believe the causes of prison riots is ultimately the overcrowding. With so many more bodies in a facility than it should. Causes of riots are bad conditions (antiquated facilities, insufficient staff that are staff and trained, lack of programs for inmates) and poor implementation of institutional structure.