

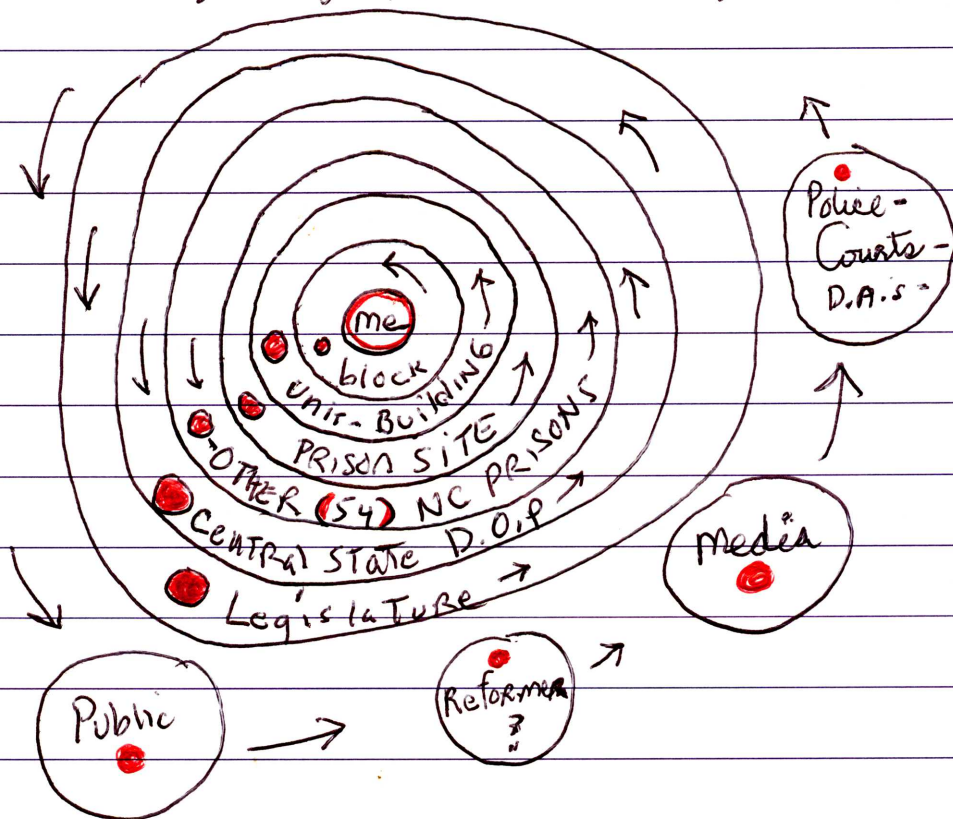
## THE PRISON AS "SYSTEM"

A reformer must consider his or her "perch" as they view the object to be reformed. Are you "in the trenches" with staff or prisoner? The proximity of the reformer's view-perspective can enhance or distort the planning and goals of reform.

How proximate to this moving hub of human-kind swirling within confines of fence or bars are you?

Consider the galaxy of prison and your vision.

A  
PRISON GALAXY  
"SYSTEM"



The further away from me and the 33 men in this block you are, the more blurred your understanding of this galaxy movement. Prison is not static, it is not a thing. It is people - a lot of people - without the usual clear cut job descriptions and predictable behaviors of a beehive.

2 All prisons are the same. All prisons are different.

Just like people, prisons have "personalities" or "cultures" evolved from dozens or a hundred years of "operations."

Transparency of operations - to the prisoners or public - are not visible "across the board."

To be honest, I can only write about prisons where I have resided, and events/actions which I have personally observed/witnessed. Other prisoners flow in and out of this prison (prior to PANDEMIC of 2020) and share, on request, news and activities and procedures at other NC prison sites. This "word of mouth" communication system is inefficient, sometimes dubious, but on the whole useful information can be gleaned.

When two dozen prisoners from different NC prisons are placed in a holding cell to await a doctor appointment at Central Hospital, the information is passed sometimes for hours. Which site offers the best jobs, TV programming, yard time, single cells versus group bedding areas, skilled staff, sony food, strict discipline, best visits - violence, drugs, gangs etc.

So to lump all NC prison sites into one general description would be a disservice to accurate reform evaluation. Prisoners and staff attitudes can vary by site. "Reformer" motivations and views can vary also. Do reformers talk - confidentially - with prisoners??