

Why prisons don't work

[Law](#), [Capital Punishment](#)



As stated in the title of " Why Prisons Don't Work, " by Wilbert Rideau, prisons are ineffective. Possibly the foremost reason of this is the fact that they are a response after the crime, not a preventive measure. Penitentiaries do nothing with respect to preventing crime rather they create a place where criminals are influenced by, almost exclusively, other criminals. Another reason of this is criminals are being sent to these institutions for periods of time that far exceed what is necessary. Criminals should serve a reasonable amount of time, which is proportional to the severity of their infraction but with the purpose of learning the wrongs of their ways and returning to society. A third reason is the lack of widespread rehabilitation and training programs. The current approach to crime has proven it does not work, because of this a new approach should be developed which emphasizes on preventing rather than punishing. " Prison, like the police and the courts, has a minimal impact on crime because it is a response after the fact, a mop-up operation. "(2) The penal system captures criminals after they commit crimes and then sends them away for a very long time not to make sure they do not continue reigning havoc on society, but to use them as examples to deter others from following the unlawful path that is committing crime. The idea of punishing the few to deter the many is counterfeit because potential criminals either think they're not going to get caught or they're so emotionally desperate or psychologically distressed that they don't care about the consequences of their actions. The threatened punishment, regardless of its severity, is never a factor in the equation. (2) As Rideau said above this use of prison is essentially useless, should be discontinued immediately, and prisons should adapt to a more fitting role in society. Once

in prisons, criminals are kept way too long thus losing the impact of the, hopefully, life-changing experience. Legislation has been operating under the false pretense that making sentences longer and/or harsher will lower crime rates and increase the standard of living. Making decisions based on this has negatively affected one of the few uses prisons have which is “ isolating young criminals long enough to give them a chance to grow up and get a grip on their impulses. ”(2) That is the greatest way in which prisons serve society and politicians who are eager to be re-elected are undermining this in order to look good for the press. Prisoners kept too long tend to embrace the criminal culture, its distorted values and beliefs; they have little choice--- prison is their life. There are some prisoners who cannot be returned to society... but the monsters who need to die in prison are rare exceptions in the criminal landscape. (2) Prisons should shorten sentences and focus more on preparing inmates to succeed in society upon re-entering it rather than keeping them from society as long as possible because the latter has proved ineffective and extremely costly. After all prisons are here to serve society, not to spend excessive amounts of taxpayers money with little to no results. “ The problem with prisons is that they don’t do more to rehabilitate those confined in them. ”(3) More has to be done to make those confined in prisons capable of returning to society and being successful at that. The convict that enters prison illiterate will probably leave the same way. Most convicts want to be better than they are, but education is not a priority. This prison houses 4, 600 men and offers academic training to 240, vocational training to a like number. Perhaps it doesn’t matter. About 90 percent of the men here may never leave this prison alive. (3) The criminal has become less than human

and something that the upstanding citizen abhors. This mentality is what is stopping prisons from progressing into a genuinely helpful and integral part of society. One has to view the criminal as a equal human being that is capable of getting better with the necessary help in order to contribute to society positively. A new approach to crime must be formulated that emphasizes on preventing crime. " The only effective way to curb crime is for society to work to prevent the criminal act in the first place, to come between the perpetrator and crime. "(3) Many of the older inmates who no longer pose a threat to society should be released as well as implementing rehabilitation programs that allows for inmates who are deemed as no longer threats to be released. The money that is being saved by releasing these can pay for educational programs for the young rigged towards preventing crime. Our youngsters must be taught to respect the humanity of others and to handle disputes without violence. It is essential to educate and equip them with the skills to pursue their life ambitions in a meaningful way. (3) This is not the quick fix, but the fix that will last generations to come providing a better place to live for all. Prisons, with their current uses and administration, are failing miserably. Penitentiaries are responses after the fact, thus doing nothing to deter crime. Inmates are being kept too long and adapting to the criminal lifestyle. Rehabilitation programs are not being widely implemented to prepare these for society after prison. A new approach to crime must be formulated in order to address this major problem in society for the short and long term.