

# Tent city arizona research paper example

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



## **Research about Tent City Jail Arizona**

### Tent City Arizona

The Tent City Jail in Arizona is known to be one of the toughest jail facilities in the United States. It was established in 1993 with a total population of 2,000 inmates and more are coming in everyday. This facility is located in Phoenix Arizona and was inspired by the elected Sheriff Joe Arpaio. The rational behind setting up tents as a jail facility came up to Sheriff Arpaio because of the staggering cost of constructing another facility as an extension of Maricopa County jail in order to meet the ever growing population of inmates in Maricopa. Tent city follows a specific social structure theory involving variations of patterns as far as criminal behavior is concern. It is a fact that psychological and biological elements do not account as social structure because the focus of this structure is the criminal behavior. One of the contributing factors in this structure is the social changes that had an adverse impact on behavior.

Another social structure can be observed in Tent City is how the inmates group themselves according to race. In social structure theories, social classes is evident when a part of the population shares the same values, attitudes and other norms to whom they felt belongs to their group. In the case of Tent City, inmates divide themselves according to race such as African Americans which are called Kinfolks, Mexicans are called Pisa's, Mexican American as Chicano's, Native Americans are called Chiefs and White Americans are called woods.

Because of the social structure being observed in Tent City jail there are risks involve that may arise from the situation. One of them is the social issue in which the inmates would have a possibility to clash with the other groups because of the matter of control of the contrabands being circulated inside the facility. The different race groups are trying to smuggle prohibited items inside the Tent City such as tobacco, marijuana and other illegal substances. When a head of the race group fails to pay back a debt occurred from confiscated contraband, there are possibilities that the involved inmate will face brutal consequences. Although a white inmate for instance joined his racial group he must follow the number rule inside the Tent City and that is to stick with your race. Any inmate that will cross the boundaries of each group will also meet a brutal punishment.

The issue with groups having a leader or they so called head also poses another threat to the over all security of the Tent City. Jail officers are struggling to keep control of all the inmates while the heads of each group are also making efforts to dominate. When it comes to sociological theories being addressed in the Tent City jail it is evident on the inmate's living condition that the 7/70 theory is possible to arise. This is because in the normal jail system, criminals are being segregated according to the nature of the crime they committed and their living condition will depend on the gravity of their crime. But in Tent City, the whole population is a mix of criminals ranging from shop lifters to inmates convicted with assault with a deadly weapon. In the 7/70 theory, prisons are described as " school for crimes" because being in the environment where much violent people are exposed to light offenders, there is a possibility that the petty criminals will

eventually learn a lot of criminal tricks from the professional criminals. As soon as light offenders are released there is a huge chance that they will come back to jail with a much heavier criminal cases.

In general two thirds of the people released from jail will in time be sent back to serve a much longer sentencing term. The 7/70 theory suggests that 7% of criminals are committing almost 70% of all crimes. Because of the present living situation in Tent City Jail, officials are addressing the situation in relation to sociological theories to divert the inmate's attention into more productive activities (Dr. Tomoconnor. com N. D). Some of which are serving food for the other inmates, working as trustees and work in commissary along with other related activities in the jail yard. The only compensation that the inmates will get by following sets of dos and don'ts is by cutting short the length of their stay in jail. By offering the prize of freedom for obeying the rules, jail officials are confident that the majority of the inmates will do their best to eventually make a decision to straighten up themselves. Another way to address the issue is to apply control measures to maintain peace and order inside the jail facility and that includes putting troublemakers in the hole for a period of time.

When it comes to social policies, evidently the culture inside the Tent City jail is not so different compared from the other prison sites in the country. The only thing that sets them apart is the fact that the inmates are at anytime may erupt to a brawl or the environment is susceptible to smuggling illegal contrabands because of the open privilege for easy access. Because of the risk the jail management is counting on their security tactics to control the

situations that may occur inside the Tent City. But the amount of security augmentation will not eliminate the long standing culture inside the facility. What needs to be done is by ratifying existing social policies that will impact change in the overall jail management system. That also includes participation programs with staff and inmates interact and understand their own point of views and to seek specific understanding of the inmate's motivations and dilemma's (Gaes, Gerald 2000). By eliminating the common thinking of " us versus them" between the staff and inmates, there would be a bigger chance of helping the inmates to do psychological and self transformation. Another way to change the social policy is to promote reform inside jail and to create an environment not only made to isolate the criminals but also create a place for rehabilitation.

## References

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