

Do prisons really make offenders worse

Law



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Smith Response

In goes without saying that those individuals who have committed crimes and are the most likely to repeat offend or commit a worse crime need to be monitored for the betterment of individuals and for general public safety. However, today's corrections system in the United States is hardly perfect and is in need of reform. Since the 1980s and the onset of the " War on Drugs" more serious, harsher, and longer sentences were doled out for drug-use crimes and drug-related offences. The goal was to make the punishment so unattractive that it would deter drug use and purchase. That has never really worked as they might have wished (Miles, 2014). That is why today our American prisons are overcrowded and understaffed. The prison system cannot be expected to improve until the minds of people are changed.

Scott Response

The problem with prison's today is the fact that you have hardcore, hardened, and dangerous criminals directly interacting with petty criminals, like shoplifters. When that shoplifter gets out he faces hard times instead of resorting to his petty crime skills, he may escalate his crime based on what he learned from other inmates in prison (Samenow, 2010). This can have a dramatic effect and creates unpredictability in the equation.