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# **Social Work in Juvenile and Criminal Justice Settings**



Third Edition

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# Social Work in Juvenile and Criminal Justice Settings

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# Foreword

In recent years there has been a surge of interest and evidence-based studies on social work practice in forensic settings, such as juvenile offender assessment and treatment programs, victim assistance and domestic violence intervention programs, and adult correctional rehabilitation and re-entry programs. This timely and thoroughly up-to-date third edition of a classic book provides valuable summaries of key issues, trends, program developments, and research findings on the most effective policies and programs in forensic settings. This book is timely because the number of men and women under some form of correctional supervision in the United States and Canada has reached epidemic numbers – approximately 7.5 million alleged and convicted offenders. There are also several million victims of violent crimes without access to woefully needed crisis intervention, trauma recovery services, cognitive-behavioral treatment, victim assistance, legal advocacy, victim compensation, case management, and other social services. In addition, as more and more inmates max out or are released on parole, they have to be better prepared for the transition to the community, including obtaining full-time employment, becoming involved with a local church and faith-based programs, building social relationships, coping with everyday stresses, reuniting with families, and gaining access to urgently needed social services. **This groundbreaking book provides the necessary blueprints and guidelines for best practices with crime victims as well as juvenile and adult offenders in institutional, community-based, diversion, and aftercare programs.**

Almost ten years ago, Charles C Thomas published the second edition of *Social Work in Juvenile and Criminal Justice Settings*, which became an essential guide for all forensic social work administrators and practitioners. As the number of incarcerated juvenile and adult offenders reached unprecedented proportions, it became clear that an updated edition of this work was critically needed. The result is practically a new book with half the book consisting of 16 brand new chapters, and the other chapters thoroughly updated. Professors Albert R. Roberts and David W. Springer called upon 50 of the most diligent and respected forensic social work scholars to contribute original chapters on the current state-of-the-art of evidence-based forensic social work. As a result, this third edition surpasses the two earlier editions in scope and content. This is the first all-inclusive, authoritative, exceptionally well-written volume on social policies and social work practices in both juvenile justice and criminal justice settings.

In Professors Roberts and Springer's overview chapter they eloquently document social work's mission toward respecting human dignity, accepting individual differences and believing in each individual's self-worth and potential for positive change. In response to the examination of forces and factors that enhance or inhibit creative solutions, the authors state:

We wrote chapters one and two, and compiled and edited the other 30 chapters, in full

support of the social work profession's 107 years of dedication to serving oppressed, vulnerable, at-risk, and devalued groups. During the past century, the most neglected and devalued groups have been victims of violent crimes and criminal offenders. In the past two decades, professional social workers have made growing progress in advocating for and obtaining critically needed social services for juvenile offenders, adult offenders, and victims of violent crimes. However, the case, class, and legislative advocacy efforts of forensic social workers (also known as correctional social workers) have increased and decreased in cycles over the past century. Specialized training and standards for forensic social work practice are critically needed. Therefore, we highly recommend that our professional organizations, including NASW, CSWE, NAFSW, and SSWR, form a task force to draft forensic social work educational standards, and lobby for federal and state legislation that mandates a minimum of an MSW, DSW, or Ph.D. in social work and five years post-master's experience, plus 90 hours of specialized training in forensic assessments and treatment protocols in order to be a forensic social work or correctional social work supervisor. (Roberts & Springer, p. 18)

I commend the two editors, the 50 esteemed chapter authors, and the readers of their important work. When you read this book, you can rapidly focus on a neglected and sometimes forgotten group of vulnerable and oppressed individuals – juvenile and adult offenders – who desperately need our help, guidance, and support. As social workers, we dedicate our professional careers to helping vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups. A major part of our social work mission is advocating for vulnerable clients, groups, and communities at the individual, group, community, and legislative levels. Professors Roberts and Springer, and their esteemed author team document the challenges, insights, experiences, and best practices of forensic social workers in beginning to meet the critical needs of vulnerable and at-risk populations. Furthermore, Professors Roberts and Springer express the hope that this third edition will stimulate debate and discussion. They are being humble. I firmly believe it is destined to be one of the foundations on which further forensic research and practices will be based in the important years ahead. **This book is a landmark achievement.**

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## Foreword to the Second Edition

The system established to deal with crime and justice in the United States is huge and complex, consumes billions of dollars annually, and affects millions of individuals and families. A look at the size and makeup of the correctional population provides one indicator of the nature and magnitude of the criminal justice problem. At mid year 1995, more than 1.5 million adults were confined in prisons and jails. The majority of persons were poor and a substantial number, in some states as many as 60 percent, were African Americans. Most were young and parents of dependent children and many were convicted on drug charges. Most new admissions to the system during the year were for nonviolent, economic-related crimes. More than five million adults were under correctional supervision with some groups affected more negatively than others. One out of every three African American males between the ages of 20 and 24 was under some form of correctional supervision, up from one out of every four only five years earlier.

The large and rapidly increasing correctional system population can be traced to several key factors. Foremost among these is the absence of public policies and programs that address major social problems, i.e., poverty, unemployment and the absence of work in many communities, hopelessness and despair, and the lack of opportunities for success that are the root causes of most illegal activity. Other factors include a willingness to use punishment as a means of addressing drug addiction and drug-related crime, politicians' perceptions that they must be seen as the toughest on crime in order to be elected to office, and the enactment of new laws that call for harsher punishment and longer sentences. No less important is the philosophical orientation toward the poor and racial minorities held by many persons in power. The lack of compassion for the poor and the willingness to label and define entire communities as the "underclass" and "endangered species" help create an atmosphere of fear of these groups. They also support the mindset that some groups are dispensable, undeserving, and beyond help and need to be separated from the rest of society.

If we continue to move along the same path established by the enactment of punitive social welfare reform measures and tough criminal justice legislation, the future can be expected to bring more of the poor and other disadvantaged groups into the criminal justice system and the custody of the state. It is not possible, however, to process all of the poor through the criminal justice system, nor is it wise or economically sound to label and stigmatize entire groups of people for life, or to lock up more and more people for longer periods of time. Research studies and policy impact analysis indicate that more prisons and harsher punishments do not prevent crime, lower recidivism, reduce fear of crime, or restore crime victims. Ongoing punishment and humiliation of the most vulnerable populations of society are likely to lead not only to widespread rebellion in prisons and jails could be better spent on meeting other social needs such as education for children and health services for the elderly.

The promotion of safe communities and the well-being of children and families command a different orientation and vision at the highest levels of public policy making. The problem of crime and the administration of justice, however, is not just a matter of enforcing laws but also one of providing programs and services that meet common human needs, address human behavior problems and improve social and economic conditions. Social workers and other human service professional are needed as active and willing partners in shaping and directing a different kind of criminal justice system. Envisioned is a system wherein justice and fairness, social and behavioral understandings, empirical research, practical realities, and ethical standards are as important as political considerations.

Meaningful social work partnerships depend heavily on professional endorsement of criminal justice as an important area of social work advocacy and practice and the educational preparation of social workers for practice in criminal justice settings. During the latter half of the twentieth century, however, social workers and established social services organizations have overlooked the needs of individuals and families involved in the criminal justice system. Social workers have had minimal involvement in providing social services for prisoners or their families, in advocating for changes in the criminal justice system, and in establishing correctional family programs. Only about one dozen schools of social work prepare students to work in criminal justice and social work degrees are not required to provide social services in most prisons, jails, courts, and community programs.

*Social Work in Juvenile and Criminal Justice Settings* is an excellent resource for helping social workers understand why the social work profession and other social and behavioral scientists should be involved in criminal justice and the history and reasons for periods of both intense interest and limited or noninvolvement in the past. The primary thrust of this inspirational and very timely volume is that justice social workers, juvenile justice specialists, correctional counselors, and victim advocates have important roles in criminal justice and can be effective in rehabilitation and restoration.

This pathfinding and extraordinarily comprehensive work critically examines the most salient issues, policies and program developments related to helping both persons who commit crime and victims of crime. Dr. Roberts and the other contributing authors give the reader insight into traditional and newly emerging areas of criminal justice practice and concerns and provide many illustrations of how to implement reform legislation and develop quality services. Family programs in prison, services for battered women, police social work, and wilderness programs for juveniles are among the featured topics. The chapters are well written and instructive and highly appropriate for use as both a major text for courses focused on social services in criminal justice and as assigned readings in more general social policy or social work practice courses. This is clearly the best single source on social work in criminal justice settings as well as a valuable resource for the many professionals who have responsibility for formulating and carrying out the mandates of the criminal justice system.

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## Foreword to the First Edition

Social Work as a profession is a twentieth century development, but it has a long legacy in private philanthropy and religious movements. The “Good Samaritan” (Luke 10: 30–37) was only one example during ancient times of compassion for less fortunate people that can be traced from primitive man to the present day. The monasteries provided services to children and minor offenders through the Middle Ages. Welfare programs began in England on a small scale after Henry VIII closed the monasteries in 1536 to 1539. Concern for the welfare of children and minor offenders was included in the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601, which made use of the “bridewells” begun in 1557 to house debtors, dependent children, and others who needed governmental care. In 1648, concern for children in trouble was shown by the establishment of a home for wandering children in Paris by St. Vincent de Paul and the establishment of a church-affiliated institution in Milan to house boys with behavior problems. Pope Clement XI established the Hospice di San Michele (House of St. Michael) in 1704, in Rome, to care for children now referred to as “delinquent”. That institution still stands and is still used for its original purpose. While there had been places for detention, including rooms in the ancient temples, there were jails and private prisons from the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries, prior to the beginning of prisons as they are known today.

The first prison was introduced at Simsbury, Connecticut, in 1773, when an old copper mine was converted into an institution for detaining “criminals”; George Washington used it as a military prison. In 1787, the Quakers started the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of the Public Prisons. The goal of the Society was to improve the sad plight of convicts by advocating that imprisonment in solitary confinement be substituted for the death penalty and physical torture. As a result, the “penitentiary movement” began with the Walnut Street Jail in 1790. The name of the Philadelphia Society was changed to the Pennsylvania Prison Society in 1887.

John Howard (1726–1790) and Elizabeth Gurney Fry (1780–1845) initiated lay visiting in England’s jails and prisons that marked the beginning of private social work in prisons. Fry was known for lending material aid to individual prisoners, while John Howard was most concerned with improving the overall prison condition. The Correctional Association of New York was formed in 1844. The Prisoners’ Aid Association of Maryland was formalized in 1869, but its beginnings went back to 1829, when the rector of St. Paul’s Church in downtown Baltimore provided food and other assistance to men leaving the penitentiary. The Massachusetts Correctional Association was established in 1889 as the John Howard Society. The first John Howard Society had been established in England in 1866. Since that time, there have been prisoners’ aid societies functioning around the world that handle all probation and parole functions in many countries.

A group of Quakers opened a halfway house for women in New York City in the

1880s, which continues today as the Isaac T. Hopper House and now houses the American Correctional Association for Women. Settlement houses began to appear in London in the 1880s. The first settlement house in the United States was the “Neighborhood Guild” in New York City in 1887, an outgrowth of the London Movement founded in Toynbee Hall. The most significant and influential settlement house was Hull House, founded in 1889 by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr. Addams and Starr rented a house built by Charles G. Hull at 800 South Halsted Street in Chicago. Although it was geographically replaced in January, 1961, by the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, the original Hull House still remains as a museum, and in 1967 it was designated a national landmark. The present Jane Addams School of Social Work is a part of the University of Illinois.

Social work had its beginnings as a profession around 1904. Charles Booth participated in the Charity Organization Movement, studied social condition in London from 1886 to 1903, and his *Life and Labour of the People of London*, published in 1904, became a monumental contribution of the time, and others in England and America followed its tradition in social work. With Paul Kellogg, Charles Booth’s most ambitious work was the Pittsburgh Survey in 1909 to 1914, financed by the Russell Sage Foundation. Summer training courses for charity workers were begun by the New York Charity Organization Society in 1898. By 1904, the first School of Social Work was established at Columbia University as a one-year program, then called the New York School of Philanthropy. As of 1919, the 15 Schools of Social Work had organized into the Association of Training Schools for Professional Social Work, including nine programs operating within university auspices and six independent schools. Adoption of a minimum curriculum had taken place by 1932. In 1935, the American Association of Schools of Social Work ruled that only those schools connected with universities could be accredited. By 1940, the Association required graduate-level education as part of all social workers’ professional development. Social work had emerged as an accepted profession.

From the beginning, the field of corrections had been an anathema to professional social work. Problems of the poor, family services, child protective services, philanthropy, and general social welfare became the primary concern of social work. Some writers, such as Warner, Queen, and Harper, in 1935, date the beginning professional social work back to 1893, when settlement workers were trying to gain recognition just to be on the program of the National Conference of Charities and Correction. This group subsequently gained recognition and “blundered” into the emerging professionalism of social work.

Correctional work had always been part of philanthropy and preprofessional social work. As social work became recognized as a profession, however, the field of corrections was excluded from its purview as being beyond its concern. While professional social workers did work with families, settlement houses, low-income families, and the new child guidance clinics begun in Philadelphia in 1897, and worked with predelinquents and delinquents in that context, they were moving away from the criminal offender. In 1917, Mary Richmond’s *Social Diagnosis* (published by the Russell Sage Foundation) established the guidelines and the norms for professional social work. It was aimed at, “those processes which developed personality through adjustments con-

sciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment.” Among the dicta were that caseworkers worked with individual “cases,” not large groups and – most damaging to corrections – the doctrine of “self-determination,” which cannot function in an authoritative setting. The “constructive use of authority” was seen as withdrawing services when the individual became ineligible for any reason.

Professional social work had moved out of corrections. Attention continued in family problems and social welfare concerns, but the emphasis began to focus toward mental health. In 1921, the American Association of Social Workers was founded to provide an organizational base for professional social workers. In 1922, the Commonwealth Fund created scholarships for professional “Social Workers” to become assistants to psychiatrists in the mental health field, and this funding continued through 1928. With the coming of the Great Depression, social work was inundated with income maintenance problems, but continued its other functions in private Family Welfare Associations, the Child Welfare League of America, the National Federation of Settlements, and other private organizations, while governmental concerns primarily focused on poverty and income maintenance as a result of the Depression. In the meantime, social work remained away from corrections because of (1) the large caseloads, (2) the doctrine of self-determination that prevented them from working in an authoritative setting, (3) the definition of “authority” as a withholding of services, rather than as an authoritative person or agency, and (4) the belief that social work techniques should remain the same, regardless of the clientele and the circumstances of the host agency, which is an oversimplification in the correctional setting.

In 1945, Dr. Kenneth Pray, Director ( frequently called Dean) of the School of Social Work at the University of Pennsylvania, was a major speaker at the annual meeting of the American Association of Social Workers in Chicago, where he had been elected president. His speech was revolutionary. Dean Kenneth Pray contended that professional social workers could and should work in corrections. All that was needed was an extra step in the early confrontations to “sell” or motivate” the client into wanting to help “reform” himself. The response was vitriolic. Traditional social workers engaged Dean Pray intensely and almost viciously. Some of the debate can be read in the issues of the *Social Service Review* after that 1945 meeting and several years afterward. His papers were subsequently published posthumously as *Kenneth Pray; Social Work in a Revolutionary Age and Other Papers* by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1949. The debate continued for years.

In 1959, the famous thirteen-volume Curriculum Study was made under Werner W. Boehm in order to consolidate the social work curriculum. Volume V on Education for Social Workers in the Correctional Field was done by Elliot Studt, who concluded that, “no separate specialty seems required in order to prepare social workers to take their place in correctional service.” The last sentence was that, “professional education should elect and prepare students for early leadership responsibility.” Even this writer entered the fray with an article on “The University Curriculum in Corrections” that appeared in the September, 1959, issue of *Federal Probation*. The article presented two possible curricula, one for corrections and another for social workers interested in corrections. The Council on Social Work Education had a five-year Corrections Project (1959–1964) financed by The Ford Foundation. Throughout its deliberations, the debate involved

whether additional information should be added to the curriculum for corrections or whether it should not. Those in favor of adding new information referred to the problems resulting from Mary Richmond's Social Diagnosis in 1917. The project reached the same conclusions that Elliot Studt had made in the curriculum study, that no separate or additional information was needed.

An outgrowth of that project, however, was the Arden House Conference on Manpower and Training for Corrections, held June 24 to 26, 1964, at Harriman, New York, involving over 60 national organizations. Outgrowths from this conference included the Correctional Rehabilitation Study Act of 1965, the Prisoner's Rehabilitation Act of 1965, and Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training, which was funded by The Ford Foundation, 1966 to 1969. The social work profession continued to maintain that no new information was needed to serve social workers working in corrections. This history of social work practice in corrections has been one of bouncing back and forth between expressing inability to work in an authoritative setting, to having state legislative committees demanding that the M.S.W. (master's degree in social work) be the basic requirement for the correctional position, particularly in probation. The push for the M.S.W. requirement was successful in several states, such as New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and others. Some long-term probation officers were surprised when the M.S.W. probation workers in New York discharged persons who had violated probation as "not eligible for probation," rather than recommending that the judge revoke probation and send them to the institution, as had been their custom. But the social work concept of "constructive use of authority" is based on ineligibility for service, rather than further punishment. Such conceptual misunderstandings have occurred between social workers in corrections and some correctional personnel and administrators with backgrounds in other areas.

This is the first book of major importance that covers professional social work in the field of corrections. It covers all the fields in which social work functions in just about the amount proportionate to their functioning in practice. The reentry of social work was first in the juvenile area, particularly in the court and the community, followed by adult probation. Parole took a little longer, as did medium and minimum security institutions for adults. The maximum security prison has been the last to experience this reentry. This book reflects this progression in its text and in its format. More than the first half of the book is devoted to social workers in the juvenile field, the point of reentry. Probation, parole, and court settings are discussed next. Finally, the maximum security prison is discussed as well, although there are more restrictive settings in some stronger maximum security institutions in which some of the examples used could not have taken place – the setting of the writers of this chapter was the Mental Health Unit of the Kansas State Penitentiary, rather than the maximum security unit. This fits into the scheme and reflects the progression of social work back into the correctional field as it actually did happen. The other three chapters in the prison section involved volunteers and family relations. In summary, then, this book reflects almost exactly the way social work came back into corrections and discusses the problems of working with authority, the problem of client self-determination, the problem of caseloads, and the problem of specialization in social work, as it relates to the entire field of corrections. Ellen Handler's excellent article (published in *Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, August, 1975) fo-



cuses on corrections and social work being “an uneasy partnership.” This is only one example of the thorough breadth of literature that characterizes the support for this book.

Dean Kenneth Pray would have been proud to see this book after his being embroiled in turmoil and debate following his revolutionary speech in Chicago in 1945 when he said that social work could and should work in the field of corrections. As a participant in and a follower of the field of corrections and welcoming the assistance of any legitimate profession for many years of turbulent and frenzied efforts to stay even with the challenge, this writer is also proud of this book. It has been, in fact, “an uneasy partnership,” but it should not have been. There are still many professionals working in practices based in the behavioral sciences who have difficulty in working with authority and want to “help the client help himself” and have other troubles in working with offenders. Even so, the number of people who can work comfortably in corrections is increasing – even in maximum security prisons – which are a rewarding observation after these many years of frustration. It is a gross disservice to the client for a professional to wait for the client to become “motivated” so he can “help him help himself” when that client is so “beat down” and angry that he will never achieve that kind of motivation. There are some who consider this kind of aloofness as downright immoral in a “helping” profession. There are now professional social workers who can talk about “aggressive casework,” “hard-to-reach groups,” “reaching out,” and motivating people “to help themselves.” While this book is important to help social workers understand corrections, it is far more important that all correctional administrators and practitioners read it to gain an understanding about what the new professional social worker has to offer and how he or she functions. This book is the most significant contribution in many years to the mutually rewarding understanding of the alliance between professional social work and corrections.

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# **Social Work in Juvenile and Criminal Justice Settings**



## Section I

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# **Evolving Trends, Policies, and Practices**



## The Emergence and Current Developments in Forensic Social Work

Albert R. Roberts, David W. Springer,  
and Patricia Brownell

### INTRODUCTION

**F**orensic social work assessment and treatment with crime victims, juvenile offenders, and convicted felons has been viewed by some as the weakest link of social work practice, and by others as a way to provide much needed services to large groups of poor, vulnerable, and neglected clients. There has been a growing concern in recent years regarding the increasing number of offenders and victims in urgent need of mental health treatment and social services; some of whom are at high risk of future violence if they do not receive the evidence-based interventions they urgently need. Social workers and other human service and health care professionals spend large parts of their careers helping vulnerable and at-risk populations. Thus, forensic social work seems to be a challenging and ideal way to advocate for social justice while facilitating assessments and improved psychosocial functioning among a large and vulnerable group of clients.

There are five trends that have emerged underscoring the critical need for forensic social work. (1) Prison sentences in the United States are much longer than in most other countries, and there are a disproportionate number of people of color currently incarcerated in federal and state prisons. (2) A significant percentage of juvenile and adult offenders (between 40% and 70%) have a mental health disorder. (3) According to the federal Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) (2005), in 2004, there were 24 million youths and adults ages 12 and over who were victims

of crimes. In this same year, over 16 million services were provided thru federal- and state-funded victim service and victim-witness assistance agencies, and almost half (47.3%) of these victims were domestic violence victims. (4) According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2005) at the end of 2004, more than seven million adult offenders were under some form of correctional supervision including adult correctional institutions, juvenile correctional facilities, jails, detention centers, probation and parole agencies, or community diversion programs. The largest group of almost five million persons (4,916,480) were under the supervision of probation or parole agencies. (5) There has been a slow but steady growth in the number of forensic social work courses and continuing education workshops. The focus and content areas of these workshops and courses include the following:

- Child custody evaluations and assessments to determine whether parental rights of persons who are mentally ill, convicted felons, and/or abusive parents should be terminated;
- Risk assessments of offenders who are mentally ill and substance-abusing (i.e., MICA-mentally ill chemically addicted, also known as dual disorders), with special attention to their risk of future violence and repeat criminality;
- Assessment and treatment of juvenile and adult mentally ill offenders in the criminal justice system and forensic mental health units to help in treatment planning as well as planning for a safe discharge or parole date;