

Abstract

This thesis deals with female prisoners in the American prison system and their overall position within the system. The research question is whether the American prison system is able to reflect the increase of incarcerated females as well as the differences between needs of incarcerated males and females. Likewise, the thesis also aims at researching whether the prison system offers the care incarcerated females need.

The thesis outlines a brief history of the U.S. modern prison system's origin and development as well as its current main attributes together with financing. The main part is devoted to incarcerated women, their positions and conditions that await them in the prison. Because the needs of incarcerated women differ from men's, for example regarding the health care, this thesis tries to describe their needs as well as how they differ from the needs of male inmates.

An important part of the thesis is devoted to health care provision in the prison. Health care is a good example that illustrates that female inmates have different needs regarding check-ups, diagnosis and needed medications. It is also described how pregnant and mentally ill inmates are treated. As an answer to different needs of female prisoner a possibility of gender-responsive treatment is discussed. This treatment would consider gender as the most important factor while providing needed care and treatment. The conclusion of the work is that the American prison system has not been able to effectively cope with the increase of incarcerated females as well as to react to their needs.