The Role of Recreational Sports in the Federal Prison System

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an exploration of the nature and consequences of recreational sports programmes in the federal prison system of Canada. Data were collected by interviewing a convenience sample of sixteen inmates and three Corrections Officers, having informal discussions with inmates and staff, and observing recreational practices, in four male Canadian federal prisons. Four key issues were identified: the effect of participating in prison sports, the rehabilitation of the inmates and social control within the institution, the cost of implementing sports programming, and the wider issue of prisoners' rights concerning their use of recreational time.

Analysis of the data shows that recreational sports programmes play an important role in the social control of male prisons. Other findings show that these programmes are beneficial to inmates during their incarceration in a number of ways. Most respondents claimed that involvement in recreational sports reduced stress and/or frustration, alleviated boredom, increased self-esteem, helped in the establishment of goals and a routine, and assisted inmates in developing friendships. Both inmate and staff concluded that prison recreational sports did not contribute to additional aggression and were essential components of the prison regime. Recreation can be seen as a fundamental component of any healthy lifestyle and, hence, it is argued that recreation opportunities should be provided for those incarcerated.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people who supported and encouraged me during this research endeavour. I wish to expend special thanks to Dr. Anthony Thomson for his prolonged assistance as my thesis advisor. In addition, Don Grady was greatly influential in assisting me with this thesis. Also, I wish to thank my father for his tremendous support throughout my academics.
I've always been active in my earlier years. I've always been involved in some type of sports. But when you're doing time you've got to occupy yourself by doing something. You can't sit around, you'll go crazy. . . . You've got to keep yourself occupied, keep a lot off your mind. Sports is the only thing to do.

This thesis explores the nature and consequences of recreational sports in the Canadian federal prison system for men. Along with rehabilitation in general, recreational opportunities have been provided to any considerable extent in Canadian penitentiaries only since the Second World War. In the 1990s, with correctional budgets declining, recreation has emerged as a popular target of government cut-backs. The argument of this thesis is that such a policy is short-sighted and that recreational sports fulfills necessary functions in the prison system.

The Canadian correctional system has two main types of institutions in which offenders are incarcerated: provincial and federal. The provincial jail system is used primarily for offenders who have been sentenced by the courts to terms of under two years. Provincial jails are also used as holding centres for convicted offenders before they are sentenced and for people charged with crimes committed while awaiting trial. Federal correctional institutions incarcerate those sentenced to two

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1 This quotation is from an interview with Ned Nelson, an inmate at the Rockwood Institution who had previously served time at Stony Mountain. Pseudonyms have been used for all of my respondents, both inmates and prison staff, to protect their identities.
years or more. Although there are some similarities between the two systems, this thesis is not focused on practices in provincial institutions; rather, my work is intended to deal with recreational sports in federal correctional institutions for men.

Canada's federal correctional system possesses three main classifications of prisons. There are minimum, medium, and maximum security institutions throughout the country. The level of the institution to which one is sent is usually determined by an evaluation of a prisoner's status as a potential danger to the public. For example, a convicted murderer would most likely be sent to a maximum security institution whereas someone convicted of an offence which involved little or no danger to others, such as a property offence, would be sent to a medium security prison. In a majority of cases, prisoners are transferred to medium and possibly minimum security institutions after serving parts of their sentences in higher security prisons. This is done after an individual is deemed by our justice system to be a lesser risk of either escaping the facility or causing corruption within the prison setting.

Rioting, violence, and failure to co-operate with authorities or abide by institutional rules may constitute corrupt behaviour in the eyes of prison officials. Once an inmate is no longer deemed a serious threat to participate in such actions or to escape, he or she may then be assigned to a lower-security institution.

There are three main functions of our prison system: to punish the offender, to protect society from the offender, and to rehabilitate the offender. When the
penitentiary system was initially constructed in the Eighteenth Century, punishment was the main goal. The relative emphasis which has been placed on either punishment or rehabilitation has changed over the years. In Canada during the early eighteenth century, citizens who broke the law faced extremely severe punishment. Capital punishment was employed for a wide variety of offences while, for other less serious crimes, other harsh punishments were meted out. By the nineteenth century, however,

It was becoming increasingly apparent . . . that the law and judicial system were not performing their main task – to restrain crime. What reformers argued for in place of the gallows . . . were moderate, certain punishments, graded to the seriousness of the crime and applied with uniformity to every prisoner . . . punishments that . . . would not simply coerce and brutalise offenders, but that would reform them. (Beattie, 1977; cited in Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1988: 20)

With the rise of the medical model of treatment in the 1950s and 1960s, prisons appeared to have changed dramatically. While the element of protecting society was still present, the goal of rehabilitation appeared to be the fundamental priority. Numerous programmes were implemented in federal prisons in an attempt to rehabilitate inmates. Education, job training, social activities, and recreation have all become a part of the institutional regimen. The rehabilitative goal now focuses on trying to prepare inmates for life after their release.

Although the history of corrections for most of the last half century has been largely centred around the growth of a rehabilitative model, this has often been more of an ideal than a reality. For a long time, prisons have been seen more as
schools of crime than institutions of rehabilitation. From the perspective of the 1990’s, rehabilitation appears to have come and gone; to have been replaced by a new emphasis on retribution and punishment. Nevertheless, reforming the criminal is still one of the primary — if not the foremost — goals of the system. The mainstream study of rehabilitation has gone from optimistic anecdotal accounts of programme successes to Martinson’s phrase that “nothing works,” to an appreciation that some programmes might help some inmates some of the time (Martinson, 1974; cited in Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1988: 211).

There is an extensive literature about the more widely-implemented programmes, such as occupational training, counselling, group therapy, anger management, and other organised efforts which were implemented to help prisoners (Blom-Cooper, 1974; Duguid, 1981; Ericson, 1977; Gosselin, 1982). Another component of prison life, recreation programming, has not been studied as extensively. In part, this reflects the general social attitude that recreational activities are not as important or serious as issues of employment or inter-personal relations. In addition, prison authorities have tended to give scant publicity to recreation programmes because such opportunities may appear to undermine punishment, which is assumed by prison authorities to be the primary purpose of imprisonment. Watching television, playing pool or table tennis, or swimming are not activities most people would define as inherently punishing. From one point of view, prisons have come to resemble resort hotels. In this atmosphere, there would seem to be
little popular support for maintaining, let alone expanding, activities in prisons which could be regarded as recreational pursuits.

However, over the years, not all commentators on the purposes of the penal system have regarded recreation programmes as unnecessary frills. It is true that, from the perspective of social control, recreation programmes in prisons are largely believed to be useful only as elements in a system whose essential purpose is to contain and restrain those in custody. In some prisons, access to recreational activities is strictly monitored and doled out as piecemeal rewards for compliance with prison regulations. The perennial problem of maintaining order in prison requires that rewards be made available as part of the encompassing regime of penal discipline. But once authorities decide not to lock everyone in solitary, they face the problem of maintaining daily, hourly compliance by prisoners with the full complement of a regular regime. Threatening what few physical punishments are available, such as incarceration in the "hole" or "lock-down," or informal brutality, has been recognised by prison officials as less effective than mobilising modest rewards or privileges which can be withdrawn.

In addition, since one of the main causes of prison indiscipline is excessive idleness, keeping prisoners active in ways which are seen as desirable by both inmates and authorities alike, helps maintain order. This is particularly true of the more physical forms of recreation such as sports. While playing chess, gaining educational credits, writing poetry or taking part in prison drama groups are all
included as parts of a recreational programme, these items rarely involve more than a small minority of usually well-motivated prisoners. On the other hand, recreational sports have the capacity to involve a much larger number of inmates.

Focusing specifically on recreational sports in prison raises several issues. One issue is whether participation in such activities is, itself, rehabilitative. It is clear that most people who participate in recreational sports activities will reap the physical benefits of such activities. Depending on the type of sport, the intensity level, and the form of physical exertion, a prisoner may benefit physically in varying degrees. In general, physical activities help to promote a healthy lifestyle and may well increase the general health of an individual. Recreational sports can have additional positive effects on the mental health of those involved. Such patterns of activity can serve as an outlet for frustration, create a great deal of enjoyment, instil or develop self-confidence in a person, as well as give a prisoner something to look forward to in the otherwise bleak custodial context. It is often easier to make friends through involvement in recreational sports than it is through other sanctioned social situations. My observations suggest that friendships developed through sports and recreational activities often become long-lasting networks because those involved tend to share similar interests. For these general reasons, it can be argued that recreational sports may have many short-term positive effects on the efficiency of correctional systems as well as on the individual orientations of inmates.

In this exploratory thesis I will attempt to review and evaluate some positive
short-term influences of participation in prison sports as well as the limitations placed on prisoners in federal penitentiaries for men. In doing so, I will also address more speculatively the main issue, which is whether or not recreational sports in prison are capable of producing long-term rehabilitative effects and, if they are, to what extent the benefits of such programmes serve the civil good of Canadian society as a whole.

A second issue is to assess a viewpoint which is in direct contradiction to the expectation of beneficial results from recreational participation. It has also been argued that recreational sports contribute further to the prison as a school for crime. According to this view, weight lifting and other competitive sports create bigger, stronger, and more aggressive inmates who could contribute to a higher rate of violent crime upon their release. Ex-convicts possessing well-conditioned bodies along with attitudes and values of "macho invincibility" may be more capable of inflicting physical violence within the broader "culture of criminality." Both physically and mentally, the effects of certain sports activities – and in particular weight training – may itself inadvertently contribute to higher rates of criminal recidivism. Furthermore, some commentators feel that prison is a place where inmates should not have such luxuries as recreation. Prisoners should be subjected to even greater hardships as a means both of punishment and deterrence from any further criminal activity.

A third issue is the fiscal cost of developing and maintaining recreational
sports programmes in federal prisons. Federal prisons build and maintain what may be considered "tremendous" and "luxurious" recreation facilities for their inmates. In times of financial hardship and restraint, citizens find little justification for paying taxes so that convicted criminals can pursue their sports interests in prison. There is a tendency to feel that it is inappropriate to subsidise a prison establishment which should serve more as punishment than as a place where inmates receive free room and board, as well as the freedom to participate in numerous recreational programmes for their enjoyment. There are a variety of contrasting views regarding the need for prison recreation and the extent to which public funds should be invested in this aspect of the correctional system. Government, correctional authorities, the general public, and inmates all have their own particular values and opinions regarding recreation in the prison system. Over the years, this debate has reached a point of tremendous frustration for many.

Finally, there is a fourth perspective on the question of recreational activities in prisons. From this view, recreational sports are generally considered to be beneficial to people's health. While fitness has become a major trend of the 1990's, more and more studies have shown its health benefits. As a result of this attitude, it is argued that prisoners, like any persons in society at large, have a right to pursue recreation activities while in custody. If prisoners should have this right, to what extent should the organisation and provision of prison programmes be incorporated as an integral part of correctional services? Due to their conditions of close
confinement, prisoners may need special consideration. Those who follow this line of analysis hold that it would be morally wrong to deprive inmates of recreational activities which could improve their health and welfare. However, the questions that remain are: what forms of recreation activities should be made available, and how much time and money should be allotted for such programmes within prisons?

The use of recreation programmes for the purpose of rehabilitation has been thoroughly debated by prison administrators over the years. Many people believe that prison authorities have a responsibility to provide for and guide an individual prisoner in satisfying his or her recreational needs and interests. Some have claimed recreation to be just as important to the resocialization process as good nutrition and quality counselling. One viewpoint is that recreation provides a constructive balance to the deadening weight of incarceration and may, therefore, have a positive impact in changing an inmate's enduring lifestyle and re-direct positive participation in social life following custody. For this reason, many believe recreation should be considered a requirement of successful correctional process rather than a privilege (McIntosh, 1986).

This study of recreation within federal correctional institutions will serve the particular purpose of identifying how recreational policy works in particular institutions and within the structures of the prison system. At the same time, this study will attempt to locate the value of recreational programmes on the larger and more encompassing hierarchy of such activities undertaken within prison
programmes of rehabilitation and reform when these values are located within the inclusive scope of the Canadian social context.

It is my intent that this study on prison recreation will make some contributions both to our disciplinary knowledge of this dimension of corrections as well as to broaden social understanding of issues in criminal systems. First, my work may increase awareness of the issue and may help to encourage further research in this area. I also expect that this study will help to provide specific findings on the benefits and other dimensions associated with prison recreation in the Canadian federal correctional context. It should serve as a tool to improve this area of corrections.

Within the United States from 1973 to 1981 there was a sixty percent increase in the incarceration of offenders. Prisons in most states have become increasingly overcrowded. Among many other jurisdictions, the state of Indiana was reported as having forty percent more prisoners than its established prison capacity (Umbreit, 1985). Nils Christie (1993) reports that in the United States there are already 1.2 million prisoners or 504 per 100,000 of the population. These statistics indicate that, today, either a higher rate of offences are being committed, or a higher number of convictions are being made, or more likely, that a combination of both factors is at work within the social system of the United States.

Given this international context, my interest in prison recreation becomes a substantial issue within the larger debate on correctional reform in North America.
Recreational facilities and programmes available to inmates at Canadian federal penitentiaries loom as large dimensions of prison life in a growing correctional system. In this study, I want to describe, review, and provide preliminary case studies of such sports programmes. I ask whether they are beneficial and, if so, how and why. We are all aware of the importance of recreation for people in society. I am interested in determining the level of importance recreation has in our prison population and our federal correctional institutions.

The focus of this thesis is based solely on correctional institutions for men and not on those for females. The reason for this is that there are far fewer female institutions and female inmates. At the time this research was conducted, Prison for Women in Kingston, Ontario, was the only federal institution for women in Canada. While this topic was very difficult to research, a study of male inmates in institutions was much more accessible than one including females.

Chapter Outline

This introductory chapter provides a broad outline of issues raised in my orientation towards the topic of recreation within historical penal thinking and practices along with a set of alternative (sometimes opposing) views of recreational programming within "punitive," "deterrent," and "rehabilitative" priorities for criminal behaviour and penal programming.

In Chapter Two I discuss the prison system from several different perspectives using a wide variety of available literature. I do an historical review of
the development of recreational sports in prisons in North America. I uncover general information regarding the prison system and then focus on the role of rehabilitation. Reflected in the policy and practise of recreational programmes within the federal correctional services sector, my focus is on the pros and cons of recreation sport in prison over the past two centuries. Chapter Three continues this discussion, shifting the focus of the literature review to the ranges of probable effects of recreational sports as a form of rehabilitation and outlining the key issues to be considered in the study of recreational sports in the penitentiary context.

In Chapter Four I review the research techniques I used throughout the thesis, as well as open a discussion of the organisation of the fieldwork involved in my research.

Chapter Five reviews the context of Canadian correctional recreational policy in practise. I present a case analysis of a group of prisoners currently serving time in four Canadian federal penitentiaries; sixteen inmates were interviewed while discussions were held with two others. I also develop my findings from interviews with three Canadian Corrections Officers, as well as discussions with prison recreation staff members, regarding their feelings and beliefs about recreational sports in the prison system. I also discuss the type, style, and impact of recreation programmes and how they vary with the category of institution studied. I also present policy on recreation and its role and purpose (goals). A comparison is made between general characteristics of federal policy and the applied practice at the
institutional level.

Chapter Six is a critical analysis which evaluates the meaning of the interview data and raises questions about the effectiveness of recreation programmes as a rehabilitative device in federal corrections. I review the material presented in Chapters Two, Three, and Four with a view to developing critical and comparative observations on my topic.

I expect that the initial suggestions concerning contradictions among the effects of recreation in prison may provide a preliminary set of findings which can be pursued in further research in this field. Finally, I plan to provide the proper authorities, research practitioners, and the public with substantial ideas regarding the role of recreational sports in improving the rehabilitative potential for prisoners as well as in working to improve the constructive role of our correctional institutions within the general social order.
CHAPTER TWO

Perspectives on the Role of Recreational Programmes within Prison Systems

Recreation is part of the "normal" life outside and if the inmate is to be rehabilitated, it is important that he maintain a link with the outside such as recreation. (Stein and Sessoms, 1973: 115-6)

The Rehabilitation Issue

The objectives in sentencing an offender are generally thought to include the following elements: deterrence, incapacitation, rehabilitation, retribution, and restitution. Incarceration supposedly accomplishes the first four of these. Since the beginning of the contemporary penitentiary movement, the meaning of these objectives and the relative weight attached to them have varied over time. Hagan (1989: 9) offers the following quotation from Reverend Sydney Smith regarding what prison and prison life was to be like in the early part of the eighteenth century:

In prisons which are really meant to keep the multitude in order and be a terror to all evil doers, there must be no sharing of profits — no visiting of friends — no education but religious education — no freedom of diet — no weaver's looms or carpenters benches. There must be a great deal of solitude; coarse food; a dress of shame; and incessant, irksome, external labour; a planned and regulated and unrelenting exclusion of happiness and comfort.

North American prisoners were expected to be reformed in such a regimen both fundamentally, through becoming penitent, and behaviourally, through compliance with prison regulations (Hagan, 1989: 9).

Throughout the subsequent years, this method of correctional practise was
determined to play no part in reducing the rate of recidivism. In fact, it appeared to enhance further criminal activity by assisting in the physical and mental deterioration of those incarcerated. Reforms of the North American penitentiary took two forms: humanitarian changes designed to soften the worst excesses of the carceral regime and a more positive concept of rehabilitation. The introduction of recreational sports in prisons serves both of these functions. Before outlining the current situation, the following sections provide an overview of the development of sports recreation in North America.

The Origins of Recreational Sports in the United States

In reviewing the literature on the practice of recreational programming in prisons for men, it is clear that United States practice is more developed than Canadian use of correctional recreation. Just as developments in, first the north-eastern states and then California have long served as models for United States prisons, so too American correctional philosophy has dominated Canadian practice. Whatever the balance of theory on the useful potential of recreation programmes in prisons, the current state of affairs in practice reflects a stagnant if not declining use of recreational sports in penal settings.

The early history of recreational sports in United States prisons was described by McKelvey (1968). According to McKelvey, by the 1840s some prisons in the United States would occasionally celebrate holidays with entertainment (26). Initially, recreation meant leisure, a relaxation of the severe codes of discipline and
hard work. By the 1870s in some prisons, inmates had "freedom of the yard" during national holidays. Some prisons at that time allowed music, theatre, lectures or other forms of entertainment during special occasions (41). The "freedom of the yard" gradually evolved into institutionalised half-holidays during which prisoners spontaneously organised games (229).

Concord Reformatory was the first institution in the United States which developed an organised sports programme for inmates. Prison authorities organised several clubs or societies as part of a movement which they thought would offer practice in self-government (McKelvey 1968: 117). These included the Baseball Society, which had forty-five members and regular meetings. On Saturday afternoons, the prisoners' games included baseball, wrestling, and football. Neighbouring towns frequently sent teams to play against the reformatory on special days (117n). Following this pioneering model, Elmira Reformatory in New York state introduced organized sports in 1896. Warden Zebulon Brockway organized sports specifically "to foster self-control and team spirit" (114).

At this time, however, these and other reformatory developments were very controversial. Sports programmes did not spread into the adult penitentiary system until the early decades of the 20th century (McKelvey 1968: 162-163). By about 1910, McKelvey reported, in the Mid-West, organised sports had become a routine feature of prison programming, spreading to the Northeast and Southwest by 1915 (229).

McKelvey argues that, "Prison athletics . . . presaged a new era in prison
discipline" (1968: 229). Organised sports made prison more tolerable in a situation in which there was considerable down-time. In his view, prison authorities regarded athletics as an opportunity to control the prisoners "in masses", but they also regarded them as a form of prison therapy, part of the "attempt to 're-create the man in prison'" (229-230). The twin dynamics of control and rehabilitation, then, were built into the origins of prison recreational sports.

Even at this early stage, however, a further dynamic was introduced. McKelvey interprets the construction of grandstands as indicating that the opportunity for mass participation was sacrificed to an entertaining "amusement program" (1968: 230). When recreational sports became widespread in the United States penitentiary system in the first half of the 20th century, the primary achievement was only "entertainment value" (114).

Institutional Recreation in Canada: 1920-1970

The introduction of recreational or competitive sports into Canadian prisons for men has lagged considerably behind the American experience. In his description of Kingston Penitentiary in the 1920s, Topping noted that there was an "excellent library" as well as occasional concerts and motion picture entertainment. He added, however, "There are no athletic contests of any kind and no games of any sort" (Topping 1930: 38-39).

A Royal Commission was established in Canada in 1936 following a series of riots in Canadian penitentiaries, which began in Kingston in 1932 and spread
throughout the prison system during the next three years (Kidman, 1947: 43). Judge Joseph Archambault, Chairman of the Royal Commission (1938), described the following conditions as undermining prisoner morale and reformation in Canadian Prisons:

They have only half an hour of daily exercise in the open air, spend sixteen out of twenty-four hours in a poorly ventilated cell, and, in winter, a large proportion of their remaining time in stuffy and overheated shops, so that they are practically deprived of exercise, sunshine, and fresh air, which is so essential to their physical and mental development. (Report of the Royal Commission, 1938: 109)

This was despite a 1920 committee recommendation that, on holidays or days when prisoners worked only half-days, prisoners should be permitted outside their cells for at least three hours, one half of which should be spent outdoors (Report of the Royal Commission, 1938: 112).

According to the Penitentiary Regulations in force in 1938, all prisoners were to have at least 30 minutes of exercise in the fresh air in winter (including Sundays) and 40 minutes in the summer. According to Regulation 47, "The exercise shall be, as far as possible, of varied nature, not less than one half of the exercise period shall consist of exercises of a rhythmic or systematic nature such as followed in the Public and High Schools of Canada" (Report of the Royal Commission, 1938: 110). This was in keeping with the demands of order and discipline, modelled after military training. With respect to the other portion of the exercise period, under regulation 48, the prisoners may have "free movement exercise" for not more than half of the
period (fifteen or twenty minutes). With respect to sports or games, the rules were
clear: "No exercise shall be permitted which calls for competition between groups of
convicts or permits or calls for personal contact of convicts" (Report of the Royal
Commission, 1938: 110). In most Canadian penitentiaries, free movement consisted
of little more than walking, silently in a circle. "Volleyball and horseshoes are
played by some prisoners in some penitentiaries, but, in other places, no games of
any kind are allowed" (111).

According to these Regulations, periods of daily recreational exercise were
only available to prisoners who performed indoor work; those who worked
outdoors were excluded from any free movement exercise, including games. Should
the weather be poor, even these periods would be cancelled. Representations to the
Commissioners complained about these limitations and included arguing that the
time allotted was too brief. Furthermore, the type of exercise permitted was too
limited and was "not a form of recreation, but in many cases more of a hardship and
punishment". Instead, "Softball, handball, quoits, and other outdoor games should
be permitted where proper facilities are available", and longer periods should be

The Commissioners concluded that the regulations were "too stringent" and
did not allow sufficient outdoor exercise or recreation. Furthermore, the
Commission recommended that accommodation should be provided for indoor
exercises (Report of the Royal Commission 1938: 111). They noted that more latitude
was given in both the United States and in Britain. In Britain, prisoners had two half-hour exercise periods, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Additional time was given on week-ends and holidays. At Dartmoor Penitentiary, prisoners were allowed on the grounds on Sundays for three separate periods of an hour each (Report of the Royal Commission, 1938: 111).

The Commissioners found that Regulation 48, which forbade competitive sports which involved physical contact, was "too drastic, and bars the introduction of many games that could be played without prejudice to discipline and with some beneficial result." In Britain, where prisoners played competitive games, it was reported that there was less trouble from fighting among prisoners than would be the case outside the prison. This was attributed to the fact that permission to play was a privilege which could be revoked in the case of misbehaviour. Consequently, they recommended that the regulations be relaxed, that a wider scope of games be allowed, and that other prisoners be permitted to become spectators. Participation in recreational sports would help teach self-control (Report of the Royal Commission, 1938: 111).

Nevertheless, there were certain dangers to authority in implementing sports programmes. In Kingston penitentiary, after the 1932 riots, Warden Megloughlin introduced a medicine ball and, subsequently, softball. In the view of the Doctor and Chaplain, better morale and less obscene language resulted. However, the Warden stated, he stopped the softball games because prisoners were abusing the
privilege. In particular, "prisoners made a practice of batting the ball toward the segregation cells in order to get into communication with prisoners segregated there" (Report of the Royal Commission, 1938: 292). In the view of the Commission:

A properly planned program of recreation is a most essential part of prison life. It should be regarded, not as entertainment, but as part of the treatment necessary to strengthen soul, mind, and body. It should absorb time that would otherwise be spent in idleness or brooding, and should be an important factor in reformation. These objects can only be obtained by keeping a prisoner physically fit by adequate outdoor exercise, and by keeping his mind occupied by labour and recreation. (Report of the Royal Commission, 1938: 109)

Consequently, under Recommendation 33, the Commissioners suggested that provision be made for more outdoor physical exercise, based on the principles suggested in their Report. Recreational games should be permitted "according to the age and classification of prisoners" (Report of the Royal Commission, 1938: 357).

As in the United States, recreational programming was also introduced into juvenile reformatories for boys. Regular bi-weekly periods of sports were taking place at the Ontario Reformatory at Guelph in the 1960s. Floor hockey, basketball, boxing, baseball, soccer, touch rugby, and horse-shoe pitching were all available for the prisoners. Particularly in floor hockey and basketball, the inmates usually played with tremendous aggression, resulting in many fights. Injuries such as bruises and broken bones occurred with regularity. Besides the youthfulness of the participants, the Reformatory at Guelph did not employ personnel who were trained in a recreational sports capacity. Because the finer points of these games were not
learned by the inmates, problems resulted. Sportsmanship was not considered to be important, whereas being on the winning team was the primary objective of the inmates (Mann, 1967).

Either when competing at boxing or playing for the prison's basketball team against outside competition, inmates could become "heroes" in the Guelph Reformatory. An outstanding performance warranted an announcement over the prison's public address system and the athlete received recognition. There was no evidence that the participation of sports at this institution created any orientation to physical fitness or good clean athletics for most of the inmates involved, raising questions about the rehabilitative function (Mann, 1967).

Post-War Recreational Sports in United States Prisons

The literature on recreational sports in the United States prisons for men is somewhat larger than similar Canadian writing. For this reason, this section is included to provide examples of types of recreational sports which are implemented in many American prisons and some of the issues which are raised by these programmes.

Increased use of recreational programming in general, and sports in particular, peaked during the rehabilitative phase in United States prisons, in the 1950s and 1960s, during which time several recreational sports programmes were developed in the United States Penitentiary system. Programmes in the state of California – particularly at San Quentin and Folsom – were very well-developed
(Christie, 1993). One prison, called the Karl Holton School, in Stockton, California, operated through a system of behavioural rewards. Good behaviour was rewarded with behavioural change units (BCU's). Various institutional privileges could be purchased with varying amounts of BCU's. The use of recreational facilities included table games, swimming, and table tennis. One issue raised by this system was whether many of the rewards offered could be relied upon as effective measures of short-term or long-term rehabilitation (Hickey and Scharf, 1980). The experience in Stockton indicated that rewards in prison also function as punishments through threatened or actual removal of privileges.

According to Kenyon J. Scudder, recreation and athletics in the prison system at Chino, California, served as an excellent way for inmates to become involved in a respected programme. Many of the prisoners have had to be encouraged to play because very few had ever been involved in recreational activity. Several different athletic games were developed and introduced to the inmates. Softball, table tennis, horseshoes, tennis, handball, squash, volleyball and croquet were all made available to prisoners. Prison authorities hoped that, having discovered these sports outlets in prison, the men would continue their involvement after their release from the institution (Scudder, 1968).

The Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville offers an annual prison rodeo to its inmates. Many prisons offer other programmes which allow inmates to participate and/or attend sporting events on the outside. Picnics, movies, and stunt nights also
take place at this institution. The all-Texas prison rodeo, which is held every October, is an even bigger event than baseball. One year, the rodeo netted more than $250,000 with the proceeds going towards a variety of items vital to prison morale and health which are not financed by the taxpayers, such as sports equipment, television sets, holiday dinners, eyeglasses, and educational materials (Boyle, 1967).

Sing Sing, one of the most well-known prisons for men in the United States, overlooks the Hudson River and is located in Ossining, New York. Ironically, this maximum security institution is best known for two contradictory penology practices: its electric chair and its sports programmes. When the weather is appropriate, the majority of inmates at Sing Sing are found outdoors in the prison yard playing sports such as baseball, softball, or handball. Other prisoners are engaged in lifting weights or pitching horseshoes. Not only is sports a major daily activity at Sing Sing but it is also a high priority at many other prisons throughout North America (Boyle, 1967).

The late Sing Sing Warden, Lewis E. Lawes, has been credited with creating a "sports empire" at this penitentiary and for his important contribution to recreational sports programmes at several other prisons throughout the United States. His strong encouragement for athletics led to the development of varsity teams at Sing Sing that played visiting institutional and semi-professional teams in baseball, football, and basketball (Boyle, 1967).
In an article entitled "Playing the Game on Sing Sing's Field," Lawes provided his rationale for the role of recreational activities within the penal context:

While prisoners are taking their turn on the field; while they argue about their favorite heroes on the diamond or on the gridiron; while they discuss the salient points of a noted ring event or exchange ideas on politics or any other topic of common interest, they are not talking about their "cases"; they forget about length of sentences; they have no time to brood about emotions. They are, during those hours, normal human beings with normal interests. (Boyle, 1967: 31)

Lawes believed that, in order for inmates to straighten out their lives and function in society after their release, it is essential for them to adopt hobbies which will occupy their recreational hours. Warden Lawes also encouraged prisoners with long sentences to play on the various sports teams at Sing Sing:

They have a big fight ahead of them — the fight against despondency. In order to regain society's confidence, it must be a clean fight. Football has all the essentials that encourage men to strive for accomplishment. Whether a halfback or a quarterback is making a touchdown, whether he is punting or making a forward pass, he appreciates the responsibility that is his. It is this sense of duty and allegiance to worthwhile group affiliation that I hope to encourage by football and other athletic events. (Boyle, 1967: 31)

Lawes believed that competition in baseball or football with outside teams was also beneficial for visitors, who would learn that inmates are human beings. It was also a way for the prisoners to appreciate playing the game with their fellow inmates. While Lawes was Warden of Sing Sing, the institution became increasingly involved in sports. Lawes hired Gerald F. Curtin to be the Director of Recreation. Curtin was a former high school baseball and basketball coach. He brought in a
former Notre Dame football player, John Law, to coach the institution's football team. The football programme at Sing Sing became a major sports commodity since outside spectators and media representatives would also attend and report on the games. Sing Sing sports teams became known as the Black Sheep (Boyle, 1967).

Today, football is no longer played at Sing Sing. The institution, however, still has varsity teams in baseball and basketball. They compete with outside teams but all games are played inside the prison walls. The baseball field at Sing Sing has a strong tradition, as some great legends, such as Babe Ruth, have played there at one time or another. Both the baseball and basketball teams are extremely competitive with their opponents from the outside. In the intramural sports leagues at Sing Sing, inmates generally form their teams on a racial basis. There are no interracial playoffs for the championships in each sport, since according to one of Boyle's guard informants, such a match would cause a major riot (Boyle, 1967).

Every Labour Day at Sing Sing is marked with a major event called Field Day. Many competitions are held in several different events and cash prizes are awarded to the winners. A large number of inmates really look forward to the coming of "Field Day" each year (Boyle, 1967).

Once locked up in their cells at night, the inmates are permitted to listen to selected radio programmes until 11:15 pm. Many listen to major league baseball games, either the Mets or the Yankees. "They're very much sports-minded in here," claims Recreation Director Gerald Curtin. After that, Boyle concludes, it is lights out.
and time to sleep. Usually this is not a problem as most of the inmates are tired from the day's activities and are thinking about the big game the next day (Boyle, 1967: 37).

Dannemora, another New York State maximum security prison, is equipped with a bobsled track and a ski jump in the winter. Green Haven, yet another New York State maximum security prison, is well known for its croquet. Prisoners at the San Quentin prison in California have access to twelve different sporting activities ranging from quiet non-physical events such as chess, to rough and active ones such as boxing (Boyle, 1967).

Twenty-one prisons for men in the United States, in 1967, had a National Baseball Congress Umpire School. One such prison was the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia. It was believed that being an umpire developed one's personality, sharpened one's wits, and broadened one's perspective. It gave a person better control over him/her self. In the state of Texas there were twelve baseball mens' prison teams, and each played one another. The winners in the northern and southern divisions played for the "World Series" (Boyle, 1967). At one time, Ferguson prison had won the title for two consecutive years. Warden Kenneth Coleman gave most of the credit to inmate Hank Thompson, a former major League third baseman. Thompson, he said, did an excellent job as a coach, teaching many young inmates the fundamentals of baseball (Boyle, 1967).

According to New York State Corrections Commissioner Paul McGinnis,
Any prison that doesn't have a good recreational program is missing one of the most important areas in rehabilitation" (Boyle, 1967: 30-1). McGinnis is quoted as saying that even at their Reception Centre in Elmira, they pay special attention to athletic interests and abilities of each individual. "Sports give the prisoner an opportunity to burn up a lot of energy, and if it burns it up in sports, it solves a lot of problems for him, emotionally and otherwise, about confinement in an institution" (Boyle, 1967: 30-1).

Telander (1975) has written about weight lifting in the recreation programme at the Illinois State Penitentiary at Statesville. His article clearly identifies the fact that prisons – and the Statesville institution was no exception – are often disrupted by violent outbursts precipitated the conditions of confinement faced by the inmate populations. Telander reported the following comment from the Supervisor of Recreation at the Statesville Institution. "Sport is the best outlet for the hostilities and energies of most of these men. Our main motivation is not rehabilitation, but the safety of the institution" (Telander, 1975: 34).

In 1972 and in 1974, Statesville won the national weight lifting meets with other correctional institutions. Statesville was unable to compete in 1973 because all inmates at the institution were locked-down in their cells for the summer as a result of disturbances within the prison. The weight lifters found this restriction difficult to accept because none of them were involved in the trouble (Telander, 1975: 40).

One of the inmates involved in the weight lifting programme insisted that he
did not at all enjoy this outlet. "To me it's a job. There isn't much pleasure involved. On the outside I'm a mechanic, but in here I lift." He believed that the programme was more in the order of a form of self-discipline as part of his survival programme for life in a prison for men. According to Telander's report, this inmate said: "For four years now I've been lifting and I feel it's my job — my duty — to lift. I need it because I'm gonna do my own time, work, and forget everything else I see" (Telander, 1975: 40). Several other inmates agreed with this philosophy. The main object of the programme seemed to be that it helped pass the time more quickly.

Corrections officials believed in the mid-1970s that the future was looking brighter for Statesville. In the spring of 1975, a new Warden had just taken over who was a power lifter himself. He garnered great respect among the inmate weightlifting population and apparently understood the value of athletics to progressive rehabilitation. The new Warden was also the leading force behind a project to build an updated gymnasium at an estimated cost of $100,000. However, some Statesville employees predict that there would always be trouble at Statesville (Telander, 1975).

According to Flynn, however, these examples may be exceptions to the general situation. In his view, in the United States, recreation is severely lacking within the ageing prison system. Approximately fifty percent of state maximum security institutions were constructed between 1830 and 1900 and had few recreational provisions. The situation for jails in the United States is even worse.
Jails are even older, and eighty-three per cent have absolutely no recreational or educational facilities. Over half of these jails do not even have medical facilities of any kind (Flynn, 1974).

Working within the punitive public context of their day, early prisons did not provide recreation for inmates. Only since the turn of the century have prisons given inmates any opportunity to invest time in recreational pursuits. At the time when imprisonment was known strictly as punishment, recreation had no place in the system. Since the concept of rehabilitation has become established early in the twentieth century, recreation has become a much greater issue in institutional life.

As O'Morrow and Reynolds have pointed out:

Provision of recreation service is considered by many investigators, civic leaders, and individuals associated within the criminal justice system to be one of the most important parts of the correctional process. It is their opinion that recreation services within the correctional process can reduce not only youth crime but adult crime. (O'Morrow and Reynolds, 1989: 103)

Nonetheless, the absence of extensive recreational provisions in the majority of correctional institutions constructed in the 1960's and early 1970's suggest that recreational reform has not been a fundamental component of rehabilitative thinking. Most of these facilities were built with the intention of simply holding inmates at the lowest possible cost. Flynn (1974) concludes that there were better inmate attitudes and higher morale in those institutions that stressed recreation programmes. In his view, recreation facilities as well as scheduled recreation
activities should be seen as essential elements in correctional programmes and not as luxuries or frills. Flynn considers these recreation activities to be a vital component of the physical and mental health of all inmates (Flynn, 1974: 58).

Conclusions

In recent years, penal institutions for men have changed their focus from "revenge" to "reintegration." Positive change is encouraged for inmates as opposed to strictly punitive measures for their wrong-doing. One important step towards this focus is a more open area of staff/inmate relations (Hagan, 1989: 9). Based on his research in Australia, Hagan claims that recreational sports can facilitate the goals of being physically fit, unbroken in spirit, and able and willing to enter into normal social relations. It also potentially helps to maintain a better quality of life for inmates on a day-to-day basis. Recreational sports facilities and programmes also have the capacity to assist in the management of the institution, although this is largely dependent upon how prison administration views recreation as part of prison life and how they intend to implement it (Hagan, 1989: 10).

Hagan stresses that recreational sports facilities, equipment, and programmes can assist inmates in adjusting and coping with the prison's "hostile environment" as well as preparing them for their return to freedom. He claims that the development of appropriate and effective programmes can produce better institutional management within the prison (Hagan, 1989: 10). Hagan believes that recreational sports facilities should serve two main purposes. First, they relieve the daily
tensions and stress created by incarceration and, second, they provide opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills to sustain inmates socially and emotionally, both in prison and upon return to the "outside world" (Hagan, 1989: 10). In those institutions emphasising recreation and sport, there were greatly improved inmate attitudes and higher morale (Hagan, 1989: 10). According to McGrath:

The recreation programmes in a prison should be deliberately planned, and not represent merely a way to spend unoccupied time. Sports, handicrafts and such activities as drama, art and music are important. Some hobbies can further the inmate's knowledge of his chosen trade. Again, properly qualified staff in sufficient numbers to handle both individual and group activities are needed. (McGrath, 1968: 67, cited in Hagan, 1989: 10)

This strategy is one of the main objectives declared in the official statement of policy of the Australian Corrections Association (Hagan, 1989: 10).

Hagan concluded that, even though prison is a means of punishment, inmates still retain certain rights as members of society. These rights, along with certain short-term and long-term objectives, are the major reason for making recreation programmes available for inmates in prison. Such programmes may enhance inmate concepts of self-actualisation, self-esteem, self-worth, and facilitate positive integration into society after release. In addition, such programmes are used as a management tool and for maintaining "good order." The belief is that, through sport and recreation, tension is relieved and social control is maintained (Hagan, 1989: 11).

In retrospect, this social control function may be all that remains as a rationale
for prison sports. The emphasis on rehabilitation as a fundamental goal of this prison system was a short-lived phenomenon. With the rise and fall of the medical model of rehabilitation, a new emphasis on punishment and retribution has turned the clock back to earlier modes of control. As a result of crowded and tense conditions in many of our prisons today, survival has largely become the principal goal. The issue of rehabilitation becomes secondary at best, while the management of chaotic conditions becomes the principal goal. In the United States, some sixty percent of inmates released from state and federal lockups return to prison. This high recidivism rate contributes to overcrowding, which in turn causes major problems (Sullivan and Victor, 1993: 186).

In this atmosphere, the rehabilitative enterprise as a whole is being seriously questioned. Many wonder if successful rehabilitation programmes in the prison system would reduce the crime rate. Ernest Van Den Haag, a well-known criminologist, does not believe they would. He states that rehabilitation programmes can only be used for people who have already been caught breaking the law and convicted. Therefore, prison rehabilitation programmes have no effect on first time offenders as well as habitual criminals who have not been convicted. Van Den Haag is in pursuit of increased punishment to reduce the crime rate and to give criminals their due. He is also very sceptical of the rehabilitation of criminals using treatment-oriented programmes (Siegel, 1989: 132).

Van Den Haag believes that as long as there exists an advantage – in wealth,
power, pleasure, and social gain – in committing crimes, there will also exist a ready
pool of recruits ready to take advantage of it. Only when punishments are severe
enough and the chance of being caught is great, will crime be reduced. Rehabilitation, then, is doomed to failure:

The only hope for reducing the burgeoning crime rate lies in decreasing the expected net advantage of committing crimes (compared to lawful activities) by increasing the cost through increasing the expected severity of punishments and the problem of suffering them. (Siegel, 1989: 132)

As we shall see, this reiteration of a punitive penal philosophy has implications for the continuation of recreational sports in the prison.

This brief snapshot of some of the recreational sports programmes available in United States institutions high-lights several key issues which will be elaborated upon in the following chapter. Recreation is deemed to fulfil two main functions in the prison setting: rehabilitation and social control. The evidence from the articles reviewed above suggested that primarily positive benefits occurred from sports programmes in prisons. The reality of the situation is more complicated.
CHAPTER THREE

Recreational Sports Programmes in the Prison System: Key Issues

Reviewing the literature of recreational programmes within the male penitentiary context, it is relatively easy to appreciate that one of the major issues in an intense debate over this question concerns their value to the federal correctional system. A significant amount of research has uncovered the fact that there may indeed be several problems involved with prison recreation as well as establishing respectable programmes in a variety of institutions. These problems may show us ways in which recreation/athletics could have a negative influence on corrections and on society as a whole.

Learning Theory and Aggression

According to Drinkwater (1980), athletes competing at almost every level of competitive sport are likely to display signs of anti-social and hostile behaviour during and after events. Sports which include contact are, in particular, more likely to instil such behaviour. Spectators as well as participants are vulnerable to this behaviour pattern. Drinkwater attempted to determine whether these aggressive behaviours are instinctive and natural or whether they are learned in a specific context of society. He emphasised the importance of determining whether such aspects of organised competition are healthy forms of expression or fundamentally undesirable manifestations of aggression (Drinkwater, 1980: 41).
In his analysis, Drinkwater discusses the three main theoretical approaches to this issue that have been mobilised to account for human aggression. They are the innate or instinctive theory, the learned behaviour theory, and Moyer's alternative. The specific area of his study examines whether or not participation in organised sports will increase or decrease a person's aggressive behaviour. The innate or instinctive theory suggests that aggression is inherent in all organisms. The instincts of anger and resentment are dormant within humans and may erupt at any time. The learned theory states that aggression is learned and is not instinctive behaviour. Children who see violence, for example, may behave in a violent way at some point in time. On the other hand, Moyer's alternative does not maintain that aggression resides solely in one's genes; nor is it an entirely learned phenomenon. His theory suggests that a person's aggressiveness depends upon the state of one's mood, which in turn is determined by the state of his/her nervous system. For example, when a person is happy and content, there are very few things which can make him/her angry. Should he/she be irascible, there are several things which can make him/her angry. Moyer's alternative theorises that aggression might be determined by both internal and external variables (Drinkwater, 1980: 41-43).

According to Berkowitz, who reinforces the learned theory of aggression, increasing data indicate that athletic competition within prison programmes does not necessarily reduce the chances of violence. He also maintains that participating in a sports event may make inmates become more aggressive as a result of the
competition. This may result in a greater probability of aggressive outbursts. He believes that participants who become angry during an activity do not appear to release this hostility through the vigorous activity. Instead, they tend to become more violent generally. It is also believed that those who lose when competing have a higher aggression level as a result (Berkowitz, 1973; cited in Drinkwater, 1980: 43).

Two different forms of aggression are described in the article by Drinkwater. Instrumental aggression is aggressive behaviour used to achieve a goal in which harm to another person is incidental. Reactive aggression is aggressive behaviour in which the purpose is injury or harm to another person. In most cases, the aggressive behaviour which occurs in sports is seen as incidental. The participant’s goal is strictly to win the game (Drinkwater, 1980: 43-4).

From the results of his study, Drinkwater concluded that aggressive acts committed during an athletic event may lead to further aggression and to some reduction of inhibitions on later occasions. Citing Berkowitz, Drinkwater claims that, because violence breeds violence, it is best to discourage any form of violent behaviour even in a “controlled” environment. A widespread approval of violence in sport exists in society along with many violent models. The result is more illegitimate violence taking place (Drinkwater, 1980: 44).

According to Drinkwater, the learning theorists have made a fairly strong case to substantiate their argument that participation in competitive sports may contribute to the growth and development of violence in our society. One
perspective is that recreation specialists should be searching for stimuli to inhibit feelings of hostility and aggression as opposed to developing more physically competitive programmes in an effort to control and release aggression. Aggression control must be taught because it may help to curb aggressive tendencies (Drinkwater, 1980: 44).

Not all social scientists believe that prison sports programmes are primarily harmful. Morris (1977) states that one of the biggest problems in the prison system is the deterioration in the conditions of detention for the long-term inmate population for whom overcrowding is not the issue. The long-term inmates have suffered from the dispersal policy. This policy holds that prisons must be concerned with security first and foremost, with other issues being unimportant. In the process, some of the programmes which have suffered include education and recreation. This is problematic because such programmes help to lower tension in prisons and build better relationships between staff and inmates (Morris, 1977).

According to Williams and Orton (cited by O'Morrow and Reynolds, 1989: 103), most conventional social activities in prison are sedentary, non-physically active, singular types of pursuits. O'Morrow and Reynolds suggest that current recreational services in most correctional centres have little effect on the life-styles of inmates. As a result, they concede that such services play a marginal role in the rehabilitation process (O'Morrow and Reynolds, 1989). They also believe that one of the major problems in prison recreation is that it primarily serves the purpose of
alleviating boredom and passing the time more quickly. They proposed six principles for an effective recreation programme to assist in a comprehensive rehabilitation process. Their principles are as follows:

1. Leisure services must be recognised and acknowledged as an essential and viable component of the total rehabilitative effort of community and institutional correctional programs.
2. Leisure services must become an integral component of the offender's treatment process.
3. The purpose and content of recreational programs in correctional settings must be redefined.
4. The use of community recreational resources must be emphasised.
5. Changes in staff and offender roles and responsibility for recreational must be initiated.
6. The efficacy of the recreational service intervention in corrections must be documented through empirical investigation. (O'Morrow and Reynolds, 1989: 103)

O'Morrow and Reynolds claimed that a transformation of the recreational services is required if they are to assist in the rehabilitation process. They must be taken more seriously and given greater priority by the institutions as well as the communities in order to accomplish anything positive. A greater sense of purpose must also be understood in the system and community resources should be emphasised. The roles of both staff and inmates must change within recreational programmes and there must be more documentation on the subject for future resource. With changes such as these, O'Morrow and Reynolds believe that recreational programmes in correctional institutions would be an effective part of a prisoner’s rehabilitation process (O'Morrow and Reynolds, 1989).

Besharov and Mueller (1972) discussed the demands made by inmates at
Attica State Prison regarding their confinement and management. In regard to recreation, one demand made by the inmates was to reduce the amount of time spent in their cells and increase the amount of time for recreation. They also insisted that better recreational facilities be provided (Besharov and Mueller, 1972). The rules at that time stated the following:

1. Every prisoner who is not employed in outdoor work shall have at least one hour of suitable exercise in the open air daily if the weather permits.
2. Young prisoners, and others of suitable age and physique, shall receive physical and recreational training during the period of exercise. To this end, space, installations and equipment should be provided. (Besharov and Mueller, 1972: 848-9)

Inmates in Attica complained that the allotted time was inadequate and that the necessary facilities had not been provided.

Card (1983) claims that economic conditions have created additional sources of stress in the correctional setting. She states that, often, the poor attitudes of recreation professionals add to inmate stress. The major factor limiting stress management in correctional institutions is a lack of understanding of the value, importance, and perceived freedom of leisure. Once the inmate has determined that recreation is a constructively positive use of time rather than a negative time to waste, stress can be reduced (Card, 1983).

According to Card, the lack of government funds, detrimental social attitudes and legislation, limited staffing, reduced rehabilitation programmes, overcrowding, inadequate facilities, sparse equipment, and old-fashioned recreation philosophies
have continued and heightened inmate stress. Such inmate stress may itself be a substantial contributor to severe inmate violence. Recreation professionals in correctional institutions may also increase inmate stress because they often do not understand the central value and rehabilitative importance of recreational activities which, in themselves, enhance inmates' sense of personal freedom. In a correctional setting, perceived freedom through recreation is in contrast to the restraints which closely surround prison life (Card, 1983).

Many inmates recognise that recreational competence is available to them in only a very limited way. As well, a large number of inmates are interested in recreational activities which are not offered. As a result, stress will understandably increase among inmates in the prison setting. Often, the stated recreational needs of inmates are not even considered when developing a recreation programme (Card, 1983).

Another problem with prison recreation programmes involves factors associated with motivation. Inmates often participate in activities for the rewards they are offered, such as refreshments, trophies, and weekend passes. If inmate participation is due to extrinsic motivators instead of intrinsic motivators, the depth of their involvement will likely be shallow. In other words, inmates who take part in recreational activities because of their own personal interest in them will likely reap greater benefits than those who become involved primarily through the persuasion of others (Card, 1983).
In addition to reiterating the common finding that in many correctional institutions, recreation facilities and equipment are inadequate and few programmes are offered, Card adds that many inmates possess poor social skills and believe that fighting is an acceptable way of venting anger over a game-rule infraction (Card, 1983). The result is often a large number of fights and considerable violence during many recreational sporting events. In addition, injuries are common in many institutions due to the rough play in many activities.

In Card's view, different measures need to be used in an effort to alleviate the amount of stress caused by correctional institutions. Thorough recreational assessments must be conducted in order to establish the relationship between recreational freedom and reduced stress. Recreation programmes should be based on more extensive and more reliable analysis in order to ensure high-quality programmes. Another important issue is that inmates must become competent in many recreational activities as opposed to only a few. Giving the inmates increased control of their activities will also help to satisfy their needs by having deeper involvement in their activities (Card, 1983). According to Card, stress can only be reduced once the inmate has changed his/her outlook on recreation and it has become a positive influence on life as opposed to a negative influence. This will also elevate the status of the recreation programme (Card, 1983: 4).

In short, while recreational sports can provide opportunities for acts of both instrumental and reactive aggression (Drinkwater, 1980), recreation specialists argue
that the negative influences can be minimised by careful implementation and monitoring. It is the attitude towards competition and aggression which must be changed in order for the potential benefits of sports programming to be realised. Currently, however, a new concern about recreation heightening inmate violence has surfaced in the United States, concerning the consequences of inmate weight lifting.

**Does Recreation Contribute to Aggression? The Weight Lifting Debate**

Over the past few years, there has been a continuous debate in the United States regarding the availability of free weights for federal male inmates. The main arguments reflect the possible added dangers associated with having this form of recreation in the prison setting. One view is that inmates will become stronger and more capable of violent criminal activity both within institutions and following their release. Another argument is that free weights create a much greater danger for Corrections Officers. It is also argued that teaching self-defence to federal prison inmates may lessen the workplace safety of Corrections Officers (Pryce-Stupak Amendment, 1994: 1).

Evidence of the dangers of the use of free weights was apparent during a 1993 riot at Lucasville Prison in Ohio, when inmates used free weights to batter down a concrete wall protecting guards. Eleven guards were taken hostage and one was killed. In March of 1994, inmates used weight lifting equipment as weapons against Corrections Officers in a riot at Rikers Island Prison in New York. One
guard was nearly beaten to death with a fifty-pound weight (Pryce-Stupak Amendment, 1994: 1).

The Pryce-Stupak Amendment, currently before the United States Senate, is believed by its supporters to be one important solution to the increasing violence against Corrections Officers by bigger, stronger prisoners. This amendment was made to help send the message that prison is a place for punishment and rehabilitation, not a place where those incarcerated can refine the skills that landed them there (Pryce-Stupak Amendment, 1994: 1).

Supporters of this amendment believe it is ludicrous that those convicted of violent crimes are using resources provided by taxpayers money to become even more capable of violent acts. In reference to the riots at prisons in Ohio and New York, supporters claim it should be common sense to keep potentially dangerous equipment away from prisoners so that further damage is not done (Pryce-Stupak Amendment, 1994: 2).

Fundamental to this belief is that weight training in the prison environment is, minimally, of no value to the prison or to society in general and that it simply costs the taxpayers more money. Removal of such facilities and activities from prisons will certainly not solve the problem of crime; however, according to the supporters of the amendment, it is definitely a step in the right direction. The amendment will not deprive the prisoners of anything essential to their health or rehabilitation (Pryce-Stupak Amendment, 1994: 2-3).
Pryce claims to understand the value of exercise as an inmate management tool. However, she believes that there are many other forms of exercise that cost less and make more sense, such as basketball, jogging, aerobics, handball, and callisthenics. She states that taxpayers' money is providing convicted criminals with state-of-the-art health clubs that are larger than and superior to similar facilities in many high schools and universities. Education should be made a far greater priority as opposed to weight training facilities and equipment (Pryce-Stupak Amendment, 1994: 4-5).

A broader statement as to why weight training equipment should be excluded from the prison environment is the belief that inmates have access to far too many luxuries and live a higher standard of life than many people on the outside. Robert Bidinotto, an award winning journalist, argues that, at Mercer Regional Correctional Facility in Pennsylvania, hardened criminals have access to a full-sized basketball court, handball area, punching bags, volleyball nets, fifteen sets of barbells, weight lifting machines, electronic bicycles, and stairmasters facing a television (Senate Additional Comments, 1995: 1).

Bidinotto makes reference to other instances of inmates enjoying a comfortable lifestyle. David Jirovec, a Washington State man convicted of hiring two hit men to kill his wife, is allowed conjugal visits from his new wife. At Sullivan, a high security prison in Fallsburg, New York, prisoners hold regular jam sessions in a music room crowded with electric guitars, amplifiers, drums, and
keyboards. In Jefferson City Missouri, inmates run a closed circuit television studio and broadcast movies filled with sex and violence. In the Massachusetts Correctional Institution in Norfolk, Massachusetts, thirty-three prisoners doing life sentences – mostly murderers – and forty-nine of their invited guests, dined on catered prime rib in the two million dollar visitor’s centre (Senate Additional Comments, 1995: 1).

Larry Meachum, Commissioner of Corrections in the State of Connecticut, arguing a conventional rehabilitation view, stated, "we must attempt to modify criminal behavior and hopefully not return a more damaged human being to society than we received" (Senate Additional Comments, 1995: 1). The Prison Work Act of 1995, however, sends out a different message than the liberal social rehabilitation philosophy. It states:

Prisons should be places of work and organised education, not resort hotels, counselling centers, or social laboratories. It ensures that time spent in prison is not good time but rather devoted to hard work and education. This is a far more constructive approach to rehabilitation. (Senate Additional Comments, 1995: 1-2)

Focusing more narrowly on weight training, there are many who feel that weight lifting is an essential part of a prison's rehabilitation programme. This belief is held strongly by the National Correctional Recreation Association (NCRA), which was founded in 1966 by a small group of correctional recreation leaders. These people were mainly Custody Officers who had displayed an interest in sports. While they were primarily assigned to the gym and yard areas, directing
programmes in weight lifting, baseball and football, they came together for mutual support and education (NCRA, 1995: 1).

The objectives of the NCRA are as follows: (1) To create and maintain professional standards in the field of correctional recreation; (2) to create and foster interest in correctional recreation; (3) to inform professionals, inmates, and the public at large of the requirements and benefits of correctional recreation programmes; (4) to encourage opportunities for constructive use of recreational time during incarceration and upon release; (5) to help reintegration of the inmate into society through recreational experiences and, (6) to provide a means for communication among professionals interested in correctional recreation through formal and informal support mechanisms, an annual conference and training institute, and publications (NCRA, 1995: 3).

The NCRA argues that weight training programmes are an integral part of rehabilitation within the correctional setting. They claim that properly administered weight training programmes are a key asset in the daily management of the prison environment, as well as potential cost-effective activities (NCRA, 1995: 4). Weight training programmes give inmates recreational skills which they may utilise following their release from prison. Most of the factors contributing to crime include intoxicants and/or firearms. Physical strength and size generally have little significance in comparison. Weight training can supply an offender with emotional, psychological, and physiological benefits as part of a comprehensive programme.
Weight training is also a means of contributing to good institutional management by providing an outlet through which offenders can relieve stress and anxiety in a healthy manner while, at the same time, helping to eliminate inmate idleness during incarceration (NCRA, 1995: 4).

The supporters of the Pryce-Stupak Amendment have a broad agenda aimed at reiterating the punitive nature of imprisonment. The focus on weight training is only the most visible part of the issue of the cost resources available to prisoners. The NCRA represents correctional workers who have an interest in the continuance of such programmes, on the grounds that benefits outweigh the costs. We next turn our attention to the recreational opportunities available in United States prisons.

Research on Prison Recreation in the United States

Boudouris and Brady (1980) conducted a content analysis of thirty essays written by male inmates at the Iowa State Penitentiary at Fort Madison. The inmates identified a total of 184 items which were of concern to them. Seven of the thirty inmates, or 23.3 percent, mentioned recreation as a concern. But recreation/leisure activities accounted for only 3.8 percent of the total 184 items identified by the inmates (Boudouris and Brady, 1980). This kind of research underlines the size of the gap between the goals and desires of some within the correctional system.

According to Stein and Sessoms (1973), forty-four percent of an inmates waking hours are devoted to leisure. The recreation staff — under the direction of the Prison Administrator — decides how they wish to utilise this time (Lengfelder,
In a 1981 survey of correctional institutions throughout the United States, only sixty-three percent of the institutions responded. Out of the responses, just over fifty percent of these institutions had a written policy concerning recreation. Sports activities such as basketball, softball, volleyball, and weight training were available to the inmates in at least fifty percent of the institutions. The survey also showed that even these institutions had a serious shortage of recreational resources beyond the four core activities (Crutchfield, Garrette, and Worrall, 1981; cited by Lengfelder, Slater, and Groves, 1992).

Despite many problems in the prison system, improvements are being made in the recreational area of corrections. Kraus pointed out in 1989, for example, that thirty-three states were under federal order to improve living conditions and to provide recreational services to all inmates. Ohio, Illinois, Georgia, Nebraska, and California are among the states which have moved the most rapidly in improving their correctional institutions (Kraus, 1989).

Recreational sports in prisons are generally comprised of either individual or programmed athletics. Just as in post-secondary or high school athletics, both varsity and intramural programmes are available. The majority of prisoners and correctional institutions have athletic teams in football, basketball, and baseball that compete against outside teams. A majority of the teams they play against are local, either industrial or semi-professional. They also compete against local college or
university teams. The most popular individual sport in prison is boxing. Many of
the top boxers in prison learned the sport during incarceration. Its popularity can be
attributed to the fact it is an individual sport. Many inmates who do not relate well
with others become involved in boxing for this reason.

The state of Nebraska has taken serious measures to evaluate and strengthen
the role of recreation in its correctional institutions. The state legislature appointed a
committee to investigate the kinds of activities offered and the attitudes and
functions of four subgroups of state institutions with respect to recreation. These
subgroups consisted of administration, guards, recreation staff, and inmates.
Generally, across all four groups, there was little support for recreation or
understanding of its value. The opinions varied considerably on the amount of time
which should be spent on recreation and the types of policies which should govern
such programmes. As a result of this study, the recreational programmes in
Nebraska were re-evaluated in an effort to rectify this situation. New recreation
positions were soon created with higher salaries. Better recreation facilities and
equipment were also provided. It was also determined that administration, guards,
recreation staff, and inmates would take part in education programmes in
recreation, in order to increase the effectiveness of the programme (Kraus, 1989).

One example of improvement in the Nebraska State Department of
Correctional Services is the new Lincoln Correctional Centre. This facility, which
serves as an institution holding younger male offenders, was especially designed to
meet the requirement for a quality recreation programme. The facility includes a gymnasium with a full-size basketball court and floor markings for other indoor sports. It also has indoor and outdoor areas for weight lifting, volleyball, handball, racquetball, softball, tennis, flag football, and jogging. It also has space for other non-athletic recreational activities such as music, reading, drama, and crafts. The facility employs six recreation professionals (Kraus, 1989). According to Murphy and von Minden,

The centre also invites various athletic teams to compete with teams from the inside . . . [such as] intramural teams from local colleges and universities and municipal recreation leagues [as well as various] law enforcement agencies and the state highway patrol. (Murphy and Von Minden, 1981: 50; cited in Kraus, 1989: 344)

At the Lincoln location, a select group of offenders are given the opportunity to compete in recreation events against competition from outside the walls of the institution. The recreation staff also trains inmates to become coaches, officials, timers, and event organisers. Murphy and Von Minden also found:

Offenders who experience nothing but hard time are less amenable to counselling, direction, and behavioural change than those offenders whose free time is spent in a positive manner . . . . Recreation will continue to serve as a bridge between hard time and free time for those offenders who wish to use it. (Murphy and Von Minden, 1981: 50; cited in Kraus, 1989: 345)

It should be noted that positive uses of recreation as described at the Lincoln Correctional Centre are limited in number and in scope. Far too often, administrators are reluctant or unable to allocate sufficient funds for recreational
programmes. Guards often resist such activities because they may interfere with their primary job responsibility for security. Even correctional institutions with exclusively female inmates, despite the fact that they are less violent, often lack sufficient recreational programmes (Kraus, 1989).

Security measures often made it difficult for Recreation Directors to bring in volunteer workers, even though the use of such volunteers could help expand various recreation programmes. Volunteer workers entering the prison must be carefully screened to be sure they are not relatives or friends of inmates. These volunteers could be extremely beneficial in events such as umpiring or refereeing sports events (Stein and Sessoms, 1973).

Participation Patterns in Prison Recreation

Romsa and Hoffman conducted a survey of patterns of male non-participation in nineteen prison recreational activities. They examined the differences in perceived barriers to participation in these activities between two main criteria: upper and lower socio-economic class and active and less active types of activities. In the study, four variables were evaluated as possible explanations for non-participation: lack of interest, lack of facilities, lack of time, and lack of funds (Romsa and Hoffman, 1980; cited in Jackson and Searle, 1983: 5-11).

Much of the study dealt with whether or not respondents desired to participate in new recreational activities. The range of this desire was from a low of 38.6 percent in one prison to 64.9 percent in the most active prison. The respondents
with the least desire to take on a new activity had primarily been involved in outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing as well as creative-cultured, passive activities, and golf. On the other hand, those with a greater desire for a new activity preferred social, exercise-oriented and self-propelled activities and team sports. It was also determined that the younger the respondent the greater desire there was for a new activity. This may explain why the younger respondents desire for new activities was also greater than that of the older ones (Jackson and Searle, 1983: 5-11).

As mentioned, four reasons for non-participation were reviewed in the study. Inmates who participate in prison recreation rarely have concern about insufficient time, facilities, or funds, Jackson and Searle claim. Facilities in some prisons are respectable and often better than many outside the system. Inmates usually have no shortage of time on their hands. Many claim that, when doing time in a prison environment, the most difficult part is passing the time. The recreation programmes are funded by the institution, often with assistance from the federal government. Funding is also rarely an issue limiting inmate participation in prison recreation (Jackson and Searle, 1983: 5-11).

The fourth reason for non-participation examined in this study was a lack of interest in participating. In the wider society, where people exercise greater freedom and have access to many different events in their lives, interest may be a determining factor in explaining participation rates. Incarcerated prisoners, on the other hand, have fewer options and much more time on their hands. Even many
who, at one time, lacked interest in recreational sports, may discover them as being enjoyable (Jackson and Searle, 1983: 5-11).

Aguilar and Asmussen (1990) conducted a study on recreation in one maximum/medium state penitentiary with a population of seven hundred male inmates. There are three full-time staff members who run the recreation programme at this institution. Weekday hours of the programme are generally from eight a.m. to eight p.m., while activities also take place on weekends from noon until eight p.m. The main goal of this programme is to provide the inmates with a comprehensive recreation programme which will improve their self esteem, promote positive attitude changes, and relieve tension and stress (Aguilar and Asmussen, 1990).

In the Aguilar and Asmussen study, a total of 496 inmates were surveyed. Only 172 questionnaires were returned and only 165 (thirty-three percent of the population) were fully completed. A high illiteracy rate as well as inmate suspicion of such studies might explain the low response rate. Participants in this study ranged in age from twenty-two to sixty-eight years with a mean age of 35.4 years. The racial distribution was fairly representative of the total inmate ethnic distribution. Respondents had spent from as little as one month to over ten years at the facility with a mean stay of 51.3 months (Aguilar and Asmussen, 1990). The results indicated that many inmates do not feel inclined to participate in many active events. The most frequent activity, in which seventy-two percent of the respondents took part, was watching sports on television. Fifty-one percent of the respondents
claimed to do weight training in the gymnasium, forty-two percent said they were spectators in the gym, forty percent admitted to using the outdoor weights, thirty-nine percent asserted that they "hung around" the gym, thirty-nine percent participated in the softball programme, and thirty-five percent of the respondents declared that they were "into jogging" (Aguilar and Asmussen, 1990).

While twenty-five percent of the subjects stated that they did not use any of the recreation facilities, seventy-two percent reported using recreation facilities at least one hour per day. It was also determined that the youngest age group of inmates used the recreation facilities the most. This was both with respect to highly physical and less physically demanding activities (Aguilar and Asmussen, 1990).

In the portion of the survey relegated to changes in recreation participation, fifty-two percent of the inmates reported a discontinuance of various activities as a result of incarceration, twenty-three percent reported having learned new activities during their time in prison, eighty-three percent of the inmates agreed they had plans to continue participation in recreation after their release from prison. Only twelve percent reported that they had no such plans to continue their involvement in recreation (Aguilar and Asmussen, 1990). In discussing their findings, Aguilar and Asmussen determined that a limited availability of recreation facilities, equipment, and activities is a potential cause for meaningless and non-constructive use of inmate time. They also pointed out that limited staff availability inevitably leads to limited programme availability (Aguilar and Asmussen, 1990).
Nearly twenty-five percent of the inmates surveyed reported learning new recreational skills during their incarceration. One speculation which could be made from this is that if the recreation programme expanded its goal to educating inmates, a higher number of prisoners would increase their recreational skills, knowledge, and/or awareness. Another interpretation is that those inmates reporting educational benefit were independently motivated to change themselves in some way while in prison (Aguilar and Asmussen, 1990).

Even though facilities and structured events are offered and seem to be useful, a large number of inmates still remain passive or sedentary. It appears as though recreational education and recreational counselling are two areas which could address teaching skills, expand interests, and promote more acceptable uses of free time. One problem with education and counselling of recreational time was noted to be the inmate/staff ratio. These ratios have been reported to range from 100:1 to 308:1 (Aguilar and Asmussen, 1990).

Recreation: Does it Play a Role in Rehabilitation?

Regardless of the form that recreational sports takes in prison, it appears likely that keeping fit through physical education and exercise has become increasingly important throughout society. This trend has spread into the prison system for men where physical education seems to be an important endeavour in the minds of many inmates. As citizens, some suggest, this is partly because the activity itself helps to fend off one's physical and mental decline as well as being an
agent in bringing together staff and prisoners in a format of respect for physical fitness (McDermott and King, 1989).

The use of recreational time has ranked high, along with education of the young, religion, organising the family around the home, and work, as a basic framework for modern personal goals. Leisure has been the means of obtaining many individual and social benefits. Constructive use of recreational time gives human beings an outlet for creativity and self-expression, for an activity drive. According to Nash, this "drive may be expressed high on a scale in terms of the explorer, inventor, discoverer or in the limitless types of hobbies." Nash added that, "recreation has not only played an important part in the treatment program of the mentally ill, but it has kept patients well" (Nash, 1971: 119-120).

In this light, recreation is a potentially valuable rehabilitative tool in corrections. By giving prisoners a more balanced life which includes recreation, employees of prisons are able to work with inmates much more effectively. Sports is not the only form of recreation found in correctional settings. Those who are not able or willing to participate in physically active sports should have other options available to them (Stein and Sessoms, 1973: 111).

McDermott and King (1989) found that prisoners are very much involved with physical education for two reasons. First, it helps to defend against a prisoner's physical and mental decline. Second, it helps to create a better relationship between the prisoner and the prison staff. Prisons have also become interested in today's
growing health trend in society.

The most logical way to determine the value of any rehabilitative programme is to evaluate their success rates, usually measured in terms of recidivism rates, and by understanding the inmates' perceptions of the rehabilitative powers of recreation programmes. According to McIntosh (1986), research in this area is limited. However, existing research suggests that, according to the inmates, there are several problems with existing recreation programmes.

Some of the claims that inmates made about such programmes were as follows: facilities were inadequate and poorly administered, the programmes lacked specific goals, the programmes helped pass the time but served no rehabilitative purpose, recreational interests were not being learned during incarceration, there was very little carry-over value of prison activities because too many of the sports were team oriented, and attitudes towards recreational activities were mostly formed before one's incarceration and would rarely be changed by any available rehabilitation programmes (McIntosh, 1986).

At the very least, correctional recreation activities should serve as safe and constructive outlets for inmates to release their energetic frustrations. These programmes can also be effective in instilling in some inmates the concepts of teamwork, fair play, and the willingness to accept instructional authority. The most important aspect of recreation in correctional institutions is likely teaching inmates to use their recreational time in a constructive and useful manner. Most crimes
committed by young offenders occur during recreational hours. The environment of a correctional institution, along with a lack of constructive things to do, can severely deter an inmate from returning to society in a productive way (Flynn, 1974).

Flynn suggests that team or group sports such as baseball, basketball, or handball, should not be emphasised in a correctional institution because these sports are not likely to be pursued on the outside following an individual's release. On the other hand, hobbies or activities that may lead one to a lifetime of leisure-time enjoyment, such as music, art, discussion groups, and reading should be stressed. Most institutions do not provide for the many prisoners who would prefer the less-active and quieter recreational activities (Flynn, 1974).

For those inmates interested in physical exercise and conditioning, the main requirement is for a staff member to plan, develop, and conduct the exercises on a regular basis. Most of the leisure-time recreation activities offered in jails and penitentiaries do not depend on a great deal of space (Flynn, 1974).

Another reason recreation activities may be limited is due to the staff's concern for security. The greater amount of security that is required, the greater amount it will cost. There is usually a shortage of staff at institutions which creates problems with general security procedures. If security is a problem with the general prison population, recreation programmes may provide a greater burden on security (Flynn, 1974).

A good prison recreation programme must be well planned to suit the needs
of inmates. Forced participation would defeat the purpose of corrections; however, the inmates should have a wide range of choice in the activities they wish to pursue.

With careful planning and development, a large number of facilities and activities can be provided for the inmates in any correctional institution. Along with a diverse range of events, the availability of vending machines for coffee and other refreshments, also helps to create a relaxed atmosphere (Flynn, 1974).

More recently, in an effort to improve correctional services, more emphasis has been placed on community corrections. Some jails in the United States were closed and others were replaced by community correctional centres. These new centres can be beneficial to the rebuilding of sound social ties between the offender, his family, and the community. The use of such community resources gives the offender an opportunity to encounter a recreational experience quite similar to one an inmate will experience after being released. The benefit of recreation can perhaps be seen much more readily in the field of corrections than anywhere else (Flynn, 1974).

In the event that corrections become more involved in the community in the future, Muth (1974) believed that institutions would likely make good use of a community's recreation resources. He feels that many families become closer units through participation in recreation activities, such as camping and low stress sports such as bowling (Muth, 1974).

The introduction of community-based correctional institutions could enhance
both the quality of recreation opportunities as well as the creative reintegration of an offender with his or her family and within the greater social system. Security, however, must still be considered a priority for the community. Children of the offender can benefit from their incarcerated father's recreational interests. Having the capability of participating in recreational activities with one's partner and/or children gives the offender a much better opportunity to keep his or her family together (Muth, 1974).

Another trend which is becoming more important within the prison system is to have the offender become a more "complete" or "whole" person. The recreational aspect of life is stressed to help the offender in this way. Many inmates leave the prison system in a "semi-rehabilitated" state but are unable to use their free time in a productive and law-abiding way. Muth (1974) stated that correctional workers started to realise the importance of recreation as a part of rehabilitation. Muth's argument began from the overall perspective, however, that only when other more basic problems in corrections such as sanitation, food, and custody have been dealt with, will it then be possible that the shape, role, and function of recreation within corrections can be brought into proper focus (Muth, 1974).

According to Muth, programmes like the innovative vocational counselling model, funded by the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission's Correctional Manpower Services Unit, have led to the observation that "recreation interests are frequently a stable base on which to build career goals — sometimes a more stable
base than occupational history” (Muth, 1974: 29). Many offenders never realise that their talents in certain recreation and craft areas which interest them could, quite possibly, offer future employment prospects for themselves. Even if an inmate’s recreation or craft interests are not his or her occupational focus, these activities should be included in his or her total life’s focus after release from institutional life (Muth, 1974).

Cipriano reported that there are several further benefits to therapeutic recreation in the prison setting. The key benefit, he argues, appears to be decreasing the rate of recidivism. This is achieved through the convergence of several other contributory influences of recreation. The improvement of one’s self-image, physical health, fitness level, and mental health all may derive from effective prison recreation. Inmates may increase constructive recreational skills, improve communication and ties with their families, have an outlet for frustration and aggression, and develop leadership skills. These are all positive attributes which potentially contribute to a more stable readjustment to society following release from prison. On the whole, Austin and Crawford endorse the view that prison recreation assists inmates in the development of their talents and skills for both occupational and recreational enhancement (Cipriano, 1987; cited in Austin and Crawford, 1991): “Meaningful recreation may well be potentially the most rewarding program in prison. People do not get into trouble while busily occupied. Trouble almost always starts during leisure time” (Fox, 1985: 221).
The American Correctional Association recognises recreation as an integral part of the rehabilitation of offenders. There are two main purposes of "therapeutic recreation" in corrections. First, providing recreation services is especially important in a correctional facility. It is a way of changing one's regular routine. Second, recreation helps to intervene and rehabilitate. Each inmate should have an individual rehabilitation plan and therapeutic recreation should be included in the treatment. Leisure education is also an important aspect of recreation and should be instilled in the treatment of offenders (Austin and Crawford, 1991).

During incarceration, inmates suffer the loss of many things: freedom, a sense of reality, sensory experiences, and the reality of who they really are. According to Specimen, ninety per cent of prison inmates will be released into the community with no new coping skills. Through participation in recreation, inmates can experience some limited control over these areas for short periods of time. Recreation will also help an individual in the re-socialisation process (Speckman, 1981; cited in Lengfelder, Slater and Groves, 1992). Wollard believes that an inmate needs to be seen as a total person in order for him to become a better citizen, and recreation is a part of this concept (Wollard, 1972; cited in Lengfelder, Slater, and Groves, 1992).

Jewell (1981) conducted a study of state maximum security prison administrators. All of the male and co-ed correctional facilities that he surveyed had some recreation programmes, while thirteen of the sixteen female facilities had
recreation programmes. Ninety-four per cent of the administrators believed that recreation was a part of rehabilitation. Seventy-eight per cent of the administrators felt that participation in recreation results in fewer security problems because inmates are kept busier and have less time and energy to get into trouble. Eighty-seven per cent of the administrators surveyed also felt that recreation should be offered to inmates on a daily basis. Eighty per cent indicated a need for more recreation facilities, and seventy-five and a half per cent expressed a need for more recreation personnel (Jewell, 1981; cited in Lengfelder, Slater, and Groves, 1992).

Jewell also looked at the size of recreation staffs in maximum security prisons. It was not too long before administrators were claiming to need more personnel in Recreation Departments. In the institutions for men, there was an average ratio of recreation staff to inmates of 1:946.5. The female institutions had an average ratio of 1:180 and the co-ed institutions average ratio was 1:642.3 (Jewell, 1980; cited by Lengfelder, Slater, and Groves, 1992).

In another study, Schafer (1969) examined the high school records of 585 boys in the tenth grade in 1964 in order to assess the effects of recreation/sports on delinquency. In his analysis, Schafer concluded that those boys with a higher grade point average were more likely to be athletic and non-delinquent (Schafer, 1969; cited in Lengfelder, Slater, and Groves, 1992). According to another study conducted by Landers and Landers, similar results were uncovered. Those boys not involved in athletics or service activities had a higher level of delinquency than
either had separately. This study indicates that high school students who spend more of their recreational time doing school work and participating in sports, are less likely to commit crimes (Landers and Landers, 1978; cited in Lengfelder, Slater, and Groves, 1992).

In view of this study, it can be argued that participation in recreational sports may play a role in a person’s functioning in terms of deviant behaviour. Because students involved in athletics had a lower level of delinquency, it can be argued that recreation is one component of leading a crime-free life.

In light of the fact that most crimes are committed during an inmate’s leisure/work time, research has been focused on examining the recreational pursuits of inmates both before and after incarceration. Other studies suggest that inmates often lack variety in their recreational pursuits. They also lack the money required to pursue some of the recreational opportunities that middle and upper class people enjoy (Lengfelder, Slater, and Groves, 1992).

As a result of the work of these researchers, a view has been developed and proposed that recreation in the prison system should no longer be considered a privilege or an additional frill for the system but, rather, be counted as an absolute necessity of everyday effective prison living. Prison rehabilitative recreation should be recreation activities organised for inmates as a tension-relief and tension-reduction outlet. These programmes should not be viewed by corrections officials as detrimental or hazardous to effective security and community safety but, rather, as
constructive contributions to providing opportunities for healthy and acceptable expressions of inmate energies. Recreation programmes in the prison system appear to play an important role in the lives of inmates as well as positively effecting the amount of violence that takes place in the institutions (Flynn, 1974).

It was with these ideas that I began an exploratory study to investigate the recreational opportunities available in the Canadian penitentiary system and to assess inmate and staff attitudes to these programmes.
CHAPTER FOUR

Research Methods

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the nature and consequences of recreational sports in the Canadian federal prison system for men. In researching this topic, I made on-site visits to four federal correctional institutions. My chosen research locations were Stony Mountain Penitentiary and Rockwood Institution in Manitoba, and Springhill Institution and Dorchester Penitentiary in Atlantic Canada.

I chose these four institutions because it allowed me to research the three basic levels of federal prisons in Canada and also because of the convenient locations in which they are situated.

Stony Mountain Penitentiary, which I visited in May, 1994, is located just outside my home town of Winnipeg, Manitoba. It gave me the opportunity to examine recreational facilities in a maximum security institution. The minimum security Rockwood Institution was easily accessible following my first visit to Stony Mountain because they are situated adjacent to one another. This afforded a convenient opportunity to examine the programmes available in a minimum security institution. The other two federal correctional institutions I chose to research, Springhill Institution and Dorchester Penitentiary, are both classified as medium security prisons. By selecting these two Maritime institutions, I was able to include in my study institutions with all three levels of security in the Canadian
Having selected a research setting, the second task was gaining access to these formal organisations by obtaining permission from the "gatekeepers." In order to gain access to each institution, I wrote letters to the head administrators expressing my educational background, my research proposal, and the purpose of the proposed research. I also explained what I intended to accomplish during my proposed visits and my motives for them (see Appendix 1). Staff at both Springhill and Dorchester responded to me by telephone. It was necessary to follow-up my letter with a phone call to the Recreation Department at Stony Mountain. Once I gained access to Stony Mountain, I was able to arrange two visits to the Rockwood Institution as well. Over the telephone, I pre-arranged specific visiting dates at each institution where I was greeted at the front door by a staff member.

In conducting this study, I used multiple methods of research. By undertaking a combination of methods, I investigated the topic from various angles. My thesis consists of an extensive literature review which is based on a history of prison recreation programmes, general theory on the rehabilitation process in prisons, information on recreational sports programmes in prisons, and information on the effect of rehabilitation programmes, particularly sports/athletics, on prisoners' lives. The literature review consists of studies from various prisons in Canada and the United States.

Field research enabled me to visit the actual sites and observe the relationship
between the respondents and the prison recreational setting. Given the absence of
systematic Canadian research on prison recreation, an exploratory study was
advantageous given the limited knowledge about the subject under investigation
(Singleton, Straits, Straits and McAllister, 1988: 298-299). I investigated the four
federal institutions mentioned by doing detailed observations of their recreational
sports facilities and programmes. I closely observed the attitudes of inmates
towards their participation in various athletic pursuits. I accomplished this by
touring each institution and then spending a majority of my time in the Recreation
Department and with the recreation staff. I viewed the facilities first-hand and
obtained considerable information from the staff of these institutions. I was able to
observe while inmates took part in various recreational sports.

First, I examined the different types of recreational sports programmes
available at these institutions. Mainly through my discussions with inmates and
staff, I was able to discover the different types of recreational sports available at each
institution, determine which activities were more popular at each prison, and
explore possible bases for different degrees of popularity. I reviewed correctional
literature produced by the institutions to understand the philosophies behind these
programmes as well as their intended effects and, ultimately, the official ideology
behind recreational sports in prison.

Second, in-depth interviews were also an important aspect of my research. I
was able to find my respondents by the use of a convenience sample. A convenience
sample is accomplished by obtaining interviews with subjects who are "conveniently" available at the time. Any other form of sample would have been extremely difficult to derive. A random sample of inmates from the four institutions would have been very difficult to co-ordinate and arrange, assuming that the prison authorities would allow access to the names of inmates in the population. Random sampling is superior because it would have provided an opportunity to generalise the findings beyond the sample to the staff and inmate population as a whole, a possibility that is unavailable with a convenience sample. Using a convenience sample, I am only able to use my findings for the specific respondents selected. However, as in any exploratory study, this limitation is less serious because the main emphasis is on delineating the issues and obtaining general responses.

I was able to interview my inmate respondents with the assistance of the prison staff. At Rockwood, Corrections Officers placed calls to different cottages, briefly explaining to the inmates my research intentions and requesting their voluntary assistance for interviews. They also were able to find other respondents by asking them to spread the information to fellow inmates. At Springhill, recreation personnel asked various inmates for their co-operation in my research and those willing to take part were sent, individually, to an office where I was located.

At Dorchester, recreation staff member Marc Leblanc assisted me in setting up discussions with inmates. After giving me a quick tour of the institution, he left
me with inmates in the Inmate Committee Office. It was there that I discussed various aspects of prison life with the inmates, including recreational sports. Following a lengthy discussion there, he led me to an office where the Inmate Sports Representative was working. I discussed several aspects of the recreation programme with him in the company of prison staff.

At Rockwood, I interviewed three prison employees formally and held informal discussions with several others in order to understand their feelings regarding the role of recreational sports in prison. While visiting the Rockwood Institution, I interviewed the three on-duty Corrections Officers in the main building of the prison. I also held brief, informal discussions with several others who were on duty during my visits. I interviewed inmates to determine their feelings towards participating in recreational sports and their thoughts as to what such programmes meant to themselves, to the institution, and to society as a whole.

I conducted a total of sixteen formal interviews with inmates on a one-to-one basis; nine at the Rockwood Institution and seven at Springhill Institution. This was accomplished with the assistance of prison staff who were instrumental in helping me co-ordinate these meetings with the inmates. My Rockwood interviews took place in an unattended visitor's room, furnished with tables and chairs, located in the main building of the institution. At Springhill, I interviewed my subjects in a vacant seminar-style office in the Recreation Department. Before I began each interview with inmates at Springhill, prison administration requested that I had each
respondent sign a consent form (see Appendix 3).

During my visit to Dorchester, I discussed the issue of recreational sports with an indefinite numbers of inmates in the inmate committee office, as some came and left intermittently. The inmate committee is comprised of inmates whose prison jobs are to act as liaisons between the institution's staff and other inmates. They are responsible for several day-to-day tasks which assist in maintaining a smoothly-run institution and minimise conflictual situations. It was not possible to interview inmates individually because I had the resources to visit each prison only a limited number of times (in some cases only once) and therefore my time was very limited. In addition, there were concerns regarding security.

At Stony Mountain, I had a discussion with two inmates and the recreation staff member in an office room in the Recreation Department. I was not given an opportunity to interview inmates on a one-to-one basis inside Stony Mountain. Security measures would not allow me to participate in this form of unsupervised interview.

The means of deriving the convenience sample raises an important caveat about the findings. Since the respondents were hand-picked by corrections staff who themselves had a vested interest in the maintenance of prison recreational sports, it is possible that only those inmates with positive views concerning prison athletics were selected. This observation reiterates the point that the data can not be generalised beyond the select sample.
This research was designed to provide qualitative data derived from personal interviews with inmates and staff. Each interview was guided by an interview schedule consisting of a series of questions about the respondent's use of and attitude toward prison recreation. The interview schedule appears as Appendix 2. Because the informants were participating in the study without any rewards and simply for the purpose of assisting my research, I offered them the opportunity to refuse to answer any questions if they so chose. I also explained that the information they provided would be used solely for the purpose of my research and their identities would be protected; I would not publish their real names.

The more I explained my personal involvement in athletics to the respondents, the more they seemed willing to discuss their own experiences and opinions in relation to this issue. I believe that this mutual interest in and understanding of sport between us created an important bond for communication. I am sensitive to the differences between official ideologies and prisoners detailed experiences.

Face-to-face interviews "permit a great deal more flexibility than is possible with a self-administered questionnaire." Furthermore, utilising an open-ended research technique enables the researcher "to elicit a fuller, more complete response" (Singleton et. al, 1988: 243). By using open-ended interview questions, I was able to explore the views of those involved. I attempted to make full use of my respondents by allowing them to express their feelings and guide the interview in whatever
direction they chose. When I interviewed inmates who showed no inclination to guide the interview, I took the lead by raising questions and topics of discussion and asked probing questions when necessary. With the permission of my respondents, I used a small cassette recorder to collect the data. Interviews were subsequently transcribed.

Utilising an open-ended technique of questioning allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers, providing additional information which a closed questionnaire would be unable to explore. First, I attempted to obtain important information about the prisoner’s life history, background in crime, and background in sports. I obtained the age of each respondent, and the approximate number of years and the number of times he had been incarcerated. I then asked the respondents the type of crime for which they were convicted. Following that, I discussed with each respondent his personal involvement in prison athletics.

I also requested that my respondents express their opinions and beliefs about the recreational sports programmes available to them in the prison(s) in which they served time. I asked them to discuss the forms of recreation in which they participate and explain their reasons for doing so. The inmates also gave me their opinions regarding the quality of the programmes as well as the facilities and equipment provided. The primary focus of my interviews was to elicit the inmates’ reasons for participation in prison recreational programmes and their feelings regarding the value of these programmes in day-to-day prison life as well as in their
lives following their release.

When interviewing prison employees, I went about it in a very similar manner. I used open-ended questions and obtained background information for each respondent. The interview schedule for the staff was very similar to that for the inmates; however, since I was dealing with prison staff and not inmates, there were differences in the content of the interviews as well as the wording of many questions. (See Appendix 4 for the interview schedule used for this set of respondents).

In the process of interviewing prison staff, I concentrated on their feelings about the recreational programmes offered, the goals and purposes of these programmes, and their effectiveness in accomplishing them. I attempted to have the staff express their personal opinions, based on several years of experience in corrections, regarding recreational programmes in correctional institutions and what their capabilities are in terms of social control and rehabilitation.

Prior to conducting my study inside four Canadian federal prisons, I had some concerns. My main concern was for my personal safety which I soon realised would not present any difficulties. Security was greater in certain areas of the institution than in others, with recreation being one of the lesser concerns of administration. I felt more uncomfortable when I was in the company of a larger number of inmates at one time. Stony Mountain's atmosphere was the most fearful, and given its maximum security classification, it appeared to meet my expectations.
in this regard. The casual and unenclosed atmosphere at Rockwood made my visits there seem anything like being in a prison environment. The atmosphere at Springhill and Dorchester, while not quite as tense as Stony Mountain, was not as relaxed as Rockwood.

During my visits to the institutions, I was not in any way approached regarding illegal activity. Despite the great amount of contraband that enters prisons, I was not aware of inmates using illegal drugs, alcohol, or weapons during my visits. The inmates to whom I spoke or interviewed directly seemed more interested in creating a good impression on me. I believe many were sincere and it was just one way of attempting to show prison authorities their desire to co-operate with “outsiders” seeking information.

Because of the fact that recreation is not a politically sensitive issue within the prison system, it is likely that the information I obtained was veritable. Topics such as spousal assault, sexual assault, or sexuality inside the prison would be considered more sensitive issues. Information obtained through interviews on these subjects could often be shaped by inmates’ fears of revealing information about themselves which could come back to harm them in some way. Therefore, I feel that my respondents were sincere in their responses and the results, in this sense, are genuine.

During my formal interview process, the respondent was the only person present in an isolated room with myself. Many of my informal discussions took
place with two or more inmates and/or staff being present. While I was able to obtain a more personal and uninterrupted response from the one-on-one interviews, the group discussions were also a valuable way of obtaining more information.

The aim of this study is to determine the role of recreational sports in the prison system. I intend to demonstrate what value and effect, if any, these programmes have on inmates and former inmates, on prison life and on society as a whole. The next chapter presents a detailed account of the data obtained in each setting through the observation and interview methods which were utilised.
CHAPTER FIVE

An Overview of Prison Recreation Programmes: Case Studies

Recreation is a basic part of a balanced lifestyle and can be an important part of a law-abiding life. Leisure and recreation programmes must be accessible to all populations; prison is no exception to this. Recreation can be an effective motivator in stimulating various populations to make the best use of limited resources. According to the ideology of prison management, the chief purpose of a recreation programme is to do more than serve an escape for inmates from the reality of prison life. It is also an opportunity to help make changes in their criminal attitudes and behaviours (Dorchester Penitentiary Recreation Department Operational Plan 1994: 2).

Recreation programmes of all types are in place in the prisons for men to help reduce stress, overcome social weaknesses, and promote physical well being. Leisure activities provide inmates with an opportunity to relieve the pressures of prison life and to promote healthy physical, mental, and social abilities. Those who participate in these activities are said to be instilled with pro-social values, leaving them with a sense of purpose and well-being. Recreation provides non-threatening opportunities for interaction through common interests. The Recreation Department engages itself to educate, promote good sportsmanship, and provide disciplined programmes in a safe, secure, and humane environment (Dorchester Penitentiary...
Recreation Department Operational Plan, 1994: 3).

Recreation in the prison system comes in many different forms. There are less-physical activities such as arts and crafts, drama, reading, movies, and playing pool. This thesis, however, mainly focuses on the more physical types of recreational sports activities in the prison setting. Many of these activities are structured events in that teams and leagues are set up for competition. Schedules of games and events are developed and posted for the inmates involved. If they so choose, inmates will also participate in unstructured athletic activities during their designated recreation hours.

Sports activities in federal correctional facilities are organised by the Recreation Department staff members. These staff members are hired by prison administrators who, formally, control the institutions. Prison Recreation Departments are of many different sizes, depending on the size of the institution, its inmate population, and the need for such programmes. For example, Stony Mountain Penitentiary's Recreation Department is much larger than that of the Rockwood Institution mainly due to the greater demand for recreation at the former.

Depending on the institution, the inmates' organisational responsibilities in recreation programmes may differ. Today, inmates are inheriting far greater responsibilities from staff members in this area. There seem to be different explanations as to why this shift is occurring. First, it helps to alleviate some of the recreation staff's workload, which is very demanding and can be stressful as well.
Second, employing certain inmates in this field (as their prison jobs) gives them added responsibility. This responsibility and experience may assist them in their lives after their release from prison. Third, it can help to ensure a better relationship between the staff and the inmates because they must now communicate on important day-to-day affairs.

It is common in most federal correctional facilities to have specified hours of recreation time for the inmates. Generally, recreation hours in most institutions are during the evenings; however, there are some exceptions. Inmates who work in various Recreation Departments as their prison jobs can often use some of their free time to use the facilities. While such actions obviously create an unfair advantage with respect to other inmates, this is not uncommon in other areas of the prison as well. Inmates working in the kitchen, for example, often take advantage of their access to greater selections and larger portions of food.

During my visits to the four correctional facilities, I observed inmates taking part in several different activities. The main difference seemed to be in relation to the time of day. During the evening hours, a majority of the inmates were involved in the recreation programmes. During the daytime hours, they were busy with their jobs within the prison setting.

Along with all of the recreational sports facilities within the prisons, there is also equipment which is issued to the inmates for use. The equipment is monitored and issued by either inmates or prison staff, depending on the institution. The
condition of the facilities also vary greatly from one prison to the next; for example, some prisons have weight rooms which are in excellent condition and possess new up-to-date equipment, while others are not well-maintained and are in poor condition.

**Stony Mountain Penitentiary**

Stony Mountain Penitentiary is a maximum security federal prison located near Winnipeg, Manitoba. The institution is known for its strict security measures as it houses some of the most hardened male criminals in Canadian society. Stony Mountain is a large institution which incarcerates approximately five hundred inmates at any given time.

The Recreation Department at Stony Mountain is probably the most popular part of prison life for its inmates. It possesses a large and well-maintained weight room and a gymnasium with badminton and basketball courts as well as providing accessibility to other sports such as floor hockey. Pool tables are also available for use on a stage beside the gym floor.

Even though Manitoba is known for its extremely cold winters, outdoor recreation at Stony Mountain rarely suffers. Two outdoor hockey rinks and a curling rink are flooded each winter and maintained throughout the season. Ice hockey has become one of the most popular winter sports at the institution. Each summer, baseball, soccer, and a variety of other outdoor activities are played in a large outdoor field within the prison grounds. The main recreational sports that
take place at Stony Mountain are ice hockey, sponge hockey, and curling (only in the winter), weight training, floor hockey, racquetball, soccer, softball, touch football, volleyball, basketball, badminton, tennis, and jogging.

At Stony Mountain, it is the job of the recreation staff to have complete control of the sports equipment. It is the on-duty staff person's job to ensure that the equipment is in good condition and to have repairs made when necessary. The staff person is also responsible for issuing the equipment to the inmates on a daily basis. A close inventory count of all the equipment must be kept to ensure that all of it is returned each night at the conclusion of the recreation period. This is important for several reasons. First, unretruned equipment usually ends up in various inmate cells and could be used as possible weapons. Second, if equipment is not returned, it will not be available for use upon request, which can be frustrating for others.

Certain inmates working in the Recreation Department are responsible for making the ice and maintaining the two outdoor rinks each winter at Stony Mountain. Day-to-day maintenance is required to shovel snow as well as flood the rinks. One rink is used for a competitive prison hockey league which consists of scheduled games each night. The other rink is used either for "pick up" hockey or for inmates who go out and play leisurely on their own.

Because ice hockey is a popular winter sport at Stony Mountain, the prison has a large supply of hockey equipment which is issued to the inmates upon request. Everything from skates to sticks and a complete line of protective gear is handed
out daily to those participating. At the time of my visit to Stony Mountain, a large portion of the hockey equipment I observed was slightly out-dated but it had been kept in good condition. A shipment of new, up-to-date equipment had just arrived and more was on the way for the coming season.

Stony Mountain possesses a large weight room which is kept in excellent condition. The exercise machines as well as the free weights are maintained daily by inmates who are employed in the Recreation Department. These inmates make repairs to the equipment and have the added advantage of working out during some of their free daytime hours.

The weight room is one of the most popular year-round recreation facilities at Stony Mountain. A number of weight lifters belong to a body building club formed and run by Marcel Comeau, a Recreation Staff member. Through this organisation, Marcel has made various vitamins and other supplements available for purchasing by the inmates. A wide selection of gym clothing is also available at the inmates expense. Comeau believes that explaining to the inmates what various supplements will do for them will help them become more interested and take better care of their bodies. According to Comeau, there are approximately eighty inmates who are serious weight lifters at Stony Mountain.

During evening recreation hours, a large number of inmates use the weight room. Generally, there are few problems with overcrowding. The weight room is large enough and there is enough equipment to avoid many conflicts. Most of the
inmates using the weight room facility usually tend to cooperage as they are working towards common individual goals. When instances of tension do occur, Comeau said, they are usually settled without violence.

**Rockwood Institution**

Rockwood Institution is a minimum security federal prison located adjacent to Stony Mountain Penitentiary. Unlike Stony Mountain, Rockwood does not have the same security measures. There are no fences, barbed wire, or cells, and the inmates are housed in fully-furnished modern-style cottages. They are free to walk about the premises during daytime and evening hours. The only security devices present are video cameras that were installed throughout the prison grounds and are monitored by the Correctional Officers working in the front office.

According to Harry Hogan, his primary duty as a Correctional Officer is to maintain security within the institution. Each officer is also responsible for a case load and is part of a case management team, to which each incarcerated offender is detailed. It is the team’s responsibility to do all the case work in preparation for parole. Each officer usually has approximately eight to ten inmates on his case load.

At one time, when prison sports teams went outside the prison to compete in the community, it was the Correctional Officer’s job to escort them.\(^\text{3}\)

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\(^{3}\) At one time it was common for different prison sports teams to go into the community to play against various organized club teams. Over the years, a small number of inmates tried to take advantage of these outings by using them to escape. As a result, these community outings no longer take place.
There are five or six inmates housed in each cottage. Each is responsible for one major chore in the household, such as cooking or cleaning. The general atmosphere of this institution is far more relaxed than Stony Mountain even though a majority of the inmates had previously served time at the maximum-security institution.

The Recreation Department at Rockwood has considerably less capacity than Stony Mountain. While the inmates at Stony Mountain are limited in their extra-curricular activities and their general freedom, things are different at Rockwood. At Rockwood, there are many other things one can do besides sports. Correctional Officer Doug Davidson states that, over the past few years, sports involvement at Rockwood has "gone down hill." The reason for this is because of the popularity of television. Many of the inmates would rather watch a sports event on television than participate in one themselves. They also have VCR's in their living rooms and many have Nintendo video games as well. Davidson feels that television is a waste of time and does not serve a useful purpose in the whole rehabilitation picture. In his view, the inmates at Rockwood generally have far too many privileges:

Those cottages are so nice and you've got people that are here from reserves, got people that come here from ghettos in the city that live with cockroaches and rats and they come here and they live here and they know they have to go back to the reserves where there's poor housing and cold houses with windows broken in. I know what they're going to do. They're going to come back here and live in this structure and I don't think that's right. I think they should have a few hardships here that it's not an encouragement to come back. A lot of them come to enjoy this as a holiday. They get away from the pressures of looking after their families.
At Rockwood, the organised recreational sports are very similar to those offered at Stony Mountain. The main difference is that a much smaller proportion of the population participate and the facilities are not as extensive. For the most part, the Recreation Department is run in a similar fashion to the one in Stony Mountain. The major differences are the staffing, facilities, and equipment. Rockwood does not employ people who are strictly responsible for its Recreation Department. The facilities are also not maintained with the same level of care. The sports equipment is often out-dated because of the lesser demand for it.

**Springhill Institution**

Springhill Institution is a medium security federal prison located in the town of Springhill, in north-western Nova Scotia. It houses inmates convicted of a wide variety of offences. Some are serving life sentences while others are doing the minimum federal prison sentence of two years for a lesser conviction. The prison atmosphere in Springhill combines elements of a maximum security prison, such as Stony Mountain Penitentiary, and a minimum security prison, such as the Rockwood Institution.

While Springhill is somewhat more relaxed than the often tense situations in Stony Mountain, it is very similar in its physical appearance as well as in its security measures. The inmates in Springhill are always either locked indoors or kept behind high-security fences.
The Recreation Department at Springhill is extremely popular throughout the inmate population. Similar to Stony Mountain, Springhill is equipped with a weight room area, gymnasium, and an outdoor recreation area for various sports events. Springhill's Recreation Department organises events such as basketball, softball, badminton, tennis and touch football. Horseshoes are also very popular. One of the few differences from Stony Mountain's Recreation Department is that Springhill does not have the capabilities for outdoor ice-hockey rinks. The winter climate in Nova Scotia is often too mild to keep ice for more than a few days at a time.

The weight room at Springhill is not a separate enclosed room; it is an open area located in one section of the gymnasium. Most of the equipment is worn, old, and in fairly poor condition. The equipment is often abused by inmates and maintenance appears to be infrequent. Another problem regarding the weight room area at Springhill is that, during recreation hours, it is controlled by the inmates. The Recreation Staff have no control over the equipment at this time. Often, the "bigger and stronger" inmates monopolise the machines and free weights. The other inmates must use this equipment at specific times during the evening to accommodate these individuals. This is another reason why the condition of the equipment is not well-maintained.

Aside from the weight training area, it is the prison's Recreation Staff who are responsible for organising and scheduling the sports activities that take place on a
daily basis during the evenings. They organise teams and post a weekly schedule of the various sporting events and their times.

During my visit to Springhill, I had the opportunity to observe an evening of recreation at the institution. One Recreation Staff member and two Correctional Officers were on duty. The Correctional Officers were primarily there for security purposes, while the Recreation Staff member was there to help fulfil the needs of the inmates and keep the programme running smoothly.

**Dorchester Penitentiary**

Dorchester Penitentiary is another medium security federal prison located in the town of Dorchester, in south-eastern New Brunswick. Dorchester is an old-style prison constructed in the 1880's. In many ways the prison is very similar to Springhill in both its atmosphere and security measures. There are inmates serving both life sentences as well as the minimum two year federal sentence at Dorchester.

The Recreation Department at Dorchester is extremely popular among the prison population. It has a large, well-maintained weight room full of quality machines, free weights, and aerobic equipment. It also has a gymnasium and outdoor recreation area with the capabilities of hosting many different sporting events. As a result of southern New Brunswick's often mild winter weather, it is also not possible to maintain outdoor ice-hockey rinks at Dorchester. The recreational sports activities offered to the inmates at Dorchester are very similar to those offered at Springhill.
The weight room at Dorchester is one of the most popular facilities in the institution. Part of the reason for this is due to the Recreation Staff. One staff member, Marc LeBlanc, was a competitive body builder for years. His attitude towards weight training and the respect he gains throughout the inmate population is in large part the reason why Dorchester's weight room is so popular. He serves as a role model for many inmates aspiring to become body builders, or at least obtain strong physiques. As a result, the weight room is kept in excellent condition. The equipment is well-maintained on a daily basis by inmates who work in the Recreation Department. Modern equipment fills the room and there are several brand new stationary bicycles and step machines set aside in another room, which had not yet been used. The inmates at Dorchester take great pride in their weight room. This is in large part due to the influence of LeBlanc.

The recreation programme at Dorchester is slightly different from the other three institutions. Through an application process, one inmate is appointed the position of Inmate Sports Commissioner. The Inmate Sports Commissioner is chosen according to standards established in agreement with the Inmate Committee. A list of applicants for the position is sent to the Supervisor of the Recreation Department. After a review of the candidates, a Commissioner is appointed through the Inmate Employment Board with input from the Recreation Department (Dorchester Penitentiary Recreation Department Operational Plan, 1994: 31).

The Inmate Sports Commissioner must ensure that the requests of the entire
inmate population for certain physical activities are brought to the attention of the Recreation Department. Primarily, he is to be aware of all inmate demands, assist the Recreation Officers in preparation for sports activities, and assist in the maintenance and repair of sports equipment. The Sports Commissioner is also responsible for issuing the equipment during recreation hours. The equipment is signed out and must be returned after use. In the event that equipment is not returned or is abused, the Recreation Department is notified and the matter is dealt with according to the severity of the breach (Dorchester Penitentiary Recreation Department Operational Plan, 1994: 31).

According to Dorchester Inmate Sports Commissioner, Josh Jones, recreation is an integral part of prison life. He says that between thirty and forty percent of the entire prison population uses the prison’s weight room. Another one hundred to one hundred and twenty inmates take part in organised baseball. There are also approximately twenty inmates involved in the volleyball programme. Jones also mentioned that many of the older inmates take part in horseshoes and shuffleboard.

Interviews and Discussions

In researching recreational sports in the federal prison system of Canada, my primary research was based on my experiences at four federal correctional facilities. Besides being given the opportunity to observe various parts of each institution, I interviewed both staff and inmates. This gave me an opportunity to obtain firsthand information and also obtain an appreciation for both the staff and inmates’
perspectives regarding recreational sports in prison.

During one of my visits to Stony Mountain Penitentiary, I had an informal discussion with an inmate and Recreation Staff member in one of the Recreation Department offices at the Penitentiary. The inmate respondent was Richard Roggins, a thirty-eight year old, who has been incarcerated for a majority of his adult life. The Recreation Staff respondent was Marcel Comeau, who had held his position in the Recreation Department at Stony Mountain for over twenty years.

While visiting the Rockwood Institution one evening, I held semi-formal interviews with three on-duty Correctional Officers. They too expressed their thoughts and opinions regarding recreational sports programmes in the prison setting. Harry Hogan spent ten and a half years at Stony Mountain before being transferred to Rockwood. Doug Davidson worked as a Correctional Officer for thirty years, his first five being at Stony Mountain. My final staff respondent, Wayne Woods, has been a Correctional Officer for over twenty-one years and spent his first eleven at Stony Mountain.

As mentioned, I also had an in-depth discussion with Dorchester's Inmate Sports Commissioner, Josh Jones. He explained his duties in his position, gave me some statistics, and as well his personal thoughts regarding the recreational sports programmes at Dorchester.

The average age of my inmate respondents was 29.4 years. All of the sixteen inmates said they took part in at least three forms of recreational sports activities
while in prison. A large majority of those interviewed claimed to participate in several (if not all) of the sports activities offered to them.

All sixteen respondents claimed to have been involved in recreational sports in some capacity before being incarcerated. Approximately half of the respondents participated in several different sports activities prior to incarceration, while inmates in a second, smaller group, were involved in sports to a lesser extent. A smaller number of respondents were primarily involved in few sports activities before incarceration.

Based on the data obtained through the interviews and discussions, there are four main reasons why the inmates participate in recreational sports activities in prison. A majority of the respondents stressed that prison athletics were necessary for inmates to relieve stress and/or frustration. Several of the respondents suggested that, without prison recreation, it would be extremely difficult to reduce boredom and to keep the prison setting under control. Second, a small number of those interviewed claimed that they participated because they truly enjoyed the activities and/or the competition. An even smaller number stated that they were active in order to keep themselves in good physical condition. The remaining respondents insisted that the main reason they became involved in sports was because it was good for their self-esteem and because prison sports gave them an opportunity to meet and interact with others.
Recreation Sports and Institutions

Terry Tate, 29, claimed to participate in all sports offered at the institution. Before his incarceration, Tate was also involved in several different sports activities.

He expressed these feelings regarding prison sports/athletics:

You may be having a bad day and inside you play floor hockey. . . . It's great, it's a lot of fun. Say you were having a bad day, you go there you may get hit, you hit a few guys. It's all clean, it's all in fun and after the game you're just totally drained, you go back to your cell, get a good night's sleep, you wake up and it's another new day. . . . It's a good frustration reliever. I guess it's the best way to put it. If they didn't have sports I'd be in a lot longer probably. A lot of guys take part in it and it's an escape for them.

Similarly, Bill Beaver expressed his opinion regarding the importance of weightlifting in the prison environment: "Guys lift weights to relieve stress, get their mind off things or else they're just going to get more angry."

During his time in prison, Tommy Thomas has participated in baseball, ice hockey, and football. He also did some callisthenics on his own to improve his physical conditioning. Occasionally, he takes part in floor hockey games as well.

Thomas claimed to have been involved in sports throughout his life but did not speak well of prison athletics:

I don't enjoy doing sports in this environment. It blows off a lot of steam. There's not too many ways you can blow steam off except for sports. I've played on highly structured teams (outside the prison) and when you screw up or something on the ice guys will give you compliments or say that's all right we'll get them the next time. But here it's a total screw up, it's all negative reactions. You can't enjoy it. You can't have fun.
Thomas claimed to participate in sports to keep busy and avoid boredom. He believed that if he did not take part, it would result in his sleeping more and watching too much television. He said that sports serve as a good way of relieving his day-to-day stress and frustration:

Take for example you're having a bad day. Basically, myself, I can't speak for others, but myself, if I'm having a rough day, instead of taking it out on you or this guy or this guy, I take it out on the weights.

Peter Percy also felt it is very important to have something in a prison to enable inmates to take out their frustrations safely. The weight room, he insisted, is the best way. "Without that weight pit, it would be impossible to be here. Your physical abilities sometimes is just your only release."

Bob Butler, a prisoner at Rockwood Institution, believed that recreational sports in prison are essential. He explained that, with respect to his time spent at Stony Mountain Penitentiary, "If we didn't have a weight room inside Stony, if we didn't have a gymnasium, if we didn't have a skating rink, then you could just imagine how violent it would be inside." When asked to explain this point, Butler said that "those are facilities where people go and express themselves physically, emotionally, and verbally." He then related his own experiences in Stony Mountain:

For me, I remember playing floor hockey inside there and hitting everyone that was around me and getting hit back too at the same time. That was a form of releasing the stress and tension I felt inside me. And of course fighting would start too.

Richard Roggins was an inmate at Stony Mountain and, as his daytime job,
he worked in the prison's Recreation Department. In his view, recreational sports has more to offer than an institutionalised form of controlled, legitimate violence. He added, "sports is a big part especially in keeping the jail calm because you get into a routine." He made special reference to weight training as providing this benefit. Roggins believed that taking away the weight rooms from United States prisons, which was under discussion, would cause severe problems: "You get the odd meathead that works out and wants to go around flexing his muscles but on the other hand you've got a lot of other guys that get into a routine."

Opponents of weight training claim that it increases the aggression level and violence of inmates both inside the prison setting as well as following their release.\(^3\) Roggins claimed, however, that without recreational athletics, prisons would be out of control. In answering the charge that weight lifting in a prison environment will increase the size and aggression of inmates and enhance violence, Roggins asserted: "You cannot change a man from the inside by his outside appearance." He insisted that weight lifting alone is a great stress release and there are seldom any fights over weight equipment.

Doug Davidson promoted both prison athletics and a healthy lifestyle. He said he did not agree with the common negative remark that weight lifting in prison serves to create more macho and violent criminals, even though he insisted that

\(^3\) The Pryce-Stupak Amendment, which is discussed earlier in this thesis, explains this argument in more detail.
weight lifting is not a quality form of exercise. He felt strongly about this, particularly in the prison setting, where they often do not have proper instruction. As a result of poor training and conditioning, he believed, weight training could cause serious distortions to the body. Davidson asserted that one of the problems with the recreation programme was that there was no guidance or instruction. He claimed that inmates would be willing to learn more about weight lifting and other sports from qualified people and that this would increase their appreciation in it. Davidson said that too many injuries take place as a result of improper training methods in the other athletic activities as well.

According to Harry Hogan, a Correctional Officer at the Rockwood Institution, athletics in the prison environment are both valid and important:

You need exercise programmes, you need sports programmes in an institution for the inmates to let off steam, to release anxieties, and to participate as groups and to comoderate, to share, and work as a team. If proper equipment is worn, for example, hockey helmets in hockey, no one will get hurt by rough play. It will just be guys letting off frustration.

Staff member Marcel Comeau also contended that, if recreation were to be taken away from the prisoners at Stony Mountain, a major problem of increased violence would ensue.

Dorchester’s Inmate Sports Commissioner, Josh Jones similarly claimed that, without sports, the prison would explode. He said this despite admitting there are occasional conflicts or fights during a recreational sports event. He felt that the
positive aspects of the prison recreation programme far outweigh the negative aspects. He also insisted that in Dorchester, there are several fine athletes involved in the programme.

Barry Belcher had previously spent time at the minimum security West Moreland Institution. He said that the many sports activities with which he became involved made his stay there much more enjoyable and the time went by very quickly.

When I was there I had four hours sleep. Between playing sports, meetings, this and that and this and that outside. You now go outside for a T.A.¹ for sports or AA meetings, it's just good.

The same point was reiterated by Steve Sanders who agreed that, without recreational sports in prison, problems arise: If they don't have things to occupy their mind then obviously there's going to be other things occupying their mind, like what bank they're going to rob when they get out or things along that line.

Without sports activities, he said, there would be a lot more violence inside the prison. If it was not for sports, Terry Tate felt he would be doing drugs and would become involved in many fights in prison. He believed that sports are useful because they act as a substitute for many things, including drugs and alcohol.

In sum, the perspective of both the inmates and the staff, recreational sports serve as a means of stress-reduction. Without organised sports, prisons would

¹ T.A. refers to temporary absences, often part of the programming of a low-security correctional facility.
experience much more illicit, uncontrolled violence.

Recreational Sports and Personal Benefits

In the wider society, people participate in recreational sports for enjoyment and for maintaining physical health. Similarly, prisoners are often similarly motivated by enjoyment and health. Thirty-six year old Steve Sanders said that he participated in many athletic activities at Springhill Institution primarily because he enjoyed them: "I enjoy it. Most sports I enjoy participating in. There are times when I'm feeling down or something like that I choose something that's going to make me sweat a lot."

Similarly, Belcher claimed that, because he enjoyed participating in sports so much, his prison stay was much more pleasant that it would otherwise be:

As it stands, it ain't too bad. I really can't say it's bad because I mean I've been here for a lot of years. I hate it in here but I enjoy it while I'm here. I take part in as much things as I can... I always get something out of the time I have to do. Whenever I leave here, I'm happy I'm out and free, but deep down I'm not happy cause there's no more sports. I can't play no more sports.

Peter Percy claimed to do weight training, play tennis, badminton, and the odd game of baseball while doing time in Springhill. He suggested that his participation was mainly to stay in shape. He enjoyed working out and competing in several different activities. Thirty-one year old Paul Powell was serving time at the Rockwood Institution and took part in several sports activities offered at the prison. "I like the competition. I like weight lifting just to stay in shape," he stated.
Richard Roggins said that, despite being thirty-eight years old, he was in the best physical shape of his life. Roggins emphasised that recreational sports in prison are a healthy way for inmates to acquire and/or maintain excellent physical conditioning. He added that, "The sports department is only one part of the entire facility, the rest is jail." In saying this, Roggins claimed that participating in sports can function as an escape from the reality of being an inmate in a federal penitentiary. It may also give him something to think about and anticipate even while he is not actually participating.

To some of the respondents, playing sports is an important component of their definition of what it means to be masculine. As such, participating in sports plays a role in developing and maintaining male self-esteem and recreational sports plays a similar role in the prison. Inmate Paul Powell summed up his thoughts in this way:

Through sports you learn how to interact with other people and learn how to obey the rules and, you know, good self image and I think there's a lot of positive aspects of it. With anything you know there's going to be positive and negative but I think the positive outweighs the negative.

Peter Perkins claimed that, before being imprisoned, he was never very involved in sports. Since his incarceration, however, his attitude had changed dramatically. He stated:

I think sports is really good for a person's self-esteem for a number of reasons. One, if they are any good at the sport, then that inevitably raises their self-esteem. They get in with a group of people and anytime in their life they've had a hard time getting in with groups of
people or becoming part of a group, then that's something that will make them feel better.

Perkins spent most of his recreation time lifting weights; however, he also played baseball, ice hockey, and did some coaching as well. He spent ninety minutes a day, six days a week, taking part in recreational sports activities.

Bob Butler also claimed that sports are good for one's self-esteem.

It helps to build your self-esteem. If you start to look good then of course your self-esteem is going to improve. At the same time you are getting stronger and you are competing with everyone in the room.

Butler claimed to participate in ice hockey, volleyball, soccer, baseball, football, floor hockey, and weight training. Similarly, Bill Beaver stated: "I lift weights because I feel good about myself mentally. I know it's a bad crime but I'm doing the time and I don't ever want to come back."

Percy stated that, even if only three recreational sports were taken away from the entire programme, some people would suffer because their physical and athletic abilities are limited. He was referring to the fact that some inmates participate only in certain sports activities either because of their enjoyment level or capabilities.

A lot of guys feel good physically in here, but mentally, I don't know. Myself, I find lifting weights and training and doing different things is the best thing for me.

In discussing other sports activities offered in the correctional setting, Roggins admitted that they gave inmates new interests. He claimed that he had never played badminton until he arrived at Stony Mountain but had become a fairly
good player. Roggins expressed his belief that sports helps people set goals and gives them something to look forward to. It can also prove what you are capable of to yourself and to others. He made reference to the highly-accomplished and well-known professional body builder, Dorian Yates. Yates claimed that, until he became involved in competitive body building, his life never had any direction. Once he acquired a routine and a set of goals, his life became an amazing success. Roggins felt that adopting such an attitude could quite possibly keep him away from further trouble with the law.

Sports also relieve a tremendous amount of boredom which would otherwise take place as a result of the inmates having so much time on their hands within the prison environment. Even after taking only one day off from his usual workout routine, Roggins claimed that he becomes bored. "Once you get into a routine you are not thinking as much, you just follow your routine day to day, what you're doing, and time just flies by."

According to Roggins, the availability of different recreational activities in prison will create more interest among the inmates. He said that he would very much like to find a place to play badminton after his release because he is getting better at it and enjoys it. Roggins believed that developing new interests will give him more things to do with which he can occupy his time. It may make life easier for him to deal with following his release from prison and possibly help keep him from getting into more trouble. An individual's involvement in sports activities
could serve as a replacement for drugs which inmates often take during their recreational time.

Another popular sport which takes place inside the walls of Stony Mountain Penitentiary is floor hockey. It is extremely competitive and rough. Roggins claimed that he doesn't play because it is far too violent and rough for him to deal with, but he agrees it is very prestigious to be on the team that wins the floor hockey championship.

Doug Davidson believed that athletics are "an absolute valid exercise" within the prison setting. He felt that it keeps inmates active both physically and mentally. Davidson asserted that, after an inmate does a day's work and then participates in an evening of recreational sports, his day is full and he will usually sleep much better. For this, along with other reasons, he would encourage participation in sports. In his view, a person who keeps himself in shape and takes pride in himself is much better off than a "couch potato."

Davidson felt that, while removal of recreation from Stony Mountain would cause severe problems at Rockwood, where only thirty percent or less of the inmate population take part in recreation, a deprivation of this programme would likely result in a greater television audience among the inmates. While at one time approximately ninety percent of the inmate population at Rockwood participated in active recreation, the availability of television sets, VCR's, and video games has caused a serious decline in participation. Davidson said that he does not want to see
time restrictions placed on inmate participation in sports. In saying this, he meant that the inmates should be able to use any free time they have to use the prison's recreation facilities.

With respect to the place of sports in the overall prison budget, Davidson did not believe that recreation was a priority. He felt that other programmes, for example, the sex offender programme, were far more important. This is another reason why recreation has become less popular among the inmates at Rockwood. Many inmates are spending more of their time becoming involved in programmes through which they may better their personal skills. Many low-budget activities are just as useful or even superior to the more expensive ones. Even sports such as baseball, soccer, and floor hockey, for example, are not costly to operate, when compared with a modern weight room, which needs continuous maintenance for its equipment.

Problems with Prison Recreation

According to information discussed in both the literature review and the interviews, there are problems associated with prison recreation in general and with weight training in particular. According to Comeau, the weight lifting that takes place at Stony Mountain leaves much to be desired:

We don't have the proper training system. It's not so much the training facilities that we have, it's the teaching. A lot of the guys, they can go in there and they don't know what their doing.

He felt that, considering the amount of time they spend in the weight room, many
inmates did not know enough about weight training. To help improve the weight training programme as well as other sports at Stony Mountain, as soon as more money became available, Comeau wanted to create a classroom in which he could show videos to teach mechanics in various athletic activities including weight training.

Comeau believed that many of the inmates would be very receptive to having professional and/or educated athletes come into the prison to hold clinics and teach the fundamentals of various sports. Roggins was impressed by a former major junior hockey player who once came to Stony Mountain to teach ice hockey fundamentals to the inmates.

Wayne Woods insisted that Rockwood needs a much more structured sports programme. "As it stands, it's nothing to write home about," he says. He would also like to see qualified people come into the institution on a contract basis to do seminars in Physical Education. Woods recalls one occasion a number of years earlier when a person came in from a university to teach a single lesson on skating procedures. It was the only time he ever witnessed such a clinic in all his years as an employee in the prison system. He thought that more clinics or seminars of this nature would inspire a great deal of enthusiasm among the inmates, and that most would be very receptive to it. As it stands, he found the weight lifting that takes place at Rockwood to be unstructured and unsupervised.

In order to improve the recreation programme at Rockwood, certain changes
must take place. More participation among the inmates is essential. Second, staff should provide more guidance or, perhaps, additional staff should be added to accommodate greater involvement. Another way of accomplishing this would be to have more experts come in from the outside to teach and encourage participation in athletics. A new sports complex, which would include a gymnasium, weight room, and offices for recreation personnel, will also help to improve the programme. Woods insisted that having more expertise available in the field of recreation would be a tremendous asset in making a better and more productive programme at Rockwood.

Dave Duncan believed that, at both Stony Mountain and Rockwood, there could be more communication between staff and inmates with respect to scheduling events and canvassing the prison population to encourage more interest. He also suggested that it would be advantageous to have more outside teams come into the prison to compete in different sports events. He felt it would be more exciting to play against people you do not see everyday.

Duncan believed that, at Rockwood, where there was a constant increase in the inmate population, there were not enough recreation facilities for the inmates. He claimed that neither inmates nor prison staff seemed to take the initiative to improve the situation.

Bob Butler said that there was a lack of organisation and, as a result, the recreational sports programmes were not very good. He believed that, with better
organisation, more inmates would be interested in participating. He also claimed that, because prison teams are no longer allowed to leave the institution to compete in sporting events out in the community, the quality of the programmes have suffered.

Butler felt that the equipment available to him in both Rockwood and Stony Mountain is "decent" but could be improved. The weight room in Stony Mountain is far superior to the one in Rockwood, he claimed. Paul Powell also claimed that the weight room at Rockwood could be vastly improved as well as the outdoor tennis courts. He agreed that most of the facilities and sports equipment at Rockwood and Stony Mountain were adequate but added they tend to get "run down" or destroyed through misuse or vandalism. He thought that the Prison Administration was often not very enthusiastic about replacing or upgrading equipment.

Bill Beaver believes that prison sports programmes need more organisation and that steps need to be taken to induce greater participation, particularly at Rockwood. Upon first entering Stony Mountain, he had not expected the recreation facilities to be "so nice." Ned Nelson described his impression of the recreation facilities at Rockwood as follows:

First of all, our weight pit's a little bit too small. They're in the process right now from what we hear, they're supposed to be building a new sports complex. There's no track out here like there is inside. Inside at least you've got a round track where you can run, a proper field, you know, to play soccer and football as well. They've got one diamond, so it's good enough for baseball. Overall, inside it's just not that big an
area to have too many different types of activities going on, like sports-wise.

Similarly, Steve Sanders discussed the quality of recreation facilities at Springhill Institution:

The facilities themselves are pretty good facilities. The equipment, some of the equipment could be upgraded. When we do get new equipment, it’s usually top of the line. But mainly what it comes down to is that it’s hard to get new stuff because of the money. They’re things that cost a lot of money, like the weights. They’re expensive. Since I’ve been here we’ve gotten one shipment of weights. It’s not a lot. Some machines are made in our shops or something like that because they can’t afford to buy them.

Barry Belcher also believed that there was a pressing need for improvement in the sports programmes and facilities at Springhill. He suggested that the equipment could be upgraded and that more space should be made available in the weight room. He also felt that the sports programmes could be better managed, a condition which would help avoid inmate discontent.

Warren Ward complained that the weight training area at Springhill was often overcrowded and that more free weights and machines should be made available. Tense situations were created, he said, when several inmates wanted to use the same equipment at the same time.

Steve Stone was less critical of facilities at Springhill, stating that the sports offered in the prison were as good as any that might be offered on the street. He added, however, that several areas of the recreation programme needed improvement; in particular, the weight room equipment should be upgraded.
because many weights and exercise machines were broken. Another problem, he admitted, was that some of the inmates take pieces of equipment back to their cells for their own use. Stone also said there should be more supervision and instruction to show the inmates how to exercise properly. Seminars should be organised to teach the inmates weight training as well as other sports. In his view, it is not the facilities that were poor; the root of the problem was that many inmates had not played many sports before entering the prison and, once they arrived they exercised improperly.

The greatest single complaint among the inmate respondents regarding the recreation facilities concerned the weight rooms at both Rockwood and Springhill. A majority of the inmates claimed the two weight training facilities were small and inadequate for the number of inmates who use them. This attests to the importance inmates place on this form of institutional recreation or the lack of other facilities that might attract them.

Nevertheless, the majority of inmates interviewed argued that sports in the prison as useful, primarily for passing the time, not particularly for rehabilitation. It is not that they were uninterested in positive changes, merely that they recognised the limitation of recreational sports. As Terry Tate observed, the prison regime as a whole fails to provide legitimate rehabilitative opportunities:

There should be more training in jail. My attitude is that the system is so screwed up. They programme people. As far as I'm concerned these programmes are useless. You have to say no first then go into the program. As far as I'm concerned this place offers no trades, no
nothing. There should be a trade where a guy can save a little money, learn something whether it's electrical, plumbing, anything. Just apprenticeship, learn a little something, then go out on the street, he's got a little money and he's got something to go for, he's got a goal. . . . That's my attitude towards how they should rehabilitate people.

Tate argued that recreation should not be placed ahead of educational programmes in prison. He believed that much more time should be spent learning trades and preparing to find employment after release. He believed that this is what will rehabilitate people. Recreation, he claimed, is only a way of passing the time during incarceration.
CHAPTER SIX

Evaluation, Interpretation, and Analytical Review

As with any exploratory study of the way in which established social structures of a social order work out in the practical lives of its' members, my own efforts to understand the role which recreational sports plays in our prison system have taken me through a complex and sensitive series of steps which would attempt to bring the structures of such programmes into the lives and judgements of prisoners, prison staff, and the prison administrators.

By laying out the structure of recreational sports in both Canadian and United States prisons, I feel it was clear early in this thesis that recreation has a major impact on our prisons. What I learned in my review of the literature, as well as my interviews and discussions with prison inmates and employees, is that a majority of my informants have made a remarkably clear and constructive statement regarding prison athletics, despite the inmates' predicaments and the grim statistical facts of recidivism. In this chapter, I review my findings from the literature and the interviews by placing them within the structural constraints of the institutions of prison athletics.

Despite the fact I have learned that a number of prison inmates choose not to become involved in prison recreational athletics, ironically my study, which was largely based on a convenience sample of inmate informants, did not include any
non-participants in recreation. This may be due to two reasons: the nature of my study and the assistance I received from Correctional Officers in finding my informants. Even though I explained to staff members that I wanted a random selection of inmates for my interviews, they seemed to track down informants whom they knew were recreationally active. The reason for this could be that they felt I was more interested in interviewing inmates who were involved in recreation or because these participants were more accessible for such a study. My interviews at Springhill Institution, for example, took place during an evening of recreation and my informants were approached and selected among this group.

The "Official" Ideology of Prison Sports

Prison management claims that recreational sports programmes involve far more than merely serving as a way for inmates to escape from the reality of prison life. It is also an opportunity for them to make changes in their criminal attitudes and behaviours (Dorchester Recreation Department Operational Plan, 1994: 2). According to this view, recreational sports programmes in prisons help reduce stress, overcome social weaknesses, and promote physical well-being. Besides giving inmates an opportunity to relieve the pressures of prison life, they promote healthy physical, mental, and social abilities. According to this view, a good recreational sports programme should include an area which focuses on the overall fitness of the individual. Inmates would then presumably take more pride in themselves and in their well being if physical fitness is presented as an important
issue (Stein and Sessoms, 1973: 112). Recreational sports would also help to instil pro-social values, leaving inmates with a sense of purpose and well-being. Other assumed benefits of such programmes are education and the promotion of good sportsmanship in a safe, secure, and humane environment (Dorchester Recreation Department Operational Plan, 1994: 3).

Both recreation staff and Corrections Officers agree with this ideology. They feel that prison recreation programmes are an essential part of everyday prison life for all of these reasons. The recreation staff members, in particular, appear to believe in the efficacy of these programmes. However, because it is their career livelihood, it may be difficult to obtain unbiased opinions from them. From my observations, Corrections Officers are mainly concerned with the effect that these programmes have on their duties, which fundamentally involve social control within the institution. While they voice support for the individual, rehabilitative ideology supposedly served by recreational programmes, their primary orientation is maintaining order in the prison setting.

The importance of occupying the many recreational hours with a constructive programme cannot be overemphasised. It is therefore important that recreational programmes incorporate a variety of activities. If inmates have the opportunity of choosing particular activities which are of interest to them, it may increase the safety of the correctional system as well as assist in the overall goal of rehabilitation. According to commentators who share this perspective, while recreation
programmes are not the main function of the institution, they are a secondary or supportive nature and should be beneficial in the rehabilitation of an individual (Stein and Sessoms, 1973: 112).

Among others, Stein and Sessoms have urged that prisons should have a mullet-purpose facility with a gymnasium and locker room. Ideally, the gym could double as an auditorium for dramatic productions and as a movie theatre. Only equipment which is in safe condition should be used. A careful, periodic inspection of the equipment should be done for both safety and security reasons. As we have seen, often sports and recreation equipment can be converted into weapons by innovative inmates. Baseball bats and hockey equipment are very efficient weapons. A Supervisor of Recreation should keep in mind at all times that the mission of his or her programme is to develop desirable traits of self-discipline and self-control in the inmates, while providing useful, helpful, and constructive recreational time activities (Stein and Sessoms, 1973: 115).

Can it be Argued that Recreation Programmes are Justified because they are Rehabilitative?

It is difficult to assess the accuracy of the correctional ideology which claims recreational sports in prison to be rehabilitative. There is an extensive literature on other programmes which have been introduced into penitentiaries to reform inmates. The general conclusion from my survey of a portion of this literature is that certain programmes may have beneficial effects on some inmates, but no general
conclusion can be made. It is not that "nothing works" but, rather, that attributing a beneficial result to a specific programme is extremely problematic. A large number of variables, including many over which the prison system has no control, affect recidivism rates. In order to determine the rehabilitative value of a given programme, one would likely have to obtain data on recidivism, separating prisoners involved in recreation programmes from ones who were not. Then, it would still be difficult to isolate the effect of this programme from a rehabilitative standpoint, particularly when collecting data from various institutions where recreation programmes differ and other programmes are also available. Drinkwater (1980) strongly disagrees with the notion that athletic involvement is a rehabilitative tool. He insists that most athletes are likely to display signs of anti-social behaviour during and following events. Similarly, Berkowitz argues that sports do not necessarily reduce violence and that they may increase one's aggressiveness. This viewpoint denounces recreation as a form of rehabilitation and also suggests that, rather than serving a pacifying function in the prison, recreational sports contributes to prison disorder (Berkowitz, 1973; cited in Drinkwater, 1980).

The learning theorists belief that sports may contribute to more violence in society also supports the argument that prison athletics are not a form of rehabilitation. They argue that such programmes could perhaps have negative consequences rather than future benefits, for both prison participants and other members of society.
The alternative perspective may be represented by O'Morrow and Reynolds (1989) who argue that recreation in corrections is one of the most important parts of the correctional process. In their opinion, prison recreation programmes can reduce crime. Flynn (1973) also considers recreation activities to be a vital component in the well-being of inmates. O'Morrow and Reynolds believe that recreational services must be recognised and acknowledged as an essential and viable component of the total rehabilitative effort of community and institutional correctional programmes. They feel that recreational services must become an integral part of the offender's treatment process.

The Inmates' Perspective

In my research, I have been unable to find any conclusive evidence linking recreation programmes in the prison system with the rehabilitation of inmates. In fact, my data could be interpreted to indicate that prison recreation programmes have little or no effect on the rehabilitation of inmates. All of my inmate respondents claimed to participate in prison athletics and each one was also a recidivist. This evidence suggests that, even though all of my respondents were involved in prison recreation programmes, they still re-offended, and some were multiple re-offenders. The data I present does not link the use of prison recreation programmes with rehabilitation, nor can they link these programmes to higher rates of recidivism. Since I only used a relatively small sample of inmates and only a limited number of institutions for my study, these facts are inconclusive.
My inmate respondents did not express the view that recreational sports programmes in prison were beneficial for their long-term rehabilitation. They all felt that recreation was an integral part of their daily prison life for several other reasons; however, they included few reflection on their futures.

While they did not espouse the rehabilitative ideology associated with prison recreation, the inmates I interviewed were generally very adamant in their belief that recreational sports programmes in prison are an absolute necessity. They raised many issues regarding the importance of these programmes in the prison environment. An overwhelming majority of these issues tend to have a major impact on social control within the correctional system.

When first entering prison, inmates become oriented to recreation programmes for various reasons. First, they often become dissatisfied with their new constricting environment. As a result, in an effort to avoid boredom, they try to find things to do with which they may occupy their time. They are made aware of the programmes, facilities, equipment, and recreation time available to them. While most of the inmates had a background in athletics before their incarceration, pursuing many of these activities would not be a new experience. Most inmates do not take part in these activities with a focus on their own long-term rehabilitation; they do so because of their state of mind and the accessibility of these facilities. Many also take part in certain athletic activities in an effort to improve their physical appearance. This is particularly true of weight lifting which can have a significant
impact on one's physical stature and self-image.

The Effect of Recreation Programmes on Social Control

There is a debate in society about whether recreational sports provide the public with a healthy outlet to reduce stress as well as to reap physical benefits. A similar question can also be raised concerning recreation within the federal prison system. Despite my inability to obtain data that would prove any rehabilitative function of recreation programmes, I did find these programmes to be very important. Data in my study strongly suggests that prison athletics play a major role in social control within the institution. My inmate respondents all claimed that recreation programmes play a key role in keeping the prison calm and under control. Many viewed it as a necessity in this regard.

None of my respondents viewed prison recreation programmes as a means of jeopardising an institution's social control. Prisoners suggested a number of different reasons why they participated in these programmes and why they are such an important part of prison life. All of their reasons were instrumental in the maintenance of social control. They claimed, for example, that these programmes help relieve stress/frustration and alleviate boredom, they help develop and maintain self-esteem, and they help create friendships of common interests inside the prison. All of these factors play a role in controlling a prison's social atmosphere and, hence, are key factors of institutional social control.

There are still those who feel that prison sports increase the aggressiveness of
inmates which may result in more violence within the institution. It is believed that fights during athletic events are common and recreation programmes simply provide inmates with another way to even scores of anger and hatred within the prison setting although, in this respect, they differ little from competitive sports outside the prison walls. In prison, as well, equipment can be used as weapons and this has been documented in some instances. It was noted above that weight lifting equipment or baseball bats can become extremely dangerous weapons in situations that become hostile and violent. It has also been documented that recreation programmes have been used to the advantage of inmate participants as a means of attempting to escape prison. These incidents have arisen both within the institution and during organised recreation outings. However, the same kind of arguments could be made for occupational tools or even kitchen utensils which have also been used as weapons or instruments to assist escapes.

Based on my evidence, a majority of the data supports the observation that recreational sports are a fundamental aspect of society in general, not only for prisoners. They serve as an excellent way to relieve stress and increase the value of a balanced lifestyle. For prison inmates, this outcome is especially important because of their lack of freedom and the stressful and enclosed environments in which they live. These sports activities may serve as an outlet for violence more than they stimulate it. This was suggested by the views of both the prison staff and the inmate respondents.
Prison staff insisted that recreation programmes rarely stimulate fights and violent behaviour. They believed that these programmes serve as a legitimate opportunity for violence in a well-controlled atmosphere. They also reduce incidents of violence by supplying the participants with an outlet in which they are able to relieve tension in a healthy way. Marcel Comeau, one of Stony Mountain Penitentiary's Recreation Department's staff members, was very adamant in his belief that recreation within the prison system is necessary for reducing the high tension and limiting incidents of violence within the institution, a belief which is based on over twenty years experience.

Richard Roggins, who has been an inmate for the better part of his adult life, insisted that recreation is a mandatory function in maintaining control and order within prison. The absence of many different recreational sports facilities and equipment, Roggins believed, would likely create severe problems. He felt that inmates would have very little to do and it would result in boredom, complete discontent, and eventually violence.

The Social Control/Rehabilitation Issue

Despite not having significant data to indicate that prison recreational sports programmes are beneficial in the correctional rehabilitation process, it could be argued that the benefits derived from such programmes for social control may have rehabilitative attributes. For example, my data shows that inmates who participate in these programmes while in prison are often well-behaved and are otherwise non-
violent individuals. If these inmates were to continue participating in organised recreational sports after their release from prison, it is quite possible that they may maintain attitudes of good behaviour and avoid further criminal activity.

However, by far the greatest problem with the rehabilitative ideology is the fact that many inmates will not continue their recreational sports involvement following their release from prison. If they do continue their involvement, it is frequently more limited in comparison to the prison programmes. After an inmate's release from a federal penitentiary, his financial situation is likely to be unstable. This alone can become a tremendous obstacle in the continuance of recreational athletics. Joining gyms or purchasing weight training equipment can be a great financial burden or even financially impossible for many former federal inmates. It is also far more difficult to gain access to individual sports or team sport leagues on the "outside" than it is inside the prison, and doing so could also be a costly endeavour.

My data indicates that many of my inmate informants intended to continue their recreational sports involvement following their release. For reasons mentioned above, their intentions are often not followed through. Many of these individuals who are released from prison also find that continued participation in this discipline becomes very difficult when they must spend a large portion of their time working and/or trying to make ends meet. If these former inmates have families they must support and care for, it can make it even more difficult to pursue recreational sports.
Then there are also those who take part in these activities while incarcerated simply because they have little else to do. Once they are removed from the prison environment, they no longer feel restricted and lose the desire to continue participating in these activities. They have relatively more access to other diversions, such as sex and alcohol, pursuits which were curtailed to some extent in the penitentiary.

As Barry Belcher claimed, once he leaves prison, he is happy to be free. But because he enjoys sports to such an extent, his removal from this environment also has its "downside." He stated:

I always get something out of the time I have to do. Whenever I leave here, I'm happy I'm out and free, but deep down I'm not happy cause there's no more sports. I can't play no more sports.

Belcher explains the fact that his participation in sports activities ends as soon as he is released. His discontinuation of sports activities results in a feeling of unhappiness and discontent. It may be that this recreational void in his life outside of prison may play a major role in his perpetual recidivism.

Telander (1975) interviewed inmates at the Illinois State Penitentiary at Statesville. One of his respondents, speaking about his participation in prison athletics, stated:

To me it's a job. There isn't much pleasure involved. On the outside I'm a mechanic, but in here I lift. For four years now I've been lifting and I feel it's my job — my duty — to lift. I need it because I'm gonna do my own time, work, and forget everything else I see. (Telander, 1975: 40)
Contrary to Barry Belcher's feelings, this perspective from the Statesville institution demonstrates that inmates may confine their recreational sports activities to the prison setting, offering another reason for the discontinuance of recreational athletics. Many other male inmates at Statesville expressed similar sentiments. If this attitude continued to shape an inmate's orientation to his work following release from prison, it might contribute to a more orderly lifestyle outside and potentially lower the rate of recidivism. The inmates' perception of weight training as simply being a good way of helping to pass the time more quickly, exemplifies the fact that one's idle time can contribute to discontent. Furthermore, this state of discontent may be a significant cause of further criminal activity and a return to institutional life.

The Weight Training Argument

A major debate has surfaced across North America in recent years dealing with weight training in prison. The main issue which has been raised is whether or not this form of recreation has serious consequences on the prison environment and on society in general. With respect to the prison environment, the primary debate concerns the safety of prison employees and inmates in the institutions. In society at large, the main concerns are the possible negative effects that weight training programmes may have by producing aggressive prisoners imbued with a "macho" image which threatens people in society and particularly women. In addition, there is concern about the expense of recreational programmes and weight training in
The purpose of the Pryce-Stupak Amendment was to eliminate weight training in the prison environment. The main argument behind this amendment was a concern about the additional dangers associated with this form of recreation in the prison setting. These dangers were exemplified by events which occurred during the 1993 Lucasville Prison riot and the 1994 riot at Riker's Island Prison. In both incidents, inmates used weight lifting equipment as weapons to injure prison staff seriously and to cause extensive property damage.

My research conducted at four federal prisons uncovered an attitude which was very different from the one defending the Pryce-Stupak Amendment. Recreation staff and Corrections Officers were generally both very supportive of weight training as a legitimate form of prison recreation. They believe it to be a beneficial form of recreation because it allows inmates to relieve stress and frustration. It also gives them an opportunity to set personal goals and become interested in their physical health and well-being. The high participation rate in weight training among federal prison inmates is also an indication that it is a valuable part of the recreation programme. Despite a few of the horrifying and dangerous incidents which have taken place, it appears as though weight training is more advantageous than it is detrimental to an institution's social control.

The only negative issue that was reported by prison staff regarding weight lifting was the fact that it is not supervised enough and many inmates who
participate often lack the proper mechanics. As a result, these inmates are more prone to injury. Corrections officials have seen several weight-training injuries caused by a lack of knowledge and improper training techniques. One Corrections Officer, Doug Davidson, does not believe that weight training in prison will develop more aggressively masculine criminals. However, he believes that improper training methods are a danger to the participants. Marcel Comeau claimed that if he were able, he would attempt to show videos to teach inmates training methods in weight training as well as skills in other sports.

Another important issue regarding weight training in the prison system is the impact it has on inmates following their release from prison. Are we creating more dangerous and more aggressively masculine prisoners? If this is indeed the case, the entire purpose of the correctional setting must be re-evaluated. Many convicted offenders are serving prison time for crimes of physical violence such as assault causing bodily harm. Weight training in prison will certainly increase the strength of those participating. Will it enhance the potential for further and/or more violent criminal behaviour following an inmates release from prison?

As Richard Roggins, an inmate at Stony Mountain Penitentiary, claimed: "You cannot change a man from the inside by his outside appearance." He insisted that weight lifting alone is a great stress release and there are seldom any fights over weight equipment. Roggins is a strong advocate of prison weight training. He is attempting to use it to his advantage in an effort to get his life back on track and
avoid future trouble with the law. He feels that establishing and following a routine and setting personal goals are important steps towards rehabilitation.

Roggins, among other inmates and prison staff members, believe that, while weight training in prison may in fact increase the size and strength of those participating, it is not likely to increase one's level of criminal activity following their release from prison. I discovered a common belief among both inmates and staff that prison weight training, by itself, should not increase the rate of recidivism but, instead, could possibly lower it. Roggins insisted that if a person is determined to commit a criminal offence, he will do so regardless of his size and strength. He made his point by expressing the fact that it does not take a very large, strong, or well-conditioned individual to shoot a gun or wield a knife at someone.

Weight training has become a very popular form of recreation throughout society as a whole and not just behind prison walls. It is known to be a very healthy, goal-oriented activity for non-convicted men who come from a multitude of socio-economic backgrounds. For whatever purpose these people participate in weight training, it serves as an important aspect in their life.

It also seems as though weight training is an important aspect of a good prison recreation programme if it is well-organised and properly supervised. The equipment must be kept in good-condition and the activity itself should be closely supervised by prison staff. If any problems or controversies occur during this form of recreation, those involved should have their weight training and/or recreation
privileges suspended or revoked. By implementing rules and regulations among inmate users, the programme should also serve as a useful mechanism for social control.

Additional Arguments for Prison Sports Programmes

Dating back to the time when prisons changed their focus from "revenge" to "reintegration" (Hagan, 1989: 9), the ideologies of prisons changed a great deal. Inmates started to articulate their beliefs and what they felt were their "rights." The fundamental argument was that they, too, were human beings and they should be treated as such regardless of their "prisoner status." They believed that "fresh air" and "recreation" should be incorporated as part of the necessities of daily life. As we have seen, to an extent prisoners were successful in encouraging the development of a wide range of recreational and rehabilitative options in the penitentiary system. Today, these inmates "rights" are again the focus of controversy as the criminal justice system emphasises punishment and retribution.

The inmates of today continue to express their discontent regarding prison life. They argue that, just because they have been convicted of breaking society's laws and are imprisoned, they should not be treated unfairly relative to those in free society. They claim that they should not be forced to neglect several important aspects of their lives, regardless of how long their sentences are. Living conditions, food, and recreation are the main aspects which are often referred to by inmates as their "rights" as human beings. The point where prison administration and
government officials draw the line between these claims for "rights" and demands for punishment is an important topic of discussion today.

Despite the fact that there are many problems with the current structure of prison recreational sports programmes, they still appear to have great value. The sports events are often criticised by participating inmates for several reasons. Tommy Thomas, as previously quoted on page 92 of this thesis, compared athletics outside and inside prison. Whereas on the outside team-mates are positive, in the prison "it's a total screw up, it's all negative reactions. You can't enjoy it. You can't have fun." Thomas claimed to have participated in sports in prison to keep busy, avoid boredom, and not watch too much television. While sports serves to relieve his day-to-day stress and frustration, like everything else in the institution, it is tainted by the environment of the prison and the coerced nature of the population.

The fact that Tommy Thomas participated in prison sports even though he did not enjoy them, illustrates that these programmes are a necessity in prison. If people take part in them despite their lack of enjoyment, it makes it very clear that these programmes should be implemented for the benefit of the inmates, the prison staff, and social control in the institution.

Other problems associated with prison sports are also common. Prison sports events often do not have enough supervision. Observation suggested that some have absolutely no supervision at all. With various events running concurrently, it is impossible for the staff to properly supervise them. Violent situations are not
common but, when they occur, can get out of hand. Injuries also occur due to the absence of appropriate supervision. A lack of knowledge and proper training in various activities is also not uncommon. Prison athletes often lack coaching in competitions and this may cause yet more complications such as disagreements during events.

Non-participation patterns in sports activities is quite common in our society. With the influx of cable television, video cassette recorders, and video games, people are often doing more passive activities than they are active ones such as sports. My observations suggest that, as many prisons are becoming more comfortable for inmates, the availability of these luxuries are becoming available more often. In fact, the minimum security institution (Rockwood) had the least active prison population but also the highest number of alternative recreational privileges (such as watching television). Most prisoners will spend time in a minimum security prison prior to their release. The result of their experience there is a tendency to become lazy and avoid active sports activities. Consequentially, they will continue this pattern following their release from prison. This sedentary lifestyle is unhealthy both physically and mentally and may also be a contributing factor in high rates of recidivism.

From the data I received during my research in four Canadian prisons, recreational sports is an important asset in the day-to-day aspect of running a prison. Despite a lack of evidence regarding its ability to rehabilitate and lower recidivism
It appears as though the greater the number of recreation facilities and events offered, the greater the positive effect it will have on those involved. Therefore, if social control is one of the system's main priorities - and it has been claimed to be by many prison authorities - recreation should be a major part of prison life. This raises the final important issue which surfaced during the research: the amount of money that should be spent by government on this area of corrections.

**Funding of Prison Recreation Programmes**

A majority of federal prison recreation programmes are funded by the federal government. Staff, facilities, and equipment are all important components of these programmes. In some instances, it is claimed that inmates pay for their own facilities, equipment, and their maintenance. However, most if not all of their earnings are accumulated from their prison jobs. These jobs are created within prisons in an effort to keep inmates busy and productive. They also may lower the cost of hiring more outside employees and help to keep the prison running smoothly. Regardless of whether the inmates pay for these programmes or not, the federal government is the real source of funding.
Since the government uses large amounts of taxpayers' money to fund recreational sports programmes, it is crucial to determine whether these programmes are necessary and, if so, to what extent they can be implemented practically. In researching this topic, I have determined that programmes have considerable value within the prison. Despite these findings, sports programmes in the prison system may be easy targets of cost-cutting measures by the government. The Pryce-Stupak Amendment in the United States is one example of a proposal to have certain programmes cut to save money. The government should understand that recreational sports programmes are an extremely important part of prison life. However, they may be inclined to cut sports programmes in a political environment within which the issue regarding their absolute necessity continues to be debated. A common argument is that prisons are beginning to look more like "country clubs" than correctional institutions. One example is the Rockwood Institution, a minimum security prison located beside Stony Mountain Penitentiary in southern Manitoba. Corrections Officers even commented that the prison had become far too luxurious, and inmates would often re-offend simply to return to the "plush" prison environment, a statement which reflects more on the conditions of life faced by ex-inmates than the luxury of the penitentiary.

For these reasons, recreational sports programmes are very susceptible to government cost-cutting measures. This is particularly true when citizens are made aware of prison recreational sports programmes and facilities through the media.
People see the facilities to which prisoners have access on a day-to-day basis as unnecessary and expensive "frills" and they support cut-back policies. They often bitterly oppose these facilities and programmes for prisons — especially when these law-abiding citizens themselves do not have the resources to have many of these "luxuries." Hence, the argument of what is a luxury and what is a necessity continues. The burden of the evidence presented here is that recreational programmes are necessary on many grounds, primarily the functional needs of the institution as well as the personal needs of many prisoners. In addition, just as recreation is a basic necessity for people's health and well-being in society at large, so too is it a requirement for the incarcerated population. In sum, recreational facilities should be funded with at least as high a priority as other rehabilitative components of the prison regime.

Clearly, recreational sports programmes are an important aspect of prison life. In the following chapter, I will conclude my findings and make further suggestions as to how our correctional system can best utilise these programmes.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

In the assessment of treatment and correctional programmes, rates of recidivism become a crucial determining factor. Treatment programmes appear to have very little effect on recidivism. In fact, it seems that the imprisonment of offenders is no more effective than non-incarceration of such individuals in terms of reducing recidivism (McMahon, 1992: 14).

According to Abdel Fattah (1976), in a study for the Law Reform Commission of Canada, in countries where no official data is available, recidivism rates range from fifty to eighty percent. Unofficial estimates on recidivism in federal penitentiaries have always been close to eighty percent. Prisoners who received slightly longer sentences than others were somewhat more likely to become repeat offenders (Gosselin, 1982: 32-3).

The observations suggest that recidivism appears to be very high despite all of the programmes in our prisons. On balance in reviewing recreation within the United States and Canadian prison systems, it must be concluded that these programmes are highly inadequate. This is often a result of poor planning or a lack of knowledge about recreation within the institution. The concern over prison and inmate security has contributed significantly to the absence of quality programmes. Equipment, facilities, and supplies should be part of the institution's budget. At the
time the budget is planned, the needs of the inmates should be considered (Stein and Sessoms, 1973: 112-3).

I have determined through my research that inmates often appear to have high rates of recidivism partly as a result of a feeling of uncertainty about their ability to succeed on the outside after their release. As a result, they often tend to be destined for more convictions even before they are released. This suggests that rehabilitation is practically non-existent within the correctional system. While optimists continue to believe that there must be a way to change the attitudes of inmates in prison and decrease recidivism, it appears as though prison staff often do not care about inmates long-term success as long as their own jobs are secure.

Although this study suggests that recreational sports programmes do not appear to have any correlation with successful rehabilitation, such a conclusion is tentative given the exploratory nature of the study and the use of a small, convenience sample. It appears, however, that such programmes in prison are most valuable in the area of social control. More than that, however, it is possible that participating in recreational sports can have long-term effects if they are continued after release from prison. Arguably, as mechanisms of social control, they function as a social safety valve for everyone and not just former inmates in free society. If they keep people active and sometimes goal-oriented in prison, they may accomplish the same purpose outside of prison.

The most substantial problem which exists is that, following their release
from prison, most inmates fail to continue these activities and this form of lifestyle. Since most inmates are working class or under-class, they have very few financial or social resources available to them upon their release. Giving more resources and providing these former inmates with means to continue their participation in athletics following their release should have an effect on social control in the community and, in essence, lower the rate of recidivism. Therefore, I believe it is of great importance to implement the best possible recreational sports programmes in the community for ex-inmates as well as non-offenders. Perhaps more money should be spent on community resources in this field, to give former inmates a place to become involved following their release.

Prisons must continue to maintain quality programmes in recreation; however, more generally, additional money should be used to fund public sports leagues and facilities in the community. People from all walks of life should be able to participate in these leagues and use these facilities. These resources would be beneficial to everyone and people would no longer complain that their taxes are being spent mainly on prison luxuries which lack any rehabilitative function. Private gyms and leagues should still be available for those who can afford them and who are not interested in using public facilities.

The federal government should fund public gyms so that people in the lower socio-economic class will have a place for recreational athletics. Many former inmates will also fall into this class as they struggle to survive financially. If these
facilities function in the wider society as they do in prison, they could potentially increase social control and potentially reduce crime, and they could also employ more people in the field of recreation. Surely, it would be more beneficial for government to employ people in the community rather than within the prison system!

Although participation in prison recreation appeared in my study to correlate negatively with rehabilitation — my respondents were virtually all both active participants and recidivists — my interpretation of this finding is that inmates fail to continue their participation in the post-release period because these facilities are not available. It is otherwise contradictory to claim that recreation increases social control but does not contribute to rehabilitation. Arguably, given the opportunities and motivation, participating in organised recreational activities outside of prison may have an analogous social control effect in the wider society.

On the other hand, the limitations of the sampling used in this thesis make generalisations suspect. Given the strong possibility that the inmates selected for the interviews were likely to be positively biased towards sports participation, it is possible that their enthusiastic endorsement of the benefits of such programmes may not reflect the views of other inmates or of a less biased observer of the prison environment. Respondents argued that sports acted as a release for aggressive energy rather than contributing to further aggression. Furthermore, there was little discussion of the possible negative consequences of weight training or of the
socialisation of males to the practices of aggressive, competitive sports. The fact that these issues did not arise from my respondents does not reflect the seriousness of the potential problems they indicate.

Another area which may improve the future outlook of crime is better education for our youth. More money should be spent on educating children and on recreation programmes for children in the school system. Learned recreation at an early age may increase the potential for further enjoyment and continued involvement through adulthood. If the findings from my study can be generalised, they would suggest that, if inmates could continue their participation in recreation after their release, it may contribute to a healthier and busier lifestyle, enhance self-esteem, provide less idle time, and motivate a more law-abiding lifestyle. The major caveat to this conclusion is that other interpretations of the effects of prison sports are equally possible and a more scientifically-selected sample of inmates and a more neutral examination of the issues could result in different conclusions.

I argue, however, that while other important topics such as sex education and safety procedures are instilled in young children today, recreation should not be neglected. If more money were spent to improve recreation in society as a whole and to educate the children of our society, it might decrease future crime and could serve as a quality investment for our future. While some people will still offend, such programmes might, as argued above, potentially assist in reducing the crime rate. When one considers the expense of incarcerating just one inmate, it may be an
investment well worth making. In addition, our society might have less crime, making it a safer environment in which to live.

While recreational sports are necessary in the prison, this does not overshadow other areas which are equally necessary, such as opportunities for education and practical training. More trades should be offered so that inmates can both utilise their time constructively and have a trade or profession to practice upon their release. Terry Tate, as quoted in Chapter Five, expressed the importance of practical training for possibilities of rehabilitation:

There should be more training in jail. My attitude is that the system is so screwed up. They programme people. As far as I’m concerned these programmes are useless. You have to say no first then go into the program. As far as I’m concerned this place offers no trades, no nothing. There should be a trade where a guy can save a little money, learn something whether it’s electrical, plumbing, anything. Just apprenticeship, learn a little something, then go out on the street, he’s got a little money and he’s got something to go for, he’s got a goal. . . . That’s my attitude towards how they should rehabilitate people.

University and college courses are offered to inmates; however, they do not appear to be encouraged to participate. More aptitude testing should also be offered upon an offender’s arrival in prison so that the offender’s skills and interests can be determined and an appropriate programme of activities devised.

Within the correctional system, there should be two main objectives: social control and rehabilitation. Recreation should be implemented for the former, while education should be implemented primarily for the latter. Given the social control function which prison recreation appears to perform in the prison setting, and the
implications suggested above for continuing recreational involvement beyond the prison, it could be argued that parole should be granted more liberally to those who complete educational programmes and who agree to maintain – and have the opportunity to continue – their participation in recreation following their release from prison. Given the results of the study reported above, an inmate who is released from prison, obtains employment and remains active recreationally in the community, should have more opportunity for success than one who has no job and is not involved in recreation.
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Topping, C.W.

Umbreit, Mark
APPENDIX 1

Arnie Caplan
Box 6468 ASU
Wolfville, Nova Scotia
B0P 1Z1
Phone: (902) 542-1620

April 14, 1994

Ms. Brenda Hastie
Chief Administrator
Dorchester Penitentiary
Dorchester, New Brunswick
E0A 1M0

Dear Brenda,

Thank you for your telephone response of April 11th. I am writing you this letter – as you requested – to make you aware of my intentions, in the hopes of gaining the privilege of visiting your institution and conducting interviews for purposes of my graduate research. As I mentioned to you by telephone, I would be grateful for the opportunity to visit Dorchester anytime after May 25th and, if possible, before June 10th of this year.

I am a twenty-six year old Master of Arts Sociology student at Acadia University. My birthdate is February 22, 1968. In working towards the completion of my degree, I am writing a thesis on The Role of Recreational Sports in the Prison System.

The aim of my study is to determine the effects of inmate participation in prison sports/athletics. I am interested in finding out whatever information I can about your recreation/sports programs for inmates.

During the daytime hours, I would very much like to have the opportunity to observe the recreational sports facilities available to inmates. Also during daytime hours, if possible, I would like to have the opportunity to interview prison staff members who organise and operate your recreational sports programs. My intent is to get their feelings about the benefits of the programs and facilities.

I would also be grateful for an opportunity to interview inmates. In doing so I would be able to get their feelings about recreational prison sports as well.

Any literature pertaining to my topic area that you could furnish me with, would also be very helpful and tremendously appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Arnie Caplan
Dear Director,

I am a current graduate student at Acadia University. I am working towards a Master of Arts degree in Sociology. As a part of my program I am required to research a particular subject area and write an in-depth thesis. My interest lies in the role of recreational sports in the Canadian prison system.

I am writing to you in an effort to obtain any information that you could possibly send me in relation to your sports and recreation programs at your institution. I would also be very interested in visiting your institution in the near future.

If you have any literature you could send me it would be greatly appreciated. Anything involving your recreation and sports as well as rehabilitation in general. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I will anxiously be awaiting your reply.

Sincerely,
Arnie Caplan
Amie Caplan
Box 6486 ASU
Wolfville, Nova Scotia
BOP 1Z1
Phone: (902) 542-1620

April 19, 1994

Chief Administrator
Springhill Penitentiary
Springhill, NS


The aim of my study is to determine the effects of inmate participation in prison sports/athletics. I am interested in finding out whatever information I can about your recreation/sports programs for inmates.

I will be returning to Winnipeg on May 2nd, 1994, but only for two weeks. I would very much like to visit your penitentiary and I would be extremely grateful for the opportunity to interview prison staff members who organise and operate your recreational sports programs. My intent is to get their feelings about the benefits of the programs and facilities.

I would also be grateful for an opportunity to interview inmates. In doing so I would be able to get their feelings about recreational prison sports as well.

Any literature pertaining to my topic area that you could furnish me with, would also be very helpful and tremendously appreciated. As I feel my research is important and could also be a valuable asset to future corrections, I am requesting your co-operation. Please contact me at the number listed below on or shortly after May 2nd. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Amie Caplan
APPENDIX 2

Inmate Interview Guide

(1) What is your age?

(2) What crime or crimes are you serving time for?

(3) How long is your current sentence?

(4) How long have you been in this institution?

(5) How many times have you been convicted?

(6) Where did you grow up and where does your family live now?

(7) What sports or athletics activities do you participate in here?

(8) If you didn't participate, how do you think you would occupy your time?

(9) Why did you become involved in prison sports?

(10) Do you think prison sports could be improved in this institution and, if so, how?

(11) Do you think people on the outside are justified in saying that prisoners have far too many luxuries inside prison? Explain why or why not.
CONSENT FORM

I, ______________________, hereby consent to the use of my recorded image and/or

voice in a film, video tape, photograph and/or publication for ________________________

(sponsoring organization) (subject matter)

I waive all rights to the recorded materials in perpetuity and assign them irreversibly to the ________________________

(sponsoring organization)

(signature) (date)

(witness) (date)
APPENDIX 4

Staff Interview Guide

(1) What is your job title?

(2) What are your duties?

(3) How long have you been employed at this position?

(4) What are your feeling about the recreation programmes in prison? Are they valid? Can they be improved?

(5) Are the recreation facilities adequate?

(6) What can you tell me about recidivism? Could you correlate any involvement in sports to recidivism rates?

(7) What are the costs associated with running a prison recreation programme?
APPENDIX 5

PRYCE-STUPAK AMENDMENT TO HR 4092 (THE CRIME BILL)
19th and 20th April 1994

Price is the lady from Ohio

Stupak is the gentleman from Michigan

(House - April 19, 1994)

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Pryce-Stupak amendment to H.R. 4092, the crime bill. Our amendment prohibits the use of free weights by, and the teaching of self-defense to, Federal prison. This amendment will go a long way toward ensuring a higher degree of workplace safety for our corrections officers.

Incidents

In last year's Easter riot at the Lucasville Prison, inmates used free weights to batter down a concrete wall protecting guards. This enabled the inmates to take 11 guards hostage. One of those 11 guards was murdered. Last month, inmates used weight-lifting equipment as weapons against corrections officers in a riot at Rikers Island Prison in New York. One guard was beaten within an inch of his life with a 50 pound weight.

We must do a better job to ensure that the danger associated with working in prisons is minimized. We must do more to ensure that these dedicated correctional officers can tell their families, with some degree of certainty, that they'll be home at the end of the day. The Pryce-Stupak amendment is not the singular solution to the increasing violence against correctional officers by bigger, stronger bulked up prisoners. But this is an amendment, in the right direction, and will help to send the message that prison is for punishment and rehabilitation, not a place to refine the skills that landed one in prison.

I would urge all of my colleagues to support the Pryce-Stupak amendment to the crime bill.
VIOLENT CRIME CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1994 (House - April 20, 1994)

b>—Chapter 303 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

'4047. Strength-training of prisoners prohibited

'The Bureau of Prisons shall take care that—

'(1) prisoners under its jurisdiction do not engage in any activities designed to increase their physical strength or their fighting ability; and

'(2) that all equipment designed for this purpose be removed from Federal correctional facilities.'

(b) Clerical Amendment.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 303 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

'4047. Strength-training of prisoners prohibited.'.

VIOLENT CRIME CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1994 (House - April 20, 1994)

Mr. LIGHTFOOT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. Pryce] and the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. Stupak]. As the House is aware, this amendment would prohibit the Federal Bureau of Prisons from allowing prisoners under its jurisdiction to engage in any activities designed to increase their physical strength. The amendment would ban free weights and all types of defensive and body-building training in prisons within the Federal Prisons System. This is a very simple amendment, but it just makes common sense, which may be why Congress hasn't done this sooner.

It is appalling to think that someone who has been convicted of a violent crime could use the taxpayer's money and resources to become even more capable of violent acts. In addition, I am aware of incidents in the gentlelady's home State of Ohio and in New York in which prisoners used weight lifting equipment as riot weapons. Why should we give those who have violated the safety of our communities additional resources to wreak havoc?
We need to make sure that individuals in prisons spend their time learning not to break the law again, not getting themselves pumped up at taxpayer's expense. Certainly, I know, and my colleagues acknowledge, that this one measure will not solve our Nation's crime problem. But I don't see any reason for us not to take all the steps we can while we have the chance. I thank Congresswoman Pryce for her work on this measure, as well as the work done by my colleague from Michigan.

Congressman Stupak. Congresswoman Pryce is a much valued member of the law enforcement caucus which Congressman Stupak and I cochair. With this proposal, we can show our commitment to helping our Nation's law officers. I urge the House to adopt this measure.

(House - April 20, 1994)

I realize my amendment is not a cure-all to crime. However, it is an important first step toward enabling the victims of crime to regain the upper hand. My amendment will not deprive prisoners of anything essential to their health or rehabilitation.

Why should be give convicted felons the ability to defeat us in our homes, on our streets, and within the correctional systems themselves. Mr. Chairman, who's running the prisons anyway? This amendment is a practical approach to protecting the public and our prison personnel right now. If you do not want to build a better thug, support the Pryce amendment.

Mr. McCOLLUM. I thank the gentlewoman for her remarks, and I want to continue that by closing out my 30 seconds. The amendment of the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. Pryce] is super. She did not explain it during that 30 seconds, and probably did not have the time. But it involves the prohibiting of the Federal Bureau of Prisons from allowing prisoners under its jurisdiction from engaging in any activity designed to unduly strengthen their physical condition. I have had a lot of complaints about that. So I am very happy that it is here. The rest of the amendments are very, very important. I am happy to support this en bloc amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

VIOLENT CRIME CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1994 (House - April 20, 1994)
Rep. PRYCE

Mr. Chairman, today the House of Representatives is debating the issue of crime. I
am offering an amendment which is a simple but a significant step toward reducing the threat of violence in America. My amendment will address a dual threat to our Nation's corrections officers and the general public. First, it will make our prisons safer by reducing the risk of assault and injury to prison personnel. Second, it will help protect potential victims of violent crime. Specifically, my amendment will prohibit the Federal Bureau of Prisons from allowing prisoners to engage in certain activities which are designed to increase their physical strength and enhance their fighting ability. The types of activities which would be prohibited include training with free weights or martial arts instruction.

This amendment makes good common sense. History has unfortunately proven that weights and weight bars can be effectively used inside prisons as weapons. In my own State of Ohio last year, inmates at the Lucasville Prison used weight lifting bars to break through concrete stairwells in order to kidnap guards seeking refuge during an 11-day riot killing nine people. In addition, on March 14, 1994, 15 corrections officers and 10 inmates were injured in the Rikers Island prison gymnasium. In that incident, inmates hit two officers over the head with a 50-pound weight, and the two officers were seriously injured and hospitalized. It simply defies logic that we are using taxpayers' money to buy state-of-the-art health clubs for convicted criminals. In effect, our taxpayer dollars are being used to build bigger and better thugs.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 81 percent of the assaults on law enforcement officers in the United States during 1992 were committed with personal weapons, such as hands, fists, and feet. Our current prison system provides convicted felons, many of whom are already prone to violence, the chance to significantly increase their strength and their bulk—thus making future acts of violence even more likely.

This proposal is not based on idle speculation, but rather on statistical fact. According to a 1991 survey, 54 percent of inmates convicted of violent crimes used no weapon other than their own body when they committed their offense. Thus, by building a better thug, we are actually providing the weapon used in many violent crimes. Finally, of the 50,000 violent criminals put on probation during 1992, over 9,000 were rearrested for a violent crime within 3 years in the same state. Mr. Chairman, I think these statistics speak for themselves.

As a former prosecutor and judge who worked directly with law enforcement, jail and prison personnel, I know full well the value of exercise and stress reduction as an inmate management tool. However, there are many other forms of exercise—including basketball, jogging, aerobics, handball, and calisthenics—that cost much less and make much more sense.
I strongly believe that prison rehabilitation programs should focus on giving inmates the proper education and job skills needed to become productive members of society. State and Federal studies show that education and job training reduce recidivism and assist many ex-offenders in obtaining gainful employment. By contrast, weight training and boxing classes can hardly be described as essential programs to provide prisoners with necessary job training skills.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment has been endorsed by the Law Enforcement Alliance of America; the American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers; the National Association for Crime Victims Rights; the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police; the Buckeye State Sheriff's Association; the California Peace Officer's Association; Citizens for Law and Order; Victims of Irreparable Crime Experience; the Southern States' Police Association; and many others.

SUPPORT THE PRYCE-STUPAK AMENDMENT TO THE CRIME BILL (House - April 20, 1994)
Rep. PRYCE

Congressional Record - House pg. H2512 20 Apr 1994

(Ms. PYRCE of Ohio asked for and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms.PRYCE of OHIO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support for the Pryce-Stupak amendment, a simple, commonsense step toward reducing violence in America and addressing the rights of crime victims. Very simply, it prohibits weight training and fighting instruction withing our Federal prisons. With the dual benefit of making prisons safer for our corrections officers and helping protect potential crime victims.

Not only is this equipment used inside prisons as weapons- but it also supplies a means for many prisoners, already prone to violence, to increase their strength and bulk. We have unwittingly been mass producing a super breed of criminals.
As a former prosecutor and judge, I understand the value of exercise as an inmate mangement tool. But, there are so many other forms of exercise - including basketball, jogging, aerobics, handball, and calisthenics - that cost much less and make more sense.

It defies logic that we are using tax payers money to provide state-of-the-art health clubs for convicted criminals. This is not a bread and water measure. Some of these prisons have larger weight programs than many high school athletic departments.
The Pryce-Stupak amendment is not a cure-all to crime. But, it is an important step for victims rights. Mr. Speaker, who is running our prisons anyway? If you want to stop building a better thug, suport the Pryce-Stupak amendment. Let us replace barbells with books.
APPENDIX 6

NCRA POSITION STATEMENT ON WEIGHT LIFTING PROGRAMS IN CORRECTIONAL SETTINGS

It is the official position of the National Correctional Recreation Organization that weight lifting programs are an integral part of rehabilitation services within the spectrum of corrections.

Properly administered weight lifting programs are a vital tool in the daily management of a volatile environment as well as a potentially cost-effective measure. The benefits of these programs can be documented in several areas:

The vast majority of incarcerated criminals committed their offenses during leisure time. Programs such as weight lifting give offenders leisures skills to utilize during free time after parole or release.

In the commission of a crime, the major contributing factors are often the presence or use of intoxicants and/or firearms. Physical strength and size are insignificant in comparison.

Accreditation standards and some court decisions require that institutions offer a comprehensive recreation program with a variety of equipment and supplies. Such programs supply emotional, psychological, and physiological benefits. Weight lifting is a part of a comprehensive program.

Inmate idleness during incarceration has been cited as a cause of serious disturbances in institutions. Inmates who are involved in constructive physical activities such as weight lifting are less likely to become involved in disruptive behavior. Thus, weight lifting programs contribute to good institutional management by providing an outlet through which offenders can appropriately relieve stress and anxiety.

The positive self-esteem that comes from the self-discipline required to obtain improved physical condition is a vital part of the inmate's preparation for a successful return to society. This is especially true when combined with other programs such as education, vocational skills, and drug treatment.

Many correctional systems fund recreational equipment and programs out of monies generated by offenders (ie; store funds, vending machines, and long distance phone call fees). This reduces taxpayer costs in that government funds can be focused on educational, vocational, and security needs while inmates supply
funding for their own leisure activities. This promotes a positive work ethic; Linking vocational and recreation programs and enhancing the assimilation of societal norms within the institution and increasing the likelihood that inmates will operate within these norms upon release.

The task of providing a safe environment of positive change is not an easy one and our tools are few. The elimination of any of these tools would create a void that would be difficult and costly to fill. The reality is that nearly all inmates in our prisons will one day return to society. It is our responsibility to ensure that they have every opportunity to return as more productive citizens that when they came to us. Weight lifting is a vital part for correctional programming and we strongly encourage its continued presence in America's prisons.
APPENDIX 7

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS (Senate - June 16, 1995)

[Page: S8564]

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, one of the many controversial provisions of the 1994 crime bill was the requirement that states have in place an array of dubious programs, including social rehabilitation, job skills, and even postrelease programs, in order to qualify for the prison construction grant money contained in the bill.

This requirement is yet another manifestation of the criminal rights philosophy, which has wreaked havoc on our criminal justice system. This view holds that criminals are victims of society, are not to blame for their actions, and should be rehabilitated at the taxpayers expense. In their zeal to rehabilitate violent criminals, proponents of this ideology have worked overtime to ensure that murderers, rapists, and child molesters are treated better than the victims of these acts and that these criminals have access to perks and amenities most hard-working taxpayers cannot afford.

Award-winning journalist Robert Bidinotto has revealed myriad abuses. For example, at Mercer Regional Correctional Facility in Pennsylvania, hardened criminals have routine access to a full-sized basketball court, handball area, punching bags, volleyball nets, 15 sets of barbells, weightlifting machines, electronic bicycles, and stairmasters facing a TV, so the prisoners do not have to miss their favorite show while working out.

Or consider David Jirovec, a resident of Washington State who hired two hit men to kill his wife for insurance money. His punishment? Regular conjugal visits from his new wife.

At Sullivan high-security prison in Fallsburg, NY, prisoners hold regular jam sessions in a music room crowded with electric guitars, amplifiers, drums, and keyboards.

In Jefferson City, MO, inmates run an around-the-clock closed-circuit TV studio and broadcast movies filled with gratuitous sex and graphic violence.

Perhaps the winner in the race for rehabilitation is the Massachusetts Correctional Institution in Norfolk, MA. There, prisoners sentenced to life in prison—known as the Lifers Group—held its annual Lifers Banquet in the $2 million visitor's center. These 33 convicts—mostly murderers—and 49 of their invited guests dined on catered
prime rib.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. These are not isolated incidents, but have become commonplace in our criminal justice system. Violent criminals have by definition committed brutal acts of violence on innocent women, children, the elderly, and other citizens. That the government continues to take money out of the pockets of law-abiding taxpayers—many of whom are victims of those behind bars—to create resorts for prisoners to mull around in is incomprehensible. The rationale for this system is likely summed up by Larry Meachum, commissioner of correction in the State of Connecticut: ‘We must attempt to modify criminal behavior and hopefully not return a more damaged human being to society than we received.’

Mr. President, I reject this liberal social rehabilitation philosophy. I introduced legislation yesterday, the Prison Work Act of 1995, which has a different message: prisons should be places of work and organized education, not resort hotels, counseling centers, or social laboratories. It ensures that time spent in prison is not good time, but rather devoted to hard work and education. This is a far more constructive approach to rehabilitation.

Specifically, the Prison Work Act repeals the social program requirements of the 1994 crime bill and instead makes the receipt of State prison construction grant money conditional on States requiring all inmates to perform at least 48 hours of work per week, and engage in at least 16 hours of organized educational activities per week. States may not provide to any prisoner failing to meet the work and education requirement any extra privileges, including the egregious items listed above.

The critics of this legislation are likely to portend that it is too costly or too unworkable. However, as prison reform expert and noted author John DiIulio has pointed out, one-half of every taxdollor spent on prisons goes not to the basics of security, but to amenities and services for prisoners. However, these extra perks would be severely restricted under my legislation. No one failing to meet the work and organized study requirements would have access to them, and since the inmates would be occupied for 11 hours per day fulfilling the work and study requirement, the opportunity for these costly privileges would be reduced. Moreover, to reduce operation costs even further, prison labor could be used to replace labor that is currently contracted out. Thus, these programs could easily be implemented.

The other charge will likely be that the Federal Government should not micromanage State prison efforts. However, this bill does not micromanage at all. Rather, States have been micromanaged by the Federal courts which have mandated that States provide prisoners with every possible amenity imaginable. For example,
Federal Judge William Wayne Justice of the Eastern District Court required scores of changes in the Texas prison system, designed to improve the living conditions of Texas prisoners. These changes increased Texas's prison operating expenses tenfold, from $91 million in 1980 to $1.84 billion in 1994—even though the prison population only doubled.

This legislation will empower State and local prison officials to operate their systems in a cost-efficient manner, and will give them the much needed protection from the overreaching Federal courts. More importantly, it will put the justice back in our criminal justice system and ensure that criminals are not treated better than the victims.