

Influencing public policy: an embedded criminologist reflects on California prison reform

The Academy of Experimental Criminology 2007 Joan McCord Prize Lecture

Joan Petersilia

© Springer Science + Business Media B.V. 2008

Abstract Criminologists bemoan their lack of influence on U.S. crime policy, believing that the justice system would be improved if their research findings were more central in decision making. I had an opportunity to test that notion as I participated in California's historic attempt to reform its prisons over the past 4 years. I became an *embedded criminologist*, where I was able to observe and contribute to the inner workings of state government. This article reports on my accomplishments with respect to fostering research activities and shifting the department's focus towards prisoner reintegration. It discusses some of the lessons I learned, including the personal toll that such work entails, the importance of the timing of policy initiatives, and the power of rigorous methodology and clear communication. I conclude by recommending that other policy-oriented criminologists seek out similar experiences, as I believe our academic skills are uniquely suited and ultimately necessary to create a justice system that does less harm.

Keywords California · Corrections · Criminal justice policy · Embedded criminology rehabilitation · Knowledge utilization · Prison reform · Public policy · Parole reform

I was deeply honored to accept the Joan McCord award from the Academy of Experimental Criminology in 2007. Dr. McCord was both a respected colleague and a friend, and her work has helped shape my career in a myriad of ways over the past 30 years. It was as a graduate student in the 1970s that I first encountered her path-breaking research in experimental criminology. I read with great interest the results of her Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study, the first large-scale longitudinal experiment study ever conducted in criminology. In this study, young boys were assigned randomly to participate in a delinquency prevention program consisting mostly of mentoring and

J. Petersilia (✉)
2317 Social Ecology II, University of California, Irvine, Irvine, CA 92697-7080, USA
e-mail: jrpeters@uci.edu

family counseling. The boys were assigned to the program in the 1930s, and the treatment lasted for about 5 years. Dr. McCord and her colleagues followed up the program participants nearly 30 years later to assess treatment effects. The findings were shocking. Despite the well-intentioned program, the young men who had participated in the program actually did *worse* than those who had not participated (McCord and McCord 1959). Program participants were more likely to have died early, committed serious crime, have been diagnosed as mentally ill, and have shown symptoms of alcoholism and other stress-related diseases. Scholars have speculated about why these negative effects had occurred, but this landmark study was the first project to demonstrate the harmful effects of well-meaning correctional programs. This study made Dr. McCord famous and influenced generations of criminologists, including myself.

To a young graduate student, who at the time was working in an Ohio halfway house for female parolees, this scientific evidence was powerful: despite my best intentions and those of the dedicated staff with whom I was working, could we actually be *hurting* the very people we were trying to help? Did these results mean that planned interventions were doomed to failure?

Dr. McCord used her findings to argue exactly the opposite. She believed that *because* government has the power to ‘do harm’ if its programs are misdirected—and, alternatively, to do *good* if the opposite were true—it has the burden and moral obligation to get it right (McCord 1990). ‘Getting it right’, for those of us who have tried to follow in Dr. McCord’s footsteps, means applying the highest scientific standards to our research, using randomized experimental trials whenever feasible, and assuring that policy makers know and understand our findings.

I have always considered myself an applied criminologist, and I believe that research is valuable only if it ultimately affects policy and practice. I have tried to produce a body of research worthy of policy attention, and then searched for ways to position myself ‘front and center’ in policy circles, where I could interject my findings to influence policy directions. An important aspect of receiving the Joan McCord award for me is that it validates that the policy-oriented nature of my work is valued and understood as an important part of criminology. The Academy of Experimental Criminology affirmed the value of the production of science as well as its policy implementation.

Most of my career was spent at RAND, a nonprofit institution whose sole mission is to improve policy through research and analysis. My presidential address to the American Society of Criminology was entitled “The Policy Relevance of Criminology,” where I wrote about the increasing marginality of criminology to inform America’s crime policy agenda (Petersilia 1991). I noted that, while our studies had become more rigorous, our national influence and research funding were dwindling. I have also conducted several studies aimed at understanding how research affects justice system policies. In one of those studies, *The Influence of Criminal Justice Research* (Petersilia 1987), I interviewed prominent decision makers to document their knowledge and use of criminological research. I teach on crime and public policy and have directed two research centers, one at RAND and one at the University of California, Irvine, both of which had the sole purpose of producing policy-relevant criminology. In short, some of my colleagues may think I am consumed with bridging the gap between policy and practice, and they may

well be right. Unfortunately, all of these 30-plus years of experience still leave me with a nagging feeling that I am rather clueless about how the policy process really works. I am reminded of Lee Iacocca's comment, "MBA's know everything but understand nothing," and I think that observation probably applies to me.

I know that *shift happens* and that research can play a critical role. After all, I have seen it in my own work. Frank Cullen, in his 2004 Presidential Address before the American Society of Criminology, traces the influence of the work of 12 researchers and believes that they saved rehabilitation. I was one of the 12 people whose research Dr. Cullen reviewed, and I was humbled when he used my work to show that "under certain conditions, the science of criminology is capable of making an important difference in the correctional enterprise, if not far beyond" (Cullen 2005: 1). However, it is one thing retrospectively to find research influence, and quite another to understand what those "certain conditions" are and proactively bring them about. Criminologists are not usually trained in political science, organizational management, or the policy sciences—exactly the world into which our research must be integrated if we are to make a difference. Social scientists are becoming more vocal in urging their colleagues to engage in public sociology or public criminology to bridge the gap between research and policy (e.g., Burawoy 2005; Currie, 2007; Jenness 2008). However, if we are to become more influential, we need a better understanding of how this policy world operates. As the President of Anchor Brewing Company said, "If you're going to make rubber tires, you should go to Malaya and see the damn rubber trees."

Making the trek to Sacramento and the world of California crime policy

I was presented with a once in a lifetime opportunity to 'see the rubber trees' with the election of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in November 2003. Governor Schwarzenegger, a Republican, was elected in a special recall election to replace then-Governor Gray Davis, making Davis the first governor recalled in the history of California. Backers of the recall effort cited Gov. Davis's lack of leadership combined with California's mounting budget problems. Many believed that the state's soaring expenditures and special interest politics were pushing California towards record budget deficits. California was facing a shocking \$35 billion budget gap in 2003, and the citizens were angry. Painful cuts in spending for education, health care and the poor were almost certainly on the way. Schwarzenegger promised to balance the budget and get special interest politics out of the Capitol (Lawrence 2004).

The state's prison system was hardly mentioned in the recall drive, but once Governor Schwarzenegger took office, he faced overwhelming evidence of incompetence and wrongdoing in California's prisons, threatening both public safety and the state's ability to bring its finances under control. In addition, despite the fact that Californians were spending more on prisons every year, recidivism rates were not declining—in fact, two out of three parolees were being returned to prison, which was the highest recidivism rate in the nation (Petersilia 2003).

Governor Schwarzenegger vowed to reform California's corrections system early in his administration. During his campaign, he mentioned the California Correctional

Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) as one of the powerful special interests he would tackle if elected. His explicit reference to the overreaching influence of the correctional officers' union, and his own refusal to accept campaign donations from them, reflected a shift in California gubernatorial politics. In his State of the State Address, he said, "California was once the national leader, a pioneer, in corrections integrity, innovation and efficiency. We can make it so once again" (Governor Schwarzenegger 2005). A popular governor—a Republican with a tough-guy persona—wanted a prison system that incorporated rehabilitation. As the *Los Angeles Times* wrote about his ability to bring the Department of Corrections under control, "If not the Terminator, who?" (Ricciardulli 2003)

On his first day on office, Gov. Schwarzenegger appointed Roderick Hickman as secretary of the Youth and Adult Correctional Agency (YACA), the cabinet-level agency responsible for all state juvenile and adult corrections. Mr. Hickman was a former warden and the first YACA secretary to have worked his way up through the prison system. It was hoped that this would help ease relations with the CCPOA. Besides Hickman, Schwarzenegger appointed Kevin Carruth as YACA Undersecretary, and Jeanne Woodford as Director of Corrections. Each of these individuals was widely recognized to be committed to reform and rehabilitation. The *New York Times* had just published a profile of Ms. Woodford entitled "The Good Jailer" (Sheff 2004). They brought in consultants and new managers and started promoting wardens and staff who were change-oriented. Hope was in the air.

I received a call from Undersecretary Carruth in February 2004, about 2 months after most of the new team had been appointed. He said simply, "We need your help." I had known Mr. Carruth from my RAND days. From 1987 to 1996, Mr. Carruth had worked in various positions, eventually rising to be Deputy Director of the California Department of Corrections. During his tenure, he had been principally responsible for planning and constructing California's expanded prison system. I had always seen Mr. Carruth as a straight shooter and someone who could get things done. However, I told Mr. Carruth that I did not go to Sacramento anymore. I told him that I had spent more than 20 years trying to influence California crime policy—writing reports, participating on state commissions, testifying before the Legislature, writing editorials, and so forth—and so far as I could tell, few of my efforts had made any difference. The state seemed hell-bent on simply building prisons, and I saw no indications that they were interested in a more balanced approach.

More importantly, I told him that I saw no indication that the state was ready to let research rather than politics drive policy—after all, the Department of Corrections (DOC) had virtually abolished its research unit in the past few years. The DOC had also just announced that it was no longer able to assist external researchers with their research or data requests. This seemed to me concrete evidence that the DOC did not value research, and I told Mr. Carruth I was not interested in being 'window dressing'—after all, I was now comfortable as a tenured professor!

Mr. Carruth assured me that things were going to be different now and that this was not about more rhetoric but true transformational change. He was bringing in Alan Glassman, a top-tier management consultant who specialized in organizational change and had successfully helped Los Angeles County reform a number of its agencies, including the probation department. They were creating a "guiding coalition" composed of six to eight national experts in public relations, strategic

planning, information technology, performance measurement, and leadership. This group would work with YACA and the Governor to do whatever it took to reform corrections. Mr. Carruth invited me to be a member of this guiding coalition. How could I refuse? It was time for me to stop ‘talking the talk’ about what academics *could* offer policy makers if given the chance, and start ‘walking the walk’ to see if I could positively contribute.

I accepted Mr. Carruth’s invitation, and that was over 4 years ago. After serving as a member of the guiding coalition for about 6 months, I went on to be appointed by Secretary Hickman as the “Special Advisor for Policy, Planning and Research.” I served in this capacity until July 1, 2005, when California established the Center for Evidence-Based Corrections at the University of California, Irvine, and I became its founding director. In July 2006 the California Legislature established the Expert Panel on Adult Offender Programming, and I used my sabbatical from UCI to serve as its co-chair. In May 2007, the Governor established the Rehabilitation Strike Team to help implement the historic AB900 prison reform legislation, and I took a leave of absence from UCI to serve as a member and eventually its chair. These varying responsibilities positioned me in different parts of state government—beginning with YACA and ending by working full-time directly for Governor Schwarzenegger in his Office of Policy and Planning. Importantly, however, I always retained my academic affiliation, which made me somewhat of an insider/outsider.

During this period, I became an embedded criminologist. Like journalists traveling alongside our military troops, I was able to watch the action, unfiltered and ‘up close and personal.’ I worked with most of the major constituencies involved in state corrections, including the Legislature, lobbyists, correctional managers and line staff, inmates, victims, law enforcement, and the media. I also had a good deal of face-time with Governor Schwarzenegger and his Cabinet. I found the Governor smart, with an attention to details that I had not expected, and he seemed sincerely committed to prison reform. His father had been the local police chief in Austria, and his brother had served time in jail. Both his father and brother were killed while driving under the influence. I got the sense that this was not just another issue for him but that his concerns were more heartfelt. I believe the totality of my embedded criminology experience may be unparalleled in academic criminology because I was able to work closely with so many of the diverse players who impact crime policy.

This article derives from that incredibly rewarding and productive experience. It is ultimately about the relationship between research and policy—specifically about how criminologists can utilize knowledge to influence policy choices. After providing a brief overview of the context of California corrections, I address three questions: What did I try to do? What successes did I have? What were the main lessons learned?

The bottom line is that I think I made a difference. I believe that there are programs and policies that are in place today that would not be there except for my contributions. I learned that academics and their scientific knowledge can be instrumental to the change process—not always but at least sometimes. My hope in sharing these observations is that others will be encouraged to replicate my embedded criminology experiences in their own states and communities. Without infiltrating this policy world, I fear we will continue to remain a marginalized discipline, sitting on the sidelines and bemoaning our lack of influence. With more

of us having such experiences, we might be able to use our unique expertise to shape crime policies that *do less harm*, something at the very heart of criminology.

Understanding California's crisis-fueled context for change

As Edward Abbey (1975) wrote, "There is science, logic, reason; there is thought verified by experience. And then there is California." Mr. Abbey was writing about efforts to protect the California wilderness, but I believe his quote also describes the corrections system. There is *no* correctional system in the United States of America like California's—whether described by size, judicial intervention, the power of organized labor, or its high recidivism rate (for a complete review, see Petersilia 2008). This context is critical to our understanding of the potential for criminological research to influence decision making.

California's 172,000 prisoners constitute the largest prison system of any state (Pew Foundation 2008). One in seven state prisoners in the USA is incarcerated in California, and its prison population has increased over sevenfold since 1975, compared with a fourfold increase nationally (Petersilia 2006). In addition, despite efforts to reduce the prison population, it continues to surge, and projections predict 191,000 state prisoners in 2010 (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) 2008).

As California's prison population grew, so did its workforce. The CDCR operates all juvenile and adult state incarceration and parole and has nearly 58,000 employees—33,350 of whom are sworn peace officers. CDCR employees represent 16% of the state of California's employee pool, making corrections the largest employer in state civil service. Correctional officers are members of the CCPOA labor union, and its yearly membership dues of over \$25 million have made it a powerful force in California politics (Institute of Governmental Studies 2008).

California's corrections expenditures are among the highest in the nation—per inmate, per staff, and as a share of the overall state budget (Petersilia 2006). By 2007, the budget for state corrections had increased to nearly \$10 billion and consumed 10% of the state's entire budget, forcing California to shift resources continuously toward prisons and away from other areas, particularly education. The average annual cost of housing a prisoner in 2008 will be \$43,149, nearly twice the national average of about \$24,500 (Petersilia 2008).

Despite the high cost of incarceration in California, minimal rehabilitation programming is delivered. The California Expert Panel (2007) reported that nearly half of all prisoners released in 2006 sat idle—meaning that they did not participate in *any* work assignment or rehabilitation program—for the entire time they were in prison. It is not that they do not have serious needs for rehabilitation. On the contrary, I found that, despite having more acute needs, California prisoners receive less treatment while incarcerated than do prisoners nationally (Petersilia 2006).

California's parole system is particularly dysfunctional. About 120,000 inmates are released from California prisons every year, and every one of them is put on parole supervision—a practice unique to California. The upshot is that California's parole system is so overburdened that parolees who represent a serious public safety risk are not watched closely enough, and those who wish to go straight cannot get

the help they need. Most parolees are returned to prison due to administrative violations, where they will serve an average of just 4 months back in prison only to be released again, and the revolving door process begins again. Just 21% of California's parolees successfully complete parole within 3 years (Petersilia 2007b).

California's system began to collapse from its own weight during the 1990s. A series of tough-on-crime bills was passed, including the nation's toughest Three Strikes and You're Out law, and the prison population kept increasing (Zimring et al. 2003). California was once a model of rehabilitation programming (Glaser 1995), but program after program was dismantled in the 1990s and the prisons became human warehouses, where inmates sat idle in crowded facilities with little to occupy their time. In this context, prison management decided that there was little need for a research division and dismantled that unit as well. After all, if all you are doing is putting people behind bars, you do not need a research team to tell you whether or not it is working. Data to inform policy decisions all but disappeared in California corrections, and politics and fear fueled by sometimes well-orchestrated campaigns, continued to keep the prisons overflowing (Domanick 2004).

By 2003, massive overcrowding had become endemic to the system, and adult prisons were operating at roughly 200% of their design capacity, the most crowded system in the nation. Inmates were sleeping in gyms, TV lounges, and hallways. Double- and triple-celling had become the norm, gang violence had increased, and long lockdowns had become a way of life at many of the state's 33 prisons (California Expert Panel 2007).

The crowding crisis and resulting lack of medical and mental health care for inmates began to attract the attention of the federal courts, and, today, virtually all aspects of prison and parole operations are governed by consent decrees based on federal and state court litigation (for review, see Prison Law Office 2008). U.S. District Judge Thelton Henderson, who oversees two of these court cases, has expressed continual frustration with the conditions in the deteriorating prisons, threatening to place the entire state prison system under receivership and impose an inmate population cap. He is not alone in his frustration and critiques. There have been more than a dozen reports published since 1990 dealing with the crisis in California's prison system, all of them calling for major reforms (for listing, see Little Hoover Commission 2007). They all recommend basically the same things, which include expanded rehabilitation programs, the use of standardized risks assessment tools, and a system of intermediate sanctions for low-risk parole violators. Everyone knew what needed to be done, but no one was willing to tackle the problem. Of course, that was true until the election of Governor Schwarzenegger. As noted above, he publically pronounced that he would fix the prison system—bring budgets under control, increase rehabilitation programs, and assure that only the most serious offenders occupied expensive prison beds. These were the marching orders given to his new management team and, in turn, the consultants brought in to help.

What I set out to accomplish: my twofold agenda

During my first meeting with Secretary Hickman and Undersecretary Carruth, I told them I wished to accomplish two major things. First, I wanted research to matter

again. I wanted to have a seat at the table so that I would have an opportunity to infuse the agency at the highest levels with an appreciation of what research could offer. My ultimate goal here was to reestablish the research division and its presence within California corrections. I wanted to elevate the production and use of research, particularly randomized experimental program evaluations.

Getting research to matter again

When I joined the YACA reform team in 2004, hard facts—even descriptive facts—about the system were hard to come by. As noted earlier, the California Department of Correction’s research unit had been abolished in the late 1990s. Even if officials wanted to study ‘the facts,’ there was nowhere for them to turn. A 2005 statewide panel examining the use of research within the organization reported that it “has virtually no current capacity to support an evidence-based organization.” It noted that, “where in the past, the research unit consisted of 120 staff, there are currently only three researchers and there is no chief of research. At the California Youth Authority (CYA), the research unit now consists of just four persons.” (Kohls 2005)

The Kohls (2005) report went on to note that other states, many facing budget problems similar to California’s, had actually *increased* their research units to help them target scarce resources. Ohio, for example, with just 46,000 adult inmates—a fourth of the size of California—had nearly 30 research staff. Clearly, the first order of business for me was to help reestablish the department’s research unit and then help hire qualified staff.

I also noticed that the current YACA organizational chart had no policy director. The old research unit had been far removed from the Secretary, actually located in the data processing division. This was troublesome to me, since, even if I were to be successful at reestablishing the research division, it was unclear how their research would be disseminated and used by top-level managers in their day-to-day decision making. Once I understood YACA’s organizational structure, I knew I needed to advocate for a high-level *policy* manager, reporting directly to the Secretary, whose principal job was to make sure that research findings were considered at the highest level before policy and operational decisions were made.

YACA had also severed its ties to its academic and research partners. Most large states have ongoing relationships with universities and private research institutes to assist in data analyses and program evaluations. Internal research staff are not usually equipped with the range of expertise needed by a dynamic and large organization, such as that found in most large states’ departments of corrections. Independent research centers are often used in other states to assist in policy studies, cost-benefit analysis, and program evaluation. Moreover, external researchers are often able to bring in outside research funds to augment state research portfolios. In this way, states are able to leverage their program dollars, gaining access to specialized research skills and, of course, assuring greater objectivity in program evaluations. California had none of those ongoing research partnerships, even though it is home to some of the most well-respected crime policy institutes in the nation (e.g., RAND and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency). Those organizations, as well as criminology faculties throughout California’s university

system, were now mostly working on other states' prison problems where their skills were more valued.

California corrections had virtually gotten out of the research business, and correctional policy had suffered considerably. Programs were implemented with little regard to rigorous evidence, and, once implemented, few programs were evaluated. Moreover, California officials had become professionally isolated. They seldom hired corrections professionals from outside the state, they did not participate in the nation's professional organizations, such as the American Correctional Association, and they did not attend professional conferences where they could have learned about the advances in evidence-based practices and the vast literature on 'what works' in corrections.

The combination of not producing their own data and severing ties with research and professional colleagues who might have helped from the outside, meant that California corrections was more and more out of step with national best practices. The California Independent Review Panel (2004) reviewed the state's correctional programs and concluded that the state continued to invest billions of dollars in programs that were unlikely to improve public safety or reduce recidivism. My first priority was to get research to matter again so that evidence-based programs would influence rehabilitation program design and implementation.

Incorporating prisoner reentry into the state's mission

My second goal was less structural and more philosophical. I had just authored a book, *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry* (Petersilia 2003), wherein I argued that crime policy needed to focus not only on how we incarcerate but also how we prepare inmates for release. California administrators, like most of those nationally, had endorsed a confinement model mission, which can be summarized as "keep them in, keep them safe, and keep them in line" (Logan 1993). In other words, the prison system does not bear responsibility for what happens to inmates *after* release. To me, this mentality severely affects public safety and an inmate's chances of successful transition. I believe that every facet of the prison experience should be connected in some way to the preparation and support necessary to help offenders make a successful transition.

However, having prison administrators embrace the goal of prisoner reintegration is highly controversial. Corrections officials often do not want to be held accountable for achieving results primarily outside of prison (Riveland 1999). Some believe that focusing on reentry may well set up prisons to be judged on matters well beyond their direct sphere of influence. I am sympathetic to that view, but if prison officials do not embrace reentry as part of their core mission, recidivism cannot be reduced. To me, this fundamental shift in California's core prison mission was essential, and only if the Secretary and his top management formally adopted this new mission, could other policy initiatives follow, such as implementing evidence-based rehabilitation programs. Thus, having the Governor and YACA management formally embrace the goal of prisoner reentry became my second agenda item.

I was not naïve enough to think that either of these two agenda items—reestablishing a research presence and refocusing the agencies' core mission—would be easy, but I felt my background made me uniquely qualified to try.

Impact assessed: where good intentions meet hard realities

True to their word, Secretary Hickman and Undersecretary Carruth gave me complete access to all aspects of the organization. I received an employee identification badge that allowed me freely to visit any prison or parole office I chose. I had complete access to inmates and staff and was never denied any request for data or additional information about the organization. I attended nearly weekly meetings early in the administration and was a featured speaker at nearly a dozen agency- and community-wide retreats. I often briefed the Legislature and their staff on pending legislation, presented at ‘new member’ educational seminars, gave testimony to a number of Legislative committees, and met with lobbyists and various constituency groups. I got to know the ‘prison beat’ newspaper reporters well and often provided background information and interviews for their stories. Soon, I was traveling so often to the State Capitol in Sacramento that I rented an apartment there. In short, I became embedded in the world of California correctional policy making, trying to learn all that I could so that I could contribute positively to the directions they were pursuing.

About a year after my work had begun, the *Los Angeles Times* chose to profile my work for a series they were doing on Californians making a difference in the state. The title of the article was “Ailing Prison System Finds Friend in Criminologist,” and included the statement, “With her blend of academic smarts, diplomatic skills and real-world know-how, Petersilia has been embraced as a sort of guru who can help California fulfill one of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s most ambitious mandates: creating a corrections system that corrects, rather than merely locks up, lawbreakers” (Warren 2005). Undersecretary Carruth was quoted as saying, “She’s a world-class researcher and one of the most respected criminologists in the country. It would be foolish for us not to tap into that knowledge.” And at the end of the article, I was quoted as saying, “I used to break down the door to get these people’s attention, and now they’re inviting me to the meetings. There won’t ever be a moment like this again.” I truly believed that the stars were aligned and that this moment was something I had prepared my whole professional life for. It would be the capstone of my career, showing that criminological research and science really could matter.

Winston Churchill, the noted statesman, was quoted as saying, “However great the intentions, you should occasionally look at the results.” I returned full time to the University of California, Irvine, in January 2008, having spent the better part of more than 4 years working with California officials on correctional reform. I still co-direct the Center for Evidence-Based Corrections at UCI, the Center established to assist the state in research studies. However, my role has changed considerably, and it seems an appropriate occasion to take stock of the results of my efforts.

With respect to my first objective—reestablishing a research division and policy director, advocating for experimental designs, and opening the agency to outside researchers and correctional practitioners—much progress has been made and it continues.

In July 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger submitted a reorganization plan, and, among other things, YACA became the California Department of Corrections *and Rehabilitation* (CDCR) (*italics added*). The name change was important, and, as the Governor said in signing the legislation that made it happen, “It is a new day for

Corrections in California...After 30 years of stressing punishment, rehabilitation is back.” I attended the celebratory signing ceremony held in front of historic Folsom Prison and felt proud at that moment that I had been a part of the team responsible for putting the “R” (for rehabilitation) into the state’s name. There were only two other states (Ohio and North Dakota) that included rehabilitation in their state agency names, and, in those states, it was the name of just the adult prison system. California had just renamed its huge umbrella agency—responsible for *all* juvenile and adult state corrections in the nation’s largest state—to include rehabilitation. Some called it only symbolic, but I felt it was an important step in the right direction.

More important to me than the name change, however, was the organizational chart that accompanied it. The new CDCR organizational chart included a new division of “Policy, Planning & Research” and its director reported directly to the Secretary. I certainly cannot take responsibility for the Agency’s name change, but I do believe I can take primary responsibility for this organizational change. I preached the same message to everyone: if there is no research organization, there will be no research. If there is no research, there are no objective data to guide decision makers. With no objective data, politics will continue to dominate decisions, and money will be invested in unproven programs and public safety will be jeopardized. I believe this message was heard, and both a new research division and a new policy division were included in the new organization.

In the past two and a half years, CDCR has hired an Assistant Secretary for Research and expanded his staff and budget considerably. In 2007, CDCR also hired its first Assistant Secretary of Policy Analysis & Planning. These individuals have been infusing agency operations with an appreciation for what research has to offer, identifying evidence-based programs and attempting to tie program funding to correctional best practices.

There are other hopeful signs as well. CDCR is now supporting a randomized experiment of a community reentry program, the first experiment sponsored by the Department in more than a decade. Academics at seven different California universities are now assisting CDCR’s research division with evaluations and policy studies. CDCR management has also become less insular, participating at some of the national conferences and visiting other states to learn of promising programs. In 2006, the Legislature appointed an Expert Panel, composed mostly of prison experts from *outside* of California, further diminishing the state’s insularity.

It is not just the *presence* of researchers and a research organization that ultimately matters, but whether the research is actually *used* to guide policy. There are positive signs here as well. The best example comes from my own work on parole reform. I had the good fortune to work closely with the Director of Adult Parole Operations (DAPO), Mr. Tom Hoffman. He was a visionary leader who welcomed scientific research. He and I worked on a number of initiatives to realign parole resources with offender risk levels and implement a system of earned discharge parole. The earned discharge policy was designed to allow low-risk exemplary parolees to earn their way off parole early. I had recommended this policy in my book and expanded upon it in an article appearing in *Criminology & Public Policy* (Petersilia 2007a). I started advocating this policy to Mr. Hoffman and others, eventually explaining it personally to Governor Schwarzenegger. They reacted favorably, and we proceeded to implement a demonstration project. A CDCR press

release was written, and attached to the press release was a copy of my full academic article as well as a summary of it entitled ‘The Science Behind Earned Discharge.’ It was the first time in my experience that a press release pertaining to corrections had ever been accompanied by an academic article supporting the policy scientifically.

This was not the only instance of research directly impacting a policy change; there were others. In fact, a 2008 report on CDCR’s progress by the state’s Office of Inspector General concluded, “The Department has appropriately recognized the critical role of its Office of Research and is involving research staff and outside experts in most, if not all, of the key areas—not just in evaluation, but in planning and development as well” (California Inspector General 2008). This report confirms what I have witnessed: research matters again.

As for as my second agenda item—refocusing corrections around prisoner reentry—there has been progress there as well. Yet, while I believe I helped in fostering the dialogue around reentry in California, I certainly cannot take most of the credit, since the reentry conversation was in the forefront nationally. However, I used my book, *When Prisoners Come Home*, to bring the issue home to California policy makers. Secretary Hickman purchased 50 copies of my book and handed them out at the first retreat he held with all his high-level managers. At that retreat I was a keynote speaker. It was an intimidating experience, since I felt these correctional experts knew far more than I ever would about prisoners and their challenges. However, when I had finished, they gave me a standing ovation. I got the sense the ovation was not so much intended for me but rather the philosophy I was promoting. These people were also distressed by what they saw in the corrections system and anxious to embrace a new direction.

Over time, I gave more speeches and handed out more books to generate support for a reentry focus. The conversation around the Capitol seemed to become more receptive—again not because I was necessarily talking about it, but because *everyone* was talking about it. In 2005, when the CDCR published its first new Strategic Plan for the organization, it contained a new vision statement and a new mission statement. The vision statement was to “end the causes and tragic effects of crime...through collaborative efforts that provide...*successful reintegration back into society.*” CDCR’s new mission was to “improve public safety through *evidence-based* crime prevention and recidivism reduction strategies” (CDCR 2005).

I helped write both statements, and my focus on reentry and evidence-based data had survived multiple drafts and committees. It was now there in black and white: the agency was committed to research evidence *and* prisoner reentry. I felt like declaring victory and going home! Of course, much more needed to be done to translate that vision into changed policy. Unfortunately, the Agency faced immediate and, in some instances, insurmountable challenges, preventing that vision from fully becoming a reality.

This is not the place to discuss these challenges fully, but, suffice to say, severe overcrowding placed enormous pressure on the prison system statewide. Attempts to expand rehabilitation programs within prisons were often blunted by the challenges of finding living space for inmates. Providing comprehensive reentry services to parolees was difficult, even when resources were made available by the state, because essential community partners were not willing to collaborate to provide jobs, housing, and treatment. In May 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger signed into

law historic prison reform legislation, AB 900, the Public Safety and Offender Rehabilitation Services Act of 2007. I stood behind the Governor as he signed AB 900 and was one of the four individuals he asked to speak at the signing ceremony on the steps of the Capitol. Surprisingly, I received some criticisms from my colleagues for standing beside the Governor, as the bill provided money for greatly expanding the state's prison capacity. However, AB 900 also provided funding for expanding prison rehabilitation programs and building reentry centers, something I had advocated for.

Increasing the relevance of criminology in public policy: lessons learned

During the past 4 years, colleagues have urged me to share my experiences. I kept putting it off, saying I did not know what the final ending would say. After all, the process continues, and the landscape changes daily. The Governor is now facing a \$14–\$20 billion dollar state deficit in 2008–2009—ironically, the same issue that initiated the recall of former Governor Davis. Governor Schwarzenegger initially announced that he might release 22,000 prisoners early to address the budget shortfalls, but he dropped his early release proposal when law enforcement leaders began rallying support against it. I have no crystal ball, but I do know that criminologists are desperately needed as various options are considered. Perhaps my recent experiences and the lessons I have learned might help in bridging the gap between ‘those who study’ and ‘those who do.’

Lesson #1: Research matters, but the topic must have immediate and understandable policy relevance, and the results must be delivered without jargon.

Contrary to what researchers often believe, facts do not speak for themselves. Our university training, wittingly or unwittingly, transmits the opposite impression—that factual displays will reveal “the obvious.” Few graduate schools urge the same attention to the implications of one's research as to the research itself. This training gap manifests itself in most of the articles we publish, which typically include a small paragraph called “policy implications” at the end of a frightfully long and detailed research article. Research matters, but we must help the policy maker answer why they should care about our conclusions, and, if they do care, what they should do about them. It cannot be assumed that the policy maker will “see” how interesting and useful the research actually is. The analyst must do that work for decision makers.

We make it even harder for policy makers to understand our work because of how we choose to disseminate our findings, both where we publish and what we say. Most academics publish in journals that policy makers do not read. If criminological research is to be used, it must first enter the awareness of potential users. However, it is not solely an issue of dissemination, which is rather easy to fix. Rather, research findings must be persuasively and engagingly *communicated*, without pretense and jargon.

Ironically, as our research methodologies have become more complicated and scientifically rigorous, and we have more to offer the policy community, we seem less able to communicate those very results effectively. I remember quite clearly a

recent situation where this point was painfully brought home. I was invited by CDCR to participate in a high-level meeting where a criminologist had been invited to explain a new recidivism prediction instrument. The CDCR was interested in recidivism prediction, had pressure from the Legislature to target scarce parole resources better, and I had encouraged them to take advantage of the risk prediction models and classification instruments that were being developed by criminologists.

They invited my colleagues in for a presentation. These colleagues began with a typical academic-style PowerPoint presentation, leading the audience step-by-step through the laborious research process and finally, at the end, revealing complicated tables containing the results of step-wise logistical regression models. The audience, initially excited by the potential of research helping them, was gradually checking out of the discussion. I tried to help, but I honestly could not understand what the results meant either. When I tried to serve in a bridging role, asking questions that might help the audience ‘read’ the tables, it just got worse. These colleagues simply could not discuss these results in a manner that policy makers (nor I) could understand. This topic was so important that I talked afterwards to my invited colleagues, explained the problem, and asked whether they might come back with a more policy-oriented presentation. They did, but the same problem occurred, and, as a result, CDCR managers backed away from considering, at that time, the implementation of a risk assessment instrument. Academic jargon and presentational style had served to close an important window of opportunity for bringing research into the agency, and this was not an isolated instance.

Clear and Frost (2007) make a similar point in discussing the inability of criminologists to engage the media effectively, an essential skill if we are to affect public perceptions and public policy. They write that our studies are so couched in caveats and ambiguities that news reporters end up relying primarily on politicians and others more ideological in their orientation. They note the conundrum, writing that, “no clean way exists to engage social science in the policy-making process. But a completely clean criminology is likely to be disconnected completely from the crime policies we live with from day to day” (Clear and Frost 2007: 637).

We must envision a larger sense of constituency if we are to address this problem. This means that researchers must expend effort creating readable publications and presentations, not only for those who must consider the findings and recommendations but also for the media and the general public as well. It means that researchers must take seriously the responsibility to make the practical implications of their findings clear, by giving the same explicit attention to the implications of the research as they currently do to reporting data and methods. In short, policy-oriented criminologists must accept that, until we effectively inform policy makers, the media, and the public of what we have learned, our work is unfinished.

Lesson #2: Know your audience and pay keen attention to their legal, political, institutional, and resource constraints.

There is simply no substitute for a deep understanding of the people and organizations you are trying to affect. Try, intellectually speaking, to “walk a mile in their shoes.” This lesson proved to be the most difficult and time consuming for me. It meant that research and policy initiatives that I advocated had to be vetted within a much broader context. Understanding that comprehensive system, and all the players

and constituencies involved, required a great deal of face-time and study. There was a multitude of players—including CDCR management, the Governor’s office, the legislature, organized labor, victims, county and city law enforcement, lobbyists, the media, and dozens of others. Even if you got them to align philosophically, there was California’s complicated criminal code and numerous procedural manuals that corrections policy needed to attend to. The Operations Manual for the Department of Corrections alone is over 900 pages long. In addition, there are literally thousands of pages of legal documents that now cover the requirements that must be met to comply with the major legal cases governing all aspects of prison and parole. Without our understanding these vital contextual issues, criminological research comes away, at best, naïve about what can be undertaken and, at worse, creating policies that are in violation of legally mandated or highly protected political turf.

Lesson #3: Timing is *everything*.

The third lesson is closely related to the second one, since, if you do not understand the details of the broader policy environment, you will not understand when certain policy options might be timed correctly or incorrectly. An example serves to illustrate the point. Early in Governor Schwarzenegger’s administration, I urged the leadership to ‘work on parole reform first’ as I felt it was the lynchpin to reducing unnecessary incarceration and freeing up valuable prison space to implement needed rehabilitation programs. Other leaders, including then-Director of Corrections Jeanne Woodford agreed, and together we tried to get the Governor to take a major lead on parole reform. Some initial discussions were held, and it appeared that some progress was possible. However, all that changed when the Governor decided to call a special election asking voters to approve eight propositions. One of the propositions was vehemently opposed by organized labor, including the CCPOA, the prison guard union. CCPOA raised millions of dollars to defeat all eight propositions, a stunning defeat for the Governor. The Governor’s popularity plummeted to its lowest level since his election, falling from 63% to 33% in less than a year. Parole reform was off the table, as it had become too politically charged. When I raised my desire to continue working on these issues, I was told “not now, maybe later.”

Fast-forward to a year later: the Governor has been reelected, has rebounded in the public opinion polls, and is seen as the most popular Governor in the nation, with a 70% voter approval rating. Moreover, he will be termed out of the Governorship in 2010 and not able to run for reelection due to term limits. He told me personally that “everything was back on the table,” and I should prioritize parole reform. One moment, we could not talk publically about parole reform—we were to keep our major initiatives ‘inside’ the prisons—and the next year, the topic was one of the highest priorities. It was all in the timing, not the substance. The lesson here is also that even if you are not able to see concretely the difference your work makes, you may be loosening up the policy environment for others who will follow in your steps when the timing is more ideal.

Lesson #4: The current literature on “what works” in rehabilitation programs is insufficient to guide policy without corresponding literature on program implementation.

This is the hardest lesson to acknowledge publicly, because I am a criminologist who has always believed that if our findings were just more accessible and were communicated more effectively, a better justice system would result. Communication and dissemination are certainly part of the problem, but so too are the limitations of what we know so far. This is particularly true in the “what works” in correctional rehabilitation literature.

My principal responsibility for CDCR was to identify and help implement evidence-based rehabilitation programs. The lexicon around ‘best practices’ and ‘evidence-based programming’ began to permeate the agency. Of course, I turned to the vast literature on the principles of effective rehabilitation programs, the findings of which are now published in dozens of books and articles (e.g., MacKenzie 2006). I also became steeped in this literature, because, in 2007, I was co-chairing the National Research Council’s Committee on Community Supervision and Desistance from Crime with my valued colleague Richard Rosenfeld. Our responsibility was to review this literature and recommend future research (National Research Council 2008). What I learned is that what we know about the principles of effective rehabilitation programs but there is a huge gap between knowing those principles and using those principles to design effective programs. *Principles are not programs*. If we fail to understand that simple message, I fear we will continue to overpromise what criminology can currently offer practitioner partners.

Let me provide a concrete example. Right after the new mission statement endorsing evidence-based programming (EBP) had been adopted by CDCR, I was asked to give a presentation on what EBP meant and what program changes would need to be made to move in that direction. I diligently presented the major findings from the EBP literature, for example, that programs should focus on moderate-risk offenders, be intensive enough to matter, use cognitive behavioral techniques, and so forth. The audience listened attentively and seemed anxious to proceed. However, and at the end of my presentation, several asked the next obvious question: how do we train staff to actually implement these programs? Here is where I found our research insufficient. I could tell them what types of programs to develop and to whom those programs should be targeted, but I had no comparable science to offer them on program implementation. I had no research studies on how to select the right staff, how to train them appropriately, or how to change the overall culture of an organization to support such programs.

It was rather like trying to make a youngster competent at riding a bicycle by sitting the child down at the kitchen table and explaining how to ride a bicycle. It would not work, because knowing about a skill—or even what is the best evaluated correctional program—is not the same thing as being skillful at delivering it. We have no science of implementation, and, hence, our criminological arsenal is rather weak. If we are to improve rehabilitation programs—and I would go so far as to say this applies to all criminal justice interventions—we now need to focus on how to move those programs off the page of scientific journals and into the real world of the agencies we hope to impact. We need to begin developing a science around program implementation, which is now almost totally lacking in our field.

Lesson #5: Rigorous research, especially randomized experiments, really does matter.

The overall state of crime research, particularly corrections research, is methodologically weak. This has been repeatedly noted in the literature (see National Research Council 2008). Important topics have not been studied, and most of the existing studies are descriptive and not evaluative. If evaluations have been undertaken, the research methodology is often not credible, failing to implement the gold standard randomized design. In the end, the literature ends up comparing apples with oranges, and the conclusions remain ambiguous at best. However, I found, surprisingly, that policy makers are often willing to support true randomized experiments, and such experiments have had the power to influence policy makers more so than other methods. Weisburd (2000) confirms my California experiences and outlines the conditions under which randomized experiments are the most feasible. Many of today's high-level managers have had courses in research methods, and, even if they had not been formally educated in research methods, most were familiar with medical trials where new drugs are routinely tested with experimental designs. Moreover, the *understandability* of the results of experimental designs helped tremendously in the translation of research findings.

I found more receptivity to, and knowledge of, randomized designs than I had experienced 20 years ago, when Susan Turner and I were responsible for evaluating the national intensive supervision demonstration project (Petersilia and Turner 1993). In fact, in one instance, the practitioners I was working with requested that I consider using a randomized design when I had presumed they would be resistant and had not even suggested it. The case in point was the implementation of a new case management model to assist parolees coming home to Santa Barbara County, California. The project, originally funded by a local family foundation, was designed by a steering committee composed of the directors of all the major agencies, including the sheriff and the district attorney, and myself. Since the project was new and innovative, it was receiving a lot of statewide attention, and I presumed the elected officials in the County would be reluctant to assign parolees randomly to receive services. Should we not serve all parolees that qualified, given the projected high recidivism rates if they were left untreated? I had heard the arguments against randomized experiments so frequently over my career that I had not even thought it was a possibility. My strategy had always been to get my foot in the door and then push for randomized trials once the project was underway.

I also presumed that, at least initially, the project would only want to serve non-violent offenders. After all, if we accepted violent offenders into the program and they recidivated, program failures could be politicized. I was wrong on both counts: the steering committee insisted on both a randomized trial and the acceptance of violent offenders. In this case, the practitioner community was ahead of me. The end result is that the project, now the state's most visible community reentry partnership, is using a randomized experiment to test the outcomes, and I am assisting in the evaluation. The lesson here is to push harder for randomized experiments whenever possible, since those you are working with may well be receptive, and, ultimately, the results will be more convincing and scientifically powerful.

Lesson #6: Public criminology is incredibly demanding, both personally and professionally, and the price is probably higher than many academics are willing to pay.

Academics are now urging a more public criminology, where scholars roll up their sleeves to help the real world. After all, the argument goes, society's problems are so huge and our knowledge so relevant. This clarion call for relevance is not unique to criminology but is permeating all of the social sciences, particularly sociology (see Burawoy 2005). We continue to bemoan the fact that our universities reward peer-reviewed academic journal articles far more than public service and suggest that, if the rewards were different, many of us would be more engaged in public policy. I, too, have written about these disincentives and still believe they are real and detrimental to influencing practice. However, my recent experiences convince me that our university reward structures are not the main culprit, but, rather, the hard and overwhelming nature of the work, the inflexibility of unrealistic time frames, and the public scrutiny and sometimes mean-spirited attacks that presumed power and visibility bring. In thinking about my experiences, if I had known all the rules at the start, and how daunting and consuming it was, I might not have done it. I came to wonder how many of us, including myself, have what it takes to engage truly in public criminology over the long haul. It is not that academics do not work hard, but rather that our culture is one of autonomy, academic freedom, and professional civility that did not characterize this bureaucracy.

I can only speak from my California experiences, but I suspect they are not that unique. This job was the most demanding one I have ever held, and I am often thought of as a workaholic. It was not just the number of hours I put in, although that was 24/7/365, but the stressful nature of the work. The more 'front and center' and trusted I became, the more my life ceased to be my own. Trips and meetings scheduled and canceled with little notice, press conferences and informational briefings with the Secretary and the Governor quickly scheduled because a major incident had occurred, and initiatives on and off the table due to changing legislative priorities. All of this contributed to a constantly changing policy environment that was the antithesis of a planned life.

I remember the first time I was told to be 'on standby.' 'On standby' meant that Governor Schwarzenegger was in town, a corrections issue might come up, and I might need to be able to get to the Capitol within 10 minutes of receiving an email requesting my presence. I also recall working with several CDCR staff on Christmas Eve to finish a report. We worked nearly the whole evening together without one person even raising the issue that it was Christmas Eve! These and other similar personal sacrifices were what I saw day in and day out, and certainly not what I had anticipated. I had expected that I would encounter a bureaucratic workforce that was unengaged (e.g. "good enough for government work") and waiting for retirement. Of course, I encountered some of those people, but overall, I was consistently surprised by the personal sacrifices made by those I worked with in state government.

We academics are quite comfortable in our rather slow-paced and autonomous environments, where we tend to be masters of our own universe. When I tried to reach out to colleagues for help, it had to fit into their agenda and rather laid-back lifestyles, and it usually did not. I did not often find the kind of personal commitment 'to the cause' that I found in non-profit organizations and in state government, surprising to say. I came to believe that we academics are quite comfortable 'talking the talk' about desiring policy influence but not usually willing to 'walk the walk.' During my tenure in Sacramento, I was offered four different

permanent positions, the final job offer at the highest levels of state government. In the end, it was not that I doubted that the job was important or that I could do it well, but, rather, I turned them down because I was not willing to make the personal and professional sacrifices that were expected. Being a professor is a privileged position and brings with it an autonomy and freedom that is rather inconsistent with what it takes to influence public policy. We need to be honest about that and acknowledge that our influence is not only minimized by the university reward structure but also by our personal preferences for our work and life balance.

There is another aspect of my embedded criminology experience that was painful and deserves mention. As I became more visible and, presumably, more powerful, I became the subject of public attack. My esteemed colleague, Valerie Jenness, used to tell me these attacks were confirmation that I was making a difference. That might be true, but the lesson I learned was that public criminology, at least in California, is a nasty business. As mentioned earlier, I received permission from CDCR to move ahead with a demonstration project to test earned discharge parole. Soon after I had published an opinion editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* explaining the project, I became the subject of negative press, particularly on the prison guard union's blog. One posting described me as "that well-known lover of all things criminal," and wrote, "This lady has never worked in the corrections or parole field. She has no idea how convicts think. She has no business making decisions or giving advice on who gets parole supervision or who doesn't. She will place California's community in danger." Another wrote, "Unfortunately it is never one of these hug-a-thug criminal lovers that gets attacked/robbed/raped/beat up by these "rahhabbed" parolees, and that's why this type of policy persists." Someone responded to that posting by adding, "the first victim of an early discharged parolee needs to find Joan and pay back the crime tenfold." I found these and other writings offensive and threatening, but it became clear to me that they were an expected part of trying to change crime policy.

Lesson #7: The science of criminology and our role in public policy is necessary but ultimately insufficient to alter fundamentally our nation's justice system.

My final lesson ends on a note of optimism, tempered by a dose of realism. I learned that I could change many aspects of the largest correctional system in the world. I could help create a system that, in Joan McCord's words, would 'do less harm.' It was not easy or straightforward, and it was totally exhausting and often personally distressing, but it was do-able and definitely worth doing. I am certainly not unique, and I believe other criminologists can make similar contributions, and I encourage them to do so. We have vital contributions to make, and key decision makers are often eager for our input. However, do not set unrealistic expectations for the contributions of research and policy analysis, as you will come away discouraged.

In the final analysis, I learned that scientific knowledge does not drive crime policy and probably never will. There are other powerful, legitimate, players at the table—for example, staff, legislators, the public, and offenders themselves—and scientific knowledge is just one important consideration. Criminologists have a role to play in this mosaic, but we should not delude ourselves of our centrality.

Research should *contribute* to policy and practice, but is not meant to provide the sole, or even primary, basis for it. In other words, research findings are meant to *inform* policy, not make it. It may turn out, for instance, that research based on experiments fails to demonstrate that increasing services to offenders reduces their recidivism. That finding, by itself, may not provide compelling grounds for disbanding such efforts. It may be that the program serves to benefit parolees' children, for example. There may be moral, justice, and economic issues to be considered along with the scientific findings. Judgments about whether or not a program should be continued or a policy direction pursued are, in the final analysis, not solely scientific judgments. We have a responsibility to provide *policy relevant* information, but leaders have the responsibility to derive *policy prescriptions*, based on research and other considerations.

Colleagues of mine often fail to appreciate our unique and, in some ways, more limited responsibilities. They often come away from interactions with practitioners feeling discouraged and unheard, believing they had nothing useful to offer. On the contrary, our studies can prove vitally important, but they alone are usually insufficient to alter crime policy. Ironically, if criminologists accepted that science was a necessary but insufficient guide to policy, more of them might stay the course longer, ultimately increasing our overall contributions.

Concluding remark

The combination of these seven lessons, and many more I could have shared, lead me to recommend that criminologists with a passion for influencing public policy take every opportunity to “go and see where the rubber trees grow.” It was a life-changing experience, and the lessons learned and the contributions I think I made could never have happened without my living and breathing the culture of state government. The destination was harder and more stressful than anything I have ever tried to do in my professional life, but definitely worth the journey. If more of us became embedded criminologists, I believe we would further contribute to the spirit and legacy of Dr. McCord and, ultimately, create a justice system than does less harm than the one we have today.

References

- Abbey, E. (1975). *The monkey wrench gang*: Harper Collins.
- Burawoy, M. (2005). For public sociology. *American Sociological Review*, 70(1), 4–28.
- California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. (2008). Adult population projections 2008–2013. Sacramento, CA. Available at http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Reports_Research/Offender_Information_Services_Branch/Population_Reports.asp, accessed May 23, 2008.
- California Expert Panel on Adult Offender Recidivism Reduction Programming (2007). *A roadmap for effective offender programming in California: Report to the California state legislature*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.
- California Independent Review Panel. (2004). Reforming California's youth and adult correctional system. California Performance Review. Available at <http://cpr.ca.gov/>, accessed on May 15, 2008.
- California Inspector General. (2008). *California rehabilitation oversight board: Biannual report*. Sacramento, CA.

- California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). (2005). Strategic Plan. Available at http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/About_CDCR/index.html, accessed May 15, 2008.
- California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). (2008). Strategic Plan: 2007–2012. Available at www.cdcr.ca.gov, accessed May 15, 2008.
- Clear, T., & Frost, N. A. (2007). Informing public policy. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 6(4), 633–641.
- Cullen, F. T. (2005). The twelve people who saved rehabilitation: How the science of criminology made a difference. *Criminology*, 43(1), 1–42.
- Currie, E. (2007). Against marginality: arguments for a public criminology. *Theoretical Criminology*, 11(2), 175–190.
- Domanick, J. (2004). *Cruel justice: Three strikes and the politics of crime in America's golden state*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Glaser, D. (1995). *Preparing convicts for law-abiding lives: The pioneering penology of Richard A. McGee*. NY: State University of New York Press.
- Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (2005). *State of the state address*. Sacramento, CA: State of California.
- Institute of Governmental Studies. (2008). California correctional peace officers association. Berkeley, California. Available at <http://igs.berkeley.edu/library/htCaliforniaPrisonUnion.htm>, accessed May 15, 2008.
- Jeness, V. (2008). Pluto, prisons, and plaintiffs: notes on systematic back-translation from an embedded researcher. *Social Problems*, 55(1), 1–22.
- Kohls, J. (2005). *Structural reorganization research workgroup: Final report*. Sacramento, CA: Youth and Adult Corrections Agency.
- Lawrence, D. G. (2004). *The California Governor recall election*. Los Angeles, California: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Little Hoover Commission. (2007). Solving California's corrections crisis: Time is running out. Sacramento: CA, available at <http://www.lhc.ca.gov/lhcdir/crime.html>.
- Logan, C. (1993). Criminal justice performance measures for prisons. In J. DiIulio (Ed.), *Performance measures for the criminal justice system*. Washington, D.C: Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- MacKenzie, D. (2006). *What works in corrections: Reducing the criminal activities of offenders and delinquents*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- McCord, J. (1990). Crime in moral and social contexts. *Criminology*, 28(1), 1–26.
- McCord, W., & McCord, J. (1959). *Origins of crime*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- National Research Council. (2008). *Parole, desistance from crime, and community integration*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences.
- Petersilia, J. (1987). *The influence of criminal justice research*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Petersilia, J. (1991). Policy relevance and the future of criminology. *Criminology*, 29(1), 1–15.
- Petersilia, J. (2003). *When prisoners come home: Parole and prisoner reentry*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.
- Petersilia, J. (2006). *Understanding California corrections*. Berkeley, California: California Policy Research Center. Available at <http://ucicorrections.seweb.uci.edu/pubs>, accessed Sept. 20, 2008.
- Petersilia, J. (2007a). Employ behavioral contracting for “Earned discharge” parole. *Criminology and Public Policy*, 6(4), 807–814.
- Petersilia, J., Committee Chair. (2007b). *Meeting the challenges of rehabilitation in California's prison and parole system*, Governor Schwarzenegger's rehabilitation strike team final report, Sacramento, CA. Available at http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/News/Gov_Rehab_Strike_Team_Release_Rpt.html, accessed May 15, 2008.
- Petersilia, J. (2008). California's correctional paradox of excess and deprivation. In M. H. Tonry (Ed.), *Crime and justice: A review of research*. Vol. 37: pp. 207–218 Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Petersilia, J., & Turner, S. (1993). Intensive probation and parole. In M. Tonry (Ed.), *Crime and justice: An annual review of research* pp. 281–335. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Pew Foundation. (2008). *One in 100: Behind Bars in America*. Available at http://www.pewtrusts.org/our_work_detail.aspx?id=74, accessed May 23, 2003.
- Prison Law Office. (2008). Major cases reviewed. Available at <http://www.prisonlaw.com/cases.php>, accessed May 15, 2008.
- Ricciardulli, A. (2003). A job for a tough guy: Schwarzenegger's persona may open the way for compassionate reforms. *Los Angeles Times*.
- Riveland, C. (1999). Prison administration. In M. Tonry, & J. Petersilia (Eds.), *Crime and justice: Prisons*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Sheff, D. (2004). The good jailer. *New York Times*, March 14.
- Warren, J. (2005). Ailing prison system finds friend in criminologist. *Los Angeles Times*, May 16.

- Weisburd, D. (2000). Randomized experiments in criminal justice policy: prospects and problems. *Crime & Delinquency*, 46(2), 181–193.
- Zimring, F., Hawkins, G., & Kamin, S. (2003). *Three strikes and you're out in California*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Joan Petersilia is Professor of Criminology, Law and Society at the University of California, Irvine (UCI), USA, former president of the American Society of Criminology, and Founding Director of the Center for Evidence-Based Corrections at UCI. Her research interests include designing and replicating randomized experiments, primarily in correctional settings, and fostering the use of scientific knowledge in policy environments.