

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 341

IR 054 657

AUTHOR Liggett, Joanna M.  
 TITLE Survey of Ohio's Prison Libraries.  
 PUB DATE Mar 93  
 NOTE 66p.; Master of Library Science Research Paper, Kent State University.  
 PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.  
 DESCRIPTORS Censorship; Financial Support; Interlibrary Loans; \*Librarians; Library Circulation; \*Library Collections; Library Facilities; \*Library Services; Library Surveys; Occupational Information; \*Prison Libraries; Questionnaires; Research Needs; Safety; State Surveys; Use Studies  
 IDENTIFIERS \*Ohio

ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted to gather data about Ohio's prison libraries and the librarians who are responsible for them. These libraries are areas of challenge and opportunity for librarians, and there will be continued growth in this field as more and more prisons are built. However, few professionals are aware of the concerns and challenges facing prison librarians. Mail questionnaires containing 36 questions were sent to the head librarians at each of Ohio's 21 adult prisons in operation at the time the survey was conducted, and 12 were returned for a return rate of 57%. Descriptive statistics were applied to give meaning to this data and to help develop a profile of Ohio's prison libraries. Staff and inmate library use, librarian safety issues, library collection size and contents, circulation statistics, interlibrary loan services, space available and handicapped access, work hours, funding, censorship, and staffing are among the topics covered. When appropriate to do so, the results of this survey are compared with those of a 1988 national survey of prison libraries. From the findings of the survey and of the literature review that preceded it, several recommendations for further study are made. A copy of the questionnaire used in the survey is appended. (Contains 31 references.) (KRN)

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made \*  
 \* from the original document. \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

ED 363 341

U S DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OEI/ED position or policy.

SURVEY OF OHIO'S PRISON LIBRARIES

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the  
Kent State University School of Library Science  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree Master Of Library Science

by

Joanna M. Liggett

March, 1993

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS  
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY  
Joanna Liggett

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES  
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

IR 054657



Master's Research Paper by  
Joanna M. Liggett  
B.S., The Ohio State University, 1962  
M.L.S., Kent State University, 1993

Approved by

Adviser \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

ii

3

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL PAGE. . . . . ii

LIST OF TABLES . . . . . iv

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS. . . . . v

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION . . . . . 1

    Statement of the Problem . . . . . 2

    Purpose of the Study . . . . . 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW. . . . . 4

3. METHODOLOGY. . . . . 29

    Introduction . . . . . 29

    Sample . . . . . 29

    Procedure and Design . . . . . 29

    Data Analysis. . . . . 30

4. FINDINGS . . . . . 31

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS. . . . . 48

Appendix

A. COVER LETTER . . . . . 51

B. QUESTIONNAIRE. . . . . 53

C. LETTER--MARY JEANNE LEFFERS . . . . . 56

REFERENCE LIST. . . . . 58

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Ohio's Prison Libraries at a Glance, Part 1 . . . . .	46
2. Ohio's Prison Libraries at a Glance, Part 2 . . . . .	47

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research project has been an informative and rewarding one, and the researcher is grateful to the many people who helped make it possible. Special thanks are offered to Mary Jeanne Leffers, Senior Librarian, Correctional Training Facility, Soledad, California; to Phil Koons, Library Development Consultant, Institution Services, State Library of Ohio; and to those prison librarians who took the time to answer and return the questionnaire.

v

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

According to Phil Koons (1992), Library Development Consultant, Institution Services, State Library of Ohio, a lot of statistical and descriptive information about Ohio's prison libraries and librarians is not readily available from the state, even though these are state institutions who file reports periodically; and there is also little of this type of information about prison libraries in library literature. However, there are job challenges and opportunities available in these libraries. In addition, information that might be useful to a librarian interested in seeking employment in the field often is not even included in the state reports. Ohio's prison libraries are an area of opportunity for librarians, and there will be continued growth in the field since more and more prisons are being built. Funding for library services in these institutions will also continue to be available, according to Mr. Koons, since these libraries are funded by the inmates and not by tax dollars.

## Statement of the Problem

Because there is little statistical and descriptive information readily available for Ohio's prison libraries and librarians and because prison librarianship is a growing field with available job opportunities for librarians, a profile of Ohio's prison libraries and the librarians who are responsible for them would be very useful.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to conduct an exploratory study that would result in the development of a profile of Ohio's prison libraries and librarians.

The following assumptions about Ohio's prison libraries and librarians have been made:

- 1) Ohio's prison library budgets for materials are generally adequate.
- 2) Censorship in Ohio's prison libraries is a major concern.
- 3) Ohio's prison libraries are used by a greater percentage of the populations they serve than are public and school libraries.
- 4) Very few librarians working in Ohio's prisons had any orientation to prison libraries prior to accepting their positions.



This study hopes to provide MLS students and other librarians with a better understanding of and a greater appreciation for this very challenging area of librarianship.

## Chapter II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the literature located several articles and studies which provided general information about prison libraries and librarians that was useful in providing background information for this project. They were also helpful in developing the questionnaire used in this survey.

There are several articles that discuss the early history and development of prison libraries in the United States. The first prison library in the United States was at Philadelphia's Walnut Street Jail in 1790. The religious nature of this library was manifested in the use of the chaplain as the librarian. The exact size of the collection is not known, but according to minutes of the Philadelphia Prison Society, 123 volumes were purchased for the prison in 1809. All were Bibles, Testaments, or other religious works (Coyle 1987).

There are some who argue that these early prison libraries were not developed enough, either substantially or functionally, to be called libraries. Nevertheless, before librarianship was thought of as a profession and libraries were thought of as service institutions, a number of efforts were made to establish library services in prisons.

In the 1820s penitentiaries became places of dread and terror. The only reading materials allowed were those which

would help improve the morals of the inmates (Sullivan 1989).

By the 1870s the philosophy about reading behind bars was to persuade and to control. During this period some prisons had state budget appropriations for books, and many others received money from visitors' fees to pay for their libraries (Coyle 1987).

In 1870 the National Prison Congress met in Cincinnati, and this was the beginning of a new era for prison libraries in which programs based on the philosophy of rehabilitation were to be the norm. Education, training, and meaningful work were considered integral parts of these rehabilitation programs. The idea that libraries could play an educational role gradually caught on, and the growth and development of prison libraries was encouraged (Sullivan 1989).

In 1915 the American Library Association Committee on Hospital and Institution Libraries published the Manual for Institution Libraries. This manual stated that "Fiction for prisons and reform should be censored carefully. Nothing should be accepted which represents vice attractively, contains sensual suggestion, or deals with crime and punishment" (ALA 1915, 7).

In 1927 and 1928 Paul Garret and Austin MacCormick surveyed 110 federal, state, and military prisons. The results revealed a considerable range in size and quality of prison library collections. Accessibility and circulation also varied considerably, but the most significant finding

was that not one of the 110 institutions had a library program supervised by a trained librarian. Inmates, chaplains, teachers, or other staff members were in charge (Coyle 1987).

In 1932 the American Library Association in cooperation with the American Prison Association issued the Prison Library Handbook. It stated that the philosophy for reading behind bars was "to persuade and control." This idea remained fundamental for many years, and so the prison library, by its definition as a rehabilitative tool, was a censored library that contained only "positive" and moral literature (Sullivan 1989).

In the 1930s the Federal Bureau of Prisons made its libraries the central focus of its education programs. It was during this period that Roland Mulhauser became the first librarian to actually work in a prison library. He was employed at the U.S. Industrial Reformatory at Chillicothe, Ohio (Englebarts, 1972). However, by the 1950s, as the focus of the education programs shifted to the classroom, prison libraries suffered neglect. In the mid-1960s, many librarians, taking their first real look at prison libraries, disliked the limiting concept of the library as a tool for rehabilitation. They thought the prison library should be modeled after the public library with its democratic ideals and its client-centered services. The idea of finding out what the inmates wanted and

providing it to them without prejudice led in different directions at different institutions (Coyle 1987).

Before 1966, Ohio's prison libraries were much like those in other prisons throughout the United States. There was a definite lack of planning and concern for these libraries and their services. They had poor collections made up mostly of old, donated, uninteresting books which did not relate to the needs or the interest of the inmates; they seldom had librarians; the facilities were not adequate; and the inmates had little access to them. However, in 1966, the LSCA title IV-A was amended to make limited funds available to state libraries for the purpose of planning and developing library services in institutions. Ohio received just over \$7000 for planning purposes in 1967 and has received \$39,500 per year since 1968 for grants to institutions and in-service training programs (Koons 1987).

In 1967 the State Library of Ohio held a conference to determine the needs of institution libraries and to set in motion plans to develop programs and services in prison libraries. At this conference a state plan designed to help with the establishment and improvement of institution libraries was set up, and the position of Consultant for Institution Library Services to oversee the changes in these libraries was created (Koons 1987).

Throughout the 1970s the State Library provided consultation, technical assistance, and help in grant writing to Ohio's prison libraries. One thing the State

Library emphasized during this period was the need to hire professional librarians in these libraries. Today all prison libraries in Ohio have a professional position and seek to hire professionals, but sometimes are unable to do so because there simply is not enough professional interest in this area of librarianship (Koons 1987).

Ohio also has an Advisory Committee for Institution Library Services. In 1982 this committee began encouraging the automation of institution libraries, and in 1984 it set up minimum standards which must be met in order for Ohio's institution libraries to be eligible for the LSCA grants. The 1980s saw many new prison being built--all with libraries. In the mid-1970s there were seven prisons in Ohio. This increased to fourteen by the mid-1980s and to twenty-two in 1992 with others under construction and more on the drawing boards (Koons 1987).

According to the Ohio Bureau of Employment, the salaries of Ohio's prison librarians generally fall in the state's Librarian 2 classification. The pay steps in this classification, as of July 28, 1991, ranged from \$11.34 per hour to \$14.18 per hour. Full time prison librarians work 2080 hours per year so yearly salaries range from \$23,587.20 to \$29,494.40 plus state benefits. If a librarian is hired without an MLS, a different classification schedule commensurate with one's education and qualifications is used.

There are several articles that discuss the roles that today's prison libraries should assume. One of these roles is the public library model which took hold in the 1960s and is still frequently favored today. Here services such as meeting the reading demands of the inmates, providing for their listening and viewing interests, and having a variety of general reference and informational resources available, as is done in public libraries, are the main focus of the library. Those who favor this model believe that inmates have the "right to read" and thus are entitled to all the library services in which they are interested, regardless of what the prison administration or anyone else thinks they should have. The supporters of this model feel that to narrow the focus of the prison library to just the educational or rehabilitative needs of the inmates reduces the library to a meaningless collection of books (Rubin & Souza 1989).

There are those, however, who feel that the prison library should again become an educational tool which should meet the more stringent requirements of the educational curriculum and which should not be at all concerned with recreational reading. One author criticizes the public library model and suggests that prison libraries should be set up to help inmates change by providing only those educational and practical materials that will make the inmates better members of society (Coyle 1987, 1989).

This change-based model suggested by Coyle is, in turn, strongly criticized in "Throw the Book at 'Em: The Change-Based Model for Prison Libraries." This author discusses both the public library model and Coyle's proposed model and says that "In addition to being an idea with little or no hope of success, the change-based model guts the library of its best chance to be effective--as a library and as a change agent" (Suvak, 1989, 33).

There is another view which falls between the public library model and the change-based model. Those who support this model believe that good prison libraries today do not simply provide for recreational reading, but are strong advocates, as well, for support service to all the educational and vocational programs in the prisons. According to one article, "Because it is the only library to which inmates have access, the prison library must serve as the public library for its' community, as a school library for inmates in Adult Basic Education and GED classes, as an academic library for inmates enrolled in college-level course work, and as a legal research resource to ensure that inmates' constitutional right of access to the courts is met..." (Chesley 1991, 569).

In Ohio's prisons the most frequent demands are those for services like the ones provided by public libraries, but since these libraries are under the direction of the department of education in each prison, they must also meet the demands of their prison's educational curriculum. In



addition, most of Ohio's prison librarians also have the responsibility of providing legal library services to the inmates (Koons & Lessun 1985).

Another article looks at the trends in prison libraries, and these seem to support the middle role model. Current emphasis is on improved standards, more attention to educational and vocational services, interest in reentry materials and services, and networking (Pool 1985).

A prison library is often hindered by not having enough funds to provide for all of its community's legitimate needs. In addition to considering the balance between the many needs of the general prison population; the vocational, academic, and basic education needs; the staff and administration needs; and the college inmates' needs, the prison librarian must meet the range of needs from inmates who cannot read to those who are doctors and lawyers (Koons 1988). Another article states that 75 percent of all adult inmates are functionally illiterate, and that in many prisons the literacy program becomes the responsibility of the prison library. This is another reason why "libraries with myriad reading materials--for all reading levels and interests, in all genres and formats--are essential in prison" (Rubin & Souza 1989, 12).

The prison librarian must set up policies for the development and acquisition of materials for an ever increasingly diverse inmate population. It is difficult to provide for all the groups needing to be served--those

physically unable to go to the library; those in the hospitals and special housing units; the non-English speaking inmates; the various ethnic groups; and the groups of special inmate organizations and clubs. Thus, prison librarians must make judicious decisions in order to establish and maintain well-rounded collections.

Hours of operation and ease of accessibility vary greatly from institution to institution. In some prisons, inmates have open access to the library during their free time; and in others, the inmates must schedule time to go to the library, perhaps several days in advance. Some prisons also limit the number of inmates that can be in the library at any one time (Leffers 1988). Security considerations can also make access a complicated issue. Because of disciplinary restrictions, legal status, or personal safety, some inmates are not allowed to use the same areas at the same time as others. When this is the case, the prison librarian must carefully schedule library visits so that all the inmates receive sufficient library time. This is sometimes a very difficult and complex task; and knowing which cell blocks are allowed which types of material is another security issue whose existence can not be ignored (Rubin & Souza 1989).

Prison libraries receive funding in a variety of ways depending on the state in which they are located. In Ohio, prison libraries are basically funded from money generated by the inmates themselves. Profits from the monies that

inmates spend inside the prison in the commissary and on other income-producing inmate efforts are put into the prison's Industrial and Entertainment account. The library then receives a percentage of this money. The I&E funds can only be used for services that directly benefit the total inmate population. Presently, in Ohio, prison libraries are supposed to receive \$25.00 per inmate per year from this fund (Bundsey 1992). Standard 106-07 issued by the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections requires the librarians to take part in the budgeting and disbursement of the I&E funds within the institution.

Prison librarians may also apply for federal grant money through the Library Services and Construction Act. However, these applications take a lot of time to complete and are matching fund grants. These funds can only be used to help establish libraries where none currently exist and to implement innovative or needed programs (Bundsey 1992).

Since 1981, some of Ohio's prison libraries have been getting actual budgets. This support is not particularly high, but it is there. These monies are used exclusively to purchase materials and supplies (Koons 1988).

In Ohio, prisons now have access to a new funding source--"telephone money." These funds are generated by inmate telephone calls with 20% of the charges being rebated to the institution by MCI. This generates tens of thousands of dollars per month per institution, and many of Ohio's

prisons are using these funds to improve their libraries (Koons 1992).

Limited resources have encouraged many prison libraries to participate in interlibrary loans. This increases the availability of materials for the libraries. Prison libraries work most often with public and state libraries. Academic and special libraries seem to be somewhat more reluctant to loan materials to prisons. The number of ILL loans an inmate may request is determined by the prison library--some being much more lenient than others (Bundsey 1992). It is important that prison librarians continually work at enabling the disadvantaged to have access to the same quality of information available to the advantaged.

Inmates often use a number of "games" on new librarians which are simply techniques to convert the librarian into a pliable staff member who is then used by the inmates to control the library. For instance, an inmate may attempt to form an intellectual bond with the librarian or trick the librarian into feeling guilty about something in order to receive some special favors. These techniques are usually not meant to be vicious or even cruel; they are simply a means to dominate the library and the librarian. Prison librarians should be aware that the need to dominate is a key characteristic of the criminal personality. The challenge for a new prison librarian is not to ignore, nor to encourage, these "games" but to manage them in a professional and successful manner (Mallinger 1991).

A study of criminal behavior and lifestyles in comparison to conventional people indicates that many criminals consider crime to be their "work" and their means of support. The inmates surveyed in this study thought that having nerve and being able to maintain one's cool were two skills necessary for being a successful criminal. The inmates also indicated that learning crime was not easy--criminals must continually acquire knowledge and apply it in a creative manner in order to make the needed contacts, think up new crimes, and so on. Criminals are very individualistic and feel a great sense of pride in their "accomplishments." They also learn to beat and manipulate the system in a great variety of ways (Akerstrom 1985). It is important for a prison librarian to review studies such as this one in order to acquire some understanding of criminals and their behavior so that he/she does not unknowingly allow the inmates to take charge of the prison library.

Prison libraries are often one-person libraries. Thus, the prison librarian is often responsible for collection development, acquisitions, technical services, and reference and readers' advisory services as well as administrative tasks such as budget preparation, staff training and supervision, and public relations activities. Thus, prison librarians need all the professional skills taught in library and information science classes. All of these traditional skills must be used; however, they must be used

in a non-traditional environment where security issues and the orderly operation of the institution are the primary focus (Souza 1989).

The rapid growth in the field of corrections has been accompanied by an increase in employment opportunities for library professionals. States with large or rapidly growing populations are always seeking interested applicants. An MLS is usually one of the few stated requirements for prison librarian positions. However, since these positions are often hard to fill, this requirement is sometimes waived. Many institutions feel it is better to fill the position with an underqualified person rather than wait the 6 to 8 months or more that it often takes to fill the position with a qualified librarian with an MLS degree (Rubin & Sullivan 1989).

Few library and information science students deliberately choose prison librarianship as a career. It usually "shows up" as an available opportunity when the time comes for job hunting. Also, few prison librarians ever take course work directly related to such a career prior to their employment. In fact, anyone who decides to specialize in prison library work will have difficulty in finding a master's program in an accredited school to support the specialty. Even the courses on service to special groups that are offered in graduate school programs often pass quickly over prison populations. There are several reasons for this. First, until recently, there has been little

demand for professionally trained librarians in prison settings. Secondly, salaries for the position are often low (although there has been some recent improvement in this area in some states) so library school students have shown very little interest in the area. College courses also are often not taught when only a few students sign up for the class, and there are very few library school faculty members who have the interest, the experience, or the knowledge to teach courses in prison librarianship. Some library schools at times sponsor related courses, workshops, or in-service training by using adjunct faculty (Lucas 1990).

Another article agrees that there is a lack of educational opportunities for those interested in working in prison libraries. This article then goes further by suggesting that prison libraries and librarians are also often ignored by the profession (Hartz 1988).

A survey was recently conducted to determine the need for developing a program for library school students that would include a three-hour course in prison library management. All fifty state libraries were included. The results showed a perceived need for such a program but this was combined with pessimism about its probable success because of the generally low salaries, negative images of the profession, and uninterested prison administrators (Lucas 1990).

This lack of educational opportunities is unfortunate because a career in prison librarianship is not an easy one.

South Carolina used the results of the above survey, to develop a three-hour course, "Libraries in Correctional Institutions," which will probably be offered every four years. This does not seem like much, but it is a start in the right direction (Lucas 1990). Enrollment in the first class of this course was small--perhaps, a reflection of the popularity of a career in prison librarianship among MLS students. However, the participants felt that the course was not only extremely helpful and educational, but also provided them with a group of professional colleagues with whom they could consult (Lee 1989).

Prison librarians must also learn to deal with threats--not only to themselves personally but also to the skills they have learned in library school, including the problems of censorship, the lack of library tools, and the struggle for support (Koons 1988). Rapport in handling the opposition is essential but conflict is inevitable because those who support prisoners' rights will often find themselves at odds with the administration. This makes it hard, but not impossible, to improve and broaden the scope of libraries in prisons (Bayley 1981).

Censorship in prison libraries often seems to cause more headaches for prison librarians than any other issue that confronts them. The general feeling that librarians do not really understand the prison setting seems to be justification for careful scrutiny and, at times, senseless banning of perfectly harmless materials. Censorship can



occur from outside the institution as well as from within (Sawyer 1991).

In Ohio, the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction has rules and regulations to run prisons. The Administrative Regulations (AR) give the administration, staff, and inmates guidelines on what can and cannot be permitted in prison. According to AR 5120-9-19, any material that is obscene, aids or abets criminal activity, physical violence or escape, or threatens the security of a prison is barred from prisons. A Publication Screening Committee exists to insure that these guidelines are followed. This committee is headed by the department chaplain and it reviews all questionable materials. Materials may be referred to the committee from any individual institution, and the committee also reviews all library materials ordered with federal funds. This committee's decisions are appealable, but very seldom are their decisions reversed (Sawyer 1991).

There are two subject areas about which the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction are very sensitive. The first one is medical information. Prison officials are afraid that inmates may use this information to feign symptoms that they really do not have. The inmates could then use this information to file lawsuits for alleged mistreatment, to get out of work, to be moved to a more advantageous location for an escape attempt, to obtain a specific drug, or simply to create excessive sick call

demands for the prison staff. Therefore, the policy is that general information medical books may be purchased if prior approval is obtained, but books discussing specific medical details are banned. The other sensitive issue is Satanism. Prison officials fear that inmates could control other inmates with the threat of "black magic," and the officials themselves are often offended by thoughts of devil worship (Sawyer 1991).

When materials are purchased with the institution's own money derived from the sale of pop, snacks, etc., the department chaplain does not review the list. It is the individual institution's responsibility to follow the AR guidelines. Experience indicates that Ohio's current department chaplain often relies only on the title of a book to make his decisions about whether or not that book should be banned. His philosophy seems to be that when in doubt, cross it off (Sawyer 1991).

Censorship will always be a problem in prison libraries, as it is everywhere. It is the responsibility of the librarian of a prison library to educate the appropriate personnel to insure that requested materials are ordered.

The librarian must show patience and develop credibility with the staff and the administration while working with them to solve these conflicts. It is important for the librarian to help them understand why materials should be available to the inmates as long as they fall within the guidelines of the AR. Experience actually

indicates that keeping materials away from the inmates often causes more problems than it solves (Koons 1992).

Safety is always a concern for the prison librarian. In some institutions librarians carry pagers or have an alarm box, others have offices that can be easily and quickly locked, some have an officer present, some have whistles, others have telephones nearby, and still others have no security at all (Leffers 1989). In Ohio all prison employees, including librarians, must take a three week course in self-defense before beginning to work.

Some prison librarians feel that they are in physical danger and experience emotional stress. They may keep their open doors deadlocked in order to give themselves a few extra seconds to summon help if they need it. In some prison libraries book shelves are bolted to the walls and free-standing units are short so all the inmate patrons can be seen at all times (Childress 1985). However, many inmates really do appreciate the library and its services and so treat the librarian with at least some semblance of respect (Scheuyer 1989). Another article states that the dangers in prison libraries are minimal because inmates tend to protect the things that are important to them and libraries are one of these things (Koons 1988). Following all safety and security regulations within the institution and providing good, consistent, and professional services will help the librarian gain the respect of the inmates and

the security staff and will, in turn, help reduce the chance that a serious problem will develop (Bayley 1981).

In 1977 in the *Bounds vs. Smith* case, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that all prisoners are entitled to "meaningful access to the Courts." This could be accomplished by one of two means: adequate legal services from persons trained in law or adequate law libraries (Flores 1990). Due to economic reasons, the latter is usually favored. Some prison librarians see law library services as functionally distinct from the traditional library services and so in some institutions law libraries have become administratively and physically separate from the general libraries, but in other institutions they are an integral part of the general prison library. However, this collection must be segregated from the general collection and must also include access to typewriters and other resources needed by the inmate "lawyers" (Needham 1987).

In prisons where the prison librarian is in charge of the law library, it is important that he/she be able to give instruction and guidance on the use of legal materials, but one must be extremely careful not to give legal counseling. The librarian should not try to advise an inmate on his rights, what legal action he should take, what legal forms he should use, how to fill out the forms, or how to write legal documents. The librarian, however, should know as much as possible about the law book collection and how it

should be used. All of this must again be done under security conditions and with prison administrators and under federal requirements and regulations (Flores 1990).

Today many prison libraries are beginning to automate. The first prison in the United States to automate its circulation and catalog systems was Chillicothe Correctional Institute in Ohio. This took place in January, 1987 (Sawyer 1989). Some prison librarians who have already automated their catalog and circulation systems and are now looking into electronic reference materials--both online and in house. Hopefully, once paranoid attitudes are overcome among correctional personnel, prisons can begin to be linked with outside sources as well as with each other.

Another problem or concern facing today's prison librarians is the Hispanic population. It is the fastest growing minority in the United States, estimated now at about 18% of the general population. The Hispanic prison population has kept pace with or has exceeded this figure. In some states 40% of the prison population is Hispanic (Mallinger 1989). In Ohio there are perhaps 1000 Hispanic inmates (Koons 1992).

Library services to this growing inmate population, unfortunately, have not kept up, and the gap is increasing each year. Specialized library services for Hispanic inmates are very rare; however, many states do provide small collections of Spanish-language materials in their prison

libraries. To improve services to these inmates, prison librarians would also find it very helpful to be able to speak Spanish (Mallinger 1989).

Librarians who work in prisons are also under constant pressure to become "correctional workers" first and librarians only incidentally. This pressure must always be resisted because subverting the library to the status of a management tool is not what professional librarianship is all about. Librarians are in the library to provide needed services--not to be a guard. Often times this is a difficult task to accomplish (Koons 1992).

Statistics show that prison libraries are visited more than twice as often as public libraries serving populations of comparable size and that these inmate users borrow five times as many books (Souza 1989). It is hard to understand how the prison administration frequently expects one professional librarian to deal adequately with the variety of requests from the inmates as well as to attend to the multitude of operational problems encountered with this volume of use, but they do. Thus, prison librarianship is not only stressful but can be hectic as well. The average age of prison librarians is 49 years, and the average length of service is just 5.5 years (Leffers 1989).

It is sometimes difficult to understand why anyone would ever want to become a prison librarian. Indeed it is a very difficult task with many pressures, hectic days, and

often little respect from the rest of the profession, the prison staff, or the outside world. For some it may be one of the few jobs available when they begin to look for employment. Others find it a challenge to their intellect and their sense of social responsibility (Koons 1988). Walt Lessun, who has served as a librarian in three of Ohio's prisons, once wrote:

Prison librarianship--damn it's good work. Not easy...but rewarding, stimulating, satisfying work. Admittedly, people tend to think you're crazy if you say you like what you're doing, and--also admittedly--you have to be a little crazy to work in a prison (as sort of a vaccination against the craziness that is the prison system), but take my word for it, prison library work is the most exciting librarianship around--never dull, never boring, always challenging, and always exhausting....it may be the imperative to think that makes prison librarianship the exciting profession that it is (Lessun 1979, 13).

As one begins a career in prison librarianship, it is important to take time to look at the history and philosophy of imprisonment and to become aware of the current issues and the present state of affairs in the prison community, and particularly that of the employing institution. It is important to understand the purpose of the institution and the theories of human nature and behavior that operate within it. The library's and the librarian's relationship to the specific goals of the institution must be determined. The prison librarian must also be able to assess the characteristics, the abilities, and the needs of the prison

population. Different prison libraries will have different roles depending on the role of the parent institution--is it a long-term institution? A short-term one? Is it for juveniles? Are the inmates being prepared for release? It is of vital importance that the prison librarian be able to assess the whole environment so that he/she can define appropriate and meaningful missions and goals for the library. Then the librarian must work to develop an effective program within the contrasting philosophies and ideologies that exist (Vogel 1989). And, this must often be done with limited funds.

Thus we see that prison libraries come in all sizes and shapes. Their roles vary according to the roles and purposes of their parent institution. Their programs also vary in size, actual services performed, support, types and amounts of materials available, and with their contact with outside libraries. Some are very viable and are deemed important by the inmates; others are struggling to survive. The problems are many and the support often lacking, yet as prison populations continue to increase so will the number of prisons and with them, the number of prison libraries.

No one yet really knows what powers prison libraries might have in effecting a positive change in the inmates. There are so many attitudes and obstacles to overcome in determining just what services and programs the various groups of prisoners should be able to use. There is a great



need to upgrade literacy among inmates, but it is difficult to say that this is or is not what prison libraries should be doing. Generally, there seems to be a feeling that prison libraries should be able to move to meet a need as it arises (Koons 1988).

Perhaps, in prison libraries more than in any other type of library, the success or the failure of the library depends on the librarian. The librarian shapes the library. He/She is not constricted by the traditional role of libraries; however, since part of the role of the prison library is to orient the inmates to becoming users of libraries, both during their incarceration and also upon their return to society, the librarian must be careful to stay within certain bounds of the role. Many inmates are looking for answers to life's questions. In the prison the library is often the only source to which they can turn.

Prison libraries have been in existence for a long time; and, while the overall picture of prison libraries may often times fall short of ideal, there are some relatively recent developments which are healthy and show that the role of libraries in many prisons is improving and expanding (Koons 1992). In the future these very complex and demanding libraries will hopefully be important factors in the development of prison programming and services; and they will, along with prison librarians, receive the awareness, the respect, and the support of the prison administrators

and staffs as well as that of professional librarians in all areas of librarianship.

## Chapter III METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

An exploratory survey was conducted to collect data on Ohio's prison libraries and librarians and a profile of these libraries and the librarians who are responsible for them was created.

### Sample

The population for this study consists of Ohio's 22 adult (male and female) prisons. Juvenile correctional institutions are not included, nor are any of Ohio's jails. The sample consists of the total population.

### Procedure and Design

A mail questionnaire consisting of 36 questions was sent to the head librarian of each of Ohio's 22 prison libraries (see appendixes A and B). This questionnaire was reviewed by Phil Koons, Library Development Consultant, Institution Services, State Library of Ohio. His suggestions and concerns were taken into consideration and incorporated into the finalized version of the questionnaire. Included on the questionnaire were questions about the institution, the library, and the librarian.

The data gathered in this study were compared, when appropriate, with the results of a national survey of prison

libraries conducted in 1988 by Mary Jeanne Leffers, Senior Librarian, Correctional Training Facility, Soledad, California.

#### Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used on the quantifiable data gathered in this study, and the results presented in tabular form. The results were compiled and printed so that they may be used by other librarians and MLS students to better understand and appreciate these libraries and librarians and their problems and concerns.

## Chapter IV

### FINDINGS

Mail questionnaires were sent to Ohio's 22 prison libraries. However, there were in reality only 21 libraries in operation at the time this survey was conducted. According to the November 9, 1992, issue of The Athens Messenger, the twenty-second one, Trumbull Correctional Institution, did not open until November 10, 1992, and no inmates were scheduled to be there for another couple of weeks. From the 21 prison libraries, 12 questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 57%. However, a school administrator returned one of the questionnaires unanswered because his institution did not currently have a librarian.

When appropriate to do so, the results were compared to those presented in "Three Years Behind Bars" by Mary Jeanne Leffers. This article presents the results of a national survey conducted by Ms. Leffers in 1988. As the results are discussed, her results are simply referred to as the national ones.

From the data gathered, Ohio's prisons vary in size from 360 to 2400 inmates with 3 prisons having fewer than 500 inmates and 5 having 2000 or more. The average population is 1579.5 inmates. This may be compared to the national survey figure of 1437. The median population of

Ohio's institutions responding to the survey is 1900 inmates.

In 18.2% of the responding prison libraries 15% or less of the inmate population use the library while in 63.6% of the institutions, 70% or more use the library. The range for the percentage of inmates using the library is 10% to 90%, the average is 65.2%, and the median is 80%. The national average is 42% so Ohio's prison libraries seem to be providing services and materials to considerably more of their inmate populations. After talking with several public librarians, they would all be very happy to have 65% of their populations using their libraries. Ms. Leffers is in agreement with these librarians--she states in her study that when she worked in a public library she would have been happy to have 50% of the nearby population using the library. And, speaking as a high school librarian, this researcher would also be extremely pleased if 65% of the student population used the school library. Thus, the assumption that Ohio's prison libraries are used by a greater percentage of the populations they serve than are public and school libraries appears to be correct.

Ohio has four security classifications for its prisons. These are, in descending order of security: maximum, close, medium, and minimum. Sometimes a prison will have separate areas, each with its own security classification. The returned questionnaires have the following security

classifications: 18.2%, maximum; 9.1%, maximum/close; 18.2%, close; 9.1%, close/medium; 27.3%, medium; 9.1%, medium/minimum; and 9.1%, minimum. The national survey included 38.4% maximum, 50.8% medium, and 10.8% minimum security prisons. Examination of the data does not show any trends or statistics that could be attributed to the type of security classification that an institution or a group of institutions had.

In response to the question about personal safety for the librarian, the presence of a telephone alone or in combination with another safety device is the most popular type of safety provided. It is used in 45.5% of the responding libraries. An officer is present in 36.4% of the libraries; a beeper, in 36.4%; a man-down alarm, in 9.1%; and a whistle, in 9.1%. Personal size (6'6" in height) is also considered to be a safety factor by one of the librarians. A combination of safety devices is reported in 54.5% of the libraries. Some of the combinations include an officer present plus a telephone or a beeper and a telephone with a beeper or a whistle.

It is interesting to note that in the two maximum security prisons that participated in this survey, one has only an officer present while the other has only a telephone. They do not have a combination of devices and/or officers as more than half of the responding institutions did.

In the national survey the telephone is also the most popular safety device with 81.5% of the librarians having one. The data also show that 50% have an officer present; 22.2%, an alarm box; 16.7%, a whistle; 1.9%, a radio; and 1.9%, a beeper. However, nationally, 18.5% have no safety devices of any kind. All the Ohio librarians who responded have some type of safety factor or factors in their libraries. In addition to safety devices, all of Ohio's prison employees, including librarians, must take a three-week course in self-defense before beginning to work in an institution. In the national survey only 87% of the respondents received some kind of prison orientation before beginning their jobs.

Of the prison libraries in Ohio that responded, 81.8% indicate that they have fiction, non-fiction, reference, and legal materials and 72.7% of them also have non-print materials. However, one of these libraries has only two such items. One questionnaire gave the library's total materials without a breakdown of the various types, and on another questionnaire this question was left unanswered. Those Ohio prison libraries that responded have a total material collection of 125,530. The sizes of the individual collections range from 7550 to 25,000. The average collection contains 13,948 materials and the median collection is 12,050 materials. The national survey



determined the average collection to contain 12,033 materials.

One can also look at the totals for the various types of materials; however, the above total contains a 25,000 piece collection (the largest) which is not broken down on the questionnaire and so is not included in the following figures. The total number of fictional materials is 31,790. The range is 2000 to 8000; the average, 3974; and the median, 3750. The national average for fiction is 5178. There are 36,683 non-fiction materials with a range of 2583 to 6100. This is an average of 4585 and a median of 5000. The national average for non-fiction was 4693. There are fewer reference materials--only 7548. The range is 100 to 2000 with an average of 944 and a median of 500. The national average for reference materials is 589. The responding libraries have a total of 21,162 legal materials with a range of 400 to 10,000. The average is 2645 and the median is 1631 materials. The national average, which is considerably more, is 3429. The total number of non-print items is 3347. The range is 0 to 1600, the average is 418, and the median 260. Non-print materials were not included in the national survey.

Favorite authors in Ohio's prison libraries are Stephen King, Sidney Sheldon, Jackie Collins, Harold Robbins, and Donald Goines. Favorite fiction titles include Pearls of Love, Trick Baby, and Dumbth. The most popular non-fiction

materials are the zip code directory, the almanac, the American Correctional Association Directory, and the Ohio Revised Code.

Only two librarians gave an exact circulation figure for January to December of last year. The others gave rounded figures or did not answer at all. One survey gave the circulation for books only so this figure was not used in the following calculations. The lowest circulation count is 9667 and the highest is 180,000. Three institutions have a yearly circulation of 25,000 or less while 2 have over 100,000. The average circulation is 58,978 and the median is 32,178. If one takes into consideration the size of the prison populations and the circulation figures, inmates borrow a lot of materials. Considering the inmates who actually used these Ohio prison libraries last year, each one checked out an average of 61.45 materials. These figures are even more impressive if one considers the supposedly low education and/or reading levels of many of the inmates.

Among the responding libraries, 81.8% have educational or class related materials, 45.5% have music on tape, and 9.1% have music on CD-ROM. All of the libraries subscribe to magazines and newspapers. Most have 2 to 3 more magazine subscriptions than newspaper subscriptions, but one has almost 3 times more newspapers than magazines (43 vs. 15). The smallest number of magazine subscriptions is 15 and the

largest is 76. The average number is 54 subscriptions and the mean is 60. The national average is 40.87 subscriptions. For newspaper subscriptions the range is 15 to 52 while the average is 25.6 and the mean is 22. The national average for newspaper subscriptions is 16.

Large print materials are found in 72.7% of these libraries, and 63.6% have audio books or books on tape. Video tapes can also be found in 72.7%, and 100% of the libraries have typewriters for inmate use; however, one of them allows the inmates to use the typewriters for legal purposes only.

There are computers in 45.5% libraries, but they are for educational purposes only. None of the respondents indicated that inmates are allowed to use computers for personal use, but one does allow its inmates to use them for recreational purposes.

Microfiche is available in 90.9% of the libraries, and 9.1% have encyclopedias on CD-ROM. Only 45.5% of the responding librarians have computer literacy programs for the inmates while the other 54.5% do not.

Interlibrary loan service is provided by 90.9% of the responding libraries. Of those participating, 90% work with the State Library of Ohio; 70%, with public libraries; 40%, with academic libraries; and 30%, with other institution libraries. One library also uses the Ohio Valley Area

Libraries Books by Mail Program and another has a bookmobile program.

Orientation programs for new inmates are held in 63.6% of the libraries. While correlating answers, the researcher found that the two libraries with the lowest percentages of inmates using the libraries are also among the four libraries which do not have orientation programs.

In 54.5% of the responding libraries, the staff, as well as the inmates, use the library and in 45.5% they do not. However, 81.8% of the librarians feel the staff should be allowed to use the library while 18.2% do not think so. The reason for some not thinking the staff should use the library may be due to the fact that Ohio's prison libraries are funded basically with inmate produced monies so some people feel that library use should, therefore, be limited to the inmates.

Physically handicapped inmates have easy access to 63.3% of these prison libraries. In one institution there is access for all but those in wheelchairs. These inmates are carried up to the library, which is located on the second floor, when necessary. However, this institution has no wheelchair bound inmates at the present time. In a second non-accessible library, the librarian personally sees each of the handicapped inmates on a regular basis in order to provide them with library materials and services. In two

other non-accessible libraries, the handicapped prisoners may request materials which are then delivered to them.

Prisoners in isolation receive library materials in 100% of the responding institutions. This is done in a variety of ways. Some librarians visit these units on a weekly basis. In some institutions these inmates send "kites" (requests) for newspapers, magazines, or paperbacks, and these are then delivered to them. In other institutions, collections of paperbacks are sent to isolation areas on a scheduled basis. In one library inmates in isolation only have access to the law library. This is done through a kite and delivery service. In another institution a standing collection is maintained in the isolation areas, and the librarian makes weekly visits to these areas and responds to kites. In still another, the librarian supplies this area with materials from the general library and the law library as they are requested.

When asked to what degree their libraries support the prison's education program, 18.2% of the librarians replied "little"; 45.5% said "somewhat"; and 36.4% stated that this is a "major" emphasis in their libraries.

Work hours vary greatly among the institutions. According to the responses, 90.9% of the librarians work afternoons; 81.8%, mornings; 63.6% evenings; 63.6%, Saturdays; and, 18.2% Sundays. Nationally, 96% work mornings; 96%, afternoons; 44.4%, evenings; 35%, Saturdays;

and 14.8%, Sundays. Looking at the combined times that Ohio's prison librarians work, one works only on Saturdays while another works mornings, afternoons, evenings, and Saturdays and Sundays. The work schedules for 36.4% of the respondents include mornings, afternoons, evenings and Saturdays. This is the most popular schedule. Another 18.2% work mornings and afternoons but not evenings or weekends while 9.1% work mornings, afternoons, and evenings, but not Saturdays or Sundays; and 9.1% work afternoons and evenings, but not mornings and also not weekends and the remaining 9.1% work mornings and afternoons and Saturdays and Sundays, but not evenings.

The number of hours per week that these libraries are open also varies. The range is 32.5 hours to 76 hours. The average number of hours of operation per week is 50, and the median is 45.75.

All of the responding libraries are funded by I & E (Industrial and Entertainment) funds. These are monies that are generated by the prisoners themselves. It comes from the items they make and sell and from the snacks and pop they purchase inside the prison. Of these libraries, 63.6% also apply for and receive LSCA grants. These monies from the federal government must be used for new libraries or new services, such as automation of a library. The State of Ohio is providing some money to 27.3% of these libraries. One respondent said this money was only for law books to

which, according to the federal courts, all inmates must have access. A new funding source in 36.4% of these libraries is "telephone money." This is money that is returned to each institution by a long-distance carrier. It is 20% of the total spent by the inmates on long distance phone calls. Several of Ohio's prisons are budgeting part of this refunded money to their libraries.

Ohio's prison library budgets in the 1991-92 fiscal year ranged from \$10,000 to \$77,028. The smallest budget (\$10,000) was for a population of 425 with a material collection of 8,828 and does not include the law library funds. This researcher works in a public school library with a comparable collection size which serves a population of about 750, and would be elated, as would many other school librarians, with a budget of this size. The average budget was \$45,352.80 and the median was \$44,000. When one considers today's economy and the fact that Ohio's prison libraries are funded mostly through prisoner generated monies, it does seem that the prison libraries budgets are adequate as assumed.

The problem of censorship varies according to the institution in which one works. Of the responding librarians, 72.7% feel censorship is a problem while 27.3% do not. However, in one of the libraries where censorship is not a problem, the librarian admitted to a personal bias against providing violent materials to the inmates, and

another indicated that The Physicians Desk Reference is banned at his/her institution although censorship is not generally a problem there. In those libraries where censorship is considered to be a problem 87.5% of the librarians feel there is a problem with medical materials; 75%, with sex materials; 62.5%, with occult materials; 62.5%, with violent materials; and 12.5%, with mythology. Other materials being censored in at least one institution are Free Masonry, engineering, chemistry, and the Foxfire series. There does not seem to be a set pattern for the combination of areas that are censored in these individual libraries. Ohio's Department of Corrections sets up guidelines and standards, and then each individual institution determines its own policy within these. The project assumes that censorship was a major concern, and while it definitely is a problem in varying degrees in 73% of these libraries, it is not considered to be a problem in the remaining 27%.

The usable square footage in each library again varies. The range is from 1200 to 6000 square feet. The average size is 2879.44 square feet and the median is 2300 square feet. The number of seats in these libraries ranges from 23 to 138. The average is 54.3 seats and the median is 47.5 seats. Seven, or 63.6%, of the responding librarians do not feel their libraries provided enough seats for the inmates,



while four, or 36.4%, said their seating arrangements are sufficient.

Automation of the circulation/catalog systems has been accomplished in 45.5% of these libraries and 27.3% more are in the process of automating. Currently there is no automation in 27.3% of these libraries.

Staffing of the prison libraries generally consists of one professional aided by inmate aides. There are civilian-paraprofessionals in 36.3% of Ohio's prison libraries and 18.2% have correction officers as staff members. The number of inmate aides varies from 0 to 40. The average number is 10.1 and the median is 6. Eight of the librarians or 72.7% have an MLS degree. This compares with 64.8% in the national survey. One of the librarians in this survey without an MLS has BS degrees in Education and English and an MS degree in Spanish; another has an MS and a PhD, but not in library and information science; and another has an A.A.B. degree. The responding librarians have been professional librarians from 0 to 19 years and have worked in prison libraries for .2 of a year to 18 years. The average length of time they have been professional librarians is 8.5 years and the average length of time they have worked as prison librarians is 5.15 years. This compares with an average length of service of 5.45 years in the national survey. The median length of service for these librarians is 5 years.

For 27.3% of these respondents, their position as a prison librarian is their first job as a librarian. Only 27.3% of them had any orientation to prison librarianship before accepting their positions, while 54.5% have had some type of continuing education related to working in prison libraries since accepting their jobs. In 36.4% of the libraries, the librarians have not received any orientation or training either before or after accepting their positions. The project assumption that few librarians had any orientation to prison libraries before accepting their position is correct.

Currently, in 90.9% of the institutions the librarian is responsible for the law library. In the other 9.1% of the institutions, the responsibility for the law library is in the process of being transferred to the librarian. However, only 27.2% of these librarians have had any legal training while 72.7% of them have had none. The national survey showed that an average of 33.3% of the librarians had had some legal training.

One hundred percent of the responding institutions have some Hispanic inmates. In 63.6% of the libraries there are some materials in Spanish for these inmates and in 18.2% there are no such materials. Two, or 18.2%, of the respondents did not answer this question. Three, or 27.3%, of the librarians speak a second language--one, Urdu and Hindi; one, Bengali; and the other, Spanish. Only 18.2%

feel a need to speak a second language while 81.8% of the respondents do not. The respondents who feel that a second language needed indicated that this language is Spanish.

These librarians range in age from 30 to 58 years. One librarian did not answer this question. The average age is 41.9 years. The national average is 49 years; thus, Ohio's prison librarians are slightly younger. Ohio's median age for prison librarians is 42 years. Three of the responding librarians, or 27.3%, plan to continue as prison librarians; 7, or 63.6%, do not; and 1, or 9.1%, is undecided. In the national survey 66.7% planned to continue as prison librarians so Ohio is considerably below the national figures in this case. The reasons for this might be a topic for further investigation.

See Tables 1 and 2 on the following pages for a profile of Ohio's prison libraries.

Table 1.--Ohio's Prison Libraries at a Glance, Part 1

	Low	High	Average	Median
Prison Population	360	2400	1579.5	1900
% of Population Using Library	10	90	65.2	80
Nbr. of Materials				
Fiction	2000	8000	3974	3750
Non-fiction	2583	6100	4585	5000
Reference	100	2000	944	500
Legal	400	10,000	2645	1631
Non-print	0	1600	418	260
Whole Collection	7550	24,525*	12,566*	11,100*
Nbr. of Magazine Subscriptions	15	76	54	60
Nbr. of Newspaper Subscriptions	15	52	25.6	22
1991 Circulation	9667	180,000	58,978	32,178
Hours open/week	32.5	76	50	45.75
1991-92 Budget	\$10,000	\$77,028	\$45,353	\$44,000
Square Footage	1200	6000	2879	2300
Nbr. of Seats	23	138	54	47.5
Years a Librarian	0	19	8.5	8
Years a Prison Librarian	.2	18	5.2	3.5
Age of Librarian	30	58	41.9	42

\* One questionnaire gave only a total: 25,000 materials. This would be the high; and, including this figure in the calculations, the average = 13,948; and the median = 12,050.

Table 2.--Ohio's Prison Libraries at a Glance, Part 2

Question	Yes (%)	No (%)
Is there security for librarian? . . . . .	100.0	0.0
What types of materials do you have?		
Educational. . . . .	72.7	27.3
Music Tapes/CDs. . . . .	54.5	45.5
Magazine Subscriptions . . . . .	100.0	0.0
Newspaper Subscriptions. . . . .	100.0	0.0
Large Print Items. . . . .	72.7	27.3
Books-on-Tape. . . . .	63.6	36.4
Videotapes . . . . .	72.7	27.3
Typewriters. . . . .	100.0	0.0
Microfiche . . . . .	90.9	9.1
Computers. . . . .	45.5	54.5
Do you conduct computer literacy programs? . . . . .	45.5	54.5
Do you participate in ILL? . . . . .	90.9	9.1
Do you have orientation programs for new inmates?. . . . .	63.6	36.4
Does the prison staff use the library? . . . . .	54.5	45.5
Is the library accessible to the physically handicapped? . . . . .	63.6	36.4
Do you provide services to inmates in isolation? . . . . .	100.0	0.0
Do you work evenings?. . . . .	63.6	36.4
Do you work weekends?. . . . .	63.6	36.4
Do you receive funding from:		
I & E? . . . . .	100.0	0.0
LSCA?. . . . .	63.6	36.4
State of Ohio? . . . . .	27.3	72.7
Telephone Money? . . . . .	36.4	63.6
Is censorship a problem? . . . . .	72.7	27.3
Are you automated or is automation in process? . . . . .	72.7	27.3
Do you have inmate aides?. . . . .	81.8	18.2
Do you have civilian paraprofessionals?. . . . .	36.4	63.6
Did you have any orientation to prison libraries before accepting your position?. . . . .	27.3	72.7
Did you have any orientation to prison libraries after accepting your position? . . . . .	63.6	36.4
Have you had any legal training? . . . . .	27.8	72.7
Is the law library your responsibility?. . . . .	90.9	9.1*
Do you have Hispanic inmates?. . . . .	100.0	0.0
Do you have materials in Spanish?. . . . .	63.6	18.2**
Do you feel a need to speak Spanish? . . . . .	18.2	81.8
Do you plan to remain a prison librarian?. . . . .	27.3	63.6**

\* This will soon change to 100% yes and 0% no.

\*\* This question was not answered on some of the questionnaires.

## Chapter V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In summary, from the data gathered it appears that Ohio's prisons, their libraries, and the librarians responsible for these libraries are all diverse groups. Yet there are some common threads among them.

Ohio's prisons vary in size, in space, and in monies allocated to their libraries. There are state guidelines and standards to which these libraries are supposed to adhere; however, within these, individual institutions may develop their own policies. Head librarians are supposed to have an MLS degree; but sometimes, due to a lack of interest on the part of MLS professionals, this requirement is waived.

All the responding prisons provide prisoner access to the courts, as federally mandated, through a law library which is or soon will be the responsibility of the librarian in charge of the general library. However, few librarians have any experience or training in law librarianship.

Ohio's prison libraries have a variety of materials. In addition to print materials, many also have non-print materials. These libraries tend to be small libraries, most of whom increase their resources through interlibrary loans. And, while perhaps not lavish, most of Ohio's prison libraries seem to be receiving adequate budgets. State budget cuts do not directly affect these budgets since they

are generally prisoner generated--a real plus in today's economy.

All of the institutions provide some type of security for the prison librarian. Many, but not all, support their institution's educational programs. Most serve a large percentage of their populations and the inmates check out a large number of materials. Automation is happening in Ohio's prison libraries just as it is in other types of libraries--in both circulation and the card catalog.

Access to prison libraries varies from institution to institution--both by physical location and by the number of hours open each week. Librarians also work a variety of hours and times--some mornings, some afternoons, some evenings, and some weekends, particularly Saturdays. Most prison libraries, including Ohio's, are operated by one professional with the help of inmate aides and, perhaps, a civilian paraprofessional or a corrections officer. Thus, prison librarians need all the skills taught in library and information science classes and they need to be able to execute them in an unfamiliar environment.

As prison populations and, thus, job opportunities continue to increase in Ohio, as well as nationally, it is important for other librarians and MLS students to better understand and appreciate this very challenging area of librarianship. There is also much related research that can be done in this area to help develop awareness and further

the development of this growing field. Included are such things as further studies in censorship; in the value of automation and telecommunications in prison libraries; in prisoner orientation to prison libraries; and in library services to the growing Hispanic population--just to name a few.



Appendix A  
COVER LETTER

School of Library and Information Science  
Columbus Program  
(614) 292-7746



Survey of Ohio's Prison Libraries

October 10, 1992

Dear Librarian:

As part of my graduate work in Kent State University's School of Library and Information Science program, I am conducting a survey of Ohio's prison libraries and their librarians. The purpose of the study is to try to develop a profile of these libraries and those who are responsible for them so that other librarians and MLS students may better understand and appreciate this very challenging area of librarianship.

I would like to invite you to participate in the project by answering the questions on the enclosed questionnaire. If you wish to elaborate on any of your answers, please do so. Your comments will be welcomed. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Should you decide not to return the survey, there will be no penalty of any kind, and you may cease participation at any time without penalty. Any information you give will be kept confidential.

Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed addressed envelope by October 31, 1992.

If you want to know more about this research project, please call me at 614-753-3511 (days) or 614-474-3682 (evenings) or contact my research paper advisor, Dr. Lois Buttler, at the School of Library and Information Science, 216-672-2782. The project has been approved by Kent State University. If you have any questions about Kent State University's rules for research, please call Judith Jagger at 216-672-2070.

Sincerely yours,

*Joanna M. Liggett*

Joanna M. Liggett, Graduate Student  
School of Library and Information Science  
Kent State University

Appendix B  
QUESTIONNAIRE

## SURVEY OF OHIO'S PRISON LIBRARIES

1. Number of residents your library serves \_\_\_\_\_
2. Percentage of your residents who use the library \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you in a \_\_\_Max \_\_\_Close \_\_\_Med \_\_\_Min security prison?
4. What is your personal security? \_\_\_Officer present \_\_\_Radio  
 \_\_\_Telephone \_\_\_Whistle \_\_\_Alarm box \_\_\_Beeper  
 \_\_\_None \_\_\_Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the size of your collection?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Fiction \_\_\_\_\_Legal  
 \_\_\_\_\_Non-fiction \_\_\_\_\_Non-print materials  
 \_\_\_\_\_Reference \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was your circulation for last year (Jan-Dec)? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Does your library contain (check all that apply)  
 \_\_\_\_\_Educational/class-related materials?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Music tapes?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Magazines? \_\_\_\_\_Number of subscriptions  
 \_\_\_\_\_Newspapers? \_\_\_\_\_Number of subscriptions  
 \_\_\_\_\_Large print materials?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Audio books?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Videotapes?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Typewriters for inmate use?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Computers for inmate use? \_\_\_Educational \_\_\_Personal  
 \_\_\_\_\_Microfiche?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Other? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you have computer literacy programs for inmates? \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N
9. Do you participate in ILL with  
 \_\_\_\_\_Public libraries?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Academic libraries?  
 \_\_\_\_\_State library?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Other institutional libraries?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Other? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Do you conduct orientation programs for new inmates? \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N
11. Does the prison staff use the library? \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N Do you  
 think they should be able to? \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N
12. Is library accessible to the physically handicapped? \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N  
 If no, how are they served (explain briefly)?
13. Are services provided to residents in isolation? \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N  
 If yes, how (explain briefly)?

14. To what degree does your library support the prison's education program?  Very little  Somewhat  A major goal
15. When do you work?  Mornings  Afternoons  Evenings  
 Saturdays  Sundays
16. How many hours per week is the library open? \_\_\_\_\_
17. How is the library funded?  I & E  LSCA  State  
funding  Telephone money  Other \_\_\_\_\_
18. What was your budget for the last fiscal year? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Do you feel censorship is a problem with  Medical?  Occult?  
 Mythology?  Sex?  Violence?  Other? \_\_\_\_\_
20. How many square feet of usable space are in the library? \_\_\_\_\_
21. How many seats are there? \_\_\_\_\_ Is this sufficient?  Y  N
22. Is the library automated?  Circulation  Card catalog  
 Circulation/card catalog  In process  No
23. How many are on your staff?  Professional  Inmate aides  
 Civilian paraprofessional  Other \_\_\_\_\_
24. How long have you been a librarian? \_\_\_\_\_
25. How long have you worked in a prison library? \_\_\_\_\_
26. What kind of education do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
27. Did you have any orientation for working in a prison library  
before accepting this position?  Y  N
28. Have you had any continuing education in working in prison  
libraries since accepting this position?  Y  N
29. Do you have any training in legal work?  Y  N
30. Is the law library your responsibility?  Y  N
31. Does the prison have Hispanic inmates?  Y  N  
If yes, do you have materials in Spanish for them?  Y  N
32. Do you speak a second language?  Y  N  
If yes, which one(s) \_\_\_\_\_
33. Do you feel a need to speak a second language?  Y  N  
If yes, which one(s) \_\_\_\_\_
34. Do you plan to remain a prison librarian?  Y  N
35. Your age \_\_\_\_\_
36. What is the favorite book in your library? \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C

LETTER--MARY JEANNE LEFFERS

56

62

## DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

CORRECTIONAL TRAINING FACILITY  
SOUTH Library  
P.O. Box 686  
Soledad, CA 93960



July 15, 1992

Joanna Liggett  
2875 Kingston Pike  
Circleville, OH 43113

Dear Ms Liggett:

I was so pleased to receive your letter! There was some interest shown in that article shortly after publication, but you are the first to use it in research.

I did the research on my own (it cost \$75.00, mostly in postage) then asked American Libraries if they were interested. They were, and sent me their manuscript guidelines. The enclosed essay is what I submitted to them. They later decided to publish what you saw and paid me \$50.00.

If possible let me know how you use the material. I still have all the returned questionnaires and will try to find time to see if there are some from Ohio. I'm planning to retire and move back to Indiana early in September, so my house is up for sale and it seems I'm always running the sweeper or scouring a sink!

If you repond to me after about Sept. 5 please use my new address: 2851 N. Dunn St., Bloomington, IN 47408.

Good luck in the future. I hope you enjoy library work as much as I have enjoyed it. (Most of the time.)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. J. Leffers".

M. J. Leffers  
Senior Librarian

## REFERENCE LIST

- Akerstrom, Malin. 1985. Crooks and squares: lifestyles of thieves and addicts in comparison to conventional people. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books.
- ALA Committee on Hospital and Institution Libraries. 1915. Manual for institution libraries. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Bayley, Linda, Leni Greenfield, and Flynn Nogueira. 1981. Jail Library Service. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Bundsey, Tom, librarian at Hocking Correctional Facility. 1992. Interviewed by author, 30 March, Nelsonville, Ohio.
- Chesley, Thea. 1991. Illinois Department of Corrections adult prison and youth center library services: an overview. Illinois Libraries 73 (November): 568-69.
- Childress, Michael. 1985. I work in a prison. North Carolina Libraries 43 (Fall): 158-159.
- Coyle, William J. 1987. Libraries in prisons. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Coyle, William J. 1989. An enabling role for prison libraries. Wilson Library Bulletin 64 (October): 31-32.
- Englebarts, Rudolf. 1972. Books in stir. New York: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Flores, Arturo A. 1990. Werner's manual for prison law libraries. Littleton, Colorado: Fred B. Rothman & Co.
- Hartz, Fred R. 1988. Prison libraries--the realities. Catholic Library World 59 (May/June): 258-61.
- Koons, Phil, library development consultant, institution services, State Library of Ohio. 1992. Interviewed by author, 27 March, Columbus, Ohio. Telephone communication.
- Koons, Phil. 1988. Lest we forget: prison libraries. Library Journal 113 (May 15): 51-53.
- Koons, Phil. 1987. Institution library services in Ohio. Columbus, Ohio: The State Library of Ohio.



- Koons, Philip and Walter Lessun, Jr. 1985. Serving the inmate-student. Interface 8 (Winter): 6-8.
- Lee, Richard. 1989. LIBR 722--a student's perspective. The Prison Librarian 1 (Fall): 6.
- Leffers, Mary Jeanne. 1988. Three years behind bars. Soledad, California: Correctional Training Facility, South Library. Photocopied.
- Leffers, Mary Jeanne. 1989. Prison librarians. American Libraries 20 (January): 16.
- Lessun, Walt. 1979. The joy of prison librarianship. OLA Bulletin 49 (July): 13.
- Lucas, Linda. 1990. Educating prison librarians. Journal of Education for Library and Information Science 30 (Winter): 218-225.
- Mallinger, Stephen. 1991. Games inmates play. Corrections Today 53 (December): 188-190+.
- Mallinger, Steven. 1989. Library service to Hispanic inmates. The Prison Librarian 1 (Fall): 7.
- Needham, George M. 1987. Special needs, special resources. Ohio Library Association Bulletin 57 (April): 26-28+.
- Pool, Jane. 1985. Library services to correctional facilities. Catholic Library World 56 (April): 387-89.
- Rubin, Rhea Joyce and Sandra J. Souza. 1989. The challenge continues: prison librarianship in the 1980s. Library Journal 114 (March 1): 47-51.
- Sawyer, Michael. 1991. I know what's best for you: Censorship in prison. Ohio Libraries 4 (Mr/Ap): 8-11.
- Sawyer, Michael. 1989. Inmates do ask questions: automation and reference service in a correctional setting. Reference Services Review 17 (Winter): 49-54+.
- Schweyer, Tom. 1989. SCARED? The truth about jail libraries. Ohio Libraries 2 (May/June): 12.
- Souza, Sondra. 1989. Real libraries...real librarians. Wilson Library Bulletin 64 (October): 37-39.
- Sullivan, L. E. 1989. Between empty covers: prison libraries in historical perspective. Wilson Library Bulletin 64 (October): 26-28+.

Suvak, D. 1989. Throw the book at 'em: the change-based model for prison libraries. Wilson Library Bulletin 64 (October): 31-33.

Vogel, Brenda. 1989. In preparation for a visit to a smaller planet. Wilson Library Bulletin 64 (October); 34-35.