Notes

Introduction


### Chapter 1


7. Foucault, Discipline and Punish.


9. The 1779 bill to establish penitentiaries in England was intended to establish separate institutions for each sex, but only one was built (Foucault, Discipline and Punish, p. 123). Peel’s reform measure of 1823 called for the separation of women within the prison under the supervision of matrons (Smith, Women in Prison, p. 89).


13. New York Secretary of State, *Report in Relation to Convictions for Criminal Offenses* and *Abstracts of Convictions for Criminal Offenses* (Albany, 1838–1900) (hereafter cited as NYSS, *Convictions for Criminal Offenses*). All rates and ratios in the following discussion have been calculated for age-specific as well as sex-specific groups by subtracting the number of males and females under age fifteen from the population figures. Population figures come from the U.S. Censuses, 1830 to 1900 and the New York State Censuses of 1835, 1845, 1855, and 1865. For the 1875 and 1885 New York populations, for which there were no state censuses, interpolations were made from standard growth rates. New York State is used because it provides the longest series of conviction statistics for the nineteenth century and figured prominently in both prison reform and women’s prison reform.


15. NYSS, *Convictions for Criminal Offenses*, 1842, p. 2.

16. NYSS, *Convictions for Criminal Offenses*, 1840–1900; Michael Hindus, “The Social Context of Crime in Massachusetts and South Carolina, 1760–1873: Theoretical and Quantitative Perspectives” (Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association, Chicago, December 1974), pp. 43–47. I would like to thank Professor Hindus for sharing with me his data and his observations on the New York rates.


eight to one-third more women in penal institutions in New York than in the previous year.


24. Quoted in W. D. Lewis, From Newgate to Dannemora, p. 163.


27. Quoted in W. D. Lewis, *From Newgate to Dannemora*, p. 164.
30. Most accounts imply that the women became pregnant while imprisoned. When the term “illegitimate birth” is used, however, it is difficult to know whether the inmate was pregnant before incarceration.
31. Lucien V. Rule, *The City of Dead Souls, and How It Was Made Alive Again: A Hundred Years within the Walls* (Louisville, Ky.: Brighter Day League, 1920), pp. 77–95, based on an exposé by a former male prisoner. See below, chap. 3, on the investigation of these charges.
34. Massachusetts Prison Commissioner’s [C. W. Bellows], *Report on the Subject of Matrons and Labor in the Common Jails* (Boston, 1854).


Sex” (Paper delivered at the Berkshire Conference on Women’s History, Bryn Mawr, Pa., June 1976).
46. Quoted in Davis, Homicide in American Fiction, p. 212.

Chapter 2

5. Elizabeth Fry, Observations in Visiting, Superintendence and Government of Female Prisoners (London: John and Arthur Arch, Cornhill, 1827), p. 8 (her emphasis). Fry’s theories are discussed below in chap. 3.
6. Kent, Elizabeth Fry, pp. 100–121. Fry did not advocate women’s rights; she thought that with courage and determination, any woman could achieve the influence she herself obtained.


25. WPA, Annual Report, 1849, in PANY, Annual Report, 1849, pp. 246,
247; Kirkland, _The Helping Hand_, pp. 70–71; Wrench, _Visits to Female Prisoners_, pp. 311–12, quoting from WPA, _Annual Report, 1850–51_.


27. Ibid., p. 247; Sedgwick to Mrs. K. S. Minot, 20 March 1853, in Dewey, _Letters of Catherine M. Sedgwick_, p. 346; Abby Hopper Gibbons to William Gibbons, 6 May 1854, in Emerson, _Abby Hopper Gibbons_, 1:186–87. Such thoughts were rarely expressed publicly.


32. WPA, _Annual Report, 1855_, p. 5.

33. Emerson, _Abby Hopper Gibbons_, esp. 2:248.


38. Roy Lubove, _The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work_


42. Chace to Governor Henry Lippitt, March 1876, ibid., 2:65–66.


45. Enoch C. Wines, ed., Transactions of the National Congress on Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline (Albany, 1871), p. 547. The organization became the American Prison Association; its proceedings are hereafter cited as APA, Proceedings. Women regularly contributed papers at annual meetings after 1871. From 1876 to 1900, the female proportion of the roll of annual conferences rose from 8 to 15 percent (APA, Proceedings, 1876, 1885, 1886, 1888, 1894–1915).

times more papers in the 1880s than in the 1870s, and 12 percent of these papers were on prison methods.


51. Ibid., p. 162.


53. WPA, Annual Report, 1887, p. 15.


56. “History of Inmates,” Massachusetts Reformatory Prison for Women, Framingham, Mass. (hereafter cited as “History of Inmates,” MRPW), particularly cases of inmates 3000, 2847, 4480, and 2845, which are quoted, and letters from attorneys, family, and prison commissioners attached to these cases. Of 153 inmate histories that cited parents and family, 40.5 percent mentioned good backgrounds, while only 21.16 percent faulted the parents and family. In contrast, of 133 cases that described inmates’ husbands or lovers, only 8.3 percent gave positive evaluations, while 62.4 percent claimed that men’s seductions or desertions, or unhappy marriages had contributed to the women’s crimes. Indiana cases are cited in IWP, Annual Report, 1878, pp. 16–17 and “Indiana’s Female Prison,” Cincinnati Gazette, 6 December 187—, in Rhoda Coffin Scrapbook, Papers of Charles F. and Rhoda M. Coffin.


58. On deterministic criminology, see: Leon Radzinowicz, Ideology and
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Chapter 3


7. These included New Jersey; Cincinnati, Ohio; and the District of Columbia (Harry Elmer Barnes, *A History of the Penal, Reformatory and Correc-

8. Elizabeth B. Chace to E. C. Wines, 1 October 1870, in APA, *Proceed-


10. Z. R. Brockway, “The Reformatory System,” in *The Reformatory Sys-
tem in the United States: Reports Prepared for the International Prison Con-


70–71; PANY, Annual Report, 1876, pp. 12–13).


20. Ibid., pp. 6, 8.

setts Reformatory Prison for Women," in S. Barrows, *The Reformatory System*, pp. 103–8; Massachusetts General Court and House Journal, 1870, p. 75; Massachusetts Senate Journal, 1873, pp. 247–305.


24. Massachusetts General Court, House, and Senate Journals, January to March 1874, for names submitting petitions. Most supporters were historically anonymous, but included in the petitions were the signatures of former governors Washburn and Claflin; the Reverend Phillips Brooks; Bishop J. J. Williams; Civil War hero Robert C. Winthrop; feminist Sarah Grimké; Ralph Waldo Emerson; Samuel Bowles, editor of the Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*; Austin Phelps; "and 26 professors and students at the Andover Theological Seminary."


34. See Hannah Chickering’s statement to Massachusetts Legislative Committee on Prisons, 1864, quoted in Mass. Bd. CP, *Annual Report*, 1875, p. 55 and Warren Spalding, "Some Methods of Preventing Crime," NCCC, *Proceedings*, 1880, p. 73. Homes included those founded by the Magdalen Society; the House of Good Shepherd; the Florence Crittenton Homes; and the WCTU Rescue Homes. Several homes opened in New York City in the 1830s; the Massachusetts homes (Dedham and Springfield) opened in

35. Kirkland, The Helping Hand, p. 15; The Third Annual Report of the Home for the Friendless (Richmond, Ind., 1871), pp. 2–3, described the moral force applied to women about to fall into prostitution: wake at 5 a.m., family worship, work training (in housework), three hours of school in the afternoon, prayer, and scripture lessons. The Florence Crittenton Homes, originally for rescuing prostitutes, searched inmates on entry, forbade profane or slang language and coarse jesting, required “family worship” morning and evening, censored letters and surveilled visitors, and taught “plain sewing and simple working,” table setting, and orderly kitchen work. Bible readings required attendance, as did the “general work of the Home.” (The Florence Crittenton Magazine 1 [May 1899]: 109).


40. Ibid., p. 102. Lowell cited Smith, Elizabeth Fry, and the reports of the Massachusetts women’s reformatory prison to support her case, but she seemed to be unfamiliar with the work of Mary Carpenter.

See below, chaps. 4 and 5, for a comparison of the New York, Massachusetts, and Indiana institutions.


43. Stewart, *Josephine Shaw Lowell*, pp. 308–12; WPA, *Annual Reports, 1892*, pp. 6–7; *1894*, p. 7; *1895*, pp. 7–8. On Bedford Hills, see below, chaps. 6 and 7. Although New York had three separate female reformatories by 1902, not all women criminals were committed to them. Felons and serious recidivists went to the Auburn women’s department (Sing Sing had closed its women’s building in 1877). Short-term sentences were served in local jails, and most New York City prostitutes and drunkards continued to serve at Blackwell’s Island. The separate women’s institutions never served the majority of female criminals, who remained in mixed jails and prisons.


46. Irish women awaiting washing work, Jewish peddlers, or other unescorted women on the streets were subject to arrest for vagrancy, soliciting, or disorderly conduct, the WPA charged. At least one judge publicly condoned such arrests (WPA, *Annual Reports, 1888*, pp. 18–20; *1889*, pp. 17–18; *1897*, p. 26).


51. Coffin, “Women’s Prisons,” p. 189. The exposé was authored by Harry Younger (possibly a pseudonym) and called “State Prison Life, by One Who Has Been There”; it is summarized and quoted in Lucien V. Rule, The City of Dead Souls, and How it was Made Alive Again: A Hundred Years within the Walls (Louisville: Brighter Day League, 1920), pp. 77–95.


56. WPA, Annual Reports, 1887, p. 11; 1888, p. 5; Mrs. J. K. (Susan) Barney, “Prison and Police Matrons,” APA, Proceedings, 1886, p. 303. Mrs. J. B. Hobbs of Chicago said of the matrons movement: “It is natural that a Christian motherly heart should have more influence with these girls than a man would have. . . . I assure you that many have been drawn by the matrons’s influence from the downward path into which their feet have entered, into the straight and narrow path. . . .” (APA, Proceedings, 1885, p. 289).


58. APA, Proceedings, 1876, p. 43ff.


60. NCCC, Proceedings, 1881, p. 269.

61. Ibid.


64. NCCC, Proceedings, 1891, p. 241.

Chapter 4

1. Eliza Mosher to her sister Hannah, 12 September 1877. Papers of Eliza Mosher, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich. All Mosher correspondence cited below is in this collection.


5. Western House of Refuge, Annual Report, 1893, p. 8; NY Bd. Char., Annual Report, 1887, p. 170; Minutes of Board of Managers, Hudson House of Refuge, 13 June 1903, in New York State Executive Department, Boards of Officers of State Institutions, New York State Library, Albany.

6. IWP, Annual Report, 1908, p. 5; Reasons for Asking for the Separation of the Woman’s Prison from the Reform School for Girls (Pamphlet in Indiana State Library, c. 1901), p. 6. The institution cost $100,000, twice the initial appropriation, or $500 per inmate.

7. Isabel Barrows, “The Reformatory Treatment of Women in the United States,” in Penal and Reformatory Institutions, ed. Charles Richmond Henderson (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1910), pp. 145, 154, 163. Infants born at the Indiana Women’s Prison were removed as soon as they
could leave their mothers (IWP, *Annual Report*, 1888). At the Hudson House of Refuge, infants remained until age two and then went to orphan asylums in Albany, unless the mother was released or a relative could take the child (New York Commission of Prisons, *Annual Report*, 1902, p. 38 [hereafter cited as NYC, *Annual Report*]).


15. MRPW, *Annual Report*, 1883, p. 6; IWP, *Annual Report*, 1883, p. 14; Carson, "New York State Reformatory," pp. 150–53. Women physicians did not reside at the New York reformatories until 1900 (Hudson) and 1907 (Albion). Indiana's officer corps became completely female with the addition of a woman doctor in 1885. Nightwatchwoman was first suggested in "Investigation by State Board of Charities Committee on Penal and Reformatory Institutions, February 1896," Box Q, Papers of Indiana State Board of Charities, after the watchman was accused of impregnating reformatory girls.


17. Mosher to Hannah, 12 September 1877; Florence Woolsey Hazzard,

19. Mosher to family, 4 August 1879.
22. Hazzard, “Heart of the Oak,” pp. 13–14; MRPW, Annual Report, 1881, p. 37; Alice Freeman to Clara Barton, 28 November 1883, Box 19, Papers of Clara Barton, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. All Barton correspondence cited below is in this collection. I am grateful to Ellen Langenheim Henle, who is writing a career biography of Barton, for directing me to Barton’s letters.
23. Mosher to Satie, 15 January 1881 and 6 November 1881.
24. Mosher to sister (?), 12 November 1882; Hazzard, “Heart of the Oak,” pp. 35–37. Mosher returned to private practice and later became Dean of Women at the University of Michigan, as well as an inventor and the editor of the Women’s Medical Journal. Mosher’s ties to the prison were not entirely broken, however, for she had adopted a young Irish inmate whose family had rejected her. She secured nurse’s training for the girl and made her one of her heirs (Hazzard, “Heart of the Oak,” p. 34).
26. Lucy Hall to Barton, 5 June 1883; Ellen Johnson to Barton, 25 May 1883. Inmate letters to Barton are full of personal communications, expressions of affection, and gratitude for her help.
27. A clipping from the Framingham (Mass.) Gazette (10 August 1883) anticipated that Barton would give free service at the prison because she had volunteered on the battlefield (Papers of Clara Barton).
28. Benjamin Butler to Barton, n.d.
29. Barton to Mr. Dwight, 8 February 1884, in response to his question, “Who has the worst time the jailer or the birds?”
31. (Her emphasis.) Johnson to Barton, 22 May, 5 and 6 June, and 1, 7, 18, and 30 September 1883, and esp. 19 December 1883.
33. Former staff members to Barton, 28 March and 8 May 1884.


36. E. Johnson to Rhoda Coffin, 22 March 1892, in Papers of Charles F. and Rhoda M. Coffin, Earlham College, Richmond, Ind. The comments on the decline of the institution were made after a fire broke out at the prison while “Miss Keely was away as usual.”


38. In 1890, the inmates of the Indiana, New York, and Massachusetts women’s prisons constituted 28 percent of all female prisoners in state institutions in the United States, but this figure did not include those in county and local jails. In 1910, with all correctional facilities included, the women’s prisons held only 1.2 percent of all female prisoners in America. U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Report on Crime, Pauperism and Benevolence in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Pt. 2 (Washington, D.C., 1895), table 10, pp. 21–24; Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Prisoners and Juvenile Delinquents in the United States, 1910 (Washington, D.C., 1918), table 60, p. 79.


40. Carson, “New York State Reformatory,” pp. 105–7; Letter from Josephine Shaw Lowell, 17 February 1892, New York State Board of Charities Correspondence, New York State Library, Albany. Felons could also serve after 1896 if they had sentences of under one year. The original age range had been twelve to twenty-five; it was changed in 1899.


42. Because changes over time were relatively slight, the mean for each category is presented to summarize the entire prison population over the period. For time series of annual percentages for inmate characteristics, see Estelle Freedman, “Their Sisters’ Keepers” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1976), pp. 190–91, 403–7.


44. These comparisons are based on the United States Prisoner Censuses for 1880, 1890, and 1910 for those categories in which the tables give data by state. The percentages of the female prison population in each category are displayed in table 5. The Massachusetts recidivism rates appear in Mass. Bd. CP, Annual Reports, 1871, p. 368 and 1873. The recommitment rate for all Massachusetts institutions between 1864 and 1871 averaged 57 percent of all prisoners; for female inmates the average in 1873 was 57.6 percent recidivists.
45. The inmate sample of 640 cases drawn from every twelfth record for the years 1877–1883, 1887–1893, 1897–1903, and 1907–1913 was taken from the "History of Inmates" volumes at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution at Framingham. The cases consisted of relatively short, often abbreviated and inconsistent entries.

46. See Freedman, "Their Sisters’ Keepers," (1976), table 10, for the means of annual statistics on all prisoners, broken down for drunkenness, prostitution, and larceny offenders, 1880 to 1901; and table 11, ibid., for the results of the sample of 640 inmate records at the MRPW, 1877 to 1913. Mosher’s data appear in “Health of Criminal Women,” Boston Medical and Surgical Journal 107 (October 1882): 316–17.

47. All cases discussed below come from the "History of Inmates." Inmates’ names have been modified.

48. MRPW, Annual Reports, 1895, 1896, 1898, 1900. The average recidivism rates for these years were: public order, 72 percent; chastity, 16 percent; person or property, 12 percent. Of recidivists, 72 percent had only one previous conviction.

49. The longest sentences included: eighty-four months for attempted poisoning; seventy-eight months for abortion; thirty-six months for adultery.

Chapter 5


2. MRPW, Annual Report, 1878, p. 17.


9. IWP, Annual Report, 1876, pp. 15–16, 17, 45.


15. MRPW, Annual Report, 1879, pp. 18–19; Warren Spalding, “Some Methods of Preventing Crime,” NCCC, Proceedings, 1880, pp. 67–68. (The 1879 law followed the precedent of both juvenile reformatories and a little-used statute that permitted the indenture of reformed nightwalkers.) Figures on indenture and returns to the prison were compiled from the list of indentures at the Framingham reformatory. From 1877 to 1913, 1,460 women went to service and 129 returned to the prison without completing their indentures, about 8.9 percent. A sample for the period 1878–1883 showed that prisoners served about three-fourths of their sentences before indenture, regardless of the crimes for which they had been imprisoned.


17. MRPW, Annual Reports, 1879, p. 19; 1885, p. 4; Letterbook of Warren
Spalding. Want ads in Boston newspapers in the 1880s offered from $2 to $4 a week for domestics and $6 to $8 a week for mill workers.


19. Letters to Mrs. Johnson, 10 December 1886 and 7 August 1886, in "History of Inmates," MRPW and letters to Johnson dated 7 May 1885, and 16 July 1886, Framingham, Mass.; letter to Mosher, 1 October 1882, in "History of Inmates," MRPW. After 1900, the New York House of Refuge at Albion also paroled women to homes and expected that employers would continue inmates' training (Minutes of the Managers of the New York State House of Refuge for Women at Albion, 1906, in New York State Executive Department, Boards of Officers of State Institutions, New York State Library, Albany [hereafter cited as "Albion Minutes"]).


21. The proportion of household workers among all working women declined from 50.1 percent in 1870 to 29.4 percent in 1900 to 16.2 percent in 1920 (David Katzman, Seven Days a Week [New York: Oxford University Press, 1978]). On the increase in white collar jobs for women, see W. Elliot Brownlee and Mary M. Brownlee, Women in the American Economy: A Documentary History, 1675–1929 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 32–37.


23. MRPW, Annual Report, 1885, p. 27.


27. The story was often recalled, e.g., Smith in APA, Proceedings, 1874, p. 305.


30. MRPW, Annual Reports, 1879, p. 20; 1880, pp. 10, 30; 1881, p. 27;


33. MRPW, Annual Report, 1896, p. 91.

34. Smith to E. C. Wines, APA, Proceedings, 1874, p. 306; Keely, “Indiana Woman’s Prison,” p. 281; IWP, Annual Reports, 1879, p. 6; 1884, p. 20; 1888, p. 16; 1885, p. 10; “Visitors’ Report,” 17 February 1910, Box MM, Papers of the Indiana State Board of Charities. The 1884 Indiana Annual Report noted solitary confinement might be required for up to several weeks to secure submission. According to a New York Times report in 1887, women were “cruelly whipped and made to stand in uncomfortable positions for long periods of time” (Times, 29 November 1887, p. 2). In 1881 in Massachusetts, one lawyer accused the prison of long solitary confinement (nineteen days), poor medical treatment, and the cropping of an inmate’s hair for attempted escape (Letterbook of Warren Spalding, p. 168).


36. New York Prison Commission, Investigation of the State Prisons and Report Thereon, 1876 (Albany, 1877), p. 374. A black woman who had been punished was found dead in her cell.


38. Indianapolis News, 2 February 1903.


42. Mina B. to Clara Barton, 18 June 1883, Papers of Clara Barton. For a discussion of the process of "mortification" on entry into total institutions, see Goffman, Asylums, pp. 238f.


44. Massachusetts Governor and Council, "Investigations of State Departments and Institutions" vol. 3, (1911), Massachusetts State Library, Boston, Mass. The following excerpts are taken from various points in prisoner testimony.

45. Elizabeth F. to Clara Barton, 26 June 1883, Papers of Clara Barton.

46. Reports cited are from I. Barrows, "The Massachusetts Reformatory," pp. 112, 125 and letters inserted into the "History of Inmates," MRPW. Former inmates did return to visit; one wrote thanking Clara Barton for allowing her to call: "You are my only friend I have to visit" (Carrie to Barton, 13 December 1883, Papers of Clara Barton).

47. MRPW, Annual Report, 1902, p. 31.


49. For an historical analysis of one female institution, Mt. Holyoke, that does raise questions about hierarchy and power, see Louise Knauer, "Mothers in Israel, Daughters of Zion: Recruitment of Evangelical Missionaries, 1840–1890" (Paper delivered at the Fourth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Mt. Holyoke College, 25 August 1978).

Chapter 6

1. Gibbons died in 1893 at age 92; Chace and Ellen Cheney Johnson in 1899 at ages 93 and 70, respectively; Lowell in 1905 at age 62; and Coffin in 1909 at age 83.

2. The proportion of American women who did not marry peaked at 10 to 11 percent for the generation born between 1860 and 1880. The total fertility rate for white women declined from 6.73 in 1820 to 3.17 in 1920. Labor force participation expanded from approximately 10 percent of all women in 1860 to 24 percent in 1920 (Daniel Scott Smith, "Family Limitation, Sexual Control and Domestic Feminism in Victorian America," in Clio's Consciousness Raised: New Perspectives on the History of Women, ed.


7. The Juvenile Psychopathic Institute, directed between 1909 and 1917 by William Healy, was founded and staffed primarily by women Progressives. Many of the psychologists who worked with Healy contributed to the literature discussed in this chapter, including Jean Weidensall, Edith Spaulding, Mary Hayes, and Augusta Bronner (who married Healy in 1932). James Angell, chairman of the University of Chicago psychology department, where most of these women trained, was a member of the Institute’s Advisory Council. Julia Lathrop was the president of the Institute. (William Healy, *The Individual Delinquent: A Textbook of Diagnosis*
and Prognosis for All Concerned in Understanding Offenders [Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1915], app. B.)


11. Ibid., pp. 147–51.


17. Ibid., pp. 533–43. She did note that prostitutes scored poorly on the tests and were mentally and physically weaker than other women criminals.

18. Ibid. In a separate article on psychological tests of black women criminals, Kellor again stressed environment over heredity: “There are no defects among the negroes which show idiocy or degeneracy so much as they show diverted and undeveloped capabilities” (Frances Kellor, “The
23. Ibid., p. 517.
24. Linda Gordon makes this important differentiation between an environmentalism that cites influences on the individual and one that cites influences on the basis of sex or class (Gordon, Woman’s Body, Woman’s Right: A Social History of Birth Control in America [New York: Grossman, 1976], p. 303).
26. European writers who linked mental capacity and criminality included Charles Goring, Havelock Ellis, and Gustav Aschaffenburg. In America, Dr. Walter S. Fernald, of the Massachusetts School for the Feeble Minded, urged the term “defective delinquent” and claimed that 25 percent of all prisoners were mentally defective. Even William Healy’s The Individual Delinquent (1915) cited mentality as a “causative factor” (p. 30). For an uncritical summary of the studies on mentality and crime and a bibliographic guide to them, see James Burt Miner, Deficiency and Delinquency: An Interpretation of Mental Testing (Baltimore: Warwick and York, Inc., 1918). See also: Tvor, “Segregation or Surgery,” p. 195; Corrine Bacon, Prison Reform (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1917), p. 417; Davies, Social Control.


33. BH, *Annual Report, 1911–1912*, p. 21. Total costs for building, equipment, and maintenance for five years were over $100,000. Members of the staff of the laboratory included, at various times, Spaulding, Weidensall, Mabel Fernald, Mary Hayes, Buford Johnson, Jessie Taft, Margaret Cobb, Almena Dawley, Virginia Robinson, Vida Elvin, Marie Lawrence, Grace Massoneau, Maude Moore, Mary B. Clark, Agnes Crowley, Christine Brigham, Helen Towe, Marjorie Taft, and Louise Russell. On Rockefeller’s support for medical research, see Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, *For Her Own Good: 150 Years of the Experts’ Advice to Women* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1978), pp. 74–77.


36. Weidensall, *Mentality of the Criminal Woman*, pp. 250, 268, 246, 249. The comparative data came from another woman social scientist, Helen Wooley Thompson, in Cincinnati. Weidensall’s results confirmed the findings of Augusta Bronner, whose study of 500 criminals showed that only 10 percent were feebleminded (Bronner, “A Research on the Proportion of Mental Defectives Among Delinquents,” cited in Davies, *Social Control*, p. 174).

37. Alberta S. Guibord, “Are the Disciplinary Cases in a Reformatory

38. The hospital for psychopathic delinquent women operated at Bedford Hills between 1916 and 1918. An average of eighteen patients resided at any one time, for approximately seven months each. The selection was based on symptoms of personality disorders, not on IQ scores. Nurses who had been trained in mental hospitals offered occupational therapy, recreation, and physical exercise. The hospital also provided hydrotherapy and treatment for venereal disease. The staff encouraged patients to assume some institutional responsibilities, and at least a dozen inmates served on the hospital staff. (Edith R. Spaulding, An Experimental Study of Psychopathic Delinquent Women [New York: Rand McNally and Co., 1923].)


41. Spaulding, An Experimental Study, pp. 101, 102, 117.

42. Ibid., p. 109.


44. Miner, Deficiency and Delinquency, pp. 140–41.


47. Goldman, "Traffic in Women"; Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Women
and Economics (Boston, 1900: Small, Maynard and Co.; originally published 1898).


50. Ibid., p. 71.

51. Fernald, Women Delinquents in New York State, pp. 434, 527–29. All mental tests excluded non-English speaking cases and controlled for race. Each institutional group had IQ scores comparable to the male groups for those institutions. Correlations between test scores and recidivism, types of offense, age at first conviction, and length of term served all produced coefficients under .20. Fernald’s critique of the methods of mental testing and explanation of her methodology appear on pp. 413–14.

52. Fernald, Women Delinquents in New York State, pp. 5, 6.

53. Ibid., p. 525. The “poorer” the home, the earlier the age of first conviction; the larger the family, the more likely it was to produce a criminal. “Defective strains” that might be inherited affected a significant minority of the families: 20 percent included alcoholics; 16 percent had epilepsy, feeblemindedness, insanity, or neurosis; 19 percent had tuberculosis. The study devoted only two pages to hereditary defects.

54. Ibid., p. 527.


57. These pamphlets are in the Louise de Koven Bowen Scrapbook, vol. 1, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Ill.

58. Menken was a member of the Jewish Board of Guardians and an organizer of New York City’s Jewish “Big Sisters” (Alice Davis Menken, interview in Jewish Chronicle, December 1916, in Menken Scrapbook 1, Box 6, Papers of Alice Davis Menken, American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, Massachusetts).

New York City Conference of Charities and Corrections (Albany, 1911), p. 163.


Chapter 7


15. Recommendations of vice commission reports are one indication of this response. Of twenty-five reports summarized in a 1918 survey, as many recommended rescue work with women as called for establishing reformatories (Joseph Mayer, "The Passing of the Red Light District," cited in Howard B. Woolston, *Prostitution in the United States, Volume 1: Prior


21. BH, “Reports,” 1906; Minutes of the meetings of the Board of Managers, New York State Reformatory for Women at Bedford, 19 March 1903, in New York State Executive Department, Boards of Officers of State Institutions, New York State Library, Albany. These minutes, which run from 1902 to 1911, hereafter will be cited as BH, “Minutes of Managers.”


28. Two other sources influenced her. Progressives often depicted residents of the large cities as the victims of insufficient light, air, and exercise. In addition, many Progressive women, and a few of their predecessors (like Drs. Eliza and Celia Mosher), promoted physical exercise as a feminist reform.

29. Katharine B. Davis, “The Fresh Air Treatment for Moral Disease,”


34. MRPW, *Annual Report, 1913*, p. 52. Some reformers had already abandoned it. In 1911, Massachusetts Prison Commissioner Mary Boyle O’Reilly resigned from her position “in disgust” at the failures of the reformatory.


39. *Annual Report* of the Board of Directors of the Connecticut State Farm for Women to the Governor, 1 July 1917 to 30 September 1918, pp. 7, 9.


43. BH, “Minutes of Managers,” 10 July 1903 and 11 January 1902, asking for transfer of those “who give no promise of improvement”; NYC, Annual Reports, 1907, pp. 74, 89; 1910, pp. 63–65. Both the WPA and the state prison commissioners worked for the establishment of the state farm, which opened after 1912.

44. BH, “Reports,” 1904; BH, “Reports,” 1906; BH, “Minutes of Managers,” 13 July 1906 and February 1911; BH, Annual Report, 1911–1912, p. 32. The proportion of Jewish women in the total reformatory population increased from 11.3 percent in 1911 to 18.8 percent in 1912. No explicitly anti-Semitic statements appeared in the record. Over the next decade special religious and social services were established for Jewish inmates, and Alice Davis Menken of the Jewish Big Sisters became a member of the prison Board of Managers in the 1920s.

45. BH, “Reports,” 1910, discusses the reduction of appropriations; BH, “Minutes of Managers,” November 1904; BH, Annual Report, 1912–1913, p. 6, mentions the need for funds to alleviate overcrowding. The period from 1909 to 1913 appears to be that of the most stringent finances, while overcrowding seems worst after 1911. At one point, Lawrence Vieller and the Charity Organization Society waged a public campaign to restore Bedford’s appropriations and succeeded in gaining a legislative allotment of over $400,000 (BH, Annual Report, 1912–1913, p. 6). “Abnormal attachments” are mentioned in BH, “Minutes of Managers,” April 1908 and February 1911.


47. According to former staff members, Davis had stimulated high morale in the face of difficulties, but her successor could not do the same (Virginia Robinson, Jessie Tafi: Therapist and Social Work Educator, a Professional Biography [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962], pp. 43–44).


51. *Bedford Investigation, 1915*, pp. 5, 8, 9, 18, 21.


53. BH, "Minutes of Managers," April 1908 and February 1911.


55. *Bedford Investigation, 1915*, pp. 25–28. By 1917, four new cottages had been built.


58. Ibid., p. 6.


**Chapter 8**


4. For example, in 1921 members of the American Bar Association law enforcement committee blamed “women banded together as prison reformers” for creating crime waves by their sentiment for criminals, and called for “real punishment” (Hartford [Conn.] *Times*, 2 November 1921); Dr. Ellen Potter in 1934 suggested selective sterilization as an alternative to committing prostitutes to prison (Potter, “The Problem of Women in Penal and Correctional Institutions,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 25 [May 1934]: 65–75). Even women like O’Hare, who served at the Missouri State Penitentiary herself, or Madeleine Zabriskie Doty, who could withstand less than one week of her voluntary commitment to the Auburn, N.Y., women’s prison, campaigned for better women’s reformatories, rather than for abolition of the institutions. See Kate Richards O’Hare, *In Prison* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923; originally published 1920; reprint ed., Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976); Madeleine Z. Doty, *Society’s Misfits* (New York: Century Co., 1916).


10. Dietzler, *Detention Houses*, pp. 1, 3, 28. These ranged from new state reformatories in the South to local detention centers within hospitals.


13. Ibid., p. 64.

Yale Law Journal 82 (May 1973): 1229–73. I am grateful to the authors for offering me access to their sources and in particular to Fred Goldberg for first asking me about the history of women’s prisons.

15. Ibid., p. 1245, n. 92, n. 94.
19. Ibid., pp. 382–85.
21. E.g., Austin H. MacCormick The Education of Adult Prisoners: A Survey and a Program (New York: National Society of Penal Information, 1931), p. 296 (MacCormick was then Assistant Director of the United States Bureau of Prisons); New York State Commission to Investigate Prison Administration and Construction, The Correctional Institutions for Women (Albany, 1932), which suggested clerical and commercial courses as well as industrial training for traditional women’s work, such as sewing, canning, and knitting (p. 15f); A United States System of Correction: Final Report of the Prison Study Committee (Hartford, Conn., 1957), cited in Sasha Harman, “Attitudes toward Women in the Criminal Process” (Research paper, Yale University Law School, 1972), p. 34.
26. The outstanding exceptions for the period after 1930 were Miriam Van Waters, a juvenile reformer who succeeded Jessie Hodder at Framingham and gained national renown, and Eleanor Glueck, who coauthored with Sheldon Glueck, Five Hundred Delinquent Women (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1934). Even Van Waters, however, came under attack in the 1940s; she successfully defended herself from an attempt to remove her as superintendent.
28. The incidents of sexual assault by women which have been reported in women's institutions do not occur routinely, as they do in men's or mixed prisons. The cases cited by Brownmiller in her study of rape, for instance, occurred in mental institutions or juvenile centers, and boys were often involved in them (Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975], pp. 267–68).

29. O'Hare, *In Prison*, p. 64.


32. E.g., Bedford Hills (see chap. 7 above). The Federal Industrial Institution for Women at Alderson suffered a similar fate in the 1930s; overcrowding peaked in 1937 and 1938 and necessitated the establishment of a second federal women's reformatory in Texas in 1940. After World War II, however, the additional institution was converted to a men's prison (Harris, *I Knew Them in Prison*, p. 306; Graves, “Federal Reformatory for Women,” pp. 47–49).


35. One male convict summarized his impressions after having served time at both a men's and a newly integrated women's institution: “Men are treated as adults, even in prison; women are treated as children, out there and in prison” (Interview with author, 9 May 1973, Framingham, Mass.). On the social roles of women in contemporary prisons, see Giallombardo, *Society of Women*, esp. chaps. 8 and 9; and David A. Ward and Gene G. Kassebaum, *Women's Prison: Sex and Social Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1965).


39. The best national coverage of women prisoners has appeared in *Off Our Backs*, the Washington, D.C. feminist monthly paper. Newsletters
which cover specific prisons include: “Through the Looking Glass: A Women’s and Children’s Prison Newsletter” (Seattle, Wash.); “No More Cages” (West Nyack, N.Y.); “Rose in a Cage” (San Francisco City Jail); “Free Flight” (Federal Correctional Institution at Pleasanton, Calif.). Local projects of the 1960s and 1970s included: Women Free Women in Prison (New York); Women Against Prisons (San Francisco); Santa Cruz (Calif.) Women’s Prison Project; Women’s Prison Project (Bedford Hills, N.Y.); Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (San Francisco). I am grateful to Ellen Barry for information on these projects.

