

## Differences in response to long-term imprisonment: Implications for the management of long-term offenders (R-10, 1991)

This research paper addresses the factors to be considered in differentiating long-term offenders according to security and programming requirements. It illustrates, in particular, that differences in the criminal history and criminal orientation of these individuals are consistently predictive of how they will react and adjust to the prison experience.

The author follows the premise that corrections traditionally have dealt with their long-term offender population as a special, though fairly undifferentiated group of individuals. Long-termers, and in particular life-sentence offenders, have been managed routinely, at least for the early portion of their sentence, as maximum security risks. Release planning for these individuals has been typically postponed until well into the sentence. Because numbers have dictated the kinds of programs and services that are offered, little specialized programming for long-termers has been developed.

With the number of these offenders steadily increasing and with the growing need to make more effective use of scarce resources, a uniform approach in managing these offenders is no longer sensible or practical. The diversity that characterizes this population should be considered.

The relationships in this report are here for illustrative purposes. Examining other indices of adjustment or reaction to the prison experience would certainly reflect other kinds of differences within long-term offender populations. One conclusion is evident: long-term offenders can be differentiated in meaningful ways, and approaches for managing these individuals should consider the diversity that characterizes this population.

It is evident that long-term offenders react to imprisonment in different ways, and approaches for managing these individuals should consider these differences.