

Correctional Counseling and Treatment

Peter C. Kratcoski

Correctional Counseling and Treatment

Sixth Edition

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Peter C. Kratcoski
Kent State University
Kent, Ohio, USA

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*This book is dedicated to the memory
of my brother, John E. Kratcoski*

Preface

Correctional Counseling and Treatment, Sixth Edition, is designed to provide information on the counseling and treatment methods currently being used in community and institutional corrections in the United States. The treatment methods and approaches that are most often used by criminal justice agencies are presented. The book is not comprehensive, since some treatment and counseling methods are not included. Those that appear to be the most useful to correctional personnel who provide supervision and counseling to those under supervision of justice agencies are examined. The treatment methods presented in the chapters and illustrated through information obtained from interviews with practitioners employed in criminal justice agencies appear to be those most relevant to the current practices of correctional agencies.

In the Sixth Edition of *Correctional Counseling and Treatment*, all of the chapters are new and original, written by the author of the book or by invited authors.

When the first edition of *Correctional Counseling and Treatment* was published in 1981, there was a debate over the purposes and effectiveness of correctional treatment. Kratcoski (1981, p.vii) noted, “A key element in the controversy that has arisen over the comparative effectiveness of various treatment programs is the fact that the purpose of correctional treatment has come to be regarded as prevention of recidivism.” This statement on the purposes of corrections was not accepted by everyone. Kratcoski, (1981, p.vii) noted “At that time, many of the persons employed in correctional agencies maintained that the goals of correctional treatment must be more broadly defined, and that successful treatment should be measured not only in terms of a lack of recidivism, but also by such progress as improved mental health, ability to perform adequately in a work situation, successful adjustment in the community, and appropriate handling of interpersonal relationships.”

The debate over the purposes and effectiveness of correctional counseling and treatment continued during the latter part of the twentieth century. The direction the criminal justice system took in regard to punishment and treatment of juvenile and

adult criminal offenders was influenced by research conducted at that time that supported the contention that the treatment of offenders in the least restrictive setting possible would, in the long run, be likely to lead offenders toward becoming productive members of the community and help create a more secure society than if offenders were harshly punished through long sentences in correctional facilities.

In 2004, the year the fifth edition of *Correctional Counseling and Treatment* was published, it was noted by Kratcoski (2004, p. xiii) that, “The trend in recent years toward determinate sentencing and retributive justice seemed for a time to reduce the importance of treatment and counseling in corrections. However, when prisons became overcrowded alternatives to the handling of criminal offenders had to be found. This corrections dilemma had the latent effect of stimulating the development of new innovative approaches in community corrections and growth of the use of tried and trustworthy older approaches to community corrections. New community based programs, often labeled ‘intermediate sanctions,’ emphasized ‘enhanced’ supervision and mandatory involvement in treatment programs. Although the strongest emphasis of these programs was on supervision of the offender, the treatment goals of the programs were also apparent.”

The current emphasis in corrections embraces many of the original goals. However, the goals have been expanded, and new approaches to providing supervision and treatment have been added. The emphasis on providing restorative justice in the processing of juvenile and criminal offenders through the criminal justice system has continued and gained widespread acceptance during the first part of the twenty-first century. This approach addresses the needs of the offender, the needs of the victim, and the needs of the community in the decisions pertaining to the treatment and sanctioning of offenders, and attempts to balance the treatment goal of corrections with appropriate sanctioning of the criminal offenders in the correctional process.

Closely related to the restorative justice approach is the recognition that victims of crime have rights and that these rights of victims should be considered in any decisions made regarding the processing of criminal offenders. Recognition of the rights of victims to be present or heard at any stage of the processing of criminal offenders has had an effect on the types of sentences convicted criminal offenders receive and the provisions of their sanctions.

The emphasis on restorative justice has resulted in the creation of many new programs and approaches to the processing of offenders. The mental health approach in the treatment of some categories of offenders, particularly the mentally ill, homeless, and substance abusers, has gained more acceptance by the legislators who provide funding for special programming for such offenders as well as by law enforcement agency personnel and judicial officials. Programs and special courts for the mentally ill, drug and alcohol abusers, some categories of sex offenders, abusers of family members, mentally disturbed military veterans, and others have been established. The goals of these special programs are to provide counseling and treatment for the purpose of rehabilitating these offenders by diverting them from criminal justice processing or by having them processed and treated in community-

based programs. If they are sentenced to prison, special treatment programs for these offenders have been established in institutions.

During the first part of the twenty-first century, many new approaches to correctional treatment and programs have been created. The large majority of these pertain to community corrections, with the emphasis on diversion and programs for special problem offenders.

The current emphasis on providing community sanctions, such as probation, or commitment to a community-based residential treatment center in place of sentencing to a correctional facility for a large number of offenders, particularly, those convicted of minor drug offenses, has led to questions about the effectiveness of the treatment programs provided. Critics of those who embrace the treatment (rehabilitation) approach to corrections can cite numerous correctional treatment programs started in the past that, despite the huge amounts of funding given to implement and operate the programs, showed minimal positive results when critically evaluated. The current emphasis on evidence-based programming has gone a long way toward reducing the probability that a new approach to correctional treatment and the establishment of programs will result in failure. Currently, proposals for federal and state funding require pretesting and evaluation before being fully implemented. It must be shown that they are based on theory and research. For example, institution of a statewide case management system for probation may take several years of evaluations and feedback before the final version is decided upon and adopted.

Kent, Ohio
February 2017

Peter C. Kratcoski

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In addition to those who contributed to the book by writing a chapter, there were many others who contributed by way of interviews or provision of forms, documents, policies, and information on programs. I am proud to announce that many of these individuals were my former students at Kent State University or are current students. They include:

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Contributors

Susan Crittenden was born and raised in Lodi, Ohio. After graduating from high school, she attended Kent State University and earned a bachelor of arts in social work and a master of arts in corrections. She began working for the Dallas County (Texas) Adult Probation Department in 1981. She was employed with that department until her retirement in 2008. During her many years of service, she served as a line probation officer and as a supervisor in several different departments. She has been a consultant/trainer for the state of Texas and has been a speaker at various functions during the course of her career.

Susan has presented papers at professional conferences and has co-authored several publications. She is currently employed as a part-time collection specialist with the Dallas County Community Supervision and Corrections Department.

Debra White received her bachelor of arts degree in criminal justice and her master of arts degree in criminal justice from Kent State University. Prior to assuming her position as a probation officer with the US Probation Office, she served as a correctional officer and case manager at the Federal Correctional Institution located in Morgantown, West Virginia. She resigned her position with the Federal Bureau of Prisons and accepted a position with the US Probation Service, Youngstown, Ohio district, in 1989. She retired from the US Probation Service after completing thirty years of probation work. She is currently employed as a caseworker manager for the Community Corrections Association located in Youngstown, Ohio.

Susan Worstall received her bachelor of arts degree and master of arts degree from Kent State University. Both degrees were in corrections. She served as a probation officer with the Summit County (Ohio) Adult Probation Office from 1981 to 1991. She was employed with the US Pretrial and Probation Service from 1991 until her retirement in August, 2014. During her employment with the US Pretrial and Probation Department, Northern District Headquarters, located in Akron, Ohio, she served as a probation officer and as a probation supervisor.

About the Author

Peter C. Kratcoski earned a PhD in sociology from Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania; an MA in sociology from the University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana; and a BA in sociology from King's College, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He was selected for several postdoctoral grants by the National Science Foundation. He taught at the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, and at Pennsylvania State University before assuming the position of assistant professor of sociology at Kent State University in 1969. He retired as professor of criminal justice studies and chairman of the Department of Criminal Justice Studies at Kent State University in 1997, where he is currently a professor emeritus and adjunct professor. He has published many books, chapters in books, and journal articles in the areas of juvenile delinquency, juvenile justice, international policing, crime prevention, corrections, and victimology. His most recent writing and research have centered on juvenile justice, collaborative policing, correctional counseling, financial crimes, corruption and fraud, and victimization of the elderly.