

Library Services and Incarceration

RECOGNIZING BARRIERS,
STRENGTHENING ACCESS

JEANIE AUSTIN

FOREWORD BY KATHLEEN DE LA PEÑA MCCOOK

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FOREWORD

Kathleen de la Peña McCook

"Can a man who's warm understand one who is freezing?"

—Shukhov, in *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*¹

Imprisonment is a civil death. We are all surrounded by people invisible to us who are in jails, prisons, or under some sort of post-confinement surveillance. Each of these people have families and loved ones caught in the winding sheet of incarceration. The captive maternal, so painfully explored by Dr. Joy James in the *Carceral Notebooks*, amplifies the snare of the range of our punitive society.²

Jeanie Austin's *Library Services and Incarceration: Recognizing Barriers, Strengthening Access* leads librarians through the stark landscape of carceral realities that affect nearly 50 percent of people living in the United States—either directly for those confined in prisons and jails or supervised by e-carceration, or their family and friends whose interaction with the imprisoned constrains all aspects of contiguity.

What do we think of when we think of prisons? The most well-known book about prison in the world is the story of the illiterate Edmond Dantès in *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844).³ After six years of monstrous solitary confinement and flogging, Dantès encounters Abbé Faria, who secretly teaches him to read and write during an eight-year tunneling out of the prison. Do librarians imagine that we are the Abbé Farias who will aid the prisoner to a rebirth through literacy and education?

I was fifteen when I read *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, and that spare book seared my heart. My only connections to jails or prisons have consisted of visits to Chicago's Cook County Jail in the late 1960s to visit friends arrested in political demonstrations, a book talk to a men's prison as part of an adult literacy program, visits to other county jails for students held on minor drug charges, and the images of the hooded men at Abu Ghraib prison in 2003. I planned a national research survey about librarians and jails, but this was cut short after 9/11. No large-scale or nationwide evaluation of jail and prison librarianship has been published in nearly thirty years. Jeanie Austin has stepped up to change this.

Who are the people in prisons and jails? What do we know about them? How do we think about them? Jeanie Austin helps us to expand our framework of understanding as we explore the map of the incarcerated and the extended effect of incarceration on the family members and loved ones who support them. In *Library Services and Incarceration: Recognizing Barriers, Strengthening Access* we learn about men in prison, women in prison, juveniles in prison, and the impact of the carceral state on mothers, people of color, LGBTQIA+ and gender-nonconforming people, and people who once would have been in asylums but are now in the carceral state.⁴ The impact of incarceration on LGBTQIA+ people (and especially those who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color and living in poverty) is rarely explicitly mentioned in the library literature on incarceration, but

Jeanie Austin provokes readers to see all incarcerated people as part of the human family. Austin's work led me to the story of Layleen Cubilette-Polanco, a 27-year-old transgender woman who died in a solitary jail cell on Rikers Island, and to the poetry of Benji Hart that is available on SoundCloud:

The Rikers Island compound will be replaced by a series of
smaller, borough-based facilities will slip into the rising
Atlantic, the ribs of our dead prepared to cage it.⁵

The experiences of people in prisons and jails have been broadly researched from many points of view. *The Prison Journal*, for example, examines the attitudes of prison and jail personnel in many nations and studies the effects of incarceration on different categories of incarcerated people.⁶ But *The Prison Journal* hasn't mentioned libraries in the past twenty years of its publication. As Jeanie Austin demonstrates in these pages, more information about existing library services and the need for new collaborations is sorely needed within librarianship and must be integrated across all our services. This information does not exist in the broader scholarship about prisons and jails.

Librarians have empathy for people in prisons or jails from reading prison writing. Imprisoned five years for political protest in the Qanatir Women's Prison, Dr. Nawal El Saadawi has written: "In prison, a person's essence comes to light. One stands naked before oneself, and before others. Masks drop and slogans fall. In prison, one's true mettle is revealed, particularly in times of crisis."⁷

What can librarians do to provide support to women in prison? What can librarians do to provide support to Black men in prison? Jed Tucker, writing of Malcolm X, has observed: "The answer to the kind of extreme social displacement foisted upon poor, racialized minorities in the United States since the 1970s is not awaiting individual heroism; rather, as Malcolm's life reveals, by investing in institutions that provide some hope, in even the most desperate of those spaces, it becomes possible to create the conditions for radical personal and community transformation."⁸ In this book, Austin demonstrates how libraries are an investment that can use extant models of service to develop new models within our institutions to evaluate information and incarceration. Austin provides critical theoretical approaches to library and information services for those who are incarcerated, and provides deep insight into the background of how library services reflect the scale of library systems that provide those services.

Library Services and Incarceration provides librarians with pragmatic and encouraging case studies and helps us to envisage library services to the incarcerated that should exist more widely. The models of direct service and indirect service presented here are analyzed in the context of sociopolitical environments with a grounded sense of their feasibility. It is heavy lifting to look at a local correctional landscape and then try to identify the opportunities for libraries, but Austin is clear that this must be done. The recognition that there is no invariable blueprint to develop services in jails and prisons is austere, but realistic and hopeful.

And then the reader is asked to go another mile to consider services and support for incarcerated people who leave institutions. Librarians will face the rules and structures of probation and parole with increased surveillance technologies that constrain reintegration. The unseen people who are people released from incarceration are often set adrift in a society that fails to acknowledge their humanity.

Understanding the narratives of incarceration in the United States—that they either

or simultaneously justify their existence through punishment or rehabilitation—provides us with the framework to assemble and create new modes of service.

Because people working in carceral institutions vary in willingness to provide services, this text clarifies the need to recognize the fact that these institutions are organized differently from place to place. They will have different security restrictions, different administrative ideologies, and different philosophies of rehabilitation. It is essential that the librarian who wishes to implement services understands these different challenges. *Library Services and Incarceration* is pragmatic and realistic about the approaches that are required in different contexts.

The alignment of library mission and carceral mission can be quite divergent, and it is the librarian's challenge to reconcile the missions. There are other educational and social services that support prisoners and their reentry, but often these do not include libraries in their scope of work. For example, library services are not even mentioned in a 2020 report from ETS on prisoner education.⁹ Community engagement, a current initiative in librarianship, provides a platform to include other prisoner-serving organizations as partners or allies.

Prison writing is a way that librarians can imagine the world that Jeanie Austin writes about. This stark verse by Jimmy Santiago Baca, a Chicano Apache poet, calls us to compassion:

Some will make it out of here with hate in their eyes
But so very few make it out of here as human
As they came in, they leave wondering what good they are now.¹⁰

The path to helping people in prison know what good they can be is shown to us in *Library Services and Incarceration: Recognizing Barriers, Strengthening Access* with its focus on restorative justice and recognition of the humanity in each person caught in the carceral systems.

NOTES

1. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1963). First published in November 1962 in the Soviet literary magazine *Novy Mir*. The 1991 translation by H. T. Willetts is the translation approved by Solzhenitsyn (New York: Noonday/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1991). This quote is from the Willetts translation as published in 1995 (London: David Campbell), 21.
2. Joy James, "The Womb of Western Theory: Trauma, Time Theft, and the Captive Maternal," *Carceral Notebooks*, vol. 12 (2016), www.thecarceral.org/cn12/14_Womb_of_Western_Theory.pdf.
3. Alexandre Dumas's novel *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844) has been translated into many languages and made into numerous movies, radio programs, television series, plays, and even video games. Dantes's hideous treatment and years of incarceration have been the embodiment of prisons in the minds of readers and viewers worldwide for nearly two centuries.
4. Anne E. Parsons, *From Asylum to Prison: Deinstitutionalization and the Rise of Mass Incarceration* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018).
5. Benji Hart, "Layleen's Bill (with Revisions)," Trans Day of Resilience / Forward Together 2019, <https://benjihart.com/portfolio/layleens-bill-with-revisions-trans-day-of-resilience-2019/>. Go to SoundCloud to hear the poem: <https://soundcloud.com/user-830244714/benji-hart-layleens-bill-with-revisions>. Sydney Pereira, "Layleen Polanco's Family to Receive \$5.9 Million Settlement

for Her Death on Rikers Island," *The Gothamist*, August 31, 2020, <https://gothamist.com/news/layleen-polancos-family-receive-59-million-settlement-her-death-rikers-island>.

6. Michael B. Mitchell and Jaya B. Davis, "Formerly Incarcerated Black Mothers Matter Too: Resisting Social Constructions of Motherhood," *The Prison Journal*, vol. 99 (May 29, 2019): 420–36; Rebecca Shlafer, Grant Duwe, and Lauren Hindt, "First Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children: Comparisons between State and National Estimates," *The Prison Journal*, vol. 99 (March 2019): 310–28.
7. Nawal El Saadawi, *Memoirs from the Women's Prison* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
8. Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York, 1965); Jed B. Tucker, "Malcolm X, the Prison Years: The Relentless Pursuit of Formal Education," *Journal of African American History*, no. 2 (2017): 184–212.
9. Stephen J. Steurer, "How to Unlock the Power of Prison Education: Policy Report: ETS Center for Research on Human Capital and Education," 2020, available from Educational Testing Service, www.ets.org/research/report/opportunity.
10. Jimmy Santiago Baca, *Immigrants in Our Own Land* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979).

INTRODUCTION

Librarians' conceptions of criminality, policing, and incarceration shape how they provide information services and define their patron bases. Even though incarceration permeates American institutions and shapes the terrain of the public, these topics have been largely overlooked within the library and information science (LIS) field. Library services to people who are incarcerated have been positioned as a niche area of interest, are rarely given prominence in LIS education, and are often overlooked as a needed and available area of service by many types of libraries. This is true despite the swelling of incarceration rates, the scope of policing and surveillance, and the public attention repeatedly given to the ways in which policing and incarceration heavily impact Black, Indigenous, and people of color, LGBTQIA+ people, people with disabilities, and people who are living in poverty. The "mass" in mass incarceration has now come to represent the likelihood that nearly 50 percent of all adults in America have an immediate family member who has been incarcerated in a jail or prison for at least one night, and this percentage is even higher for Black and Latinx adults in the United States (Enns et al., 2019). It is beyond time that librarians attend to the realities of how incarceration shapes American society.

The vastness of carceral systems in America is almost incomprehensible, which is likely why so many publications on library services to people who are incarcerated have selectively scoped to focus on a specific setting, type of service, or on personal accounts of librarians and library staff. Instead of offering a single account of library services and incarceration, this book acknowledges Ettarh's assertion that libraries and carceral systems are institutions with shared histories that have shaped their propensities toward control and harm (2018). This project draws upon previous research on library services to incarcerated people with the aim of contextualizing the existing publications on the subject and approaching library services from multiple points of view. It does so with the recognition that few librarians have been trained to work in carceral facilities (a catchall phrase used in this book to encompass immigration detention centers, jails, juvenile detentions, and prisons), and that those that do often enter these positions with a limited understanding of policing and carceral systems and are rarely provided with the resources needed to deepen their engagement with the topic, although many librarians in carceral settings have learned about the realities of incarceration on the ground (Conrad, 2017).

This book is concerned with the overlaps and intersections between information and incarceration, the histories of library services to people who are incarcerated, carceral technologies, existing library services for people who are incarcerated or detained, ideas for information services and programming that can be implemented by a variety of

libraries, and tips for creating and implementing library services. It focuses on areas of service that have often been neglected and are not considered to be rights.¹ While some librarians in prisons are positioned simultaneously as academic, reference, recreational, and law librarians, this book does not cover aspects of legal librarianship with much depth.² This is partly because access to the court, often in the form of a legal library, is varied in its implementation and is not always the role of prison librarians. It is also because this text seeks to identify areas where information access can be augmented by both prison librarians and librarians working outside of carceral facilities.

This book is written with the intention of providing tools for many types of librarians—including academic, public, and specialized ones, as well as librarians working in carceral institutions—and for information professionals and scholars. Incarceration is a complex system that requires a nuanced approach, and it is only by working across professional and disciplinary divides that LIS professionals can begin to successfully grapple with how the control and regulation of information is an inherent aspect of carceral functions. While this book acts primarily as an introductory text, in the absence of other similar resources, it does attempt to be as comprehensive as possible as it moves between contexts of incarceration and carceral practices and the current and possible work undertaken by LIS professionals, people who are incarcerated, and community groups. It incorporates and builds on information from people who are or have been incarcerated, and utilizes the testimony and experiences of currently and formerly incarcerated people. It incorporates person-centered language (Cox, 2020; Hickman, 2015; Keller, 2015) throughout the text. This is an intentional act to prioritize the experiences of people directly impacted by incarceration, and to highlight the ways people who are impacted by incarceration value, and evaluate, information access and their own information practices.

STRUCTURE OF THIS BOOK

In order to present a comprehensive overview of library services for people who are incarcerated, theoretical, historical, and practical considerations all arise in this text. The first half of the book, which provides an overview of information, incarceration, and historically situated library services, acts as a foundation for the descriptions of library and information services that are currently being or could be implemented. This allows readers to take a wide-ranging view of incarceration and library services, one that makes room for situated approaches to increasing information access to people impacted by incarceration.

A section on technology sits between the two halves of this book. This positioning is purposeful. It acts as a reminder of the fulcrum point between current information practices and constrictions inside, and emphasizes that access to technologies in carceral facilities falls along lines of power. The lack of information about technologies in the second half of this book suggests that librarians and information professionals have not often been able to counter the carceral facility's control of information access through technology.

The second half of the book turns to actual examples of programs and services to people who are incarcerated, often in the words of the librarians and information professionals who provide those services. It ties practical aspects of information provision back to the themes treated in the earlier chapters, illustrating that critical theoretical and historical stances can lead to generative action.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The first half of this book, composed of chapters 1 through 4, covers critical and historical approaches to carceral systems. It draws from critical, practical, and theoretical work from fields outside of LIS, including criminology, critical carceral studies, gender and sexuality studies, history, law, political science, psychology, studies of race and racism, and surveillance studies, in order to frame library services to people who are incarcerated within the larger context of carceral systems in the United States. This positioning provides an informed understanding of how library services to incarcerated people have been implemented over time and how the circumstances of information access and control have changed or shifted over the course of the previous century. It also creates a foundation for interrogating the neutrality of LIS. The goal of the first half of this book is to illustrate the long and often obscured history of library services to incarcerated people and to introduce the myriad contexts of incarceration and carceral systems so that LIS professionals can better engage in information provision to those impacted by incarceration. This part of the book also reveals how deeply the patron bases served (or overlooked) by libraries have been impacted by incarceration. This information enables readers to interrogate how claims to neutrality within LIS often function to support and reiterate whiteness within the field. Given the extremely racialized and gendered impact of criminalization, policing, and incarceration, and the scope of these practices in structuring much of American life, it is telling that the LIS field has not paid much attention to how carceral systems function through the control of information, nor, despite ongoing calls from within the field, has it prioritized services to people who are incarcerated.

Chapter 1, “Philosophical Approaches,” positions library services within the narratives that carceral institutions have used to justify their role over time. By examining how librarians have adopted the carceral justifications of imprisonment as either rehabilitative or punitive, this chapter begins to question the idea that librarians are capable of acting outside of their own philosophical approaches to information provision. Utilizing critical theoretical work, it illustrates that what has been typified as the carceral philosophical swing between rehabilitation and punishment is often much messier and more complex, and that each of these philosophies of incarceration relies, to some extent, on its counterpart. The chapter examines how information access has functioned within these philosophical approaches, and encourages LIS professionals to rethink how they have conceptualized the role and necessity of existing carceral systems. This chapter provides needed context for the following chapters.

Chapter 2, “Carceral Histories in the United States,” delves into the historical antecedents of carceral practices in the United States. It connects histories of carceral practices to histories of library services in carceral facilities, illustrating that information and the control of information have been central to incarceration in America. This chapter includes an overview of how library services to people who are incarcerated have (or have not) changed over time, and uncovers the fact that current approaches to library and information services to incarcerated people have not shifted very much in the one hundred years since some of the earliest instances of professional concerns about the information available to people who were incarcerated. A historical examination of library services for incarcerated people reveals a reliance on those very same carceral philosophies that have limited or otherwise determined information access for people who are incarcerated, and also underlines the role of racial criminalization in justifying limitations on information access. By examining the brief periods when incarcerated people’s

collective advocacy has led to increased access and when information access has been a prominent concern within the LIS field, this historical examination provides some opportunities for identifying points of departure from ongoing practices, and underlines the extent to which these philosophies have done a disservice to both patrons who are incarcerated and their larger social support networks.

Chapter 3, “Forms of Incarceration,” moves from the discussion of mass incarceration at the conclusion of chapter 2 to outline a few of the prominent forms of carceral systems within the American landscape. By bringing attention to the interlocking but differentiated functions of types of carceral institutions and practices—including state and federal prisons, jails, juvenile detention centers, immigration detention centers, and state (community) supervision (probation, supervised release, and parole)—it foregrounds how conceptions of the public and patron bases of libraries will be transformed by the recognition that people who are incarcerated or beholden to carceral systems are included in those groups. Understanding the differences between these institutions and carceral practices is a needed element when considering possible library and information services to people who are incarcerated or under state supervision.

Chapter 4, “Information and Incarceration,” surveys recent publications on library services to incarcerated people and positions these alongside the latter’s actual information-seeking practices. It analyzes the library literature from 1992 through 2019, the period since the most recent ALA standards for carceral library services were developed. It then turns from LIS-centric conceptions of library and information access in carceral facilities to incorporate some of the ways in which people who have experienced incarceration discuss and conceptualize their own information access while incarcerated, and the importance they place on that access. Statements from formerly incarcerated people are contextualized as consequences of the information regulation that is inherent in American carceral practice.

The interstitial section on technology, “Technologies and Flows of Power,” demonstrates that tracing access to technology within carceral practices is one way to examine how power functions in and through carceral systems. This segment of the book examines the technology and data-gathering practices of information and communications technology (ICT) companies in carceral facilities, including biometric surveillance. Surveillance technologies have been applied to people in carceral facilities since the late 1980s and have proliferated widely in the last decade, but only limited research has engaged critically with these technologies. Positioning research on the practices of ICT companies at the center of the book makes room for the possibility to extend from nascent critical research on people who are incarcerated as under the compulsion to train algorithmic intelligence (AI) and to act as digital workers as an area for further study.

Technologies do not feature heavily in the second half of the book, which concerns actual practice that can be tied to the theoretical and historical information presented earlier in the text. Yet, data gathering and other practices of surveillance are professional concerns. These practices conflict with LIS philosophies that uphold access to information and advocate for patron privacy, and they have negative repercussions on the practical library and information services offered to people who are incarcerated. The lack of attention to technologies in the second half of the book is testament to the state control and regulation of information, often counter to the efforts of library and information professionals. This part of the book raises the possibility that new library services might be developed by carefully considering how to use digital technologies to facilitate greater access to information and recreational materials.

The second half of this book focuses on the practical aspects of library services in carceral institutions. It identifies ways that LIS professionals can build upon critical approaches to carceral systems and accounts from people who have been incarcerated to create more meaningful and much-needed library and information services. Chapters 5 through 7 cover three types of library services—direct (or face-to-face) services, indirect services, and reentry services—which can be implemented to support people who are incarcerated, people who have recently been incarcerated, and their families, friends, and social support networks. Chapter 8 discusses some of the nuances of creating and sustaining library services in carceral facilities. Generally speaking, the second half of the book recognizes that the spread of carceral systems and the role of information control within carceral practice leave many points of entry for library and information services, but that these must be understood within the ongoing scale of incarceration in the United States.

Chapter 5, “Models of Direct Service,” examines various examples of the face-to-face provision of library materials to those who are incarcerated. The chapter discusses notable examples of collaborations between public libraries and prison libraries or carceral facilities. It offers profiles of successful, well-established, or unique public, prison, and other library services and programs in order to illustrate the possibilities for providing direct services within carceral facilities. These programs can be contrasted with the overall dearth of library and information services for people who are incarcerated across the United States. The chapter also draws upon the literature on prison libraries and public library services in prisons to address gaps in the existing LIS literature.

Chapter 6, “Models of Indirect Service,” moves from models of direct services to an analysis of the stated information needs and desires of incarcerated people and how library and information professionals might work to meet their requests. The chapter highlights two forms of indirect services—reference by mail and book donations—as ways that libraries with limited institutional support or resources can work to address the carceral control and limitation of information access. It moves outside of the LIS field proper to recognize the decades-long work of community groups that have advocated for increased information access for people who are incarcerated and have continuously pushed against the censorship decisions made on the part of carceral facilities. This chapter concludes with a survey of other indirect services and forms of support which could be explored as more services for people who are incarcerated are developed by librarians and other information professionals. It offers an ethical stance on thinking through these and other possible programs and resources—that library and information services should always be developed with the goal of increasing information access for incarcerated people.

Chapter 7, “Reentry Support and Programming,” digs into the realities of release from carceral facilities, and draws on research with people in the process of reentry in order to identify existing library resources that can be tailored to better meet the needs of people who have recently been released from jails and prisons. It incorporates information from popular publications and profiles one long-standing reentry program in order to outline the various approaches to reentry support and outreach. This chapter takes as a given that raising public awareness of the realities of incarceration, and of the library resources available to those impacted by incarceration, should be part and parcel of reentry services.

Chapter 8, “Building Institutional Support and Getting Started,” closes the section on practical applications of critical approaches to the carceral system by touching on hot-button issues and concerns that impact library services for people who are

incarcerated. These issues include building the library staff's awareness about policing, incarceration, and reentry; advocating for new or increased library services to the incarcerated in conversations with the library administration; finding ways to begin services in carceral facilities; and institutionalizing a library's services so that they are not dependent on a few passionate staff members. This chapter also addresses concerns around patron privacy and record-keeping, challenges to library materials, navigating racism in publishing and incarceration, and identifying opportunities to share resources to better support the people most impacted by policing and incarceration.

The book concludes by encouraging LIS professionals to build on the introductory information in this text and conduct further research on LIS services for incarcerated people, critically explore the oversights in librarianship's claims to neutrality, and envision new models of LIS services which push against the normalization of incarceration in the library and information science field.

CONCLUSION

Pulling together the many threads related to carceral systems and information access provides a new framework for thinking through these disparate and intertwining themes. Doing this offers critical theoretical insight alongside practical information related to information access. This book draws on existing models to envision as yet nonexistent forms of access, collaboration, and programming.

A large portion of this text was written as people inside of carceral facilities were locked down, a move that carceral systems proposed as a security measure in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In many instances, these conditions included only one hour a day spent outside of a cell, being placed in precarious health conditions while unable to acquire needed medical protections, having no form of in-person visitation with loved ones, and rolling and continuous outbreaks of coronavirus throughout carceral facilities in the United States. The lockdowns resulted in reduced information access, including access to recreational materials and needed medical information about personal protective equipment and general health. At the same time, medical technologies that were probably developed or refined through their compulsory use on people who were incarcerated prior to the pandemic—such as telemedicine—proliferated and facilitated resource access for people who were not incarcerated.

Although local and state carceral systems were touted for their efforts to reduce the transmission of the coronavirus within their facilities—typically by releasing incarcerated people with health conditions—these piecemeal efforts were not often supported by funding to groups that had long been resources for people in reentry. While the releases presented a possible point at which to push against carceral logics, readers should be cautious in assuming that these changes will inherently lead to a decrease in incarceration. Research has shown that coronavirus-related releases were not the reason for the decreases in prison populations that occurred during the pandemic (Sharma et al., 2020). Rather, prisons, for the most part, did not accept transfers from local jails—meaning that there was not an influx of people who were incarcerated as people who had completed their sentences were released, courts that oversaw criminal proceedings were closed, and conditions of probation and parole changed in ways that led to a lessened likelihood that individual parole or probation officers requested that people be reincarcerated (Sharma et al. 2020). These trends did not represent a change in the systemic biases present in

carceral systems, nor do they portend a major change in carceral functions. Rather, carceral practices of containment and restriction have made it more pressing that LIS professionals identify ways to continue to provide information access even as carceral facilities have expanded their methods of information restriction. This book offers a few examples of continuing to advocate for people who are incarcerated, community groups that have championed information access and resisted censorship, and LIS professionals who have, alongside these groups, paved the way for an analysis of and practical engagement with the control of information as a form of state-sponsored oppression.

NOTES

1. Largely due to the organizing efforts of people who were incarcerated, people who are incarcerated have a right to meaningful access to the courts, though the definition of this has been significantly reduced over time. Access to religious texts is also a right.
2. The Assistance for Prisoners group of the American Association of Law Libraries maintains a list of relevant legal resources at www.aallnet.org/srsis/resources-publications/assistance-for-prisoners.

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