

adults for felony crimes; today, there are more than 1,800 prisons in America (Foster, 2006). As in case with the U.S., the history of correctional system in Brazil dates back to the middle of the 19th century. It would be fair to say that in many aspects, the process of corrections system development in Brazil was heavily influenced by that in the U.S.: since 1853, when a Brazil commissioner visited America to investigate its prison design, this information and knowledge were used and incorporated into the state prison system in Brazil (Roth, 2006).

Population

The present day correctional system in Brazil is based on the Penal Code of 1940. Brazil has around 5,000 penal institutions in operation, including correctional institutions, penitentiaries, houses of custody and treatment, agricultural colonies, and houses of correction; these are complemented by military prisons, regular adult prisons, jails, and juvenile institutions (Roth, 2006). The general prison population in Brazil rapidly grows, with 419,551 women and men incarcerated in 2007 (Human Rights Watch, 2008). Between 2003 and 2004, 600,000 new prisoners entered the system and the number of incarcerated per 100,000 reached 182 (Lemburger, 2006). The rates of prison population growth in Brazil vary from state to state: in San Paulo alone, every month 1,000 of new prisoners enter the system (Lemburger, 2006). In the U.S., the number of incarcerated persons in 2007 was 7.3 million people; in other words, 1 in every 31 adults was either in jail, in prison, on probation, or on parole (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009).

Management/ security levels

The current system of prison management in the U.S. is based on the assumption that prison environment should be safe and orderly, and inmates should interact with low levels of conflict and tension. In this context, a typical prison is managed by a warden, who is essential a gatekeeper, and whose major aim is to maintain prisoners' secure custody (Foster, 2006).