

book accurately reflects the current state of affairs in most U.S. jurisdictions.

Public Health Behind Bars is more than a public health or medical textbook and will be compelling to a broad audience. For instance, in one chapter Todd Clear offers the intriguing argument that high rates of incarceration in impoverished communities destabilize important social networks and informal social control. Thus, beyond a certain threshold, or “tipping point,” increased incarceration of adults in these communities paradoxically leads to higher crime rates, making incarceration a poor policy approach for the enhancement of public safety.

The broad appeal of this book is greater because the contributors do not avoid controversial stances. One example is the chapter by Mark Heath, which gives a devastating account of execution by lethal injection in the United States: “We kill our prisoners in the United States in a way that we would never be allowed to kill a dog.” Some chapters reflect an expansive interpretation of public health, whereas Farah Parvez and other contributors provide informative reviews of traditional topics in public health, such as the prevention and management of tuberculosis in correctional facilities. These chapters are particularly appropriate for correctional administrators and medical providers.

Although vast numbers of people are incarcerated in the United States, there is limited evidence from peer-reviewed sources about effective approaches for maximizing health in correctional settings and during the transitions inmates make between correctional and community settings. Furthermore, the cross-disciplinary nature of work at the interface of public health and corrections makes it hard to identify all of the relevant literature from a single search engine such as PubMed. Thus, *Public Health Behind Bars* is a helpful guide to the literature that is available from a variety of academic disciplines, government sources, and policy centers. Although Heath’s chapter provides some international models, the integration of further international perspectives could add depth to the solutions that are offered in this book.

This collection of distinct chapters on public health considerations in correctional health illustrates the important role of today’s correctional

facilities in the health of our communities. Independently, individual chapters could serve as reading materials for students in disciplines as varied as public health, sociology, medicine, law, social services, criminology, and ethics who seek to understand the role of prisons in the health of our society. Although the book suffers from some redundancy among chapters, the benefit of this redundancy is that educators can use individual chapters as self-contained teaching materials.

Overall, I was struck by the authors’ compassion for inmates throughout this book. They express a passion for the topic that reveals the compelling nature of the nation’s jails and prisons as critical institutions in the fight to improve health in the United States.

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PAYING THE TAB: THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF ALCOHOL CONTROL

By Philip J. Cook. 262 pp., illustrated. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2007. \$35. ISBN 978-0-691-12520-6.

ALCOHOL IS ONE OF THE MOST WIDELY ENJOYED — and abused — drugs in the United States. It is a part of the mainstream U.S. culture. What could be more American than having a beer and a hot dog at a baseball game? Moreover, of all drugs of abuse, alcohol also has the dubious distinction of offering health benefits when it is consumed in moderation. These characteristics and more make alcohol control policies a hard sell in the United States.

In *Paying the Tab*, Philip J. Cook offers a comprehensive historical, economic, and public policy perspective on alcohol control policies of the past 100 years. His main message is that American policymakers have failed to adequately account for the fact that beer and liquor are less expensive and more widely available now than they were several decades ago. Legislators have ignored the evidence that alcohol is too cheap and that supply-side policies such as higher excise taxes on alcohol could be used to reduce the health and economic consequences of alcohol misuse and abuse — es-

pecially homicides, suicides, injuries that are caused by alcohol-related accidents, and deaths from liver cirrhosis. Policymakers have increased taxes and considerably reduced access to tobacco products but have been woefully inadequate in pursuing supply-side measures for the control of alcohol. Cook argues that legislators must put alcohol control and taxation “back on the policy agenda.”

In compiling the evidence on alcohol control policies, Cook does not shy away from the need to justify the use of government power to alter the behavior of individual persons. He notes that in the case of tobacco, this justification rests on the demonstration that it causes harm to users and to others (in many cases, innocent bystanders); this is the “negative externalities” argument based on British philosopher John Stuart Mill’s “harm principle.” Cook scours the literature in this terrain and argues fervently that higher taxes on alcohol would improve health and safety and save lives and are thus justified.

If there are limitations to this thought-provoking and thorough book, they concern other types of financial incentives and a lack of international comparisons. Other types of financial incentives could include the use of commitment devices, offering the possibility of using extrinsic tools of motivation with intrinsic ones, such as modified forms of psychological counseling, motivational interviewing, motivational enhancement, and cognitive-behavioral therapy. A second area that deserves further attention is analysis of alcohol policies and excise taxes in some other countries, especially European countries. It would be worthwhile to examine whether the relatively low cost of alcohol in some European countries bolsters the main arguments of this book or whether other factors, such as social and cultural norms, may influence alcohol consumption as much as national and local taxes do. Such analyses could supplement the evidence from the United States that is presented in the book. Despite these limitations, *Paying the Tab* offers a wide-ranging historical and social scientific perspective on alcohol in the United States and argues that more must be done to control the consumption of alcohol.

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CORRECTIONS

Clinical Decisions: Management of Type 2 Diabetes; Treatment Option 3 — Add Exenatide Twice Daily (January 17, 2008;358:293-7). The third sentence of the second paragraph (page 296) should have read “These drugs also appear to inhibit gastric emptying and enhance satiety, leading to weight loss in a substantial number of patients,” rather than “These drugs also appear to enhance gastric emptying and satiety.” The text has been corrected on the *Journal’s* Web site at www.nejm.org.

Simvastatin with or without Ezetimibe in Familial Hypercholesterolemia (April 3, 2008;358:1431-43). In the list of authors’ affiliations (p. 1431), the affiliation for Daniel Gaudet should have read “Department of Medicine, Montreal University, Montreal (D.G.)” The article has been corrected at the *Journal’s* Web site at www.nejm.org.

Adjuvant Chemotherapy for Gastric Cancer with S-1, an Oral Fluoropyrimidine (November 1, 2007;357:1810-20). In Figure 1A (page 1816), the third entry for S-1 should have been 370 rather than 270. The figure has been corrected on the *Journal’s* Web site at www.nejm.org.

NOTICES

Notices submitted for publication should contain a mailing address and telephone number of a contact person or department. We regret that we are unable to publish all notices received. Notices also appear on the Journal’s Web site (www.nejm.org/meetings). The listings can be viewed in their entirety or searched by location, month, or key word.

HEALTHCARE, THE MARKET, AND THE PUBLIC’S NEEDS AND INTERESTS

The conference will be held in Warsaw, Poland, on June 2. Contact Dr. A. Gorski, Polish Academy of Sciences, PKiN, 00901 Warsaw, Poland; or call (48) 22 6204553; or fax (48) 22 6204910; or e-mail agorski@ikp.pl; or see <http://www.pan.pl/english>.

ACGA-HKSMG INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENETIC & GENOMIC MEDICINE

The conference will be held in Hong Kong, June 8–11. It is jointly sponsored by the Association of Chinese Geneticists in America and the Hong Kong Society of Medical Genetics.

Contact China Travel Service, Suite 601-2, Wing On House, 71 Des Voeux Road Central, Hong Kong; or e-mail ACGA-HKSMG@chinatravelevents.com; see <http://ideaeexplore.net/conference>.

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