

***Prisoners' Guerrilla Handbook to Correspondence
Programs in the United States and Canada***

By Jon Marc Taylor

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Reviewed by Bob Gaucher

Jon Marc Taylor (BA, MA) has been imprisoned in the State of Missouri for the past two decades. During that time he has earned four college degrees and certificates and his research and analyses of US penal justice and carceral practices has been widely published in academic journals and popular news focussed magazines.

He was the recipient of the prestigious Nation/I.F. Stone and Robert Kennedy Student Journalism Awards for his reporting on the debate over Pell Grant educational funding for prisoners. Taylor's writing had a significant impact on that debate, and his numerous articles on education and imprisonment have been important contributions to academic discourse on this matter. Taylor brings a recognized expertise to this Educational Resource Book for prisoners.

This comprehensive guide provides detailed information on 212 educational and vocational Correspondence Programs available to prisoners in Canada and the USA. These programs are classified as High School, Paralegal and Vocational, College and University, including graduate studies. This well organized and accessible catalogue is much more than a listing of programs and institutions.

Taylor notes the effects of the slashing of prison educational budgets and grants across the USA, which also occurred in Canada during the 1980s and early 1990s. This has heightened the need for other avenues, and accredited correspondence course programs offer the best possibility of filling the void. There are other guides to correspondence programs, including **PEN'S Prison Education Opportunities**, but none address the problem from the inside situation and perspective of the prisoner. Taylor brings an experienced eye to the unique problems and prejudices that the prisoner-student will encounter with prisoncrats and program administrators. This is evident in his presentation and evaluation of available programs of study. This evaluation addresses time limitations, accreditation for work, possible linkages amongst programs of study and institutions, to a consideration of costs.

This Guerrilla Handbook will serve as an invaluable directory for prisoners, especially longterm prisoners, who are seeking ways of using time instead of doing time, through pursuing their education.

In the past decade I have corresponded and met with an increasing number of prisoners who have achieved undergraduate and graduate degrees while imprisoned. Most members of the **Infinity Lifers' Group** I worked with between 1986 and 1991, completed university degrees in the course of their sentence. The **convict criminology** that John Irwin and his associates have been developing also reflects this trend. Jon Marc Taylor's work will enhance this possibility.