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Corrections Philosophy

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Life on Parole

1) What do you think of Erroll Brantley’s decision to live with his girlfriend while on parole? Does the fact that she doesn’t identify as a victim influence your opinion?

* Although his girlfriend does not identify as a victim, Erroll Brantley’s decision to live with her was inappropriate. I feel this way because he knew that doing that was a violation of his parole. Even if I disagree with some rules of parole, they still need to be followed.

2) What needs do female parolees have that make them different from male parolees?

* Women have different needs than males. Female parolees are often the primary caretakers of their children, Officer Katherine Montoya fears for the safety of children if she is forced remove mothers from their situations.

3) Parolees have many rules and regulations to follow as conditions of their parole? What were some of the conditions you saw mentioned in this video? Do you think they were fair, or excessive? What should the conditions be?

* Some of the rules and conditions I saw in the video were no drinking, no using drugs, and parolees were not allowed to be with the people they offended against. Also, the parolees needed permission for almost everywhere they went, including a convenience store. Perhaps these rules are necessary because parole is not meant to give an offender absolute freedom, just a measure of it, as mentioned in the video. However, I think some parole officers are more strict than others, we saw Erroll Brantley given second chances after multiple parole violations, but Vaughn Gresham was arrested after having been found drinking in a halfway house.

4) What do you think we should do with parolees who fail drug screen tests? If you argue for treatment, how many opportunities for treatment should each individual be afforded?

* Erroll Brantley’s parole officer, Mark Pawlich, said parolees that are opiate addicts tend to always go back to using. If they tend to always go back, there obviously needs to be a change in the way we parole drug users. I do argue for treatment, but each indivdual should show clear commitment to getting clean. Erroll Brantley, a known drug addict, was sent to a halfway house littered with used needles. If Erroll Brantley has to show commitment to getting clean, the parole board needs to show their willingness to help too.

5) After what you’ve seen in this video, let’s say you were incarcerated and had 5 years left on your sentence. Would you rather serve out your 5 years in prison or on parole? Why?

* I would most certainly want to serve my last 5 years on parole rather than in prison. Though it is not complete freedom, it is some freedom. I could choose when to eat, when to sleep and when to wake up, most of the time at least. However, that is just hypothetical. Rob Sulivan said a number of times that it would just be easier for him to go prison than live life on parole and that is what he did, he served the rest of his sentence in prison and was released free of parole, he now works as a cook and can afford to pay his child support.