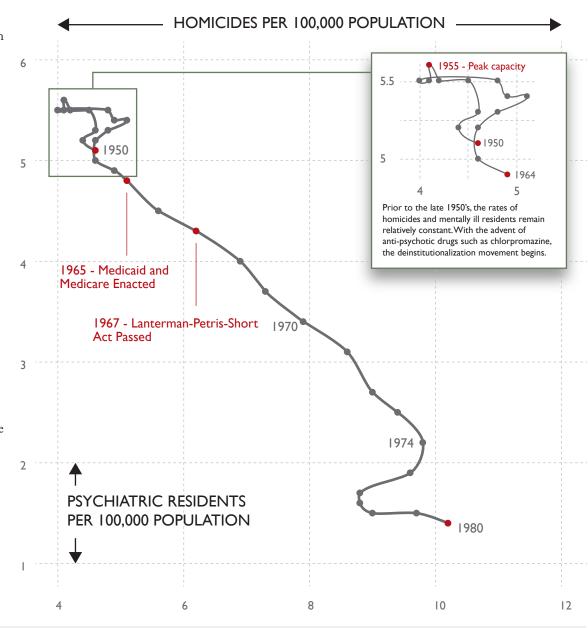
More Mentally Ill People Go to Prison than Psych Hospitals

During the deinstitutionalization movement in the United States countless individuals with severe mental illnesses were moved out of large state institutions, with most of these institutions being shut down altogether.

Deinstitutionalization is regarded as a systemic failure by many. Concomitant with the movement is an increase in homicide rates, prison rates, homelessness, and mental health crises.

The terms "transinstitutionalization" or "reinstitutionalization" are sometimes used to acknowledge the fate of many mentally ill persons: incarceration. With the closure of state mental hospitals, mentally ill individuals are not held involuntarily, and rarely comply with medication requirements. As a result, many of them eventuate in prisons, which are ill-equipped to provide the proper care they need.



Timeline of Deinstitutionalization

1841

Schoolteacher Dorothea Dix

lobbies for better treatment of

maltreatment in jails. By 1880,

IIO psychiatric hospitals are

mentally ill after seeing abuse and

Certain events played an integral role in the establishment and disestablishment of mental institutions. This timeline indicates key events and legislative activity that contributed to the process of deinstitutionalization

The population of mentally ill kept in psychiatric hospitals peaks at 560,000.

to move patients from mental hospitals to nursing homes due to its limited coverage.

> 1954 The anti-psychotic drug chlorpromazine is synthesized and marketed as Thorazine. Its introduction to psychiatric practice succeeds in managing the behavior of many ill paitents.

Medicaid is passed, forcing states

1984

1967

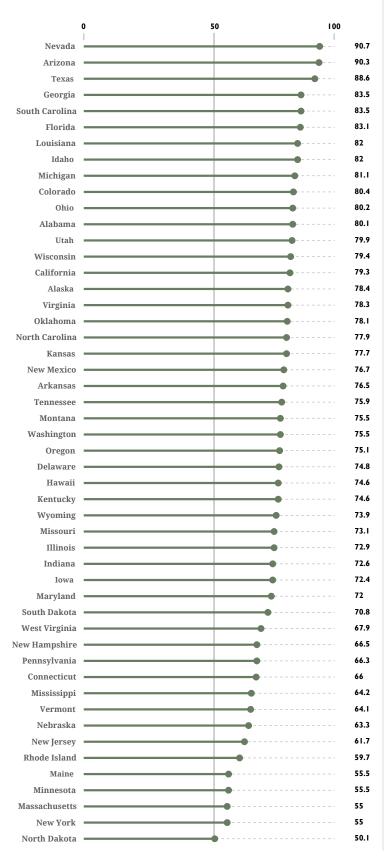
A study conducted in Ohio, financed by the National Institute of Mental Health suggests that about 30 percent of homeless are mentally ill.

The Lanterman-Petris-Short Act is passed, which prevents involuntary hospitalization except in extreme cases. Shortly after, prisons see a dramatic rise

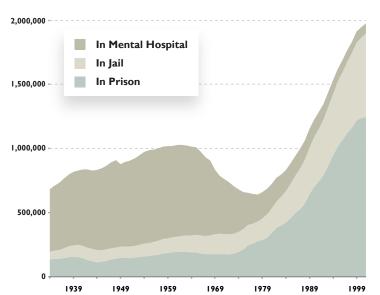
in mentally ill inmates.

Percentage of Institutionalized Mentally III in Prisons

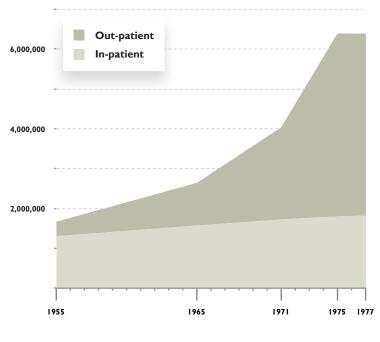
This chart demonstrates the distribution of institutionalized mentally ill people between hospitals and prisons. It is abundantly clear that the mentally ill have a much greater propensity towards prison than any kind of medical care.



Distribution of Mentally III in Prisons, Jails, and Mental Hospitals



Number of Patient Care Episodes



Sources

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