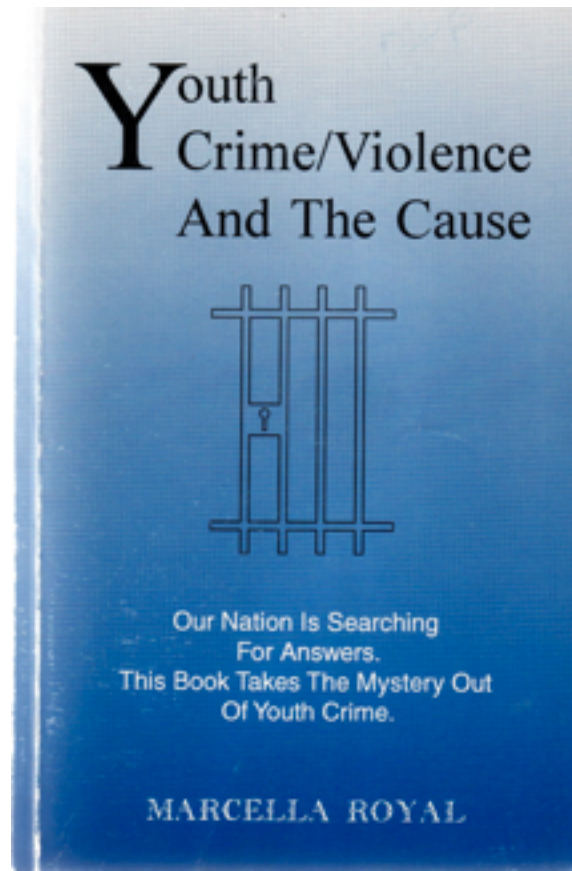


Excerpt From:



Excerpt from chapter sixteen, "Teaching Criminals Responsibility"...

Delancey Street Foundation

Those who believe our present criminal system is failing miserably and needs to be overhauled should seek out the workings of the Delancey Street Foundation in San Francisco. This foundation is completely self-supporting. It is run by its President, Dr. Mimi Silbert, who holds a Doctorate in Criminology.

All the residents are former drug addicts, drug pushers, prostitutes, robbers and attempted murderers. All have jail and prison records and came straight from the jails and off the streets.

There is no place in the world like Delancey Street. It is a spotless campus apartment house for people who have hit the bottom. They average twelve years of drug addiction and four trips to prison. They spend on the average of four years rebuilding their lives, learning moral values, three trades and earn the equivalent of a high school diploma.

**All the residents are former drug addicts,
drug pushers, prostitutes, robbers and attempted murderers.**

All the residents of Delancey Street have requested the opportunity to work out their sentences there, the alternative would be prison. Dr. Silbert says, “We are just as selective as Berkeley, Stanford and Harvard. We take only the bottom one or two percent, the same way they take only the top one or two percent.”

Two and Three Generation Criminal Families

Dr. Silbert said “In the last few years I’ve seen second or third generations of criminal families. That is the worst situation of them all.”

Remember, as earlier chapters mentioned, we now have two generations of people reared on the philosophy that says, “Don’t spank your child, try to understand why he is being irresponsible and rebellious.” The results? Old seasoned criminals are saying they don’t even want to be in jail with the young criminals. Not only are they dangerous but they lack a conscience.

**If they are drug addicts, they are told to lie
down on a couch and detox themselves**

Family Values Taught at Delancey Street

Dr. Silbert says they teach family values at Delancey Street. As I mentioned earlier, criminals are not taught family values because their families lacked that knowledge themselves. Since the 1950’s, family values have taken a back seat to the permissive way we see today.

Dr. Silbert knew long ago that we cannot have law-abiding citizens without first having moral values engraved in their minds. Morality is the foundation for any civilized community. **Lawlessness is the result of extreme selfishness.** Selfishness is the exact opposite of all moral values.

Delancey Street is different as there is no pampering. Drug addicts are told to lie down on a couch and detox themselves. It’s like having a bad flu, Dr. Silbert says. The second they look at all functional and can stand up, a broom is stuck in their hands and they sweat out the rest. A lot of time is not spent teaching these ex-cons and addicts how to stay off drugs, but time is spent teaching them how to have a life. Drugs are hardly spoken about.

When the inmates are drug free their images are changed with haircuts and the teaching of manners. Some learn for the first time how to use silverware properly. The Foundation has established legitimate businesses and these men and women work in them and earn a wage for their labor.

It Takes Work and Patience To Turn A Human Around

This may sound easy but, of course, it isn’t. It takes much work and patience to turn humans around. Some few will even give up and return to prison as it seems the

easiest way to go. Of course, in the long run we know it isn't. It takes much love, patience and wisdom to turn a hardened criminal into a law-abiding citizen.

The criminals are paying their debt to society and they are also learning to live properly and start a straight life. They live in clean, pleasant houses and dress like ladies and gentlemen, the thinking being, if you act like a lady and a gentleman you will become one.

Nobody, including themselves, ever believed they would be anything but worthless.

One of Delancey Street's thousands of successful graduates sits on San Francisco's Board of Supervisors. Others serve as deputy sheriffs, police officers, lawyers and business executives. Nobody, including themselves, ever believed they would be anything but worthless. Remember, these people all came from a life of crime, but they were not coddled. They were told they had to straighten out their lives or leave. If they leave they must go back to prison and complete their sentences.

These Criminals Are Given a Vision

The criminals are told how to dress and how to act. They are told they can be respectful and respected if they want to, but they must do it. They are given the vision of the good life and with strict rules and obedience to them, these ex-cons turn into strong moral individuals. It is a story of success that comes with hard work. We can turn around when it is demanded of us. They are told, "Yes, you can come here but you will live by our rules." You see, down deep, we all really want to live by the rules. It gives us a feeling of honor and accomplishment. It is only when we are allowed to get away with not living by the rules that we become self-destructive.

There could be a book written about this noble organization. There is not enough space here to expound on the change these men and women experience as they serve their time at Delancey Street.

Delancey Street proves that we humans need rules and laws to live by. When we do live by them, great heights can be attained; when we don't we sink to the depths of despair.

This story has been told to show that being submissive and obedient lifts us up in our own eyes, as well as in the eyes of others around us.

We can turn around when it is demanded of us.

Criminals Are Ruling Over Us

How much longer will our nation allow criminals to rule us? What has become of our wisdom? Why are we coddling these people? Would this have been tolerated fifty years ago? Law-abiding citizens still outnumber them!