

6th World Congress on Probation and Parole

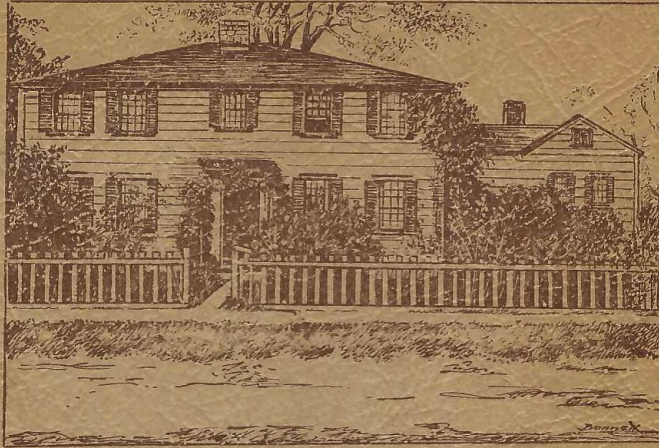
The Hague
April 17, 2024

Probation and Parole:
Occupation or Profession?

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Learning Objectives:

- To explore the concept of professions.
- To investigate how the concept applies to probation and parole.
- To provide recommendations and strategies to increase the professionalism of probation and parole.



JOHN AUGUSTUS

First Probation Officer

INTRODUCTION TO THE 1939 EDITION

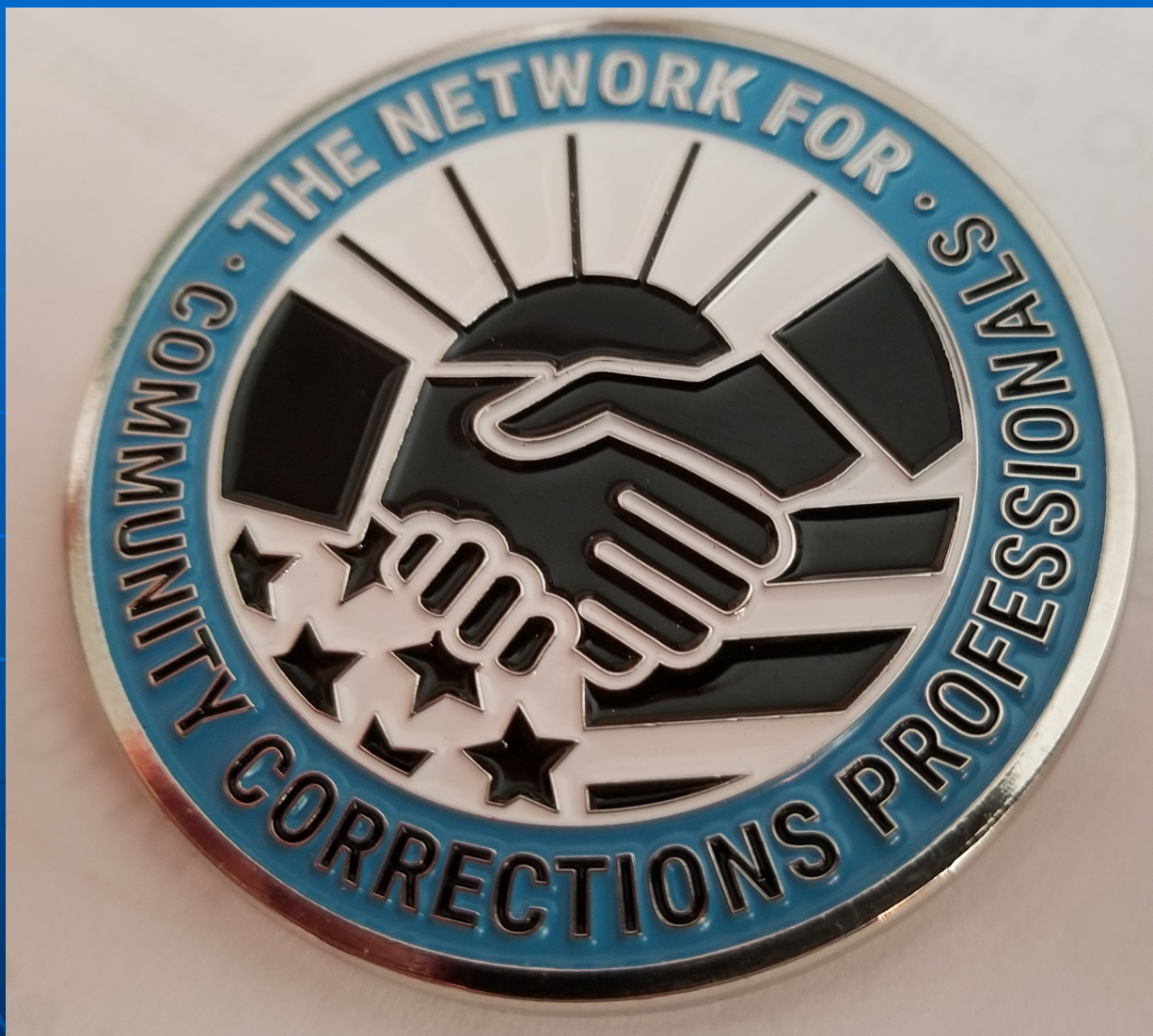
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EVERY profession has its geniuses, heroes, inspirers of those who come after. Medicine boasts of its Hippocrates, Vesalius, Pasteur, Reed; Law of its Mansfield, Blackstone, Marshall, Holmes. A name too little known among workers in the correctional field is that of John Augustus, the Boston maker of shoes who, in the middle of the past century, devoted much of his time, ingenuity and means to the making of decent citizens out of criminals. John Augustus is in a very real sense the father of probation.

If it be true that "the evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones," then, to reverse this law of ingratitude in even one instance is a public service. That is one good reason why the writer has undertaken to bring out this little known chronicle of the labors of a man who indeed deserves to be remembered by his fellowmen. But it is not the only reason.

Within the pages of John Augustus' quaint account of his stewardship of offending humanity is to be found much wisdom still untarnished by the passage of time; wisdom not only for judges and probation officers, but for social workers generally and indeed for all who believe in the essential goodness of humanity.

This account of Augustus' humane and wise ministry was published by him in Boston in 1852, at the request of his friends, "with diffidence yet with much self-gratification." It covers his activities in the Boston criminal courts during a ten year period prior to its publication. Evidently only a



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Professionalism in Probation

Dr Matt Tidmarsh

Academic Insights

November 2022

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Impact of Experienced Professionalism on Professional Culture in Probation

René Butter & Jo Hermanns

European Journal of Probation
Vol. 3, No.3, 2011, pp 31 – 42

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Definitions:

- *Occupation*: the principal business of one's life.
- *Vocation*: the work in which a person is employed.
- *Profession*: a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation.

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Characteristics of the professions:

- An identified body of knowledge that drives the practice of the profession.
- Demonstration of mastery of that body of knowledge through a standardized examination.
- Standards of practice based on the body of knowledge

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Characteristics (cont.)

- Specialized post-baccalaureate education.
- Supervised period of practice to demonstrate competence.
- Certification and licensure (revocable) to practice in the profession.

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Characteristics (cont.)

- A Code of Ethics.
- A monitoring and enforcement mechanism for the Code and the standards of practice.
- Continuing education requirements to maintain current knowledge and certification/licensure.

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Why Professionalize?

- *Standards of Practice*
- *Implementation of Standards of Practice*
- *Selection and Hiring*
- *The Nature of Professional Work*

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- No Professional Obligation
- No Consequences
- No Problem?

The Star-Ledger

N.J. surgeon who prescribed drugs to addicts ordered to close his practice.

Watson, who has been practicing addiction medicine since 2005, engaged in gross negligence and professional misconduct by prescribing high volumes of addictive benzodiazepines, stimulants and, in some cases, narcotics to his patients without sufficient medical justification, the attorney general said. He did not perform adequate physical exams, patient monitoring, or record keeping, the office said.

An inspection of his medical office and review of his patient records revealed that in some cases, he prescribed these drugs for years without fully assessing the patient's underlying medical conditions or referring the patient to alternate treatment providers, like psychiatrists, authorities said.

Watson admitted to investigators last year that he has no formal training in addiction medicine and did not see any patients in person or conduct any urine drug screens between March 2020 and August 2021, officials said. He also testified that he often did not obtain a patient's prior medical records; he diagnosed conditions—including psychiatric and neurological conditions—without adequate testing; and has prescribed CDS upon a patient's initial presentation before first prescribing safer alternative medications, as required.



STREET-LEVEL BUREAUCRACY

DILEMMAS OF
THE INDIVIDUAL
IN PUBLIC SERVICES
MICHAEL LIPSKY



Street-Level Bureaucrats

- Heavy Workloads
- Inadequate Resources
- Ambiguous Policies
- Wide Discretion
- Relative Independence

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“In human services, practitioners are the intervention. Evidence-based practices and programs can inform when and how they interact...but it is the person (the practitioner) who delivers the intervention through his or her words and deeds.”

(Fixen, et al 2005, p. 45)

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The Road to Increased
Professionalism
Runs Through Our
Professional Organizations

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What Should We Do?

- Help identify the body of knowledge that is essential to the practice of probation and parole.
- Establish standards of practice for the field and aggressively market them to the field and publicize with policy-makers and media.
- Develop and deliver continuing education

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What Should We Do? (cont.)

- Educate about and enforce the Code of Ethics
- Develop the means to demonstrate of mastery of the body of knowledge by candidates for PO



AMERICAN PROBATION AND
PAROLE ASSOCIATION

Code of Ethics

for the Field of Community Corrections

- I will render professional service to the justice system and the community at large in effecting the social adjustment of the offender.
- I will uphold the law with dignity, displaying an awareness of my responsibility to offenders while recognizing the right of the public to be safeguarded from criminal activity.
- I will strive to be objective in the performance of my duties, recognizing the inalienable right of all persons, appreciating the inherent worth of the individual, and respecting those confidences which can be reposed in me.
- I will conduct my personal life with decorum, neither accepting nor granting favors in connection with my office.
- I will cooperate with my co-workers and related agencies and will continually strive to improve my professional competence through the seeking and sharing of knowledge and understanding.
- I will distinguish clearly, in public, between my statements and actions as an individual and as a representative of my profession.
- I will encourage policy, procedures and personnel practices, which will enable others to conduct themselves in accordance with the values, goals and objectives of the American Probation and Parole Association.
- I recognize my office as a symbol of public faith and I accept it as a public trust to be held as long as I am true to the ethics of the American Probation and Parole Association.
- I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself to my chosen profession.



Code of Ethics

Revised December 2020



Image courtesy of [Romy Michaud](#) on [Pixabay](#).

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What Should We Do? (cont.)

- Certification/licensure
- A monitoring and enforcement mechanism for the Code of Ethics and standards of practice.

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Thoughts?

Reactions?

Suggestions?

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