

LSE Debating Law public debate



## Order without Law? Gangs and Other Forms of Alternative Social Order in and Beyond the Prison

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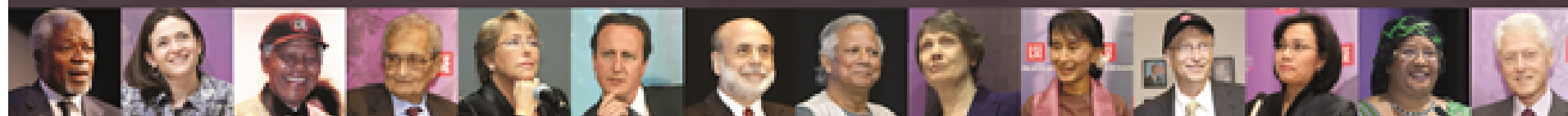
*Fellow in the Department of Sociology, LSE*

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**LSE events**

Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: **#LSEgangs**





























The prison's economy includes "cooks, painters, restaurateurs, carpenters, electricians, cleaners, accountants, [artisans], and doctors."











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THE

# **SOCIAL ORDER** OF THE UNDERWORLD

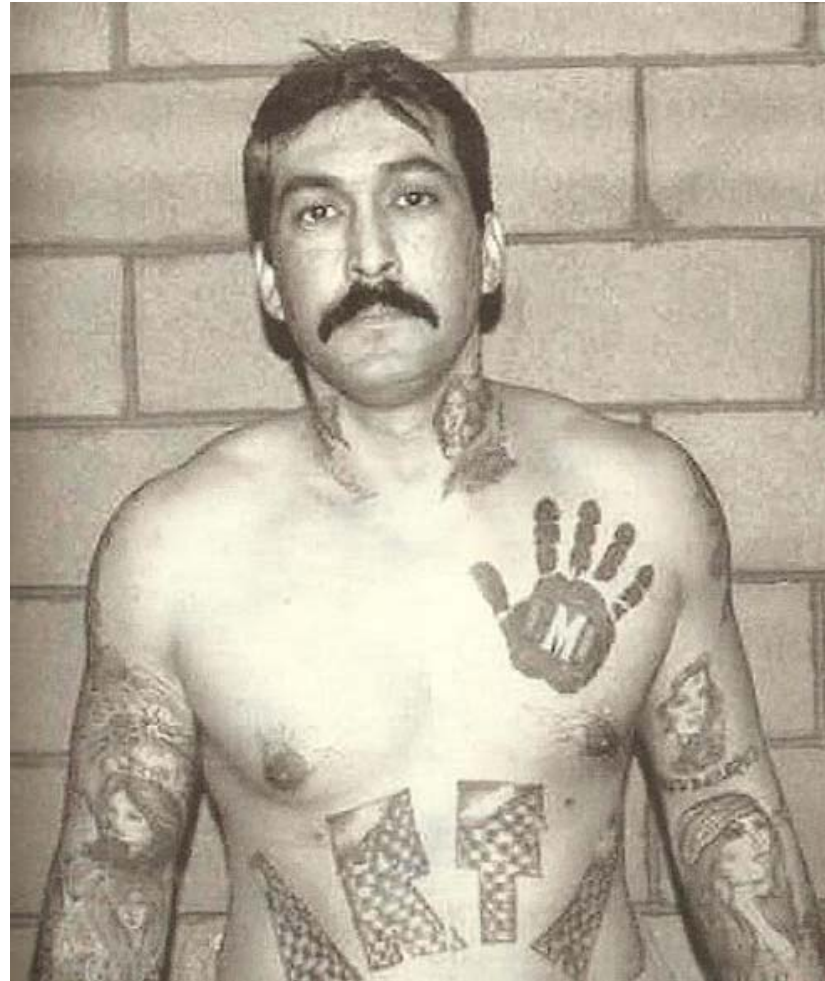
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How Prison Gangs Govern the  
American Penal System

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**DAVID SKARBEEK**

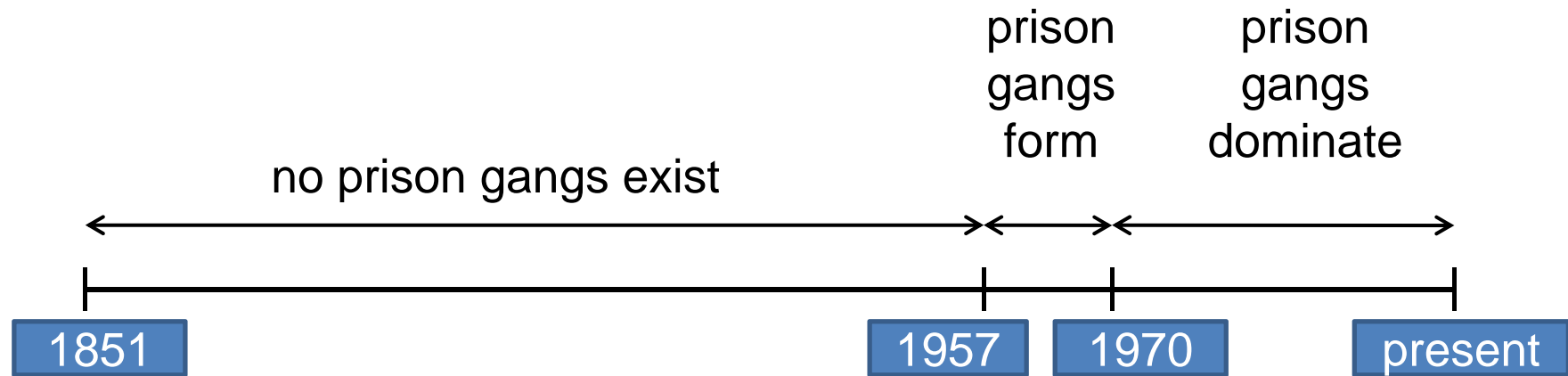








# The Puzzle of Prison Gangs



Never rat.

Don't be nosy.

Don't gossip.

Don't lie.

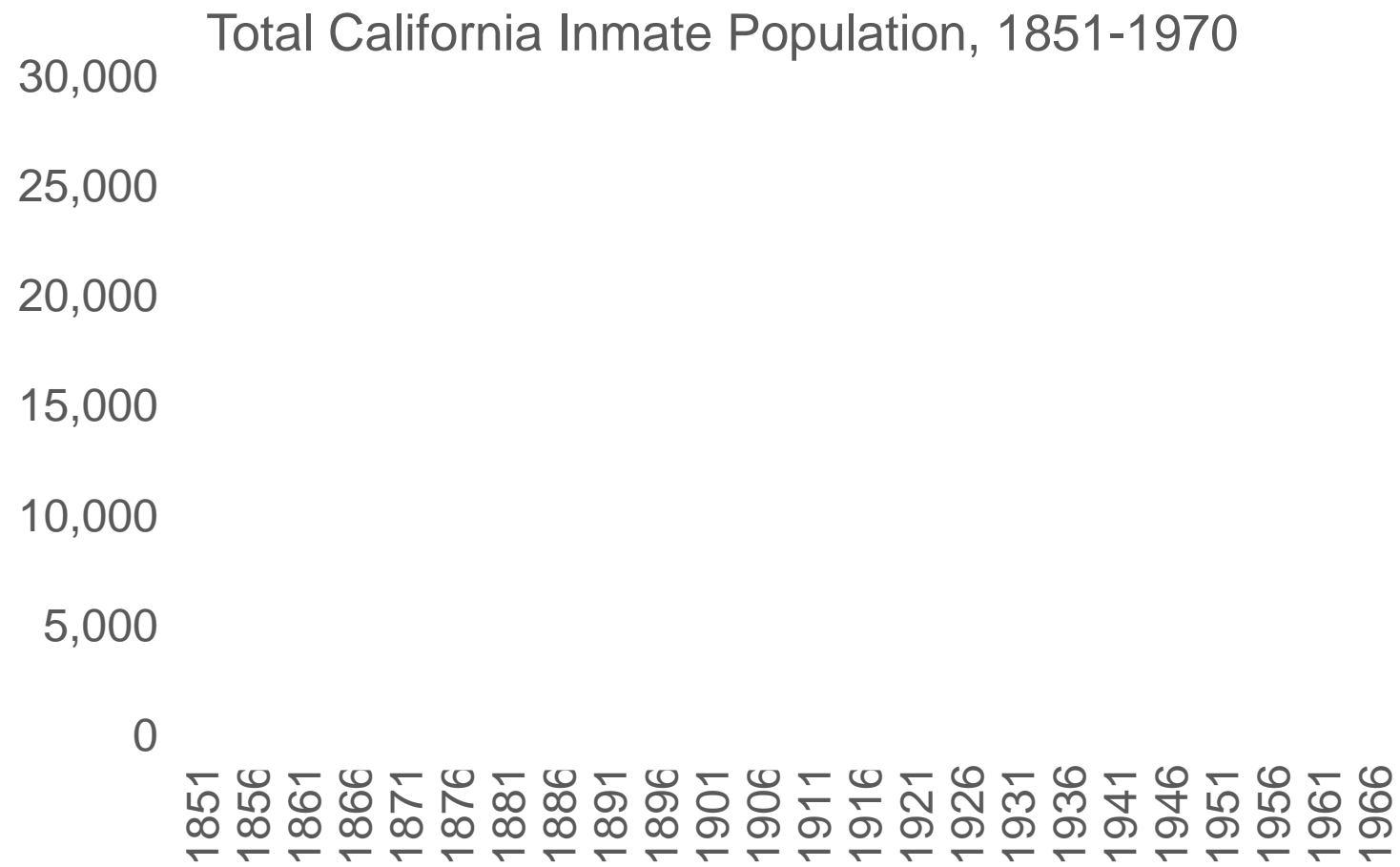
Don't steal.

Pay your debts.

Don't weaken.

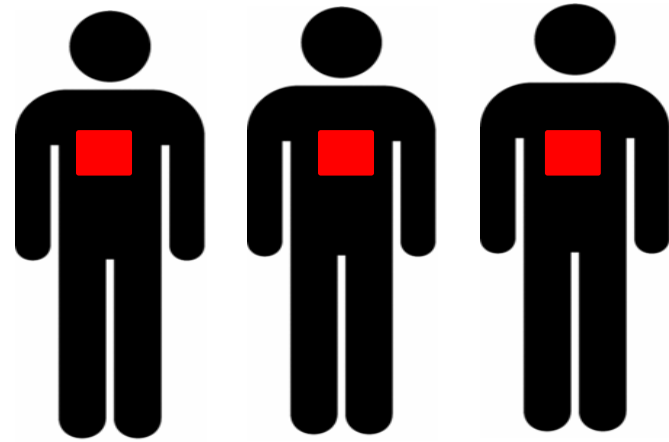
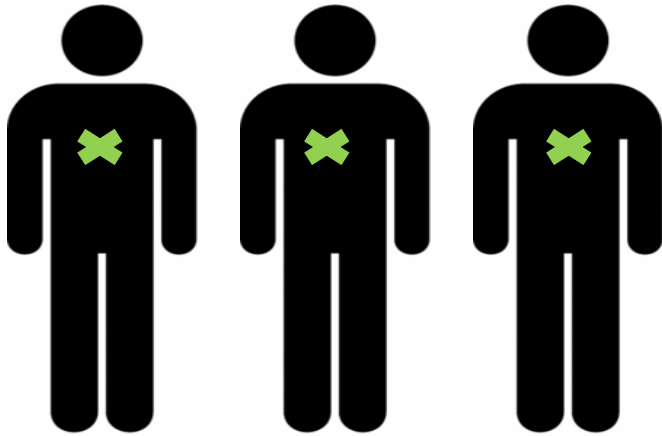
Don't whine.





Total California Inmate Population, 1851-2014







“We need to keep the boys in line. If one of our guys is a hot head or something and is always shooting off his mouth it can get everyone into trouble.

We don't want a lockdown, we don't want a riot...If one of my guys is messing up then we either offer him up to the other guys or we take him down ourselves.”

Trammell 2009, 763-764

“Well, we don’t fight in a riot and stuff unless we have to...If I’m locked down, then I’m not working. You can make some serious bank in prison and shot-callers hate it when you’re in lockdown”

Trammell 2011

‘there’s definitely not a gang scene going on’

‘It’s not really like there’s a gang that runs the prison’

‘where you heard of this gang thing?, I don’t know  
nothing about that’

-- from C. Phillips, *Punishment & Society*, 2012



Average Prison Population

4,000  
3,500  
3,000  
2,500  
2,000  
1,500  
1,000  
500  
0

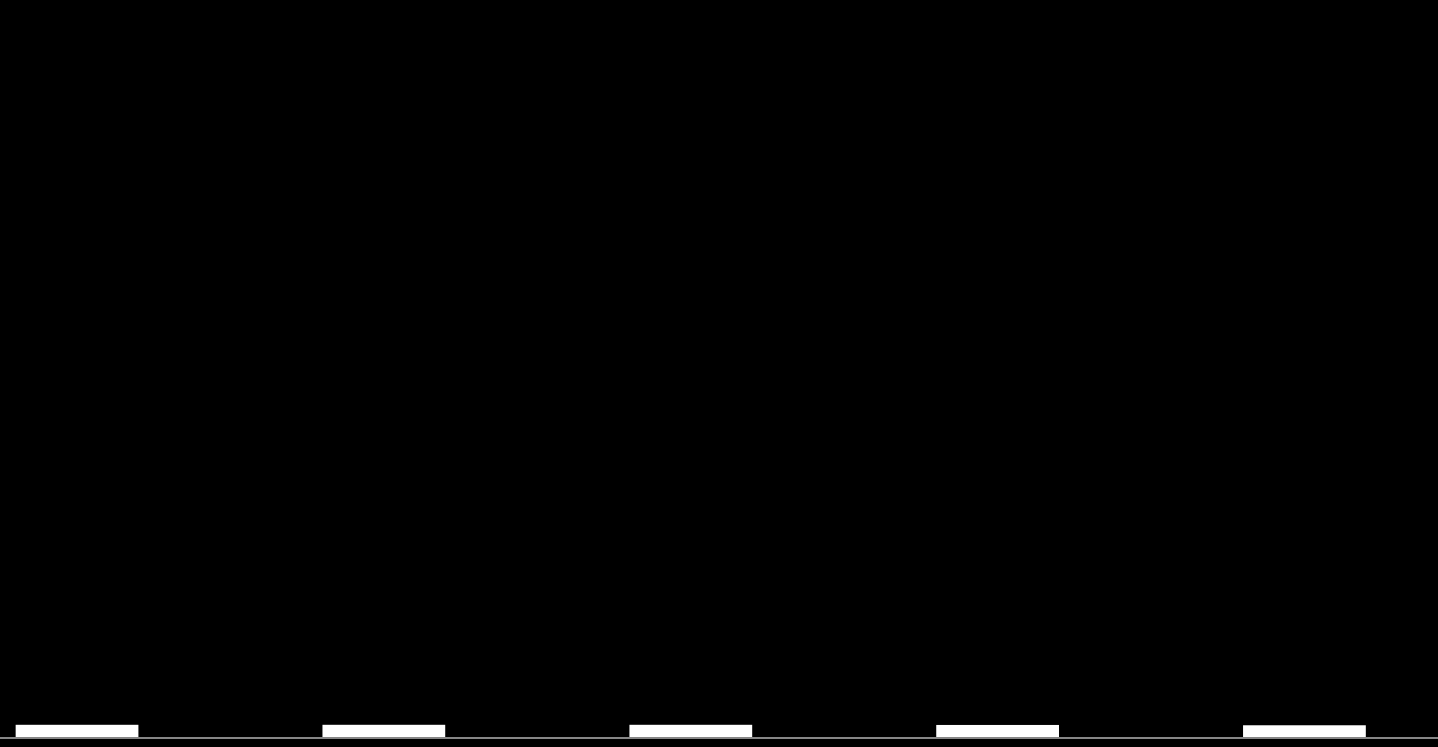
California

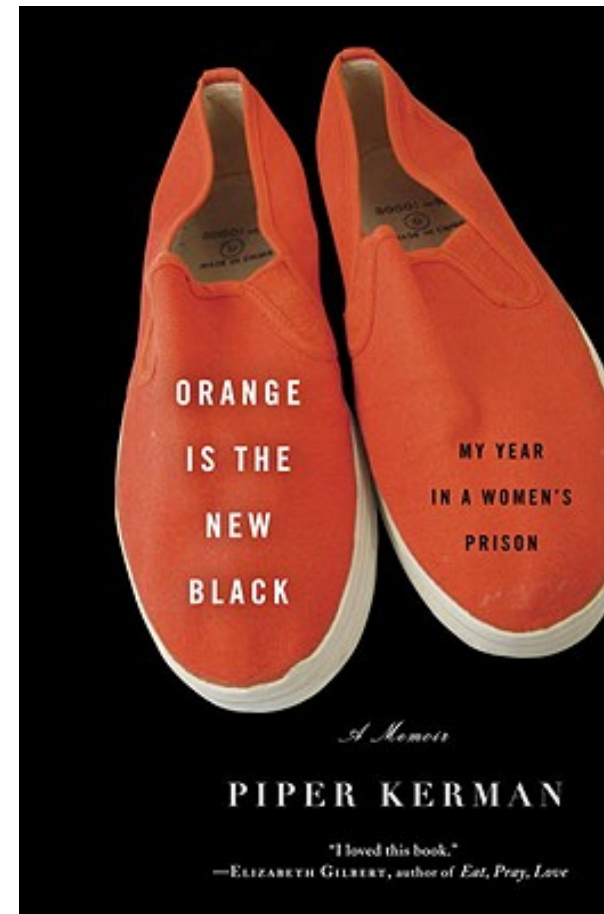
England  
& Wales

Norway

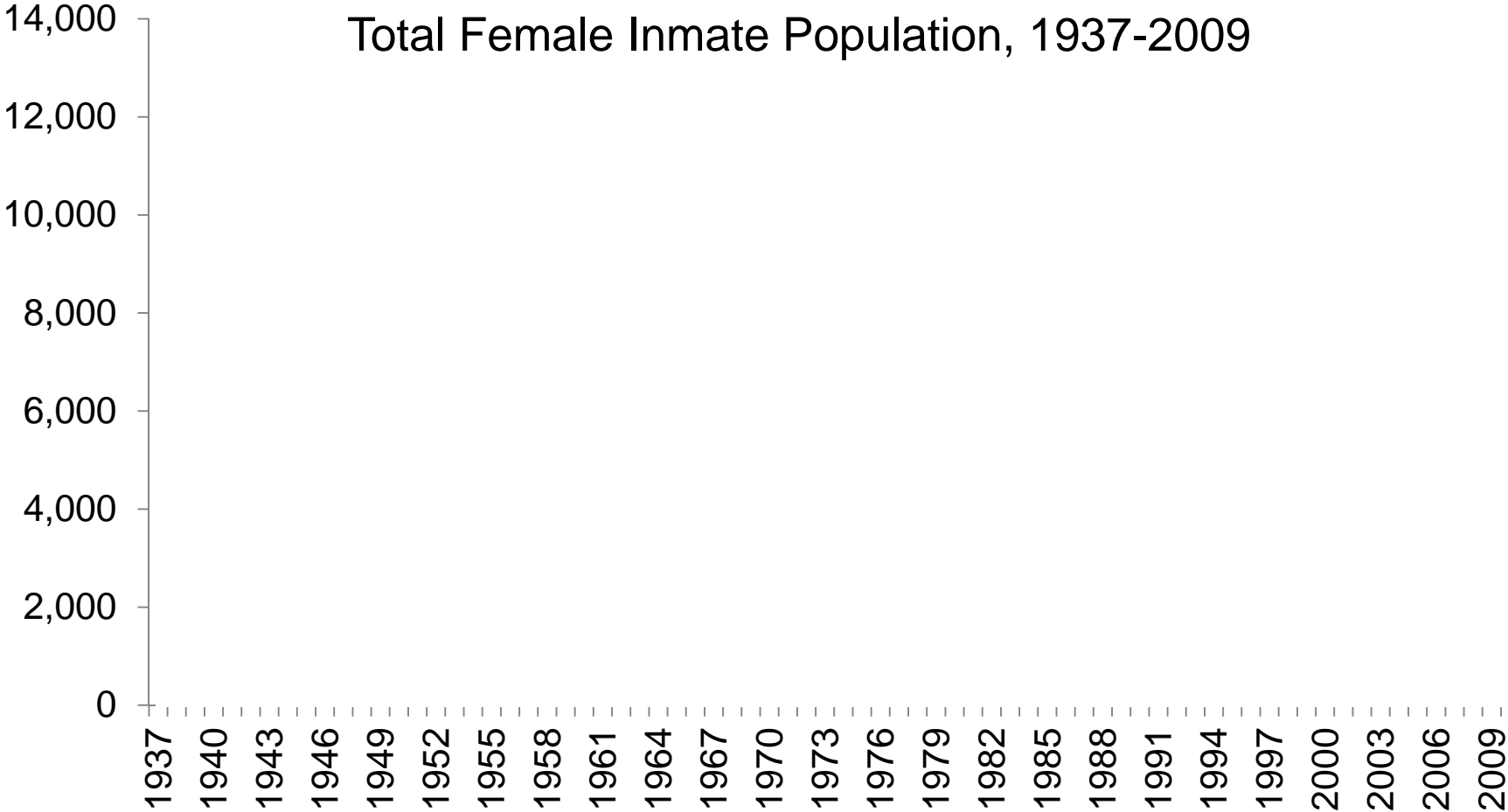
Sweden

Denmark



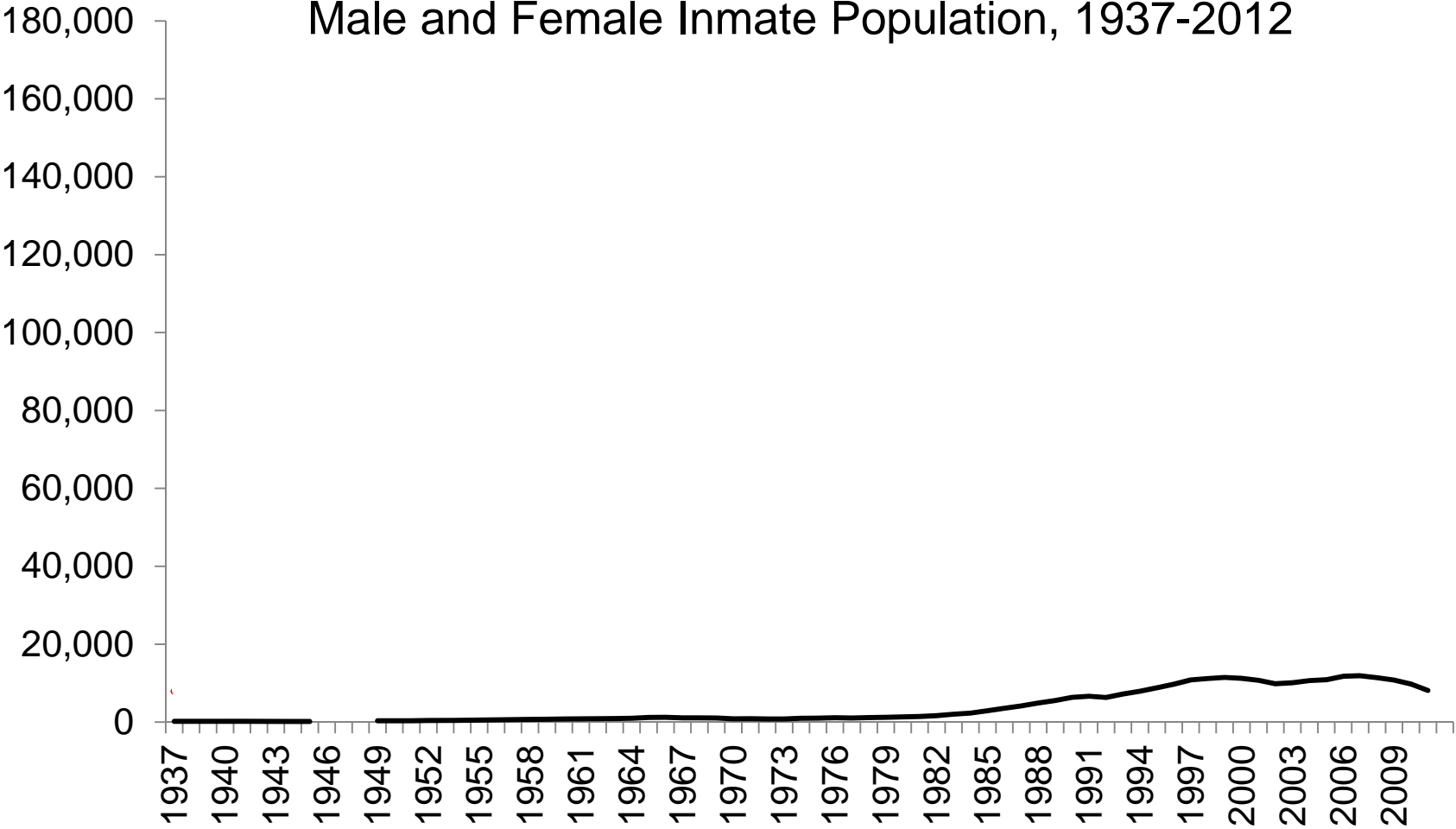


Total Female Inmate Population, 1937-2009





Male and Female Inmate Population, 1937-2012



Prison  
Use  
Rate

800  
700  
600  
500  
400  
300  
200  
100  
0

ir ir n fr k lll rll ir rr x x rr x rrr rr e xa lrl al x rr r x fr rr al rr e lrl lll kl rr al n

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