

CHAPTER 1: THE NATURE, PURPOSE, AND FUNCTION OF CRIMINAL LAW

HISTORY OF OHIO

Prior to the American Revolution, Ohio was occupied by the British, French, and Native Americans, all of whom were scattered across what was to become the Northwest Territory. In 1787, the Northwest Ordinance was passed, creating the Northwest Territory. The Ohio Company purchased more than 1.5 million acres of land in what is now Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The company sponsored a forty-eight member expedition to settle the new territory, which eventually was controlled by a group of five individuals appointed by the U.S. Congress -- a governor, a secretary, and three judges. These individuals performed the legislative, executive, and judicial functions in the territory.

Despite the settling of the Northwest Territory, there were tensions between the settlers, the British, and Native Americans. The British promised the Native Americans protection from the settlers, which heightened the strain between the parties. A noted battle in the early 1790s was not only instrumental in brokering peace between the settlers and Native Americans, but also enabled the settlers to push the British out of the territory. In the Battle of Fallen Timbers (south of Toledo), General Anthony Wayne engaged in a battle with various tribes, defeating them decisively. As a result, the Treaty of Greenville was passed in 1795 to negotiate peace and land transfers between the U.S. and two primary Native American tribes, the Chippewas and the Delawares (see Ohio Secretary of State Website, www.sos.state.oh.us).

CREATION OF OHIO'S GOVERNMENT

Not long after the Treaty of Greenville was signed, the formation of Ohio's government commenced. In 1799, after the number of settlers in Ohio exceeded 5,000, the U.S. Congress informed the settlers that they were allowed to convene and elect congressional representatives. In 1802, Ohio's first constitutional convention was held and Ohio's first constitution was ratified and admitted into the Union in 1803. In the constitution of 1803, the legislature was the center of power. Called the General Assembly, the legislature was bicameral, with a house of representatives and senate. Although the position of governor was created, this person had no veto power over legislative acts. Additionally, the legislature was to approve all governor appointments and appoint all judges.

Regarding the judicial branch, a two-tiered court system was created -- the Ohio Supreme Court and the Courts of Common Pleas. There was no intermediate appellate court created at this time. The constitution required justices of the Ohio Supreme Court to meet once each year in every county in the state, similar to circuit riding in the federal courts. At first, this was not a huge endeavor, as there were very few counties in the state at the time. Over time, however, this became a burden as the number of counties increased when the population increased (see www.ohiohistorycentral.org).

The 1803 constitution did not remain in its original form; it was heavily revised in 1851 and the 1851 constitution exists today in much of its original state. This version allowed Ohio voters to elect the governor, other state officials, and judges, taking this power out of the hands of the legislature. Voters could also approve constitutional amendments. Slavery was prohibited in the 1803 constitution, but African-Americans were not given the right to vote. This was reinforced in the 1851 constitution.

The 1851 constitution is organized much like the federal constitution, with a description of each branch of state government in order of importance: legislative, executive, judicial. What is interesting, however, is that, unlike the federal constitution, Article I of Ohio's constitution does not describe the legislative branch; this first section contains the state's bill of rights. There are twenty-one total rights listed (with two rights labeled 10 and 10a). A fair number of these rights deals with criminal law and procedure:

- § 5 – trial by jury
- § 8 – habeas corpus
- § 9 – right to bail except for capital crimes and public safety risks,
- § 10 – grand jury, right to defend oneself, counsel, speedy, public, impartial trial, self-incrimination, double jeopardy, compulsory process, face witnesses
- § 10a – victim's rights (added in 1994)
- § 12 – local jury
- § 14 – search warrants
- § 15 – no prison for debt
- § 16 – due process

Interestingly, section nine states that some defendants have a right to bail, something that is not guaranteed by the federal Bill of Rights. Additionally, section ten's self-incrimination protection contains language that goes against the U.S. Supreme Court case *Griffin v. California* (1965). In this case, the Court ruled that prosecutors and judges could not comment to the jury on the defendant's refusal to testify at trial. In the wording of section ten of Ohio's constitution, this is something that can be done:

No person shall be compelled, in any criminal case, to be a witness against himself; but his failure to testify may be considered by the court and jury and may be made the subject of comment by counsel.

Despite this, the current practice in Ohio is to abide by the Court's ruling in the *Griffin* case.

Articles II, III, and IV of Ohio's constitution describe the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, respectively. With regard to criminal law and procedure, the legislative branch is given the power to make laws, but there are some other sections of Article II that concern the criminal law. Section thirty-two states that the legislature cannot exercise any judicial power unless that power is expressly listed. Section thirty-nine allows the legislature to regulate expert testimony in criminal trials (added in 1912). Finally, section forty-one indicates that the legislature can regulate prison labor (added in 1912). Article III gives the executive branch (the governor) the power to grant reprieves, commutations, and pardons, and Article IV describes the makeup and role of the judicial branch (see Ohio's Constitution, www.legislature.state.oh.us/constitution.pdf).

HISTORIC THEMES IN OHIO LAW

Slavery/Civil Rights

Although slavery was prohibited in the Ohio constitution, Blacks did not receive the same rights and protections as Whites, such as voting rights. Fearful of economic competition from Blacks, legislators passed Black Laws in 1807 to discourage Black migration into Ohio from southern states. These laws required Blacks to prove that they were not slaves and to post a \$500 bond. This discouraged many Blacks from entering the state.

As a result of the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868, Ohio passed the Public Accommodations Law in 1884. This law prohibited discrimination in public buildings. Additionally, the Ohio Civil Rights Law was passed in 1894 to reinforce the Public Accommodations Law; it also made it illegal to discriminate in public businesses and buildings. Despite this, law enforcement officials rarely enforced the laws and businesses continued to discriminate against Blacks.

Due to the non-enforcement of these laws, the Ohio legislature enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1959. It prohibited employment discrimination based on "...race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry" as well as provided for fair access to public facilities and private businesses. The Act also created the Ohio Civil Rights Commission to enforce the provisions of the Act. Both the Act and Commission are still in place today (see www.ohiohistorycentral.org).

Temperance

The Temperance Movement was present in most, if not all, states, and Ohio temperance groups jumped on the bandwagon to regulate alcohol in the state. During the 1800s and early 1900s, religious and temperance groups felt that society was losing its moral compass and pointed to alcohol as partly to blame. In Ohio, so-called Blue Laws were passed during this time to prohibit the sale of alcohol on Sundays. These laws are still in place today, though they are a bit relaxed. The sale of alcohol can now take place after 11:00 on Sundays, though some businesses wait until after 1:00, when church services are over.

In 1883, the Pond Law was passed, which levied a tax on saloons. This law lasted only two months, however, as it was struck down by the Ohio Supreme Court as unconstitutional. In 1886, the Dow Law was passed, which permitted the state to tax and regulate trafficking of alcohol in the state. Saloon owners were required to pay fees in order to operate their businesses, but local governments were permitted to prohibit sales in their own towns. In 1908, the Rose Law was enacted to allow communities to put Prohibition on the ballot and to stop saloons from operating in their cities. Although it appears that Ohio was vigorous in zeal to regulate alcohol, the temperance movement's work was sporadic throughout the state (see www.ohiohistorycentral.org).

SOURCES OF LAW IN OHIO

There are multiple sources of law in Ohio (see Textbook, page 8-14). The highest source of law is constitutional law; state constitutions are the highest sources of law in the state, but all state constitutions (and all state and federal laws) must abide by the provisions in the U.S. Constitution.

The most common source of law in Ohio is statutory law, found in the Ohio Revised Code. The Code features twenty-six sections on topics ranging from agriculture to real estate. The Code has multiple sections for criminal law and procedure. Titles 19 – 27 deal with the structure and jurisdiction of the courts; for example,

The municipal court has jurisdiction of the violation of any ordinance of any municipal corporation within its territory...a judge of a municipal court does not have the authority to dismiss a criminal complaint, charge, information, or indictment solely at the request of the complaining witness and over the objection of the prosecuting attorney... (Ohio Revised Code, 1901.20 (A)(1)(2), 1998).

Title 29 contains the bulk of criminal law and procedure, focusing on defining crimes and punishments. The following is an example for the crime of menacing:

No person shall knowingly cause another to believe that the offender will cause physical harm to the person or property of such other person, such other person's unborn, or a member of the other person's immediate family...Whoever violates this section is guilty of menacing, a misdemeanor of the fourth degree (Ohio Revised Code, 2903.22 (A)(B), 2001).

Title 29 also provides for victims' rights and outlines criminal procedure from arrest through sentencing and appeal:

A victim in a case may be present whenever the defendant in the case is present during any stage of the case against the defendant that is conducted on the record, other than a grand jury proceeding, unless the court determines that exclusion of the victim is necessary to protect the defendant's right to a fair trial (Ohio Revised Code, 2930.09).

When, after arrest, the accused is taken before a court or magistrate...the court or magistrate shall, before proceeding further...[i]nform the accused of the nature of the charge against him and the identity of the complainant and permit the accused or his counsel to see and read the affidavit or complaint or a copy thereof... (Ohio Revised Code, 2937.02 (A)).

In addition to the criminal procedure outlined in the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio has a number of "Rules of Procedure" that apply to civil, criminal, appellate, juvenile, and claims courts and "Rules of Evidence" that were created by the Ohio Supreme Court. In 1968, Ohio voters approved the Modern Courts Amendment, which allowed the Ohio Supreme Court to create rules that govern all courts in Ohio. Although not statutory in nature, the Ohio Rules of Criminal Procedure is a supplement to the criminal procedure provisions found in the Ohio Revised Code.

Municipalities may also create statutory law, called ordinances. Ordinances are usually a duplication of the state code regarding some offenses, but ordinances only cover violations that call for less than one year incarceration or fines.

An interesting facet of Ohio's statutory criminal law involves the definitions of felonies and misdemeanors. In many states, felonies are defined as those offenses involving more than one year in prison, while misdemeanors are defined as those involving less than one year in jail (see Textbook, page 6). In Ohio, felonies are defined as offenses involving more than six months in prison, while misdemeanors are defined as those involving less than six months in jail.

A third source of law in Ohio is administrative law. Administrative law is outlined in the Ohio Administrative Code and is established by administrative agencies. The Code encompasses a wide range of topics from hunting and fishing to public health. Although administrative agencies are responsible for administrative law, adoption of new laws and regulations must be subject to multiple steps, including public hearings.

Finally, common law exists in Ohio and it "fills the gaps" not covered by statutory and administrative law. Common law is found in tort, contract, and other civil law and also encompasses judge-made (case) law.

STRUCTURE OF THE OHIO COURT SYSTEM

Ohio's court system is comprised of four levels – courts of limited jurisdiction, courts of general jurisdiction, intermediate appellate courts, and a state supreme court. These are discussed below and further information can be found at the Ohio Supreme Court's website at www.sconet.state.oh.us.

Among Ohio's courts of limited jurisdiction, there are four primary courts. Mayor's courts have jurisdiction over local ordinances and traffic cases. Mayor's courts are present in areas with more than 100 residents. Upon election or appointment, new mayors must undergo training to conduct procedures in the mayor's courts; they are not required to be lawyers. Municipal courts are found in most, but not all, counties in Ohio. These courts are generally found in more populated cities and have jurisdiction over misdemeanors, traffic cases, and civil cases up to \$15,000. There may be multiple municipal courts in one county. County courts are found in some counties and have the same jurisdiction as municipal courts, but only in areas that are outside the municipal court's coverage. Finally, claims courts have jurisdiction in all lawsuits against the state for personal injury, property damage, contracts, and wrongful death.

Ohio's courts of general jurisdiction are trial courts and are comprised of four divisions, but all are called courts of common pleas, a name that is a holdover from early common law. The general division handles civil and criminal cases as well as appeals from most administrative agencies. The domestic relations division has jurisdiction over divorces and child custody. The juvenile division has jurisdiction over juvenile cases and most paternity actions. Finally, the probate division handles estates, mental illness cases, adoptions, and marriage licenses. Not all counties have common pleas courts; some lesser populated counties combine with others due to lack of resources and caseload.

Ohio's eighty-eight counties are divided into twelve districts; these districts represent the jurisdiction of the twelve courts of appeal in Ohio. Working in three-judge panels, the courts of appeal have appellate review of the judgments of the common pleas courts as well as the municipal and county courts. They also have original jurisdiction in some cases, including those dealing with habeas corpus (allegations of unlawful confinement) and mandamus (compelling a public official to perform a required act).

The Ohio Supreme Court is the highest court in the state of Ohio. It is presided over by a Chief Justice and six associate justices. According to its website, the Ohio Supreme Court,

[is the] court of last resort on state constitutional questions of public or great general interest; appeals from the Board of Tax Appeals and Public Utilities Commission; all death sentences; original jurisdiction in select cases
(www.sconet.state.oh.us/introduction/default.asp)

Like Ohio's courts of appeal, the original jurisdiction power encompasses issues such as habeas corpus and mandamus, among others.

In recent years, the Ohio Supreme Court has tackled some controversial issues. For example, in 1996, the Ohio General Assembly passed Senate Bill 2, which altered sentencing policies in the state. Among the policies was a form of punishment called "bad time," which allowed prison officials to prosecute, convict, and punish prisoners for criminal violations that occurred during the course of the prisoner's incarceration. In effect, prison officials could form a judicial function and add time to a prisoner's existing sentence if convicted of the criminal violation. The Ohio Supreme Court ultimately struck down this provision, stating that prison officials, as part of the

executive branch, were performing a judicial function; this violates the doctrine of separation of powers under the Ohio constitution (see *State ex rel. Bray v. Russel*, 729 N.E.2d.259, 2000). Another controversial issue was recently addressed by the Ohio Supreme Court. The case involves the extent to which juries can consider a defendant's damaging childhood when deciding whether to impose a death sentence. Under Ohio law, childhood experience is a mitigating factor, but it was only considered if the defendant suffered from some form of mental illness. In the most recent case, however, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that childhood experience, in this case, the horrific and traumatic childhood of the defendant, must be considered upon sentencing, regardless of presence of mental illness. This case marked the first time, in over two hundred death penalty decisions, that the Ohio Supreme Court reversed a death sentence based on the troubled childhood of the defendant, stating that a traumatic childhood alone could justify a life sentence rather than the death penalty (see *State v. Tenace*, 109 OhioSt.3d255, 2006).

Primary Actors in the Ohio Court System

Judges

Judges in Ohio are elected by voters in a non-partisan election. Judges at all court levels are elected (or re-elected) every six years and there are no term limits. The minimum requirements for all judgeships are 1) at least six years experience in the practice of law and 2) a resident of the county (for common pleas courts) or district (for courts of appeal). Although there are no term limits, there is an age limit of 70 for all judges.

The entire state elects the justices on the Ohio Supreme Court, residents of each district elect their respective courts of appeal judges, and residents of each county elect the judges of the common pleas courts. In the event of a vacancy, the governor appoints a judge who then must be elected by voters during the next election cycle.

In 1996, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 2 to establish, among other things, determinate sentencing throughout the state. This greatly limited the discretion that judges enjoyed during the previous indeterminate sentencing years. However, judges in Ohio still retain some discretion in cases that do not call for a mandatory term.

Prosecutors

According to the Ohio Revised Code (Chapter 309), county prosecutors are elected every four years and must be licensed to practice law in the state. There are no term limits for prosecutors. Each county's voters elect their respective chief prosecuting attorney. The Ohio Revised Code also provides for the selection of assistant prosecutors by each county's chief prosecuting attorney. The state attorney general, though considered the chief law enforcement officer of the state, is actually the chief prosecutor in the state, although the attorney general has no direct supervisory power over the county prosecutors.

The structure of each county's prosecuting offices varies depending on the size of the county and the caseload. In Cuyahoga County (Cleveland), for instance, the prosecutor's office is comprised of twelve different units, each handling different types of crimes. These units are as follows:

- major trial unit (homicides and rapes)
- economic crime unit (white collar offenses)
- domestic violence/stalking unit
- major drug offenders unit (trafficking)

- general felony unit (all other felonies)
- appeals unit
- grand jury/arraignment unit
- juvenile justice unit
- children and family services unit
- child support enforcement unit
- drug court unit
- police court unit (probable cause hearings)

Other, less populated counties, such as Wood County for instance, only contain a few units or divisions: criminal, civil, juvenile, appellate (see the Cuyahoga County Prosecutors website at www.prosecutormason.org/criminal_division.asp)

Defense Attorneys

As in other states, defense attorneys in Ohio are either retained or assigned. The appointed counsel system in Ohio contains a mixture of public defenders and court-appointed counsel. Ohio has a Public Defender System, established in 1976, which establishes rules and guidelines for counties that utilize a public defender system. The Ohio Public Defender Commission is a nine-member body appointed by the governor and the Ohio Supreme Court to oversee the Ohio public defender system. Although it provides assistance to the counties, the Ohio Public Defender System's primary focus is appeals and post-conviction cases; approximately one-half of its staff and resources is devoted to death penalty cases.

In more populated counties, a public defender system is utilized; thirty-three counties utilize a public defender system that is locally administered. In eleven other counties, assigned counsel is contracted out through the Ohio Public Defender System. In the remaining counties (44), private-assigned counsel or non-profit organizations are utilized. The type of defense system utilized in the counties is determined by each county's Board of Commissioners (see the Ohio Public Defender's website at http://opd.ohio.gov/us/US_AboutUS.htm).

Jurors

Jurors are often overlooked as court actors, yet they make critical decisions every day in the courtroom. In Ohio, defendants have a right to a trial by jury if they face possible incarceration. Bench trials are also allowed if the defendant wishes it.

According to the Ohio Rules of Criminal Procedure, capital and other felony trials utilize twelve jurors, while misdemeanor trials utilize eight jurors. Verdicts for all trials must be unanimous. Jurors are chosen based on voter registration and driver's license lists maintained by each county. Once called for jury service, jurors are subject to voir dire, where they are subject to being challenged by the prosecutor or defense. The Ohio Rules of Criminal Procedure outlines fourteen types of challenges for cause:

A person called as a juror may be challenged for the following causes:

- 1) That he has been convicted of a crime which by law renders him disqualified to serve on a jury.
- 2) That he is a chronic alcoholic, or drug dependent person.
- 3) That he was a member of the grand jury which found the indictment in this case.
- 4) That he served on a petit jury drawn in the same cause against the same

- defendant, and such jury was discharged after hearing the evidence or rendering a verdict thereon which was set aside.
- 5) That he served as a juror in a civil case brought against the defendant for the same act.
 - 6) That he has an action pending between him and the State of Ohio or the defendant.
 - 7) That he or his spouse is a party to another action then pending in any court in which an attorney in the cause then on is an attorney, either for or against him
 - 8) That he as been subpoenaed in good faith as a witness in the case.
 - 9) That he is possessed of a state of mind evincing enmity or bias toward the defendant or the state; but no person summoned as a juror shall be disqualified by reason of a previously formed or expressed opinion with reference to the guilt or innocence of the accused, if the court is satisfied, from the examination of the juror or from other evidence, that he will render an impartial verdict according to the law and the evidence submitted to the jury at the trial.
 - 10) That he is related by consanguinity or affinity within the fifth degree to the person alleged to be injured or attempted to be injured by the offense charged, or to the person on whose complaint the prosecution was instituted, or the defendant.
 - 11) That he is the person alleged to be injured or attempted to be injured by the offense charged, or the person on whose complaint the prosecution was instituted, or the defendant.
 - 12) That he is the employer or employee, or the spouse, parent, son, or daughter of the employer or employee, or the counselor, agent, or attorney, of any person included in subsection (11).
 - 13) That English is not his native language, and his knowledge of English is insufficient to permit him to understand the facts and the law in this case.
 - 14) That he is otherwise unsuitable for any other cause to serve as a juror.

(Ohio Rules of Criminal Procedure, Crim R 24, 2005).

In addition to challenges for cause, jurors may be challenged through the use of peremptory challenges. In capital cases, prosecutors and defense attorneys each have six peremptory challenges. In felony cases, each may utilize four; in misdemeanor cases, each side has three peremptory challenges.

LANDMARK CASES IN OHIO

Mapp v. Ohio 367 U.S. 643 (1961)

Police were searching for a person of interest regarding a recent bombing and the possession of “policy paraphernalia.” Police tracked the person to a two-family dwelling in Cleveland; Dollree Mapp was living on the top floor of the dwelling. Police asked to enter the dwelling without a warrant and Ms. Mapp refused them entry. Hours later, police forcibly entered the dwelling absent a warrant, handcuffed Ms. Mapp, and proceeded to search the entire dwelling for the suspect and policy paraphernalia. Police found obscene materials in a trunk in the basement and arrested Ms. Mapp for possession of those materials. On appeal, Ms. Mapp claimed that police did not have authority to enter the dwelling without a warrant and the U.S. Supreme Court

agreed, stating that, “[a]ll evidence obtained by searches and seizures in violation of the Federal Constitution is inadmissible in a criminal trial in a state court.” This case extended the federal exclusionary rule to the states.

Terry v. Ohio 392 U.S. 1 (1968)

Officer McFadden of the Cleveland Police Department was patrolling the streets when he witnessed three suspicious individuals whom he believed were “casing a job, a stick-up.” Upon approaching the individuals, Officer McFadden asked them questions, to which they “mumbled something.” Fearing for his safety, Officer McFadden proceeded to frisk each individual’s outer clothing, finding a firearm on two of the individuals. The individuals objected to the officer’s actions, claiming that they were not doing anything illegal and that the officer’s actions amounted to an illegal search and seizure. The U.S. Supreme Court disagreed, claiming that Officer McFadden had the authority to inquire about suspicious activity on the part of individuals on the street. After the inquiry, if the officer feared for his safety, he has the authority to conduct a pat down of the outer clothing of the individuals to search for weapons. This case established the guidelines for police to conduct a “stop and frisk” on individuals.

Jacobellis v. Ohio 378 U.S. 184 (1964)

Jacobellis was the manager of a movie theatre in Cleveland Heights and was charged with possessing and showing an obscene film, "Les Amants" ("The Lovers"), in violation of the Ohio Revised Code. The question in this case was whether the film was, in fact, obscene according to the First Amendment’s protection of free expression. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the movie was not obscene, prompting Justice Stewart to declare that the First Amendment protects all but “hard-core pornography.” Further, Justice Stewart noted: “I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description; and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that.”

REFERENCES

Griffin v. California 380 U.S. 609 (1965)

Jacobellis v. Ohio 378 U.S. 184 (1964)

Mapp v. Ohio 367 U.S. 643 (1961)

Ohio Revised Code, www.ohio.gov/ohio/ohiolaws.html. It should be noted that different statutes have different dates; these dates reflect the date the individuals statute took effect.

Ohio Rules of Criminal Procedure, www.sconet.state.oh.us/Rules/criminal/default.asp

State ex rel. Bray v. Russel, 729 N.E.2d.259, 2000

State v. Tenace, 109 OhioSt.3d255, 2006

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the Treaty of Greenville?
 - a. A treaty between the British and Native Americans to fight against Ohio settlers
 - b. A treaty signed after the Battle of Fallen Timbers between Ohio settlers and Native Americans to acquire lands and make peace
 - c. A treaty between temperance groups and saloon owners to regulate alcohol sales on Sunday
 - d. A treaty between Ohio settlers and the British to eradicate Native Americans in the Northwest Territory

2. What is the name of Ohio's trial courts of general jurisdiction?
 - a. Mayor's courts
 - b. Municipal courts
 - c. Common Pleas courts
 - d. County courts

3. Most of Ohio's criminal law and procedure is found in which of the following?
 - a. Ohio constitution
 - b. Ohio bill of rights
 - c. Ohio Revised Code
 - d. Ohio Administrative Code

4. How are judges selected in Ohio?
 - a. elected by voters
 - b. selected by the legislature
 - c. selected by the governor's advisory panel
 - d. elected by county prosecutors

5. How did *Mapp v. Ohio* affect criminal procedure?
 - a. it established the practice of "stop and frisk" for police procedures
 - b. it extended the exclusionary rule for illegally-seized evidence to the states
 - c. it stated that prosecutors are not allowed to comment on a defendant's refusal to testify
 - d. it established rules for determining obscenity

DISCUSSION QUESTION

As stated in the chapter, Ohio defines felonies as those offenses that are eligible for six months or more incarceration. Most states define felonies as those offenses that are eligible for one year or more in prison. What are some possible benefits of defining felonies as Ohio does? What potential problems does Ohio's definition pose for the court system and, especially, the prison system?

WEB RESOURCES

- www.sos.state.oh.us – website for the Ohio Secretary of State, contains information about Ohio’s history
- www.ohiohistorycentral.org – provides a detailed history of Ohio on a wide range of topics
- www.lsc.state.oh.us/statusreport.html - website of the Ohio Legislative Services Commission, providing reports on legislation in Ohio
- www.legislature.state.oh.us/constitution.pdf - website of the Ohio General Assembly, with a link to Ohio’s constitution
- www.sconet.state.oh.us – website of the Ohio Supreme Court, with links to information about the Ohio judicial system at all levels
- www.ohio.gov/ohio/ohiolaws.html - website of the Ohio state government, with links to the Ohio Revised Code
- www.ohiobar.org – website of the Ohio Bar Association, with information about many aspects of Ohio law, including sources of law and structure of the Ohio court system
- http://opd.ohio.gov/us/US_AboutUS.htm - website of the Ohio Public Defender for information about Ohio’s appointed counsel system and yearly reports regarding the performance of the OPD
- www.prosecutormason.org/criminal_division.asp - website of Cuyahoga County Prosecutor for information about the various units in place
- www.findlaw.com – website for public access to state and federal court decisions