

# Howard League for Penal Reform

## Early Career Academics Network Bulletin

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### ECAN Facebook Group



The Howard League for Penal Reform is active on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). There is a special page dedicated to the Early Careers Academic Network that you can reach either by searching for us on Facebook or by clicking on the button above. We hope to use the Facebook site to generate discussions about current issues in the criminal justice system. If there are any topics that you would like to discuss, please start a discussion.

## Introduction

Prisons and the penal system have been regularly in the public domain presenting the Howard League with both challenges and opportunities to actively engage people in thinking about justice and penal reform, and to consider the possibilities of creating social and penal institutions that can contribute to the realisation of safer and more cohesive communities. Our CEO, Frances Crook, provided an alternative vision in her recent article in [The Guardian](#).

Alternative visions were also proffered at our international conference Redesigning Justice: Civil rights, fairness and trust. This event was extremely well attended with a range of academics and practitioners from all over the world. If you did not attend the conference there will be ECAN special issues based on some of the papers presented. There will also be more information on our website's [research pages](#).



Our legal team was also able to launch an innovative sentencing toolkit at the conference. This is aimed at ensuring better outcomes for children facing sentence in the criminal courts. It has three separate sets of resources: child-friendly information including a leaflet-come-poster and an App; information for

adults supporting children in the criminal courts; and, a list of useful resources. All these materials are [downloadable](#).



Away from our conference we marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Corston Report by working with our [APPG on women in penal system](#) to launch a new inquiry into the sentencing of women. Baroness Corston, it's Co-Chair commented: "Seven in 10 women entering prison are sent there to serve sentences of six months or less. One in four is jailed for 30 days or less, and almost 300 women last year were given sentences of two weeks or less. ... The need for a rethink on sentencing could not be clearer, and I hope that this inquiry will help to encourage and enable the magistracy to send fewer women to prison." [Baroness Corston with MPs Kate Green and Victoria Prentis](#) wrote a feature about the need for the inquiry.

To keep up to date with all our work and please [join](#) the Howard League. We can only continue to undertake all these things with your help.

**Anita Dockley, Research Director**

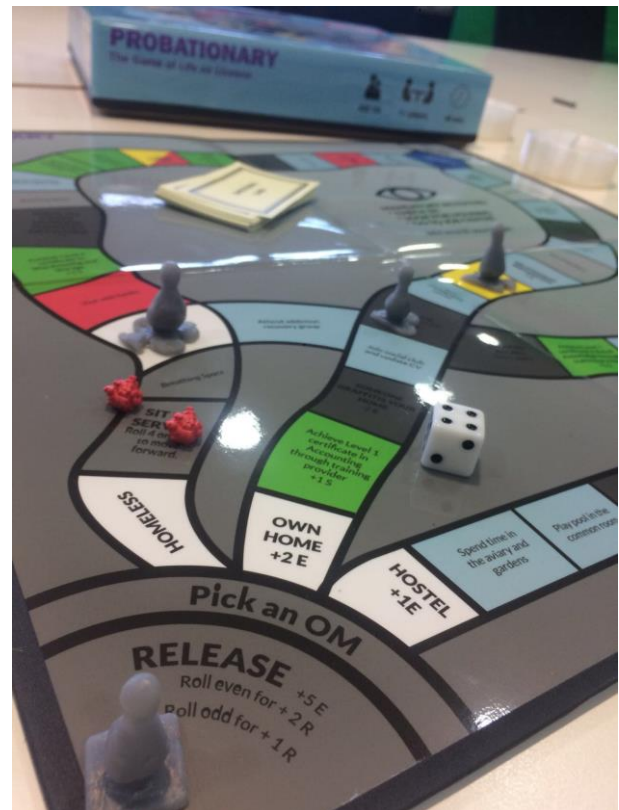
## Features

### Probationary: The Game of Life of Licence

Anne Hayes, Will Jackson, Emma Murray and Steve Wakeman

Our research aims to understand how artworks produced through collaborative methodologies can contribute alternative forms of knowledge to policy discourse. We want to explore the potential of a partnership between criminology, art, and penal reform agendas, which align scholarship, artistic practice, and campaigning to harness the messages contained within each piece of co-produced art. Our first project has focused on the probation system in England and Wales and suggests that this way of working has much to offer campaigns for change in the criminal justice system.

*Probationary: The Game of Life on Licence*<sup>1</sup> was created through workshops with men on licence and explores the lived experience of being on probation. It takes the form of a board game and takes its players on a journey through the eyes of four playable characters as they negotiate the complexities of the probation process. Board games, from *Monopoly* to the *Game of Life*, contain within them the structures and values of the society in which they are produced, presenting back to us the world in



which we live. Taking this as a starting point, *Probationary* reflects real experiences of being subject to the criminal justice system and presents us with an opportunity to collectively play, understand and discuss such systems within our contemporary society.

As an artwork, the board-game was produced through socially engaged art (SEA) workshops with men on licence, which asked the group to consider their understandings of 'justice', 'luck', 'equality', and 'sentencing'. As an artistic approach, participatory methodologies are employed

<sup>1</sup> Created by Hwa Young Jung with men on licence. Commissioned and produced by FACT, supported by Liverpool John Moores University

throughout the production of works, placing individuals and communities at the centre of the collaborative creative process. SEA's treatment of social and political issues is often associated with activist strategies – referred to by some as 'artivism' – an approach which merges 'the boundless imagination of art and the radical engagement of politics' (Jordan, 2016:1). To align criminological scholarship, and policy reform agendas, at the boundaries of art and activism, is to draw upon the transformative and poetic qualities of art, to mobilise, and to inspire.

### **Art in the criminal justice system**

'Traditional', (if there is such a word in relation to this field), arts-based interventions within the criminal justice system are as vast as they are varied. They tend to fall within the areas of prevention; intervention; and resettlement, and involve a diverse range of activities usually incorporating a creative, affective, and reflective dimension. The transformative, therapeutic value of the arts within criminal justice settings cannot be underestimated and there is a wealth of evidence documenting their benefit and impact in relation to meeting the needs of prisoners, as a route to education, accessing cultural communities, increasing social participation, recovering health, improving rehabilitative effects, etc. (see <http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/>). The current criminal justice landscape is ripe for arts-based interventions to take centre stage. The Lammy Review was welcomed by the Arts Council in relation to the ability of the arts to access people from BAME backgrounds

throughout the criminal justice system; the Culture White Paper, published in 2016, referenced how cultural interventions can be beneficial to prisoners, ex-offenders, and those 'at risk'; and the Review of Evidence published by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) in 2013 linked arts projects to the process of desistance from crime (Burrowes, 2013). This landscape along with the opening up of the rehabilitation market-place by the Ministry of Justice in 2013, in principle, provides opportunities for arts-based projects.

However, there are arguably problems with the way in which arts based interventions are understood and evaluated by government. This is exacerbated by the fact that many small arts programmes do not have the financial stability and they are required by the contracts that payment is restricted to services that deliver 'real reductions in reoffending' (MOJ, 2013:6) which is problematic. Many arts-based programmes successes are linked to 'soft' outcomes that involve changes within the individual. Examples include increased self-esteem; growth in confidence; raised aspirations; better health and wellbeing; improved behaviour and conflict management; healthier psychological well-being; stronger familial relationships; greater communication skills; and reversing negative social attitudes (Hughes, 2005). These 'soft' outcomes should not be under-valued and can be crucial in an person's journey to desistance, as individuals redefine themselves and change their notion of self (McNeill et al, 2011). However,



they are difficult to measure and quantify against 'hard' outcomes that involve measurable changes, like stopping offending, improved educational attainment, etc. We agree that the government should retain a commitment to the arts in this context and should rethink the way that impact is measured. We recognise that there is a great deal of excellent work being done to explore the therapeutic potential of the arts in the criminal justice system but as, explained above, activism is based on a different understanding of the qualities and potential of art. The aim of this work is not only to effect change on individuals at an individual level, but to seek transformation at a systemic level too. In the current criminal justice context, we are therefore seeking to utilise the space opened for the arts, to ask difficult questions, including of the state, by critically exploring and challenging existing understandings of the experiences of the criminal justice system.

### **Creative criminology and art as method**

We also believe that this project has potential for the wider field of criminology as it represents an alternative method of *doing* criminology; that is, an alternative way of learning about crime, deviance, and the agencies/systems of their control. The need for this is well established, and we would hardly be the first to note that criminology as a field is characterised by a rigid adherence to established social scientific research practices. While it is important to stress that this isn't necessarily a bad thing in and of itself, what we hope to show here is that there *are* alternative ways of

doing things which can have very interesting results. In this instance, both the collaboration with art and the co-production of a board game tells us more about 'life on licence' than more traditional approaches such as interviewing probationers. It represents an alternative way of doing criminology and has underpinned the production of alternative knowledge. In this respect, we think our approach has pertinent implications for the wider field.

In embracing 'play' as a constructive medium, we were able to learn about the experiences of life on probation in ways that other methods might not have facilitated quite so easily. Gadd and Jefferson (2007) were some of the most prominent criminologists to stress the importance of reading data critically in criminology, and not simply 'telling it like it is'. We shared their beliefs here, and sought to 'read' the production of the game as data to be learnt from in and of itself. The results of this were interesting to say the least. To give one example, all the way through the process participants *talked* about the importance of material conditions (good housing and meaningful employment opportunities mostly), but when it came to assigning value to experiences in the game by way of 'e-tokens' (measures of how well one is doing in the game), reconnection with family – especially children – was unanimously decreed to be worth more tokens than a flat or a job. Clearly, emotional wellbeing was more important in the game than material wellbeing, despite what they may have said to the contrary. Our belief is that this reflects these

men's realities, and that the medium of play made this evident faster and more efficiently than an interview/survey ever could.

There are however, some challenges here that ought to be considered. While we think SEA practice has theoretical/methodological potential for a field like criminology, we are aware of some of its limitations. For example, our project involved the input of a professional artist who spearheaded the game design process and took the lead on its production. Her knowledge, expertise and professional capacities extended well beyond ours as academics. The increased resources required by this project (financial, as well as time and space) should also not be underestimated. That said, the process of learning through play has been shown here to be beneficial in bringing to the fore a number of issues relevant to both academic criminology and the penal reform sector. In thinking about how we conduct our research a little more creatively, and being a little more ambitious and open minded in terms of what we consider to be 'data', there is very real potential to innovate and enhance what and we come to know our areas of study.

### **Probationary as activism**

As an 'artist' project our aim was to critically explore the potential of SEA to understand probation from the perspective of those on licence and, ultimately, to effect change. The participants were placed at the centre of a creative process that allowed them to determine the shape and focus of the game. The role of the criminologist in this

process was to work in alignment with the artist, to assist and inform, but not to determine how the subject should be understood or presented to its audience. As a result, the game provides a 'view from below' and in doing so, it not only gives voice to those experiencing life on licence, but enables us, as players, to follow their journey and share their experiences. We want now to explore the effects of this immersive experience by enabling those with an interest in the current probation system to play the game.

The project in this sense is just beginning, and dissemination can, and will, take a number of forms. While there will be academic papers on the value of this method and its potential for criminology, as an activist project our findings are encapsulated within the game and dissemination must come through play. We have through this game, which is first and foremost a piece of art, the potential to invoke an emotional response in the player that is key to changing attitudes and in turn bringing about wider change. So for the game to have *activist* potential it needs to be played.

We believe that *Probationary* enables players to begin to understand the experience of those on licence to the probation service in the period following *Transforming Rehabilitation*, the Government's 'revolution' in the management of offenders in England and Wales. It is not the first attempt to provide a critical appraisal of the effects of these changes, but the method by which probation is exposed to scrutiny is here, we think, unique. We learn through *Probationary* how

the current system operates and begin to see how and why problems persist despite, or perhaps because of, these recent reforms.

One of the most striking things that the game demonstrates is how difficult the current systems makes it for those on licence to complete the journey from the prison gate to their eventual goal. As players we see that Chris Grayling's (2013) aim to 'ease the transition' from custody by providing a 'through the gate' service that provides the 'full range of support' has not been realised. Instead we begin to see why the use of recall is such a significant problem that has been exacerbated since the privatisation of the probation service. As the Howard League has highlighted as part of the [3Rs campaign](#), most recalls to prison are for technical breaches of licence conditions, not the commission of new crimes. Players of *Probationary* will negotiate the demands of licence conditions and begin to appreciate that in many cases recalls are not driven by attempts to tackle crime, reform offenders or ensure public safety, but instead are the consequence of a system that is not working.

As collaborators in the production of *Probationary* we are not the first to highlight these issues but believe in our proposals about the potential of SEA and our analysis of it to contribute to the campaign for change. Through this initial collaboration a fascinating piece of art can be shared with many audiences as we explore this artwork as a vehicle for campaigners to draw upon as they seek a change in attitudes and a



change in policy. The next stage of this process was at the Howard League conference (March 2018), where delegates were invited to play the game and consider its role in campaigns for change in probation, but we also want those who play at the conference to reflect on the potential of this approach for criminologists working beyond this specific focal point and our chosen artistic medium.

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### About the authors

**Anne Hayes, Will Jackson, Emma Murray and Steve Wakeman** are all academics at Liverpool John Moores University and are part of its Centre for Crime, Criminalisation and Social Exclusion.

**Dr Emma Murray** is a senior lecturer in criminal justice in the School of Law, Liverpool John Moores University. Her work is dedicated to the problem of veterans within the criminal justice system, and more recently what the testimonies of veterans who have been convicted of an offence post-combat reveals about war and governance in the 21st century.

Emma is Project Lead of the 'Reimagining Conflict: Pedagogy, Policy and the Arts' site and international research group at the

LJMU Centre for Crime, Criminalisation and Social Exclusion. She works with scholars, artists and policy makers across the UK, Emma is also the director of the 'Reimagine the Veteran' film project.

**Will Jackson** is a lecturer in criminology having previously taught at the University of Central Lancashire. He completed his PhD at the University of Salford in 2012.

Will's main research interests focus on policing, security and protest with a particular interest in the development of theoretical insights on these topics from within and beyond criminology. His current research is focused on the policing of protest and broader state responses to political activism.

**Steve Wakeman** is a lecturer in criminology August 2014 after completing his PhD in the Centre for Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Manchester. Prior to this he worked in drug rehabilitation centres, homeless hostels, and at a 'problem' youth project. His main research interests include drug use and drug policy, addictions, the criminological significance of various types of popular media, and progressive criminological theory (especially regarding its interface with contemporary continental philosophy). He is currently researching the ways in which popular media sources like television, film, comic books and video games have the capacity to shape and redirect criminological debates.



## Youth, the State and the Politics of Evidence\*

### Naomi Nichols

The topic of this paper – Youth, the State and the Politics of Evidence – is inspired by an experience I had as a researcher, leading a large community-based institutional ethnographic research project with young men and women living in a highly stigmatised, racialised and economically disadvantaged neighbourhood in Canada’s largest city: Toronto, Ontario. Because of the research I have been doing with young people about their experiences of safety and inclusion in their neighbourhoods, I was asked to sit on an advisory board for another piece of community-based research that had been commissioned by the Toronto Police Services board: the Community Assessment of Police Practices (or CAPP) project. The research focused on the neighbourhood’s experiences with, and perceptions of, the police. Specifically, the Board wanted to know how the community was experiencing institutionally mandated changes to the production and use of *Community Inquiry Cards* – colloquially known as Carding. The carding process is the outcome of police-initiated, non-crime-related interactions. These encounters are framed by police as intelligence gathering through community outreach and engagement, but they are experienced in the community as fishing, harassment and surveillance. The changes to the carding process reflect recommendation from the *Police*



and Community Engagement Review (or the PACER report), which was released in 2013.

Another key recommendation in the PACER report was that there should be regular community consultations; this is where the CAPP project comes into the story. The purpose of CAPP was to assess – from residents’ perspectives – police practices in the neighbourhood, with a particular focus on the production of *Community Safety Notes*. But the release of the report was met with dismissal from the city’s then Chief of Police because it failed to include any ‘facts’ and by this, we were to learn, it was meant that the report contradicted the ‘facts’ that the police themselves produce (e.g., the *Community Safety Notes*

and the statistical administrative data that the police collect) to account for their work.

My interest in writing a paper on evidence – and the politics of how it gets produced, how it gets used, and how it contributes to racialising and exclusionary processes in young people’s lives – was piqued by my own experiences at Toronto Police Services downtown headquarters during the official release of the CAPP report, where these findings were shared with the Toronto Police Services Board. But investigating the institutional activities which constitute Canada’s turn towards evidence-based policy-making and practice from the standpoints (that is, the embodied experiences and experiential knowledge) of young racial-minority men and women, growing up in a highly stigmatised and economically marginalised urban neighbourhoods, reveals the exclusionary effects of these practices for people who are outside (and sometimes the targets of) these institutional regimes. My interest is to help the reader see the processes whereby different forms of evidence become institutionally actionable – or not – across the various settings where youth are active. In this way, I hope to reveal how the processes of generating and using purportedly institutional accounts is foundational to young people’s experiences of voicelessness in, disengagement with, and fundamental distrust of state institutions.

### **The research**

To complete this study, I used a type of research called Institutional Ethnography (IE). Institutional

ethnographers study institutional relations that connect people to one another and give shape to their lives (Smith, 1990, 1999, 2005, 2006). By coupling descriptive accounts of people’s everyday lives with a critical analysis of the social and institutional relations that give shape to personal embodied experiences, an institutional ethnographer looks out from “the everyday to discover how it came to happen as it does” (Smith, 2006: 3).

Data collection for this paper began on the ground with the experiences of youth who have been institutionally categorised as ‘unsafe’ through the disciplinary policies and procedures that link the youth justice and education systems. Our multi-generational research team used community-based approach to data collection, analysis, and action. We work with a community-based organisation that houses two Safe Schools programmes and we hired and trained youth from the neighbourhood to participate in all aspects of the project as researchers. Drawing on interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions, participatory mapping, and policy analysis, the research produces ethnographic accounts of young people’s experiences of racialisation, criminalisation and exclusion as they engage with dominant public institutions – namely education, healthcare, policing, youth justice, and housing. We interviewed 48 young people in a Safe Schools programmes, on the corners, alley-ways and basketball courts, and in the neighbourhood programmes where youth workers of various types

(educators, child and youth workers, even police officers) endeavour to keep youth busy and off the streets. Most of these interviews were conducted *with youth by youth*. We also interviewed 15 young people in custody or detention in Canada's largest youth jail, and interviews and/or focus group conversations with 48 professionals who work with young people, including people who work for Toronto Police Services. I also analysed a range of policy and institutional texts.

### Findings

Across the interviews conducted for this project, young people describe being falsely accused, misunderstood, and misrepresented. A young man named Chris I interviewed in a youth justice facility responded to my question about how he ended up in a jail with an explanation that is typical of the young people we interviewed:

*"a year ago I got arrested for robbery and assault causing bodily harm. But I didn't really do the robbery, but I kinda – my friend was basically getting hurt so I was helping him defend himself. The person was older and he basically charged us."*

This quotation is an exemplary representation of our data. Chris did not deny his involvement in an altercation; rather, he insists that the official legal charge for 'robbery and assault causing bodily harm,' does not aptly convey what happened. Instead of dismissing young people's stories as the desperate tales of people who do not want to take responsibility for their actions, I've tried to spend

some time understanding how they see what happened in ways that differ from the institutional accounts that are produced to account for the things they've experienced.

Brad, another young man who was interviewed in the justice facility, explained that he ended up in jail due to a 'misunderstanding':

*"Me and my co-accused were in a vehicle. I pull up in this driveway. The cops pull behind us. They stop the car. They told us to get out the car. Once we got out of the car they [the police] searched the car and found a firearm. It's not mine. It's his [my co-accused's]. He got bailed. I went straight to jail ... [My co-accused] framed me ... That was his first charge. He never got arrested before in his life. [But] I have previous charges. Well, I got break and enter, breach, theft. I have maybe 10–15 youth charges. Failure to comply, theft, and robbery ... I just gotta wait and see what's gonna happen. It's not fair."*

Like Chris, Brad's version of the story differs from the official legal accounts of what happened. Brad told interviewers that he had been framed, and in some ways he has. Prior charges, captured in his youth criminal justice record, suggest a pattern of criminality that can be used to establish grounds for an additional charge. Brad's "co-accused," on the other hand, had no prior charges or convictions, making it difficult to establish a history of criminality. When young people break the law for the first time, police must consider whether an extrajudicial sanction or

measure is more appropriate than pursuing a charge (Youth Criminal Justice Act, S.C. 2002, c. 1, s. 6.1). The legislative obligation to consider diversion for first-time 'offenders' shapes different criminal-legal outcomes among young people in conflict with the law. Criminal-legal outcomes do not reflect an objective reality; rather, they reflect bureaucratic and legal responses to a range of accounts of what actually happened.

Later in the interview, Brad elaborates that while the gun was not his, he "had to take the charge." It is common for young people to "eat", "swallow", or "take" a charge, particularly where their co-accused has no prior charges or convictions. If a young person is less than 18 years of age (i.e. still involved in the youth criminal justice system), it is safer to swallow the criminal charge for someone else than to face being labelled a snitch on the streets. Brad's knowledge of how things work on the streets shapes how he responds to the charge, despite his belief that it is unjust. Unfortunately for Brad, the police are quite aware of how things work on the streets and use this to their advantage during conversations with youth. Having been brought in for police questioning, young people report that police tell them their co-accused has 'sung' or turned on them. Chris explains:

*"When you get arrested [the police] come to you, and if you have co-accused they'll say you have friends that snitched on you. When they come to me, I don't say anything. I try not to listen to them ... They just wanna get you to start talkin."*

Other young people report that police present their own information as though it was actually provided by another co-accused youth. This interview technique reflects professional policing knowledge about the culture and organisation of street-level economies. In turn, young people's refusal to give the police the knowledge they seek reflects their own understanding of how the police are working to unearth information that will further investigative efforts. Nevertheless, young people detained and questioned by the police find themselves in a precarious position of knowing they and/or their families will be punished (by their bosses and co-accused peers) if they comply with the police requests for information and face harsher sentencing by the courts if they do not. Young people who find themselves in this situation share a keen awareness that no matter what they do or say, the outcomes for them will be negative.

The criminal legal system operates through the collection and use of forms of evidence that fit with and enables particular institutional courses of action (e.g. issuing a warrant; approving a police raid; or laying a charge). There are no similar courses of action through which young people's versions of what happened can effectively trigger an institutional process that has this type of wide-reaching effect, nor are they able to effectively refute the forms of evidence generated to fit with and activate the interlocking institutional processes which comprise the criminal-legal system. While young people can tell their version of what happened to an interviewer or to friends, there is no corresponding





institutional process or sequence of action that enables this version to effectively counter the official versions about the case produced by police and other institutional authorities.

Not unlike the ways the police dismiss young people's knowledge of their lives and experiences as anecdotal, the police used administrative policing data to discredit the CAPP report findings. The CAPP research team surveyed over 400 people in the neighbourhood where my own research was taking place. They found that despite frequent non-crime-related interactions with the police, 86% of respondents were not being issued receipts (police-generated records of the stop), a violation of a key recommendation of the 2013 PACER report. Seventy per cent of respondents also reported reduced access to fair movement during these non-crime-related encounters in their neighbourhoods – that is, they didn't feel that they could simply walk away from these interactions unhindered by police retribution, which is their legal right.

Despite this body of evidence generated through the CAPP survey, the Chief of Police dismissed the report as non-factual. The field notes that follow (produced by myself and graduate student research assistants) invite the reader into police headquarters, where the findings from the CAPP report were publically delivered to the Police Services Board:

#### **Field note #1**

Naomi: we made our way up the big winding marble staircase, following the signs until we arrived in the auditorium. There was a large rectangular table that was occupied by members of the Toronto Police Services Board with microphones at each spot and a place at the head of the table for the CAPP research lead, to make his presentation to the Board. The Chief of Police kept his back to us for the entire presentation, leaning back in his chair, thumbing through the report and scowling, shaking his head, and rolling his eyes ... After [he] gave his report, the members of the board were invited to respond ... Red in the face, and with a raised voice, the Chief dismissed the report as anecdotal and non-factual.

#### **Field note #2**

Jessica: The community's perspective on police interactions shows that people have limited knowledge of the new policy and that in practice few police follow these new procedures [of providing badge numbers and issuing receipts to people they stop and speak to] ... While [the board] reviewed the key findings of the Report, I saw the construction of these community 'perspectives' as

false, biased, and incorrect ... those whose work is implicated in these findings turned their backs and rolled their eyes at the table.

### Field note #3

Stephanie: On the Thursday I saw Kennard [one of our youth researchers] who actually brought up the release of the carding report. Kennard told me he hoped it would make change and that “stuff like this” (i.e. research) was important ... but that the “Jakes will keep doing it [interacting with young people in unlawful ways] because they are powerful.”

The “Jakes” (i.e., the police) are powerful indeed. The police were able to discredit the CAPP report because Toronto Police Services had officially stopped carding people in the aftermath of the PACER report. The police response to the report was to question how people in the community could say they’d been carded, when the computerised devices they use to submit electronic field notes, log calls for service, and so forth no longer enabled the production of contact cards (field note, key informant, 2015). Even though relations between the police and people who live in the neighbourhood had not changed – that is, officers continued to come up and ask people for ID, tell them to take off their shoes, empty their pockets, open up their backpacks, and so forth – the institutional data collection and reporting practices to account for these interactions had been altered. The police were able to argue that the institutional relation that people in the community called carding was no longer occurring – thus undermining the findings produced

by the community-based organisation leading the CAPP project.

Changes to the evidence gathering procedure the community known as carding enabled the police to effectively destabilise community activism against this practice. Key to this offensive move – initiated long before the CAPP report release – was a shift in data gathering practices, including how the data are talked about and recorded by police. When we spoke with the police during a focus group the same summer the CAPP research was conducted, they described their interactions with young people and adults as institutionally sanctioned processes for assessing and promoting community safety (focus group conversation, Toronto Police Services, 2014). Contemporary policing depends on practices of data collection and outreach, responding to non-crime-related calls for service, and simply being present in a neighbourhood (what the police call ‘waving the flag’) as an attempt to deter crime, traffic violations, and unrest (field note, key informant, 2015). The majority of police work involves the very non-crime-related interactions with ‘civilians’, which people in this neighbourhood experience as harassment, racial profiling, and surveillance. Indeed, although Black people represent 8.4% of the total population in Toronto, police administrative data confirm that Black people represent 22.6% of all stop-and-search data, and Black people in patrol zone 113 (a neighbourhood that is affluent and predominately White) are 13.4 times more likely to be stopped and searched than White people in this

same neighbourhood (Bailey and Rankin, 2010; Winsa, 2014).

While this data goes some way towards substantiating young people's experiences, I want to make it clear that they are no more indicative of an objective reality than the evidence contained in the CAPP report or the stories shared by the youth I have interviewed. This data is generated in the field by police officers, who determine how they will racially code the people they stop, and whether they will even record the stop at all. It remains the case that the administrative data is produced by the very people about whom the data will be used to make institutional determinations of professional competency and accountability. These are the politics of evidence shaping young people's experiences with the police and other public-sector authorities.

The use of data to make decisions in public sector organisations is framed as a way to improve objective decision-making and reduce the incidence of bias and discrimination regarding the distribution of public resources. But crime analytics – statistical patterns, reflecting calls for police service, arrests, accidents, ticketing, reported incidence of crime – depend on and then obscure the everyday subjective decision-making processes employed by police officers and others acting in a professional capacity as well as everyday people, who make discretionary decisions about what to report, measure and track. Interactions between individual officers and young people on the streets are

connected to complex text-based practices through which some young people are constructed as unsafe and policing is constructed as a mechanism for producing safety. While police accounts of the interactions enter into and become actionable within a complex criminal legal system, which connects frontline policing to the court, incarceration, and community supervision processes, there is no similar organisational course of action enabling young people to report or act on an alternative version of the interaction.

### **Conclusion**

My research seeks to reveal and redress the institutional processes and knowledge that influence young people's experiences of exclusion (including racialisation and criminalisation) in their neighbourhoods and in our public institutions. Clearly, the collection and use of administrative data and other monitoring and accounting technologies shape young people's experiences of access, inclusion and efficacy during their encounters with dominant institutions. The power wielded by "the Jakes" is linked to the use of these technologies of evidence to achieve a particular institutional (or ruling) aim *and* dismiss the experiential accounts of individual youth as anecdotal or non-representative of the larger population.

The 2008 *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* suggests that a "lack of youth voice" is one of many things that shape processes of exclusion that lead to youth violence. The youth I work with have little faith in our public institutions – historically their voices

and experiences have failed to register there. This paper begins to show how the use – and framing – of administrative data by mainstream institutions sidelines the experiences and concerns of youth who already experience the marginalising effects of racism and poverty. The effects of these exclusions are evident in young people’s disaffection from/within our public spaces and their disengagement with – and even hostility towards – society more generally.

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## Women's Centres: Gender Responsive Services for Formerly Imprisoned Women Post Corston Report (2007)

**Helen Elfleet**

The article explores the experiences and perspectives of formerly imprisoned women, accessing one women's centre which was opened in response to the Corston report (2007). The doctoral research, on which this article is based, has incorporated a 16-month period of participant observation, 16 semi-structured interviews with members of staff at The Women's Centre (TWC)<sup>2</sup>, and 14 semi-structured interviews with formerly imprisoned women who accessed TWC after their release from prison. Utilising the ideas of gender responsivity and governmentality scholars (Hannah-Moffat, 2001; Goodkind, 2009; Haney, 2010; Joseph, 2013) and drawing upon a Foucauldian feminist perspective, the research explores the role and function of one women's centre for women after prison, thus contributing to a small body of research in this field.

### **The Corston Report: A gender responsive framework**

In 2007 *A Review of Women with Particular Vulnerabilities in The Criminal Justice System* by Baroness Jean Corston was published. It is one of the most influential reports on women in prison in England and Wales and was a response to a number of controversial self-inflicted deaths of women in prison. The report laid out a blueprint for a holistic woman centred approach. It

<sup>2</sup> All places and names referred to in this article are pseudonyms.



reiterated the longstanding concerns of feminist researchers that women prisoners were drawn from some of the most socially and economically marginalised groups. She noted that women in prison were often drug users and/or alcoholics; that they experienced poor physical health; they were frail and vulnerable despite often appearing brash and confident; they were often victims of sexual and emotional abuse; and, that they experienced little control over their lives and did not have many choices. She further noted that they experienced mental health problems and had self-harmed, and were disproportionately drawn from black and minority ethnic groups (BAME) (Corston, 2007:27; Elfleet, 2017a;

2017b). Corston reiterated that women prisoners were poorly served by a system designed with men in mind, and as such she proposed that her 43 recommendations provided “a blueprint for a distinct, radically different, visibly led, strategic, proportionate, holistic, woman-centred approach” (Corston, 2007:79).

Some of her main recommendations included: the speedy implementation of the gender equality duty across all public bodies within the criminal justice system; the creation of an Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group for women; and the mainstreaming of services for women, which she proposed would reduce their risk of reoffending. She recommended women’s centres should be further developed in order to provide a network of community-based centres (Dunbabin, 2013; Elfleet, 2017a; Elfleet, 2017b).

In her most radical recommendation, Corston advocated the significant downsizing of the women’s penal estate, proposing that the Government should announce, within six months, a clear strategy (taking place within ten years) to replace women’s prisons with smaller, more widely dispersed, custodial units. She indicated that these units would be multi-functional in purpose, providing women with the help and care needed in a therapeutic environment to assist them in rebuilding their lives (Elfleet, 2017a; 2017b).

When advocating a woman-centred model of corrections, Corston stated that existing women’s centres provided the correct approach to assist women with particular vulnerabilities in the criminal justice system. She cited Asha, in

Worcester,<sup>3</sup> and Calderdale, in Halifax, as noteworthy examples of a woman-centred approach, stating that their overall objective was “to treat each woman as an individual with her own set of needs and problems and to increase their capacity to take responsibility for their lives” (Corston, 2007:10, para 18, emphases added).

### **Women’s centres**

Women’s centres are specialist community-based facilities that provide a range of services for women who have offended and those at risk of involvement with the criminal justice system, amongst other groups. As the All Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System (APPG) (2016) have noted, women’s centres vary in terms of the services provided but they all state that they provide a welcoming atmosphere where women can spend their time and receive support. Many women’s centres provide: counselling and mental health services; drug treatment; employability skills; domestic violence support; child care; and housing assistance (APPG, 2016:2).

Whilst it has been noted that the number of women’s centres established post-Corston Report is modest, they are nonetheless argued to be a superior form of support for women (Corston, 2007; APPG, 2016; Roberts, 2017). As such, they are considered to be one of the main achievements of the Corston Report, particularly in terms of the ability to support women at risk of offending/re-offending (APPG, 2016; Elfleet, 2017b). Therefore, a

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<sup>3</sup> The centre subsequently closed in early in 2017, following a long-term struggle for funding.

consideration of their function for, in the case of this research, formerly imprisoned women is important.

### **Why study the experiences of formerly imprisoned women within one women's centre?**

It has long been recognised that imprisonment has long-term damaging impacts on prisoners and their families (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Goffman, 1991; Liebling and Maruna, 2011; Scott and Codd, 2010). Prisons enforce a series of denials and losses on prisoners, the loss of: liberty; autonomy; family connections; employment; and housing.

Feminist contributions to this body of research have highlighted the differing needs and experiences of women in prison to men. However, according to Carlton and Seagrave (2011), this has produced two particular limitations, firstly the neglect of the experiences of formerly imprisoned women have been neglected, and secondly the appropriation of feminist scholarship into policy development and service delivery. Indeed, the latter point is considered to be of particular significance in light of the gender responsive proposals made within the Corston Report. As has been noted elsewhere (see Dunbabin, 2013; Kendall, 2013; Elfleet, 2017a; 2017b) whilst the Corston Report made a number of significant acknowledgements, her overall solution to the problems faced by women in conflict with the law was largely a responsabilising endeavour (Elfleet, 2017a; Elfleet, 2017b). This is clearly emphasised when she states that the disadvantages experienced by women in the criminal justice system could be addressed through helping them to

“develop *resilience, life skills and emotional literacy*” (Corston, 2007:2, para.1, emphases added), the overall aim of which is “to increase their capacity to take responsibility of their lives” (Corston, 2007:10, para 18). It has thus been noted that Corston considered women's disadvantages through a narrow lens of personal failure and social inadequacy (Dunbabin, 2013; Elfleet, 2017a; 2017b). Indeed, as Kendall (2013) has also noted in this regard, whilst Corston noted key three vulnerability factors experienced by women in conflict with the law, domestic, personal and socio-economic, the majority of her attention was given to the former two factors.

There have thus been a number of notable concerns raised in relation to gender responsive/woman centred strategies. For some, they constitute a neoliberal feminised governance strategy that places the burden of responsibility on the individual, whilst (crucially) at the same time obscuring the role of state in generating social and economic inequalities (Hannah-Moffat, 2001; Goodkind, 2009; Haney, 2010; Carlton and Seagrave, 2011; 2016)). As such, gender responsive strategies are argued to primarily focus on diverting women away from the criminal justice system, through instilling the belief that through hard work and endurance they can succeed in achieving their goals. Thus, overall, they may operate to transform individual subjectivities into neo-liberal subjectivities, whereby self-reliance and resilience are embraced as essential traits for a successful and meaningful life (Hannah-Moffat, 2001; Goodkind, 2009; Haney, 2010).

A considerable concern, therefore, is that woman centred programmes

may marginalise social and economic hardship, by primarily focusing on the individual as a site for change, through the promotion of programmes that are designed to enable women to better negotiate social and economic uncertainty (Hannah-Moffat, 2010; Joseph, 2013; Elfleet, 2017a; 2017b). Indeed, as Hannah-Moffat (2001) has noted, gender responsiveness frequently does not address the unequal social and economic relations of society, it may in fact strengthen them since gender responsive programmes are generally considered to be gentle, caring and supportive methods (Hannah-Moffat, 2000; 2001).

As Carlton and Seagrave (2011) importantly note, gender responsive strategies also include post-release policies within their remit. It is thus assumed that these post-release services will produce helpful outcomes for those engaging with them. These services are, however, generally deemed to be beneficial in terms of their ability to minimise the likelihood of serial incarceration, through reducing recidivism (Kendall, 2013; Carlton and Seagrave, 2011; 2016). Thus, for Carlton and Seagrave (2016), these support structures are frequently unable to deal with the complex nature of discrimination, marginalisation, and disadvantage that women experience in the community on release. Indeed, the primary aim of gender responsive models, as evident in the Corston Report, appears to be to increase women's "capacity to take responsibility for their lives" (Corston, 2007:10, para 18), and thus dominant depictions of success are likely to be associated with desistance, whereby individuals have been "empowered to be resilient" (Elfleet, 2017:36), self-sufficient subjects capable of

managing their criminogenic needs (Hannah-Moffat, 2001; 2010).

Given these concerns it is a key objective of my ongoing research to consider how gender responsive services function for women after prison, through a focus on the post-release experiences of women within one women's centre opened in response to the Corston Report. Furthermore, given the considerable lack of attention paid directly to the experience of gender responsive services post-release there are clear justifications for research of this nature.

As Carlton and Seagrave (2016) note, all too frequently imprisonment is viewed as a discrete event in the women's lives. Conversely, they argue that imprisonment and release cannot be separated from life events involving state intervention, childhood welfare systems, and post-imprisonment offender management services (Carlton and Seagrave, 2011; 2016). As such they state that imprisonment should be viewed as an extension of traumatic events in the lives of those incarcerated.

These concerns were clearly acknowledged by many of the formerly imprisoned women interviewed for this research. Their life experiences, which included: difficulties with mental health problems; substance misuse; child sexual abuse; domestic violence; homelessness; and poverty and isolation were acknowledged to be directly linked to their imprisonment:

I've had a bit of a rocky upbringing; I was in care from 18 months... in respite care to 6. Then got took off my mum fully at 7, and then



got adopted at 12. The adoption fell through 2 years later at 14. I've lived on the streets, in hostels, due to all that I started getting depressed. I was an alcoholic at 13, coke head at the age of 13 ... then I hit jail. I hadn't been employed for 6 months before prison, I was in a hostel. So that's what kind of led me to the prison, living in hostels. (Kelly, 2016)

All formerly imprisoned women who took part in this research were recruited to the project through one women's centre in the North West of England, The Women's Centre (TWC). TWC states that it provides a woman-centred strategy which adheres to the principles outlined in the Corston Report, and further states that its overarching aims are focused on reducing reoffending and the prevention of initial offending. As such, the centre hosts a significant number of other organisations that utilise the premises of TWC for service delivery. These services were advertised to women in the centre by way of a monthly timetable. A senior manager stated that the overall objective was to "address all criminogenic need so that they will avoid reoffending" (Jean, 2016).

Given the concerns in relation to gender responsive/woman centred proposals outlined in the Corston Report (2007), a key consideration of my research focuses on how such services function for women post-release. A primary concern relates to what happens if they do indeed fit within the woman-centred framework proposed by Corston, dominant depictions of success are likely to be considered in terms of desistance. Furthermore, they may well function as a means of rendering formerly imprisoned women as solely responsible for their socio-economic

disadvantages. In short, they may constitute an extension of transcarceral power, through intensified surveillance and management of those in the community deemed to be at risk of offending, or reoffending (Carlton and Seagrave, 2013; Kendall, 2013).

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1 All places and names referred to in this article are pseudonyms.

2 The centre subsequently closed in early in 2017, following a long-term struggle for funding.

3 See Dunbabin, 2013; Kendall, 2013; Elfleet, 2017a; 2017b.

## Toward an understanding of the interactions between the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) scheme and staff-prisoner relationships: HMP Wandsworth

Zarek Khan

### The research

Historically, prison research into incentive-based regimes has its roots in Beccarian neo-classical penology and Benthamite utilitarianism. The scholars' rationalist philosophies fuelled the inauguration of incentive-based penal policies in 20th-century Britain, with an explicit focus on the subjective material value of incentives that would motivate human conduct. Such assumptions came to be axiomatic in Woolf and Tumin's (1991) institutional development of an incentivised penalty, governed through an interface of rational-choice economics. In 1995, the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) policy was introduced in England which sought to ensure that prisoners earn privileges by responsible behaviour and engagement in hard work and other constructive activities. However, policy revisions in 2013 have intensified requirements for system progression, coercing prisoners to 'demonstrate a commitment towards their rehabilitation' (PSI 30/2013: 30) by active engagement in purposeful activity and embracing various compliant methods to satisfy the quintessential template of individual responsibility. Amidst the concomitant surge of the neoliberal agenda, these strategies of penal management resonate with the 'new penology' model where interventions



are pursued on utilitarian grounds, as opposed to the direct benefit of a systemic priority. These demands shape the terrain on which compliance to IEP is achieved and they have significant consequences for how prisoners interact with uniformed staff.

### Research overview

Based on recent interview data ( $N = 16$ ) collected in a medium security men's English prison (HMP Wandsworth), this article represents prisoners' accounts of the ways in

which the IEP policy contributes to the maintenance and distancing of their relationships with staff. First, it documents how existing staff-prisoner relationships form IEP experience. Second, the role IEP has in shaping staff-prisoner relationships is explored. The final section casts light on the proportion of prisoners who were compliant in the general sense but unable to establish relationships with staff due to their unnoticed personal characteristics. The significance of this study pertains to this last group of *invisibly compliant* prisoners as it raises key implications of the policy's alterations for prisoner progression within the system.

### **The contribution of existing staff-prisoner relationships in forming IEP experience**

Prisoners in Wandsworth expressed that existing relationships with staff directly affected their experience of imprisonment, particularly in regards to the opportunities IEP presented:

*If you have a good relationship with staff even if you're on basic, you can just get put on enhanced. You don't have to be there for 3 months before they put you on enhanced.* (Harry, basic)

*I've got the equalities rep now and an officer asked me to do that because she knows me and that I can talk to people. There's a bit more leverage because I built that relationship up.* (Walter, enhanced)

Existing staff-prisoner relationships meant that prisoners felt they had greater advantage in achieving enhanced privilege levels, compared to those who had unstable relationships. Despite the allocated

timeframe for IEP reviews, prisoners that formed officer rapport were more likely to have IEP rules slightly amended for them. Official policy mechanisms of institutional guidelines were sidestepped: 'don't get me wrong, I do things I shouldn't but I get away with it because I've got that rapport with them, you know what I mean?' (Chris, enhanced). In these instances, an established staff-prisoner relationship would override the formal component of IEP practice.

While some prisoners profited from established relationships with staff, this was often motivated instrumentally for purposes of self-interest:

*My kids are what make me behave so I can get more time for visits. That's how I play the game.* (Jeffrey, enhanced)

As the above interviewee observed, in order to 'play the game' - an expression used to describe how inmates undertake their sentence - certain aspects of IEP encouraged compliance with the scheme as it had direct personal benefits. This form of compliance is principally built on a degree of calculated rationality (Bottoms, 2002) in the attainment of subjective incentives and rewards:

*The motivation is the extra money to spend [...] I've been put on basic a few times and it's cost me money so I don't want that happening again.*

(Sam, enhanced)

Taken together, such depictions closely reinforce the Kantian dictum of *means to an end*. Prisoners saw the earnable privileges as stimulus



to participate in the scheme as it financially motivated them and, especially for those who had children, maintaining enhanced privileges were an important part in getting through their sentence. The arithmetic of rational utility, combined with Bentham's axiom that '[m]en calculate, some with less exactness, indeed, some with more: but all men calculate' (1789: 173), points to the economic assumption that human behaviour can be incentivised. However, despite prisoners' impetus for self-gain, compliance was not only based on logical expediency but through emotional attachments that superseded other concerns:

*Well, obviously being enhanced you don't want to lose it, you don't want to be stuck in your room for 22 hours a day. But with enhanced the motivation is the more social time you get, the more freedom you get. (Walter, enhanced)*

Attachment-based normative dimensions contributed to prisoners' self-approval and faith in the scheme which ensured their compliance. This was often a product of established social bonds which influenced the officers they would target for personal requests or favours as a result of their perceived interactions with them:

*There's a few officers that are decent people, ones you can have conversations with and they understand you. Like if I were to say gov I need this, they'll get their little book out, write your name, your problem, and then usually get back to you in a few days. (Jeffrey, enhanced)*

*I get on with one or two gobs who I can talk to. If you ask them to do something they do a bit more to help. They're the same ones I try to go to all the time.*

(Mark, standard)

Targeting uniformed staff on prison landings was deliberate and induced prisoners with a sense of hope and anticipation in expediting outcomes. This sense of ontological security provided prisoners with a level of existential freedom through developed and stable personal relationships with uniformed staff. This puts into stark perspective the significance of existing staff-prisoner relationships in shaping prisoners' IEP experiences.

### **The role of IEP in shaping staff-prisoner relationships**

Prisoners who experienced negative connotations of IEP responded accordingly and this had detrimental impact to their relationships with staff who, it was felt, enforced such decisions inequitably. As two prisoners commented, representing a fairly common view:

*If there's a gov that keeps giving me IEPs, you're not gonna listen to him. When he tells you to bang up you're gonna ignore him. (Jimmy, basic)*

*Half of the IEPs I couldn't even work out why I had them. It's just put through my door without warning [...] When screws give you constant IEPs, you're gonna tell em to do one (Kyle, enhanced)*

As these excerpts suggest, the exercise of IEP as procedurally fair and justifiable were crucial to prisoners' assessment of staff



legitimacy. Comments of this kind shed light on the new ways staff can wield their power at a distance (Crewe, 2011). There is no requirement for hard intervention as order can be achieved via prisoners' self-regulation which subsequently enables IEP decisions to be readily enforced. Through a combination of alienation from the policy's services and perceived illegitimacy of staff decision-making, these types of prisoners were visibly non-compliant which reflected in their attitudes towards the scheme and relationships with staff:

*They keep threatening you with IEPs. It's ridiculous really and they use it so freely and often about anything and everything [...] But it relates to your bonds with them or whatever. If they treat you like shit, you're gonna give them the same back.*

(Adam, basic)

There are two key related issues here. First, staff-prisoner relationships are subject to legitimate scrutiny when IEP procedures are unjustified or used as derelict abuse of authority in the

eyes of the confined. Implicit in these accounts is that the exercise of power 'flows in multiple directions' (Foucault, 1977: 203), involving a continuous dialogue between those in positions of authority and those subordinated. Such an assertion calls to mind Aristotle's maxim, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, that '[o]ften one of a pair of contrary states is recognised from the other contrary' (1985: 116). Hence, in this context, prisoners can turn their weakness against the powerful. Secondly, where interviewees portrayed lack of fairness towards the scheme they retreated from complying with prison regulations and were consequently opposed in developing relationships with staff or averted from system capitalisation.

Meanwhile, a significant yet unanticipated feature of the study was the number of prisoners who complied with IEP rules but due to the nature of their differing social characteristics, they were not explicitly recognised by staff as engaging with the scheme.

### 'The forgotten incarcerated'

*When I was on the wing for the first 4 months, no one even knew my name because I kept myself to myself. It's hard to get positives if you're quiet even if you're not causing any trouble because they don't notice you, they don't even know you.* (Robert, basic)

This quote indicates several implications for prisoner progression within the system. Prisoners who possessed less vocal traits suffered the inability to form relationships with staff, albeit passively compliant to prison rules: *'they say yeah he's quiet but they're not gonna give you any positives. How do you shine?'*

(Adam, basic). These types of prisoners were not explicitly recognised by staff as participating in the scheme due to the nature of their introverted social traits which consequently hindered status elevation. To this end, approximately one third of research participants, especially on basic IEP levels, were unable to visibly, and thus actively, demonstrate a commitment to their rehabilitation or establish relationships with staff due to the altered policy regulations, despite their absence of irrational behaviour. This intensification to 'constructively engage', pivotal to the scheme's revisions, manifested as a kind of double punishment for this group of prisoners, who spent the majority of their time locked in cells:

*It's a bit silly if you're a calm person because nobody will notice you ...Get up in the morning, get your shower, bang up, who is gonna know oh yeah Mr whatever, he's a cool person... They don't even register you because you have to remember how many people are in prison for them to register you.*

(Adrian, basic)

*The worst thing is if you're locked up all day, you don't see anyone. Then it's hard to have any sort of relationship with officers.*

(Harry, basic)

Such views were cognate among prisoners assigned basic IEP status. This extra disadvantage for the 'forgotten incarcerated' derives from the new paradigm of needing to be *visibly compliant* by staff to progress within the scheme; it is no longer sufficient to be *invisibly compliant* - passively obedient. Amidst these

burdens and discontent towards the system was the material problem of staff shortages reported by interviewees:

*When they're always changing staff, you might not get the same officers on the wing all the time so how are you gonna get someone to notice you?*

(Adam, basic)

*What they do here if they're short staffed on the main prison is they'll call them over from Trinity to the main prison [...] Most of the officers are always busy running about doing something and if they keep changing officers or pulling them onto different wings then how can officers get to know people on there?* (Jimmy, basic)

The frequent dispersal of staff into different areas of the prison suppressed the ability for these prisoners to initiate any relationships with staff. Marx's (1977) construction of a humanism reminds us that 'men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves' (p300). Indeed, much of what occurs in the realm of penalty depends on the swarming circumstances that arise at any particular moment, and how the people subject to those circumstances ascribe meaning and respond to them. Such representations of diminished involvement with the scheme affected prisoners' ability to become actively noticed and curbed possibilities of developing relationships with staff. Visibly compliant prisoners were more capable to respond to these internal constraints that staff shortages

posed, as they could turn to previously established relationships; there was greater choice among these prisoners. At the other end of the spectrum, invisibly compliant prisoners were detached from the IEP scheme due to the lack of time to familiarise themselves with officers; it minimised their capacity to become visibly compliant for progression within the scheme.

### Concluding comments

This exploration of Wandsworth's social world makes apparent the demands of the revised IEP scheme's objectives of ensuring compliance to institutional aims. With the thrust of incentivising prisoners to address their offending behaviour, the scope of the policy encourages actors to become self-governing moral agents, as architects of their carceral management. To perform in such an explicit way may be highly corrosive to personal dignity, and the request to do so undermines the legitimacy of the system in the eyes of the incarcerated who are, in effect, penalised for their compliance, while extroverted subjects progress. Crucially, it is also a moral question of painting an 'ideal behavioural type', to change who people are in their entirety, and what right we have in promoting and justifying this penal avatar.

On a more positive note, these utilitarian ideals are not simply emblematic of issues regarding policy effectiveness in the development of penal policy initiatives. Rather, they underpin the resettlement and rehabilitative pathways that could mitigate any unnecessary pains of imprisonment, fostering a more purposeful prison culture which enables human

agency to thrive. That said, fundamental to these assessments of penal policy, such as IEP, is the role staff-prisoner relationships have in shaping prisoners' IEP experiences and hence their progression within the system; it further encapsulates the idea that gaining or losing IEP status is not as simplistic as following conventional IEP regulations.

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**About the author**

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