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law to include offences which at present are only civil? It may be replied that such a danger can be avoided by confining restitution to specified types of crime, e.g. crimes of violence. Such a solution would surely prove unsatisfactory, at least from the victim's point of view. He has suffered harm or loss through no fault of his own, why then should he not be compensated? His loss is the matter of substance; the precise classification of the wrong done him is formal.

This discussion which is raised by Dr. Schafer may lead to a reconsideration of the distinction between civil and criminal wrongs. This could result in all legal wrongs becoming technically crimes. In any event we are left with the question: what is the criterion of the distinction? Maybe the reviewer is being too academic. It may well be that the criterion is one of social expediency and, therefore, never final but alterable in the light of changing circumstances.

Whatever the solution adopted students and legislators are indebted to Dr. Schafer for a careful exposition of the present practice in a large number of countries and for a stimulating concluding chapter on the punitive concept of restitution.

ALEX KELLY.

THEORETICAL STUDIES IN SOCIAL ORGANISATION OF THE PRISON

Edited by George H. Grosser

Social Science Research Council, New York.
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THIS BOOK summarises a series of discussions of a group of seven meeting under the sponsorship of

the Social Science Research Council in 1956-1957. The persons concerned are all social scientists actively concerned with sociological and psychological research in prisons with special reference to group processes.

The common approach underlying their discussions is the idea that prisons are social organisations (admittedly of a special type, but this is true of all social organisations). As such, prisons, meaning the inmate and custodial groups, should conform to sociological law in a manner basically similar to other social institutions and groups studied by anthropologists, psychologists and sociologists. The attempt was therefore made in the course of these discussions to use the concepts of modern social science to generate hypotheses about prison groups. No attempt is made in this report to verify the truth of the hypotheses: the references to actual research are rather perfunctory and do not enable us to discriminate between various possible hypotheses. This is not written as a criticism of the authors whose main interest lies in deriving a theoretical model which will render various phenomena of prison life explicable and which will show the relationship between prison society and other social groups.

The resulting theoretical model is tremendously exciting and suggestive as it provides a systematisation of the notions of several generations of prison reformers in terms of an abstract and detached theory of the functioning of social groups and of the psychology of the individual in conditions of incarceration. It is rather unfortunate therefore that the treatment is so summary and couched in a

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phraseology which will tend to fatigue the British reader unfamiliar with American social science jargon.

The authors begin from a conception of prison derived from Kurt Lewin's "topological psychology". A prison constitutes a polar type of an authoritarian system that is governed by a bureaucratic hierarchy and entrusted with power over the total life space of the individuals under its jurisdiction. This defines the particular object of investigation, it indicates the method to be used in studying this object, and adumbrates the kind of conclusion which will be reached by the authors. The distinction is made right at the beginning between the inmates and the custodians. The objective relationship between the two groups is indicated. The terminology is rather unfortunate because of the normally negative emotional content of the words used as objective sociological terms. The terms, although used often by the ordinary man as denigratory, are not intended to be understood in this sense.

One of the most valuable contributions of this book towards our understanding of the prison community is the demonstration that the inmates and custodians, in practice, share a common interest in maintaining the prison as a unit which operates as a going concern. The authors are obviously followers of Malinowski and apply his view throughout that the various things that happen in a group (the relations between guards and prisoners, the system of merchanting of scarce and forbidden commodities, the prison riots, the homosexual behaviour of some inmates, and so

on) all have a function to fulfil of a conservative character ensuring a stability to the group and to the individuals in it which enables them to endure the frustrations and deprivations of prison life.

Even in the most humane of prison institutions the inmate lives under conditions of deprivation. He loses the liberty of disposing of his own time, his living-space is severely restricted, he is deprived of certain goods which are taken for granted in the society outside, he is denied heterosexual relations. In addition, his social isolation is perceived by the prisoner as an attack on his self-image and his sense of personal worth, an attack which is more threatening to him than even physical brutality or maltreatment would be. He is denied the privilege of being *trusted*, there is an implicit attack on his masculinity, he is forced into association with unbalanced and potentially violent persons so that his safety is endangered, he has lost any power of self-determination.

In this situation the inmates develop a particular code of behaviour and belief, they engage in the playing of particular roles, they develop attitudes to each other and to their custodians which enable them to parry the main effects of the social rejection, impoverishment and figurative castration. The inmates develop a strongly knit society *vis-a-vis* their captors and the greater society "outside". A solidarity grows around certain shared ideals, the common deprivations and the inferior conditions of life. A code of conduct binding on all inmates and determining their relations with each other and with their guards restores the self-respect

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and sense of independence of the society of captives, at the same time providing them with a purposeful way of life which cushions them from the deprivations and frustrations of prison life. The code (Never rat on a con! Don't lose your head! Don't exploit inmates! Don't weaken! Don't be a sucker! and so on) gives a new frame of reference to the prisoner so that his condemnation by the free community becomes almost irrelevant. Loyalty to his fellows, generosity to those suffering more than he is, disparagement of official society, results in an uneasy compromise between the actual condition of the prisoner and his continuing attempts to maintain the favourable image he retains of himself.

The group of inmates, as other social groups do, thus develops particular lines of interest as a consequence of the fact that certain problems confront the individuals in the group and the group as a whole. Crucial "axes of life" in terms of these problems and interests will be defined: the behaviour of individuals will be referred to these axes and certain "roles" or types of uniform reactions will emerge. The individual members of the group will thus be perceived by the others in certain stereotyped ways. These social perceptions or roles will have a constraining effect in that the individual member will tend to react as the group expect him to react, and the group will be constrained to interpret his behaviour (whether appropriately or not) in terms of the role in which he is normally cast. In this way the behaviour of inmates is "institutionalised": each may behave differently from the others

in relation to the group standards, without unbearable strains developing. Thus each finds his established place and function in the system—the "rat", the "tough", the "gorilla", the "merchant", the "weak sister", the "fag", the "innocent", the "square John", the "right guy" the "hero". Each of these is a deviant of one kind or another from the accepted code: the collection of roles (of which the above constitute a sample) together with their inter-relationships constitute the prison as a *system of action*.

The authors point to the remarkable similarity of the inmate systems found in one institution after another. They suggest that the explanation is not to be sought for in the factor of tradition; that is it is not enough to think in terms of the old hands passing on a developed tradition. Rather the prison setting generates a typical pattern of reaction on the part of the inmates. The inmate code, the social roles, the nature of the inter-actions between the individual prisoners and guards are all methods by which the society of prisoners adapts itself to a particular set of harsh social conditions. The phenomena we have been dealing with arise in answer to *needs* which are common to all prisoners. The forms of solidarity which develop act to reduce the pains of imprisonment. Frustration remains at a minimum. This means that all prisoners have a vested interest in maintaining the *status quo*. Certain prisoners adapt themselves to roles which improve their conditions of life more than their fellows. Although there may be competition for particular roles, such as "the merchant", "the gorilla", and other exploitive roles,

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once the system is established and running as a going concern it is in everyone's interest to adapt themselves to it, *and this includes the custodians as well*. Otherwise frustration will ensue for everyone until a new system of action has been produced. Thus the authors maintain that prison riots and hunger strikes and other crisis situations are primarily attempts by prisoners to restore an antecedent system of social relationships which has been disturbed by some (to them) arbitrary change in the pattern, a change perceived by them as threatening to the particular adjustment they have made within the action system.

The other main theme discussed in relation to the action system is that of *communication*. Information is one of the goods in scarce supply as far as the inmates *and* the guards are concerned. One of the major paths to power, either as a custodian or as a prisoner, in prison, consists in establishing oneself in such a position in the communications network (both formal and informal) as will give you access to information. A prisoner who is in a position of trust where he gets information from the records, or another prisoner who has established a relationship of middleman with a custodian, has advance information about such things as transfers from prison to prison, early release, searches for contraband goods. This can be "sold" for various goods and services which all prisoners covet. Alternatively, by supplying information to custodians certain privileges, sometimes of a corrupt character, can be extorted from the custodial system—a better job, contraband, advance information,

to be "left alone" in working a prison "racket". The authors see control over information as being more important, and indeed replacing, the direct exercise of executive power. It establishes and maintains a hierarchy, it emphasises certain values, it inculcates attitudes, it maintains discipline, it places some units of the organisation in an inferior position with respect to others (for example, work supervisors to guards or *vice-versa*).

Although the discussion is conducted on rather an abstract theoretical level certain empirical research is reported which tends to substantiate this theoretical analysis. For example, one author reports on his research into the changes made in the course of transfer from an autocratic system of wardenship in a Hawaiian prison to a more democratic and "treatment-oriented" regime. This is probably the most interesting and rewarding part of the book for the British reader who is a member of the prison services at the present time, since the argument of the other sections is here graphically illustrated.

What is the use of such a study for the present generation of prison officials? The book is abstract and difficult. The discourse is in terms of a field of scientific work with which very few are familiar. The locale is American prisons of the type of Alcatraz and other maximum and medium security establishments. Prisoners' slang and sociological jargon are both in Americaneese. The authors are all on the side of "the bad angels" (or inmates), as against the custodians—or seem to be! They consider that the custodians in progressive types of prisons are confronted by an insoluble dilemma—that they

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are forced to set inmates goals of rehabilitation which can rarely if ever be realised. This pessimistic conclusion, which is developed in detail, should make this study required reading for all prison officers who see their function primarily in terms of rehabilitation of the offender.

In spite of these critical remarks this is an important study which would well repay the very serious effort necessary to comprehend its main contentions. It provides the theoretical rationale of our contemporary approach to prison work, establishing the connection between the older type of prison regime and the professionalisation of the criminal. It indicates the prime importance of understanding the phenomena of group activity if we are to connect certain types of behaviour of prisoners and guards with antecedent causes. The causal connections it establishes enables us to predict the outcome of particular regimes and to control social response. The best possible outcome of this book would be that some comparable group in this country might be encouraged to look at our prison system and correctional establishments in the same way and analyse them in terms of the same conceptual framework.

JOHN McLEISH.

PREDICTING DELINQUENCY AND CRIME

Sheldon & Eleanor Glueck
Harvard University Press (London &
Oxford University Press) 1959
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WHATEVER VERBAL FORMULA we may like to resort to as our solution of the free will versus determinism

dilemma, there can be few who would deny what the authors of this book call "the reasonable predictability of human behaviour under given circumstances." Moreover, there seems no reason why we should exempt from this general statement such pieces of human behaviour that usually attract moral judgements. In other words, this predictability of human behaviour applies equally well to such actions as are customarily called good or bad. It may or may not be meaningful to say that a criminal has free will, but in any case there is no reason to doubt the predictability of his nefarious activities. And if anyone *does* doubt it then let him read this book. Herein is contained "an entire battery of predictive tables developed inductively out of the numerous Glueck researches." The underlying assumption of the book is simple but sound—that items which are found to separate the sheep from the goats at an acceptably high level of significance are capable of predicting sheepishness (or goatishness); and, furthermore, and this is really the "message" of the book, that this sort of knowledge is potentially of the highest social utility if only we could induce our administrators to use it. Evidence of such significant differences is given for a wide variety of treatments—e.g., Behaviour on Probation, Behaviour in Correctional Schools, Behaviour during Parole, Behaviour after End of Treatment, Behaviour of Civilian Delinquents in Armed Forces, and so on. There is also a chapter on the prediction of behaviour of female offenders, welcome because female delinquents are notoriously an under-studied group. Most interesting of all, in this reviewer's