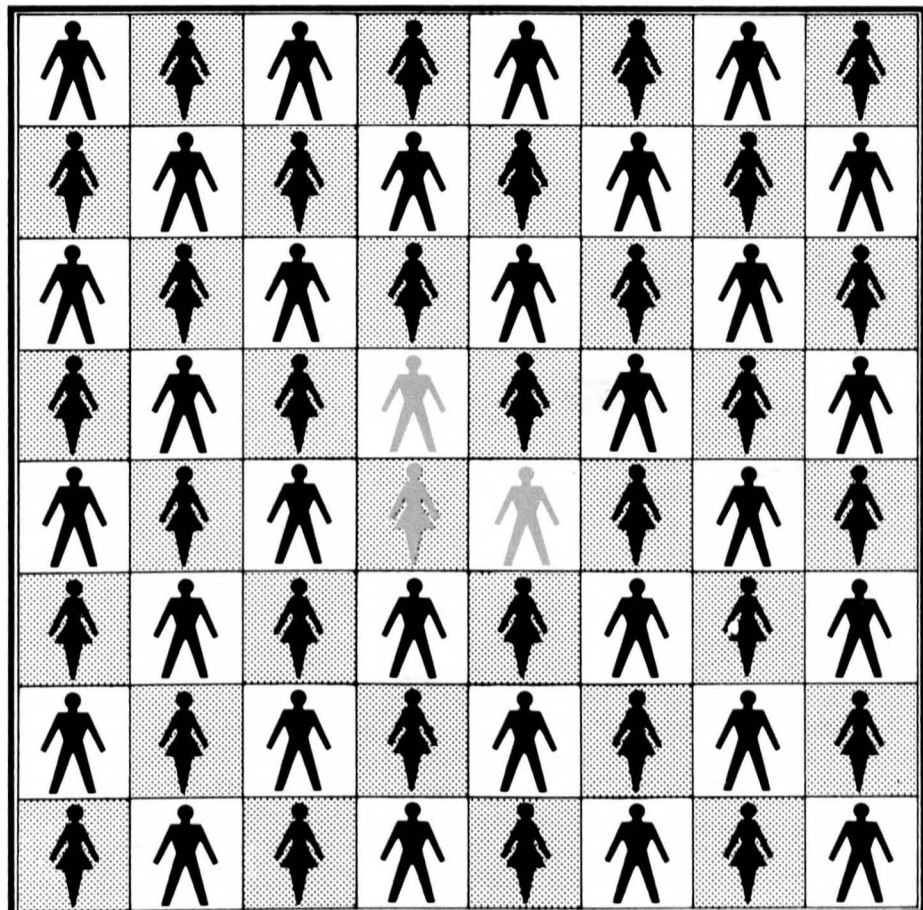


# PRISON SERVICE

# JOURNAL



Theme: Minorities



# PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

No. 35 New Series July 1979

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*The editorial board wishes to make it clear that the views expressed by contributors are their own and do not reflect the official views or policies of the Prison Department.*

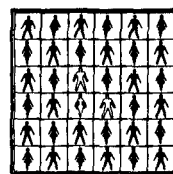
## Comment

The majority of the articles in this issue are about minorities. When the Editorial Board decided to invite contributors to write on this theme it became apparent that there was a major problem of selection to be overcome. Some minorities are obvious either because of the colour of their skins, or their style of dress or their mode of religious observance etc. Others are not so immediately recognisable but still present an appreciable problem to penal establishments and their staff: for example because of their sexual habits or limited intelligence. There are also another group of minorities which is created by the prison system itself for reasons of security or administrative convenience. The occupants of dispersal prisons or Rule 43 units come into this latter category.

Each of these groups present its own special problems but the Prison Service does not have the resources to give specialist training to those who must work with them. Given the current problems of overcrowding, increasing tasks and declining recruitment it is difficult to forecast any improvement in this area. However, if specialised training is not available then the normal standards of professional behaviour expected from prison staff must serve instead. Observers of the Prison Service comment time and again upon the integrity and humane manner in which the majority of ordinary prison staff carry out their duties. Given proper professional standards and encouraged by a caring management the average prison officer has shown his ability to cope with all the varying and bewildering problems which are thrown up by the prisoner population.

Unfortunately, although it takes the efforts of thousands of devoted staff over many years to establish a sound reputation for a service, recent events have shown just how easily such a reputation can be jeopardised. Provoked and humiliated though certain of the Hull staff may have been, they failed to maintain the standards of conduct which the public has a right to expect. There have also been disturbing signs in recent years that in the pursuit of legitimate industrial objectives some prison staff have not hesitated to cause prisoners and their families real suffering. It is not suggested that this has been done with conscious intent but the implications are that some staff have ceased to regard prisoners as people with normal feelings. Not that that Prison Service is alone in having this problem. Social workers have gone on strike using the suffering of their clients as a weapon in their dispute. Teachers are talking of refusing to invigilate at examinations thus placing the future of their pupils in jeopardy. These tactics are wrong. Human beings cannot be regarded in the same way as components at British Leyland. Those of us in the public service and in the Prison Service in particular have a moral duty not to exploit the vulnerability of the human beings in our charge no matter how provocative or unlovable they may be.

The recent troubles of the Prison Service have led to many calls for an independent inspectorate which will publish its reports, for a prison ombudsman with the power to investigate complaints and for a revision of the membership and powers of the Boards of Visitors. Such proposals may well be justified and no member of the Prison Service who feels for its good name and high standards should be alarmed or afraid to debate them. The preservation of the good name of the Prison Service must be the objective of us all.



# women & crime today

by Raya Levin

The interest shown in female crime generally is a sign of the times. As in many other areas of life the focus of study, observation, research and policy-making has, until the last few decades, been overwhelmingly centered on men and nowhere more so than criminology. In so far as women appeared at all, they do so incidentally in relation to men, e.g. studies were devoted to the effect of maternal deprivation or matrimonial discord on male offenders.

Social and economic developments, in particular the fact that the female labour force has doubled in the past 20 years (as against only 28 per cent rise in men) and now forms 40 per cent of the working population, have now made it impossible to continue to treat women as both silent and invisible. So the female offender is beginning, very belatedly, to get some share of attention.

Male delinquency has been examined from a variety of stand points, in the light of economic and cultural changes, of work situations, of group dynamics, of environmental factors, and the treatment of male criminals, whether custodial or otherwise, has been debated extensively by academics and policy-makers alike. Where women are concerned the approach to this day has remained exceedingly primitive and is still coloured by the outdated theories which link crime to biological factors, or, at best, to psychological abnormality. It is significant that the only innovation in the field of penal treatment for women has been the new Holloway Prison; its equation to a psychiatric hospital emphasises the fact that women offenders are perceived as being mentally ill. The "normal", "psychologically healthy" woman apparently does not commit offences whatever her circumstances. The "normal" woman continues to be defined in terms of a stereo-type personality embodying specific "feminine

qualities" such as docility, gentleness and frailty.

It is interesting to note that whereas a woman has to step right outside her perceived image and act in direct contradiction to her assumed normal characteristics in order to become a criminal, man has merely to exaggerate or emphasise the traits allotted to his stereotype in order to do the same.

Actually the concept of male and female stereotypes is totally sterile and bedevils the understanding of human behaviour, because human beings of both sexes have elements of the so-called male as well as female components in their personality, in varying degrees and permutations. The prevalent stereotyping is essentially a cultural device to ensure male control.

More recent research has attempted to link female criminality to woman's traditional and domestic role and in that light there are two types of offences which are seen as typically female. The first is obviously prostitution and other related offences such as living on the earnings of a male or female prostitute, brothel keeping or importuning by a male. In 1973 Home Office Criminal Statistics for England and Wales showed that 18.5 per cent of those convicted were men and 81.5 per cent women. It is hardly necessary to point out that the overwhelming predominance of women is the result of their role as a sex object (male prostitution is also an offence)

coupled with a double standard which punishes a woman but not her client, thus creating a unique situation where only one of two parties to an illegal act is committing an offence. However, the study of prostitution is a complex area which merits separate consideration and will therefore not be dealt within the framework of this article.

Shoplifting is an offence which according to official statistics is predominantly female.

TABLE 1—Shoplifting<sup>(a)</sup>

1969	Males—72 per 100,000 of population Females—83 per 100,000 of population
1974	Males—122 per 100,000 of population Females—111 per 100,000 of population

Although men's participation has proportionately increased in the five years covered by the table, the assumption remains that shoplifting is mainly a female activity since the numbers of women officially recorded as involved with shoplifting far exceeds the number of women involved in any other type of crime and this makes it quite unique in terms of female offences. Male and female shoplifters, although they do not appear to vary greatly in terms of

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their statistical significance, are apparently quite diverse in the terms of items they steal. According to studies of shoplifting by Gibbens and Prince<sup>(b)</sup>, women steal mostly food, usually of little value, and clothes while men tend to steal objects other than food or clothes and frequently of considerable value. A similar trend emerges in the U.S.A. where a large percentage of larceny charges involving women are for shoplifting where the items stolen are of little value.

The involvement of women and girls in shoplifting and their choice of stolen goods would seem closely related to the role of women in industrial societies like the U.K. and the U.S.A. Women are predominantly shoppers for household items and food, and the techniques of shoplifting, unlike the techniques which might be required for other offences such as car theft or burglary are available to them as to all shoppers. The tremendous increase in large self-service supermarkets which display goods in such a way to tempt the shopper to buy are also clearly instrumental in the increase of shoplifting in general and food thefts in particular. Furthermore, the theft of clothes is also clearly linked to the female role. This is particularly evident where pressure is placed on women to be well dressed and fashionable while the prices of clothes are restrictive and women's average earnings low. Shoplifting can therefore be seen as an extension of the feminine role, both in method and in its object.

Other offences most obviously related to the female role are those committed against children and infants and the procuring of illegal abortion. The latter offence has fallen dramatically in numbers due to recent legislation. In 1974 only four males and seven females were convicted. As regards the others, offences like cruelty to children, abandoning a child under two and child stealing, are clearly more likely to be committed by women and who bear most of the responsibility for child care. The strain of looking after children, the stigma of illegitimate birth and the desire to have a child are almost entirely peculiar to women in our culture.

If we now turn to offences of dishonesty which are not seen as specifically feminine like shoplifting, but which women commit in

significant numbers, it can be observed that there too their participation represents an extension of the normal female role rather than a deviation from it.

TABLE 2 (c)

		Male	Female
Theft by	1959	7,199	1,304
employee	1974	9,969	1,855
Theft from a	1959	3,681	467
machine	1974	3,734	1,001
Handling stolen	1959	5,505	565
goods	1974	18,433	2,590
Forging and	1959	1,676	948
uttering	1974	2,535	1,046
Social Security	1959	538	164
offences	1974	2,982	1,503

NB. This table shows that, with the exception of theft from a machine and Social Security offences, the ratio between male and female offenders has remained on average virtually unchanged. The question of the increase in criminal activity by women will be dealt with later in this article.

All the offences listed in this table require neither skill nor expertise. They involve a low degree of risk and they are also generally based on personal relationships, e.g. in the case of offences involving the handling of stolen goods the recipient of the goods is likely to be the "passive" associate who has not participated in the original theft or burglary. This passivity is in keeping with the women's role especially when the stolen goods are hidden or used in the home. Furthermore it is frequently the case that women will conceal stolen goods for those with whom they have some kind of personal relationship, e.g. husband, lover or sons. They therefore become implicated in criminal behaviour through family loyalty. In the case of theft from a machine, the personal relationship element is missing. Such a theft is a purely impersonal one and of a very petty nature involving no victim. Stealing from a machine requires no great skill, strength or planning so consequently it is consistent with the culturally ascribed characteristics of the female role. Similarly, theft by an employee does not necessarily require much planning or skill. In the type of jobs where women are frequently employed such as domestic work or as shop assistants, there are opportunities for thefts which cannot be easily detected. Even forgery does not require particular skills beyond the level of literacy which men and women are both likely to acquire. This crime also fits into the specialised line of activities in which women engage, especially their role of buying most family necessities and paying the family bills. Generally,

the haul at this level of criminal activity can only be modest.

Violent offences on the other hand are not easily reconciled with the accepted view of feminine behaviour and indeed very few women appear to be involved in murder or violence against the person.

TABLE 3 (d)

		Male	Female
Murder	1959	35	0
	1974	108	4
Attempted murder	1959	20	2
	1974	45	7

Studies of homicide in the U.S.A. reveal that even in this area the way women operate and their choice of victim remains related to the female stereotype. A major analysis<sup>(e)</sup> of homicide revealed that the victims of the female murderers were overwhelmingly individuals who had a family relationship with the offender (51.9 per cent) or were lovers (20.9 per cent). Women therefore appear to murder their husbands, lovers and other relatives while the men in the study more frequently killed close friends and strangers (in the course of committing other offences). Women offenders also tended to use less physical strength in committing murder, e.g. they were far less likely to beat a victim to death or use excessive violence such as multiple stab wounds on their victims. Women use knives or household implements in over a third of the cases. They tended to kill their victims in the kitchen or within their own homes. The place of the killing and the weapon used, as well as the fact that the crime was often unpremeditated, implies that the victims of homicides committed by women were often initially the aggressors and that women often killed in self defence or in anger. Even homicide by women can be understood in terms of their traditional role within the home, in the context of the family.

All in all it seems that in crime, just as in industry and commerce, women appear predominantly in the areas of low skills and poor rewards.

The connection between women's criminality and their current social roles has created the anxiety that as women's roles change, more will engage in crime. The fear of havoc to law and order which might result from women's emancipation is not new. Lombroso in 1895 spoke of the dangers of educating women, of removing the constraints of domesticity and maternity which he maintained would allow the "innocuous, semi criminal" personality present in

(b) Gibbens and Price, *Shoplifting*, 1972.

(c) C. Smart, p. 14.

(d) C. Smart, p. 14.

(e) M. E. Wolfgang, *Patterns in Criminal Homicide*.

all women to emerge. Similarly, in 1921 in the wake of women's suffrage the "New York World" placed the responsibility of most social ills at the doorstep of the Woman's Movement.<sup>(f)</sup> It reads: "the modern age of girls and young men is intensely immoral, and immoral seemingly without the pressure of circumstances. On whose door may we lay the fault we cannot tell. Is it the result of what we call emancipation of women, with its concomitant freedom from chaperonage, increased intimacy between the sexes in adolescence and a more tolerant view towards all things unclean in life?"

The above and similar fears and speculations seem quite ridiculous now. The predictions of Lombroso and others, in spite of women's education and the vote, have not come true, yet the topic is widely taken up again in consequence of the renewed thrust of women for equality.

Hard facts on the supposed rise in female crime are extremely difficult to come by. It has been possible to dig out just a few examples of statistical material. Table 2 shows that a proportionately higher increase in offences of thefts from machines and Social Security frauds committed by women. The first is a trivial offence and seems a function of the increase of coin operated launderettes and dry cleaners over a period of 15 years. These are most likely to be used by women, whereas men presumably steal from cigarette and gaming machines in pubs and arcades.

Social Security frauds are closely related to the sharp fall of the average earnings of women whose influx has been primarily into depressed and low paid jobs. Since 1955 the gap between average earnings of men and women has nearly doubled. Also there has been a marked increase in the number of households where the woman is the sole or main breadwinner (in the U.S.A. their number has risen by 73 per cent since 1960 and that now comprises 13 per cent of all families).<sup>(g)</sup>

Low wages and the heavier burden of dependents is responsible for the increase in Social Security offences, not the emancipation of women. In Sweden where equal opportunities for women are more firmly established than anywhere else in the western world the ratio of crime between men and women has remained at a constant ten per cent

for many years with a recent tendency to decline.

In the U.S.A. where any symptoms are always more acute, a study of Federal statistics from 1960-75 shows that females comprise 10.7 per cent of all arrests in 1960 and 15.7 per cent of all arrests in 1975. This is a gradual increase of five per cent and certainly not a dramatic rate of growth over a span of fifteen years.<sup>(h)</sup>

What of alleged increase of violence in women offenders? In Great Britain 33,071 men and 2,377 women were convicted of crimes of violence in 1973. This is considerably less than the ten per cent traditional ratio of female crime.

In the U.S.A. the proportion of violent arrests for women has remained consistent at ten per cent of the total of violent arrests since 1960.<sup>(h)</sup>

Nevertheless the 1975 report to the United Nations Congress in the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders endorsed the view that "most of the scant statistical evidence demonstrates that the increasing crime ratio among women is a new universal phenomenon". It is admitted that not all the evidence supports this view, and that such evidence as is available is scant, but instead of reserving judgement or requiring further data the Congress shows its bias by uncritically endorsing the report.

What remains? All one can say is that there is a "feeling" among probation officers, welfare agencies and institutional staff that their women clients are becoming more violent or aggressive and this is avidly lapped up by the media. No information is given as to which acts are defined as violent or aggressive. There is undoubtedly a growing change in women's attitude to authority, both domestic and social, but it is a far cry from being less easily intimidated or asserting one's rights to acting aggressively. It would seem that a self-confident stance when adopted by women is in itself seen as a threat.

Another factor which obscures the issue is the failure, until quite recently, to observe and record the actual as opposed to the assumed behaviour of delinquent women or girls. Some attention has been directed to the alleged increase of active participation of girls in gang crime. Since gang researchers in the

past have never troubled to interview female gang members as to their precise role, this could never have been assessed accurately. It has always been assumed that girls in gangs enact their deviance in terms of the typical female role, i.e. they are sexually promiscuous, they join gangs only because their boyfriends are members and they exert a calming influence on tearaway males. It seems far more likely that the recent perception of changes in female delinquency is not so much indicative of actual changes in behaviour but rather denotes a new awareness which in itself is the result of greater attention paid to the actual behaviour of women.

It is a great fallacy to assume that because women demand equal opportunities to acquire education and skills which would enable them to diversify their activities in all branches of industry and the professions, they therefore have a desire to resemble men. At present there are still only two generally acceptable identities available to individuals: the polarised masculine and feminine models. So a deviation from one model is wrongly perceived as an adoption of another. If the Women's Movement succeeds in freeing women from their own stereotype of dependence and its related attributes, it will by the same token profoundly effect the masculine stereotype. Man will cease to be under pressure to demonstrate drive (aggression?), toughness (brutality?), rationality (repression of feelings?), assertiveness (domination?). Woman's emancipation, if successful, is more likely to contribute in the long run to a reduction of violence and crime among men than to its increase among women. ■

## Contributions

to the Prison Service Journal are always welcome, especially from serving members of the Prison Service. Please send them to the Editor or to:  
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(f) Quoted by W. I. Thomas in "The Unadjusted Girl".

(g) *International Journal of Comparative Criminology*, 1977, No. 3, p. 49.

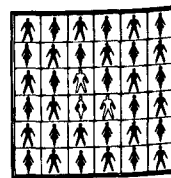
(h) *International Journal of Comparative Criminology*, 1977, No. 3, pp. 46, 47, 233.



## Introduction

Two seminars for Governors were arranged late in 1978 by Prison Department in co-operation with the Race Relations Adviser (Community Programmes and Equal Opportunities Department.) The first, for Governors of young offender establishments, took place on 23rd and 24th October and the second, for Governors of adult establishments, on 28th and 29th November, both at the East Cliff Court Hotel Bournemouth.

For the session *Ethnic Minorities in the Community and in the Custodial Setting*, Mr. Cecil Ross spoke on *West Indians and Black British* and Mrs. Roshan Horabin on *Asians and British Asians*. Mr. Ross is Senior Community Worker at the Tooting Project, a magistrate and a Member of the Board of Visitors at Ashford Remand Centre. Mrs. Horabin is a Probation Officer at Wandsworth Prison and the author of the report *Problems of Asians in Penal Institutions* (a joint publication by the Runnymede Trust and the Howard League for Penal Reform [1978]). A summary of their talks follows, together with a note on some points raised by Governors in the ensuing discussions.



# Ethnic Minorities in the Community and in the Custodial Setting

by Nadine Peppard

## West Indians and Black British

In his talks Mr Ross dealt mainly with the problems which were likely to feature in the background of the young West Indians and British-born blacks in penal institutions. Many had become disillusioned with society. They could not but be aware of some hostility towards them and of the incidence of discrimination. They often came into conflict with their parents who, as immigrants, had been ready to settle down to lower-paid manual jobs and who often could not understand the problems of their British-born children or the frustrating experiences they had. For example, in areas where the "sus" charge was in frequent use and the youngsters were arrested, parents tended to assume automatically that they were at fault. This lack of understanding and the parents' often unrealistically high expectations of their children often led to estrangement which could last for four or five years. The young people drifted into a rootless life and could easily turn to petty crime in order to live from day to day. Feeling that they were outside society and had no chance in it, (a feeling confirmed by their experiences in seeking employment) they

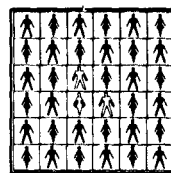
had little incentive to be honest. Mr Ross pointed out that the official measures taken over the years had failed to deal with this particular aspect of the problems, and this had led to the formation of community groups trying to deal with their own problems.

Turning to the matter of the relevance of all these factors for the Prison Service, Mr. Ross thought it important for information to be made available on the numbers of black trainees and prisoners and on what was happening to them in penal establishments. He received many complaints from black youngsters about staff attitudes towards them and the use of Rules 42 and 43 which they said was much more frequent in their case. Some felt that their intelligence and ability were underrated and were often superior to those of the Prison Officers in charge of them. In view of their experience in the community and the background to their offences and arrest, they saw themselves as being in prison first for their colour and second for their crime. Nevertheless, said Mr. Ross, it was an ironical fact that for a number of them, their circumstances were in many respects

improved when they were in establishments rather than in the community. For example, it sometimes happened that community workers like himself tried in vain to get boys on to training courses, only to find that when one of them went into borstal he was given a place on an identical course straight away.

In the course of discussions Mr. Ross said that he fully recognised that many white youngsters faced similar problems, but the fact that theirs had not been alleviated did not mean that those of black youngsters should not be recognised and attempts made to solve them. Questioned about the very hostile attitudes they seemed to have to all prison staff, he said that in fact they were generally not unfair in their judgments: as in the case of their attitude to the police officers they encountered, they would readily distinguish between those who in their view were just or were unjust. On the subject of recruitment to the Prison Service, Mr. Ross agreed that it would be helpful if more black people could be encouraged to become prison officers, but pointed out that for this to happen the structure and environment needed to

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# Race Relations Training and the Officer Training Schools

by John Dring  
*Officers' Training School, Leyhill*

In December 1978 I went with another tutor from OTS Leyhill on a three day attachment to Wolverhampton Council for Community Relations. Our purpose was to study, at close quarters, the problems which coloured people have in the Wolverhampton area.

The background to this rather unusual attachment is worth noting. Since the early 1970's what used to be called "Community Relations" training has formed a small, but significant, part of both Initial and Development training courses at the Prison Officers Training Schools at Leyhill and Wakefield. Currently, the Initial course students spend five sessions on the subject and the Development course two sessions. On the Initial course, the aims of the first three sessions entitled "Race Relations in Society" include:-

1. Making the students aware of the cultural differences between the three main groups of immigrants (i.e. West Indians, Indians and Pakistanis).
2. Making the students aware of the problems of integration.
3. Making the students aware of the various aspects of prejudice within the community.

The two other Initial course sessions are devoted to "Race Relations in Institutions", and the aim to look at the effects of cultural differences and of the problems of integration in penal establishments.

Obviously, teaching this subject requires the tutors to possess a good deal of knowledge about the various ethnic minorities and their problems. Formerly, O T S tutors were trained

by means of Race Relation seminars, but more recently tutors have felt that direct contact with members of the ethnic minorities in the community would give them greater understanding of the particular problems which they face and more detailed knowledge of their cultures. To this end, the Home Office Race Relations Adviser, Miss Nadine Peppard, was asked by the two training Schools to arrange placements for their tutors with Community Relations Councils in various parts of the country. This Miss Peppard did, with the help of the recently created Commission for Racial Equality, which acted as a liaison between the Training Schools and the various Community Relations Councils involved in the placements.

Our particular attachment started with a briefing from the Community Relations Officer who was to be our host. He set the scene by giving us an outline of the development of the Community Relations Councils, emphasising that they are set up locally and voluntarily, quite independent of each other and with no direct organisational link with the Commission for Racial Equality (C R E). The C R E is a statutory national body set up by the Race Relations Act 1976 to replace the old Race Relations Board and Community Relations Commission. The

Act lays down that the C R E is to help enforce the 1976 Act and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups generally. It also lays down that the C R E may give financial assistance to any organisation concerned with the promotion of equality of opportunity and good race relations. Consequently, the C R E gives financial assistance to nearly all the locally established Community Relations Councils.

My colleague and I were the first Prison Service staff ever to be attached to Wolverhampton Council for Community Relations (W C C R), but nevertheless they had worked out a very thorough and useful programme for us. We first visited a Day Centre owned by the Y M C A, but run by Youth Leaders paid by the W C C R. The majority of the young people who used the Centre were either West Indian or of West Indian descent. This predominance of one ethnic group was not intended by the organisers, but reflected the population of the area, as well as a reluctance by many white youths to use the Centre. It had two main functions. Firstly, it was used as a day-time club for unemployed youngsters. Secondly, the Centre was the venue for some Youth Opportunity Schemes funded by the Manpower Services Commission. One group was learning African dance to a professional standard, so as to earn their living as a Dance Group. Another group was involved in a "leader-

ship/learning for living" course, involving a Youth Leader and attendance at a local College of Further Education. We became involved in a lively discussion with this latter group, although we first had to break down their stereotyped image of Prison staff before we could persuade them to confide in us. When they did, there was undoubtedly some bitterness in their view of white society and feelings of helplessness and frustration that they would never be given a fair chance in competition with white youths for jobs. It was impossible for us to assess the validity of their evidence for this pessimistic view, but it was certainly the way they saw things. This, despite the fact that they were a group of intelligent and sensible young people, some of whom were taking G C E examinations and would be well qualified for good jobs when they left school.

The Youth Leader told us that very few black youngsters in Wolverhampton are Rastafarians, which did not seem to tie up with the experience of many of us working in Young Offender penal establishments in the Midlands during the last few years, where the majority of black inmates claim to be Rastafarians. However, if one considers that, in essence, the Rastafarian movement in Britain aims to make black people proud of their heritage, then it is not surprising that the small minority of mainly unemployed black youngsters who are sentenced to Borstal or Prison are so keen to become Rastafarians once they arrive at our establishments. They arrive at our gates with all the usual feelings of any offender about to start his sentence, plus these extra feelings of bitterness, helplessness and frustration, which my colleague and I observed at the Day Centre. In this vulnerable state they are easily persuaded to join a movement which seems to be offering them self-respect and support in the face of the "oppression" (as they often see it) by white authority.

During our stay at Wolverhampton, we also spent time with the Asian Community. We had a very useful introductory discussion with an Indian Community Relations Officer and his Pakistani colleague, so that we were able to extend our knowledge about their countrymen considerably, and they highlighted for us the differences between their

cultures as well as the three main religions, (i.e. Moslem, Hindu and Sikh). We visited Bilston Neighbourhood Centre, where a Youth Worker was running another Manpower Services Commission training scheme for Asian girls, involving them in a survey of the social needs of the area. Between them they explained the difficulties of being an Asian girl in Britain; the protectiveness of their parents, especially their fathers; the suspicion by their parents about their exact relationship with the Youth Leader, who was young and male; the problems of their not being able to associate freely with boys; and finally the cultural clash resulting from "arranged marriages" which, though they were in favour of them in principle, some seemed to favour less than others. Even with these cheerful, quite outgoing girls brought up in Britain, there was a good deal of suspicion of us and the authority role which we represented. This possibly reflected the traditional Asian reluctance to resort to authority to solve their problems, but it also reflected their dislike and distrust of the Police Force with which they associated us in a general way. Certainly, the pessimistic views they expressed about their prospects in life were not as gloomy as those of the West Indians whom we had talked to earlier, but the girls still felt that their opportunities in life would be restricted by their colour.

Overall, my colleague and I were particularly impressed during our time in Wolverhampton by the low level of aspirations of the bright, articulate young people amongst those we met in both the West Indian and the Asian communities. Although many felt they had the ability to do well in life, they did not expect to receive an opportunity to realise their full potential in our white dominated society. This pessimistic attitude towards their chances in life was widespread, not only amongst those we personally talked to, but also, according to Youth Leaders and Community Relations workers, amongst the majority of coloured youngsters in this country. This attitude alone would make it difficult for young coloured inmates to form relationships with white staff in penal establishments, but the problem is compounded by cultural differences and by misunderstandings on both sides. Thus we see the relevance of the current programme of Race Relations Training for prison staff and also for their tutors.

Already, a number of tutors from both the Officer Training Schools have completed similar placements with Community Relations Councils. Feedback from tutors who have been on these placements has been generally positive, and it is my hope that similar placements will form part of the training of every tutor who is posted to the Officer Training Schools.

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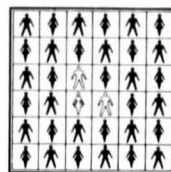
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# RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN PRISON

## TOLERATED? ACCEPTED?

by Derek Russell

*South East Regional Chaplain*

### Approach

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes the freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom however alone or in community with others and in public or private to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance". So says Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All subsequent comment and practice, whether it be through the European Convention on Human Rights or Standard Minimum Rules or just relevant Circular Instructions, regarding Prison have seen this as a right maintained and upheld during imprisonment. But the scene has changed and is changing from what it was in this country 30 years ago. The social scene has changed, the religious scene has changed and many prisons also have changed in their tasks and constraints. The simple assertion of a human right is one thing, but it's working out and practice in the complexities of human life in institutions, and amid the flaws of human nature, is another.

### Minorities

There are always great pressures toward conformity and to be in a small minority in a total and permanent sense is distinctly uncomfortable. Religious belief is one of those deeper aspects of human life that enables people to live in minorities and encourages them. But it is then too simple to describe a minority as just a smaller group

among many other larger groups. For all our democratic ideals and our western pluralism, minorities may pose a sense of threat. Minorities of all kinds, religious, racial, social, or even criminal, have much assumed of them, or projected on to them by the rest of the community. A minority may be seen simply as a "social abnormality". Sometimes the life of the one person may be divided across the boundary of the majority and minority in different aspects of his life, perhaps as between his work culture and his religion and home life. What constitutes a minority in one aspect may not be so in another; what is a minority in one country may not be so in another so that a minority in one country may draw its strength from elsewhere, posing a sense of threat.

(I can recall being struck by the thought — while crossing the footway on Hungerford Bridge in fact — that as a Christian I am part of a minority. In this country it is a shrinking minority; overall in the world the Church grows by over 50,000 per day and that is encouraging; at the

same time I still draw support from aspects of a culture in this country which belongs to a post-Christian era. In England we still think of ourselves as a "Christian nation" and the Church of England is still the established Church, but Christians, practising their faith as a function of living, are a minority. The Act of Uniformity of 1662 could not recognise difference. Perhaps the value of an increasingly plural society is that all can be recognised as minorities in a welcome variety, without the projection of myths and fantasies on each other.)

However, it is in the religious aspect that each group seems to claim to be more right than any other, and before we criticise or condemn a theocratic Iran, we would have to look to Northern Ireland as showing that even within Christendom, pluralism can be experienced as a deep threat. It is reasonable, and human nature demands, that we should respect the rights of others to be different from ourselves. But we are only able to accept those differences to the extent that, or at the level at which, they are



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not a threat to how we want to live or to the smooth working of the social structure. Even if we do not feel a sense of threat this may be due less to positive acceptance, than to negative indifference or tolerance.

### Religion

Recently, Wymott Prison was opened to the public gaze, and articles appeared in the Guardian Newspaper. Cynthia Bateman wrote, "..... with a splendid Chaplain who can call up (indeed has the statutory obligation to do so if requested) reinforcements in the way of Rabbis, Gurus, or Wee Free Ministers if a prisoner so desires ....."; and a little further on "..... the Dining Hall convertible to Cinema or Theatre, has a choice of menu as varied as the potential Chapel staff .....". There was a light-hearted flavour in an article about a prison which as yet has no prisoners, but the religious references are not without significance. Many would see the religious scene of sects and faiths as a kind of menu of choice, a la carte, and according to cost and flavour. In some ways the Prison Department at whatever level, sees the Chaplain as conveniently discharging a role, something like the Head Waiter facilitating arrangements. There is a sense of variety to be accepted and in addition to the smaller groups (eg the Jews) and of the smaller sects around for a long time (eg the Mormons), large movements of population for whatever reasons, have turned the Christian West into a society with religious pluralism which has its effect on prisons. To some extent the effect is to put religion more in the sphere of the private individual life (being reversed in Iran for example). There are choices that were not around formerly. The simplistic view of a society in which one religion carried some sense of moral unity, exemplified in the Old Testament, no longer fits all the realities, and the universal public appeal of a faith is reduced. When this happens, the committed may leave for another community, or quietly accept assimilation in the secularism of our age, or become eclectic and sectarian. But where a minority chooses to stay, or in the case of prison, has no option but to stay, the strength for the individual lies within his own spirituality as he moves about in an alien culture. Nevertheless he will want to do

justice to the spirituality and support it, through some corporate sense.

Although there are very deep differences if ideas and practices, processes of assimilation do happen: Christians may be challenged in the spheres of individual piety and meditation, while those who come from the East may begin to take on some of our habits and sense of regular meeting. Of course this serves cultural as well as religious needs in minority groups, and especially so in prisons. I can recollect ten years ago having the greatest difficulty in persuading an Imam to enter the prison; he would provide prayer mats or Korans, but saw no need to visit for either religious or cultural reasons. Times have changed because the minorities have changed in size, in variety, in influence, and through the ways in which they are regarded.

### And inside the Prison

Within the prison too, things have changed and the weekly meetings of those registered in a minority faith are common place. The Eastern emphasis on significant time and festivals and foods has also been asserted; the Muslim emphasis on ritual cleanliness at least highlights the state and poor facilities of some large older prisons!

How a minority religious group behaves "inside" is a complex matter. In the community small minorities are acceptable because the tendency is to assimilation, while larger ones developing strong identities become seen as a threat. Within the prison, so long as groups, different from the traditional and manageable, remain relatively small, few problems are felt. Initially on entry to a prison the prison culture may administer such a shock in terms of sheer survival as to be the dominant and unifying factor. As time passes and if the sentence is of any length the practice of religion in a minority group may become important as a means towards identity, or self-assertion, or real support, or as a means of outside contact; it may be all these and God reaching through to a man by whatever has been his mode of spiritual knowledge.

### Sects/Colour/Culture

There has been no real increase in the numbers of those from the traditional sects that have broken off the mainstream Christianity, such as Christian Scientists or Mormons, and there are few problems here because

the needs are related to such small numbers; if a Mormon does not drink tea or coffee he manages this as a matter of his individual piety and not as any expression of group culture.

Colour identity on the other hand is raised in many activities and many forms, so whilst differences should be recognised any devisiveness to further separate religious groups on account of colour alone, should be avoided. Colour anyway, cuts across all religious boundaries and it has become more frequent to find white inmates registering some link with a non-Christian faith.

The West Indian expresses his culture in a number of ways which may include dress, hair-style, refraining from pork, music etc. Not too many West Indian Christians have been drawn into the established Church, although there are notable exceptions. Finding a lack of warmth and some prejudice they have sought to build their own black churches, often within the Pentecostal ethos, where they have enjoyed the more uninhibited aspects of worship. Present within Anglican worship in prison, they are less likely to follow the norms of "quiet and still behaviour". Sometimes an anti-authority streak is reflected in bad behaviour, but on occasions behaviour is simply exemplifying aspects in their own warm and more ebullient culture and worship. Furthermore, often feeling failures in society, or feeling pushed to the bottom of society, a nice quiet dependent style of religion is firmly rejected.

Among younger West Indians, Rastafarianism is often a means towards black identity, although perhaps a passing phase in terms of its use within prisons. Maybe the Jamaican Government, which regards it as a movement with religious overtones will have to adjust to its presence and influence, but meantime the element of orthodox faith is insisted upon as lying with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

It is interesting that within the prison culture Asians will sometimes avoid West Indians as meaning "trouble", and on the other hand feel them to be picked upon unfairly by staff. Within the chapel, Asians including those who are Muslim or Sikh and who attend Christian worship, resent disruptive behaviour as disrespectfully irreligious whether it comes from West Indians or

nominal whites present for a host of reasons irrelevant to worship.

### **Whose Responsibility**

Meeting the declared objectives of the imprisonment of men and women is the department's responsibility, but it becomes a shared responsibility, of all involved with prisoners in every aspect of their lives and their rights. More particularly the appointment of chaplains of all faiths is from Establishment Division 3. Fees and expenses are paid and the recipients are accountable to the Governor regarding their work inside the prison as it affects security, control and the proper running of the community.

Not every religious group can have, or wants, its own "holy place", but awareness is required of the need for space which can be managed to cover all activities. The enemy of proper provision is usually overcrowding, shortage of space in old and some new prisons, and restricted time-tables and staffing that prevent the best use of available space. The task of the Chaplain is a delegated one and he can only work within the existing constraints. In saying this it has to be remembered that there is the danger of his becoming the "religion man". In the minds of some this may fit well with supposed reductions of his work in other directions, but it is arguable that more of the administrative work in a large prison should be undertaken by the institution, setting him free for his essential pastoral job.

There is a responsibility also to the prisoner; it is certainly to recognise and to provide facilities to meet his rights. It may also be to protect at times in a position of vulnerability from a host of those who would religiously approach him in the prison. It may also be to look honestly at issues where prison rules get tangled with pieces of manipulation, as instanced by the matter of haircuts and registering as a Sikh.

### **Staff Feelings and Attitudes**

Staff will bring to their working relationships the same sets of attitudes and feelings as they hold in their lives generally. This is inevitable and not cause for regret so long as careless labelling, half in fun, does not take advantage of a superior position in the behaviour of a few. There is every indication that most staff show much concern for the isolated person and the foreigner, but the prison culture and life brings

such close contact with inmates of all races and religions, who are yet indigenous to this country that great understanding and sensitivity is required if there are not to be frictions and perceived injustices. Actual staffing and manning levels need to be such as to enable a number of gatherings for religious worship and instruction to take place within adequate time slots. Control is easier if work is the only consideration during the day, but the religious element has to be included in the more varied programmes that now exist.

Over the past few years sheer familiarity with the task of arranging and supervising the worship of other faiths has produced much understanding and acceptance from staff. Of course strange ceremonies or foreign languages may pose a threat. I suppose that Christian religious programmes form a part of that mutual ground for communication so vital in the prison. But where any aspect of the activity seems to exclude staff by its strangeness or language some initial suspicion may arise.

It becomes important for staff to have some information about religious customs and festivals. The subject of food is a very emotive one in the context of religion (almost a subject on its own) and how easily incidents become seen as "bucking the system". Although circulars may allow no special observance of the festival, mere knowledge of something important to another, could affect a working relationship. The weekly bulletins or internal circulars, in some prisons might include such information and Staff Information rooms might also be used. Chaplains have, or can obtain, information. For a long time the Department has taken note of the Jewish minority and publishes a Circular Instruction at the beginning of every year. This might be extended to include major matters of importance for other faiths too.

Staff training, needs on the spot opportunities to look at actual incidents and to acquire learning from them; solutions have to be quick. In general racial and community terms this is necessary and might well include the religious aspect. The Asian for example, sees no division between the sacred and the secular so that even if there is a fall away from religious practice the

cultural distinctions remain. Staff need to have access to accurate information and all opportunities within training programmes that are currently being developed, are welcome.

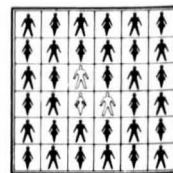
### **So what are we asking of Chaplains?**

In some establishments, depending on size and location, little extra is asked in the matter of religious minorities. But always there is a statutory responsibility to liaise and call upon Ministers as required and insofar as they may be willing and able to visit. In cases of doubt he will refer to HQ to test the genuine character of the particular religious group to which adherence is claimed. This may not at all coincide with what he considers being free from "up the garden path" religion. Furthermore just as there are varieties within the Christian church so also in other faiths among Muslims, buddhists, and others, perhaps reflecting national characteristics. The requests that come to the Chaplain may reflect a man's fragmented search for some spiritual truth, or for some technique of meditation that brings better performance and a sense of peace; or they may come through to him at a level of manipulation, concern for diet, or just that egotistical twist which combined with prison conformity, wants to be different.

The Chaplain has to respect the person in his religious registration, and in his desire to practice his faith. He explains the way in which departmental rules have been negotiated with outside religious authorities to enable the minimum and obligatory requirements of the faith. He will have to absorb resentments if ever the inmates feel let down by their own leaders not visiting. He will need to offer concern about routines, cleanliness, religious objects, and foods, which in the absence of the "holy place" are important. In such a way he will help to form good attitudes by the institution to its minorities.

Such respect for another's faith makes it hard for him to pick up pastoral opportunities, being denied the use of its own Christian images and ideas. Christian Chaplains have now to proclaim and practice their faith within a multireligious atmosphere, all the closer in a tight prison community. *The importance of the Chaplain lies in what he is, as much as in what he does.* Among those

*continued on page 12*



# THE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED PRISONER

David Waplington

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**There are, I believe, considerable grounds for believing that not only are our prisons being actively used against the State but that the actual conditions of imprisonment can in some cases be a far from neutral factor in the way in which they affect certain prisoners.**

These problems, are I feel, of great concern in relation to prisoners who are motivated by an extreme political belief and this article seeks to explore the hypothesis set out in the first paragraph in relation to this particular group. It is my belief, however, that first we as prison staff must be prepared to look at these groups and the beliefs which they hold in the same way as we look at other minority groups; that is with a view to understanding them.

Numerous historians and political biographers have suggested that the experience of serving a term of imprisonment has had a considerable, and often profound effect upon the political thinking and development of certain individuals. A good example of this is contained in the book *Ulster*.<sup>1</sup> The authors attempt to trace the beginnings of the split between the Official and Provisional factions of the I.R.A. and formed the following assessment: "Prison was the turning point for both men. Goulding, the more thoughtful, emerged from jail a potential new leader of a reformed I.R.A.; prison on the contrary, transformed Stevenson into an embittered obsessed figure — committed to the old violence". If such a statement were true it would seem to indicate the necessity to take a good look at what is, or can be, taking place in our prisons because

while the effect on individuals appear random in this example, this may not be the case and the authors certainly seem to be suggesting that the experience of imprisonment, in both cases, played a very important part in subsequent development.

Whilst I was employed as a Wing Assistant Governor, I formed the opinion that a system which involved relatively free association for large numbers of prisoners under conditions of inadequate staff supervision (too few staff) was highly conducive to the formation of various relatively influential prisoner groups. In several cases, the factors which seemed to greatly enhance the degree of group cohesion were a unifying belief and a common cause which it was possible for members to identify with. Not surprisingly, it was groups of black prisoners that I first observed more closely and I noted that the groups which contained inmates who were, or professed to

be, most actively involved with "Black Militant" organisations seemed to purposely stress their group identity by withdrawing from other prisoners, by becoming more extreme in their dress and language and by strongly supporting one another against outsiders. Whatever the reasons for the coming together of such groups, the threat which they appeared to pose to both staff and other prisoners seemed related not only to the size of membership but also to the extremes to which the group members went in terms of identifying themselves with one another and with their cause.

Given this fairly obvious starting point, I found myself looking more closely at other individuals who were not quite so obvious but who, nonetheless, were known to belong to, or identify with a political cause which was generally considered to be an extreme minority movement. These were principally Irish and Welsh Nationalists but also included some less classifiable extremists from both sides of the political fence.

As a result of observations,



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interviews, group sessions, study of records plus all the other countless and often priceless pieces of information that a prison can produce, I eventually formed some tentative conclusions which I presented, fairly hesitantly to the North Regional Assistant Governors Conference in 1976. These basically consisted of a crude typeology which was no more than a useful framework for allowing me to record consistent information. I now believe that most of my conclusions were extremely naive but not wholly invalid.

The groups I identified were:

### 1) Leaders

This group usually had case histories which indicated that they had considerable ability and intelligence but were under-achievers. They were respected because of their intelligence, fervour and crusading activities. In prison they invariably sought to strengthen their belief by use of books and other educational material and this was often of a very selective nature. The outside contacts of this group often included a member of a university staff or a pressure group activist, and usually they had links (incoming newspapers, letters, books) with some person or office of the organisation which they supported.

Although at the time I suspected there were other more important, and less easily identifiable leaders I could not find out anything about them, even though many of the Irish Republican prisoners held "ranks" outside which they seemed unconcerned about concealing. I now believe that my group did not identify leaders at all but people who were looking to identify with a cause, and advertising that fact but, nonetheless, they were potential recruits and recruits who could well aspire to leadership.

### 2) The Anti-Social

This was the second group which seemed to emerge and they represented the most alarming in terms of behaviour in that they seemed not to need the political belief structure in order to behave violently, but the fact that this did not bar them from membership of the group and also gratified their need for acceptance and status also enabled them to camouflage their natural inclinations.

At the same time I found this group the least satisfying construction and I

was very conscious of the prison bias of my observations. I now think that this group included those who were looking for excitement and activities: the "stimulation seekers".<sup>2</sup> This group could be a most important one in prison riots. "The revolutionary propagandist who calls for the direct outplay of aggression against a scapegoat . . . may be principally appealing to the frustrated but may also gain adherents from young bored persons who are "out for kicks" or perhaps just something to do".<sup>3</sup>

### 3) The Introverts

This group tended to consist of solitary or somewhat insecure individuals whose case histories indicated that they had difficulties in forming personal relationships and that their life-style was one which lacked supportive companionship and direction. They seemed the most exploitable and vulnerable but membership of an extreme organisation which demanded a whole commitment gave them both not only identity and purpose but scope for social intercourse; friends and supporters. Many of the very young Irish prisoners seemed to have been enrolled into the I.R.A. through joining folk clubs or language societies. In the biographies of several notable Irishmen these organisations have been identified as fairly common starting points in the process of regaining community and national identity, particularly when one is in a foreign country. Something which seemed more surprising was the number in this category who were unusually small or who had impediments or slight handicaps of some kind. Perhaps this is a reason for greater isolation in individuals. I was fairly sure of this group and feel that it represented the classic "outsider": "The minority group member can come to feel guilty for being different. When the system will not let him in, will not restore or create community despite his ardent desire to be like them he may seek political power to co-erce the society into creating community or equality".<sup>4</sup>

These then were the typologies which seemed to emerge. Observations about the total effects of imprisonment were, however, much harder to evaluate since I was not only looking at the individual but also at groups who are usually closed to prison staff and all outsiders.

### The Effects of Prison

There is much evidence, in political biographies in particular, that one of the common effects of imprisonment is to influence certain individuals towards really concentrating upon themselves, their identity and their beliefs — it is often described as being a process of self-sustainment. The response or outcome of the process can result in an individual completely immersing himself in a minority culture or particular belief. Prisoners who have nationalist feelings, for instance, often concentrate upon their national history and language and I have known several prisoners who were actively engaged, whilst in prison, in de-Anglicising themselves even to the extent of changing their name to correspond with the spelling and form it would take in their national language. This on the surface, may not seem very significant but I believe it to be an important clue that a fundamental identity and belief change is taking place. Cultural identity is known to play a very important part in all nationalist movements and in many revolutionary movements.<sup>5</sup>

If one looks at the importance of groups and particularly prisoner group experience in prisons, there seems ample evidence from the P.O.W. experiences, for instance, to suggest that prisons which allow a great degree of association among inmates but which do not facilitate widespread informal contact between prisoners, staff and wider groups tend to produce restricted or closed prisoner communities. Groups which are closed can gain mutual support and even generate a sense of elitism amongst their members. The possible implications of such a process can work for an extreme minority group by consolidating members' commitment towards one another and the cause supported and, cut off from other forms of influence, the members are likely to become more extreme. The Irish Republican movement has a long history of prison groups forming and much has been written by them about this even to the extent of analysing the usefulness of various tactics to be employed against prison staff and the "authorities" in general. It is something which, as we are witnessing with the campaign taking place in the "H" blocks in the Maze prison in Northern Ireland, can be turned to considerable advantage by the

organisation outside. It should not be thought that this is a wholly modern phenomenon nor one which has been confined to prisons in Northern Ireland. Sean MacStiofain, writing of his experiences in Wormwood Scrubs, wrote "In the Republican movement, a political prisoner did not just vanish into jail to be forgotten. The jails and camps themselves were an important sector of the revolutionary front".<sup>6</sup> This may not always mean confrontation with prison staff. It is clear for instance that many politically motivated prisoners use imprisonment as an opportunity to educate themselves in some way. Lenin describes the prison library at St. Petersburg as, "for many prisoners an institution of higher learning"<sup>7</sup> and MacStiofain referring to Republican Prisoners during the 1939-45 war stated that they had "developed to an outstanding extent the idea of prison as the University of Revolution".<sup>8</sup> There are numerous other examples which could be quoted in this context and it seems reasonable to assume that a form of indoctrination, not necessarily an unreasoning, mechanical one can be taking place in prison.

In fact, the whole area of education in prison might prove worthy of serious attention as I believe that there are many positive aspects to it which could be better exploited. I am not, I hasten to add, advocating putting two extreme factions together in a classroom, but rather structuring a situation so that well-trained and well-supported staff are encouraged to find out what prisoners are reading and thinking, and be prepared to discuss issues with them. There are risks in such a policy, of course, and while it may be possible to structure a regime so that informal staff/inmate contacts is greatly facilitated, these contacts would have to be genuinely opportunist or accidental; never forced as an alternative form of indoctrination. In some cases, in order for such measures to be effective they would probably require a far more favourable staff/inmate ratio than exists at present, and an acceptance of the important contribution of all staff who have regular contact with prisoners.

Like everyone else, I am troubled by the thought of political extremists whose methods of achieving their aims involve sabotage and murder

but, regardless of whether we see them as criminals or as "politicals", we certainly need to discover much more about them. This cannot be achieved unless we are prepared to observe them closely, encourage informal contact with them and genuinely attempt to understand them. To do otherwise might, in some cases I suspect, be tantamount to making a contribution to a cause which we would never knowingly support.

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3. Ibid.
4. Ibid P377 *The Psychology of Social Movements* by Hadley Cantril.
5. See *The Study of Politics* by Maurice Duverger. Nelson Univ. Paperback 1974, Esp. Ps. 95 to 109.
6. *Memoirs of a revolutionary* by Sean MacStiofain. Gordon Cremonesi, 1975.
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## RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN PRISON *continued from page 9*

sincerely practicing their non-Christian faith is often found a respect for religion as such, and for the Chaplain as the "holy man" or the "God man", who is most around and most facilitating of their needs.

The Chaplain will need to be in touch with staff and sensitive to their questions and misunderstandings as well as using a large measure of their skill and helpfulness among the inmates.

In the midst of relationships with staff and inmates the Chaplain must nevertheless still stand for the Christian faith and avoid being some kind of theosophical ombudsman. There is a challenge within his own worship and religious groups in heavily multi-racial establishments. And he may have to watch sensitively for those who become absorbed by a dominant religious culture which would not be there for them on discharge. This can happen where chapel attendance is still compulsory, or it may occur to individuals where they have no supporting minority group. Yet he will want to be alert to the possibilities of conversion without compulsion.

## The Church

In theory, although not always in practice, the church holds the view that everyone is to be respected and held in reverence as created by God. From past failure, present opportunity and future hope there arises a responsibility to seek equality and actual friendship with all. Accepting the diversity and holding the tensions within them, is a starting point. This entails an equal opportunity for religious practice in prisons. I finish by quoting largely from words of a theologian. Max Warren, — "Unless I contend for the other man's right to be different from me, I may well find that I am no longer free to be myself. As far as Britain is concerned the Christian Church has an inescapable responsibility for ensuring far beyond mere consideration for Christian unity, that legitimate diversity and freedom and pluralism will be able to flourish within one people to the enrichment of that people. What is so embarrassing for the Church is that so much of its theology in the past has tried to justify limitations upon freedom for the right to be different".

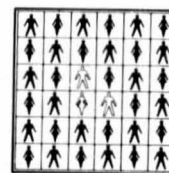
Perhaps in this new situation we

shall need further real research into the way that religion, and religions of many kinds, actually function in the hearts and minds of men and women of diversity within the prison situation.

Max Warren quotes a Muslim Scholar, recently become a Christian — "a pluralistic religious world is not a crisis, it is God's providential challenge and the Church's opportunity. It does not destroy anything except our complacency and smugness. It is the opening through which God's call for his people today has become searchingly but compassionately focussed".

The Prison Department would hardly see the matter thus with aspects of crisis appearing in so many other directions. Christians and the Chaplaincy will certainly find their integrity tested as they feel after a deeper task among all who share at least another dimension to life and the principle of faith in something that is greater than man himself. I believe that this dimension is experienced in some way, however confused, by a great variety of those who find themselves in imprisonment.





# CHILDREN IN CUSTODY

**Finlay Graham**

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Children in custody is quite clearly a subject, the very title of which is likely to engender an emotive response, and consequently it is essential to clearly specify to whom is being referred by the label 'Children in Custody'. In the context of the present article the label is taken to refer to young male persons aged 14 to 16 years who are held in detention centres, borstals and prisons. That individuals of this age can accurately be termed children is questionable and it is felt that the term 'young persons' employed in the Children and Young Persons Act when referring to individuals aged 14 to 16 years is much to be preferred.

It is tempting to simply write a subjective article on this topic but it is doubtful if such an approach would be of any real value. Instead it has been decided to take a fairly objective standpoint and make an attempt to describe in practical terms the current situation with regard to young persons in custody.

## (a) What is the Background of Young Persons in Custody?

The typical junior detention detainee is a young person with two or three previous convictions who has been involved in criminal activity for one or two years. He is unlikely to have committed a crime of major violence and rather he is likely to have been convicted of a breaking and entering, theft, or damage to property offence and is likely as not to have previously been placed on a care order to a local authority, possibly involving a period in a community home (about one third are ex community home boys). In other words it would probably be fair to say that they are young persons who appear to be on the threshold of a criminal career but, who, as yet, are a nuisance rather than a danger to society. In the main they are of average intelligence although some are quite definitely intellectually subnormal. Their educational attainments are below what would be expected for their age and intelligence level. About 14 per

cent of them could be described as showing some signs of "disturbance" on personality testing. In 1977 junior detention centers accommodated some 75 per cent of young persons in Prison Department custody.

Not surprisingly the young person aged 15 to 16 years (14 year olds are excluded from borstal) held in borstals are more established in their criminality, most having been convicted of three or more previous convictions with more than half of them having previously served a detention centre sentence. The type of offence which they commit

remains much the same as for junior detention centre detainees except that young persons in borstal have committed these offences more often and in addition crimes of violence are more prevalent. As a group these young persons in borstal appear to be individuals who have already commenced a criminal career and who have not been deterred by community home, detention centres and other measures.

The small number (56 in 1977) of young persons who are imprisoned have generally been convicted of a very serious crime which, if committed by an adult could lead to a sentence of 14 years imprisonment or more. They tend to be treated as individual cases and may serve their sentence in a number of different establishments. The problems they pose are so unique that they will not be considered in this article.

## (b) The Extent of the Problem

In 1955 young persons constituted an almost insignificant proportion of the total population held in Prison Department establishments but have since increased to a point where in 1977 they constituted 13 per cent of



In 1972, entered City of Glasgow Police as a constable after graduating at Aberdeen University. Resigned in 1974 and obtained his teaching qualification at Moray House, and a Diploma of Education at Edinburgh. Joined as psychologist at Low Newton in 1975 where with colleagues he provides a broadly based psychological service to six establishments in NE England. Married, three children and studying part-time for a Ph.D at Durham.

the department's population. For those who still believe in percentages the numbers have increased by a staggering 2300 per cent (Prison Stats. 1977) since 1955. Between 1972 and 1977 alone their numbers have more than doubled. Why has this increase in numbers come about? An examination of the Criminal Statistics for 1977, where it is shown that persons aged under 17 were found guilty of 50 per cent of all burglaries, 38 per cent of theft and handling, 33 per cent of criminal damage, 30 per cent of robbery, 21 per cent of sex offences and 18 per cent of violence against the person charges dealt with by the courts, would lead one to believe that the increase in young persons in custody has been produced by an increase in their crime rate. However the rise in numbers of 14 to 16 year olds found guilty of indictable offences has remained fairly constant in comparison to the number of persons of all other ages found guilty of such offences. In 1938 for example 16.96 per cent of all indictable offences were committed by young persons whilst in comparison the figure for 1977 was 17.72 per cent. In this sense the problem is not a new one at all, our 14 to 16 year olds have always accounted for a sizeable proportion of all crimes committed. It is interesting to note however that since 1957 receptions into Prison Department custody per 1000 individuals found guilty of indictable offences has risen almost threefold for 14 to 16 year olds but has decreased by more than half for over 21 year olds (Criminal Stats. 1976). Apparently, therefore, it is the courts themselves which are producing the dramatic rise in the number of young offenders placed in Prison Department custody and that this is not in fact due simply to increasing numbers of young persons committing crime *per se*. Custodial sentences are hence being used as a new solution to an old problem.

### (c) Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations relating to young persons in custody focus on two main points (a) is it right to remove young persons from the care of their parents? and (b) is it right to punish young persons? There appears to be fairly widespread agreement that some young persons require to be removed from their parental home in order for them to receive adequate care and protection. This is the philosophy under which

community homes are now operating. Prison Department establishments, particularly junior detention centers where 75 per cent of young persons in custody are held, cannot realistically be seen as providing care and protection for detainees. The purpose of detention centers is quite clearly punitive although this has been much diluted since their inception. Whether or not such policy is morally right really depends on public opinion at a given time and within the context of this article that question is unanswerable. Notwithstanding the moral issue it is possible, however, to examine the efficacy of the policy.

Detention centres in the late 1950's were probably a fairly realistic example of a short, punitive custodial sentence and with reconviction rates of 45-50 per cent, they appear, by current standards, to have been successful. The situation is not however as straightforward as it would appear to be and one must guard against jumping to hasty conclusions. A considerably greater proportion of young persons received into detention centres in their early days were first offenders and it was with this group that their real success, namely reconviction rates of around 30 per cent, lay. With ex-approved school boys, however, their reconviction rates were over 80 per cent. Objective evidence would hence suggest that if a short punitive sentence were to be employed for first offenders, preferably of a somewhat "anxious" disposition (in a recent study at Medomsley detention centre it was demonstrated that anxious offenders had significantly better reconviction rates) then very good success rates could be predicted. At present however only about 13 per cent of young persons currently being committed to Prison Department establishments are first offenders, hence the outlined policy is unlikely to have a widespread impact in the detention centers, even in their early days, were largely unsuccessful with young recidivists. In addition many will argue that it is contrary to natural justice to subject first offenders to punitive treatment whilst in comparison young recidivists languish in borstals.

It would seem in recent years that opinion is moving towards a situation in which local authorities will deal with all young persons whose offending necessitates their removal from home. This policy was advocated by the ACPS in 1974 in their

report on "Young Offenders" and was endorsed in principle in the recent green paper "Youth Custody and Supervision: A New Sentence". Implicit in this policy is that punishment *per se* as a method of dealing with young persons who break the law is no longer acceptable.

### (d) Institutional Problems

Ethical considerations apart the reality of the present situation is that increasing proportions of young persons are being held in Prison Department establishments. How ought they be treated? The main philosophical argument lies in junior detention centers which, as mentioned previously, cater for some 75 per cent of all young persons in Prison Department custody. The philosophy behind a detention centre sentence has undergone a progressive dilution since their creation in the mid 1950's. In November 1968 the Advisory Council on the Penal System recommended to the Home Secretary that Moor Court, the only detention centre for girls, be closed without replacement on the grounds that girls were unlikely to be influenced beneficially by custodial treatment limited to the period available under a detention centre order. The Home Secretary accepted this recommendation and Moor Court ceased to take receptions from January 1969. In their report in 1970 on detention centres the Advisory Council suggested demilitarising the detention centre regime: "In our view the punitive function of detention should be regarded as fulfilled by the deprivation of the offender's liberty, and treatment within the centre should be aimed at bringing about a change in the offender's behaviour". The Advisory Council in their report in 1974 on Young Adult Offenders recommended a merging of the three existing sentences of detention centre, borstal and prison into a single sentence the regime of which would basically be that of borstal. This report brought to an end the philosophy that "There is a type of offender to whom it appears necessary to give a short, but sharp reminder that he is getting into ways that will inevitably land him in disaster . . . . . Their regime will consist of brisk discipline and hard work". (C. Ede, Secretary of State for the Home Office, Hansard, 1948) which marked the creation of the detention centre sentence. In addition to these proposals made by

the Advisory Council it was recommended that young persons be gradually phased out of Prison Department establishments in favour of comprehensive arrangements for the care of all young persons by local authorities. But where do these proposals leave staff in junior detention centres?

From a practical viewpoint young persons in their mid-teens are obviously going to be more impulsive and less emotionally stable than are adults. In the majority of cases this will create problems which staff can quite readily handle. However it must be pointed out that neither junior detention centres nor most borstals (except Feltham and Grendon) have the facilities to cope with disturbed or intellectually and socially inadequate young persons. There are no full-time medical officers in most of these establishments and no provision for psychiatric treatment. In addition manning levels are such that officers are unlikely to have sufficient time to spend with detainees/trainees in the type of therapeutic role which would be required if dealing with disturbed young persons. Their training in this respect is also limited. Quite clearly therefore, disturbed or inadequate young persons would more appropriately be dealt with by either the National Health Service or the Local Authorities in their community home system as both of these organisations have the facilities to cope with such persons. Assessment of suitability for detention centre or borstal will not however be an easy matter and will also raise ethical problems.

One point which distinguishes establishments catering for young persons is that most of the detainees/trainees will have to be given fulltime education. In a sense therefore they will be in the charge of the "Local Authority" for a fair percentage of their time in whatever Prison Department establishment they may be serving their sentence. The time remaining for Prison Department staff to develop constructive relationships with their charges on an individual basis and thereafter attempt to produce a change in their behaviour is hence not likely to be very great.

#### (e) **The Effectiveness of the Prison Department in Dealing with Young Persons**

Despite the arguments against their use reconviction rates must be one of the objectively best ways of evaluat-

ing regime effectiveness. Reconviction rates from Prison Department establishments as a whole are unlikely to produce much optimism on the part of those who feel that custodial sentences ought to deter those experiencing them from committing further crimes. However when the results for 14 to 16 year olds are examined they portray the singular degree of ineffectiveness of the sentence in deterring the offender from engaging in further criminal activity. In junior detention centres the reconviction rate for 1974 based on a two year follow up was 73 per cent whilst in borstal the reconviction rate for this age group in the same year was 81 per cent. This is markedly worse than rates for 17 to 20 year olds which in 1974 were 58 per cent and 63 per cent in senior detention centre and borstal respectively. Has the Prison Department got its policy for dealing with young persons all wrong or is it that young persons are resistant to treatment/training in general? An answer to this dilemma may be found by looking at the relative success of community homes who also deal with a fair number of 14 to 16 year old offenders but who operate very different regimes from those in junior detention centre and borstal. Cornish and Clarke (1975) obtained reconviction rates of on average 69 per cent based on a two year follow up of boys admitted to three different community home regimes. Millham, Bullock and Cherrett (1975) in a study of over one thousand community home boys obtained similar results. These results therefore suggest that it is not simply that the Prison Department have got their policy wrong but that young persons are resistant to current treatment/training practices.

#### (f) **The Future**

An examination of the numbers of young persons received into Prison Department custody since 1955 leads inescapably to the conclusion that, in the absence of executive or parliamentary intervention, the upward trend in the numbers of young persons will continue. Since 1966 the number of 14 to 16 year olds received into custody has increased threefold whilst in the same period the number of adult males received into custody remained practically unchanged barring a sharp but temporary drop in numbers in the early seventies. If these trends continue over the next twelve years then by the early 1990's

we will have a situation in which there will be half as many 14 to 16 year olds in custody as adults. If we then add the predicted number of 17 to 20 year olds there will be as many under 21 year olds in Prison Department establishments as adults. The question must be asked is this a rational policy? It seems that institutional sentences are not particularly effective in combating crime in young persons but then neither are non-custodial measures which produce much the same sort of reconviction rates.

The recent green paper *Youth Custody and Supervision: A New Sentence* although lacking bright new ideas represents the most realistic philosophy within the constraints of the present situation. It is proposed in this paper:- "For those offenders with short sentences, the emphasis would be on personal development, basic social skills, and survival training intended to help them look after themselves in the community". If such a policy within the institution is combined with attempts at modifying the environment to which the offender will return upon his release then there may be some slight grounds for optimism. This will, however, require a great deal of co-operation between Prison Department staff and probation officers.

The constraints mentioned in the previous paragraph are the aims and objectives which courts and indirectly society has when an offender is sentenced to a term in a Prison Department establishment. These aims are probably fourfold; to reform the offender, to deter the offender himself and others from committing crime, to protect the public or simply to punish the offender. In terms of these aims the Prison Department successfully protects the public in that few persons escape from custody and commit further offences and if punishment is looked upon as withdrawal of freedom then on this point also the Prison Department must be regarded as successful. Is it sensible however to talk of protecting the public for periods as short as six weeks (the current junior detention centre sentence) from 14 to 16 year old offenders whose crimes are a nuisance rather than a danger to society? Also is it sensible to talk of punishment in relation to a sentence of six weeks duration in which the detainees will receive full-time education and where the emphasis

will be on personal development, basic social skills and survival training? I would suggest that it is not sensible. The remaining aims of deterrence and reformation can only be evaluated by examination of reconviction rates which, as mentioned previously, in 1974 were 73 per cent, and 81 per cent reconvicted within two years from junior detention centre and borstal respectively for 14 to 16 year olds.

In conclusion therefore it seems that short custodial sentences for 14 to 16 year old offenders do not meet the aims set out for them. They are not the easy answer to juvenile crime which many people perceive them as being and as long as they exist alternative methods will not be sought with sufficient vigour. However they are not likely to be abandoned and I therefore revert to my earlier point that within the

constraints of the present situation the recent green paper represents the most realistic philosophy. Ideally though, what really needs to change are the expectations which the courts and society place on short custodial sentences for young persons, those expectations at present being in discord with any examination of objective evidence relating to the efficacy of such sentences.

#### ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE COMMUNITY continued from page 4

be ones in which they could operate. Community workers tried hard to get them to think more positively, and it would help to strengthen the right kind of community influence if local seminars and meetings were held, lists of visitors for black inmates and organisations which could provide speakers compiled and more ethnic books provided. As in all areas where this kind of activity needed to be developed, more money and resources were required.

#### Asians and British Asians

Mrs. Horabin began by referring to her experience of contact with prisoners in a variety of settings. As a child in Poona she had visited the prison and been told of the language difficulties of offenders (the language of the courts being English) and the breakdown of family life due to a man's imprisonment. In the course of wartime intelligence work she had acquired some knowledge of the mental, physical and emotional consequences of imprisonment in camps. In penal institutions here there were similar problems of communication and of social and emotional needs. Isolation bred deprivation and that led to depression, then illness, which could be part of the grief syndrome, and then aggression might follow and lead to conflict. It was difficult for a man to explain the emotional causes of his illness, especially when his needs and different cultural attitudes were not understood. If they were, it would not be felt necessary to send him to hospital, sedate him or lock him up.

Language problems were sometimes very severe. While prisons were usually able to provide an interpreter for main languages, or other inmates might help, there were real difficulties with little known languages like Pushtu, Tamil or Bengali. There seemed to be no

specific way in which inmates speaking only those languages could be helped, either to have rights and procedures explained or contact made with their families. The same problems arose in the courts and could lead to intense anxiety about all that was happening.

Other problems arose in the allocation of work in prisons, when certain jobs like cleaning, laundry work and tailoring were resented as being work for untouchables rather than "perk" jobs, and this needed to be explained. Older Asians of the wartime generation tended to identify with English Prison Officers, while younger ones were shocked by the low educational standards of some white inmates and others, and by the crude language they heard. They tended not to associate with West Indians, partly because of difference and partly for fear of being included when officers "picked on" the blacks.

Religious needs were not always fully met, and the compulsory removal of religious symbols like the muslim tawiz or the Sikh bangle could cause great distress. A source of reference was needed for prisons and borstals to have access to someone who could help with an inmates personal, religious, family or immigration problem. Deportees too often suffered great disadvantages in that they were not eligible for the provisions (leave, earnings, help for families and discharge grants) which other prisoners had.

The wives of people from small villages had particular communication problems. The Pakistan Women's Association had suggested that there should be a unit in the UK which would liaise with them. They could send field workers to the villages and send news of his family to the man. Young Asians sometimes suffered greatly from the different

expectations of their parents at home and of British society. A Pakistani boy of 18 or so would have to assume full responsibility for the family if his father died and often found that he could not cope with this when he had adapted to life in Britain.

Mrs. Horabin's recommendations included the idea that every penal institution should have a calendar of religious festivals so that staff could show that they had taken note of them; that a closer check should be kept on degree of literacy, so that the Education Department could help; that greater efforts should be made to involve the various religious representatives and obtain voluntary associates; that books and films in Asian languages should be made available and opportunities provided for playing Asian music; that prison staff should go out into the community and visit Asian homes; that Governors should ensure that discrimination is not practised, and should discuss with staff any problems or anxieties they had; and that efforts should be made to acquire greater knowledge and understanding of the special problems faced by Asian prisoners.

In the course of discussions, Governors generally agreed that more background knowledge was needed and said that they should receive more information and opportunities for seminars, talks etc., on cultural backgrounds and special difficulties. Some from young offender establishments thought that although at present staff sometimes felt threatened by some West Indian boys, there were signs that angry young Asians might also become more threatening and form groups. It was most important for staff to understand this subject better and also for more liaison arrangements with the outside community to be made.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Reviews Committee:

RAY MITCHELL *Prison Service College, Wakefield*

RICK EVANS *HMP Bristol*

MARK BEESON *Leeds University*

PETER ATHERTON *Prison Service College, Wakefield*

## PRESSURE POINTS

### The Acceptable Pressure Group: Inequality in the Penal Lobby: a case study of the Howard League and RAP

M. RYAN

*Saxon House, 1978, £7.50*

This is a timely book, coming as it does when the penal system is subject to what may be fairly described as a crisis. Mr. Ryan clearly understands the nature of pressure groups, and he has, very thoroughly, researched important aspects of both the Howard League and Radical Alternatives to Prison (RAP). Gordon Rose's *The Struggle for Penal Reform* remains the standard history of the League and its predecessors, but Mick Ryan is not trying to supersede this. He is more interested in influence wielded by the League, especially in recent times. What his book does is to explain more of how the League and RAP work; who belongs; and, above all, their relationship with the Home Office.

Historically, the relationship between the League and the Home Office, has been collaborative. The consequence of this is that even those who disapprove of the League must admit that it has influenced decisions about penal policy, and Ryan discusses some notable examples. The question which is debated in modern times by more radical critics is whether this "influence" is influence at all, or whether these are "reforms" which the authorities allow the League to suggest. As the author points out, this is not to say that the League never disagrees with the Home Office (the control units were a case in point), but that there is basic agreement about the need for a

penal system, and broad concordance, at least in theory, about its direction.

This is not surprising, since the League's membership of 1300 or so, in 1975, consisted of "solid middle class professionals", at least two-thirds of whom lived in the London area. When one studies the making of penal policy, incidentally, the London grip is striking. One consequence is that events on the "periphery" often fail to make an impact. I was much struck, for example, by the length of time it took the denizens of the South East to realise the seriousness of the situation in Hull in 1976.

RAP, as its name suggests, wanted change at the base. It wanted to challenge the need for prisons at all, or at least some of its members did. Naturally, an organisation with radical aspirations will attract people with varying perceptions of what "radical" means. The ensuing squabbles are of the greatest help to penal authorities. After all, what could be better than a group, interested in the penal system, channelling its energies into discussion about the abolition of prisons — a prospect which, in a modern industrial society, for whatever reason, seems somewhat remote. A measure of the radicalism to be found in RAP was opposition to Community Service Orders. Ryan points out that they opposed them because the Orders were punitive, they were retributive, and they sought to reintegrate the offender, "instead of being educated to see himself as the victim of an unequal and corrupt society".

One especial, and practical, example of RAP's interest has been in women offenders, which is, of course, a reflection of a new interest in society at large into the position of women. Despite opposition to the project,

however, Holloway went ahead. On the other hand, RAP has had some successes. One of these was the Newnham Alternatives Project, with which the more radical were not very happy, because it was "collusive". And RAP figured largely in the campaign against the control units. Mention of the control units leads me to one minor flaw in the book. Nor can the author be blamed, since he cannot analyse informal pressures of the kind that came from courageous governors who opposed the units in their pristine form, thereby contributing to their modification. It is this same invisible phenomenon which invalidates his conjecture that it may have been the League's case for an independent Prison Department which set off the Management Reviews. Arguably the real reason for these was because the post-Mountbatten structure, centred around the key role of the Inspector General, was unpalatable to Whitehall.

The book's discussion of the most "extreme" group — PROP — is limited, but the reason is familiar to writers. The time between writing a book and it appearing in print is so great that intermediate events cannot be taken into account. In my judgement, PROP is now a good deal stronger than when Ryan started to write his book.

Prison staff often look bewildered when a new policy, big or small, lands on the doorstep to be incorporated into their work. "Who", they ask "decided this"? If you want some clues, read Mr. Ryan's book, and read it carefully.

Dr. J. E. THOMAS

*Deputy Director, Department of Adult Education University of Nottingham*

### The Occupational Socialisation of Prison Governor Grades

P. A. J. WADDINGTON

*University of Leeds, 1978*

I expect there are many Assistant Governors who will relive their time at the Prison Service College as they flip through this dissertation. That is, if they are prepared to stick with what is a very technical sociological treatise and if the GPO are prepared to transmit such an immense typescript around the country. This Ph D thesis is the result of "Tank" Waddington's study and participant observation of the AG's initial training courses 1971 to 1973 which he places in the context of socialisation theory. Socialisation was a term once applied only to the upbringing of children but it is now used to describe the process through which adults also learn to conform to the expectations held by members of the group they are joining. It is this wider sense of attitudinal and behavioural modification which Dr. Waddington applies to Assistant Gover-

nors preparing for their new positions.

Part 1 supplies a critique of the theory, describes the attitude scales and interviews which the Assistant Governors completed for the research, and outlines its results. The theory of socialisation predicts that heterogeneity of attitudes and beliefs should increasingly give way to a similarity or homogeneity of outlook as the induction proceeds. In fact, homogeneity among AG's was high and remained consistent throughout the course which may say more about the selection process or even the expectations of the students than about the training. Socialisation theory also predicts that people will be more defensive about the system as their "conversion" proceeds, but AG's, judging by their responses to an evaluation scale, appeared to become more critical of the Service and its achievements as they trained. There was also much talk at the time about the differences between ex-officers and direct entrants to the rank of Assistant Governor, but Dr. Waddington's research shows that such differences among students at the College may

have been largely mythical: few reliable differences were found in the results and these bear little relation to the premises of socialisation theory.

Interestingly, the students' responses revealed an adjustment not so much to the job of AG as to the College in Wakefield. The theory predicts that socialisation to the role should occur despite such feelings but the students — like groups of inmates in prisons — displayed U-shaped curves of adjustment to the regime, showing less conformity both at the beginning and at the end of the course.

Part 2 of the dissertation therefore abandons the stricter confines of socialisation theory and describes a period of participant observation in which Dr. Waddington sat in with the trainees. Much of this section is concerned with the confusion over what role the Assistant Governor will be taking in the field and, in the light of this confusion, describes the period at the College as a *quasi-professional training*. The legitimacy of the course in improving job-related behaviour is questioned and its



input seems to have been more social science than skill training.

To be fair, this research was conducted at the time of the "old style" course when Assistant Governors attended for eight months full-time at the College. The style of training is now "block release" over two years with periods at Wakefield alternating with attachments and practical experience of the Assistant Governor's job and puts a greater emphasis on managerial skills. Still, Dr. Waddington's study may help some Assistant Governors get their training into perspective and recall those "good old, bad old days" in the College when some of them were not so much socialised as social.

R. E.

## Ten Years of Parole—Retrospect and Prospect

J. E. HALL WILLIAMS

*The Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquency, 1978, 30p*

### Guidelines for Parole and Sentencing

DON M. GOTTFREDSON, LESLIE T. WILKINS and PETER B. HOFFMAN

*Lexington, 1978, £13*

*Guidelines for Parole and Sentencing* is the result of an American study to demonstrate that discretion in criminal justice decisions can be structured and controlled without losing the advantages of considering cases individually. Decisions about parole and sentencing are made on two levels: the merits of the individual case, and the overall policy which provides the context in which individual decisions are made. The aim of the research was to clarify this overall policy by producing explicit standards or guidelines, thereby enabling decisions at both levels to be more easily evaluated. The intention was not to eliminate discretion, which was felt to be an essential ingredient of any criminal justice system, but to bridle it, and to reduce decision disparity and inequity.

The researchers found that decisions made by the United States' Board of Parole were generally based on three major considerations: seriousness of offence, probability of reconviction, and institutional performance. The first step, therefore, was to ask members of the Board of Parole to rank offences according to their judgements as to severity on a six-point scale. The severity of offence then formed one axis of the guidelines model. The other axis was based on an actuarial device which attempted to predict the probability of reconviction. The predictions resulted from a two-year follow-up of a random sample of 2,483 cases released in 1970. Similarly to the British system, offender characteristics such as the number of previous convictions, age at first offence, types of previous offences, employment record, and domestic circumstances were each given a rating and then totalled to produce a placing on an eleven-point scale. The possible scores were combined to form four risk classifications: 9-11 (very good), 6-8 (good), 4-5 (fair), and 0-3 (poor). This was termed the "salient factor score". The "median time served before release" for each seriousness/risk level was then tabulated; the figures being obtained from a large sample of previous decisions and an evaluation of their consequences. Each median was then bracketed to provide a discretion range.

The guidelines table which emerged was used in a pilot project in which panels of examiners (which appear to be roughly equivalent to our local review committees) were asked to complete an evaluation form that included a severity rating scale and a salient factor score. If they made a decision which was outside the guidelines, they were instructed to specify the factors in the case that resulted in

this decision. The main reason for deviation from the guidelines was the third dimension in arriving at parole decisions — institutional performance. Approximately 85 per cent of all decisions were within the guidelines. The pilot project was deemed a success and the system is now being used by the federal board and by several State paroling authorities.

A by-product of the introduction of guidelines was that the Board of Parole felt confident enough to introduce an open decision policy. Every inmate who is denied parole receives a brief written statement of reasons, an example of which is as follows:

"Your offence behaviour has been rated as *high severity because your offence involved multiple auto thefts*. You have a salient factor score of four (4) (a copy of the item-by-item breakdown is attached). You have been in custody a total of 25 months. Guidelines established by the board which consider the above factor indicate a range of 26-32 months to be served before release for adult cases with good institutional conduct and program achievement. After careful consideration of all relevant factors and information presented, it is found that a decision above the guidelines is warranted because:

- 1 *Your offence was part of a large-scale and ongoing criminal conspiracy*
- 2 *You have two recent and serious institutional disciplinary infractions*

Continue for review hearing in twelve months [25 months + 12 months = 37 months (5 months above the guidelines range)]

Could the system be introduced into Britain? I can't see any reason why not. It would reduce the feeling that parole is a lottery; it would establish clear criteria; and it would enable inmates to make a more realistic appraisal of their chances of getting parole. The book is quite readable even if, like me, you cannot understand most of the statistics. I would recommend it to anyone involved in the parole procedure.

*Ten Years of Parole* is the text of a lecture presented to a meeting of the I.S.T.D. in 1978. As readers of his previous publications will have come to expect, J. E. Hall Williams reviews the parole system in this country from a standpoint of experience and commonsense. He applies a realistic approach to many recent less-informed criticisms of the principles and procedures, and his conclusions and suggestions for improvement of the system are eminently practical.

The story of parole in this country is one of gradual development and improvement. No one would suggest that the system is perfect and it will no doubt be soon due for further review. One can only hope that when that happens, the voice of informed opinion will carry the day.

RAY MITCHELL

*Prison Service College, Wakefield*

## The Search for Criminal Man

YSABEL RENNIE

*Lexington, 1978, £12*

A first glance at the table of contents, reference notes, and bibliography confirms the biographical note at the back of the book: the author is a historian, a journalist, and a novelist too. What will such a person make of this complex and specialist subject? This book has emerged from her work on the Ohio "Dangerous Offender Project", so she ought to know what she is talking about.

The contents are arranged in six parts or sections, with an introduction which defines the problems of dangerousness, causation and treatment. The six sections are determined partly by historical development, partly by approach: I. Legal, historical, philosophical and political viewpoints; II. The historical growth of scientific approaches, especially the biological and genetic; III. The influence of

social and cultural theories, e.g. the conflict between Darwin and Marx; IV. Psychiatric influences; V. Physiological contributions including chromosomal work, brain surgery, alcohol and discussions of psychopathy. Part VI is a one chapter section to consider where all this endeavour has got us.

Right away one becomes totally absorbed. Part I is a fascinating tracing of early concepts of "dangerous classes" through changing ideas about punishment, political deviants across history, starvation as a social force and the class conflict theorists. What one might have expected to be a tedious section comes alive under the pen of this historian/journalist/novelist who not only has a knack for selecting the aphorisms of others but can coin a few herself. She puts a great deal of current thinking into historical perspective. Of course, this is Mrs. Rennie's area of special knowledge and competence so how will she fare later on? Part II is also historical and Mrs. Rennie knows her history of science too. Another fascinating pathway through evolution, skull measurements, breeding, and the criminological viewpoints these stimulated (eugenics, punishment to fit the criminal rather than the crime, sterilisation).

Part III ought to be even better: such an author should be quite at home with social issues. I found it a bit disappointing: a competent enough historical review, again, with important references to effects of inequality, immigration (the waves of European cultures arriving in America), labelling, and the concept of a "dangerous society", but rather dry. Part IV will be worse and will find Mrs. Rennie on weak ground then? No. She's back on sparkling form with a penetrating analysis of the development of psychiatric views of motivation, the mad/bad dichotomy, and the arguments on both sides of the Atlantic over the insanity plea in court. However, she seems a little adrift in thinking that psychotherapy is a thing of the past and that behaviour modification is discredited: there are many learning-based approaches to changing behaviour in addition to the punitive aversion therapies, which are largely abandoned now anyway. Most current practices give rise to no more ethical qualms in prisons or hospitals than their near relatives, educational practices, do in schools, or training methods do on the stage, in the concert hall or on the sportsfield. If it is wrong to assist a willing criminal to learn new and socially-acceptable ways of solving his problems, relieving tension and achieving personal satisfaction then it must also be wrong to educate a child in historical, religious or political knowledge or a motorist or marathon runner in how to improve his performance.

Apart from this slight lapse however, we have now come to accept Mrs. Rennie's competence across a broad spectrum of knowledge. So it is no surprise to find in Part V that she deals skilfully with historical studies of the relationship of anatomical characteristics and body physiology to criminal behaviour. She reviews competently the work on chromosomes and brain surgery (with its attendant ethical dilemmas) and then the complex association of alcohol with criminality. She then delivers a skilful review of that old chestnut, psychopathy. Particularly useful to many readers will be the resumé of Cleckley's sixteen characteristics of the psychopath, and this is followed by a competent digest of Hare's review of the neurophysiological work (complex stuff for the non-specialist even though it further witnesses to Mrs. Rennie's penetrating grasp over a very wide field).

How surprising then that her summery chapters are so defeatist! Because no single approach has the answer, the explanatory task must be impossible and a solution not worth attempting. The work so far is valuable, she thinks, but only serves to emphasise that "the proper end of criminal justice is that . . . not cure . . . abolition . . . Utopia, but simple justice". Yet she recognises the answer and



quotes it earlier in the words of Norval Morris: "there are no more causes of crime than are causes of human behaviour". This is both the strength and the weakness of Mrs. Rennie's book: the search for criminal man is the search for man. This is complex, but it is also challenging and here seems to be the gap in Mrs. Rennie's otherwise impressive knowledge. History, as she says, does repeat itself, but each time round something new emerges and this time round is seeing the explosion of the behavioural sciences. Mrs. Rennie doesn't seem to have grasped their import: she sees psychology as synonymous with sociology and attributes the discoveries of psychophysiology to medicine with all the "hardware" or "disease" connotations of such an approach and its inevitable conflict with the sociologists' environmentalist views. The behavioural scientists' "software" approach to man (a structure with varying biological potentialities programmable for a variety of roles) may not change Mrs. Rennie's accurate perception of the nature of the criminal phenomenon. But it should, this time round, add to our ability to explain, relieve, and improve man's condition and so assist in the realisation of "simple justice".

All in all though, one's initial misgivings when presented with this book prove unfounded. In fact, the title proves too modest. This is an account of the search for the nature of man himself and the explanations for the variations in his behaviour which have from time to time and from culture to culture been regarded as threatening to individuals or to society. Mrs Rennie is a widely read, a critically understanding, and an elegantly lucid writer who, in considering the various views, explanations and policies that have surrounded criminal people, has given us a most helpful review of the major approaches to unsocial behaviour throughout the history of modern man. Students and practitioners of law, social history, politics, and the social, medical and behavioural sciences will all find this book a treasure store of key references as well as a comprehensive account of the search for ways of defining and explaining criminal behaviour.

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## Kidnap and Ransom—the Response

RICHARD CLUTTERBUCK

Faber & Faber, 1978, £5.95

Terrorists and urban guerillas are among the nastier problems currently confronting society, particularly democratic societies. The practice of kidnap, the taking of hostages for either political or criminal aims, has recently spread like the pox. The Prison Service in the United Kingdom has not been immune.

In this slim book, Richard Clutterbuck has written about the problems of urban conflict. This is his fourth book in about four years and the subject is covered in more general form in his previous books, *Guerillas and Terrorists* and *Living with Terrorism*. *Kidnap and Ransom* is an attempt to analyse the problem in greater depth. It is not a handbook on "how to do it". It cannot be. Tactical plans of law enforcement agencies must remain confidential if they are to gain any success in dealing with hostage situations. Clutterbuck does, however, discuss strategies by explaining the motives and methods of operation of groups which have indulged in kidnapping and critically analysing each event. This allows the reader to understand why certain strategies were more successful than others.

We hear less of kidnap events in totalitarian societies as they do not have a free press; but, no doubt, such regimes, not having to fear

public opinion, are less delicate in their approach to the problem. In contrast, democratic societies have to take an approach which, at first sight, might appear weak. Clutterbuck reminds us that the key to dealing with terrorists and criminals is the mobilisation of public opinion in support of law enforcement agencies and the democratic process. If one takes that message, it will permit greater insight into why we seem to adopt "weak" strategies, and also why, when such strategies are successful, society is better defended against the terrorist threat.

J. UZZELL  
Prison Service College

## Suicide: Inside and Out

DAVID K. REYNOLDS and  
NORMAN FARBEROW

University of California Press, 1978, £2.75

The "inside and out" of the title refers not to inside and outside institutions but inside and outside the patient. It is an attempt to bring into conjunction the experiences of the suicidal patient and the observations of staff, using the one to validate the other.

The book opens with a convincing critique of experiential research as an experimental method. To give a valid perspective to the "inside" observations in the present study the researcher had to "become" a depressed patient. This was achieved by assuming the physical and mental postures of a depressive and deliberately fostering within himself the melancholy elements in his own normal personality. Is this possible? "All indirect measures suggest that the research anthropologist was able to develop within himself a feeling closely approximating if not identical with genuine depression. Nursing notes, doctors' reports, naively-taken and blindly-scored psychological tests, introspective reports and psychophysiological changes uniformly indicated that the anthropologist was successful in getting into a depression".

The core of the book is the daily journal kept by David Reynolds during the fourteen days he was living through the experiences of "David Kent", a special-watch suicidal patient in a locked hospital ward. This journal is revealing and disturbing, catching on a raw nerve. If this can be the experience of being a patient in hospital which treats you as an unfortunate casualty in need of help, what then is the experience of an inmate in a prison which regards you as suffering exactly what you deserve?

Press reports of suicide in prison characteristically suggest, overtly or covertly, that this desperation has been precipitated by harshness, humiliation and the rigours of a punitive regime, and this determines the focus of the Service's internal and external self-justification. We reassure ourselves that we do not oppress or deal harshly with inmates, that they are treated according to regulations and that all precautions are taken to deprive identified "suicide risks" of the means and the opportunity to destroy themselves.

But perhaps it is not necessary to be punitive and callous. Perhaps the very status of patient (or inmate) and the routine of the institution is intrinsically debilitating and potentially corrupting. The hospital staff described in this book treated their patients with the utmost propriety, yet "David Kent" could be reduced to feeling: "The only way I could punish them and avenge myself and disturb their holy routine and show them I meant business and escape any punishment they might wish to visit on me and mock and hate and spite on them all — the only way — was to hang myself". What had "they" done to arouse this anguish of resentment? From his depressed perspective it was what they had not done which hurt: they and the system they served had diminished his sense of worth, of individuality as a person and his control over his own life.

And what price the "suicide risk" now? Despite the insight of his training and the bit of himself which stood apart from his depression to observe it, the socio-cultural pressures were such that he came frighteningly close to suicide himself. Given the right (or wrong) circumstances we are all vulnerable to a collapse of morale.

The findings of this book are summarised: "Humanised settings are likely to build self-esteem and self-esteem is likely to deter some suicides. Psychiatric wards where patients' self-images are undermined are preparing fertile ground for burgeoning of suicidal thoughts and acts". But the relevance of this is not limited to the prevention of suicide. Its concern with reconstruction and encouragement of healthy adaptive behaviour exactly parallels the rehabilitative objectives of prison. The message is not just for the Hospital Officer: all of us need to become more sensitive to what our standard routines and perfectly proper behaviour might mean to its recipient.

What would it be like to be an inmate in your institution?

B. A. JOHNSON  
Regional Psychologist,  
North Regional Office

## Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

RUSSELL JONES

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates/Wiley,

1978, £10.50

Have you ever considered why a placebo medicine works? How can a bottle of pink sugar-water make lasting psychological and physiological differences? Have you wondered why some people seem to achieve everything they set their hearts on while others grind on, getting deeper and deeper into feelings of failure? Have you considered why you are nearly always right in your judgements about people? These are the sorts of areas that psychologist Russell Jones links together under the ominous title *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies: Social, Psychological and Physiological Effects of Expectancies*. It's a powerful idea and, if the book were not so academic in its exploration of the technical literature, this could have been a widely-read and influential volume.

The first main section reviews what psychologists know about the pigeon-holes people use in forming impressions of others. The discussion moves on naturally to stereotypes and includes an interesting excursion through psychiatric diagnosis. Maintaining that such assessment is merely a form of matching patients' behaviour to a set of stereotypes, Jones shows expectation at work as different examiners note different symptoms in the same patient and use the same symptoms to infer different diagnoses. All of us like to think we are open-minded in weighing up other people: the reality is that our impressions of them are rarely changed even when the evidence argues against what we have come to believe.

The importance of self-fulfilling prophecies came to Russell when he was engaged in selection interviewing. How could the same candidate make such different impressions on him and his colleagues? He came to understand that it was the result of more than differing pigeon-holes and stereotypes: it was the effect of each of the interviewers acting on his assumptions and treating the interviewee differently. Students from what some considered prestigious colleges were not questioned closely about their research but were encouraged to discuss the wider and more interesting issues. Students from less eminent colleges, on the other hand, were pressed for methodological and statistical details: by comparison with the others, they were judged (surprise! surprise!) as boring and over-concerned with detail. Like all good

psychology, then, here is another piece of common-sense. In fact, the book helps to bring home what we take for granted: it would be a genuine surprise if we stopped to consider how much our expectations actually do guide our views, conversations and lives. The emphasis is not only on how one considers others but how these impressions and prejudices shape one's subsequent dealings, cementing the circle of the self-fulfilling prophecy.

One particular application that Jones dwells on, though more in the context of the mental hospital than the prison, is the phenomenon of "labelling" and "secondary deviance". Plenty of other reviews in this journal have discussed the sociological results of publicly stigmatising rule-breakers with the effect that they become labelled as deviants and are pushed further along the path of criminality or madness. In this book, Jones adds the psychological substrata to this process, showing how on-lookers not only re-organise their previous impressions around the significant event of the public label but communicate their expectations of future deviance with crippling effect on the offender.

Other sections of the book deal with aspirations and performance — not excluding the effects of wishful thinking — and with the consequences of expectations on susceptibility to illness, to placebo medicines and to psychosomatic disease. The book ends with the mandatory recommendation about more research and the direction this should take.

I was disappointed by the technicality of the approach but fascinated by the notion of self-fulfilling prophecies and Jones' ability to encompass within this framework people's aspirations, their dealings with each other, and their approach to illness and even death. I look forward to a layman's version of this book, but, in the meantime, have a new respect for the expression "It's all in the head".

RICK EVANS

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Bristol Prison

## Going Straight

DICK CLEMENT & IAN LA FRENAY  
BBC Publications, 1978.

Hardback £4, Paperback 70p

1. I found this book to be funny in parts, very boring in others, and — for the loss of a better word — pathetic to laugh at anyway. The parts that were funny were those which I could relate to the TV series in which Ronnie Barker played Fletcher. Had I not seen the series, I would not have enjoyed the book at all.

Some of the words Fletcher uses are far out of the range of the average convict. The way in which the steward on the train reacted to Fletcher when he found out he had just got out of prison was quite pathetic: had he been an escaped convict doing life for mass murder then it would have seemed far more realistic. But for a wash and shave, it was more of a children's half-hour farce. Mind you, I was quite touched by the concern of Fletcher's daughter and the way he told her to stop fussing. I also enjoyed the part of the book where he started work in a hotel — there again, I could relate this to the TV series.

In some ways, the television programmes were very distracting and ruined anything the book itself had. Overall, it is not my type of weekend reading. It has no pull, no real story to follow, and when I smiled I wasn't sure if it was the book or the TV series I found amusing.

\* \* \*

2. I was most interested in the book's witticism. It reminds me of real-life characters who do not seem bad people and who are more comical than criminal. Fletcher is such an easy-going character that he would enjoy life, whatever environment he happened to be in. I found the book most enjoyable and I imagine it would be enjoyed by people in any walk of life.

TWO INMATES OF  
Bristol Prison

## Architecture and Social Behaviour: Psychological Studies of Social Density

A BAUM and S VALLINS

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates/Wiley, 1978,

£8.45

There is a growing body of literature on the stress-inducing qualities of certain sorts of environments and the behaviours that can result. When such stress is related to the number of people or to the amount of space in the environment, the concept of "crowding" becomes relevant. This book addresses itself to stress which results from too much unwanted social interaction.

The authors describe a five year programme of research at two American Universities comparing differently designed "dormitories" (halls of residence) in terms of the reactions of the student occupants. What emerges from this research is that students attempt to cope with high-density living by forming "protective" informal social groups. These groups enable the students to engage in steady, predictable patterns of social interaction. Some physical environments facilitate such group development, others do not. Two important environmental factors differentiating dormitories highlighted by the research are:

- (i) the physical boundaries by which the environment divides large groups of people
- (ii) the provision of "semi-private space" — areas which are not assigned to individuals but which are also not completely public and can be used for small group interaction.

Where the architecture facilitated group development, there was more social interaction, residential satisfaction was high, few perceived their living areas as crowded, and there was little evidence of stress. Where the architecture inhibited group development, a pattern of stress and perceived crowding emerged. Residents became increasingly likely to shun social interaction, particularly when that interaction meant high involvement. They also started to behave in a "helpless" manner; failure to cope in one area of their lives seems to have brought about attitudes which affected other areas.

Baum and Vallins' work may be of interest to those involved in the design and management of institutions but, in the authors' words, "The degree to which these findings generalise to other institutional and non-institutional settings remains to be investigated".

When we compare the British prison to the American University dormitory, numerous differences are evident. These seem to me to be of three types. First, Baum and Vallins observed behaviour which was relatively unaffected by administrative constraint. In prisons, the constant necessity to monitor and control prisoner movements means that the administrative variables are at least as important as the architectural ones. Secondly, the different backgrounds, needs and expectations of British prisoners and Americans are likely to influence the way they adapt to environments. Thirdly, prisons and universities clearly serve different functions and the different demands made on inmates and students will affect what constitutes a "good environment". Though we must be aware of such differences, the patterns of withdrawal and helplessness observed by Baum and Vallins resemble some of the main phenomena normally associated with institutionalisation. With the idea that prisons should be places of humane containment becoming increasingly important, the work reported in this book certainly provides food for thought for prison researchers.

The book as a whole is thorough and well argued and represents a major contribution to environmental psychology. But it is rather too technical and too specific to be of great value to the layman.

ROB FELTHAM  
Psychologist, Bristol Prison

## Report on the Work of the Prison Department 1977, £2.25

## Prison Statistics (England and Wales) 1977, £2.50

Both published by H.M.S.O., 1978

*The Report on the Work of the Prison Department 1977* reinforces the significance of that year for the Prison Service. Security and control feature strongly in a number of ways, particularly in respect of the publication of the Chief Inspector of the Prison Service's two reports on the escape of William Hughes from an escort, and the riot in Hull Prison.

Additionally, the report discusses the continuing rise in the number of difficult and subversive inmates entering the system and recognises that the threat they pose has now extended to Category 'B' Training Prisons in addition to Dispersal Prisons. Prisons are now having to deal with a less mature and less stable type of prisoner who is more prone to violent behaviour than was the case ten years ago. Symptomatic of this trend was the number of roof climbing incidents during 1977 which, in two cases, resulted in considerable damage to buildings.

Recognition is also given to the increasing problem of the containment of mentally disordered offenders who medical officers have found a number of hospitals unwilling to receive and consequently the courts have imposed sentences of imprisonment. This problem appears to be particularly acute amongst the female prison population. There have been significant problems caused by a rise to record levels of the daily average population of women and girls in prison. Consequently, it was necessary to convert a new male remand centre at Cookham Wood to a closed prison for 120 women.

On the brighter side, a whole chapter is devoted to the development of Category 'C' establishments and the improvements made in recent years to meet the problems and needs of this category of inmate.

Other aspects referred to in the report include the changes in adjudication procedures and the concept of the generic sentence. 1,144 Prison Officers joined for training in 1977 selected from 13,167 applications. The cost of recruitment advertising alone approached £¼ million.

*Prison Statistics [England and Wales] 1977* supports the picture of continuing pressure being exerted on the system. An exception arises in the case of juveniles remanded in custody to await trial whose numbers fell significantly in 1977 after two orders made by the Secretary of State under the *Children and Young Persons Act*. There was also some reduction in the number of fine defaulters received into prison after Section 59 of the *Criminal Law Act 1977* was brought into effect.

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## Textbook of Criminal Law

GLANVILLE WILLIAMS

Sweet and Maxwell, 1978.

Hardback £16, Paperback £10

The initial reaction on being asked to review a nine hundred page document on a highly technical subject is likely to border on the unprintable. A colleague unkindly described this book as the answer to an insomniac's prayer. Surprisingly and gratifyingly, Glanville Williams has produced a format and style which virtually guarantees interest. The textbook is aimed at the general reader, the practitioner and the law student. It therefore presupposes neither a basic knowledge of the Criminal Law nor of the workings of the English Legal system. It may, however, be asked to what extent "the general reader" is likely to chance upon this book.

In fact, the book is easily readable by the

layman. Williams introduces a topic and then poses questions as though from an argumentative observer. Through this "dialogue", the more obscure points are teased out. A drawback is that only those questions that Williams' hypothetical questioner asks are answered, but this approach serves to maintain interest and to break up long passages of discussion. Williams, too, is far from reluctant to criticise the eccentricities of English Law and does so with wit and great perception.

For the law student, the volume offers considerable advantages. Each chapter is self-sufficient, the book is clearly laid out, and each chapter ends with a summary. In both clarity and detail, it is far superior to anything available to me when I was a law student. The practitioners' needs are also met with a reasoned discussion of the potential areas of weakness in the law as it stands.

Apart from its weight (physical and intellectual), the only serious drawback of the book has been the frequency with which I have been accosted by long-term prisoners who have noticed it and requested assistance with appeals. If a prison library or legal aid officer were able to offer one textbook on Criminal Law this would surely meet the need of even our most litigious client. It is an endlessly absorbing book to dip into. Beware however! Glanville Williams believes only those serving sentences of three years or more are eligible for Parole; it has been taken on trust that similar inaccuracies are not repeated elsewhere!

F. P. MASSERICK  
Assistant Governor II,  
Hull Prison

## Living in Prison

HANS TOCH

Collier Macmillan, 1978, £9.75

*Living in Prison* is sub-titled "The Ecology of Survival", and it is said by the author to be a transactional approach to the environment of prisons. Toch's transactional approach assumes human uniqueness yet, it is said, allows individual preference options to be taken within the prison environment. The book, therefore, is about the significant variations in the environmental requirements of different people with different needs.

Toch attempted to identify individual needs or environmental concerns of inmates and tried to lump them together into environmental concerns that were shared by larger groups of inmates. The researchers were also concerned with the stress transactions of those who had difficulties in survival. Finally, they attempted to examine the ameliorative environments that helped to reduce stress. The research method was very complicated but, in essence, was based upon long interviews conducted with a random sample of inmates in five New York maximum security male establishments. A "stressed inmates group", such as protection cases, were also interviewed. Staff were interviewed in order to establish a base line for the inmates' stress factors.

The analysis of results led to the postulation of eight hypothetical environmental concerns. These were: 1. Privacy — a concern with peace and quiet, a preference for isolation; 2. Safety — concern for physical safety and protection; 3. Structure — preference for clear cut rules and regulations, consistency; 4. Support — concern for assistance, self-advancement, self-improvement; 5. Emotional feed-back — concern about being loved, appreciated, cared for; 6. Social stimulation — concern about settings which possess opportunities for companionship and social interaction; 7. Activity — a concern with maximising opportunities for occupation; 8. Freedom — concern about the restraints imposed upon one's autonomy. These environmental concerns represented the areas common to large numbers of inmates.

Without doubt, the most significant contribution of this book is the establishment and quantification of these environmental concerns. I was much less happy with what Toch was able to achieve with his new tool. In the analysis of these environmental concerns some common-sense conclusions were reached. Old inmates are less concerned with freedom than young ones; black inmates are more concerned with both support and freedom than white ones; veteran inmates are more concerned with privacy than novice inmates.

The separate section dealing with the "stressed inmates" produces similar obvious, yet highly relevant, material. Common-sense suggests that Toch's template works, and it is possible to quantify. Perhaps therefore we can move away from the often-expressed view that all prisoners are different, all institutions are different, and the problem is too difficult to solve. I'm afraid too often we have been tempted to lock up our minds as well as our inmates. Possibly Toch gives us some hope here.

Having completed all but the last chapter of this book, I was in a pleasurable state of anticipation. Would all now be revealed? Alas, there was no magic formula, no universal panacea for our ills. Such was my despair at the way Toch had expanded his options, that I almost believed he would recommend a one man/one prison solution. Nevertheless, I feel sure that actually attempting to determine environmental concerns of inmates as an ongoing exercise would assist both staff and inmates to reduce stress in prisons. Perhaps we can now ask the questions; if for no other reason that we are not afraid of the answers and could use them constructively.

In conclusion, this is a significant "prison book". I am glad I have read it and I shall undoubtedly refer to it again. In all honesty, however, I could only recommend this book to governors of empty establishments, case-workers with a case-load of five, unemployed academics, members of the British Branch of the Long Words Society and to all fellow masochists.

M. A. LEWIS  
S W Regional Office

## The Rule of Law in Britain from the Roman Occupation to the Present Day

ANTHONY BABINGTON

Barry Rose, 1978.

Hardback £6.95, Paperback, £3.95

Despite the title of the book, it attempts to cover the entire history of the English legal system from A.D. 41 to the present day. As this is closely linked to political, social and economic change, the book also includes a potted history of England. It soon becomes apparent that this mammoth task cannot be satisfactorily undertaken in a mere 291 pages of text. The price that the author has had to pay can be counted in the number of unsupported generalisations he makes and the number of contentious areas left unexplored. The price is so high that the book fails on two counts: the expert in the field is likely to be annoyed by the superficial treatment the subject is given; the beginner is in danger of being misled by the oversimplification.

The links between law and society are complex and fascinating. An understanding of these links is invaluable for any politician or administrator seeking to create change. It is a pity that this book cannot make a greater contribution to that understanding.

As a piece of literature the book also suffers from over-compression. Sentences are long and cumbersome as the facts and ideas jostle for position. This feeling of claustrophobia would be lightened if there was room for examples to illustrate the points being made.

Sadly, this is not the case: evidence offered usually takes the form of the opinion of other commentators.

The book may be at its most useful helping those undertaking 'O' and 'A' level exams on the history of the legal system. Even those students would be well advised to look elsewhere if they want to achieve a real understanding of the subject.

P. M. WHEATLEY  
Assistant Governor I,  
Leeds Prison

## Locking Up Children: Secure Provision within the Child-Care System

SPENCER MILLHAM, ROGER BULLOCK

KENNETH HOSIE

Saxon House, 1978, £6.50

Having served at two open borstals and a large remand centre which had its own landing for the "baby burglars", having visited the secure unit at Redbank some ten years ago and paid recent visits to two other secure units, one very modern and purpose built, the other much older and in many ways still an "approved school", I had great expectations of this book. One inevitably looks at one's own experience and experiences.

After reading the first forty pages, I was feeling a little hot under the collar and saying to some of my colleagues, "Who do these people think they are? They write a book just to knock the system". I found that I was asking myself questions. When will they deal with the real problem? What about the Courts? They keep crying out for places to remand children to, other than prisons. What about the more dangerous types? Should they not be kept in a place of safety, giving the public some respite and/or protection? As it turns out, these subjects are dealt with later in the book.

I found that the book tried to give a wide spectrum of views and some of my early fears of it "knocking the system" began to subside. Even then, the inexperienced person may not get the overall picture. A principal of one secure unit says, "I don't know much about child development but I feel these boys are really missing out. There are no girls, no discos, no Saturday nights, no chip shops and, for some lads, this is going to last a long time". Of course this is not true of every unit and to say the least, a little out of date. Ten years ago, Redbank secure unit housed both boys and girls, and some of the latest secure units do the same, allowing the sexes to be together for most of the day and evening. There are, moreover, almost all the facilities in the units that one can find outside.

One quote concerned me just a little, but then it could be my background. It says, "Boys who spend long periods in security run the risk of institutionalisation, of overdependence on particular adults and of withdrawal from the outside world. For example, a homeless boy was encouraged to spend his summer leave from the unit at a nearby children's home. On his first morning he did not come down to breakfast and the matron presumed that he was sleeping in. When finally she looked in on him towards lunch-time, he was lying fully clothed on the bed". (My italics). I find it hard to believe that an experienced person would leave a youngster who had not appeared at breakfast for hours before checking on his well being. Maybe this is an exaggeration to try to prove a point.

I particularly enjoyed the chapter dealing with staff and some of their problems, and feel that other research workers could follow this example and look closely at this vital area.

This is a book of great interest for all who have any dealings with young delinquents. I hope the authors decide to take a second look at the system as more units are opened.

E. PRICE  
Prison Service College, Wakefield

**(1) The Prison Journal**

Volume 58, Number 1. Summer 1978

**(2) International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology**

Volume 22, Number 2. Autumn 1978

The Pennsylvania Prison Society reckon the pendulum is ready to swing back. The editorial of *The Prison Journal*, noting that treatment in prison has been under considerable criticism recently, expresses the belief that we are now ready for "correctional treatment without illusions"; that is, rehabilitation and therapy without the unwarranted optimism which once surrounded them. Perhaps this is no surprise, coming from Pennsylvania, where treatment in prison was once seen as the final solution to the problems of crime. Anyway, four papers in the *Journal*, which look at the issues involved, are followed by reports on two very specific treatments: a "behaviour modification" programme for rapists and family or marital therapy for other prisoners.

The main criticisms of prison treatments stem from three factors: the failure to demonstrate significant difference in the reconviction rates, the revival of a philosophy of punishment, and the interference (especially in America) of parole and treatment with one another. Taking the last issue, David Wexler makes a special point in his article that treatment should be available in prison as it is in the community and that prisoners should have the right to refuse it. It is somewhat ironic, therefore, to turn to the *International Journal of Offender Therapy* in which Douglas Haines stresses the high relationship between alcohol and crime and recommends compulsory Antabuse treatment. Presenting evidence to the Canadian Parliamentary Commission investigating federal prisons, he confirmed that the incidence of alcoholism or alcohol-related crimes is as high as 82 per cent of the total prison population. He makes no bones about the suggestion that all paroles, day-passes and treatment facilities should be dependent on inmates taking their Antabuse tablets three times a week. That should make them sick down in Pennsylvania.

The other articles in this edition of the *International Journal* include a discussion of the role of "correctional officers" and the conflict between treatment and security commitments.

R. E.

**Deferred Value: An Account of the Origin and Development of the British Police Dog**

CLIFFORD R. STANLEY

Barry Rose, 1978, £2.20

The title of the book sums up what many people have felt about the value of dogs in police or prison work — the decision to employ them has been deferred time and time again. This quotation sums up admirably why dogs are so important to our present day society: "The use of dogs as aids to Police Services has been a subject that I have practically and personally studied for many years. It was argued, and in fact still is, by a certain section of the public, that the use of dogs to ..... prevent crime is a retrograde step on the part of the Police, but this never appears very convincing when one observes the absolute indispensability of dogs in numerous branches of civilian employ. In fact if, by some cause, all the dogs in the country were suddenly to be removed, it is safe to say that the most appalling lawlessness and crime would result".

Anyone who does not accept the value of dogs should read the account of how dogs were

used to locate bodies of soldiers killed in the Israeli/Egyptian war, the bodies having been covered by the shifting sands. This was a truly remarkable feat.

My main criticism of the book is that it is too short: I have the feeling that the author has many more interesting experiences to share. The photographs are rather old and, although it is important to show how dogs were gradually introduced, more up-to-date photographs would have helped to make the book more topical for today's dog handlers. Some of the dog handlers in the Prison Service will recognise photographs of instructors who have helped to make the Prison Dog Section one of the best and largest in Europe.

Many Governors who have a Dog Section in their establishment would benefit by reading this book. The true value of dogs in our Service can never be accurately measured, but on innumerable occasions they have foiled escape attempts, and found drugs and weapons. Do not let us defer our recognition of the true value of dogs any longer, but let us get rid of the prejudices once and for all so that everyone can benefit from their presence.

JIM REID  
Governor, Dog Section,  
P5 Division

**On Human Nature**

EDWARD O. WILSON

Harvard University Press, 1978, £7.85

Edward Wilson does not claim *On Human Nature* to be a work of science. It is a book about science, and about how far the natural sciences can penetrate into human behaviour before they will be transformed into something new. The work arises from his previous book, *Sociobiology*, in which he argued that the biological principles which appeared to be working reasonably well for animals in general can be extended to the social sciences. This led him to form the hypothesis that human social behaviour rests on a genetic foundation. Man has not escaped his own genes and become simply culture bound as propounded by the social sciences of the past.

Wilson develops his thesis from examining two dilemmas. The first is "that no species, ours included, possess a purpose beyond the imperatives created by its genetic history". The outlook for man is bleak; he has no particular place to go. Ideology and all the other "ologies" must necessarily bow to their mysterious lords, the genes, and all our highest motivations seem to be lost in the realm of biological activity. This in turn reveals the second dilemma; "innate censors and motivators exist in the brain but deeply and unconsciously affect our ethical premises; from these roots, morality evolved as instinct". The problem then is, which of the censors and motivators should be obeyed and which curtailed? These are the human guides which distinguish us from electronic computers. Wilson maintains that the key to human nature is biology and social scientists cannot ignore its principles. The book challenges the many theories about human nature and man. If human behaviour is controlled by our biological heritage will this heritage limit our human destiny? Wilson takes many leaps into this vast pool of hypotheses and possibilities, and advances some interesting theories in the elemental categories of behaviour, aggression, sex, altruism and religion.

The religious nature of man is admitted to be the most complex and powerful force in the human mind and probably ineradicable from it. Wilson believes that religious practices can be mapped on the two dimensions of genetic advantage and evolutionary change but, although science can explain religion, it cannot diminish the importance of its substance. Scientific materialism maintains that every

part of existence is considered to be obedient to physical laws and requires no external agent, its explanations must exclude a divine being. Even religion itself, according to biological theory, can be explained in the natural sciences. But somehow that divine being is not so easy to get rid of. Scientific materialism has no spiritual power source and this contributes to its very weakness; man is left without his immortality — so what hope remains?

Wilson offers some advice in his last chapter on "Hope". Once scientific humanism becomes a more powerful mythology than religion, then human destiny can be determined. We must then face the third and perhaps final dilemma. With all our knowledge concerning the genetic foundation of social behaviour and techniques for genetic engineering, the human species will be enabled to change its own nature. But what will it choose? And who will do the choosing? There is no turning back. If man's biological evolution has produced an organic basis for his cultural evolution, then in planning human evolution, biology must be guided by man's spiritual and cultural heritage. We cannot afford to dismiss man's unique spiritual heritage and substitute a human mythology.

Certainly, if one is interested in Man, his origins, behaviour and destiny, then this book must not be ignored. Any assertion we might make must inevitably be inadequate, but we are compelled to continue our search for answers just because we are men. Professor Wilson's work contributes to that search.

COLIN COPLEY  
Regional Chaplain,  
Midland Regional Headquarters

**One Policeman's Story**

ERIC ST JOHNSTON

Barry Rose, 1978, £8.75

This is the story of a policeman born not with a silver spoon in his mouth but with a silver truncheon in his pocket. Despite this, this is the man that had some involvement with all the major innovations which have taken place in the police service since the war.

St Johnston graduated from Cambridge in 1932 and joined the Metropolitan Police as a junior executive officer in the Commissioner's office. This was shortly after Trenchard had taken over the Metropolitan Police and his direct entry scheme at officer rank was underway. Within two years, St Johnston was called to the Bar. He joined the 3rd Trenchard course at Hendon in 1935 and, in 1937, he was attested as PC 640C and required to spend eight months as a constable. He was then promoted to sergeant. After a further four months, he was promoted to junior station Inspector and made second-in-command of a Sub-Division. In 1940, the former Commandant of the Hendon Police College asked him if he would like to be Chief Constable of Oxfordshire. He accepted and, at 29 years of age, became the youngest Chief Constable in the country.

In November 1942, he was offered a position at the War Office making plans for the invasion of Europe. He was subsequently given a brief to prepare a plan to cover policing, fire brigade, prison service, civil defence services in Europe, under the umbrella of "public safety". This chapter dealing with the military involvement of police is extremely interesting.

Shortly after the liberation of Paris, St Johnston was appointed Chief Constable of Durham. This force was badly neglected and presented a challenge which he met head-on. During the process, making many useful contacts including most of the senior Cabinet Ministers of the day. By 1950, he had the Durham Force running efficiently and he then took command of the largest provincial force in the United Kingdom, Lancashire County.



Although a reasonably efficient force, there were a number of things which did not meet up to St Johnston's expectations, and he decided to reorganise various facets. Amongst his innovations were the issue of regular weekly orders, the production of a set of Standing Orders, a housing department, and the establishment of a promotion selection board which then was a new idea to the police service. He also arranged for three constables a year to attend Lancaster University, and set up the first police underwater search team. Lancashire was the first provincial force to use radar for speed traps, and the first to use all-white traffic patrol cars. Perhaps his greatest claim to fame is the fact that he started the unit beat police system, using the panda cars.

It is perhaps unfortunate that St Johnston sometimes sounds a bit egotistical and I find it hard to accept that, in a force as big as Lancashire, he kept such tight control of the Senior CID that they required authority to detain a murder suspect longer than six or seven hours. Be that as it may, the fact is that in 1967 he was appointed Chief Inspector of Constabulary and, again bringing flair to the job, created two new positions of Inspectors of Constabulary of Crime and Traffic. Shortly before taking up his new post, he was knighted. He retired from the police service in 1971.

It is a pity that he dismisses contemporaries, like Robert Mark in an off-hand sort of way and does not really deal with the serious problems of corruption which occurred and were investigated by his Inspectorate of Crime, during his period as Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

On the whole, rather a boring book to read, which contains several irritating inaccuracies. Apart from these, though, the story covers a period of unequalled advancement in the British Police Service. And, if St Johnston is to be believed, most of the innovations were his.

D. H. W.

## Alternative Strategies for Coping with Crime

EDITED by NORMAN TUTT;

Basil Blackwell and Martin Robertson,

1978, £3.95 (paperback) £10 (hardback)

This collection of ten articles sets out to evaluate alternative approaches to the problem of crime, and to illustrate their difficulties and disadvantages, including some of the problems of implementation. It also attempts to show how alternatives can be developed, and hence how the process of social change can be generalised. Most of the alternatives examined have been written about in journals or papers, some many times, but the impact of their collection into a single volume is considerable. The concluding articles by Martin Wright and Nicholas Hinton are particularly worthwhile in the way that they draw the threads of the various articles into a single skein.

An approach I would have liked to have seen included as a separate article is one dealing with what is increasingly seen as the root of crime — the areas in which delinquents live. With few exceptions, the book concentrates on individuals who have already stepped outside the law, rather than on the society that breeds them. The idea is already abroad in the Probation Service of using officers as catalysts to stimulate the community to improve and develop local resources, and to develop methods of reducing crimes like vandalism. The dangers and difficulties are apparent, but this would seem a major alternative strategy in dealing with crime.

The book rightly stresses the importance of the contribution of the voluntary agencies. This cannot but be underlined when the efforts of the large statutory bodies are contrasted

with the achievements of a small organisation like NACRO. If one examines what this particular agency has contributed in the way of enthusiasm, drive, positive projects, distribution of information, and the setting up of day conferences and workshops, it is almost impossible not to be impressed. The question of why professionalism in the statutory services becomes a psychological prison for so many is a vexing one. It would have been interesting to see what NACRO would have evolved from the Younger report on the Young Adult Offender, in contrast to the dead hand of the present Green Paper.

Personally, this balanced book made a definite impact on me. It deserves critical reading, particularly by those who work in penal institutions.

J. S. MCCARTHY  
Governor,  
Cardiff Prison

## After Prison: Study of the Post-Release Experiences of Discharged Prisoners

JOHN CORDON, JO KUIPERS and KATE WILSON

*Papers in Community Studies No. 21,*

*University of York, 1979, £2*

The researchers in this particular study claim to be exploring virgin territory, although one feels at times that the ground between the explorers' tracks is becoming narrower by the moment. The land in question on this occasion is that trodden by short-sentence men released from three West Yorkshire prisons during a period in 1976. The authors follow the fortunes of 107 such men returning to the Leeds area and attempt to identify some of the major resettlement problems they face. Their report is eminently readable, with descriptive material balancing the necessary statistical data. It is particularly helpful in its constant references to, and comparisons with, other related research.

The method adopted by the researchers was to interview each man shortly before his release and on two occasions in the month following discharge. The report concentrates on four major areas of interest: accommodation, employment, finance and "through-care". The outcome reveals a disturbing lack of effective or, in some cases, even minimal provision from the statutory agencies operating in all four fields. In relation to accommodation, it emerges that standards of housing are likely to deteriorate following a period of imprisonment. Furthermore, although nearly half of the men interviewed had accommodation problems which were clearly identified during sentence, in only a small number of these cases were any plans made for their discharge. The study is rightly cautious in drawing conclusions about the employment difficulties encountered by the men. Nevertheless, it is of interest to note that almost all of those in work a month after release had obtained their jobs through personal and informal contacts. However, social networks were of less significance when it came to acquiring financial resources. The operation of the discharge grants system is examined with the conclusion that most men expecting grants received them and there seemed to be no wide spread misuse of the grants made. A significant minority of the sample encountered problems in initial claims for Social Security benefits and the variety of decisions reached by the D. H. S. S. often did not match the diversity of need. Unfortunately, explanations are not forthcoming as the D. H. S. S. did not grant permission to follow up the ex-prisoners' accounts of their experiences with the officials who dealt with them.

Lastly, the prisoners' experiences with the

Probation and After-Care Service are explored from the post-sentence interview to the post-release contact. What is revealed is some ignorance on the part of the prisoners about the help available, but confusion is created by terminology and many men did not understand the term "After-Care". Attitudes towards the Probation Service were influenced by previous experience and the interest shown by the home probation officer during sentence. Frequently, distinctions were drawn between negative feelings towards the Service generally and positive feelings towards individual probation officers. A familiar message emerges once more: the prisoners' expectations of help spell "Welfare" whilst the Probation Service provisions spell "Case-work".

Throughout the study, the authors examined the degree to which informal social networks act as a means of support and find this to be a relevant factor in every respect. Not surprisingly, the socially isolated men fare least well and, depressingly, the report discovers those most in need of help are least likely to receive it. Somewhat optimistically, the researchers conclude their work with a number of recommendations for change in penal practice and policy. All the recommendations are sensible and practical, and the authors, who are all former Probation Officers, know what they are talking about. By the same token, they are probably also pessimistic about the chances of their findings bringing any change in practice.

M. K. FIELDER (Mrs)  
Assistant Probation Officer

## Analysing the Criminal Justice System

J. W. LAPATRA

*Lexington, 1978, £11.50*

The author, after providing a sketchy familiarity with systems analysis methods, suggests simulation models which might use the data of a criminal justice system, and tells us, for example, that we might save money by altering sentencing policy, or throughput rate, in the court system. He sometimes forgets that it may not seem reasonable to base social decision-making on financial cost-benefit calculation. Despite his caveats, LaPatra seems to put complete faith in quantification, although he admits that it is very difficult to devise a mathematical model simple enough to handle, yet complex enough to offer valid predictions. He admits also that both judgement and intuition are involved in devising and using models.

What this book shows most is the author's compulsion to mathematise life. LaPatra defends systems analysis even as he concedes that the results it gives are inconclusive and current computer models mostly primitive. He shows that where a case for change exists, it may with benefit present its evidence in apparently scientific form. But examples of the power of systems analysis do not convince me of the general usefulness of the approach. LaPatra also has some strong, subjective views on prisons. For example, he writes: "Reforming large and unwieldy institutions with a historical reliance on isolation, force, punishment, regimentation and subordination appears impossible". And of staff: "low pay, inflexible rules and administrators, poor working conditions and a lack of sufficiently high personal qualifications work against attracting suitable individuals". Or again: "It does not appear that reintegration is truly society's goal, else those warehouses for storing human outcasts would soon be demolished".

LaPatra notes that some want to suppress the criminal quickly and cheaply; others seek a sophisticated system of criminal justice; yet others seek to correct the society, not the

criminal. In all this, what he hopes to see systems analysis provide is a thorough examination of our assumptions. He is not confident that rational plans provided by scientists would be adopted by politicians. He admits that the unexpected cannot be provided for. Yet he advises the application of mathematical modelling as a useful tool and as a guide to future action.

LaPatra's book seems to have been written section by section, so that the author appears not to remember what he said earlier. It contains several irritating misprints. In general, this book does not seem to be relevant for workers in British penal establishments.

JACK SHULMAN  
Governor,  
Highpoint Prison

## Television Violence and the Adolescent Boy

WILLIAM A. BELSON

*Saxon House, 1978, £12.50*

In December 1978, the national press presented yet another news story about the effects of television violence on adolescent boys. Dr. William Belson, it was said, had "proved" that exposure to violence on television led to an increase in violent behaviour in boys in London.

Belson, a psychologist with a keen interest in complex and sophisticated scientific methods of social survey research received a \$290,000 grant from CBS, a major US television network, in order to test whether "High exposure to television violence increases the degree to which boys engage in violent behaviour of a serious kind".

In a survey of 1,565 boys aged between 12 and 17, he tried to discover how many times they had seen episodes of 68 programmes assessed as having violent content by a panel of 50 experienced judges. The programmes were broadcast between 1959 and 1971. The boys in the sample were asked to remember when they had begun watching a programme and how many times they had seen it. Boys were also asked to admit or deny involvement in 53 different acts of violence in the previous six months, using a sophisticated and apparently reliable method previously used by Belson in studies of juvenile theft, largely based on the sorting of cards.

Belson tested over 200 different hypotheses and found that there was clear evidence to support a causal connection between high levels of exposure to certain types of violent programmes on television and involvement in serious acts of violence. Acts of violence were graded by a sample of 43 members of the public, and ranged from "not the least bit violent" to "extremely violent".

It is possible to raise criticisms of Belson's study both within his methodology and from a critical theoretical position. Belson's construction of the key measures (type and amount of violence viewed, and level of involvement in serious violence) raises some problems. The use of aided recall with 12-17 year-olds, and the emphasis in the study on the reconstruction of what for the subject was, in effect, a lifetime's viewing, throw serious doubts on the external validity and reliability of the measures (though it should be said that they were statistically valid and reliable). Another problem arises from Belson finding a causal relationship between high exposure to violent programmes and serious violence, but no such link between such viewing and violent behaviour in general. Furthermore, serious violence was defined by members of the public, and one example of their judgement will indicate a possible drawback of this method of measure-construction: "telling a boy that his mother has been killed in a car accident just to upset him" is equated in terms of its level of violence with "cutting a boy with a razor". In addition, judges were expressly

instructed to consider the act of violence as though committed in isolation, that is, out of context.

Belson's overall theoretical approach may also be criticised. The method works reasonably well in scientific research but when applied to social issues it tends towards self-fulfilling prophecy. The very narrowing of the focus of investigation necessitates that certain factors that may be crucial to the full understanding of the behaviours under study are undervalued. The membership and significance of youth sub-cultures, orientations to the use of leisure time, the nature of family ties and relationships, the influence of the physical environment (city versus rural, for example), and the ways in which different violent acts are viewed by the boys in the sample are factors left out of Belson's account.

The advantage of the very full and detailed presentation of the author's methods (the book is primarily addressed to fellow methodologists) is that it reveals factors that appear to be important, but which he ignores. He finds a clear class-basis for involvement in serious violence, even though the amount of viewing of violent programmes is fairly consistent across classes. Similarly, though again Belson does not comment on it, there is a negative correlation between involvement in "football violence" and the viewing of violent programmes. Presumably, youths involved in the football gang culture spent their leisure time "out with the lads" rather than watching *The Untouchables*.

Although Belson's study represents an attempt to transfer an approach applied previously to artificial experimental situations to a real-life, "normal" situation, the usefulness of his findings for policy-makers is minimal. It is unfortunate that, whereas he acknowledges that his method "... will not provide proof that some causal connection exists", his findings are portrayed in the popular press as having done exactly that. One might tend to agree with the overall sentiment, but in my view it is still not possible to rest this view on firm scientific evidence. Perhaps any society whose younger members typically spend more time in watching television than they do at school should be concerned about the possible affects of such saturation. Whether traditional approaches such as that adopted by William Belson should predominate in the study of these effects is open to question.

MICHAEL PILSWORTH, M A  
Research Fellow, Centre for Television  
Research University of Leeds

## Child Abuse

RUTH & HENRY KEMPE

*Fontana/Open Books, 1978, £1.25*

It is only a hundred years since the social climate changed and some people started to question the neglect and abuse which were the lot of many children. It is less than 18 years since Professor Kempe called the first multidisciplinary meeting to discuss what he coined the "battered baby syndrome". Since the publication of his classic paper in 1962, thousands of words have been published on the subject but the Kempes remain the leading authorities on parents' cruelty to children.

This paperback describes the results of 20 years' experience of dealing with child abuse. The first part documents the nature and effects of physical violence, of neglect, of emotional abuse, and of sexual exploitation. Paedophilia and incest are areas usually ignored in the literature on child abuse, so this book's chapter on sexual violations is particularly important. Cases of child abuse can be horrifying, but I found the approach taken in this volume to be caring and sensible: certainly it is less sensational in tone than the book's cover which proclaims "This year, two children a week will die at their parents'

hands — NSPCC Report".

In general, the factors leading to child battering are these: the parents were themselves deprived or perhaps abused, they find the child unlovable or disappointing, there is a precipitating crisis or stress, but no "lifeline" of immediate help or communication. In addition, the Kempes realistically describe a quarter of the victims as "veritable demons" (negative, aggressive, or hyperactive); while this may be the result rather than the initial cause of abuse, it helps to ensure that a very vicious circle is continued.

The second part of the book looks at how medical and social work staff should deal with child abuse. The Kempes are optimistic that cruel parents can be identified and helped. "Child abuse is a problem — but not a hopeless one. Our results show that four out of five abusive parents can be brought to stop injuring their children physically". The answer lies in providing emergency "hot-lines", crisis nurseries, home-helps and volunteers, and in special casework and psychotherapy. The priority is treating parents although the book describes the physical care, play therapy, and temporary fostering that the child victims may need. There will always be cases in which the child has to be taken away from the family and the Kempes make no bones about this. Of the one in five parents who cannot be treated, half are described as seriously mentally ill and the other half as not responsive to therapy. There is also a checklist on page 88 of the book to help doctors and social workers assess the risk of returning a child to his parents.

The final chapters call for more attention to children's rights and for more extensive help to abusive parents in the community: there still needs to be greater co-operation between traditional agencies or, in some places, creation of special task-forces. Although these last issues are less than central for Prison Service staff, it is probable that we deal with more child abusers and victims than we might assume from the direct incidence of convicted battery, cruelty and sexual offenders. This paperback is the most readable, comprehensive and sensible book that we will find on this difficult social problem.

RICK EVANS  
Senior Psychologist,  
Bristol Prison

## Civil Commitment and Social Control

MARTIN L. FORST

*Lexington, 1978, £11*

The 1970's have revealed an increasing awareness that attempts to provide a "therapeutic" alternative to custodial treatment, outside of the criminal justice system, are not necessarily to the benefit of the offenders involved. Why is it that the rehabilitative ideal, with its emphasis on treatment and cure rather than punishment and revenge, has come to be seriously questioned, often, paradoxically, by persons of a radical rather than conservative penal philosophy? The central argument has been that mental health treatments imposed on, rather than chosen by, offenders tend to be used for the social control of deviants without due regard to the protection of offenders' rights. In effect, it is argued, there are many disadvantages to the status of being "in need of treatment" rather than simply "bad"; the main one being that, in the name of treatment, individuals can be detained indefinitely in a mental institution until treatment personnel deem them cured or no longer dangerous. It has also been pointed out that judgements of cure and dangerousness are unreliable and of dubious validity. Martin Forst's book is very much within this critical tradition. His concern is with the process of civil, as opposed to criminal, commitment of sex offenders in California. Under Californian law, convicted



sex offenders can receive two forms of sentence: a criminal sanction (probation, prison, etc.), or a civil sanction under which the person is designated a "Mentally Disordered Sex Offender" (MDSO) and placed in a maximum-security mental institution. An MDSO is defined as "any person who by reason of mental defect, disease or disorder, is predisposed to the commission of sexual offences to such a degree that he is dangerous to the health and safety of others". There is clearly some similarity between this procedure and the ways of dealing with "sexual psychopaths" in other American States, and with persons suffering from a "psychopathic disorder" under the 1959 *Mental Health Act* in England and Wales. The Californian law allows for the detention of the MDSO for an indeterminate period, depending on the hospital staff's evaluation of his response to treatment and future dangerousness.

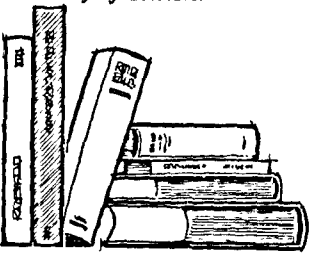
The main part of this book is taken up by an empirical study of the workings of the MDSO procedures in three selected Californian counties. Forst studied the circumstances under which a defendant is likely to be classified as an MDSO, and the opinions and behaviour of key decision-makers (judges, attorneys, psychiatrists, etc.). His main conclusion is that the civil commitment has become "criminalized" to such a degree that it is no longer perceived by court officials as substantially different from imprisonment.

The original purpose of a criminal/civil distinction was to differentiate the blame-worthy from the non-blame-worthy. In practice, courts allocate offenders on a pragmatic basis, employing the sanction that corresponds to the length of detention the offender requires or deserves. In effect, the offender is sent to the security hospital because the hospital detains offenders for about the right period of time for the offence committed, rather than because they might benefit from the treatment it offers. In fact, Forst suggests, decision-makers do not perceive the security hospital as providing a therapeutic service which is any more effective than that provided in the criminal system. If this is so, it might be argued that the hospital is part of the penal sanctioning system. At this point, the reader might assume that Forst is going to suggest that the "criminal" nature of the hospital commitment ought to be made explicit by formally redesignating the hospital as a prison. Forst rejects this solution on the grounds that the hospital environment, even if not more therapeutic than prison, is more humane for a group of offenders who are likely to be stigmatized in a prison. The alternatives he sees as more acceptable include: making hospital commitment voluntary, or ensuring that the duration of hospital commitment should not exceed the maximum of the criminal commitment.

The main criticism that might be made of this book is that it remains one man's view of

the administration of justice. Forst's case is plausible but depends more on his account of what decision-makers have told him in private than on the facts and figures he presents. It is also important to remember that his account is how the hospital commitment is *perceived* by the court and is not an account of what actually *happens* in hospitals and in prisons. It may be that the hospital commitment is more therapeutic than it is perceived to be. The book's main interest for the British readers lies in its confirmation that the problems associated with distinguishing the mad from the bad are universal, and in its demonstration that there may be a considerable gap between statutory accounts of the purpose of a particular commitment and the perceptions and procedures of the people who operate it.

KEVIN HOWELLS  
*Lecturer in Psychology,  
University of Leicester*



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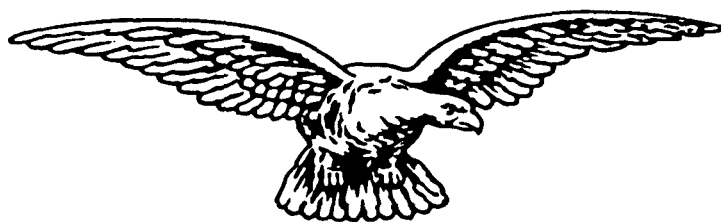
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