

- be warned that society does not tolerate their misbehaviour;
- avoid custody and its stigmatising and traumatic effects; and,
- prevent the difficulties experienced by the family of the imprisoned offender.

Tagging is more humane than prison. Being treated with respect and dignity may encourage an offender to act in this way than being in overcrowded prison. Home, despite being controversial as a place of punishment, is a convenient, safe and cheap place of curfew. It was also be advantageous psychologically. The downside was the feeling of being observed and of transparency. There is no doubt that those living with a taggee were involved in it too: disturbances from phone-calls, pressure to comply, frustration, anger and impatience towards an irresponsible breacher. However, most important, they provided moral support.

Telephone checking had been awkward, but this could be minimised by full compliance with the curfew. I was surprised at the lack of stigma associated with tagging. I found it unobtrusive by being easily concealed by conventional clothing. My artificially induced monitoring did not allow me to experience any concurrent counselling or after-care, which could be

advantageous in many instances. I presume that this would be in the hands of the probation service. I was impressed by the efficiency of the equipment and the flexibility which a limited curfew allows; the curfew could permit the continuation of everyday life, with little impact on the family, the restriction mostly affecting social/recreational time (or offending time in the case of some offenders). This I considered a fair punishment for certain crimes, as well as an opportunity for reflection by the offender while deterring the offender from re-offending.

The equipment appeared to work well. Two errors occurred during the two weeks of monitoring. I was (wrongly) reported as absent for ten minutes when I was actually at home. Bedding, closed doors, or distance between transmitter and receiver might have interfered with the radio signal from the tag to the receiver. On that particular occasion, being also out of curfew made me resent what I saw as an interfering call, and a breach of my right to privacy. However, it also proved the usefulness of the passive system of tagging: a technical fault could be corrected through verification by allowing the contractor to update their records. Continuous radio signalling raised ethical issues if monitoring could not have a fool-proof guarantee to be restricted curfew periods.

Book Reviews

The Prisons Handbook 2002

by Mark Leech and Deborah Cheney (Eds). Waterside Press. April 2002. ISBN 1872870163. £57.50 (£44.50 to prisoners and their families)

Almost ten years to the day since the first private prison in the UK accepted its first prisoners, the 2002 edition of *The Prisons Handbook* was launched. It is appropriate, though perhaps by accident, that the cover photograph this year is of Parc, the Securicor-owned prison in south Wales.

A friend recently commented that he was bored with *The Prisons Handbook*. Each year it appears, slightly bigger than the year before, and a touch more expensive than previous editions, and yet it appears to try to appeal to too many audiences. Fair comment perhaps but *The Prisons Handbook* remains an essential and indispensable resource to those of us working in the penal sector, either from the inside or the out.

The 2002 edition is bigger than ever before, running to over seven hundred

pages. An interesting addition this year is the inclusion of 'Governor Profiles', giving background to the career of those governing governors who provided the information. The difficulty in such a publication is in keeping it up to date, and apart from a few recent changes, the editors have again managed to provide current information.

The launch of the Handbook, in the grand setting of the Chapel at Wormwood Scrubs, was attended by Martin Narey (Director General of HM Prison Service) and representatives of other prisons, reform groups, academics, and contributors — myself included. For the first time, the Handbook this year includes a chapter on gay and bisexual prisoners, and the launch of 'GALIPS' (Gays and Lesbians in the Prison Service) featured heavily in the speeches at the launch. GALIPS were provided with a free advert in the Handbook.

Perhaps the most significant addition to this edition is a new chapter by Shane Bryans and Rachel Jones on 'Prison Officers and Prison Governors'. It provides a clear explanation of the development and roles of prison officer

and governor, and includes interesting information on, for example, the breakdown of governor grades in the Service. The Editor's Award for this year was presented to Bryans and Jones.

Last year's edition was dedicated to HMP Grendon, to mark that institution's fortieth anniversary. Sir David Ramsbotham is the recipient of this year's dedication, with a touching tribute to his efforts whilst Chief Inspector provided by Mark Leech.

'For and Against' is the chapter of real debate, this year considering the issue of a prisoners' union, with the 'for' argument being presented by John Hirst of the Association of Prisoners, and the 'against' coming from Joan Aitken, the Scottish Prisons Complaints Commissioner. It is an interesting debate, but one that Hirst wins. Mark Leech offers a view on in-cell confessions, interesting in the wake of the Damilola Taylor murder trial, and that of Michael Stone. 'Something to Say' this year is provided by Sir David Ramsbotham, on 'The Conduct of Imprisonment'. Together, these three sections make an interesting read in a publication so often seen as being devoted

entirely to the 'facts' of prisons and imprisonment.

If there is criticism to be found in the Prisons Handbook, it is difficult to be convincing. Certainly, the sheer cost of the publication makes it an unlikely purchase for families and friends of prisoners — one group for whom it could be a vital source of information. But then, the costs of producing such a mammoth volume must be covered, and the more recent addition of the Prisoner's Pocket Diary means that some essential information is available directly to all

prisoners.

The Director General's standing appreciation for the Handbook should be backed up with an official requirement that every prison library holds at least one copy of the current edition. One prisoner told me last month that his prison librarian had never heard of the Handbook — and a prison officer at the launch commented that he had only heard of the Handbook after speaking to one of the editors at a recent conference. Certainly, a copy in every main public library would give the friends and families

of prisoners access to the information they need.

Once again, the editors, contributors and publishers are, to be roundly congratulated for another excellent edition of the Handbook. But it is true to say that if the Handbook gets any bigger, rather than launch it in a bricks-and-mortar prison next year, they will need to launch it off the side of a ship. HMP Weare, maybe.

Steve Taylor, former prisoner and PRT Council Member

The Treatment and Rehabilitation of Offenders

by Iain Crow. Sage, London, 2001.

The Treatment and Rehabilitation of Offenders is aimed at the ever-increasing range of university courses that now include modules on crime, justice and the criminal justice system, though with its readable style and relative lack of jargon, it might also appeal to the interested lay person, or even to somebody just starting a career in the prison or probation service. Its ambitious aim is to provide a broad introduction to the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders in just over 200 pages.

Part one provides a good and thorough overview of the history of penal thinking over the past century, from the medical treatment models through the development of the Nothing Works view to the current 'What Works movement'. While this will be a familiar history to many in the criminal justice system, its retelling by an academic from a criminology background introduces some less familiar perspectives.

Part two covers the content of treatment in the prison and probation services and is the most disappointing section of the book. The chapter on treatment and rehabilitation in prisons seems particularly unbalanced and poorly researched. Half a page is devoted to an outdated account of cognitive-behavioural programmes in prisons, while 'education, training and social skills programmes, designed to prepare offenders for when they are released' merit only a passing mention. Following this very brief coverage, seven whole pages are devoted to the therapeutic regime at Grendon. While this is a reasonable treatment of that prison, the chapter makes only passing mention of other prison-based

therapeutic communities and contains no discussion of the therapeutic community literature in general. Unfortunately most of the references for this chapter are taken from the mid-1990s, a time when the Prison Service was reeling from the combined onslaught of Woodcock, Learmont and Michael Howard and when the Service's culture and its approach to treatment and rehabilitation were very different from today. While it provides an interesting reflection of how much things have changed in the last six years, the students at whom this book is aimed are likely to come away from this chapter with a distorted and pessimistic view of the treatment of offenders in prison.

The chapter on treatment in the probation service is also disappointing and outdated. It makes no mention of the National Probation Service and only passing reference to such key concepts as Pathfinder programmes and the accreditation of programmes in general. It also misses the opportunity to discuss the central role which the application of national standards and pro-social modelling now have in probation work.

The third part of the book focuses on specific treatment issues, with a chapter each on the treatment of sexual offenders, mentally disordered offenders and drug misuse. These chapters generally provide a brief but good and balanced overview of many of the main issues. For example, the chapter on sexual offenders gives a brief overview of the causes and prevalence of sexual offending an overview of prison and probation-based treatment programmes and the evaluation of programmes, before ending with a discussion of the issues involved in supervising sexual offenders in the community and the registration of sexual offenders. It is a reasonable summary in 20 pages of the key issues in a large and complex field.

This book's strengths lie in its wide-

ranging, concise and readable summaries of the issues and debates. To students who know nothing about the criminal justice system or the issues it has to wrestle with, this book provides a good and broad overview of the key issues. Given the breadth of coverage, more experienced readers may also find interesting new perspectives on familiar issues. A useful touch is that each chapter ends with questions and discussion topics and a helpfully annotated reading list for readers wishing to explore the subject further.

At times the book seems uneven in the level at which it is written. In places it provides simple and clear explanations of, for example, the history and function of the probation service or the distinctions between class A, B and C drugs. At other times it glosses over huge areas. The chapter on mentally disordered offenders, for example, makes no reference to perhaps its thorniest issue, the nature and treatment of personality disorders. Tantalisingly, and bizarrely, the very last paragraph in the book finishes with a plea to move towards a more restorative model of justice, and yet there seems to be no other mention of the concept throughout the book, let alone an explanation of what the term means or how its principles are applied to prisons and probation.

Another area where this book disappoints is in the patchy and outdated details of many of the treatment and rehabilitation programmes which are supposed to be its focus. In the author's defence this is, to a certain extent, a reflection of the pace of change in the criminal justice system. Perhaps it is also a reflection of the failure of the prison and probation services to communicate intelligibly with the general public about treatment and rehabilitation.

Phil Willmot, Prison Service psychologist

Captive Audience: Media, Masculinity and Power in Prisons

by Dr Yvonne Jewkes. Willan Publishing, 2002. £17.99.

If there is one issue guaranteed to whip up frenzy in the leader columns of the tabloid press, it is the creation of new privileges or facilities for prisoners. We can all remember the media furore when plans were announced for a golf course at an open prison, and politicians wasted no time in roundly condemning such 'molly-coddling'.

The era of Woolfism in the early to mid-1990s brought with it many changes to regimes for prisoners, almost all for the better. In-cell television was one such reform, brought about to allow prisoners a greater feeling of connection with the outside world through television news and other programmes. Radio has been around longer, but by definition lacked the visual stimulus provided by television.

And whilst in-cell television provides the main focus for Yvonne Jewkes' new book, other forms of media use are also explored, considering with each the effects on the media on power and empowerment, masculinity and identity. Research spanning many months was conducted in several prisons, primarily Stocken and Ashwell, and this included interviews and focus groups with significant numbers of prisoners serving a wide range of sentences.

Captive Audience: Media, Masculinity and Power in Prisons begins with a review of existing literature, in which parallels and comparisons are drawn with the seminal works of, for example, Sykes and Clemmer. The formation and maintenance of 'identity' is a central and recurring theme in this work, and Jewkes argues in Chapter One that media access can mitigate the sometimes deleterious effects of imprisonment, especially in younger prisoners serving relatively short sentences. Within this Chapter comes a consideration of Sykes' 'pains of imprisonment' and the extrapolation of these pains to the media context.

'Structuration' and adaptation to the prison condition, and the role of outside 'real world' contacts and relationships are the subject of Chapter Two. Within that adaptation, says Jewkes, is a necessary differential in each prisoner, whereby his or her individual adaptation will involve not only his interaction with family and friends outside of the carceral setting, but also his place within a wider criminal

justice arena, where other influences such as the institution's own biography, social attitudes, and the politics of criminal justice, play a part. To quote the book, it is the 'masculine cultural milieu' that is central to the adaptive process.

An explanation of the research methodology, and of the structures and cultures of the prisons in which the research was conducted is provided in Chapter Three.

Chapter Four is titled 'The microsocial contexts of media use', where the fluid notions of time and place, and their relationship with identity, are considered. The Chapter reveals conflicting, and not immediately obvious, differences in the prisoners' own interpretation and use of the media to achieve relative normality.

'I'm in my element now with five weeks of cricket on the telly. I find it very calming. It takes me back to who I really am.'

This comment, from 'Bill', is perhaps the kind of comment one would expect. The escape provided by television allows the prisoner to connect to the person he was, and will probably return to, outside prison. His liberty is denied, but his interests and passions continue. For Bill, the passion is cricket. But other prisoners appear to shun television as it provides only painful memories of the world of which they are no longer a part. To quote 'Neil':

'When the news comes on I flick over, I do not want to hear about it. It reminds me of what I'm missing ... the outside world no longer exists. I do not dwell on what I could be doing. It's an utter sheer waste of time, the futility of being in here. Seeing it all on TV would only make it even worse.'

Chapter Four's theme of the individual leads to the wider prison community — the 'meso-sphere' — and culture in Chapter Five. Largely rejecting some of the earlier studies of prison and prisoner culture, here Jewkes argues that the prison society is much more complex than concluded by prison sociologists such as Sykes. The suspension (or even termination) of the prisoners' pre-prison identity is necessary to conform to the 'performative and excessively masculine prison culture'. Whilst prisoners present a front of solidarity and union whilst in groups, the reality of distrust and dislike between some prisoners is presented acutely here. The private use of the media, and the construction of prison 'masks', is pervasive and all-

encompassing. Other influences, such as the 'newness' of a prison wing, are also important:

'... at least I know my cell's not contaminated ... it's had nobody die in it. In fact nobody had even slept in the bed before me.'

The 'macro-social' context of prisons and the media is the subject of Chapter Six. Asking the question of 'where does power lie in prison?', the Chapter looks at the needs of the prisoners against those of the institution in which they are held, and the way in which the media can be a central locus of the power relationships that exist within prison walls. Within this Chapter is also presented the mindset of the prisoners who would prefer not to have in-cell television — and who would therefore run against the grain of the 'scrounging' prisoners presented by the tabloid media:

'I did not want in-cell TV, but in the end I had to have it because I'm on Enhanced. I cannot pretend I do not watch it now that I've got it, but I held out for as long as I could. I enjoyed my eight months here without it though.'

In itself, this poses questions about the autonomy of prisoners and their right to choose how their regime is run within a prison. Perhaps the independence and greater freedoms generally afforded to enhanced status prisoners should extend to a choice of whether or not to have in-cell television? Another interesting quote within the book came from a prison officer, who questioned the 'right' of prisoners to a television in their cell, when he had recently had to pay a significant sum for a relative to have television at her hospital bedside.

As Jewkes herself notes in the Conclusion, this work has brought together two academic disciplines previously disconnected — those of media studies and criminology. Power is not without previous study, and nor is masculinity, but the interaction with the media is, from this book alone, central to any serious consideration of relationships and prisoner identity within the institutional setting.

The undemocratic nature of media use in prisons is reiterated in the Conclusion. The use of the media as a tool on the part of the prison — in a kind of 'carrot and stick' approach — is not insignificant, and there is balance to be achieved between the inactivity of television watching, and the requirements

for activity placed upon the prison service. Nor is power unidirectional and, rather like the media, it can be used as a resource but also as a constraint.

My own current research has led me through the many previous works on masculinity and prisoner identity, many of which are decades old. The pace of change in recent years, both in the development of the media, and in penal policy, has made the publication of this

book now most apposite. If there is to be one criticism of the book, it is that it has not considered in any depth the relationship between the consumption of the print or broadcast media, and 'media' in the wider context — such a letter-writing and other communication means.

That said, this is an excellent book — one of the best specialist books on prisons and penology of the last few years. It has transcended the wall between being

academic and being practical effortlessly. It should be read by all with an interest in prison regimes, not least the managers of prison regimes, a few of whom appear to struggle with understanding the different needs of prisoners.

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English Prisons: An Architectural History

by Allan Brodie, Jane Croom and James O Davies. English Heritage. 2002. £40. ISBN 1873592531.

It is a sad fact that so few people have any real idea of the real goings-on behind prison walls. The mass media informs — or, some argue, *misinforms* — the public through programmes such as 'Bad Girls' or 'Porridge'. The image of prison in most people's eyes is that of one of the huge Victorian establishments such as Leeds, Portland or the Scrubs.

Prison reformers — myself included — spend much of our time criticising prisons, be it the health care, the regimes, or any other aspect of imprisonment. What perhaps separates me from some prison reform colleagues, is my appreciation of prison buildings. Some, such as Elmley, are built to contain, with little concern for the aesthetic. But others, such as many of the previously mentioned Victorian prisons, are at the same time imposing, magnificent, and fascinating. It is, I accept, a perverse fascination, similar perhaps to my love of medieval churches, despite being an atheist.

In 1999, English Heritage concluded the first part of their architectural survey of English prisons, and published the paperback 'Behind Bars', providing a basic insight to prison buildings in England. The English Heritage team was granted unprecedented access to all prisons, and allowed to photograph any area — except where this may have compromised security. Although many prisons were photographed during the 1870s when prisons all came under central control, this was the very first time such a project had been undertaken in all prisons, and for public access.

The book, *English Prisons. An Architectural History*, opens with the famous Churchill statement: 'The mood and temper of the public with regard to the treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of the

civilisation of any country'. What becomes clear throughout the 297 pages of this book is that one can actually gauge the mood the temper of the penal *policy* from that time too ... from the religious and reformatory principals popular at the time of the construction of, say, Shrewsbury, through to the purely utilitarian design of newer prisons, such as Swaleside or Full Sutton.

The pages of the book are filled with hundreds of photographs taken as part of this survey, and some older ones also — including a striking photograph of a wing within Newgate. One criticism of the book is that it does not include photographs of *all* the prisons in England. Included are shots of cells, wings, hospitals, governor's houses, chapels and workshops, and an in-depth commentary which serves not only those with an interest in architecture, but also those simply interested in the history of imprisonment in England. It is one of the few publications to cover comprehensively the work of John Howard, and it includes an image of his statue in St Paul's Cathedral.

Long-closed prisons are also documented in some number, including the 14th century gaol at Hexham in Northumberland, Oxford castle, Lydford castle in Devon, and Ripon House of Correction. Photographs of cells and other holding areas in non-prison buildings are included, such as the cells beneath Lambeth Palace, and buildings used by local communities for holding offenders for short periods, such as the conical lockup at Wheatley in Oxfordshire, and a similar building located on a 17th century bridge at Bradford-on-Avon.

Some closed prisons remain intact — Oxford castle and Littledean gaol in Gloucestershire as examples. The plans of the reformers, such as Bentham's panopticon and Byfield's radial designs, are examined and the plans reprinted, together with lists of prisons built in these styles, many of which have now closed or been demolished. The short life of the Millbank Penitentiary is also documented at some length.

It is half way through the book when Du Cane's 1877 Prisons Act appears, and local authorities are divested of their responsibilities for prison establishments. This also marks an interesting turning point in the architecture, and shortly afterwards is seen the building of the first 'telegraph pole' style prison: Wormwood Scrubs in London. Many more utilitarian (in the literal, rather than Benthamite sense) buildings begin to appear, including Norwich and Bristol. Prison architecture suddenly appears to reflect the frugal existence of those held within the walls. The grand gatchouses of Leicester are gone from the plans.

It is after the turn of the twentieth century when the visual change becomes even more apparent. Prison huts begin to appear, many built by prisoner labour, such as Haverigg. Old mansion houses become prisons, as do former military bases. The creation of open prisons brings the building of accommodation resembling municipal housing units, such as those at Ford. There are some that would fuel the 'holiday camp' theorists — I was astonished at the 'chalet' accommodation at Finnermore Wood, closed since 1996. Some prisons, such as Styal, develop 'proper' houses for prisoners to live in, and others build specialist accommodation for specific groups of prisoners, such as the lifer houses at North Sea Camp.

Later still come the ugly buildings such as Featherstone or Highpoint, which resemble warehouses — some would say in more ways than one. Then come the downright ugly — The Verne, Feltham and Belmarsh. There's some photographs from late April 1990 of Strangeways and Pucklechurch, included here perhaps as a reminder of how things can go wrong.

Private prisons bring even more new styles, from the modern design of Altcourse to Parc, where the accommodation blocks appear to resemble aircraft hangers. Indeed, one of the Parc pictures adorns the cover of this year's Prisons Handbook. The story of The Weare is retold here, not many pages

away from the story of the Thames hulks of the 18th and 19th centuries. There might be something in that. And we have 'RTU' units — wooden prisons which arrive in bits on the back of lorries. McDonalds build new 'drive-through' units in much the same way. Perhaps the first McJail is not far away.

With the recent publication of Patrick Carter's report into the future of private and state prisons, this book has come at a time when change may be imminent. To use the American term, Carter recommends the creation of 'supermax'

prisons to accommodate as many as two or three-thousand prisoners in one institution, close to major conurbations. One academic recently described the supermax as a 'solution in search of a problem', and talk of bringing such an institution to the UK is unwelcome.

The British public love talk about crime, punishment and prisons, and yet remains singularly uninformed about the inner workings of such institutions. The busiest section on my own website is one containing seventy-odd photographs of English prisons, something I started after

the demise of the Penal Lexicon site last year. It is useful to have this book if only to give to people who want an insight and an idea of what prison is really like.

At £40, it is not a cheap book. Nevertheless, the sheer amount of work and effort that has gone into the work makes it well worth the price.

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The Interview

Anne Owers

Anne Owers took over in 2001 from Sir David Ramsbotham as HM Chief Inspectorate of Prisons for England and Wales having previously been Director of Justice from 1992. Her early career was spent researching and teaching in Zambia. She worked at the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants and became its general secretary in 1986. Other appointments and publications reflect Anne Owers' interests in refugees, immigration and nationality, human rights and legal issues.

Interview by **Nigel Hancock**

Anne Owers spoke first of her earliest impressions of prisons and of work with prisoners.

'I remember visiting Brixton when I was doing legal advice work in South London. I had the impression of being in a very strange, unfamiliar and alienating environment, but was of course dipping in and out of it. The first prison I ever visited was Latchmere House when it was holding immigration detainees in the mid 1980s. I was working with the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants and one of our roles was dealing with people who were in immigration detention. So it was an interesting circularity for me that, just as I joined the Inspectorate, we were starting a thematic review of immigration detention following an addition to my post's statutory responsibilities. Fifteen years down the line Latchmere House is much changed.'

While I was at Justice I worked with prisoners who claimed that they were wrongly imprisoned. The legal advice to prisoners role was very different to my present one. When I first went there we were dealing with a lot of individual cases that were potential miscarriages of justice. We received about 1,000 letters a year from serving prisoners. That changed partly because we were successful in persuading the then government to set up the Criminal Cases Review Commission which could do the job much more effectively and quickly than we could. Legal officers would go out to see people but a lot of the work was done by correspondence rather than by direct visit.'



Could the new Chief Inspector give her impressions of prisons in England and Wales now and of the overall prison system?

'In the last few months I have inspected about 14 and visited a further 15. So I have seen a good proportion of the growing prison estate quite quickly. I have seen prisons in action as part of my own learning curve and then seen them during inspection. I have been there for the last two days of full inspections and at the debriefs with the governor and the senior management team. I have also done one full inspection with each of our three inspection teams starting from the first day and going on to the fifth day, so that I can get a feel for how the business is done, how the information is compiled and how the teams work. That has been immensely useful.'

Prisons are so different, and just talking about a 'prison system' somehow implies a consistency that may not be possible. I do not yet have a full picture of the prison estate, for example of women's prisons or of dispersal prisons. A key impression though is that the prison system is good at coping, and prides itself on doing well with the resources it has. It copes surprisingly well given what is thrown at it: with increased numbers of women and of juveniles; with children in prison; with people who are mentally ill and disturbed in various ways; and with immigration detainees.'

There is a stress on crisis management, on fire fighting. Prisons are always conscious that they are on the edge, that they are only a days away from the next disturbing suicide, the next bed watch. Prisons exist in a constant state of anxiety. This coping mechanism