UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

THESIS

PRISON PROBATION WORK:

Contact Between Long-Term Male Prisoners and Prison Probation Officers

Mary Anne McFarlane, B.A., D.A.S.S., C.Q.S.W.

Master of Philosophy

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK STUDIES

APRIL 1994

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to acknowledge invaluable help from Sylvia Strevens, Lyn Sims, Fiona Hancock, David Colombi and Don Swinton in completing this study. Consultation with other researchers included Brian Williams, Tim Craven, Alision Whitehead, David McAllister and Alison Leibling, to whom I wish to convey many thanks. The staff and prisoners at HMP Grendon, the Prison Reform Trust and members of the Prison Link Project contributed valuable material. Proofreaders, Wendy Gay and David Scott, performed an essential and dedicated task.

The main gratitude, however, is expressed towards the prisoners, the Governor, staff and the Probation Team at HMP Parkhurst, who were willing to share their thoughts and experiences so freely and contribute so much to the development of knowledge in this under-researched and under-valued area of probation work.

Thank you to my children for sharing their mother not only with a full-time job, but also the demands of a further degree.

Finally, to my husband, Bob, for all his encouragement and support, as well as sorting out computer problems and remembering to back-up my disks.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK STUDIES

Master of Philosophy

PRISON PROBATION WORK:
Contact Between Long-Term Male Prisoners and Prison Probation Officers

by Mary Anne McFarlane

The study examines the literature relating to prison probation work, including prisoner autobiographies, and finds a lack of a theoretical framework. Prisoners' writings generally omit the Prison Probation Officer or reveal suspicion and cynicism about the role. A pilot study revealed the limitations of questionnaires in this setting and demonstrated that the prisoners viewed the probation role mainly in terms of welfare and family work.

A file survey was undertaken of fifty-three prisoners at HMP Parkhurst relating to work done over the previous two years. The prisoners were analysed in four groups relating to their contact with Prison Probation Officers, both at Parkhurst and previous prisons. The four groups were: those who undertook focused work with Prison Probation Officers on their offending or relationship problems; those who had high contact but no focused work; those with low contact; and those with minimal or no contact. The survey demonstrated that lifers and prisoners on the Special Multi-Disciplinary Unit were more likely to undertake focused work. Older, high level security prisoners were less likely to be in contact. A high number of disciplinary reports on prisoners appeared to be linked to high contact, but not to focused work. Other factors were not significant. The focused work group of fifteen prisoners were then interviewed in depth, using a methodology based on Guba and Lincoln's Naturalistic Inquiry, which allowed the prisoners maximum opportunity to define factors influencing contact with Prison Probation Officers.

The prisoners described a great number of potential barriers between themselves and the Prison Probation Officers, one of which was shared working with Prison Officers, although well-resourced personal officer schemes were felt to encourage contact. Prisoners who had undertaken focused work described a range of social work and assessment skills on the part of the Probation Officers which they valued. Prisoners were not in favour of Probation Officers withdrawing from prison. The prisoners' image of Prison Probation Officers centred on families and the welfare role.

The conclusions are that Prison Probation Officers are viewed by the prisoners in this study predominantly as social workers with an emphasis on family and external links. Risk assessment and working on the offence were valued as skills, but not central for the prisoners. Given the current emphasis by the Home Office on these latter roles, the study underlines the importance of ensuring that the welfare task is undertaken with resources additional to Probation Officers and Prison Officers, possibly in partnership with community-based organisations. This would free the Probation Officers and the Prison Officers to concentrate more on focused work through Sentence Planning, although this needs to be well integrated with the welfare side of throughcare.

The study concludes that the establishment of effective throughcare services is likely to become more difficult with the current conflicting messages about rehabilitation in prison and a rapidly rising prison population. Given the setting of the study in a maximum security male prison, further research is recommended to replicate and expand the file survey and conduct interviews with female prisoners, those in local prisons and prisoners who have had a low level of contact with Prison Probation Officers.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Study

The seeds for the current study were sown when the author become Senior Probation Officer at HMP Parkhurst in January 1988 and later that year took over responsibility for "C" Wing Special Unit at Parkhurst. This unit was set up for disruptive prisoners, who also had a history of psychiatric disorder, in December 1985, following the report of the Control Review Committee (1984). It was later monitored according to the recommendations of the Research and Advisory Group (RAG) (1987). It became apparent that some important work was being done with long term prisoners, both by Probation Officers based in the prison (prison seconded Probation Officers) and Probation Officers based in the prisoner's home area (field Probation Officers). However, this experience did not seem to be reflected in prison literature, where Probation Officers were portrayed as peripheral, pre-occupied with practical matters, officials of the prison system, out of touch with prisoners' real problems and lacking status. In reading casefiles and dealing with the prisoners on "C" Wing, it seemed that in some cases and at some stages of sentence, certain significant pieces of work had been undertaken between the Probation Officers and the prisoners, particularly on their offending and their relationships with other people. How did this come about and what factors influenced when it took place?

The researcher spent the following year setting up a Shared Working scheme at HMP Parkhurst. This involved the Prison Officers performing certain welfare tasks. The aim was to free Probation Officers to concentrate more on planned rehabilitation and offence-related work with the prisoners. Probation Officers have been seconded to prison establishments to perform welfare work, amongst other tasks, since 1966. They are generally allocated at the rate of one to every one hundred prisoners, although at Parkhurst the Senior Probation Officer headed a team of three Probation Officers and, since 1991, one part timer for a

prison population of about 180. The higher ratio of staff reflected the complexity and high-risk nature of the Parkhurst prisoner population and refurbishment work at the time of the study. The probation team was also supported by a group of volunteers who visited prisoners on an individual basis and helped with groups. As Parkhurst is a national resource within the prison system, the field Probation Officers were spread throughout Britain. Each prisoner is entitled to contact with a Probation Officer in his/her home area, known as the field Probation Officer. Not all prisoners take up this offer and not all home areas were in a position to offer an officer throughout sentence in the early part of this study.

The original research proposal consisted of a study involving some triangulation; interviewing prisoners, Prison Probation Officers and field Probation Officers, to try to explore what factors, if any, influenced whether the Probation Officers and prisoners worked on either offending or relationships. There was the question also as to what factors might influence the prisoners' preference for working with a field officer or Prison Probation Officer. The original method envisaged was that of questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, building on the studies of the eighties. This proposal was submitted to the Faculty of Social Science at the University of Southampton and the researcher was accepted on the part-time M.Phil post-graduate course beginning in October 1989.

The study changed throughout the first three years of the research programme. The final focus of evaluation was contact between Prison Probation Officers and prisoners, not including field Probation Officers as originally planned. The pilot questionnaire indicated a literature search which should include prisoner autobiographies and a search for a consumer-focused methodology.

The methodology then changed from questionnaire and semi-structured interview to one which promoted evaluation by principal "stakeholders", in this case prisoners, Probation Officers and Prison Officers, through open interviews. The researcher also decided to undertake a survey of files to examine contact between prisoners and Prison Probation Officers over the previous two years. All the research was undertaken by the author, apart from interviews with Prison Probation Officers which were carried out by another researcher.

The researcher had a baby in 1990 and as a result the research was suspended on two occasions. Part of the research, the pilot study, took place in the spring of 1990. The literature survey was undertaken primarily in the spring of 1992 and updated in 1993. The file survey was carried out in June 1992 and interviews with respondents at Parkhurst in the summer and autumn of 1992. Because of a change of job for the researcher the analysis was not written up until 1993.

During the period of the study, four years, major changes took place in the prison system. The Strangeways riot leading to the Woolf Report (1991) and the Criminal Justice Act 1991 both recommended a degree of fundamental change which had not been experienced in a largely static prison system since the security clampdown of the 70s. However, these changes did not, in the main, have an impact on the prisoners until after the study was completed.

The study was undertaken principally at HMP Parkhurst, with one discussion group at HMP Grendon Underwood. Therefore, the study refers solely to adult, male prisoners. The reason for this was expediency as the researcher worked at Parkhurst. It would have been very interesting to have undertaken a similar study in a long term women's prison and perhaps this might form the subject of further research. Another limitation in terms of understanding the prisoners' experience was the researcher's status as a white, heterosexual female, from a relatively privileged position in society. Her ability to understand the context in which the prisoners' experiences took place was necessarily limited by these factors. This was partly overcome by the choice of a constructivist methodology which built on the views of the main stakeholders.

HMP Parkhurst

Parkhurst is near to Camp Hill and Albany prisons and is situated approximately three miles outside Newport, the county town of the Isle of Wight. The history of Parkhurst has been described by an ex-Prison Officer Dick Prewer (undated). Parkhurst was originally an old military hospital, built in 1798 near the then Albany Barracks, a large depot for training infantry soldiers which ceased to be of importance after 1815. A Select Committee was set up in 1835 to enquire

into conditions prevailing in gaols and houses of correction and some very unpleasant facts had come to light; for example in the hulk Euryalus at Chatham was found a boy of six and a half. He would have had to stay on the hulk until old enough for transportation at fourteen. A prison for young offenders on shore was proposed and the old military hospital on the Isle of Wight was duly converted, beginning in 1838. The old hospital buildings were of the so-called mathematical tiles which were hung on wooden framework, and gave the appearance of brick. The architect, Sidney Smith, retained all the old buildings, dividing the hospital wards into cells with brick partition walls, but adding outside galleries for access purposes. He also added two new brick buildings of cells, a large dining hall (now a hospital wing), a kitchen and a range of workshops. Victorian works officers were always deploring the state of the older buildings and reported that they could not last much longer, yet several of them are still in use today.

Parkhurst opened as a juvenile prison in 1838, for boys drawn from the "York", a hulk at Portsmouth, though later the drafts came direct from Millbank. They ranged in age from 7 to 17. Their sentences were usually 7 years' transportation for offences such as stealing a few pence from the person, or taking a pair of stockings. Such are the early Victorian values as expressed in the prison system. However, it is likely that they had a far better education than most Victorian boys of their background and sneers were heard elsewhere of Parkhurst as "an academy for young gentlemen", (the Victorian equivalent of the "Butlins" jibes of today). In 1844, there were no less than 165 corporal punishments and 44 boys were put into the Black Hole (which is still there under an association room in "C" Wing). New buildings were erected, mainly by the boys, including a female wing. By 1863 the juvenile prison had been run down and women prisoners were taken on as well, in a separate building. In 1864, the remaining boys were transferred to Dartmoor and the women only stayed until 1869. It then became an adult male prison, with a high proportion of prisoners with mental and physical problems. The last wings were built in 1886. Thus it remained for seventy odd years, becoming a Preventative Detention Centre in 1950.

Some notorious escapes led to the Mountbatten report (1966). Although

Mountbatten advised an "Alcatraz" on the Isle of Wight for dangerous prisoners, the Home Office adopted an alternative strategy of "dispersal" prisons (outlined in the Radzinowicz Report, 1968). The most dangerous prisoners were to be dispersed and moved around eight high security dispersal prisons, including Parkhurst, and this system remains today. Security was upgraded at Parkhurst in the 70s. This had the effect of keeping the 80% of prisoners in the dispersal system who were not high level security (Category A), under an unnecessarily high level of security. This was thought by some to be a contributory factor to subsequent disturbances. In 1969 there was a riot, and again in 1979 when 2 wings were destroyed. They did not re-open until June 1993, a matter of some considerable concern to the Inspectorate of Prisons (1992). The following information sheet for visitors to Parkhurst indicates the current setting as well as the particular style of the Governor, who was in post for the main part of the study:

"Parkhurst is a Maximum Security Prison
A Message to Visitors from the Governor, Mr John Marriott

'Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the Courts.

Our duty is to look after them with humanity and to help them lead law abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.'

It is my aim to create a relaxed and secure environment for prisoners and for staff in order that positive work can go on here. It is the hallmark of our work that we treat prisoners with respect and dignity and this requires a flexible, fair, open and honest approach by us all. The good relationships between staff and prisoners at Parkhurst have been acknowledged and commented on positively by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons and by many visitors from home and overseas.

Our population includes many of the most difficult, dangerous and disturbed prisoners in custody today and you are reminded that this is a maximum security prison. We have few assaults or other incidents as compared with many other establishments, but you should be aware of the potential danger and of your responsibilities. It would be helpful if you would accept any guidance offered by the staff escorting you.

Parkhurst is a unique institution because of its many specialised functions which are not found in any single setting elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

C Wing Special Unit

This is one of three national units which manage long-term prisoners

who have histories of violent behaviour in and out of prison and who have been unable to mix with the rest of the prisoners. They are considered to be in need of psychiatric support. Ours is the largest of these units and is commonly regarded as the most successful. It has pioneered the personal officer scheme and small unit management. A multi-discipline team which includes officer, psychologist, psychiatrist, probation and education staff under the leadership of a governor grade, manage prisoners in a relaxed but structured environment. The aim is to help prisoners understand and come to terms with their disruptive behaviour in a non-confrontational setting.

Health Care Centre

Parkhurst has a modern operating theatre and about 400 operations are performed each year. The facility is essentially for high security risk prisoners from England and Wales. Additionally, it contains a national psychiatric referral unit linking the Prison Service with special hospitals.

Recent developments include the introduction of regular well-man clinics and providing routine health care for the three Isle of Wight prisons.

Special Secure Unit

Essentially, this is a prison within a prison and operates in isolation from the rest of Parkhurst. Originally set up for the Great Train Robbers in the 1960s, the unit now contains a small number of prisoners for whom escape must be made impossible.

Normal Wings

There are five other wings in Parkhurst for 'normal' long-term prisoners. A and D Wings have recently come back into use following major refurbishment. M Wing has yet to be modernised. B and G Wings are in the process of refurbishment and should be re-opened in December 1994.

Population

Parkhurst will contain about 400 prisoners once all the accommodation is brought back into use. The present numbers average only about 230-240 prisoners, but Parkhurst contains the highest proportion of prisoners with a history of:

- special hospital placements
- assaults against staff and other prisoners
- hostage takers in prison
- firearm offences
- moves within the dispersal system (indicates control problems).

So it is a volatile population with a high potential for disruption. Yet of all the maximum security prisons we have the lowest rate of staff assaults.

Parkhurst is an old prison with a strong tradition for tolerance. The culture is a kindly one (and prisoners may tell you this). We place great store by talking through difficulties, rather than seeking confrontation.

But it must be acknowledged that Parkhurst can at times be a very stressful place to work and it is important that this is recognised, and that proper support systems are in place for staff.

I care passionately about the staff and prisoners at Parkhurst and hope to continue as Governor for many years to come. We fulfil a very important role for society and I sincerely hope that during your visit you will be impressed by our professionalism and the quality of our work.

I and my staff welcome any comments you may wish to make, either orally during your visit, or in writing afterwards.

J MARRIOTT
Governor"

As at 1st September 1992, during the interview process, the profile of the prison was as follows (percentages in brackets):

Population size

B Wing	C Wing	M Wing	Hospital	Segregation	SSB#	Total
103	13	31	13	13	7	180

The Special Secure Unit or Block.

The low numbers were due to refurbishment in the Hospital and the new rear wings.

Age	Total
21-25	21 (12)
26-30	43 (24)
31-35	41 (23)
36-40	24 (13)
41-50	39 (22)
51-60	8 (4)
61 plus	3 (2)

Average age = 35

Sentence length in years

Length	Nos (%)
0-4.9	6 (3)
5-5.9	9 (5)
6-7.9	22 (12)
8-10.9	38 (21)
11 plus	55 (31)
Life	49 (27)

Violence to staff this sentence to arrival	27 (15)
Violence to inmates	16 (9)

Ethnic origin

	B Wing	C Wing	M Wing	Hospital	Segregation	SSB	Total
White	69 (67)	13 (xx)	26 (84)	12 (92)	9 (69)	7 (xx)	136 (76)
Black	27 (26)	0 (0)	3 (10)	0 (0)	1 (8)	0 (0)	31 (17)
Asian	4 (4)	0 (0)	1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (3)
Other	2 (2)	0 (0)	1 (3)	1 (8)	3 (23)	0 (0)	7 (4)

Escape history Total 27 (15)

(One prisoner escaped during the period of the study, only the second to have done so in the history of the institution.)

Security Category

	B Wing	C Wing	M Wing	Hospital	Segregation	SSB	Total
A	9 (9)	8 (62)	9 (29)	5 (38)	2 (15)	7 (xx)	40 (22)
B	81 (79)	5 (38)	19 (61)	8 (62)	9 (69)	0 (0)	122 (68)
C or D	12 (12)	0 (0)	3 (10)	0 (0)	2 (15)	0 (0)	17 (9)

(Source: Probe database. PROfiling BEhaviour is a database on dispersal prisoners held by the Prison Psychological Services.)

This showed a prisoner profile of high security, older prisoners but a surprising number of lower security prisoners as well. At the time, with the refurbishment of so many prisons towards integral sanitation it was proving very difficult to move prisoners on.

The information given to prisoners about the Probation Department on reception, as at the time of the interviews in 1992, was as follows:

"There are four Probation Officers, one Senior Probation Officer and a group of Volunteers in the Parkhurst Probation Team. We aim to help you settle in, do some planning about the time you spend here, help keep up or set contacts with the world outside the prison and assist in planning towards your next move and/or release. This work will be done in planned interviews.

A system of shared working is in operation. You should see your Landing Officer in the first instance to sort out any difficulties." (Followed by a list of names and wings covered.)

The section on shared working in the reception information pack reads as follows:

"**Applications. Shared Working**

A system of shared working operates in Parkhurst. A similar system operates on C Wing through the Personal Officer Scheme.

All applications are channelled initially through the landing officers. Where appropriate the landing officer will deal with the applications, otherwise they will be passed on to the designated shared working/personal officer to resolve.

Queries to any other department of the prison will be processed by the shared working/personal officer. This enables the wing to know what action has been taken so that any further queries can be dealt with."

(Introductory Pack for prisoners on arrival at Parkhurst)

Although the intention was for all prisoners to be handed an information pack on Reception, this did not always happen and throughout the study the researcher found that the prisoners had not seen a copy, or not retained the information in it. However, over 95% of the prisoners were seen by Probation Officers for Reception interviews when it is hoped that some of the elements of the service offered would have been communicated.

Conclusion

This study arose from questioning why some prisoners had contact with Probation Officers and some did not. Was this a matter of choice, chance or other factors which were not apparent to the researcher at that stage?

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters:

Chapter One introduces the research topic and describes the setting at HMP Parkhurst
Chapter Two reviews relevant literature
Chapter Three traces the methodological developments, theories and approaches used
Chapter Four describes the pilot questionnaire results
Chapter Five describes the file survey findings
Chapter Six describes the interview findings
Chapter Seven contains a general discussion of the findings and outlines recommendations for future research and policy
Bibliography
Appendices

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE SURVEY

Introduction

The literature relating specifically to probation work in prisons is not extensive, partly because the specialism as such has only existed for twenty five years and partly because there is little research in this area. However, there is a vast amount of literature on prisons, on the sociology of total institutions and on general social work and probation, from which an understanding of the prison probation task may be enhanced.

The literature review developed in three stages. The initial stage included a great deal of reading of Home Office, Probation Service and Prison Service documents relating to the prison probation task, commonly referred to as "throughcare". The researcher was at that stage compiling a handbook for Prison Probation Officers and was seeking specific practice-based material. Also at that stage, for training purposes, a history of throughcare was prepared which entailed a brief survey of historical accounts of welfare work in prison. This general reading stage expanded, as the research programme commenced to include literature on prisons and organisational theory.

The next stage took place after the pilot questionnaire, when it became apparent that a prisoner-based perspective was an essential part of the research. The researcher then focused on prisoner autobiographies and undertook some group and individual discussions with ex-prisoners to amplify her understanding of the central issues for them. These interviews and discussions are described in the methodology chapter. Davies describes the absence of such material in most studies:

"*There is very little material which enables the student to draw on the prisoner's*

own perception of his prison experience or his assessment of its effects on him when he returns to the community outside. This is partly a reflection of the greater ease with which the official line can be studied."

Davies; (1974): p125

The third stage was to embark on a structured literature review, using the library at Southampton University, including an on-line search, and the resources of the Prison Service College Library in Wakefield. The approach adopted initially was related to Hesse's network theory, amplified by Ryan et al (1992). This method involved taking all the main journals for one year which related to the field under study and scanning relevant articles. For each article the method states that a leading reference should be identified. This is then noted and charted. Gradually a diagram of the central articles in the field ("the grandmothers") is created. Following that, a network can be built up of the major themes or assumptions expounded in these articles, representing the main drive in the field that year. The process is repeated for another year, say five years previously, and five years before that. The researcher embarked on this strategy but was unable to pursue it. Either there was no identifiable reference or the main reference was to the author's own previous work. What was apparent was that certain articles and books were frequently quoted overall. It may be that network theory is better suited to reviewing fields such as accountancy, where theories are more clearly expounded, or disputed. It certainly became apparent that the field of prison probation work lacks a conscious theoretical framework for its foundation and development. It has been shaped more by changing ideologies than informed by research. Where research has been used to develop an aspect of the work, it is often not put in the context of other research, or ignores the effects on the prisoners of the total institution. The researcher decided to divide the literature into four sections and this chapter is so divided.

The first covers the experience of the recipients of the service under scrutiny, the prisoners, as revealed by autobiographical and biographical material, and documents from prisoner-based organisations. The second section examines some of the general literature about prisons to draw out factors which might be seen to influence the prisoner's relationship with the Prison Probation Officer. The third section covers the literature which described and influenced the

development of prison welfare, together with research and other documentary material on prison probation work. The fourth section outlines recent developments in the Prison Service.

Prisoners' Accounts

The literature representing the prisoners' viewpoint is not easily accessible. Titles are often unrelated to the subject matter, e.g. "The Frying Pan", Parker (1970), and did not appear in the "on-line" computer search. The researcher was fortunate to have contact with another researcher, Brian Williams, who had surveyed this field and also provided information about David Haxby, who collects this type of material. Television and radio broadcasts and newspaper articles were another source, as well as letters to journals and newspapers written by prisoners. Very few books were in the University Library and most had to be obtained through inter-library loan. The Prison Service College provided an easy and quick resource. The Hampshire Probation Service Library also provided some useful material. Alison Whitehead (1985) had also undertaken a literature review of prisoners' writings which proved a supplementary source. The researcher contacted the Gateway Exchange, Edinburgh, an organisation set up by Jimmy Boyle, an ex-prisoner. Although he was unable to spare the time to assist, the author had a brief exchange with him later at a conference. Ex-prisoners are often under pressure to give interviews and assist with various projects and it seemed important to be able to offer something to anyone who assisted in this study.

"*The middle class get some vicarious excitement out of talking to me, but then you go home - you're not part of their group. And the working class - I don't fit in there, either; they think I'm middle class.*"

"'*These middle-class women,' he'd said of his interviewers. 'They should go to Battersea Dogs Home and get themselves a stray. I'm a writer. I'm not a victim. Except when I was a child, when I couldn't do anything about it. But when I could do something about it, I became a writer.*'" Healy; (1992)

Healy's point is that he does not want to be treated as a victim but as himself, a writer. However he does refer to having been a victim as a child when he could do nothing about it. One of the benefits of research which includes the respondents' view of themselves is that it reduces the temptation to classify and stereotype. Peelo et al (1992) make the point in their study of offenders as

victims that the two groups cannot be separated:

"It is not news to Probation Officers to hear that offenders are often victims of crime. However, recognising this fact is not a step victimologists have been willing to take, although Smith (1986) has argued that empirical work has steadily gnawed away at the supposed divide between offenders and victims, leaving this division as a 'figment of political imagination and a sop to social conscience' "

Peelo, Stewart, Stewart and Prior; (1992): p98

The need to listen to the prisoners also seemed crucial to an understanding of what might influence them to have contact with Probation Officers. Discussions with the Prison Link Project, an organisation for black prisoners, took place (see Chapter Three). Punch (1991) shows the importance of understanding the role of crime to some criminals, which seemed important in Parkhurst, where so many prisoners had been involved in crime all their lives:

"I would argue that, in order to understand the actual phenomenon of crime, criminologists should take to the streets to find it, observe it, and talk about it with the people who commit it (and, of course, also with those who are victims of it). To some people the criminal act is clearly central to their manhood and we have to perceive it in terms of their role identity. Criminals inhabit an underworld with its own specific norms, structure, hierarchy, and habits that both reflect and invert certain aspects of conventional society".

Punch; (1991): p66

For the all pervasive situation of prison it seemed important to understand how it might be experienced:

"...to obtain detailed evidence as to how social situations appear to the actor in them and what meanings various factors have for the participants."

Angell, Gottschalk, Kluckhorn; (1945): p178

What relevance then could contact with the Probation Officer have to the daily life of the prisoner? Prisoners' accounts have very little to say about the welfare

or Probation Services and it seems fair to surmise that they are marginal to the lives of most prisoners. McWilliams and Davies (1971) found a low level of knowledge about after-care services and this seemed to be borne out by the accounts. The researcher could find no written account of any substantial contact with a Probation Officer. There were references to lack of time:

"*Well, there should be a few people there who you could actually have a talk to without them saying "Look, I've got 5 minutes. Be quick." Because really you don't get a chance to talk. They're too busy running about. One Probation Officer saw 200 prison inmates. It's just not enough.*"

NACRO; (1986): p4

There were also references to giving the Probation Officer in prison a hard time, as one of the games played in prison:

"*...Magoo moves to other fields - the WO, [Welfare Officer] with a little cross in his lapel he is usually a less holy edition of the Chaplain. Our hero ponders. Does he want (a) to get married; (b) divorced; (c) separated from anyone? or merely have his overcoat redeemed from Fagin's before the ticket runs? He'll sure find something to keep the bastards on the go.*"

Roberts; (1968): p207

The main subject mentioned is the writing of reports, particularly with insufficient knowledge of the prisoner. This theme was to be repeated time and again in interview and group discussion.

"*Though the system is the greatest enemy of reform, the inmates themselves contribute largely to the breakdown in communications, for they are the last to welcome naive investigators into the workings of their minds. Even in prison a man will fight for his own identity, for ultimately (particularly if he is serving a long term) it is all he has to lose.*"

Norman; (1970): p3

Trevor Hercules also describes investigation as intrusion into an already threatened personal identity.

"For as long as I can remember, social workers, child-care officers and probation officers have tried to talk to me about my mother and family in general, but not a word would pass my lips even though they had the basic facts: that my mother had left myself and brother in a home and gone to America. I suppose they had to try and find out what I felt about it just because they could never get anything out of me."

Hercules; (1989): p17

Hercules goes on to say that one reason for his reluctance to talk was his fantasy that one day his mother would appear and put it all right. Although he knew this was a fantasy, talking about it was not possible.

"So you can see that I didn't really want anyone to judge my mother, least of all people who didn't know her, people who made a living from assassinating people's characters."

Hercules; (1989): p18

Yet his refusal to talk was probably completely misconstrued by those social workers trying to communicate with him. For him a background report with descriptions of the family meant begging:

"I had already made myself clear to my counsel...that no way would I submit to the shame of begging this court and bringing my family life into it so that they could judge my family as well."

Hercules; (1989): p16

He makes the point here that there may have been mitigating background factors to his offending but he had his own reasons for not wanting this background to be analysed or described. These feelings must have been exacerbated in prison. Probation Service guidelines on report writing cover many different aspects, some of which try to recognise the vulnerability of the client, such as the discussion and checking of reports for discrimination, and openness about content. Nevertheless there is an assumption that the collection of background information relevant to the offence is inherently a good thing. Feelings of invasion of privacy are not generally acknowledged.

An account by a resident writer reveals the impact on report writing of a bureaucratic process:

"Here [the Dispersal Unit], the staff's duties, then, apart from locking and counting, are making reports in which the minutest idiosyncrasy is noted. Society requires it, though of its nature such a task is endlessly repetitive, petty, bureaucratic, biased, at times whimsical. Prison bureaucracy is necessarily cautious, slow and ponderous and all-powerful, riddled by schisms and interests and rivalries, resigned to administering a hopeless cause society doesn't much care about. Though it presents the singular face of authority, it is in fact many-headed, uniformed and civilian, whose reports from all sides are continuous.

Understandably, prisoners are also suspicious of psychologists, as is Scott. They are also part of the powers that assess him. In prison there are skilled and dedicated specialists, but prison gets to them too. In the end, prison workers, officers or governors or civilians, are touched by cynicism. Idealism, which motivates some, is invariably embattled. In whatever event, for the long-term prisoner the powers-that-be are working for an overview of each man in their charge, compiled from many sources, and all this leading to a summary based on the larger picture: an ultimate decision, somewhere made, as to whether or not a lifer ever comes out of prison. For men like Scott, who cannot stand outside the lives they live, there is no larger picture. There is no objectivity. And whatever reports come back from the black hole Scott's life has become, they are always negative."

Smith with Wait; (1989): p200

Here the individual is lost against a general background of routine. Prisoners feel resentful of the bureaucratic nature of Probation Officers' work.

"I don't see why anybody who sees me for maybe fifteen or twenty minutes per six months, per year, or whatever it is, has got the right to make out a report on me, especially one that could be harmful."

Williams; (1991c): p4

Williams argues that the bureaucratisation of throughcare has devalued the work

in the eyes of prisoners. Prisoners who saw their records during a mutiny at HMP Durham were shocked:

"*Reports from welfare staff and the prison chaplain were amongst the most vicious and spurious*".

Probyn; (1977): p119

John McVicar commented on the same occasion however about how little the authorities seemed to know about him.

Comments on parole reports reflect the inadequacies of the scheme as much as the workers. The uncertainties and secrecy of the system cause much stress:

"*The form I received to state my reasons for wanting parole started a very difficult period in my sentence, as up until then I had settled down ..... I became far more aware of the separation from my wife and son and the importance of the forthcoming parole interviews. Once the interviews started it seemed as the only thing of any importance was whether I would get parole. I found I was seeing things in what the welfare officer and Probation Officer had said to me and building them up out of all proportion as pointers to whether I would get parole.*"

Anonymous prisoner; (1971): p49

For some the process is meaningless:

"*It was whilst I was serving this punishment that I was again presented with a parole form to fill in. 'What are they up to?' I thought. I still had seven years to serve, I'd just made my second attempted escape. I was responsible for John McVicar being at large. I had seriously embarrassed the Home Office. I had necessitated an expenditure of a quarter of a million pounds, and here they were, inviting me to apply for parole, added to which I was a top-security prisoner, regarded as dangerous. I pointed all this out to the official who asked me to fill in the form and told him to 'piss off'. The form was brought back to me again and I was interviewed by a Probation Officer. The Home Office were*

anxious to involve me in their bureaucratic games."

Probyn; (1977): p131

This cynicism about parole is common to many prisoners in the dispersal system, particularly after the announcement of the Home Secretary, Leon Brittain, in October 1983 at the Conservative Party Conference that certain types of serious offenders would no longer be granted any substantial amount of parole. Many of the prisoners' accounts show that the task of writing reports, central to the task of the Prison Probation Officer, cannot be separated from the prison systems to which the reports contribute. This means that to some prisoners the report writing is a bureaucratic charade. To those prisoners who want to have a report prepared because they think it may positively influence a decision, the extent of knowledge possessed by the Probation Officer about them as individuals is crucial. The changes in the parole system arising from the Criminal Justice Act 1991, described later, are therefore to be welcomed in the main by prisoners.

However, not only are there constraints on the Probation Officer's time to achieve the knowledge to prepare assessments. It seems that the Probation Officers are viewed mainly as part of the system and therefore not to be trusted or confided in. Moreover the system itself is seen as inherently antagonistic towards rehabilitation which can place in a vacuum the efforts of Probation Officers working towards this end. Probyn provides a detailed indictment of the parole system and cynicism about the intentions of the agencies involved:

"*Whatever their programme, with however much goodwill it was administered (and there was often not much of that) he would insist on seeing things differently. What is announced as benign, helpful and constructive is seen as coercive, punitive and soul-destroying....His case throughout is that official policy prevents rehabilitation by intimidating and deterring prisoners from actually using the rules.*"

Probyn; (1977): p234

Another ex-prisoner remarks on the unhelpful degree to which Probation Officers identify with the institution.

"It is no coincidence that the members of prison staff who have spoken out on abuses are precisely those most loosely tied to the disciplinary structure; the part-time teacher, the official prison visitor (not to be confused with the Board of Visitors), the voluntary associate of the Probation Service. One has only to move a stage beyond these appointments and all the previously mentioned inhibitions and vested interests are in force. At the supervisory level of full-time Education Officer and Senior Probation Officer, immersion in the penal system is total."

Coggan and Walker; (1982): p222

Or to put it more succinctly:

"The motto of hardened criminals is, "Them against us." Welfare workers, assistant governors, psychologists and the rest cannot even scratch the surface."

Norman; (1970): p2

There emerges a gulf between the conceptual framework of the official throughcare documents which assume consensus, co-operation and a rational, responsive and planned system and the experience of the consumers, or as Taylor puts it "*the subtle interplay between the processing system and the experience of those being processed.*"

Probyn; (1977): p232

If report writing is to have any meaning for the participants it seems that Probation Officers have to find a way to convey their interest in the individual, get to know them without being intrusive, and understand them and their lives before embarking on a shared analysis of their situation which may be influential on their future. This would also answer the objection to being defined simply by their problem, i.e. the offence. Ex-social workers are articulate about this factor perhaps because they are well aware of the intentions of the probation/social worker as well as the consumer angle:

"***Q.*** *Now you have acquired a Probation Officer, what is it like being a client?*

A. *My initial experience was that the role was quite stigmatising. It was something inherent in the role-relationship, to do with the feeling of being "defined" by my "problem" (my offences), rather than any reflection at all on the Probation Officer's approach to me.*

If you have led a fairly full life it doesn't seem to do much for your self-esteem to feel defined by a relatively small part of the total "self"....the client-worker relationship. That relationship often focuses on the failures of the client's life, rather than on his success. I do wonder if this might lead to yet further damage to the client's self-concept, when what is really needed is to make him feel more positive about himself."

Ryall; (1990): p26

Croft and Beresford make the same point:

"When so many things in people's lives may be negative and unpleasant, give priority to making participation a positive experience....Recognise people's strengths as well as vulnerabilities...But generally being a service user has been a demeaning and disabling experience.....If anything was ever needed to emphasise the importance of people having more say in services, it's having to use them."

Croft and Beresford; (1991): p16

Traditionally the Prison Probation Officer is seen as concentrating on welfare problems:

"On reception into prison each con meets a member of the welfare staff. One word of warning: these people are also Probation Officers and therefore not to be taken at face value.

"Your particular problem may be debt, or possible eviction for your wife and family, in which case the prison welfare staff have no power to do anything about it. But don't let this deter you from asking; sometimes they are able to make positive suggestions.

"No one is quite sure what the brief of the prison welfare staff really is, apart from the fact that the majority of them seem to have the ear of the governor. Their main concern on your initial reception seems to be to ask lots of questions, to fill in lots of forms, and to create yet another file on you.

..It would be unfair to be too disparaging about prison welfare staff. Most of them are people who genuinely want to help. It is the system that is wrong, not the individuals...I now have many friends who hold positions in prisons as welfare officers. To these I say, try just a little harder".

Marshall; (1974): p118

What is interesting here is that this man has broken down the prisoners' stereotype of the welfare officer as the enemy, having left prison and met a number of officers as individuals. This leads him to draw attention to the effects of the system on their role and effectiveness, although he acknowledges that they have some influence within the prison and are not to be under-estimated. The breaking down of stereotypes emerged through the interviews as a powerful influence on the way prisoners, Prison Officers and Probation Officers viewed each other.

As the Probation Service in prison becomes more offence-focused and transfers much of the general social work task to others, it is likely to concentrate more on the areas of "risk-assessment" and offending, relating perhaps only to one part of an offender's life. Their work may become more influential on the progression of the sentence but the problems of engaging with the prisoners are likely to be more acute. This links with another recurring theme in the accounts, that of contact with the outside world.

Prison Probation Officers have mainly been used by prisoners to keep or improve links with the outside world. This is often seen as trivial work by the Probation Officers and many teams have policies of not giving phone calls, or making many on behalf of the prisoner. The absence from family and partners was to emerge in the pilot study (Chapter Four) as the most acute source of difficulty through imprisonment. It is also echoed in the prisoners' accounts:

"You don't realise how much time's passing until you see people that you haven't seen for a while and then you know that however many years have passed, have passed. You know that they're growing up without you and growing old without you and there's not a thing you can do about it, you can't just be there. Time hasn't got any meaning in prison, yet life goes on outside."

Richardson; (1989): p16

There is an overwhelming feeling of lack of control or power over affairs outside prison:

"A late letter or a cancelled visit is enough to give a prisoner a nervous breakdown wondering what happened. Are they all right, why didn't they come, why didn't they write? Your mind, already wracked by prison tension, becomes alive with ill fate. Only you can deal with it and you had better be strong. You feel so frustrated when you receive a letter or visit and something's happening out there which you could have prevented if you had been free. You feel so useless at not being able to help your family or friends."

Hercules; (1989): p86

Even if the idea of what can be achieved outside is inflated, this does not detract from the sense of impotence. As Ryall comments:

"The most fundamental indignity of prison life is the inevitability of being reduced to child status, and no amount of insight can make that less irksome."

Ryall; (1990): p25

Rationing or filtering systems adopted by hard-pressed Prison Probation Officers over phone calls may add to this child-like role and make it less likely that the prisoner engages in discussion about offending or rehabilitation. Lowry (1973) describes this from the point of view of the Prison Welfare Officer twenty years ago:

"Again generalising, the morning is usually taken up with "applications" - that is, those men who, through whatever system is in use, have made it known that they wish to see the PWO that day; if applications are numerous, there may be

posed a pretty problem of selectivity - one must acquire the facility of separating the wheat from chaff, of distinquishing between the chronic and the crisis state; the applicant may have a valid request or problem, or may be crying for attention, or be escaping from an onerous or boring job, and be extending his absence from the job by continually going to the tail of the queue!"

Lowry; (1973): p33

While the tone may have changed, the pressure on Prison Probation Officers to operate some discretion and rationing is still intense.

Davies comments on the overall effect of autobiographical evidence:

"The overall effect of reading prisoners' autobiographies is a very depressing one and this applies at least as much to the area of welfare and after-care where one can perhaps recognise that there are good intentions on the part of those in authority.

The figure of the Prison Welfare Officer is never central to the reality of prison life as described by those who have experienced it...rarely appears and even when he does it is as a rather shadowy bureaucrat."

Davies; (1974): p127

He comments also on the gap between autobiographies and official accounts:

"There is an odd feeling of familiarity about prison memoirs, in so far as they tend to go over much the same ground, to express only slightly varying opinions at the same time, they are strikingly at odds with most penological discussions, simply because the prisoner's view is rarely taken into account."

Davies; (1974): p136

An exception to this was the Woolf enquiry (1991) where prisoners were specifically invited to write with views and evidence and did so. Another was the National Prison Survey (1991). In relation to questions about the preparation for release, improving the Probation Service (mentioned by 60%) came third on the list, after money (87%) and home leave (64%). This survey

also confirmed the social disadvantage experienced by prisoners, reinforcing the need for effective resettlement work in those areas:

"*The Survey confirms that prisoners are drawn from the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups in the country: that their experiences of family life, social services care, schooling, and employment are bleak.*"

Leibling; (1993): p567

Conclusion about prisoners' writings:

To summarise, there appear to be five consistent themes that emerge from a reading of prisoner accounts:

1. Prison Probation Officers are marginal to the daily lives and experience of prisoners. The concentration on offending behaviour and decrease in welfare work is likely to increase this situation.

2. Prison Probation Officers are seen as part of the penal system and are generally regarded as being on "the other side" from the prisoners.

3. One central task of prison probation work, report writing, is viewed cynically by prisoners. This is because the system to which the reports contribute is not respected. It is also because of the lack of knowledge possessed about the prisoner by the report writer.

4. There is a tension between the need for the Probation Officer to gain information to prepare a report, and the desire of the prisoners to keep personal information to themselves to preserve their identity and privacy.

5. The Probation Officer has traditionally held power over contact with the outside world. This task is not always valued by Probation Officers but is crucial to prisoners. This is a potential area for conflict, misunderstanding and disappointment. Dependence on the Probation Officer for links with family and friends makes the sense of powerlessness more acute for prisoners and when Probation Officers are

unreliable or unhelpful the sense of frustration mounts up. This is not conducive to planned work.

General Prison Research

The research literature on prisons is very extensive. Prisoners are necessarily captive audiences and also have plenty of documentation and figures kept on them. They live in total institutions which provide a controlled environment for those looking at behaviour. Prison psychologists and the Home Office Research Unit therefore have a rich and easily accessible field of study as insiders. Outside researchers have not, however, found it easy to gain access or to maintain their research once started and their contribution to this area is limited.

The research falls mainly into three areas. The first is the management or control of prisons. The second is the study of prisoner adaptation. The third is the research on prison rehabilitative programmes. Naturally the divisions are not absolute and one area impinges on the other. In fact a criticism of prison psychologists in the researcher's experience is that they study individual behaviour principally to inform regime management, rather than to benefit the individual prisoner. This section will examine all three areas to try to discover the implications for social work in prison. It will also refer to studies of Prison Officers' roles and attitudes which feature less prominently in prison literature.

Prison Management:

Examinations of the structure and regime of prisons have mixed messages for rehabilitative efforts. Ditchfield (1990) has reviewed the literature relating to control in prisons. He highlights a general point that the researcher found during this literature search, that the quantitative studies are limited in their value:

"*Studies of factors affecting prison control are understandably only rarely of a strongly quantitative character. The relevant factors are many and complex and the prison situation does not lend itself to investigation by hypothesis and experiment. Consequently, most of the literature reviewed in the study is based on available records, interviews, observation etc, or is the result of researchers spending long periods of time studying particular prisons.*

.....Even here though, [with quantifiable studies] the findings have been more

limited than might reasonably have been expected, the inter-relationship of these factors, and their impact on control, proving to be very complex and problematic."

Ditchfield; (1990): p6

This is also a very important point to bear in mind when looking at the current political pressure to make the prison probation task measurable in its effectiveness. It might be argued that if the regime in general is not susceptible to quantifiable evaluation, then one small aspect of the regime has even more need of a different evaluative approach.

Ditchfield traces three distinct phases in the development of prison management ideology; the authoritarian, the treatment and the bureaucratic-lawful phases. He argues that the nineteenth and early twentieth century were characterised by the authoritarian model, stemming partly from the Quaker belief that reformation was only to be achieved through introspection and also from the impact of Sir Edmund Du Cane, Chairman of the Prison Commission from 1878 to the end of the nineteenth century. Du Cane presided over the nationalising of the prisons, following the Prisons Act 1877, and established a system of extreme discipline over the convict and the local prisons. The principle of silence was enforced and the principle of earned, minor privileges was adhered to. The development of scientific discovery and the emergence of a scientific approach to social situations also served to make the prisoner be regarded as an object who, exposed to certain conditions, would be likely to respond in a certain way. Unfortunately, even if penal policy owed something to scientific method, it did not include the accompanying research to study its effects. This might have led to the demise of many of the dehumanising aspects of imprisonment which survive and are in vogue at the present time. However, the development of penal policies, like most social policy, is not dependent on research findings but more on the political exigencies of the day. This period is described by Priestley, according to contemporary accounts:

"*The picture they present is an horrific one: an inhuman system, inhumanly administered; great mental and physical suffering redeemed by tiny glimpses of essential goodness from fellow prisoners and some members of the prison*

staffs. Running through the pages of the prisoners' tales, whether they are religiously, politically, or financially motivated, there is an obvious desire to understand and explain a bizarre social experience, and to publicise the details of an otherwise concealed world. And perhaps most importantly of all, they constitute an attempt on the part of their various authors to redeem the years of lost time and to make them count for something - not least the possible reform of the system under which the authors had suffered. In this last aim some of the nineteenth-century authors were not unsuccessful..."

Priestley; (1989): p12

Priestley (1989) argues that this all created the climate which led to the establishment of the Gladstone Committee in 1895 which condemned the Du Cane era as one of inhumanity. Gladstone sowed the seeds of rehabilitation, combining this aim with deterrence and attempting to move the management of the prisons away from the authoritarian mould. Hobhouse and Brockway (1922), both political prisoners during the First World War, also contributed to the reformist movement with their compilation of accounts of former prisoners and staff, describing the shortfalls of the prison system.

However, for many years into the twentieth century the prisons continued to be run along authoritarian lines and these underpin many of the attitudes and practices still found today.

Ditchfield identifies the real emergence of the treatment phase after the Second World War when the aims of rehabilitation and treatment became more overt, coinciding with the prevalent therapeutic model of casework in social work. The Criminal Justice Act of 1948 was based on reformist ideas and introduced the notion of Corrective Training. The Borstal system also grew out of the notion of rehabilitation, hence the phrase Borstal Training, but again in practice fell far short of the mark. The legacy of the authoritarian period was still interwoven with the regime, as in other institutions such as military service and public schools. For example, the rule of silence no longer officially existed but the Chairman of the Prison Commission commented in 1952:

"*'Talking is restricted, though not forbidden, on certain occasions, and entirely*

unrestricted on others. During working hours, gossip and unnecessary chatter will be discouraged, as also when parties of prisoners are moving about under supervision...'"

Fox; (1952): p160

Walker underlines the state of relationships between Prison Officers and prisoners at that time:

"*Another assumption was that relations between staff and prisoners should be formal. In theory, if not always in practice, communication between officers and ordinary prisoners was restricted to the exchange of instructions and essential information. The officer who 'fraternized' did so at the risk of disapproval and even reprimand from his superiors. If he kept in touch with a prisoner after the latter's discharge he risked a disciplinary charge.*"

Walker; (1970): pviii

The Emery study is interesting because it took place during the early days of the rehabilitative model. At Norwich, a small local prison, an experiment had taken place with the regime in the early fifties. This comprised increased association between prisoners and an improved officer-prisoner relationship. Encouraging reports led to an extension of the experiment in Shrewsbury, Swansea and Oxford the following year and then another six more local prisons the year after. The Prison Commission then sought the help of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in appraising the initiative. Around the same time the Morrises (1963) were beginning their study at Pentonville, a big London local prison. Emery's analysis of the prison as a social system centres on the inescapable conflict between the custodians and the imprisoned, and the ever shifting balances of power that lead to more or less tension.

He studied the regime at Bristol prison before and after changes along the lines of the Norwich experiment, i.e. a daily routine which allowed the prisoners to spend most of their waking hours in association with each other and a basic personal officer scheme, linking pairs of officers with sixteen prisoners for whom they had certain welfare and assessment responsibilities. Emery used a "social scientific" approach to the study, combining observation, interviews with staff

and prisoners and analysis of prison data such as disciplinary reports. He found that the association did not lead to increased opportunities for offending, as predicted by some of the staff. The general level of tension declined with less fluctuation and cumulative build-up. The prisoner-officer relations became more stable and prisoners were more drawn into participation with others. The public and private attitudes of staff and prisoners to the scheme became more favourable, with less mutual stereotyping. However, Emery did not think that the role of the Prison Officer should be extended to include counselling. This was partly because of their lack of skill but mainly because of the resultant role strain:

"*As shown by Grusky's study of a small Californian prison camp, the effects of combining in the basic-grade role the psychologically contradictory tasks of prison warder and counsellor would be the emergence of a new schism in the staff-counsellor-oriented versus discipline-oriented- and a loss of morale in the disciplinarians as they find their attempts to maintain security and order undermined by fellow-officers bent on the reform of their charges.*"

Emery; (1970): p95

Emery sees a conflict between security and rehabilitation and concludes with three propositions:

"*(a) Given the requirement of medium or maximum security, the prison regime cannot be expected to be a reformative agent.*

(b) Given the requirement of security, a level of internal freedom cannot be found that will automatically secure good order. Supervision and coercion will be necessary.

(c) Given the requirements of security and good order, the role of the ordinary officer cannot be defined as that of also being the prisoner's friend and counsellor."

Emery; (1970): p96

It is instructive to note that HMP Grendon, which opened in 1962 along

therapeutic lines, was not replicated generally elsewhere and has only recently had its experimental status removed, after the Woolf Report (1991) was published. At Grendon a different group of officers has had to be provided to do the searching and other overtly disciplinary tasks, from the officers who work closely with the prisoners on the wing, indicating some incompatibility of role. This theme of role conflict for Prison Officers is examined further later in this chapter. Emery's study exemplifies the efforts of social scientists to produce objective evidence and establish the validity of their field in the sixties. The functional model is used to good effect to analyse the similarity and differences in the backgrounds and values of prisoners and officers, arguing that the two groups provide two opposing solutions to the same problems of social adaptation and career choice, in much the same socio-economic setting. However, as in the Morrises' study of Pentonville (1963), the attitude of the researcher does not appear to empower the prisoner as respondent. The prisoner emerges as a shadowy figure who can be observed and classified and whose role is inevitably a negative one. Because the researcher does not include an account of the effect or changes on his own attitude during the two and a half years at Bristol, it is difficult to gauge how far his final conclusions are supported by his evidence, or influenced by the prison staff. Walker comments:

"*One may not agree that all these problems are real. Is it really true, for instance, that a closed prison must be inimical to any degree of inmate self-government? This may be so in a local prison, but because of its high turnover of inmates rather than its security.*"

Walker; (1970) pxi

King and Elliott (1977) comment on the effects of Emery's research being officially sponsored.

Bottoms and McClintock (1973) undertook a study at Dover Borstal with the aims of classifying prisoners according to problems requiring individualised treatment, to study the process of modifying the regime to facilitate such treatment and to assess the impact of the regime and its effectiveness in preventing further criminal behaviour. Their aims were closely defined with the

aims of a progressive management team at the prison. The results showed no difference in re-conviction rates between the traditional and modified regimes. However, when re-conviction rates were broken down into the prediction risk categories and a calculation of "subsequent social problem" scores, it was found that those with the highest post-borstal social problems levels also had the highest re-conviction rates within each of the prediction risk categories. This highlighted the importance of the social situation to which the individual returns, a theme which will be taken up again at the end of this chapter.

The prison system by now was moving to the phase described by Ditchfield as bureaucratic-lawful. Attempts to evaluate treatment programmes during the fifties and sixties were not co-ordinated and were bedevilled by different or inadequate methodological models:

"Bailey (1966) examined 100 'correctional outcome studies' carried out between 1940 and 1960, noting that for at least half of them the research design was of questionable rigour. Logan (1972) also reviewed 100 evaluative studies - not all of them the same ones as Bailey - and he too pointed out how common were methodological deficiencies..."

Brody; (1976): p9

Martinson had already published his highly influential indictment of the rehabilitative approach in 1974. He reviewed studies published before 1967 and produced the "nothing works" conclusion by which much subsequent penal policy was informed. His study was a gift to those criminologists and sociologists promoting deterrence and justice models as well as those policy-makers who wished to move away from the rehabilitative model. It had a major impact in the United States of America. At the same time there was a relentless expansion of the prison system and a bureaucratic and organisational need to run an efficient and smooth running system, which placed the needs of the institution before the needs of the individual prisoner. The expansionist movement in the seventies is described by Rutherford as the new "gaol fever":

"A new and virulent gaol fever is now endemic in many societies, including some which set high store on democratic values and aspirations. Imprisonment

is being used more extensively and the apparatus of the prison system being greatly expanded despite, in some instances, stated government policy that parsimony should guide decisions to impose custody. The new gaol fever has every appearance of being beyond political control."

Rutherford; (1986): p3

Rutherford notes that in the United States a Justice Department committee had urged that 2,000 million dollars be made available for prison construction and the May Committee talked about the need for an expenditure of £720 million just to provide for adequate accommodation for prisoners in 1979. (It is ironic to note that the United States is now recognising the serious flaws in this expansionist policy and examining alternatives just at the time when the British Home Secretary is advocating expansion.)

The decline of rehabilitation as an ideal and the pressure on prisons to expand were two important factors in the emergence of the bureaucratic-lawful or justice model of imprisonment which began to take root in the seventies and eighties. Another influential factor had been the increasing number of escapes in the sixties which led to the Mountbatten Report of 1966. This marked the beginning of a pre-occupation with security which took precedence over other aspects of the regime, and is still a feature of the dispersal prisons. However, this was not all due to Mountbatten's Report. In fact he made it clear that he did not want rehabilitation to be ignored:

"I consider that the modern policy of humane, liberal treatment aimed at rehabilitating prisoners rather than merely exacting punishment is right, and that escapes should be prevented by far better perimeter security."

Mountbatten; (1966): para14

Ditchfield comments that the inherent contradiction between treatment and custodial goals becomes more apparent with the bureaucratic-lawful model. There is no "inspirational goal" and less social cohesion between staff and prisoners. Gangs are more likely to take control. He argues that this stems from changes in society.

During the seventies a more open style of social exchange developed (Ditchfield; (1990)). The emergence of rights groups in the United States led to the rejection by prisoners of the goal of rehabilitation, as this implied that prisoners were different and needed treatment. Prisoners, they argued, should be treated like other people:

"*Just as blacks demanded social and political equalities in the 1950s, so too did 'prisoners of that decade and the next press for a redefinition of their situation within society.*"

Jacobs; (1977)
Quoted in Ditchfield; (1990): p21

Jacobs and others, who do not agree with the aim of rehabilitation, describe its inherent control:

"*Thus rehabilitation, like punishment, is directed at reducing the probability that the offender will commit future crimes and is a potentially powerful technique of social control.*"

Jacobs and Steele; (1975): p350

They also draw attention to the problems of promising a "cure":

"*Unquestionably their humanitarian instincts were moved by the suffering they saw in prisons and they desired to alleviate that suffering insofar as possible. But by clothing humanitarian issues in the attire of pragmatic and economical*

crime control they laid an unsteady foundation for prison reform."

Jacobs and Steele; (1975): p351

Although they only use Martinson's "*What Works?*" survey to prove the futility of rehabilitative work, they make a valid point about the backlash from the failure to deliver the goods.

The Prison Service in Great Britain moved into the bureaucratic-lawful phase in the seventies and this is still the current dominant model. It works counter to

the rehabilitative model, relying much more on notions of "just deserts" and humane containment.

"*The change from rehabilitative ideals to notions centring around the ideas of humane containment in the seventies and eighties is the most recent example of societal changes affecting penal philosophy.*"

Ditchfield; (1990): p27

It seems ironic that shortly after the introduction of Probation Officers to prison in 1966, the prison system began to move away from the treatment model and this was to exacerbate tensions in the role of the Prison Probation Officer:

"*While the practice of casework may be the ideal towards which Prison Welfare Officers aspire, it is one which commands less and less general acceptance. Casework has been attacked as ineffective, as over-ambitious, and as unintelligible to the working class clientele for whom it is mainly provided. It has also been considered immoral...agent of social control...*"

Sinclair, in Introductory Note to Shaw; (1974): p.vii

The style of Governor is crucial to the running of any prison. The researcher had experienced three different governors at Parkhurst with very different approaches. The first operated on a "laissez-faire" basis, the second on a firm but fair, detached basis, and the third on a model that emphasised prisoner responsibility and consultation. The Prison Officers appeared least happy with the third approach but the prisoners preferred it. Barak-Glantz (1981) looked at the way individual governors could influence the nature of the regime. He described four basic models of prison management:

1. Authoritarian
2. Bureaucratic-lawful
3. Shared-Powers
4. Inmate control.

He found that in individual prisons a change of governor often meant a change of regime which affected control factors. The shared-powers model implies the

democratisation of the prison (often for the purpose of rehabilitation and therapy). This "*created a power vacuum to which inmates, as well as guards, responded quickly by attempting to advance their respective interests*". This could lead to inmate control.

Thomas and Pooley (1980) argued that an increase in escapes often paralleled the development of the rehabilitation/treatment model.

"*.....giving freedom will mean that some prisoners will try to escape*".

Quoted in Ditchfield; (1990): p2

This continued linking of increased freedom with increased escapes hastened the demise of the rehabilitation model of management, which was itself seen by the rights movement as unjust and paternalistic. Jacobs' study of Stateville (1977) and Carroll's study of Eastern Correctional Institution (ECI) (1974) looked at the impact of developments in the prison management model on prison society and implications for management and control. Jacobs outlined the pitfalls of the rehabilitative, individualistic model which included the failure to meet basic demands for services, to meet the challenge of the gangs and provide a system for rational decision-making:

"*Having no other strategy to maintain control, the reform regimes periodically reverted to measures even more repressive than those of previous decades.*"

Ditchfield; (1990): p22

He also describes the growth of the prison staff unions during this time. Carroll (1974) and McCleery (1960) both describe rehabilitative reforms which were followed by disturbances. These studies underline the difficulties for Governors, such as John Marriott, who wish to run a rehabilitative regime.

Irwin (1980) also draws attention to the tension through the growth of ethnic gangs whose insistence on group identification militated against the individualisation of the rehabilitative model.

This leads into a consideration of prisoner adaptation literature.

Prisoner Adaptation:

Early adaptation studies were based on the indigenous or deprivation model. Clemmer (in Johnston et al; (1962)) laid emphasis on the impact of the prison sub-culture on the individual. Sykes (in Johnston et al; (1962)) outlines what he calls the pains of imprisonment: deprivation of liberty, goods, services, heterosexual relationships, autonomy and security. He sees the prisoner being reduced to a child-like helplessness. He argues that prisoners adopt certain roles within the prison social structure to cope with these deprivations. These roles include the "merchant", the "gorilla", the "rat", the "centre man" and the "real man". The last is seen to earn respect from other prisoners by being "his own man" and doing his sentence with the minimum of fuss or response. This is seen by Sykes as a cohesive response. There are similarities with some of the older prisoner autobiographies here and certainly his ideas still have some resonance today. The problem with these typologies is that human beings usually fall between them and they are not always helpful in explaining one individual's criminal career and life events. Another problem is that these and other adaptation theories refer only to male prisoners.

Clemmer refers to the adaptation process as "prisonisation" and says that whether or not it is complete depends on the personality and kind of relationships that someone had before, in addition to the type of prison placement. He gives a list of criteria for likely prisonisation:

- Long sentence
- Unstable personality but capacity for loyalty
- Death of positive relations outside
- Ready for / capable of integration
- Blind acceptance of dogma
- Chance placement
- Ready to participate in gambling and abnormal sexual behaviour.

T. and P. Morris received quite a few essays from prisoners during their study of HMP Pentonville (1963). One man challenged the idea that the effects of imprisonment were long lasting, though he accepted the notion of prisonisation:

"I have never come across the word "prisonisation" before and I think it is perfectly loathsome. However, its meaning is perfectly clear and if we must use it, then I think it may be stated without any doubt that any person living in a prison must of sheer necessity become "prisonised" to a degree. But on release from prison, one can quite easily and automatically revert to one's normal outlook on life, I know that this has been the case with myself, and from talk I have had with other prisoners, it seems to be a fairly general thing."

Morris and Morris; (1963): p354

The authors commented earlier, however, that they had seen prisoners deteriorate over time:

"The duration of the research was sufficient to observe several prisoners on the downhill path, men who made fewer and fewer jokes, whose appearance became increasingly untidy and who became progressively uninterested in everything about them."

Morris and Morris; (1963): p105

Another prisoner comments on the advantage of a previous sentence:

"We all have our friends in here and we all stick together right through our sentence we know who to trust and who to say nothing to. You will always find that a person who has been in prison quite a lot will get on a lot more than a man coming in for a second time because the first man knows nearly all the screws and how to go about things and when to tow the line as he knows how far to go and will not take any chances."

Prisoner L in Morris and Morris; (1963): p356

Whether individual adaptation can be easily identified or not, the power of prison culture is not to be underestimated and can run counter to rehabilitative efforts. Ohlin argues that it is difficult to modify the criminal value system without reorganising the formal and informal social structure of the prison system:

"It is necessary to deal directly with the normative conflict involved by systematically frustrating behavioural expressions of the criminal value system

and promoting, rewarding and encouraging behaviour expressions consistent with a conventional value orientation. It is likely that marked personal conflict will take place before an individual inmate is prepared to make a major shift in value identification [my underlining]."

Ohlin in Johnston et al; (1962): ch44

As the interviews later reveal, this tension between what the prisoners call the "sex, drugs and violence" culture on the wings and attempts to engage in personal, rehabilitative work with Probation Officers is a major disincentive to the latter.

Studies of adaptation gradually came to include the importation model, or recognition that a prisoner's previous life experience was highly influential on his adaptation to prison, (Schrag; (1944), Irwin and Cressey; (1962)). Jacobs (1974) found that the structure of the prisoners' social system and the codes within that system were similar to the way in which they had related to each other before imprisonment as members of a street gang. Irwin (1980) also comments on the impact of the ethnic gang.

The Morrises commented on the influence of the few "big boys" in Pentonville, which has links with the population at Parkhurst:

"*Men convicted of felonious wounding, causing grievous or actual bodily harm and the like, though comparatively few in number, are an important sector of the population. Most of them are the strong-arm men of the London gangs, and their violent proclivities are seldom left outside the prison.*"

Morris and Morris; (1963): p55

In the development of the adaptation theories two other factors became important; contact with the outside world and expectations of the future. A third model, integration, combined both the indigenous and the importation models. Grapendaal (1990) conducted a study, using the integrated model, on the inmate subculture in Dutch prisons. He validated a need to use both indigenous and importation models in a theoretical approach, but argued that the indigenous model was more useful in daily routine policy planning and the

importation model for the allocation of types of prisoner.

Generally speaking, with the advent of the rehabilitative model and later with the civil rights movement, the notion of prisoner adaptation became more complex. The original models had arisen during the authoritarian period when prisoners came largely from backgrounds of theft and burglary. It was from their norms, as Irwin (1980) pointed out, that the Inmate Code was derived. In 1970 he had carried out a study of adaptation to prison life in Californian prisons. (The researcher began her probation career coincidentally in California in 1971.) He identified three groups of prisoners who tended to respond in different ways; those who cut themselves off and identified with the inmate sub-culture, "jailing", others who got on with their sentence, "doing their own time" and the third group who participated in anything that was offered, for a variety of reasons, "gleaning".

The search for influential factors on adjustment continued in the seventies and early eighties but no conclusively consistent themes emerge. Toch (1977) used the Prisoner Preference Inventory to analyse aspects of imprisonment which he divided into the following concepts: freedom, feedback/support/privacy/safety, structure and activity. He found that structure was more important to older prisoners, and to a lesser extent privacy, but Jensen (1977) found that the need for structure was stronger when the prisoner had an urban background. Toch also found that black inmates had a high concern for freedom. Later studies tried to analyse the race factor further. Megargee and Bohn (1979) found that the MMPI, (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory), classification was only predictive when white inmates were considered. Striking differences were observed when separate analyses were run for white and black samples. This later led to the hypothesis that life in the ghetto prepared black people for life in prison, but this was not validated. One problem about applying prison research from the United States is the different situation affecting black prisoners. The political awareness, black consciousness and prisoner rights movement are all further developed than in Britain and it is clear from the research and autobiographical accounts that the notion of rehabilitative work with prison officials, such as Probation Officers, is not the norm. Even contact with researchers is shunned as King comments in his study of Oak Heights:

"In part this [return rate of questionnaires] probably reflected the fact that a British researcher with an obviously English accent was perceived as being quite outside 'the system' and therefore non-threatening - even to minority groupings of blacks and Native American Indians."

King; (1991): p136

Toch's Prisoner Preference Inventory was used in an examination of long-term female offenders which found that long termers had more problems in relation to their environment by MacKenzie, Robinson, Campbell (1989). However, a study in 1987 (MacKenzie et al) had found no support for a person-environment fit model of prisoner adjustment. Instead they proposed that control was the important factor. By control they meant prisoners' control over their life in prison, with three components: general expectancy of control, perceived control and environmental control. These were combined into four groups of prisoners:

1. High expectancy of control-high perception of control (controllers);
2. High expectancy of control-low perception of control (rebellious);
3. Low expectancy of control-high perception of control (institutionalised);
4. Low expectancy of control-low perception of control (withdrawn).

Four independent factors were found amongst the adjustment dependent variables: stress/anxiety, prisonisation, misconduct and lack of involvement.

The results showed strong support for the importance of control in influencing certain aspects of inmate adjustment but the control variables did not equally influence adjustment. The controller group adjusted most successfully. The withdrawn group had difficulties but contrary to expectations also displayed the most prisonised attitudes. The institutionalised group had a higher level of stress than the rebellious (not expected) and there was no evidence that a person with a general lack of control would respond reactively to prison. Where two components of control were absent: expected control and perceived control, there was increased anxiety and prisonisation.

The conclusion to be drawn from prisoner adaptation studies, which mainly examine male populations, is that probation contact may well be affected by an

individual's strategy for survival in prison. This would reinforce prisoners' statements about the need to retain control over their private lives, and privacy in a public arena. Some prisoners prefer to do their sentences without contact with families and partners and this would affect contact with Probation Officers. Some prisoners don't like to talk about the offence, certainly during the middle of a long sentence, because they find it unsettling:

"*There is sometimes a feeling that discussions about their offending and their lives outside will simply cause time to drag and lead to their doing "heavy bird."*

Williams; (1991a): p16

Those who may adopt a "hard man" image, and there appeared to the researcher to be quite a number of those at Parkhurst, particularly determinate sentence men on Category A, may be disinclined to use the welfare services:

"*..a large minority of prisoners also see the welfare services as primarily provided for the use of "inadequates", and prefer to subscribe to the prevailing subculture which dictates that they use their own resources to deal with their own problems.*"

Williams; (1991a): p16

Getting through to these prisoners, as evidenced by the interviews in Parkhurst, is no mean achievement, and it is achieved mainly by breaking down stereotypes and making personal relationships. This can be helped or hindered by the regime and may vary according to stage of sentence.

Zamble and Porporino (1990) carried out a longitudinal study in Ontario which looked at the prisoner's coping ability. They argued that coping difficulties appear to be a central cause of the maintenance and repetition of criminal acts, if not their origin, and outlined various dysfunctional types of coping responses. They found no real difference in coping behaviour before and during sentence and no indication of deterioration over time, except that things got worse with the number of sentences. They proposed remedial coping programmes which should take place at the beginning of sentence when emotional distress and desire to change were both high, repeating the work at the end. The challenge

for prison regimes was:

"to create 'total environments' that change coping behaviour rather than ones that have no effect or that mostly maintain maladaptive patterns."

Zamble and Porporino; (1990): p70

Thus research on prisoner adaptation begins to refer to the influence of regime in any rehabilitative effort. Robson (1989) refers to the importance of staff's interpersonal skills in his study of Bathurst Gaol, Australia, recommending:

- a high level of staff/inmate interaction
- work for all prisoners
- a structured staff and prisoner training programme.

Hamm and Schrink (1989 pp.174-8) showed that the rehabilitative ideal remained a critical part of contemporary criminal justice ideology in Indiana but outlined three mistakes by the prison administration in applying treatment across the board:

1. Anti-social attitudes inherent in criminal conditions were ignored.

2. They supported approaches which were likely to fail because no behaviour had been targeted, prisoners were not involved and there was a lack of "pro-social" standards.

3. The main goal of treatment programmes was deterrence.

They recommended presenting programmes as experiments, involving the prisoners, setting goals, limits and measurement systems and underlined the importance of the personnel involved.

The background against which any programme takes place is clearly crucial. This point has also been made in relation to examining disruptive behaviour. Again, for some time attempts were made to profile the individual but it became clear that the context of the behaviour was all important:

"Violent incidents result from the interaction of psychological characteristics and situational characteristics."

Cooke; (1991): p97

Cooke goes on to contrast the emphasis in the Scottish Prison Service with the Research and Advisory Group on the Long-Term Prison System (1987):

"...all our experience suggests that most troublesome prisoners present control problems only at particular times or in particular contexts."

Cooke; (1991): p11

"A diverse range of regime factors is important, but perhaps the core of features of any regime are the characteristics of the staff who deliver the regime to the prisoners. Research has shown that the four most important elements in this area are staff-inmate communication, staff training, staff experience and staff morale."

Cooke; (1991): p99

In "Prisons under Protest" Scaton and Sim (1991) refer to the flaw in the Home Office's assumption that there is a hard core of disruptive prisoners:

"As previous chapters illustrated, this explanation has been used, without foundation, to explain the disturbances in Scotland's prisons. Similarly, the spectre of the disturbed individual or subversive group has been raised repeatedly by prison managers throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth as the official explanation for the wave of disturbances inside. This view became institutionalized in the 1960's. Since that time prison managers have argued that a new breed of prisoner has emerged, more recalcitrant and subversive than his predecessors. However, as Roy King has noted, there is little evidence to suggest that this is the case."

Scaton and Sim; (1991): p142

Influence of the Prison Environment:

Here our attention is drawn to the political aspects of research. It is hardly

surprising that with so many prison studies being undertaken by psychologists with inside access to prisons, undue emphasis was placed for many years on individual adaptation, and rather less research done on the effect of unacceptable prison conditions, although these are clear from the autobiographical material:

"*Given the long-established hostility to the Barlinnie special unit and more recent complaints about overcrowding and understaffing in Grendon Underwood, the RAG's hope for a truly therapeutic regime would appear to be over-optimistic. Security and control, underpinned by individualized psychological assessment, remain the cornerstones of long-term prison policy in England and Wales.*"

Scaton and Sim; (1991): p140

Roy King and Kathleen McDermott are two of the few researchers to combine a rigorous approach with respect for prisoners and their experiences. In "Mind Games" (1988) they gain access to the experiences on the landings between staff and prisoners, through observation in five prisons. Here survival is described in terms of a series of games or ritualistic exchanges between prisoners and staff over daily matters such as association, going to the toilet, confinement and security. They suggest that prison reformers would do well to pay attention to the rules and conditions of the games and the way they are refereed. They say that reducing the prison population is worthwhile but constitutes a narrow view which ignores:

"*...the very meaning of the game. In part this is determined by the very nature of the rules themselves. Those who make the rules do so according to criteria whose reasonableness is often called into question both by those who have to carry them out and those on the receiving end. In this game there is a need for a referee who not only determines whether the players stick to the rules but also whether the rules themselves reflect appropriate and humane standards.*"

McDermott and King; (1988): pp374-5

They end by emphasising the power implicit in imprisonment:

"*For, at bottom, imprisonment is not, and cannot be an institution, like cricket or*

dominoes, with its own set of rules which are relatively independent of society. It is rather an extension of that society and deeply embedded in its power structure. Who goes to prison, for how long, and how they are treated while they are there, reflects a particular balance of power. By the same token what staff and prisoners actually experience in prison, plainly is not a game. Many of the incidents we witnessed were despairing or desperate attempts by people, who felt dehumanised and powerless, to maintain some conception of themselves as active, controlling agents in some small sphere of their lives."

McDermott and King; (1988): p375

This point had been made twenty five years before by the Morrises:

"It is a social fact of some significance that the public and the Press judge the success of a maximum security prison by its ability to contain rather than to reform, to protect society rather than to treat the individual".

Morris and Morris; (1963): p20

The influence of the environment is stressed in a study of HMP Grendon (Gunn et al 1978). This showed that good prisoner-Prison Officer communication led to less violence. Leech (1992) discusses the benefits of the regime at Grendon and its isolation within the prison system. Jimmy Boyle (1977) traces the development of complex and crucial staff/prisoner relationships in the Special Unit at HMP Barlinnie. He also comments on the hostility of other Prison Officers towards the Unit staff (pages 245-6). A similar finding was described in relation to 'C' Wing, Parkhurst, Bell (1991).

However, thus far units such as Barlinnie are rare and rehabilitative efforts isolated or scorned within the prison system:

"Staff who started groupwork were painted with the adjective of permissiveness, which extended sometimes to a description of their personal and not just work lives. Permissiveness was used to mean licence. The threat to men whose masculine image of themselves was built on the control of difficult and tough men was beyond toleration. The thought that most violent men can usually be managed best by other means than physical force took away

the status of the work for many staff."

Power; (1990): p656

As we shall see this derogatory attitude has bedevilled the Personal Officer and shared working schemes in Britain.

The need to look at the situational context of behaviour is again underscored by Toch and Adams:

"Explosivity, rebelliousness, and other disruptiveness may be situationally responsive."

Toch and Adams; (1986): p16

They link this point, however, with the significance of two other factors: ability to cope and roots in the community. We begin to see that it is only in a combination of an individual's situation, peer influence and prison environment that we can begin to make sense of the prisoner's experience and behaviour. Studies that distance themselves from their subjects run up against problems:

"...the definition of institutional adjustment must be discussed with an awareness that the available behavioural data may not provide the ideal operational definition of such a concept."

Carey, Garske and Ginsbery; (1986): p364

The tetchy tone of these researchers shows that even in the controlled environment of the prison their measurement devices are lacking. A serious defect of this study is that ethical considerations of respondent agreement appear to be swept aside in the desire for perfect data:

"Although coercion was not used, the inmates were aware that the MMPI is a required component of the intake process, and the noncompliance rate was less than 1%."

The qualitative research studies which attempt to get close to prisoners' experiences appear to produce some consistent themes. Although they use

some assumptions proposed by the quantitative researchers, there is much greater reliance on the narrative. Early contributors in this area are Cohen and Taylor (1972). Their theoretical framework draws on environmental psychology to give the background to the experience of long-term imprisonment, including disaster studies:

"*It is this notion of the destruction and then the rebuilding of a life which captures the predicament of the long-termer more adequately than does the narrower focus suggested by sensory deprivation studies.*"

(p50)

From migration studies they conclude:

"*Prison involves an involuntary migration to a region in which the dislocations of life are not necessarily costs of the move but are rather deliberately engineered insults to the self.*"

(p51)

From explorer studies they comment:

"*In an environment which is as bleak and apparently eternal as an arctic night, he must survive similar psychological traumas to those which preoccupy the explorer, but must survive them without being allowed any sense of achievement.*"

(p52)

On prisoner of war camps they draw out three similar survival tactics:

- self-consciousness and consciousness of others
- resistance to attempts to change the prisoner and
- taking up a position in relation to the institution.

(p.54)

They came to know the men in "E" Wing, HMP Durham, quite well over the four years, starting with their social science classes and ending with the rejection by

the Home Office of their research proposal. They see for themselves the importance of prison relationships:

"*...a single personal relationship may be called upon to sustain the various functions which would be spread across several other friends in outside life.*"

(p.75)

They looked at five types of resistance used on the unit:

- self-protecting
- campaigning
- escaping
- striking
- confronting

These are variants of those which appear in the adaptation literature and Cohen and Taylor argue that it is only in extreme situations, such as the special long term unit at Durham, that these types emerge with any clarity. These types of resistance linked with the ideologies held by the men. Cohen and Taylor challenge some of the previous assumptions about long-term prisoners. They refer to the ways in which "*the inmate beats off the unfavourable definitions offered to him*".

"*This type of humorous evasion of popular definitions contrasts with much of the literature on total institutions which presents the inmate as someone who has been stripped of all other identifications and is forced to play the single all-embracing inmate role twenty-four hours a day.....In the first place, it is not true that the prisoner receives no recognition of himself in any other role - in correspondence with relatives and friends, in contact with us, in newspaper reports and even books about the better known of them, the men are constantly being reminded of other identities....Secondly, the men seem to have transcended the use of desperate regulative devices to overcome role-stripping..*"

(p135)

The men at Durham would not agree with a statement such as that made by one Pentonville prisoner:

"*...You need to put on a front in prison...*" (p136)

In other words, prisoners were more likely to see themselves as rounded people than the research would suggest. This connects with Ryall's comments about social workers relating to clients through one small aspect of their lives, the offence.

Once again it is a combination of individual and situational circumstances that influences the experience of imprisonment:

"*Our argument so far has been that we cannot explain adaptation to long-term imprisonment by simply referring to an inmate sub-culture, we also need reference to the personal and externally manifested behavioural characteristics of the men who make up the security wing's population. They have contrasting relationships to authority outside the prison and these are related to adaptive styles inside. In addition, we found a need to know about the ideologies which informed such styles, the belief systems which gave meaning to the life inside and outside prison.*"

Cohen and Taylor; (1972): p160

This portrays a much more complex picture than Sykes' pains of imprisonment, which does not deny those pains but places them in context. Coker and Martin (1985) also commented that lifers did not necessarily become damaged through long sentences and that care should be taken when making assumptions about the effects of imprisonment. What is fairly certain is that prisoners will adopt a position and a view of officials in prison, including Probation Officers, and this will vary and be influenced by individual previous and present circumstances, as well as the prevailing ethos amongst their peers. This may create a stereotype which the Probation Officer has to break down if s/he is to have any success in engaging the prisoner in ongoing work. One might argue that the fact that a large number of prisoners in the Parkhurst study did so engage showed an act of faith on the part of the prisoners, given the contra-indicators. Time and interest,

as was shown in the pilot study and interviews, go a long way to cementing a relationship.

Research on Rehabilitative Programmes in Prisons:

As the management of prisons shows, the demise of the rehabilitative model owed much to Martinson (1974) and Brody (1976). It is important to acknowledge, however, that Martinson himself qualified his position only three years later but this was not so widely reported. Thornton (in McGurk et al (1987)) provided a useful critique which showed that 80% of Martinson's studies fell outside academic rigour and of the remaining 38, 16 showed some advantage, 17 no difference and 1 some disadvantage to the participants. In 1979 Gendreau and Ross refuted Martinson's findings and the development of meta-analysis has enabled a much more systematic approach to evaluation. A cognitive behavioural approach appears to have greater chance of success and many programmes, including anger management and sex offender programmes, are modelled on this approach. The contribution of psychology to evaluation is highlighted in "Applying Psychology to Imprisonment" (McGurk, Thornton and Williams eds. (1987)) and the role of the Directorate of Psychology is very prominent in developing regimes within the Prison Service.

The current model which emerged in the early 90s, while this study was being carried out, combines some elements of the rehabilitative and the bureaucratic lawful, based on a concept of contracts between prisoner and institution known as Sentence Planning. This will be described more fully at the end of the chapter in the section on shared working.

The goals of HM Prison Service, which became an executive agency of the Home Office on the 1st April 1993, include the following:

"*Provide positive regimes which help prisoners address their offending behaviour and allow them as full and responsible a life as possible.*
Help prisoners prepare for their return to the community."

H.M. Prison Service; (1993): Vision and Values Statement

The Prison Service Framework Document states:

"*Prisoners will be treated with fairness, justice and respect as individuals.*"

Framework Document: p4

The approach has become known as "Opportunity and Responsibility" in the Scottish Prison Service:

"*This means laying to rest the vestiges of the treatment and training policy of the 1960s and with it the view of the prisoner as a person who is in some way sick.....a belief that the Prison Service should aim to offer prisoners a full range of programmes which present opportunities for personal development or the resolution of problems....going down this road does involve a changed relationship which affects the role of the Prison Officer. Now, to a greater extent than before, the Prison Officer is being asked to act as a facilitator in the process of change and personal development. This points out a significant aspect of culture change, namely the taking on board by staff of the concept of the prisoner as a customer.*"

Frizzell; (1993): p206

There is heavy reliance on a change of role for Prison Officers. It is relevant at this point to examine some of the literature relating to that role.

Prison Officers:

The role of the Prison Officer is traced by Thomas (1972), describing a common view of the fundamental conflict between security and rehabilitation. Thomas saw the development of the rehabilitative model within the prison system as largely excluding Prison Officers. As described in the following section of this chapter this was compounded by the allocation of the prison welfare task to the Probation Service in 1966. An increasing emphasis on security in the 70s appears to have narrowed the role of the Prison Officer to a strictly custodial one. The continued lack of training and the emphasis in recruitment on white, male ex-servicemen reinforced this image. Consequently when shared working began in the eighties, without a co-ordinated policy of recruitment, training, and

organisation of the working week, it was often an uphill struggle. "Fresh Start", which did away with overtime and placed officers onto a regular salaried footing, was felt to have been introduced with insufficient attention to staffing levels. Because of the fixed and reduced number of working hours, officers spent less time on the wings, took increased time off in lieu and this led to a lack of continuity on the wings.

The image of the Prison Officer in the throughcare of prisoners can be described by the popular reference to "welfare screws" by some staff and prisoners, and the belief that helpful relationships with prisoners are not the job of the landing officer. In an article about the rehabilitative regime at Blantyre House in 1991 the resistance to change is mentioned:

"*Despite hearing so much that was positive, what emerged from the seminar was frustration at the failure of other prisons to learn from Blantyre. On the contrary, Governor John Semple said he felt his 'back was to the wall' as the Prison Dept, staff and inmates in other prisons waited for the Blantyre initiative to fail.*"

"Criminal Justice", (1991) p3

However, the H.M. Inspector of Prisons (1993) hoped that the Blantyre approach could be applied throughout the system.

The opposition of the Prison Officers Association (POA) to the wearing of name badges as recommended by Woolf (1991) and suggested in the subsequent White Paper, "Custody, Care and Justice" (1991) seems to symbolise the attitude of many Prison Officers. As the prisoners' newspaper comments:

"*The question of badges is expected to increase the number of union disputes in prisons. It is difficult to imagine anything less troublesome.*"

"Inside Time"; (December 1991) p7

However, a literature review and questionnaire on Scottish Prison Officers by MacFadyen (1991) indicates a more complex picture:

"What this piece of research highlights is the discrimination that officers exercise about what tasks they think legitimately constitute the caring role. Those responsible for implementing policy need to bear this carefully in mind and consider if it is acceptable to tailor the nature of the caring role to fit the conviction of the majority of staff in which case it seems likely that the caring role would remain relatively narrow. If this type of approach is adopted while officers may consent to greater involvement in groupwork type programmes, welfare problems involving contact with DSS and Housing Departments, for example, may remain largely unmet by prison officers."

MacFadyen; (1991): p36

Craven (1993) describes the effects of Fresh Start, understaffing and poor conditions of service, particularly in the South, as undermining throughcare assumptions:

"Many here are from the North, newly qualified, 30% leave the service within two years. They live in subsidised bedsitters overlooking the prison, a lot of people have no-one to turn to, just four walls...a lot become alcoholic or are drawn towards suicide, it's meant to be 39 hours, but we're doing a lot more. ...women screaming at you. I have to deal with racism every day."

Anonymous staff member in Craven; (1993): p16

However, many Prison Officers have been involved with rehabilitative efforts in prison and it is important for Probation Officers not to be precious about their superiority of skill in rehabilitation. They have an increasing role in relation to the Prison Officers and negotiation skills are paramount as Boulter (1990 pp33-34) emphasises in his distance learning guide to probation in prisons.

Conclusions on Prison Literature

Throughout the prison literature there is an emphasis on the individual, which has been resisted by radical criminologists and prisoners' organisations who argue on a human rights basis. The issue of power as inherent in the rehabilitative model has been described. The history of adaptation has been traced, concluding that the experience of long-term imprisonment depends on a

complex blend of factors, including the individual and the situation. The conflict between daily life on the wing and notions of rehabilitation has been emphasised, with the conclusion that whole regimes have to be changed if people within them are to change. Resistance by prison staff and prisoners to rehabilitation, for different reasons, has been found. Studies which incorporate the personal experiences of prisoners and staff through observation and interview appear to result in a view which the respondents would recognise. Although quantitative studies appear to be rather limited in this respect, they provide useful comment, particularly the need for prisoners to feel they have some control over their lives and the helpfulness of structure for some long-termers. In addition, meta-analysis may provide a useful way to evaluate effective work with prisoners in the future. It was significantly unhelpful for Prison Probation Officers that their arrival in prison in 1966 coincided with the move away from the treatment model. The current model which emphasises openness and prisoner responsibility could be seen as a positive development but unless there are some major supporting changes in the way prisons are run and staffed, the best elements of Sentence Planning are doomed to failure. The current political pre-occupation with degrading punishment and "austere" conditions, takes us neatly back a century to the Victorian values of Du Cane which have nothing to do with effective work with prisoners.

Above all in the prison literature one is struck by the resilience of human nature and the extreme nature of the situation of the long-term prisoner:

"*You can't begin to imagine what it entails to survive here at any level above a floor mat. Suffice to say the pain of the struggle kills a part of one's being and renders many of us progressively more insensitive until/unless, love or something rescues you, you metamorphose into a callous 'ex-human being'. And this last is my single most haunting fear.*"

Prisoner to McDermott and King; (1988): p374

The Development of Prison Welfare and Shared Working

Imprisonment has a long history, but the idea that prisoners should receive after-care did not take shape until the nineteenth century. The concept of "throughcare" emerged in the 1950s. The development of the Probation role in relation to prisoners is not fluid or consequential. Different strands have contributed to the picture which is still one of inconsistency, obscurity of policy and low status. However, there are four fairly distinct phases: the voluntary phase, the social caseworker/welfare phase, the shared working/liaison phase, which have some congruence with the authoritarian, rehabilitation and bureaucratic-lawful phases of prison management described earlier, and finally the current Sentence Planning phase. Links between welfare services inside and outside prison have also varied in intensity but have usually been tenuous and patchy.

Voluntary Phase:

From the fifteenth century onwards, bequests for those released from prisons were common. In the seventeenth century the Society of St. Vincent de Paul promoted voluntary work with prisoners. The Quaker tradition of working with prisoners dates from the eighteenth century, including the famous prison campaigner Elizabeth Fry. In the nineteenth century voluntary effort mushroomed, including Discharged Prisoners Aid Societies (DPAS) 1823, Police Court Missionaries 1876, Jewish Societies with similar aims and the Catholic Social Service for Prisoners 1898. From 1823 Magistrates had the powers to give financial relief to ex-prisoners. This power was transferred to the Prison Commission in 1877 and back to the DPAS in 1913. Many other organisations were involved with prisoners, most from a religious standpoint. This combined an individualistic approach with a metaphysical dimension, the idealist tradition. Kant sought to secure the foundations of natural science and place limits on it. By acknowledging the existence of a higher supernatural world he argued that it was rational for us to act as members of that world. Those who obey the moral law rise above the world of sense, necessity and order that govern the natural world. Certainly, the early welfare workers rose above the grinding reality of their charges.

Often the voluntary bodies were set up for other purposes, eg. the promotion of abstinence from alcohol. The belief of the early prison welfare workers in abstinence (the "pledge"), the emerging concept of the deserving and undeserving poor, surveillance and the wish to control behaviour, and belief in reform of the individual all link with the Protestant work ethic and the view of the individual as a rational being. However, they did not by and large enquire into the nature of the individual's situation and in fact often treated the prisoners like numbers, or "natural history specimens" (Garland, 1992 p418).

The studies of prison welfare work in the first part of the twentieth century are mainly gleaned from autobiographical accounts or from Committees of Enquiry. Both rely on description, overlaid with moral criteria. It is interesting to note that the seeds of later themes of prison probation work were sown by the Gladstone Committee in 1895 who stated two objectives for imprisonment:

"*We start from the principle that prison treatment should have as its primary and concurrent objects deterrence and reformation.*"

Gladstone Report; (1885)

Various aftercare organisations were set up but there was little research into the effectiveness of these efforts. The emphasis seems to have been on determining who was most able or willing to benefit from the services, and on their desire not to waste resources on the undeserving. However, no attempt was made to create an open set of criteria by which to judge these attributes and once again the prisoners themselves do not seem to have been consulted.

In 1936 the DPAS formed a National Association, NADPAS, and in 1937 they appointed the first Welfare Officer to HMP Wakefield, Frank Dawtry. A handful more were appointed but they were stretched and had little opportunity for consistency. Meanwhile, in the field, the Police Court Missionaries had become Probation Officers. They had always carried out unofficial aftercare work and continued to have some contact with ex-prisoners but again this was low priority and patchy. Various aftercare organisations had been formed in the early twentieth century. Certain groups of adults were subject to compulsory aftercare, reporting to the Police. Borstal licences included aftercare and in

1948 the Criminal Justice Act gave formal responsibility to the Probation Service for Detention Centre Licence supervision. The following year the Probation Rules included voluntary aftercare in the duties of Probation Officers. At that time the voluntary bodies were merged into the Central After Care Association. The DPA Committees were said to operate in a paternalistic, suspicious manner:

"*They saw their role essentially as distinguishing between the deserving and the undeserving, in order that their charity should not be dispensed to the shiftless and ungrateful. Above all they had a fear of being exploited by the unscrupulous.....Before the DPA Committee, by contrast, he [the prisoner] felt humiliated when a group of citizens, professing a concern for his future, treated him as a potential exploiter and gave him what he felt to be gratuitous moral advice as to how he should conduct his life and leisure.*

It was, therefore, scarcely surprising to find amongst prisoners a universal contempt for the D.P.A., an attitude which extended to the Central After Care Association."

Morris and Morris; (1963): p304

Statutory Social Caseworker/Welfare Officer:

Sociology in the post war period was dominated by structural functionalism, in which role theory occupied a central position, though descriptions of the Prison Welfare Officer's function in terms of role theory are not found until the 60s. The 1950s and 1960s saw the heyday of individually-based casework. Compulsory aftercare became viewed as desirable and the notion of Prison Welfare Officers was promoted, particularly by the Maxwell Committee on Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies, 1953. They recommended that "*Prison Welfare Officers should be appointed at local prisons*" and saw their work as "*focusing on the development of aftercare and with a special responsibility to submit to the appropriate Aid Society recommendations for the aftercare of such prisoners as are willing and able to benefit from their services and appear suitable for special attention and assistance*". One can see the "undeserving/deserving" ethos at work here.

The DPAS viewed with misgivings the division between nationally appointed Prison Welfare Officers and the local Aid Society welfare field workers. There were three duties spelled out by the Maxwell Committee for the Prison Welfare Officers, who were to have the same background and training as a Probation Officer:

"*(a) To pick out those prisoners who are most willing and most likely to benefit from friendship and assistance after their discharge;*

(b) To help prisoners during the period of their imprisonment by making enquiries on their behalf about family matters or other matters which are causing them anxiety; to do what they can to mitigate the numerous difficulties which beset a man or woman whose social ties have all been suddenly snapped by a sentence of imprisonment and by such means to establish with the prisoner a relationship of confidence;

(c) On the basis of the knowledge gained by such a relationship to prepare case histories of selected prisoners and constructive plans for their assistance after discharge for submission to the Society to whose care they will be released."

Trained social workers were to undertake the job. This description could hold good for much of the throughcare work over the next twenty years. The following issues are generally not addressed:

(a) practice being informed by research;
(b) reference to other staff in the penal system;
(c) client self-determination;
(d) mention of the offence;
(e) equal opportunities issues.

The Probation Service through National Association of Probation Officers ("NAPO") and Principal Probation Officers' Conference expressed dissatisfaction with their role as agents for both the Central After-Care Association and NADPAS.

In 1963 the Sub-Committee of the Advisory Council on the Treatment of Offenders (ACTO) reported on "The Organisation of AfterCare," recommending that:

"*1. Aftercare in the community should be merged with the duties of an expanded Probation and After Care Service*

2. Throughcare should be integrated with the work of the establishment

3. Social workers should be appointed to prisons by the Home Secretary as members of the Prison Service."

That year the Prison Officers Association passed its famous unanimous resolution declaring commitment "*not only to a policy of rehabilitation of the prisoner but also the positive participation of the Prison Officer towards this end*". A working party was set up between the POA and the Home Office to look at the role of the Prison Officer (ROPO). In the event, the Home Office followed the first two ACTO recommendations but not the third. Prison Welfare Officers were to become Seconded Probation Officers. The Probation and After Care Service had argued forcefully for this task and it was felt that there should only be one branch of social work dealing with the prisoner.

In 1966 the first Prison Probation Officers were appointed, about 100 in number. The DPAS was dissolved and The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) was formed in its place. Home Office Circular (HOC) 241/65 outlined the new task and the role was later defined in HOC 130/67. It was seen as four-fold:

"*as a social caseworker, as the focal point of social work, as the normal channel of communication on social problems with the outside and as the planner of aftercare.*"

Twenty-one functions were listed. It is said that this was compiled by Home Office Inspectors visiting the prisons and totalling up all the activities which any Prison Welfare Officer may at some time have undertaken, Foren (1969). This is

characteristic of job descriptions for Prison Probation Officers. Even the later Home Office Core Tasks document reads more like a shopping list than a rationale for Probation Officers to work in prison. There was not, at that stage, any notion of a unique contribution by the Probation Service; generally the brief confines itself to a social casework role.

In the Prison Rules 1964 Rule I stated "*The purpose of the training and treatment of convicted prisoners shall be to encourage and assist them to lead a good and useful life*".

We see that the rehabilitative model was still enshrined in the official objectives of the Prison Service.

The other significant factor at that time was the dominance in the field of male officers. One of the few female officers from that period provides a rich source of experiences and reflections. Trotter (1969) describes the effect of a female welfare worker in an all male establishment. She is unimpressed with traditional research into the subject and refers to the thousands of pounds spent yearly on Committees and research workers who fail to ask for the views of those directly concerned. She quotes Barbara Wootton:

"*E.g. the Wolfenden Report produced evidence from such respectable persons as the Rt. Hon. Viscount Hailsham Q.C. and the Lord Chief Justice of England and from such bodies as the British Social Biology Council, but seems to have made no investigation into the lives and problems of the persons most directly affected by the laws on those subjects.*"

Trotter; (1969): p161

She also comments on the disillusionment of the Webbs with Commissions and goes on to say:

"*When I want accurate information about prisons I prefer to read books written by Prison Governors and Prison Chaplains. When I wish to gain further knowledge of the criminal and how he is handled, I prefer to read works by*

Judges, JPs, Magistrates and Probation Officers."

Trotter; (1969): p166

Note that she does not include prisoners in this feedback requirement. She is clearly from the rehabilitative period, endorsing a recommendation by R.L. Morrison, Prison Service Journal (January 1962) that:

"*research done within the prison field by prison personnel in contact with offenders and experienced in the understanding of their attitudes and behaviour is a really urgent necessity.*"

Trotter; (1969): p167

One of the few contemporary prisoner-based studies highlighted the weakness of the official view. In "The Courage of his Convictions" (1962) Parker and Allerton allow clients to describe the inflated claims for welfare. Advice was often unwanted, inappropriate and many of the prisoners were not seen. The reality was that the internal system of the prison dominated the prisoner and the welfare worker was peripheral to their lives. Their method of research, which allowed the clients to speak, was reflecting a shift in sociological thinking towards interpreting social activity rather than subordinating it to behavioural laws. In fact, Parker chooses not to interpret but present the view of the central actors in the scenario. This was not, however, the general approach to the examination of prison welfare work in the 60s and 70s, which tended to rely more on role theory and an "objective" stance.

In 1965 Berntsen and Christiansen published their study of 126 short term prisoners who received intensive treatment in Danish prisons. A control group was used. They concluded that recidivism was significantly higher in the control group than the experimental group (Berntsen and Christiansen (1965)). Haines points out the limitations of this success story:

"*First of all, it was not possible for the authors to determine fully what it was about their experiment which led to the results they obtained, or even if some other intervening variable caused the effects reported. Secondly, it is not clear from the research report how far the treatment extended into the community*

following the release of the prisoner."

Haines; (1990): p22

In 1966, Probation Officers began secondment to prisons. They had to negotiate a role for themselves and may well have taken on aspects of throughcare work formerly done by Prison Officers, Chaplains, Prison Visitors and outside bodies. In fact, this process had started with the first NADPAS welfare worker according to the Morrises:

"In the months that followed [1959], the Welfare Officer attempted to establish a role for himself in an area in which DPA, Chaplain, Church Army Captain, Salvation Army, and prison visitors (and additionally the Warden of the Norman House Hostel for homeless prisoners) all had a stake."

Morris and Morris; (1963): p307

Small wonder then that the role was on the one hand expected to achieve miracles, and on the other became a receptacle for difficult or tedious jobs. From the researcher's experience in the field it was viewed as a "doddle", "opt-out", "going over to the other side" - a job apart from the rest of the Probation Service. On 1st January 1969 the Service also took over responsibility for filling social worker posts in Remand Centres, Detention Centres and Borstal Allocation Centres. Existing social workers employed by the Prison Department and in post were absorbed by the Service. By the end of 1968 Probation Officers throughout the country had set up working relationships with all penal establishments. The voluntary aspect of throughcare was continued by NACRO and Probation Volunteers.

In 1971 the Treatment of Offenders Committee of the National Association of Probation Officers carried out a survey of prison welfare officers and ex-prison welfare officers. An inconsistent picture emerged:

"One senior with a caseload of 50 in a prison with a low rate of turnover was able to do work with all men in his section. At the other end of the scale an Officer in a local prison with a high turnover was responsible for 3,500 men

during 1969 and had done continuing work with ten...."

NAPO; (1971): p10, para22

Quotations from the officers give a flavour of the job:

"*The acceptance of the social worker in a treatment role remains a hard sell.*"

NAPO; (1971): p15

"*The Welfare Officer is looked upon as some appendage, very often of a worthless nature and his (sic) services are not very often required unless for the more mundane type of work.*"

NAPO; (1971): p15

Or as 'Fletch' puts it in 'Porridge', produced around this time on BBC1, welfare officers, like the chaplain are "*not to be trusted*". Kindly Officer Barraclough replies that he thinks Fletcher is speaking rather harshly of a "*well meaning group of men and women*".

Greater emphasis on throughcare did not significantly increase the take-up of voluntary aftercare but a higher proportion were persuaded to maintain contact for longer periods (Report on the work of Probation and After Care Department 1969-71). The emphasis on the casework model is illustrated by Monger (1967). Social work had moved away from clients' material problems with the creation of the welfare state and was only to move back with the welfare rights movement in the seventies and dismantling of the welfare state in the eighties.

Shared working/liaison phase

The concluding section of HOC 130/67 gave notification of the setting up of what became known as the "Midlands Experiment in Social Work in Prisons". The Home Office increased Prison Welfare Officers in three penal establishments in the Midlands, hoping to determine what their role and liaison function should be. The experiments led to four reports, two of which were published as Home Office Research Unit reports, Shaw (1974) and Holborn (1975). The other two studies were written up for internal use. "The nature and content of voluntary

throughcare" promoted the new concept of throughcare and focused on the liaison between field and Prison Probation Officers. The other unpublished study, the findings of the Co-ordinating Committee, proposed experimentation in the field of "welfare/prison staff interaction." The studies thus set out three important concepts which can be referred to as "ThroughCare", "Relative Effectiveness" and "The Shared Task". Shaw's study attempted to replicate Berntsen and Christiansen's work and studied 176 men in the last six months of a sentence of at least 12 months at Gartree and Ashwell prisons. The treatment consisted of weekly sessions with the Prison Probation Officer but the content and aims of the sessions were not established in advance and no analysis of this contact was attempted. She found that less of the experimental group were reconvicted but the only indicator of type of prisoner that might benefit from intensive contact was introversion. She found that intensive work with prisoners did not necessarily lead to better take-up of aftercare, but this was partly because the prisoner had different concepts of the Probation Officer inside and the Probation Officer outside the prison. This finding was reinforced by the Midlands companion study, Holborn (1975), and later by McWilliams and Davies (1971) and Craig's Northern Ireland study (1984).

The research projects associated with the Midlands Experiment were partly directed to look at the effectiveness of Prison Welfare Officers' methods. Some impact on recidivism was found, particularly in introverts. Attitudes became more positive towards Welfare Officers but there was a gap between prisoners' perceptions of their problems and that of Probation Officers. A later study by Fowles (1978) of intensive probation welfare contact with short term prisoners in a local prison found no significant difference between reconviction and take-up of aftercare between the experimental and the control group. However, the welfare officers with the experimental group had more contact with prisoners, Prison Officers and outside Probation Officers. Prison Officers took a greater interest in the aftercare of the experimental group to the total neglect of the control group. However, a short follow-up period of 12 months was used as opposed to the longer periods of Shaw's and Berntsen's studies where the effects only became apparent after 12 months.

Other reports looked at the Prison Probation Officer in terms of role. Davies

(1974) describes the historical separation of the supportive role of the aftercare agent from the potentially destructive effects of imprisonment and goes on to outline some of the tensions inherent in the role. Priestley (1972) also uses role theory to analyse the situation of the Prison Welfare Officer and talks about "role-strain". Monger (1967) talks about prisoners as "captives of their own social positions". Parris (1968) says that the Prison Welfare Officer is caught up in the conflict of interest between the individual and society. He also makes the comment, however, that the habitually delinquent or impulse ridden client is more self-contained in prison. He felt there was more opportunity to clarify and intervene in private predicaments, to work through problems in a more rational and realistic way. This runs counter to the theories about "prisonisation" as it is known, but struck a chord with the current researcher. Jarvis (1967) sees Prison Welfare Officers as an integral part of the prison staff structure and consequently experiencing some conflicts of loyalty. Silberman and Chapman (1971) had shown Probation Officers primarily preoccupied with welfare, material problems. The picture is generally a rather depressing one of the Probation Officers occupying a low status in relation to the prisoners, the prisons and the outside Probation Service.

The fourth report on the Midlands Experiment, "The Report on the Findings of the Co-Ordinating Committee" (1970) had addressed, among other issues, the involvement of prison staff. The concept of "shared working" emerged and was taken further forward by the discussion document "Social Work in the Custodial Part of the Penal System" (CI 48/74). This proposed a major shift in the whole structure of prison social work. At the centre "*the Prison Officer/inmate relationship should be recognised as the basic working relationship within the institution*". Specialists, including Probation Officers, were to be resources for the Prison Officer. Probation Officers were viewed as consultants and advisors. The document proposed to strengthen the concept of the wing team. There was a great deal of antipathy to this document from the Probation Service at the time, as it was seen as eroding the Probation Officer's right to work directly with prisoners. As a preliminary, the document saw "*the necessity for effectively monitored pilot projects in which prison and probation staff would be jointly involved*".

The next ten years saw the development of "social work in prisons" or SWIP as it came to be known. Five prisons, Coldingley, Exeter, Featherstone, Kirkham and Wakefield, were asked to set up SWIP schemes and later Maidstone and HMP Swinfen Hall joined in the experiment (CI 1/77). The aims were :

(a) To improve the assistance available to prisoners;

(b) To foster more effective working relationships between staff of the two services, including staff based outside the prison;

(c) To enable prison staff to participate more fully in work within the establishment in the field of inmate welfare;

(d) To enable Probation staff to concentrate on arrangements for release and other aspects of social work, for which the Probation Service has a responsibility.

Monitoring was intended for all schemes but in the event it happened in a minority of establishments, in two regions and nationally in a Prison Department survey in 1980.

In 1981 the National Association of Probation Officers (NAPO) resolved to move towards the withdrawal of seconded Probation Officers from prison. In 1984 NAPO and the POA published a joint policy towards this withdrawal. The hopes of the early seventies that Probation Officers could exert some influence on prison regimes had faded. At that stage it was hoped that resources could be diverted into community-based throughcare. The Mountbatten report (1966) signalled an increased emphasis on security and containment and rehabilitation slowly lost credence as a Prison Department objective. By 1984 it had disappeared from the prison task statement:

"*The task of the Prison Service is to use with maximum efficiency the resources of staff, money, building and plant made available to it.....*

(i) to keep in custody untried and sentenced prisoners and to present

them to Court for trial or sentence

(ii) to keep in custody.....sentenced prisoners for the duration of their sentence

(iii) to provide for prisoners as full a life as is consistent with the facts of custody, in particular making available the physical necessities of life; care for physical and mental health; advice and help with personal problems, work, education, training, physical exercise and recreation and opportunity to practise their religion, and

(iv) to enable prisoners to retain links with the community and where possible assist them to prepare for their return to it."

CI 155/84 Annexe A

This was produced in the same year as the Statement of National Objectives and Priorities for the Probation Service gave throughcare a low priority.

In the early eighties studies were undertaken about prisoners' problems. Cynthia McDougall (1980), used questionnaires to compare prisoners' analysis of their problems with the Probation Officers' definition and description of those problems being worked with. The problems most frequently expressed by prisoners mainly centred on the prisoner himself and his current situation, with less importance being placed on home problems. A major problem of loneliness emerged. The Prison Probation Officer worked with a large proportion of the problems identified but was also less aware of home problems. Most prisoners were satisfied with the amount of contact with the Prison Probation Officer and 82% were either satisfied with help given or had not needed to get help. The value of involving the prisoner in the assessment of his/her own problems was also underlined. McDougall proposes that:

"*The involvement of a prisoner in assessment of his problems and agreement on a plan to work on these problems would perhaps also help to reduce the feelings of frustration and isolation which prisoners experience. This approach would be very applicable to the work of Probation Officers in prison, where it is necessary*

to keep in touch with the numerous problems of a changing population."

McDougall; (1980): p24

In 1982 Williams, Nooney and Ray, also psychologists, embarked on a national survey of prisoners' problems (reported in McGurk, Thornton and Williams eds. (1987)) building on the Acklington study to assist in the redefinition of the role of the Probation Officer in prison which was then under scrutiny. The most widely reported problems included the emotional impact of imprisonment (depression, loneliness and coping with sentence), problems associated with release and with their own behaviour. Domestic problems were reported less frequently. Probation Officers were in broad agreement with the prisoners about their problems, though slightly over-estimating problems of a behavioural or domestic nature. They under-estimated problems of depression. Prison Officers were also surveyed. Although they did not know the personal circumstances of the prisoners their view of observable problems concurred with the prisoners' view. The level of agreement between Probation Officer and prisoner was high where there was no problem, but only 50% where the prisoner reported a problem. Prisoners only sought help for less than half their problems. The researchers concluded that there were implications for setting up Life and Social Skills courses. They felt that the lack of agreement that a problem existed was crucial and recommended systems for early identification of social welfare problems.

In November 1984 N.A. Jepson and K.W. Elliott undertook a review of nineteen SWIP developments and other projects in their "Review of the Role of the Probation Service in Adult Penal Establishments" and presented this to a workshop in Bournemouth on the same subject. 68% of those establishments surveyed by Jepson and Elliott had a shared work scheme or related scheme using Prison Officers as well as Probation Officers to deal with welfare matters. Four basic models emerged:

"***Model A*** *The full-time attachment of individual Prison Officers to the prison Probation Department*

Model B *The part-time attachment of individual Prison Officers to the prison*

Probation Department

Model C *Individual officers who are assigned specific welfare tasks but not attached to the prison Probation Department*

Model D *The wing team concept"*

Stable regimes had a lower lapse rate as did Model A, possibly because of commitment, training and being full-time. Model D had a higher lapse rate perhaps through being more diffuse. Jepson and Elliott identified five criteria by which to judge effectiveness:

(i) Prisoners' response to SWIP
(ii) Prison Officers' expertise and job satisfaction
(iii) Probation Officer professionalism and job satisfaction
(iv) Relationships (as between Probation and Prison staff)
(v) Prison objectives

Generally the views of prisoners, Prison Officers and Probation Officers were favourable. However, Jepson found that seconded Probation Officers did not necessarily redefine their priorities or provide an enhanced social work service.

SWIP was taken forward into the concept of "shared working". This opted for the Model D integrated wing team approach and stated:

"*Prisoner throughcare is an integral part of the regime and influences the nature of that regime....the Prison Officer/prisoner relationship based on day-to-day involvement with prisoners and developed alongside the custodial role, is central to prisoner throughcare. The active involvement of Prison Officers in prisoner throughcare should be considered the norm rather than the exception*".

CI 25/86 HOC 64/86

It is interesting that the Home Office adopted the wing team model when experience had shown that this was the most difficult to sustain. (It was adopted at Parkhurst in 1988.) The reasons probably have to do with the plans

for the "Fresh Start" restructuring of the Prison Service which relied very much on the wing team model and also the lack of resources available to equip Prison Officers effectively to carry out the welfare task. Further examination of shared working illustrates the problems of the wing team approach.

Since 1986 the number of shared working schemes has grown. The latest figures from the Prison Service Annual Report and Accounts April 1992 - March 1993 show that all young offender institutions have personal officer schemes and 87 out of 106 adult prison establishments, (82%). However, other surveys, Craven (1992) and Prison Reform Trust (1992, including Young Offender establishments) show lower numbers (70% and 74% respectively). They also describe serious shortcomings in some of the schemes. This suggests that Shared Working has not received the priority intended by the Prison Department. McDermott and King (1989) in a study of prison regimes showed they had become more restricted and shared working tasks were constantly abandoned for other tasks seen as greater priority. Pre-release courses were often cut or cancelled. In young offender establishments the concept of a Personal Officer has been developed for years and in those places Probation throughcare is carried out by field teams and the Prison Senior Probation Officer. This is not always well done as McAllister has shown (1991) and also with McAllister, Bottomley and Leibling (1992). In particular, contact with Probation and Prison Officers was found to be disappointingly low. It seems ironic that much of the documentation relating to Sentence Planning, described below, resembles the young offender throughcare documentation. Little attention has been given to the problems of time, priority and finance which have impeded shared working and other throughcare schemes.

Craig (1984) assessed prisoners' perceptions of the Probation Throughcare and Aftercare Services and tried to identify factors relating to decisions over those services. Her study was still based very much on role theory. Prisoners were interviewed pre and post release in order to compile questionnaires. Perceptions of the role of the Prison Welfare service were very limited, mostly related to practical help, though satisfaction levels were quite high:

"*The findings indicate that, whilst the Prison Welfare service is successfully*

fulfilling a genuine need for practical help amongst a large proportion of prisoners, the systematic social work practice inherent in throughcare policy is virtually non-existent. Although a fair minority of respondents reported that the PWO had maintained contact with them throughout their sentence they were not more likely to have become engaged in casework, or even to have discussed a 'personal problem', than those whose interaction with the PWO had been sporadic and self-initiated."

Craig; (1984): p49

Many prisoners did not know that the PWO was connected to the Probation Service outside, though Craig thought this would be to the PWO's advantage. (This finding was replicated by McWilliams and Davies (1971).) Craig emphasises the difficulty of rehabilitation within the institutional setting:

"Assuming the validity of the treatment model adopted by the Probation Service it is difficult to visualise how the principal aim of 'preventing re-offending' can be met in the context of a service which is geared towards meeting crisis demands. It may be that the assessment of environmental manipulation as their major or only requirement from the Probation Service is a realistic one for many prisoners. Certainly there was no evidence to suggest that respondents had experienced any unfulfilled needs for treatment orientated interaction with a PWO or for 'skilled rehabilitative help' from Probation. However, this does not rule out the possibility that these needs did exist unrecognised and Holborn has demonstrated that it is possible to increase prisoners' awareness of the relevance of casework methods to their own circumstances."

Craig; (1984): p51

Craig concludes that there is a basic incompatibility between the requirements of justice and those of therapy:

"It has been shown, however, that it is possible to affect offending behaviour by working intensively with suitable offenders and the willingness of the respondents in the present study to ascribe ventilatory roles to PWOs may indicate a receptiveness to the direct offer of social work."

Craig; (1984): p52

This study might partly explain the work engaged in by the Parkhurst prisoners with the Probation Officers: that they had some knowledge of services offered, were in a supportive environment to throughcare and might be willing to work. Craven (1993) argues that the secondment of Probation Officers is important both in current service provision and potential use to prisoners, Prison Officers, Governors, less powerful voluntary groups and volunteers.

In Special Units, such as C Wing at Parkhurst, the throughcare concept has been developed successfully in relation to adult prisoners (Bell (1991)) enabling the field and Prison Probation Officers to concentrate on offending behaviour, maintaining links with the community and resettlement. However, the development of shared working overall has been bedevilled by lack of priority, management initiative, clear objectives, training, monitoring and feedback. At its best shared working does offer an opportunity to free the Prison Probation Officer from daily applications and use the time to work with specific prisoners on mutually agreed areas of work.

Throughcare in the field suffered a setback with the Home Office Statement of National Objectives and Priorities (1984) which clearly accorded it lower priority than the growth industry of "alternatives to custody". However, a number of Chief Probation Officers pointed out the inconsistency of this approach, whereby the same offender could move from high to low priority simply by virtue of a prison sentence. In the late seventies and early eighties specialisation was favoured as an approach to resettlement and certain areas developed considerable expertise in throughcare. The Association of Chief Officers of Probation (ACOP) produced a "Principles of Throughcare Practice" in 1989, which was later appended by the Prison Department to the draft CPO contract with Governors. This affirmed the importance of throughcare, though targeting the field officers' work at certain points in the sentence (ACOP (1989)). In the late eighties, however, there was also a renewed questioning of resources for throughcare and a number of inner city throughcare units were disbanded, with resources targeted on parole. The advent of management effectiveness programmes and performance indicators have produced attempts to focus probation throughcare work, but the long-term effect of probation intervention is almost impossible to separate from other influential factors. Certainly probation

work is less demand-led than before but prison and field probation teams are often defining their tasks in isolation from each other. The lack of "systematic teamwork" described in the seventies continues. As described later, the latest set of guidelines for the job may not help clarify the situation.

In 1990 Kevin Haines reviewed the literature relating to aftercare services for released prisoners. He stresses the importance of the social situation to which the prisoner returns and his or her interaction with that situation. He comments that much of the Probation Officer's time is spent on structural problems such as accommodation and employment which could be tackled more efficiently at a higher level and of themselves do not reduce recividism. He argues that this focus is at the expense of 'human' problems such as links with family and friends, despite the research evidence of the importance of these networks for the released prisoner. The isolated prisoner is particularly at risk:

"*What this research demonstrates is the importance of situational factors for human behaviour. Thus, if a released prisoner returns to a social situation in which offending behaviour is accepted; or a social situation in which there are few normative controls on behaviour; or a social situation (e.g. homelessness, plus unemployment) in which the rewards are so few and the needs so high that there is little incentive to remain law abiding, then it is not surprising that the individual may commit further offences.*"

Haines; (1990): p35

Haines finds the literature in this area very limited both in its scope and its efforts to measure effectiveness in aftercare and makes a number of suggestions for future quantitative studies. He also comments:

"*The other major research omission is the lack of any systematic qualitative evaluation of aftercare. To be fair, important advances in qualitative methodology have occurred since the interest in aftercare has waned....Full consideration should be given to qualitative methods in future research if we are to be better able to probe how and why questions in aftercare practice.*"

Haines; (1990): p4

The message for Prison Probation Officers, whom Haines still refers to as Prison Welfare Officers, is that more attention should be paid to maintaining links with the community and specific work on the situation to which the prisoner will return. He comments that the research on prisoners' problems is dated but there is agreement on the difficulties facing socially isolated prisoners:

"*That many offenders who end up in prison are socially isolated, that the experience of prison exacerbates the social isolation of many prisoners, and that social isolation militates against successful reintegration into society and a cessation of offending appears axiomatic in the academic and practice literature*".

Haines; (1990): p9

Linked to the other studies in the "What Works" debate it seems that effectiveness may be about combining the individual, the social factors and the social context. Where programmes combine a cognitive behavioural intervention, opportunity to practice learning, in the institution and in the community, with social skills training where required and community ties, there appears to be an impact on reoffending.

The Howard League for Penal Reform have commented on the lack of community links in the middle of sentence:

"*...it appeared that there was a period of doldrums in the middle of the sentence when all contacts, including the major one, slackened off. They then picked up again towards the end of sentence.*"

Howard League; (1979): p79

Field Probation Officers did not decrease this isolation:

"*However, it appears from Table 8 that Probation Officers are rather more likely to write to those men who are already receiving one or more letters a week.*

Of course, they write to those clients whom they judge to be most in need of their services but since they are the only people who have any responsibility for

writing to prisoners, it should be recognised that they evidently do not at the moment correspond with those men with few or no contacts."

Howard League; (1979): p77

This would indicate that the Prison Probation Officer needs to pick up those isolated prisoners in mid-sentence and try to increase their community links. This problem is more acute for long-term prisoners who often lose contact permanently with their family and friends after the initial few years. The importance of the visit from the field officer in its own right is stressed by Kingston:

"At the beginning and the end of a sentence a visit was important, not just for itself, but for the possibility of contact with some person from the outside, and for exchanging information. In the middle of the client's sentence these two aspects of the visit became less important, and what became more important was the fact of the visit in itself. That is to say, its significance was translated into what it meant in terms of "being inside", and was looked on as an event which would help to relieve the tedium of his (sic) day-to-day existence in the prison."

Kingston; (1979)

Haines also comments that the success described in Shaw's study may be partly explained by the fact that the prisoners were long-termers and had longer to build up a relationship with the Prison Welfare Officer (Shaw (1974)). Conversely the rapid throughput in local prisons militates against effective aftercare work. A prison-based reintegrative regime, such as that found in Massachusetts, is effective and shows how essential it is for the rehabilitative efforts of the Prison Probation Officer to be reinforced by the regime. Some attempt to improve the structure of the prison system is to be found in the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and the White Paper on the Prison Service, which was based on the recommendations in the Woolf Report.

Sentence Planning

The present study took place against the background of one of the major Criminal Justice Acts of the century and a number of other significant documents relating to the Prison Service. The Carlisle Report (1988) had recommended fundamental changes to the parole system, including abolition of the Local Review Committees, automatic remission for a large number of prisoners and the ending of the tradition of secrecy. The riots at Strangeways in April 1990 led to the commission of the Woolf Report. This was the most significant critical analysis of the prison system since the Gladstone Report in 1895. Its philosophy was based on the need to strike the right balance between security, control and justice. Woolf uniquely took evidence from prisoners and received an enormous amount of written and verbal testimony from them. The Report itself is 598 pages but written in a readable style. However, despite its comprehensive approach and far-reaching proposals, it misses an opportunity to criticise the insularity of the Prison Service and seems to say that if the regimes and numbers could be improved then some notion of rehabilitation could be resurrected. It is more about prison reform than penal reform and fails to present robust recommendations about the place and role of custody within the penal system. There are, however, 12 recommendations and 204 proposals, many of which formed the substance, albeit watered down, of the White Paper on the Prison Service which was presented in September 1991 ("Custody, Care and Justice").

Key elements of the White Paper include the preparation of a code of standards, greater openness with prisoners, new arrangements for handling complaints and appeals against disciplinary findings and a recognition that:

"*Prisoners remain citizens even though they have been charged with or convicted of committing an offence.*"

"Custody, Care and Justice"; (1991): para 16

The White Paper refers to links between the Prison and Probation Services, though the emphasis, as in the Criminal Justice Act, is on supervision on release:

"The Probation Service must know about and contribute to the Prison Service's work if it is to be able effectively to take up the reins of supervision following the prisoner's release from custody."

"Custody, Care and Justice"; (1991): para 9.3

It refers to national standards, new guidance on throughcare and the role of the Prison Probation Officer, encouraging *"the full use of their social work skills"* (para 9.4). There is also reference to contracts between Governors and Chief Probation Officers and joint training between prison and probation staff.

The main development in the White Paper which affects Prison Probation Officers is the concept of Sentence Planning. This places responsibility on the prison to organise and maintain a system, similar to the current lifer system, whereby the prisoner has a simple plan for the progression of his/her sentence and the facilities which will be made available to him or her. This plan is to be subject to regular review and forms the basis of the new parole documentation. Great emphasis is laid on the liaison necessary between the prison and the field officer. However, as McAllister has shown, this liaison did not work out in practice in relation to young offenders:

"It was very evident, however, that a lack of trust between Probation and Prison Officers weakened any useful exchange of information and therefore any link which might be established between custody and supervision."

McAllister; (1991): p4

The forms used for Sentence Planning have many similarities with the young offender scheme so it is likely that similar pitfalls will be encountered.

Sentence Planning did not commence at Parkhurst until after the current study was undertaken, but various elements were already in place, for example the Long Term Review Boards for those serving over 10 years and Lifer Review Boards. This meant that some prisoners were already participating in discussion about the progression of their sentence with members of the prison staff as well as their Probation Officers. Some of the provisions in the White Paper have been welcomed by prisoners, such as the code of standards.

However, many proposals fall far short of firm commitments and are often qualified with the words "when resources permit". The White Paper does not give substance to the bulk of the Woolf recommendations, in particular the notion of a cluster of prison establishments based in an area to enable sentences to be served nearer home. The structural changes necessary to achieve the aim of maintaining or improving the social situation to which the offender returns, remain remote:

"*The proposed role of the Probation Service is problematical. They don't want it as they feel it compromises them by making them an extension of the prison system. I hate to disappoint them but in the eyes of most prisoners they already are.*

In addition what are they meant to do or achieve? A man leaves prison after 10 years, he has no money, no home, his wife has left him and he has no real job prospects. In addition, after 10 years of prison he is scarcely fitted for life outside as prison intentionally institutionalises its inmates in order to control them more easily. What can the Probation Service do? We all know that it is little or nothing. A total change in the system would be required."

Wood; (1990): p29

The Criminal Justice Act provisions relating to parole and sentence planning commenced on October 1992, after the period of the study, but again various elements were already having an effect on the prisoners. The 1991 Act had all party support and has three major themes. The first reduces the pressure on the prison system by restricting the use of imprisonment in the courts and expanding community penalties. Sadly, the Act did not establish a Sentencing Council and Carlisle's emphasis on curbing the imprisoning tendencies of the judiciary was fudged. The second theme reviews the basic principles of sentencing. The White Paper ("Crime, Justice and Protecting the Public") had introduced the notion of proportionality, or just deserts. The Act makes the sentence commensurate with the crime and not linked to the defendant's record. The third theme is bi-furcation, or twin track punishment. This means that petty offenders are retained in the community, but serious offenders spend longer in prison, with greater supervision on release.

For the Parkhurst prisoners sentenced after October 1992, it means longer sentences, less parole and compulsory supervison on release. They are part of the political deal that tries to remove many of the minor offenders from the prison system whilst remaining 'tough' with serious offenders.

The prison sentence becomes an integrated sentence in the Act, comprising three stages:

- custody
- supervision and
- "at risk"

As far as prisoners are concerned the main provisions are to abolish the old parole system for most prisoners and introduce automatic conditional release on licence after half the sentence for all prisoners serving more than one year and less than four. The new parole window is to apply only to prisoners serving more than four years who may be subject to discretionary release between one half and two thirds of their sentence, when they would anyway be released on supervision to the three quarters stage. Courts may order sex offenders to be supervised up to the end of their sentence. The other change is to introduce the notion of sentence planning, which demands far greater involvement from the prison in working with the prisoner on his or her offending. A significant feature of sentence planning and the new parole system is the concept of openness. All the documentation, with some limited exceptions, will be shared with the prisoner. Whilst Probation Officers have traditionally shared their opinions, if not their assessments, with clients the Criminal Justice Act systematises this openness and extends the practice to others, such as Prison Officers, who are not used to it.

Generally speaking, the impact of Carlisle, Woolf, the White Paper and the Criminal Justice Act has been to establish the bureaucratic-lawful model of prison management, with an emphasis on fair, open and consistent handling of prisoners. Comments have already been made, however, that the just deserts approach to sentencing does not take individual circumstance into account and runs the danger of ignoring structural inequalities in the Criminal Justice system.

However, anti-discriminatory practice is included, due in part to the lobbying efforts of the Probation Service. Although the principles of the Criminal Justice Act are proportionality, protecting the public and rehabilitation, the latter is to be achieved by community penalties, rather than custody, where it disappeared officially as an aim:

"*For custody, neither rehabilitation nor the prevention of re-offending enter the picture as far as the Act is concerned. People will not be sent to prison for rehabilitation. And the only crime prevention effect assumed by the Act is that which is enforced by the period of incarceration. The reasons for this may be obvious but bear repeating. Prison is not a sympathetic environment in which to work at rehabilitation or reform. Too many factors pull the other way; contact with other criminals; separation from family; and absolution from community responsibilities.*"

Halliday; (1991)

He goes on to qualify this with reference to "*good and useful work*" which can and should be done with the aim of rehabilitation in mind:

"*This is needed to offset the otherwise adverse effects of imprisonment, and to maximise the chances of successful re-entry to community life on release.*"

This places the work of the Probation and personal officer in prison in the general social work, general welfare tradition of damage limitation and pre-release work. This theme had been underlined fifteen years earlier in a NAPO report (1976).

This reactive and rather hopeless view of the role appears to be enshrined in some of the early Home Office material on the Act and White Paper. Yet there is a much more specific and contradictory message in the documentation relating to sentence planning, the new National Framework for Throughcare and the Probation Service National Standards (CPO 13/1992, Home Office). Here the task centres on rehabilitation through tackling offending:

"*..central elements of the work of the seconded officers are: to contribute to the*

development by prison staff of the offender's sentence plan; and to contribute to addressing and tackling offending behaviour by helping to meet targets set out in the plan."

Although it is acknowledged that some targets will have to be achieved on supervision after release, there is an expectation of work being done on offending in prison. In fact, it is clear that prisoners are unlikely to be released on discretionary supervision unless they have addressed their offending. Sex offenders are being targeted in particular by a national programme, run jointly by prison, psychology and probation staff.

In the main, however, the National Standards have little to say about the role of the seconded Probation Officer and it is significant that the Criminal Justice Act training packs, produced by NACRO with the Home Office, were also very brief on the practice implications for the Prison Probation Officer compared with other aspects of the Service. Once again the role of the seconded officer appeared to be an after-thought and subject to much inconsistency.

The National Framework for the Throughcare of Offenders was finalised right at the end of the current study period. The key throughcare tasks during custody focus on offering the prisoners help with the following:

"to accept responsibility for their crime, to acknowledge its effect on their victim(s) and to face up to the consequences of their offending behaviour

- *to reduce the risk of their reoffending*
- *to cope with their sentence and personal difficulties as appropriate*
- *to maintain family and community ties*
- *to plan for a successful resettlement. This may include addressing such things as:*
    - *addictions*
    - *budgeting - including ability to cope with money and to feed and clothe self and dependants*
    - *accommodation and employment problems*
    - *problems with reading and writing*
    - *relationship and family problems*

- *low self esteem*
- *lack of relevant training, work experience or qualifications*
- *lack of parenting skills*
- *discrimination experienced by the offender*

(These can best be identified through the sentence planning process)."

National Framework (1994).

The resources to achieve these laudable aims are not, however, forthcoming at the time of writing. If Woolf were to be implemented in full then effective approaches as outlined by Gendreau and Ross (1987) might have some success within the prison system. There is every indication at the moment that Sentence Planning is being tacked on to the existing system and will exist mainly through the ticking of boxes and circulation of paper. However, the political reversals of policy since 1991 have seriously undermined the Woolf Report. Resources for the Probation Service in the community are also being cut back and NAPO's earlier hopes of reallocation of resources from prison to community-based throughcare are unlikely to come to fruition, Williams, (1991a p54). It seems that the Prison Probation Officers will have to stand firm and articulate the value in detail of the service they offer to the prisons in order to sustain posts under the new contracts with Governors.

The European context also indicates a move towards justice and away from rehabilitation. Britain is a signatory to the European Prison Rules (1987) and should adhere to their principal requirements of treatment. NACRO was arguing in 1984 for minimum standards for prison establishments, Casale (1984). The Prison Reform Trust has examined the gap between the English system and the European Prison Rules, Plotnikoff, (1986 revised 1988), and found the former to be seriously lacking. The approach in Scandinavia and some other member states is exemplified in the following statement from the Danish Deputy Director General of Prisons and Probation:

"*It is a basic principle of the European Prison Rules that the deprivation of liberty shall be effected in material and moral conditions which ensure respect for*

human dignity (Rule 1). Furthermore, it is said that the purposes of the treatment of inmates shall be such as to sustain their health and self-respect, to develop their sense of responsibility and to encourage those attitudes and skills that will assist them to return to society with the best chance of leading law abiding and self-supporting lives after their release (Rule 3). Finallly, it is stated that imprisonment, by the very deprivation of liberty, is a punishment in itself. The conditions of imprisonment and the prison regimes shall not, therefore, unnecessarily aggravate the suffering inherent in this (Rule 64).

The fundamental principles also form the basis for what could be called the Scandinavian approach, and which I will describe in more detail with the key words Normalisation-Openness-Responsibility as my starting point."

Rentzman; (1992): p8

Britain has had to bow to the judgement of the European Court of Human Rights on several occasions in relation to its penal policy, recently in relation to discretionary life sentence prisoners. Britain now heads the table for imprisonment per head of population and will have to take note of other states' penal policies if its membership of the Community is going to have any moral standing.

The current picture then continues to be one of role conflict and tension for the Prison Probation Officer and throughcare Prison Officers. On the one hand they are working within a non-rehabilitative model which concentrates on justice and acknowledges the incompatibility of custody and rehabilitation. On the other hand, they are expected to focus their work with offenders still further in assessing and tackling offending. It is simply too great a step in political terms to abandon the rehabilitative tradition entirely. Also, the Criminal Justice Act has the aim of protecting the public and therefore the prison system must be seen to be confronting prisoners with their offending and attempting to change their behaviour. The Prison Service Statement of Purpose currently refers to helping prisoners "lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release". It is likely for some years to come that the prison system will not

achieve this with the vast majority of prisoners but at least it will be forced to acknowledge the reasons why the prisoner is there, and own some responsibility for reducing the likelihood of his or her returning.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter traces the design of the study from its inception in 1988 to the completion of the research in 1992. The study arose through curiosity about why some prisoners engaged in work with Probation Officers and some did not. There seemed to be no obvious pattern or set of pre-conditions governing this choice. The original research proposal was a study involving some triangulation; interviewing prisoners, Prison Probation Officers and field Probation Officers. Various factors would be explored for their potential influence over whether the prisoner and Probation Officer worked in a focused way, either on offending or relationships.

Because general research on prisoners had been conducted traditionally through surveys and structured interviews, the original method envisaged for this study also involved questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, building on the studies of the seventies and early eighties.

Research began with background reading on the history of prison probation work and the current governmental policy position on such work. A review of the policies of Probation Areas by Williams (1990) showed attempts to make the work more focused on probation expertise rather than on general welfare work. Prison Department documents evidenced a desire to divert "welfare" work to Prison Officers.

The main message seemed to be that if Prison Probation Officers could be freed from the day-to-day applications or welfare task, then they could undertake more focused work on offending and other matters for which they were trained. This was clearly a major issue for the current study and encouraged the researcher to interview Prison Officers as a significant group.

However, the first large question posed through this early reading was whether focused prison probation work was actually possible or desirable, given the enormous impact of the prison environment and the need for all concerned to survive it:

> *"It is necessary also to deal directly with the normative conflict involved by systematically frustrating behavioural expressions of the criminal value system and promoting, rewarding and encouraging behaviour expressions consistent with a conventional value orientation. It is likely that marked personal conflict will take place before an individual inmate is prepared to make a major shift in value identification."*
>
> Ohlin in Johnston et al; (1962): Ch44.p500

The second question that comes to mind is whether the prisoners who work best with Probation Officers are the most mature, those able to withstand their environmental pressure, or are they the weakest, those who might be expected to lean on the Probation Officer?

An early meeting with Brian Williams, who had concentrated his research on the field Probation Officers' role in prisoner throughcare (1990), led the researcher to the decision to undertake a complementary study focusing on Prison Probation Officers. It was also apparent at that stage that very few prisoners were engaged in focused work with their field officers. Practical considerations also tipped the balance against attempting interviews and questionnaires with field Probation Officers.

The amended research proposal would examine contact between Parkhurst prisoners and Prison Probation Officers to see what, if any, factors led to focused work, either on their offending or relationships.

The research problems and design were examined and refined during the University Research Programme in 1989/1990. Interesting problems of access pertain to prisons, surely the most closed of institutions, apart from Special Hospitals. Cohen and Taylor (1972) described the difficulties of obtaining and

maintaining access. The present researcher was well placed from this point of view, however, being a member of staff at HMP Parkhurst, and permission from the Home Office was obtained to undertake the research.

On the other hand, the imbalance of power between the prisoner respondents and researcher needed to be considered. Prisoners form one of the most disempowered groups in society. The researcher, as Senior Probation Officer, occupied a position of power in the prison in relation to the Probation Officers and indirectly to Prison Officers. In 1990 the researcher used the Research Programme to explore these issues and the implications of researching in one's own work setting (most post-graduate part-time researchers were in this position).

At that stage, the researcher was attempting to achieve maximum objectivity. The pilot questionnaire was drawn up with that intent and the possibility of studying a control group in HMP Albany, a neighbouring dispersal prison, was considered, although the power element would still be there for the Probation Officers, as the researcher was in the same management group as their Senior Probation Officer.

The pilot questionnaire familiarised the researcher with the statistics package SPSSPC, which was also used by the Psychology Department in HMP Parkhurst in connection with the prisoner database. In order to find out what level of contact was actually taking place between long term prisoners and Probation Officers, and the profile of the prisoners, the researcher decided to undertake a file survey, examining all contact over a two year period. Permission was obtained for this from the Association of Chief Probation Officers (ACOP), as the records had been compiled by Probation Officers all over the country in different institutions.

However, the experience of the questionnaire and the extensive literature survey convinced the researcher that although a statistical file survey would be helpful, a scientific, neutral approach was neither attainable nor appropriate for the interviews as it would not produce the data required from the respondents. They needed the opportunity to contribute to the framework and themes of the

study through a method which sought to shift power from the researcher to the respondent, rather than attempt objective examination:

> *"...a social development of some significance when offenders and deviants began to be regarded in a manner which explicitly suspended moral judgement and sought to provide a rational, empirically grounded explanation of criminal conduct."*
>
> Garland; (1992): p416

The researcher wanted to seek out the prisoners' views of Prison Probation Officers rather than work from her own professional standpoint, well established over 20 years, with 8 years in a management role.

The researcher was introduced to stakeholder evaluation (Guba and Lincoln, 1989) through the Research Programme, with a presentation by local researchers who had used the method. Stakeholder evaluation, or naturalistic enquiry as it had earlier been called, seemed highly appropriate for the current study. It is described in detail in the last section of this chapter, but briefly Guba and Lincoln point out that stakeholders, or groups who form part of an evaluation, are at risk through the research. While on the one hand they are open to exploitation, disempowerment and disenfranchisement through preconception in the design of interview and questionnaires, on the other hand they are capable of using the evaluation information and, through participation in the design of the research, can broaden the range of evaluative enquiry. This last point was particularly crucial:

> *"When evaluations are focused on a few preordinate objectives, decisions or efforts, their results must necessarily be limited and formally quite predictable. Indeed, it is this very predictability that makes it possible to predesign an evaluation (or other conventional) inquiry. But when one does not know in advance what information is to be collected, it is literally impossible to design an inquiry that will provide it. Open-endness (an "emergent" design) is called for."*
>
> Guba and Lincoln; (1989): p54

They also address the power of manager involvement in determining the study design:

> *"This state of affairs in effect disempowers stakeholders who may have other questions to be answered, other ways of answering them, and other interpretations to make about them."*
>
> Guba and Lincoln; (1989): p32

Conducting the interviews along these lines would enable prisoners to define contact between themselves and Prison Probation Officers on their own terms, introducing themes that might not have occurred to the researcher. Even semi-structured interviews are just that. They include some structure which is likely to be affected by the researcher's own perceptions. If not, then the researcher has probably already embarked on some form of stakeholder analysis. The interview stage had thus been resolved.

The following sections of this chapter describe the process of the pilot questionnaire, file survey and interviews in detail.

Pilot Study

The pilot study was undertaken in a way which illustrates the impact of chance and practical considerations on research. The Probation Team at Parkhurst wanted some feedback from the prisoners about the problems of long term imprisonment, in order to understand more about which prisoners were most vulnerable to adverse effects. This, it was hoped, would inform team policy and practice. The researcher took the view that this study could double as a pilot for the research. However, this was not to be a pilot for the proposed interview schedule, rather an exploration of the phrasing and questions which might be included in the schedule. Although time was too short to design the questionnaire specifically for statistical analyisis, there was an opportunity to refine it enough to be processed through the SPSS PC package, to see if it was feasible as a method to work from the personal computer. The format of the pilot questionnaire relied heavily on Shaw (1974) and was discussed with the probation team, prison staff and University tutors. It was itself piloted with someone outside the Probation and Prison Services. The sample size reflected the number of questionnaires that the researcher could process in a tight timescale before going on maternity leave. A manual analysis had to be done quickly for the team, the establishment and the prisoners. The SPSS analysis was not undertaken until a year later following the period of maternity leave. It was felt important to have a random sample at this stage but to stratify for race as this is such a significant factor in distinguishing prison populations from non-prison populations.

Two months were taken up with negotiation, reading and consultation over the questionnaire. Negotiation was necessary with the Prison Management Team and this took place at several levels. The proposal was discussed formally in the Custody (prison functional management) meeting as the Probation Team was included in that part of the prison line management structure. Drafts of the questionnaire were discussed with the Head of Custody who also acted as an informal consultant for the researcher, having a background in research himself. Team members mentioned the project in the communication meetings on the wing with Prison Officers. Negotiation also took place with the Psychology Department over supplying relevant lists of prisoners, which entailed writing a

specific program within the normal database. The Chaplain agreed to help prisoners who had reading or writing problems to fill in their questionnaires. Negotiation also took place within the probation team itself because the project was potentially threatening to their professional standing. The results could have implications for the quality, focus and level of their intervention with the prisoners. Initially the survey was to have identified individual wings. However, this would also have identified the work of the individual wing Probation Officers, so the wings were amalgamated to give a more general picture of the prisoners' perceptions of the Probation Team. One difficulty with this was that one team member was female and the other two male so that any comments from respondents using "she" would identify this person. Also being such a small team it was likely that certain comments would identify either officers or prisoners. This whole area of anonymity left some unresolved problems which were to have implications for the main study.

Reading and consultation were essential for the survey design. A study had been done by the Home Office (Shaw 1974) to explore the role of the Prison Welfare Officer, as Prison Probation Officers were then known. Some of the questions from that survey seemed relevant to the current study and were appropriately modified. However, that study had used a control group and a group exposed to intensive probation contact. The detailed questions on the quality of service did not seem appropriate. One main problem for the author was that she was also the team's Senior Probation Officer and consequently accountable for their work.

This issue was also to have major implications for the design of the questionnaire and also the planning of subsequent research. It was compounded by the researcher also having power or influence over the respondents, i.e. the prisoners themselves. The problem was brought to an ethics panel during the taught part of the M.Phil course. Some members of the panel thought it was possible to do research on one's "patch" but others felt that the degree of freedom experienced by the respondents would be too restricted. The problems are somewhat similar to those experienced by doctors doing research with patients, or indeed consumers generally of the personal social services. How far

can the respondents refuse to participate? If they do can they be identified as refusing? How far will their answers be tailored to fit what they think the researcher wants to hear? The experience of the initial questionnaire was invaluable in teasing out the weight of some of these issues.

The questionnaire was drafted several times and the final version, together with the initial synopsis of results, is given as Appendix A. Comments from the team, university tutors and colleagues were helpful. A role play was also useful in eliminating some obvious ambiguities for respondents. Some of the questions might be quite painful and these were placed in the middle. The questions on the role of the Probation Officer were deliberately repetitive and open because the researcher wanted to gain some idea of phrases and concepts that seemed to have some meaning for prisoners. These could then be used in subsequent questionnaires and interviews, rather than language deriving entirely from team objectives material, which tends towards jargon and conceptualisation. It was decided not to link individual questionnaires with individual prisoners at this stage, because the focus of the study was on general problems of long term imprisonment and also on the role of the Probation Team. The issues of researching the team's own clients also contributed towards this decision. Thus although there are three opening factual questions, these are there to lead into the rest of the document rather than provide essential information. The final questions about the field officer were partly factual to end the survey on a lighter note although Q.17 does require some thought about their role.

The selection of prisoners for the questionnaire was a 20% random stratified sample taken from the lists of prisoners in the main general living areas and the Segregation Unit. The sample was stratified for ethnic origin. The overall figures for the prison were 74% white, 26% non-white. 'C' Wing special unit was omitted from the study because the researcher was responsible for limited probation intervention on the wing, the probation post had been frozen for two years because of staffing difficulties, the 18 prisoners on that wing were all white and it was felt that the wing was therefore atypical. Plans were made to operate the questionnaire in that wing in a different way at a later stage, possibly in a group setting. (In the event the file survey and interviews showed

that "C" Wing was significant in the patterns of contact between Probation Officers and prisoners.) The other living unit omitted from the survey was the Special Secure Unit, which housed 9 top security prisoners, including politically motivated offenders and organised crime offenders who have little use for the Probation Team.

A print-out was obtained from the Psychology Department on all prisoners at Parkhurst Prison at the beginning of March 1990. The list was divided into wings and into white and non-white. Because of the 74%/26% ethnic divide, one non-white prisoner was chosen for every three white prisoners. The sample figure of 20% allowed every fifth name to be picked from the list. The wing lists were numbered starting with the white prisoners and ending with the non-white prisoners and every fifth name was picked. A die-roll determined whether the first or second name on the wing list began the selection. In retrospect to give equal probability of selection a random number between one and five should have been chosen. A total of 41 cases were chosen (20.7% of the total roll for the four wings concerned). 11 cases were non-white (26%). Where prisoners had transferred out of the prison in the three weeks between the issue of the print-out and the issue of the questionnaires the next name on the list was chosen.

The process of issuing the questionnaires was not straightforward. It was felt that they needed both a written explanation attached to the front and a verbal introduction. The wing Probation Officers seemed the best people to hand them out because they could explain that the idea came from the team and clarify that it did not constitute a check on their work. Prisoners are quick to identify with the underdog in the system and if they thought there was some monitoring process involved this might have biased their answers. On the other hand the same Probation Officers could not collect them in the following week because it was important that the individual Probation Officers did not see the prisoners' individual answers. This might have prevented the respondents from saying what they thought, out of loyalty. However, the researcher did not want to leave a box on the wing for returned questionnaires. Previous experience of this has shown a poor response rate, questionnaires being filled in by officers and

even the box disappearing. Also, this would not have given the opportunity to gain some feedback on the questionnaire itself and possible reasons for not filling it in. This turned out to be crucial. Therefore, the researcher decided to return the following week with a sealed box and collect the questionnaires from individual prisoners, taking comments at the same time and looking out for anyone who seemed to have been distressed by the experience and needed referral for further help. The explanatory letter accompanying the questionnaire outlined this process and also stated that a report on the final results would be made available in the prison library. Another note referred men with reading and writing problems to the Chaplain for help in filling it in. This was another reason for having a verbal introduction as well.

The 41 questionnaires were handed out during the week of 19th March 1990 during a brief interview with the wing Probation Officer. One referral was made to the Chaplain for help with completion. Three prisoners refused to participate at this stage. One prisoner was transferred that week elsewhere and gave his completed questionnaire back to the wing Probation Officer before he left. The rest of the prisoners were contacted the following week by the researcher to hand in their questionnaires. 30 questionnaires were returned.

The issues raised by the process included:

(a) The feasiblity of using SPSS
(b) The feasibility of using a questionnaire about interaction between individuals
(c) The impact of working in the prison
(d) The impact on the researcher's team and on the prisoners
(e) The richness of the data in response to the open questions
(f) The problems of defining the parameters in advance
(g) The issue of power in relation to prisoners and to research

Discussion

(a) Using SPSS. Because the researcher's background was in the Arts rather

that the Social Sciences, there was some diffidence in embarking on statistical analysis. In addition, because the pilot had not been designed primarily for SPSS analysis, it involved much post-coding which was unsatisfactory. The data entry took less time than expected, although there were problems which were difficult to sort out by telephone and trips to Southampton for consultation were time-consuming. However, it was a useful exercise in trying out the programme and produced some interesting results. The conclusion was that SPSS could be used for part of the main study.

(b) The usefulness of using a questionnaire to evaluate an interactive process is difficult to gauge. On the one hand the return rate was good and the form was filled in by most respondents in detail. On the other hand the researcher was left wanting to know much more about the reasons for prisoners making the comments they did and some of the most useful material came out of conversations with them when the questionnaires were being returned or since then. The questionnaire was extremely useful in its original aim of defining the most acute problems caused by long term imprisonment. Although attention had been paid to the problems of illiteracy, respondents did rely on ability to write and some views were therefore lost. The problem of having translators available was also highlighted by the number of foreign prisoners in the sample. The conclusion was that interviews would be required in the main study.

(c) The impact of the researcher working in the prison was noticeable in the retrieval of the questionnaires. Using the team to distribute and introduce the questionnaire and being known to some of the prisoners on the wing helped to retrieve some replies and resolve a particular problem about confidentiality. However, it is not known why the other prisoners did not return questionnaires and an outside researcher might have been more successful with them. King and Elliott (1977) describe their initial contact with prisoners as quite difficult to achieve but with time and care they managed to gain acceptance of the research by 60 out of 72 prisoners (p.61-63). However, the scope of their study was considerably greater

than the current study. In the main study, it seemed helpful to look carefully at the characteristics of those prisoners who did not respond to Probation Officers. This was one reason for subsequently considering reading case records, referred to later as the file survey.

(d) The impact on the researcher's team was twofold. In the first place, time and thought had to be devoted to the questionnaire. Secondly, the work of the team was under scrutiny and this was potentially threatening. The researcher had experience of a previous Probation Team who found the idea of a client questionnaire extremely threatening for that reason. However, the Parkhurst team discussed this issue and were free to amend or delete questions that related to their practice, as it was made clear that these were additional to the original purpose. Some minor amendments were made. Team members said that they wanted to know what the prisoners thought in order to improve their practice. In some ways it was less threatening to have their current Senior ask these questions than an outside researcher as she was already familiar with their work. The problem might have arisen later if the questionnaire had revealed great dissatisfaction with the service and then the research made public. This was an issue for the main study as it would be impossible to disguise the identity of the officers involved, although individual comments would not be linked to individual officers. The issue would remain a problem in the neighbouring prison as the researcher was part of the management group overseeing that prison as well and the officers well known to her. Thus the advantages of being known within the prison would be lost at Albany without the problems being resolved in relation to the probation team. This did not rule out work at Albany but changed the reasons. A study at Albany might still be useful to see if there were significant differences in working practices and prisoners' perceptions of the Probation Service in a prison with similar prisoners and a Probation Team with the same aims as the Parkhurst team.

(e) The richness of the data in response to the open questions led to a revision of the original plan to use questionnaires as a method. Newby

has commented on the dangers of researching a captive audience:

"*However, the result was that, in common with so many other sociological studies, I was taking the easy option of homing in on a captive set of respondents. So much sociological research takes place in an institutional setting - a factory, office, school, prison, hospital - whereby contact is made, especially with working class respondents, via people in positions of authority over them.*" He said the researcher needs "*a careful and sensitive appraisal of the role required to obtain a sympathetic rapport with the respondent before data collection even commences.*"

Newby in Bell and Newby; (1977): p115

It seemed that if a sympathetic rapport could be established with the respondents then some rich data might be gathered.

(f) The pilot showed up the limitations of basing a questionnaire on the assumptions of the professional and defining the parameters in advance. There is a danger that the whole person will be ignored in the concentration on problems and the particular position of long term prisoners. Ryall (1990) comments on the experience of being a client after being a Director of Social Services:

"*My initial experience was that the role was quite stigmatising. It was something inherent in the role-relationship, to do with the feeling of being 'defined' by my 'problem' (my offences), rather than any reflection at all on the Probation Officer's approach to me.*"

"*If you have led a fairly full life it doesn't seem to do much for your self-esteem to feel defined by a relatively small part of the total 'self'.*"

Ryall; (1990): p26

Mayer and Timms discuss the limitations of official definitions:

"...all kinds of working assumptions are used by practitioners of social work, by administrators and policy makers about the ways in which clients see their problems, why they approach certain agencies, why they behave as they do and so forth, but these assumptions have rarely been critically examined."

Mayer and Timms; (1970): p2

They comment that exploratory studies had relatively low status in social work circles at that time, against the need for "rigorous quantitative studies." Pritchard (1971) also drew attention to the lack of consumer research in the social services. Clearly since the early seventies consumer research had become more popular but relatively few studies related to probation work with prisoners. The pilot questionnaire showed the need for a more open approach and the opportunity to reflect on the interaction between the individuals concerned rather than official descriptions of the role, which prisoners might well have absorbed, although Craig (1984) and McWilliams and Davies (1971) show a high level of ignorance of this. Some prisoners did not understand the questions or left some blank.

For some time there seemed to be a dilemma about the methodology. To achieve objectivity it seemed as though the research would have to be done by questionnaire and fairly structured interviews, preferably in another prison. However, in order to explore the original question, which was how some prisoners come to do significant work with Probation Officers, it seemed more appropriate to allow the prisoners to bring as much of their own thoughts to bear as possible, ie. a qualitative, interactionist approach. If this were to happen in an interview then confidence and trust were important. Prisons above all institutions have a profound mistrust of outsiders and prisoners can get caught up in that mistrust. If the researcher were to be honest about her job then prisoners who mistrusted the Probation Service would be the same in any prison, except that perhaps in Parkhurst this would be offset by some familiarity. The researcher could have some informal discussions about

the subject with the prisoners before embarking on the main study. A focus on the Parkhurst prisoners seemed preferable. There remained however the question of researcher bias.

(g) The issue of power had emerged as a theme from the questionnaire. Some prisoners thought the Probation Officers could increase or use their power more effectively within the system. Others thought that the officers were becoming more and more marginal. The other aspect of power was in relation to the researcher's role in the prison, having some influence over decisions about prisoners and responsibility for the Probation Officers. How would this affect the data collection and the issues of consent and confidentiality? Becker in Filstead et al (1970) describes the "hierarchy of credibility". Those at the top have a more credible account of the way things are. Accusations of bias, he argues, arise when the researcher gives credence to the perspective of a subordinate group in some hierarchical relationship, (moral in the case of deviance).

"*Thus credibility and the right to be heard are differentially distributed through the ranks of the system.*"

(p.18)

He comments particularly on institutions:

"*For a great variety of reasons well-known to sociologists, institutions are refractory.*"

"*..prisons do not rehabilitate prisoners...*"

"*..officials develop ways both of denying the failure of the institution to perform as it should and explaining those failures which cannot be hidden.*"

"*We can never avoid taking sides.*"

(p 23)

Becker suggests therefore that we have to say at the start how we will approach the subject; through whose eyes.

King and Elliott (1977) also explore this theme, contrasting the approaches of the Morrises' work at Pentonville (1963), Emery's work at Bristol (1970), Cohen and Taylor's work at Durham (1972), and Bottoms and McClintock's work at Dover Borstal (1973). They describe the Morrises' approach as "independent", Emery's as "officially sponsored", Cohen and Taylor's as "mutual prisoner and research-interest" and Bottoms and McClintock's as "mutual staff and research-interest". The point is that objectivity is not achievable in prison research and the identifications and interests of the researchers will inevitably have an impact on the research and the way it is subsequently received. They argue that subjective reactions cannot be suppressed as suggested by Morris:

"*The assumption that this problem has to be dealt with by suppression rather than by acknowledgement and discussion points both to the extraordinary power of the approved model of scientific research and to the weakness of the method, that is soon likely to be spotted by the respondents.*"

King and Elliott; (1977): p42

It became very apparent that using a starting point for the research enquiry of historical and official descriptions of the role of the Prison Probation Officer would compound the powerlessness of the respondents and build in the bias of the researcher from her position of relative power within the institution.

The methodological debate between the positivists and the interactionists seemed to come to some compromise in the eighties and a mixture of methods became respectable, although qualitative research continues to be seen in many circles as preceding or supporting "hard data" rather than taking its place. The researcher needed a method of obtaining the prisoners' views in a structured but open way.

General discussion with Prisoners and Ex-prisoners

HMP Grendon

The consumer literature on prison probation work had turned out to be quite sparse in the literature review. It seemed useful to have some discussion with prisoners and ex-prisoners directly about this, in order to expand the background picture before embarking on the main study. The researcher had read about a power-sharing conference in August 1991 when the prisoners played a major part in the planning and the proceedings. She wrote to the Senior Probation Officer (SPO) at HMP Grendon asking for more information on this conference and outlined her research. The SPO offered to set up a special meeting with prisoners who had participated in the conference to discuss the research. This took place in December 1991. The themes arising from these discussions and the process of undertaking them are outlined below.

The Grendon discussion seemed useful for several reasons. Firstly, it would enable the researcher to pilot use of a tape recorder and transcribing afterwards. Secondly, the Grendon prisoners were drawn from the national prison system and had experience of many establishments. Whilst they are generally amongst the more articulate prisoners it was felt that they could comment usefully on the overall image and role of the Prison Probation Officer, as well as describing their own experiences. The researcher decided to use a group discussion technique based on Kreuger's focus groups. He describes this as:

"*...carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. It is conducted with approximately seven to ten people by a skilled interviewer. The discussion is relaxed, comfortable and often enjoyable for participants as they share their ideas and perceptions. Group members influence each other by responding to ideas and comments in the discussion.*"

Kreuger; (1988): p18

The method seemed in sympathy with Naturalistic Inquiry, (to be used in the

Parkhurst interviews and described at the end of this chapter). Kreuger comments on the limitations of the quantitative approach in evaluation:

"*Too often the quantitative approaches were based on assumptions about people, about things, or about reality in general that were not warranted.*"

"*The intent of the focus group is to promote self-disclosure among participants.*" (p23)

Ideally, the method should be used with strangers. Although the prisoners came from different wings they knew each other. They did not form a group in the prison however and the researcher felt that some knowledge and trust might encourage them to talk about work they had done with the Probation Officers, which might have been of a personal nature.

The researcher prepared a letter on the purpose of her research to be given to all participants beforehand and the SPO Grendon gained permission from the Governor to tape record the session. On arrival the researcher was directed to the Wing Probation Officer and discussed the group briefly with him. He said that he would like to be present during the group and saw no problems with this. The researcher was a bit surprised but the group commenced as planned with nine prisoners. The room was quite large and stark with a men's toilet at one end which flushed intermittently. The Wing Probation Officer had talked briefly with one of the prisoners about use of the tape and he quickly discussed it with the others who seemed to have no objections.

The researcher introduced herself from a prepared format (Appendix B) outlining the research and the purpose of the group. At this point there was some puzzlement from the prisoners. It transpired that they had been expecting a discussion about the conference that had taken place the previous August and knew nothing about the research. The letter of introduction had never reached them or the Wing Probation Officer. Small wonder that he was not concerned about his influence on the group discussion. The researcher had to start from scratch. She explained the purpose of the research more fully and said she

would quite understand if any of them wished to leave the group. However, they were all prepared to stay and speak off the cuff. Each prisoner spoke in turn for five to ten minutes, though as they went round, others were increasingly likely to contribute or refer to previous contributions. Because the group lasted only an hour there was very little time for general discussion at the end but the researcher was able to clarify some themes and the extent of agreement about them. The composition of the group was as follows:

Prisoner	Age	Offence	Sentence	Stage
1	32	Murder	Life	11 Years
2	36	GBH	Life	11 Years
3	32	Rape	Life	8 Years
4	56	Murder	Life	6 Years
5	21	Attempted Murder	10 Years	3 Years
6	50	Murder	Life	6 Years
7	43	Murder	Life	4 Years
8	31	Rape	12 Years	3 Years
9	Not Known	Indecent Assault	4 Years	3 Years

A week later the researcher wrote thanking the prisoners for participating and enclosing a copy of her original letter. The group session was transcribed by the researcher and emergent themes were noted as well as the interventions of the researcher. This was very useful as it was important to describe that influence both in this group and in the main study.

Although the prisoners were asked to describe their contact with Prison Probation Officers they also talked about their field officers. The main themes were analysed according to the number of times they were mentioned by different prisoners or in relation to different prisons. They can be grouped into four main sections.

The first theme is about spending time with the Probation Officers which was generally agreed to be useful. Influential factors on this were as follows, (number of times mentioned is in brackets): time (10); accessibility (8); ratio of prisoners to Probation Officers (3); contact limited to report writing/didn't know prisoner well enough to do report properly (3). Ideas to improve this included less prisoners to officer ratio, evening work, wing-based PO and flexible regime.

The second theme centres on the influence of shared working schemes and the prison regime. There was most agreement about shared working schemes which were universally condemned (12). Shared working officers were seen as a barrier to probation contact and Prison Officers generally were often hostile to contact between prisoner and Probation Officer. A change of culture was suggested through properly resourced personal officer schemes. This links with the prison regime which was seen as highly influential on the contact between prisoner and Probation Officer (8). The normal "sex, drugs and violence" culture of the wing, coupled with the secrecy about offences, was seen to militate against any rehabilitative work with the Probation Officer and where this was attempted it caused tension for the prisoner. Where the regime was also rehabilitative in intent the Probation Officer was seen as integral to the wing and easily accessible, complementing the work done elsewhere on the wing.

The third theme describes the content of interviews; liaison with family (4); discussion of crime (3); regular discussion of situation or personal matters (3); support (2); telephone calls (3); liaison with field Probation Officer (2); rapport/friend (2); minor chats leading to more intensive work (1); referring on to other organisations and encouraging self-help (1). The one foreign prisoner felt that the Probation Service should improve its service to foreign offenders. Generally when prisoners had established regular contact with the officer this was very important to them and they missed it when the officer or they moved on.

The fourth set of themes describes the role and image of the Prison Probation Officer. Clearly individuals varied tremendously, from "didn't like him", "didn't trust him" to "a little island in a storm". The importance of showing interest

was crucial (5). Other individual comments were made during a group discussion about whether there were any important characteristics of the 'good' Probation Officer. None were found but the following features were mentioned: experience; consistency; non-judgemental approach; firmness; professionalism; social and other skills; specialist knowledge; in-between/neutral role in prison.

Prison Link Project

The Grendon group had all been white. The literature search and general experience of the researcher had led her to believe that the experience of black prisoners was likely to be different, not least because of the degree of institutional and other forms of racism in the Criminal Justice System. The researcher had had some contact with Prison Link Project, a voluntary organisation in London, set up to help black prisoners with resettlement problems. Many of the staff and volunteers in the Project are ex-prisoners. The researcher explained the background of the research to the Director and that she was interested in contact between Probation Officers in prison and prisoners, and the factors that might affect this. The Director asked staff members and volunteers if they would like to talk to the researcher, on the basis that material used would be anonymous. In the event four people agreed to discuss their experiences, one on the telephone and the three others in person. Unstructured interviews were carried out with these respondents, two male and two female, all black ex-prisoners, in the Autumn of 1991. The following section describes the themes that emerged.

Approach and ability of Probation Officers

This varied from prison to prison. One respondent found a good service at one out of three prisons. By good she meant:

"*You get results. If you ask them you get what you want.*" (PLP1)

"*Some of them are all right, some not. They're not all very competent.*" (PLP4)

"Ability varies from prison to prison. Some are efficient and caring. Others have been there too long - get very indifferent. Already decided what they're going to do with you before you ask." (PLP3)

Reports

These were seen as part the Probation Officer's job but not popular with the prisoners because of the way in which the task was undertaken:

"They just come round and fish you out and write a report after 2 times." (PLP4)

"Parole reports with no contact. Never seen a report. Questions going back into my life. I can paint a pretty picture of myself. Not necessarily true. How does the PO know?" (PLP2)

One man talked about the danger of being misconstrued:

"e.g. I said I didn't want visits because it was a long time [the sentence]. This turned into "family disowned him". Messed up parole." (PLP3)

"Reports are based on what the Prison Officers say, read [by the prisoner] after it's done." (PLP1)

Image

The image of the Prison Probation Officer was mixed:

"Probation Service seen as part of the system that has put them there; last resort. If you can help it avoid seeing them, but long-termers need probation." (PLP2)

"You can be really stitched up by them, they carry a lot of weight." (PLP3)

"They don't do much for you. Whatever you tell them, not a secret." (PLP2)

"*Power depends on the individual you're dealing with.*" (PLP4)

"*They tried but people higher up didn't want to know.*" (PLP4)

One aspect which might affect contact was the desire among some black prisoners which kept contact with any officials to the minimum.

"*Don't give them the opportunity to humiliate or embarrass. Keep contact to formal level. Control your life.*" (PLP2)

The presence of Black Prison Officers and Probation Officers was generally welcomed although one found his Black Probation Officer something of an embarrassment.

Field Officers

The field officers were also mentioned as being potentially helpful but the main complaint was the number of changes:

"*When you change prisons you have to change field officer each time, takes 6-8 months.*" (PLP3)

"*Outside PO very helpful but changed each time I changed prison.*" (PLP1)

Improvements

General communication was felt to be essential, not just using the record:

"*Talk to the individual and find out first hand opinion, not just on paper.*" (PLP4)

"*Should show more concern, more care about the individual...that would open up a lot of doors.*" (PLP2)

Pressures on the Prison Probation Officer were recognised and smaller wings

were preferred to enable the Probation Officer and shared working schemes to operate efficiently.

"They're inundated with requests..asking too much for them to deal sensitively." (PLP3)

The Probation Officer's power over outside contact was not appreciated and the advent of phone cards welcomed. For short term prisoners this might decrease the need for Probation Officers. The reluctance of some Probation Officers, both inside and out, to become involved in practical problems which were of concern to the prisoners was criticised.

Generally then the service offered by Probation Officers in prison according to the PLP respondents was seen as patchy, with insufficient communication taking place with the prisoner. For some prisoners welfare contact was demeaning and to be minimised. Reports were generally resented. However, when the Probation Officer adopted a helpful and practical approach and spent time with the prisoners this was appreciated, even when it contained a challenge:

"I had a Black PO outside. I wasn't doing much for myself. He said "get on with it!" He could do it and so could I." (PLP4)

Naturalistic Inquiry

The Grendon experience and interviews with PLP respondents had reinforced the researcher's opinion that the use of open interviews would uncover themes which she could not anticipate. However, focus groups as a method were too structured for this purpose. At this point the researcher encountered the work of Guba and Lincoln, "Fourth Generation Evaluation" (1989). Guba and Lincoln seemed to tackle some of the above problems and in particular began to answer the question why the experience of the researcher in observing pieces of significant work did not seem to fit in neatly with the research accounts of prison probation work. They describe four stages, or generations, of evaluation; measurement, description, judgement and constructivist (the fourth generation evaluation). They propose a method of evaluation which is based on negotiation and empowering the participants. Central is the notion of stakeholder groups who have some interest in the object of the study. Because the method builds up constructions through which individuals make sense of the situations they find themselves in, each person can contribute to the shaping of the research and hopefully benefit from the process as an active participant. In addition, the researcher's own position is built into the process and openly acknowledged, so that any bias is worked with rather than attempts being made to avoid it:

"*The values of the enquirer....inevitably enter the enquiry in connection with the whole series of decisions involved in designing, mounting and monitoring. The values of involved individuals....also exert influence...also because inquiries always take place in value contexts*"

"*Values are reflected in the theory that may undergird the inquiry.*" "*Moreover, all of these values may be disjunctive.*"

"*The ultimate pragmatic criterion for this [constructivist] methodology is that it leads to successively better understanding, that is, to making sense of the interaction in which one usually is engaged with others.*"

Guba and Lincoln; (1989): pp88-89

Constructivist methodology is a responsive mode of focusing on claims, concerns and issues. Claims are favourable to the evaluand (subject of evaluation), concerns are unfavourable and issues are states of affairs about which there is disagreement. Compromise is sought through negotiation between stakeholder groups. The stages are principally to identify the stakeholders and ask them about claims, concerns and issues, building up a joint construction of the evaluand:

"*Claims, concerns, and issues, we shall see, arise out of the particular construction(s) that a stakeholder group has formulated, and reflect their particular circumstances, experience and values. Often the nature of their claims, concerns, and issues is completely unpredictable by anyone not him - or herself - a member of the group.*"

(p55)

Information about the different constructions is then shared between stakeholder groups so that unresolved areas may be negotiated if possible to arrive at a joint construction and evaluation by the stakeholder groups. In relation to Parkhurst, the main stakeholder groups seemed to be prisoners, Prison Officers and Prison Probation Officers. Prisoners' families and field Probation Officers were two more stakeholder groups but the practical considerations of organising interviews with these respondents ruled them outside the scope of the present study. The interview methods seemed entirely appropriate to elicit views. Given the emergence from the literature review of a gap between official documents, research studies and the views expressed in prisoners' writings, it seemed unlikely that the researcher could formulate appropriate questions herself:

"*But when one does not know in advance what information is to be collected, it is literally impossible to design an inquiry that will provide it. Open-endedness (an "emergent" design) is called for.*"

(p55)

The method of interviewing is illustrated in Appendix C, the Hermeneutic

Dialectic Circle. The researcher interviews the initial respondent who is asked to describe the focus of enquiry as he or she sees it. That interview is analysed into an initial formulation of respondent A's construction. Respondent B is then interviewed in the same way, except that themes from Respondent A's construction are introduced if they have not been mentioned. As a result the second interview contains not only Respondent B's construction but a response to A's construction. This is then analysed and forms the beginning of a joint construction. Respondent C is interviewed including at the end the introduction of themes from A and B if not covered. The process is repeated with new respondents being added until the information received either becomes redundant or falls between two or more constructions which are at odds in some way. Certain themes become salient and respondents are asked to respond to these. The 'circle' can be repeated if the researcher wishes the first respondents to comment on the salient themes.

Although Guba and Lincoln suggest that respondents nominate each other this method was not chosen for the Parkhurst study. The dynamics of prison life are such that taking part in a survey takes on all kinds of meaning within the prisoner population and it was better to rely on the prisoners who had emerged from the file survey, (described below) as having engaged in planned work with the Prison Probation Officers. This ensured that the group interviewed was a group of prisoners who had experienced the focus of the study and removed the element of power that prisoner-nomination might have given to one or two.

Appendix D illustrates the whole process of this method. The researcher had made a decision to build up the separate constructions of the three stakeholder groups but a decision about whether to proceed to the full third stage of negotiation between stakeholder groups was not taken at this point. The researcher had had discussions about this with a local researcher, Jackie Powell, who had used these methods in evaluating a travelling day hospital, Powell and Lovelock (1987). The researcher felt that the prisoners were not in a position to negotiate equally and therefore it might not be possible to use that part of the method. However, the earlier stages of individual interviews and possibly group discussion seemed appropriate for prisoners, Probation Officers and Prison

Officers, as the major stakeholders. In building up stakeholders' constructs, instead of asking questions based on the researcher's own construct of the work, it was hoped that a more "substantive" theory would emerge, Glaser and Strauss in Filstead (1970). The parameters of the research degree did not permit a complete exploration of the topic along the lines suggested by Guba and Lincoln, nor indeed that outlined by Glaser and Strauss. However, these theories had been useful in setting the scene for the interviewing.

In addition to the interviews, it seemed that the material might be enhanced by one or two case studies of individual prisoners and Kelly's repertory grid analysis was considered, Kelly (1991). This was ruled out for two reasons. The first was the time needed to complete the analysis. The second was reluctance to embark on an exercise which could stir up some very painful new areas for the client. This would put pressure on the researcher to work on those areas with the client and blur her roles. It was also felt that prisoners have enough to cope with without being exposed to further pressure for the purposes of research. The researcher felt that it might be better to use work that had already been done with clients, although this would not yield such a rich view of the relationship with the Probation Officer as a repertory grid analysis.

File Survey

The reading of case files began to emerge as a useful backdrop to the interviews for a number of reasons. In the first place the researcher wanted to know if her experience in Parkhurst, and particularly with lifers on "C" Wing, had given her a skewed picture of prison probation work. The pilot questionnaire had showed a significantly higher level of contact with the Parkhurst team than the previous prison Probation Team. Was this function of memory or reflected in the records? Zelditch in Filstead (1970) described enumeration and samples as the best methods for learning about frequency distribution, though not efficient for yielding experience on incidents, histories, or institutional norms and statuses. It was also felt that reading the files would indicate the main areas of focused work with the clients and provide a check on the original areas chosen, which were the offence and relationships with others, particularly family. Another reason was to see if the files yielded the information required; did the officers record the focused work in a way that could be identified? Would different styles of recording obscure this scrutiny? Was it possible to study records relating to work in previous prisons? It might also be a way of linking prisoners' characteristics with probation contact, e.g., types of offence, length of sentence, stage in sentence. A preliminary file reading exercise in June 1991 showed up some of these problems.

The first major problem was that where work had been undertaken with the client on their offending, the record was quite brief and referred to the ensuing report. Offence-related work is often initiated through the preparation of a parole report or institutional report relating to risk or location. The researcher found that officers would make an entry on the day to day part of the record such as:

"*Saw - for parole report. Lengthy interview. Will see him again next week to discuss draft.*"

This would be followed by:

"Saw - to discuss draft parole report. This provoked a long discussion about the victim's family."

The researcher could not glean very much from the reports themselves about the work undertaken as it was not clear which parts came from the current work and which from previous assessments.

The information about work with relationships was, however, documented more fully, probably because it involved contact with the outside world and there was a need for accurate detail on file to avoid confusion. It was usually possible to trace the process of work over a period of time with the client and this was charted in various reports or assessments. One drawback of prison probation records is that they do not routinely contain three monthly casework assessments, as the field records do, or should.

The question of different styles also emerged. Some officers have a cryptic style which is useful to them as a memory jogger but obscure to the reader. Others have a rich narrative style which indicates the nature of the work undertaken but it is not always easy to see where the client has actively participated. Only where a period of planned work takes place, particularly in a group, is it possible to be clear about what precisely was being attempted. This style is less likely with long term prisoners, particularly in the middle of their sentences. The overriding task at that stage appeared to be helping them manage their sentence in as active a way as possible, and any work on offending or relationships was interwoven with that attempt.

Recording done in previous prisons was interesting in that it showed the different styles of particular prison teams and indicated the pressures of high workload. In some prisons there would be no entry at all. In others there would be full assessments with regular use of standard forms to chart areas of work and progress. Other individuals seemed to record their work with all clients in immense detail, almost like a process record. The main problem was with handwritten records. Mostly they were just too difficult to read.

In conclusion it seemed that case files would be a fruitful source for indicating level of contact with the Probation Service, with the exception of one or two prisons where the team was too pressed to record anything. Telephone contact with those prison teams might produce amplification of their client contact. Case files would also indicate where some work had been done on the two areas in question, though "relationships" would be recorded in more detail than "offending". They would not, however, be useful in analysing the content of that work. In all cases details of the offence, sentence, stage of sentence and age of prisoner were given but ethnic classification was not always recorded. However, this was a minority of cases and it was felt that these could be followed up through the system for missing information. A decision was made, therefore, to use case files as part of the research and to use parts of the record relating to previous prisons as well as the current location. However, the use would be restricted to half a dozen prisoner characteristics, level of contact and presence or absence of the two areas, offending and relationships. Definitions would be important. It was decided that work on the offence would be included if there were more than two interviews on that subject, as officers routinely saw clients twice for reports, but might not embark on current work on the offence in them. Work on relationships would be included where the officer was being asked by one side or another to influence the other party's attitude to the relationship, or where the client expressed concern about his level of functioning in this area.

The researcher decided to attempt to decipher handwritten records where they appeared in the Parkhurst records, as quality of probation work is not neccesarily determined by the level of secretarial support. In fact, one of the drawbacks of case material is that the best case-workers do not always keep the neatest records and vice-versa. Daphne Shepherd had found similar problems with her study of mentally disordered offenders in Southampton (unpublished, private discussions with the author).

The file survey was undertaken in May 1992. The aim was to provide a picture of the contact between a sample of Parkhurst prisoners and Prison Probation Officers over the previous two years, including previous establishments in a

number of cases. The survey would also be used to define a group of prisoners for the interviews.

A random sample of prisoners at Parkhurst, excluding all hospital prisoners except for the lifers in the hospital, was generated by computer. Information was taken from the Probe database held by the Prison Service Psychology Department. PROBE = PROfiling BEhaviour and is a database held by all dispersal prison psychology departments. It holds information on the inmates present and past, their previous offences and in-prison behaviour. This system was chosen for a number of reasons. If the prisoners left the establishment during the study, the information would still be accessible. The Probe system holds more relevant and consistent information about prisoners than the LIDS day-to-day prison programme. It is also linked to SPSS.PC in the Psychology Department and this enabled the analysis to take place more easily than transferring to the researcher's home-based SPSS.PC programme.

Files were read on 22nd May 1992 relating to a sample of 53 prisoners, 25% of the population. The researcher noted all contacts recorded on the Part C follower which is a daily record sheet, between 1st May 1990 and 1st May 1992. In addition, the researcher noted where focused or sustained work appeared to have taken place on offending or family relationships. This was defined as taking place when there were more than two planned sessions on either topic. The definition was reinforced by the researcher's own knowledge of the cases. The prisoners were subsequently grouped into four sets:-

Group 1

14 prisoners (26.4%). This included all prisoners who had engaged in some focused work with Prison Probation Officer(s) during the period.

Group 2

10 prisoners (18.8%). This included all prisoners who had had substantial contact with Prison Probation Officer(s) but where the work did not appear to be focused (9-32 contacts).

Group 3

17 prisoners (32%). This included all prisoners who had had some contact (3-7 contacts).

Group 4

12 prisoners (22.6%). This included prisoners who had had minimal contact (less than 3 contacts).

Discussion of File Reading Process

Some problems which are normally common were not encountered in this research. Firstly, the researcher was used to the layout of the files and had 10 years' experience of reading probation files for supervisory purposes. This did of course raise the issue of what to do about matters that arose from the reading which the researcher might normally take up in supervision. As there were no serious professional issues to follow up, the researcher left all matters arising from the file reading and did not take them up in supervision. Normally a file check would have taken place at that time. The researcher decided to omit that check and await the following file check to take up any matters arising from the cases. If the researcher had found some serious omission or mistake a greater dilemma would have been presented. However, it could be argued that an outside researcher would also feel obliged to draw attention to such an issue.

Access to the files presented no problem because of the researcher's work position. In addition, the Parkhurst entries were typed and up to date which enhanced the validity and accessibility of the data. Where files were missing, the researcher knew how to get hold of them or request them from previous establishments. In one case this involved quite persistent telephoning, particularly because the researcher knew that a great deal of work had been done with this prisoner at the previous establishment and that he was likely to be in Group 1. In three cases the prisoners had moved on already and the files had left the establishment. The researcher substituted the next file in the cabinet in these cases.

Problems with the reading included some of the general hazards of file surveys. In some previous establishments records were handwritten and often illegible. In some establishments there were no entries at all, even though the prisoner had been there for a year or more. Styles vary and some officers are more able to define plans and focused work than others. The researcher chose to use only recorded contacts on the Part C, even though it was clear from some transfer summaries that there had been some contact. The exception to this was the case where focused work had clearly been done on a daily basis in the previous prison and this was outlined in the transfer summary. In addition, it was clear that Groups 2 and 3 included some prisoners who had done some focused work on their offending through reports being prepared, but it was felt more precise to remain with the original definition of focused work, i.e. more than two planned sessions on the topic. It could also be argued that some work was done with those prisoners in Group 2 who had substantial contact with no apparent focus, particularly where contact was being promoted with families, but this was simply not clear enough from the record to define. It is likely, therefore, that the final groups under-represent the work between Prison Probation Officers and prisoners.

The prisoners in Group 1 engaged in a range of work with the Prison Probation Officers, both in Parkhurst and previous establishments. 6 were located on 'B' wing, 5 on 'C' wing, 2 on 'M' wing and 1 in the Segregation Unit.

The Probe and SPSS programmes were then used to analyse the data in the four groups to see if there were any significant factors which might be relevant to the question of contact between prisoners and Probation Officers. The database contained 25 factors at the time of the study. From an initial printout of all these factors certain were chosen for analysis which seemed most relevant to Probation work. These factors were as follows:

Groups 1-4. (These were the four groups indicating the different levels of contact with the Probation Officers.) The groups were analysed by:

- Age

- Religion
- Race
- Sentence length
- Index offence
- Drug history (evidence of drugs prior to sentence)
- Alcohol history (evidence of alcohol abuse history)
- Self injury
- Number of previous convictions
- Total number of prisons allocated to this sentence
- Psychiatric history prior to sentence
- Psychiatric diagnosis in prison
- Security category (A-D)
- Number of times placed on report in Parkhurst
- Wing allocated to in Parkhurst.

The Probe programme descriptions for variables which are not self-explanatory are attached as Appendix E.

A Chi square test was carried out on the nominal variables and Kruskal Wallis test on the ordinal variables.

To conclude this summary of methodological considerations up to the start of the interviews, the focus had shifted to a consumer-based account of work that prisoners undertook with Prison Probation Officers in the areas of their offending and their relationships. The decision had been taken to use case files, in addition to interviews with prisoners, Prison Officers and Probation Officers. The decision to base the study in Parkhurst had been made, although case records would be read in relation to previous prisons. A random sample of 53 case files was read for the purpose of establishing the level of contact with the Prison Probation Officers. Those prisoners who had engaged in focused work with Prison Probation Officers, on offending or relationships, over the previous 2 years were interviewed, taking a lead from the methods outlined by Guba and Lincoln. Interviews also took place with four Prison Officers, four Prison Probation Officers, and fifteen prisoners. The Prison Officers were drawn from

those with experience of Shared Working, i.e. officers who had been involved in working with Prison Probation Officers. All four members of the Probation Team were interviewed. As each interview took place the researcher attempted to create and develop constructs of the contact, identifying concerns, claims and issues. It was envisaged that some of these respondents would then be interviewed together in three separate groups after the individual interview process, to discuss unresolved concerns, claims and issues. In the event, because of the researcher's change of job which took her away from Parkhurst, follow up discussion of the interview findings took place with the Probation Team as a group, and with individual Prison Officers and prisoners who were still at Parkhurst and available when the researcher visited. The researcher had intended to have a group of all three stakeholder representatives but only if it was apparent that this would empower the group of prisoners. However, lack of time and the extended time scale of the study ruled this out. The shared contructions emerging from the stakeholder interviews would only be a statement about those respondents' experience at that time, but it was hoped that a rich account of what can go on between prisoners and Probation Officers would be achieved. Together with the pilot questionnaire and the case files it was hoped to make some sense of the gap between received wisdom about prison probation work and the experience of the participants.

Interviews with Prisoners, Prison Officers and Probation Officers/Process

Fifteen prisoners were interviewed for the study. Thirteen were those prisoners who had emerged from the file survey as the group with whom some structured work had been done on offending or family relationships (Group 1). Two other prisoners were interviewed. One of the original sample had moved on from Parkhurst, even though the interviews took place as soon as possible after the file survey. A substitute was found from that officer's existing caseload on the same wing, with whom structured work had taken place. An additional, foreign, prisoner was added as this group had been identified in the pilot study as one whose needs were not well met by the Probation Service. This man had been the subject of structured work on offending and his family contacts. One of the original group from the file survey declined to be interviewed as it was the week of his release.

The interviews with prisoners were carried out in July and August 1992 by the researcher, when three weeks were set aside for this purpose. A copy of the pro-forma letter to the prisoners is attached as Appendix F. A follow-up contact interview to the letters was undertaken by the researcher to ascertain whether the respondent wished to take part in the interview and whether it could be taped. Only one prisoner indicated his intention to decline after the letter and he was about to be released so the researcher did not attempt to follow him up. All other respondents agreed to be interviewed. Only two prisoners did not wish the interviews to be tape-recorded.

The process of carrying out the prisoner interviews was relatively straightforward for the researcher. When one respondent was not available it was possible for her to arrange to see another respondent so as not to waste the time set aside. All the interviews were undertaken within the three weeks set aside in July, apart from one who was on home leave who was interviewed in August. Each day after the interview the researcher would transcribe the interview onto cards, putting each self-standing theme onto a separate piece of card. The major themes were then listed for introduction into the next interview, if they did not arise naturally. This method is described by Guba and Lincoln as being the best way to complete the hermeneutic circle for the joint construction. It was very time-consuming and often

the work would go on long into the evening. However, it seemed vital to examine each interview before moving on. Although the result was a very intense three weeks' work, it enabled the researcher to enter into the prisoners' viewpoints without distraction or interruption and to listen and concentrate without interpretation. This is not to say that the process was entirely without the normal set of problems besetting the prison researcher.

Some entries from the research log will illustrate these:

"*During the interview another prisoner became very irate and was shouting and yelling outside the door in the main office. The interview carried on as the prisoner said this was alright.*" (However, I did find it difficult to concentrate completely as I knew the prisoner outside and wondered if he was about to "blow".)

"*Went over to "C" Wing to interview a prisoner. He said he thought his appointment was Wednesday. I did not have my diary on me. What a basic error! He agreed to be interviewed anyway. I should have checked at that point who I was meant to be seeing but I had it in my head it was him. Later discovered it was another prisoner and had to go back and apologise to him, though he did not seem to mind and said it was fine. I doubt an outside researcher would have made this mistake. On the other hand my knowledge of the prisoners made it easier to apologise.*"

"*The interview was constantly interrupted because we had to sit in the main room on the wing and not in a private office. Officers came to and fro. I wonder if this was more than necessary but perhaps not. There was also an alarm bell in another wing. We stopped the tape at this point.*"

"*I was asked to see the prisoner early by the Psychiatrist as he had a group at 10.30 which included this prisoner. Started off in the wrong room and then had to move. Prisoner quite humorous about all this.*"

"*Interviewed a prisoner in the Segregation Unit*". (He was on the upstairs landing which is for prisoners segregated for their own protection. Those downstairs are

on punishment.) "*I had rung the night before and also this morning to check on the time and the prisoner but when I arrived the Prison Officer said "It looks like you won't be able to see him". I went down and saw the Senior Officer and managed to persuade him that I only wanted to see the prisoner in his cell and that an Officer was not required to stand outside all the time," (this was one of the problems presented about my interview). "I suppose an outside researcher would have seen this prisoner in the Visits Room anyway but certainly an outsider coming on to the wing would have had no joy this morning as there were ructions downstairs and the staff were needed to be on call down there.*"

"*Once again, having checked this interview last night and this morning, I arrive on the wing to find that a telephone call has been booked for half way through it. We interrupt the interview for the telephone call then the Works Department comes and without so much as a by your leave starts fixing the lock on the door. Fortunately the prisoner was fairly good humoured about all this and we managed to get through the interview.*"

Overall the research interviews seemed to mirror the experience of Prison Probation Officers' interviews in being easily marginalised, prone to interruptions and attempts to cancel for inadequate reasons. What struck the researcher on the main wing, where she had not carried out many interviews before, was how very noisy it was and how the constant shouting up the landings produced a very unfriendly and tense atmosphere.

The transcribing of the tapes took a long time which had been anticipated, between 2 and 5 hours per tape. However, the tapes were invaluable for maintaining the accuracy of the data, particularly for the researcher as a social worker. They showed when she was slipping out of role, where she had selectively not heard or misheard a piece of data and they preserved the flavour of the interview. The equipment worked well and no tapes were blank or inaudible, though notes were taken as well. It was felt useful to have the tapes for later checks on authenticity. At one stage consideration was given to some direct consultancy over the interview, through the tape:

"A very difficult interview this morning because the prisoner is mentally fairly dull and I found myself having to draw him out. I do not know whether I drew him into specific answers or simply into answering. I shall need to give this tape to Don [the Principal Psychologist] to listen to, to check out.....Later. Just finished transcribing PH13's interview. Perhaps not as incoherent as I thought though there are quite a few ramblings and misunderstandings. I might be able to use some of it so I will discuss this later with Don."

In the event a great deal of material was used from this interview. If notes alone had been taken they would not have been used to the same extent because there would not have been the same opportunity to re-evaluate the interview in detail. This man would, therefore, have been unable to contribute to the research process, simply by virtue of his difficulty in expressing himself.

Further extracts from the log illustrate the difficulties of taping.

"It took me a long time to analyse this interview. I think the prisoner's thought patterns were fairly disorganised and I noticed instead of being able to get ideas on to one side of the cards it was taking me two or three cards sometimes."

"Later. Had to transcribe interview late at night because of work this afternoon. That is two nights running working until midnight. This is very hard work."

"Another interview on "C" Wing. Went quite well. Managed to transcribe it in the afternoon. Hope to have this evening off. Later. I think I have left my coffee pot on in the prison. Have to go in at 9.00 p.m. As it turns out I have not left it on. So much for my evening off."

Transcribing was done by having one hand on the tape recorder and one writing on the cards. This was not as fast as having transcribing equipment but expense ruled this out and other researchers had not given the impression that this equipment necessarily speeded up the process. There were some instances of unintelligibility but not to a significant degree.

The other issue that came out in the interviews was the position of the researcher as also being, or having been known to the prisoners, as the Prison Senior Probation Officer. There were three interviews which drew attention to this split role. The first was described in the following way in the log:

"*This interview today was quite difficult because I have had quite a bit of contact with this prisoner before and I think this did affect the content of the interview. I think he was more complimentary about Senior Probation Officers and Probation Officers generally than he might otherwise have been.*" The researcher was able to distinguish fact from fiction in this case over one comment:

"*.....it was apparent, when analysing the interview, that he does not always distinguish fact from fantasy, for example he referred to an 80 year old woman that I had suggested as a volunteer and this had turned out to have some good things about it but in fact he never had contact with this volunteer,*" [who was not 80]. "*At the end of the interview he had to talk to me about a complaint because a report from Probation was not apparent at the Lifer Board last week.*"

The decision was made to treat his general complimentary comments about the Service with care but to concentrate on specific comments.

The question about fact and fiction was more difficult and this was brought out in the second case:

"*A bit of a problem emerging in this interview because he was very critical of the wing Probation Officer who is a woman and I am not sure how much of this is to do with general attitudes towards women and so my knowledge of him is rather prejudicing the way I receive the material*".

However, the researcher found that the method of building up joint constructions overcame this problem. Where the prisoner's comments simply added to an existing pile of cards on a particular theme and confirmed what other prisoners were saying then the material was used. Where the comment was very much a product of fantasy it tended to lay outside the other "theme" piles and therefore

would not be included anyway in the joint construction.

The third case was one where the prisoner gave a specific example of the researcher's own intervention to illustrate a point. It was made in an unselfconscious way and did not seem to get in the way of the interview.

The researcher's relationship with her team was obviously affected by the research. One aspect was the fact that she could not discuss the findings of the interviews with the prisoners with them until after they had been interviewed. Because the interviewer for their group, the Principal Psychologist, was not available for the interviews until October the researcher was in the strange position of having information she wanted to share with her team but not being able to do so.

"*When I came back to the office both his Probation Officers, i.e. the ones he sees, x and y, were in the office. They asked me how it went. Pleased to see me back. Jokingly asked for more details. I joked about how I could not give them.*"

"*It is quite difficult researching the team sometimes. There do seem to be two different styles emerging for prison Probation - one which is more structured, less time on the wing, more arranged appointments and the other which is easy accessibility on the wing. I have both different styles in my team. It may be difficult writing about this.*"

Interviews with Prison Probation Officers

The four members of the Probation Team had been involved throughout the research project, discussing the process of interviewing the prisoners and Prison Officers, though not the content of the interviews. The researcher decided to ask an independent person to interview the Probation Officers themselves, as they were line managed by the researcher and would have more freedom to explore their perceptions of the contact with prisoners with another interviewer. The Principal Psychologist at Parkhurst agreed to do these interviews. He had been involved as field consultant to the researcher and was partly familiar with the methodology. He decided not to tape the interviews but recorded notes on cards. The interviews

were carried out in October 1992. Unfortunately, the researcher was not clear about the need to put different themes on different cards so the cards on each individual interview ran on from each other in a continuous form of recording. This meant that it was possible for the researcher to link the interviews with the individuals very easily. Also the cards then had to be cut up by the researcher for analysis. However, it is likely that the researcher would have been able to identify most of the comments made as she knew the individuals very well. This was a valuable learning experience for the researcher about giving a clear unambiguous brief to a co-worker. However, the team were at least enabled to have their interviews at some distance from the researcher. They were not concerned about the identification of comments, but keen to know the outcome of the research, which was given in an initial form in December 1992. In retrospect, this process should have been repeated with the prisoners and Prison Officers at that stage, rather than await the final analysis which did not take place for a year.

All four members of the team were interviewed separately by the co-researcher for one hour. The interviewer started by outlining the subject under discussion:

"*Mary Anne is interested in contact and work done between prisoners and Probation Officers.*
Why is it that some prisoners do a lot of work with POs and others don't?
What sort of things either help or hinder that work taking place?"

The writing up of the interview chapter came six months later because the researcher changed jobs and moved house. The consequent pressures on time made it impossible to work on the research during the week and some special time had to be set aside with the co-operation of her new employers. This underlines the problem of part-time research. Because of the inevitable life events and changes that take place over a four year period the research is highly likely to be interrupted or even abandoned in the face of new pressures. However, at the beginning of 1993 the debate about the role of the Prison Probation Officer was taking place between the Probation Service Division and the Prison Service and it seemed very important to try to finish the research and to publish an article on the main findings. This was the main motivating factor for the researcher at this

stage.

Conclusion

The study had now taken shape, although it is important to acknowledge that the process of research had started long before the researcher applied to register for the higher degree course. The main shift for the researcher had been from a historical viewpoint, with a reliance on official descriptions and a managerial outlook, to a prisoner-centred approach which virtually turned the study on its head. One result of this change was in the researcher's own practice. All the reading of consumer accounts of the service had led her to replace an approach based on problems to an approach based on the prisoner's strengths and resources. By this stage the team had changed their policies in response to the pilot questionnaire; so in fact the research had already affected the potential respondents. This made it even more vital to use a methodology that was based on a dynamic process, building in the impact of the researcher rather than trying to work round it.

The other major change in emphasis was the decision not to focus on the field Probation Officers. The reading, discussions, pilot questionnaire and thinking had led the researcher to place the Prison Probation Officer closer to the prisoner than the field officer, in the majority of cases. Also Brian Williams (1990) had undertaken a study of the field Probation Officers' relationship to throughcare, and work had also been done by McAllister, Bottomley and Leibling (1992). The researcher felt that a focus on the Prison Probation Officer in her study might complement these other studies. The original query about whether any factors governed the choice between field or Prison Probation Officer had been modified. Very few prisoners were undertaking focused work with their field officers. This was an area where the researcher had at first been influenced by her experience on "C" Wing. Some of the "C" Wing lifers <u>had</u> in fact kept in touch with their field officers and the latter contributed significantly to the planning and progress of their sentence. However, these were in a minority and the reading of the case files bore this out. The present study would therefore focus on the work undertaken with the Prison Probation Officer, while leaving open the possibility of describing work with

field officers where it occured. This was most likely to be in the area of relationships with those outside the prison where the prison and field Probation Officers were working together. Once the constructivist methodology had been chosen a framework and timetable was drawn up. As the study was no longer based on positivist principles there was no need for a "control" group at HMP Albany. To have interviewed there would have been interesting but would have required replication of the entire study, involving all three stakeholder groups, and time did not permit this. Had extra time been available it would have been spent on expanding the Parkhurst evaluations through the further stages. In July 1993 the researcher wrote to all the prisoners with a summary of the findings (Appendix G). In October 1993 the researcher visited Parkhurst to discuss the findings with the prisoners, Prison Officers, Prison Probation Officers and the Governor.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE

A synopsis of the questionnaire results is attached as Appendix A. This was presented to the Parkhurst Probation Team before the researcher went on maternity leave in April 1990. Later that year the results were entered into SPSS for analysis. Some of the questions were post-coded as they were open questions. Where there were several answers to one question the first item was used for coding, though all the answers are described in the synopsis.

Questions 1-3 (Fig 4.1) show that the sample consisted of men in the middle of a long sentence, settled into their time at Parkhurst. Four were lifers.

Figure 4.1

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Length of Sentence (N = 24)	10.5 years	4.94
Time Served (N = 27)	3.42 years	1.97
Time at Parkhurst (N = 28)	1.33 years	1.46

Although the SD is high for length of sentence, only 5 prisoners were serving under 7 years and none less than 3 years.

Question 4 asked about the most important part of the Probation Officer's job. (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 (The most important part of the Probation Officer's job)

Task	Frequency		(%)	
Family (contact)	6 }		(20) }	
Outside Links	3 }	9	(10) }	30
General Approach i.e. genuine, friendship	5		(16.7)	
Problem Sharing	5		(16.7)	
Release	2		(6.7)	
Practical	2		(6.7)	
Liaison with Officials	2		(6.7)	
No Contact	2		(6.7)	
Service for Foreigners	1		(3.3)	
Psychiatric Help	1		(3.3)	
Negative Comment	1		(3.3)	
	30		(100)	

The first mentioned task was taken for the analysis. More comments are made in the synopsis as some prisoners mentioned more than one task/subject.

No prisoner mentioned work on offending. The emphasis is on the traditional role of the Prison Welfare Officer rather than the emerging role of the Prison Probation Officer which focuses more on offending-related work.

The average rate of satisfaction with Prison Probation Officers was 7.37 out of a ranking of 10. (SD 2.73).

Figure 4.3 (How do you rate a Probation Officer's job?)

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Bad	1	2	6.7
Bad	2	1	3.3
Medium	4	1	3.3
Medium	5	2	6.7
Medium	7	5	16.7
Good	8	5	16.7
Good	9	4	13.3
Good	10	7	23.3
Missing	99	3	10.0
TOTAL:	-	30	100.0

It is difficult to read any meaning into this result, partly because of the range and also because customer satisfaction surveys generally reveal a 75% satisfaction rate and these respondents were in a position where the people they were evaluating had power over their lives. Nevertheless, Parkhurst prisoners are generally fairly outspoken about their views on the system. Question 6 showed that 86.7% of the answers to this question were, however, based on personal experience.

Question 7. The level of contact between Prison Probation Officers at Parkhurst and prisoners was high in relation to their previous experience.

Figure 4.4

Previous Prison Contact

Parkhurst Contact	Weekly 1	Fortnightly 2	Monthly 3	Once/Twice 4	Not at All 5	Row Total
Weekly 1	1	1	-	3	2	7 (23.3)
Fortnightly 2	-	1	-	1	1	3 (10.0)
Monthly 3	-	-	1	3	1	5 (16.7)
Once or Twice 4	1	-	1	6	4	12 (40.0)
Not at All 5	-	-	-	1	2	3 (10.0)
Column Total	2 (6.7)	2 (6.7)	2 (6.7)	14 (46.7)	10 (33.3)	30 (100)

T.Test/(Pairs) were carried out on the two variables. This showed the difference to be significant, ($t = -3.16$, $df = 29$, $p = .004$).

Thus half of the sample had met with the Probation Officer at least once a month in the previous three months whereas only 20.1% had done so at the previous prison. Ten prisoners had no contact at all at the previous prison, compared with three at Parkhurst. Answers to Question 8 showed that this contact was mainly on the basis of a mixture of "call-ups" (initiated by the Probation Officer) and "applications", initiated by the prisoners. This was frequently supplemented by an informal chat, showing that availability on the wing increased contact.

The subjects for discussion focused on:-

1. Reports and Boards (14)
2. Contact with outside, family and friends (11)

3. Release plans (11)
4. Feelings (7)
5. Offences (5)

The answers suggest that the reports, boards and offences would have surfaced as topics in the "call-ups", initiated by the Probation Officers but these subjects appear not to have influenced the prisoners' view of the role as it was not mentioned in Question 4.

The prisoners' view of the factors influencing re-offending were:

Money/lifestyle	7
Finding a job	6
Being accepted by people at work	6
Health	6
Keeping a job	5
Breaking the habit of offending	4
Drink	4
Partner	4
Obligations to friends	3
No friends	3
Somewhere to live	3
Drugs	2
Keeping away from friends	2
Being accepted by friends	1
Gambling	1

Clearly, finance and employment are major considerations for prisoners prior to release, with drink, drugs, offending and accommodation further down the list. Yet the Prison Probation Officers are encouraged through current policy to focus more on offending behaviour and substance abuse, than on finance and employment.

11 out of 30 (36.7%) prisoners identified other problems which they thought the Prison Probation Officer should help them with.

Figure 4.5 (What other problems?)

Problem	Frequency	%
Foreign Prisoners	3	10.0
Re-Offending	2	6.7
Money	2	6.7
Resettlement	1	3.3
Family Work	1	3.3
More Power	1	3.3
Shared Working	1	3.3
Not Applicable	19	63.3
TOTAL:	30	100

Answers to Question 13 showed two interesting features, the poor service to foreign offenders, and the fact that many aspects of the Prison Probation Officers' role were not understood by prisoners. Therefore, suggestions about practical and welfare matters, resettlement and family problems, all part of the role, were not recognised as such, or the service provided was inadequate in the eyes of the prisoners. Greater knowledge about the role and function of the Prison Probation Officer is indicated. An answer to Question 10 echoes this:

"*Through reading this leaflet I did not know I could discuss such matters.*"

This question links to Question 15 (what ought Probation Officers to do?)

Figure 4.6 (What ought Probation Officers to do?)

Task	Frequency	%
As Now	5	16.7
More Power	4	13.3
Help with Problems	3	10.0
Service to Foreigners	2	6.7
Wing-Based	2	6.7
Family	2	6.7
Unclear/Cannot Comment	2	6.7
Earn Keep	1	3.3
Represent Prisoners	1	3.3
Resettlement	1	3.3
Increase Prisoners' Power	1	3.3
Psychiatric Skills	1	3.3
Missing	5	16.7
TOTAL:	30	100

The main gap which was recognised by the team was in the service to foreign prisoners. The perceived powerlessness of the role supports some of the comments in the prisoner autobiographies. 5 prisoners did not answer. One felt unable to comment through limited experience and one felt that the question was unclear. The others left this question blank. This might indicate a lack of knowledge, power or control on the part of the prisoners in relation to the probation role. Again there is no mention of offence-related work and resettlement is only mentioned once. The validity of the core tasks of the Prison Probation Officer as reflected in the current National Framework (1994) seems not to be perceived by the prisoners.

Question 14, about the most difficult part of the sentence, was a painful one to ask, but the probation team were interested in how they could focus their efforts to help these long term prisoners cope with their sentence.

Figure 4.7 (Most difficult part of the sentence)

Value Label	Frequency	%
Family and Partners	13	43.3
Other Prisoners	4	13.3
Innocence	2	6.7
Guilt/Regret	2	6.7
Prison System	2	6.7
Release	1	3.3
Health	1	3.3
Isolation	1	3.3
Regime for R43s	1	3.3
No Problems	1	3.3
Missing	2	6.7
TOTAL:	30	100.0

The number of answers relating to the family belies the commonly held belief that long-term prisoners lose touch with their families. These answers suggest that helping to maintain and increase family and outside ties could have an impact on the problems encountered through long term imprisonment. (The Probation Officers might be said to have less impact on the effects of other prisoners and the prison system.)

Questions 16 and 17 referred to field Probation Officers. 19 were in touch (63.3%) and 11 were not (36.7%). Most saw the field Officers' role as focusing on outside links but there were 5 negative comments about the service

provided. Only 8 out of 30 had contact several times a year with the field Probation Officer.

Figure 4.8 (Letters or visits from outside Probation Officers)

	Frequency	%
Several Yearly	8	26.7
Once/Twice a Year	10	33.3
Sometimes	1	3.3
Not Applicable	10	33.3
	1	3.3
TOTAL:	30	100.0

These findings are replicated by Kingston (1979) and Williams (1990). Burnett (1992) has shown some evidence of a lack of shared perception between prisoners and field Probation Officers regarding their role. Prisoners in the middle of a long sentence appear not to have high priority for most field Probation Officers.

To summarise and conclude, the pilot study had shown a high level of contact at Parkhurst between Prison Probation Officers and prisoners, though some felt closer contact was needed. The perception of the role mainly centred on welfare tasks. The Prison Probation Officer was seen as having insufficient power within the system. There was a feeling that the Prison Probation Officer was slightly apart from the system, on the side of the prisoner. The sample was of long-term prisoners in the middle of their sentence, a significant number of whom experienced problems in relation to keeping in touch with their families or partners. There was no indication that the prisoners saw offence-focused work as part of the role of the Probation Officers. They were by and large satisfied with the Prison Probation service but not so much with the field Probation service. The need for more knowledge about both was indicated.

CHAPTER FIVE

FILE SURVEY ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The file survey consisted of a scrutiny of a random sample of files on 25% of the Parkhurst population, excluding all hospital prisoners, except lifers. The reading took place in May 1992 and a note was made of all contacts with the Prison Probation Officer, noted on the Part C daily record sheet between 1st May 1990 and 1st May 1992. In addition, the researcher noted where focused or sustained work appeared to have taken place on offending or family relationships. This was defined as taking place when there were two or more planned sessions on either topic. The prisoners were grouped into four sets - Group 1 included all prisoners who had engaged in some focused work with Prison Probation Officers over the two years. Group 2 had substantial contact (9-32 contacts) but no planned work. Group 3 had some contact (3-7 contacts). Group 4 had less than 3 contacts. The Probe and SPSS programmes were then used to analyse the four groups for significant differences at the 5% level.

Discussion of Nominal Variables

Figure 5.1 Prison Index Offence

Group ↓	Murder	Homicide	Other Violence	Robbery	Drugs	Firearms	Explosives	Other Indictable Offence	Total
1	6	3	0	3	1	1	0	0	14 (26.4%)
2	2	1	1	3	0	0	1	2	10 (18.9%)
3	4	2	0	8	2	0	0	1	17 (32.1%)
4	0	2	0	5	3	2	0	0	12 (22.6%)
	12 (22.6%)	8 (15.1%)	1 (1.9%)	19 (35.8%)	6 (11.3%)	3 (5.7%)	3 (1.9%)	3 (5.7%)	53 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	28.77703	21	.11946

The figures in the cells are the actual numbers counted.

Discussion

There is no statistical difference but there are some trends. It seems as if Group 1 contains more prisoners (i.e. half) convicted of murder and homicide and Group 4 contained no murderers. That would link with the higher proportion of lifers in Group 1 (Figure 5.12.3) and fewer prisoners convicted of robbery in Group 1. This also links with the wing table (figure 5.2 below) and the fact that five of the lifers were on C Wing. The explanation would seem to be that C Wing takes some of the most serious offenders in the system and has a high proportion of lifers anyway. Most of these life sentences are for murder or homicide. Lifers are more likely to be targeted by probation and vice versa because of the nature of the sentence. C Wing has a multi-disciplinary team approach to assessment and treatment, supporting the Probation Officers' work and enabling them to target planned work where it is needed.

Figure 5.2

Wing

Group ↓	B	M	Hospital	Segregation Unit	Special Secure Unit	C Wing Special Unit	Row Total
1	5	2	0	2	0	5	14 (26.4%)
2	5	2	1	1	0	1	10 (18.9%)
3	8	2	3	4	0	0	17 (32.1%)
4	9	2	0	0	1	0	12 (22.6%)
	27 (50.9%)	8 (15.1%)	4 (7.5%)	7 (13.2%)	1 (1.9%)	6 (11.3%)	53 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	23.82267	15	.06817

Discussion

0.06817 (Pearson) is close to significance. This is discussed above in relation to Figure 5.1.

Religion

Figure 5.3

Religion

Group ↓	Nil	Church of England	Roman Catholic	Non-Conformist	Muslim	Jewish	Sikh/Hindu Buddh	Total
1	1	8	4	0	1	0	0	14 (26.4%)
2	2	2	3	0	1	1	1	10 (18.9%)
3	3	2	7	2	1	1	1	17 (32.1%)
4	3	2	4	0	2	0	1	12 (22.6%)
	9 (17.0%)	14 (26.4%)	18 (34.0%)	2 (3.8%)	5 (9.4%)	2 (3.8%)	3 (5.7%)	53 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	17.40773	18	.49526

Discussion

There would appear to be no differences to note under religion. It may be however that the Chi-Square tests fail to achieve statistical significance because of sparse data. It may be that the small sample size means the tests lack the power to detect differences that do exist in the population.

Present Security Category

Figure 5.4

Security Category

Group ↓	A	B	C	D	Row Total
1	2	9	1	2	14 (26.4%)
2	4	4	2	0	10 (18.9%)
3	3	13	1	0	17 (32.1%)
4	4	8	0	0	12 (22.6%)
	13 (24.5%)	34 (64.2%)	4 (7.5%)	2 (3.8%)	53 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	12.20274	9	.20212

Discussion

There is no statistical difference in the security categories, but it would appear that there are more Category As in Group 4 and less in Group 1 than would be expected if the category had no effect on the group. However, when the lifers and non-lifers were analysed separately, a significant difference was found between the groups. (See Figures 5.4.1 and 5.4.2). Category A non-lifers were absent from Groups 1 and 2 and there were more Category Bs in Groups 3 and 4 than in Groups 1 and 2. There were no Category C or D men in Groups 3 or 4. The Category B lifers were more likely to be in Group 1. It seems, therefore, that there is a trend of prisoners increasing their contact with Probation Officers as their security category is reduced, apart from Category B Non-Lifers.

Figure 5.4.1.

Present Security Category - Lifers

Group ↓	A	B	Row Total
1	2	7	9 (45.0%)
2	4	0	4 (20.0%)
3	2	3	5 (25.0%)
4	2	0	2 (10.0%)
	10 (50.0%)	10 (50.0%)	20 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	8.97778	3	.02959

Figure 5.4.2

Present Security Category - Non-Lifers

Group ↓	A	B	C	D	Row Total
1	-	2	1	2	5 (15.2%)
2	-	4	2	-	6 (18.2%)
3	1	10	1	-	12 (36.4%)
4	2	8	-	-	10 (30.3%)
	3 (9.1%)	24 (72.7%)	4 (12.1%)	2 (6.1%)	33 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	18.37917	9	.03102

History of Self Injury

Figure 5.5

History of self injury

Group ↓	No evidence	Prior to this sentence	This sentence	Both prior to and this sentence	Row Total
1	10	3	0	0	13 (28.9%)
2	7	0	0	1	8 (17.8%)
3	10	2	1	0	13 (28.9%)
4	11	0	0	0	11 (24.4%)
	38 (84.4%)	5 (11.1%)	1 (2.2%)	1 (2.2%)	45 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	11.58477	9	.23774

Number of Missing Observations: 8

Discussion

There are no significant differences here, but it would be expected that the Probation Officers would target those prisoners who had a history of self-injury and therefore it is not surprising that there are none in Group 4. The three in Group 3 raise the question about why they had such low contact with Prison Probation Officers.

There are missing observations in this table and the tables for history of alcohol, drugs and psychiatric problems because information on these factors was not available on the original prison file from which the PROBE data was derived.

Evidence of Alcohol Abuse History

Figure 5.6

Alcohol abuse history

Group ↓	No Evidence of Alcohol	Evidence of Alcohol	Row Total
1	8	4	12 (26.7%)
2	7	2	9 (20.0%)
3	11	2	13 (28.9%)
4	10	1	11 (24.4%)
	36 (80.0%)	9 (20.0%)	45 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	2.35237	3	.50256

Number of Missing Observations: 8

Discussion

This analysis did not produce any significant difference but there is a trend of more than expected with alcohol problems in Groups 1 and 2 and less in Groups 3 and 4, which would be consistent with Probation Officers targeting alcohol problems. Had data been drawn from probation files rather than the PROBE database, higher numbers of prisoners generally with alcohol problems would undoubtedly have emerged. A future study might benefit from combining data sources.

Evidence of drugs prior to sentence

Figure 5.7

Evidence of drugs prior to sentence

Group ↓	No Evidence	Cannabis Only	Other than Cannabis	Total
1	10	1	1	12 (26.7%)
2	6	3	0	9 (20.0%)
3	5	7	1	13 (28.9%)
4	8	3	0	11 (24.4%)
	29 (64.4%)	14 (31.1%)	2 (4.4%)	45 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	7.98340	6	.23932

Number of Missing Observations: 8

Discussion

There are no significant or interesting differences in this analysis.

Figure 5.8

Diagnosis

Group ↓	No Psychiatric Diagnosis	Yes Psychiatric Diagnosis	Row Total
1	11	3	14 (26.4%)
2	9	1	10 (18.9%)
3	15	2	17 (32.1%)
4	12	0	12 (22.6%)
	47 (88.7%)	6 (11.3%)	53 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	2.97740	3	.39512

Discussion

There are no significant differences here, though no prisoner with a psychiatric diagnosis is found in Group 4, which might indicate targeting. Given the reputation that Parkhurst has for psychiatrically disturbed prisoners the numbers with psychiatric diagnosis seem quite low. It has to be remembered, however, that prisoners in the hospital would not be entered on the Probe database if they were there for assessment/temporary treatment (known as "lodgers"), rather than allocation on a more permanent basis. It is likely, therefore, that prisoners with a psychiatric diagnosis are under-represented in the sample. These comments also apply to Figure 5.9 on psychiatric history below.

Group by Psychiatric History

Figure 5.9

Group ↓	No Psychiatric History	Yes Psychiatric History	Row Total
1	11	3	14 (30.4%)
2	7	1	8 (17.4%)
3	11	2	13 (28.3%)
4	11	0	11 (23.9%)
	40 (87.0%)	6 (13.0%)	46 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	2.58276	3	.46052

Number of Missing Observations: 7

Group by Race Ethnic Code

Figure 5.10

Group ↓	Other	White	West Indian	Indian	Row Total
1	0	13	1	0	14 (26.4%)
2	1	8	1	0	10 (18.9%)
3	0	14	3	0	17 (32.1%)
4	0	10	0	2	12 (22.6%)
	1 (1.9%)	45 (84.9%)	5 (9.4%)	2 (3.8%)	53 (100%)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	13.71138	9	.13297

Discussion

There are no significant differences here, nor were there any when the categories were reduced to two: white and other. However, it is worth noting that C Wing has always had and continues to have just white prisoners. Given the fact that prisoners are more likely in this survey to engage in planned work on C Wing it would follow that prisoners of West Indian and Indian origin would be less likely to engage in planned work. There is a trend of more white prisoners than expected in Group 1 and less West Indian and Indian prisoners. There are more Indian prisoners in Group 4 than expected.

Continuous Variables

Non-parametric tests were carried out on the variables age, sentence, previous convictions, previous prison institutions and reports by group (Kruskal-Wallis 1-way ANOVA). The usual T tests were not used because of the size of the sample and skew of data. In the Kruskal-Wallis H test, cases in the different samples are ranked together in one series. Scores can be compared in more than two groups.

The tables show the mean rank for each group, the number of cases in them, the chi-square statistic and its significance level. A table of group means is also shown for each variable.

Age

Figure 5.11

Group	Mean Rank	Cases
1	24.25	14
2	22.20	10
3	22.91	17
4	40.00	12
		Total: 53

Cases	Chi-Square	Significance	Chi-Square	Corrected for Ties Significance
53	11.1044	.0112	11.1449	.0110

Age was found to be close to significance. When the lifers and determinate prisoners were analysed separately the significance remained for the non-lifers, but not the lifers (Figures 5.11.2 and 5.11.3). However, the trend is the same. It seems, therefore, that older prisoners were over-represented in Group 4, but as they were also more likely to be determinate sentence men it is not clear which factor influences contact with the PPO (Figure 5.12.3).

Figure 5.11.1 (Means Summaries of Age by Group)

Group ↓	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases
1	35.3571	7.1962	14
2	35.8000	11.5162	10
3	34.2353	7.4122	17
4	46.6667	10.8404	12
Total:	37.6415	10.1149	Total: 53

Figure 5.11.2 (Age by Group for Non-Lifers)

Group ↓	Mean Rank	Cases
1	17.50	5
2	11.67	6
3	12.75	12
4	25.05	10
		Total: 33

			Corrected for Ties	
Cases	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**
33	11.0876	.0113	11.1341	.0110

Figure 5.11.3 (Age by Group for Lifers)

Group ↓	Mean Rank	Cases
1	8.39	9
2	10.63	4
3	11.20	5
4	18.00	2
		Total: 20

			Corrected for Ties	
Cases	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**
20	4.4321	.2184	4.4522	.2166

Sentence

Figure 5.12 (Non-Lifers)

Group	Mean Rank	Cases
1	20.80	5
2	14.17	6
3	14.71	12
4	19.55	10
		Total: 33

			Corrected for Ties	
Cases	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**
33	2.6568	.4476	2.6892	.4421

Figure 5.12.1 (Means Summaries of Sentence by Group for Non-Lifers)

Group ↓	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases
1	12.8000	4.7117	5
2	10.1667	4.4008	6
3	10.6667	4.2068	12
4	14.1000	6.9514	10
Total:	11.9394	5.3147	33

Figure 5.12.2 (Lifer Status by Group)

Group ↓	Non-Lifer	Lifer	Row Total
1	5	9	14 (26.4)
2	6	4	10 (18.9)
3	12	5	17 (32.1)
4	10	2	12 (22.6)
Total:	33 (62.3)	20 (37.7)	53 (100.0)

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	6.99044	3	.07220

Discussion

The factor of sentence was not found to be of statistical significance in relation to determinate sentence prisoners, though there is a trend of longer sentence men in Group 4. There were more lifers in Group 1 and fewer in Group 4 (Figure 5.12.2). This was close to statistical significance ($p = .07220$). This would be expected as lifers are usually targeted by Probation Officers and it is in their interests to have contact.

Previous Convictions (ie.number of occasions on which a prisoner had been convicted)

Figure 5.13

Group ↓	Mean Rank	Cases
1	23.89	14
2	27.15	10
3	29.26	17
4	27.29	12
		Total: 53

			Corrected for Ties	
Cases	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**
53	.9375	.8164	.9425	.8152

This was not found to be significant.

Figure 5.13.1 (Means Summaries of Previous Convictions by Group)

Group ↓	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases
1	6.4286	5.3882	14
2	9.3000	9.3577	10
3	10.0000	10.1366	17
4	12.8333	18.7415	12
Total:	9.5660	11.5551	53

Previous Institutions - this sentence

Figure 5.14

Group ↓	Mean Rank	Cases
1	24.89	14
2	30.70	10
3	27.00	17
4	26.38	12
		Total: 53

			Corrected for Ties	
Cases	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**
53	.8543	.8364	.8625	.8345

This was not found to be significant.

Figure 5.14.1 (Means Summaries of Previous Institutions this Sentence by Group)

Group ↓	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases
1	8.0000	7.0165	14
2	13.7000	15.3699	10
3	9.4118	10.5004	17
4	8.5833	7.7864	12
Total:	9.6604	10.2036	53

Reports (i.e. number of times prisoner had previously been placed on a disciplinary report)

Figure 5.15

Group	Mean Rank	Cases
1	29.71	14
2	36.15	10
3	25.65	17
4	18.13	12
		Total: 53

			Corrected for Ties	
Cases	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**	**Chi-Square**	**Significance**
53	8.0364	.0453	8.0529	.0449

This was found to be significant at the 5% level. Group 2 had the most reports followed by Group 1, Group 3 and Group 4. As Group 2 was high contact but no planned work, there is a possibility that the disruption caused by the prisoner being on report so often prevented planned work. Group 1 would be expected to have a high number of reports because of the high number of C Wing prisoners. C Wing by definition takes prisoners with a history of reports. The low reports for Group 4 might suggest more self-containment and self-control in that group.

Figure 5.15.1 (Means Summaries of Disciplinary Reports by Group)

Group ↓	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases
1	16.7857	13.6297	14
2	27.0000	23.6643	10
3	18.8235	26.0965	17
4	8.8333	13.2310	12
Total:	17.5660	20.6235	53

Conclusion

The analysis of the nominal categories did not show any significant differences at 5% between the four groups although wing location is close to significance, as also is lifers vs determinate sentence prisoners. This could support a hypothesis that prisoners on C Wing, especially life sentence prisoners, are more likely to do planned work with Prison Probation Officers than prisoners on other wings, or fixed sentence prisoners. Other small numerical differences indicate some targeting of prisoners with alcohol, self injury, psychiatric problems and there is some evidence to support the Prison Probation Officers' theory that Category A prisoners do not engage in planned work unless they are lifers. However, the numbers were generally too low for any general conclusions to be drawn. Parkhurst C Wing offers a particular focus for planned work and the team would appear to target lifers and those with psychiatric/self injury/alcohol problems.

The analysis of the ordinal variables shows significance in sentence, i.e. lifers having more contact, and age, i.e. older determinate sentence prisoners having less contact. This would correlate with the cross tabulation on wing/group and lifer status. Disciplinary reports were also a significant factor. The lower number of prisoners with reports in Group 4, perhaps linked with age.

To summarise, the file survey had shown no significant differences between the groups except that prisoners on C Wing and those serving life were more likely to have had contact with the Prison Probation Officers. Category A and older determinate sentence prisoners were less likely to. Although not statistically significant, contact was also more likely with prisoners with drug, alcohol, psychiatric and self-injury problems. A future study might combine probation and psychology databases.

Individual Cases/Planned Work

Notes were taken on those cases where individual work was engaged in with the Probation Officers. To preserve confidentiality the prisoner numbers do not

correlate with the prisoner interview numbers.

Prisoner 1

All the initial contact with this man focused on his relationship with his son and his attempts to gain and preserve access. He was an extremely volatile man and at one point he agreed to some anger management sessions but never turned up. However, throughout the contact the Probation Officers continually defined boundaries, gave him feedback and encouraged realism in his relationship with his son. It seemed that a good foundation had been created for future work, especially as he thanked the Probation Officer when he left Parkhurst. However, the fact that he threw a chair across the room in the family proceedings court showed that he had some way to go.

Prisoner 2

This prisoner worked with the Probation Officer on maintaining family relationships. He also looked at the relationship between his drinking and his offending and agreed to sessions with an outside addictions specialist to define the extent of his drinking habits. She felt that he was not ready to do anything about it at this stage but he had more information about the effects of alcohol and his own patterns of usage by the end of the sessions.

Prisoner 3

This contact focused on the prisoner's relationship with his daughter who was in care and constantly running away from homes. The Prison Probation Officer worked closely with the Shared Working Officer in this case and the latter accompanied the prisoner to a Case Conference on his daughter. Work was also done in relation to recategorisation and transfer which involved some risk assessment and discussion of offending with the prisoner.

Prisoner 4

This prisoner was extremely antagonistic towards all staff when he arrived in Parkhurst. He worked on a regular basis with a psychologist and the wing Probation Officer for over a year, mostly on his interpersonal relationships and his anger management. He was also visited regularly by a probation volunteer

and this contact extended his social interaction. Wing staff commented on his ability to relate in an adult and thoughtful way compared to his arrival. He engaged in the process of report preparation and risk assessment.

Prisoner 5

This man had not had much contact with Probation Officers but during the period under study he worked with the Probation Officer towards his last parole review, discussing strategies for avoiding offending and plans for release.

Prisoner 6

This prisoner worked with Probation Officers in establishments before Parkhurst on his family relationships and in Parkhurst on his offending, including planned attendance at a group targeting those in the final 2 years of sentence.

Prisoner 7

This man worked with a Probation Officer in the previous establishment on his offending patterns and on increasing his social confidence. In Parkhurst he took up the offer of a probation volunteer.

Prisoner 8

This man worked with the Probation Officer on specific plans for release and on avoiding reoffending in connection with his drug abuse. He was due for release in July 1992.

Prisoner 9

This man worked with the Probation Officer on his offending in connection with lifer reports and a further court appearance. He also focused on aspects of his family relationships, particularly his daughter.

Prisoner 10

This man undertook focused work on offending with the Probation Officer and other staff on 'C' wing. He was very wary of coming out of the wing and a volunteer was used in a planned programme to encourage him to go to the visits room. A great deal of contact took place with the field officer (9 visits in 2

years) and work was done in relation to a Local Review Committee review. Plans were underway to transfer him to another prison on normal location.

Prisoner 11

This man worked with the Probation Officer and staff on 'C' wing on his behaviour towards women and on his family relationships. His mental illness was a significant factor and he was also working with the psychiatrist.

Prisoner 12

This prisoner engaged in structured work with the Probation Officer on his offending and subsequently attended a group run by the psychiatrist. He also worked on improving family links and was put in touch with a probation volunteer.

Prisoner 13

This prisoner worked on his offending patterns, his self control and his family relationships with the Probation Officer. He improved markedly in his ability to control his temper.

Prisoner 14

This prisoner discussed his day-to-day coping with the wing Probation Officer at previous establishments on almost a daily basis. He also discussed his offending.

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

Prisoners

The major themes are described below. Some other emergent themes on which there was not agreement but which seemed to centre on an important issue for prisoners, are also described.

1. **Access to Prison Probation Officer**

This was seen to be crucial as the first step to contact with the Probation Officer. In the local prisons where the numbers are high the problem is increased for the prisoners:

"*It's the initial bit of getting to see them.*" (PH1)

"*Most prisons I've hardly seen them.*" (PH1)

"*When I was in prison X waiting to come here it was very hard. You had to put in an application, sometimes she might see you or she didn't see you until 3 or 4 days later. You'd blown.....On here if something happens you can get someone fairly quickly.*" (PH7)

"*We used to have a Probation Officer on here, was it X? I could just come in here there, just knock the door, see if she's busy, if she's not busy come and see her, problem solved, then probably couldn't see her for a couple of weeks but other people in that time would be seeing her all the time.*" (PH9)

"*If we were talking generally about trying to make the Probation Service easier, more easily accessible for people that is, you'd have more Prison Probation Officers,...it's hard for 2 people to look after 1-*

200 people." (PH6)

"*I'm usually pretty patient anyway. I just fix an appointment and wait for it to come round, take me time to wait. I've got nothing to....most people you see have families and that, they tend to want something done immediately which if a Prison Probation Officer's got a full caseload it's a bit difficult to get round to them sometimes.*" (PH6)

There seemed to be built in tension between the need for personal attention and time, which could be given through planned interviews and the need for instant access. Some appointment systems were seen as a barrier because the Probation Officer was not regularly on the wing:

"*Not visible, you can't just go down to the office and see them (local).*" (PH1)

"*I was fortunate, I was in the tea room. Other prisoners couldn't get to see her.*" (PH1)

"*Planned interviews? You might book me one day and say I'll see you on 25th and on that 25th you might come and I'll have nothing to say and so you say I've wasted my time there, I might as well have seen somebody else.*" (PH9)

"*I'd like an hour maybe once or twice a week would be helpful. One hour for talk and one for feedback.*" (PH11)

Interviewer "*At prison X, how did you get to see the Prison Probation Officer?*"

"*Too much formality, it takes 3 or 4 days, if you're in a hurry to see someone, it's important message, I mean - 3 to 4 days!*" (shrugs)(PH12)

"S/he's so rarely in the wing that it's an event when s/he comes in." (PH14)

"The most serious problem we have at the moment is as I say access to Prison Probation Officers, 2 weeks to see X." (PH14)

One prisoner gave a description of an officer who clearly saw the initial access as the key to subsequent relationships:

"There was a woman Prison Probation Officer who used to bring a different collage in every week and she used to invite people to willy-nilly knock on the door if she wasn't having an interview and just add little bits and pieces to it and then she'd have this big photograph and it sounded silly.." (Interviewer,*"Sounds a good idea"*), *"...<u>but what it was it got people talking and people talking to her</u>....you build up a friendship, a relationship, you begin to trust the person."* (PH10)

Comment

The prisoners recognised that numbers were a significant problem but were agreed that access to a Probation Officer within 24 hours was very important. Availability on the wing on a regular basis was seen as helpful, with some time built in for emergencies, as well as planned interviews. Time wasters would always be a problem but staying away from the wings was not seen as solving that because it debarred access for the genuinely needy.

2. **Applications systems**

The idea of putting personal details on an application form to see the Probation Officer was extremely unpopular:

"There are some things a man likes to have control over no matter how little it is." (PH11)

"I've known people decline to see the Probation Service as a result of

these details" [being required]. (PH11)

Literacy could be a problem:

"*That's another one. Personally when I first came into prison I had that problem because although I could write it was only in my style. I didn't have any proper basics in reading and writing and fortunately for me I saw the Probation Officer the following day and I told him the story all the way through, got to know him quite well. It's a problem, specially in the nicks where you've go to make the application written, either get someone else to do it for you, or say to this person I can't read, I can't write.*" (PH10)

"*I can't fill forms so I don't bother like.*" (PH13)

"*Fact of not being well educated, these forms, sometimes I find them very difficult, there was times I thought they were just put this way to put people off. At times I've declined to see probation because of these forms.*" (PH11)

"*In prison X, before I put apps. in, they go "here you are, here's a piece of paper, write down what you want" and I'll say "well she's down there, I'll only be 2 minutes and they say "No, you write down what you want". ..difficulty reading and writing then and I could hardly read or write and save me being embarrassed in front of everybody I'd walk away with the form, then I'd either screw the form up or turn round to them and say "listen, write this for me would you, I felt a right idiot, my fault for not doing me school. <u>It turns you away</u> so what you do then? I used to go to the recess and I'd see the probation down there and I'd just shout at her.....*" (PH9)

Here we have a prisoner having to contact the Probation Officer via the recess, rather as the prisoner who worked in the tea room circumvented the official access system.

Confidentiality was the main issue with applications:

"If you put reasons on I think they should give you a special envelope and seal it with the proper probation thing on so that way it's got to go to that person without going through different people, it might be something important, it might just be not important but it doesn't make any difference, straight to probation." (PH9)

"..you don't know who's going to get this bit of paper. I mean whenever I've been in that situation I never put a telephone number on. I always say telephone number to be given by me....they go to the ECR [emergency control room], well the ECR has a cleaner. I mean there's all these applications." (Gives example of a girl he knew getting a knock on the door from an ex-cell mate who got her address from one of his letters.) (PH10)

"Don't agree with writing things down, not held private, screws read it, joke about it, could fall into the wrong hands." (PH5)

"Just say you want to see the Probation Officer, it's a hassle going through 'cos the staff want to know why you want to see a Probation Officer, all you should have to do is go down and say, see the Probation Officer, don't have to stand there and argue, "well what do you want to see the Probation Officer for?" or "what do you want to see the Governor for?" and all that crap" (PH7)

There is suspicion about why the personal details are needed:

"I've always felt funny about that. I've always felt well why should they want to know what my problem is beforehand, to see, and if they say well your problem can be dealt with by somebody else when really you didn't want to see that other person...I've always been very vague when it comes to a reason, just give enough information for there to be a reason to see you." (PH6)

"I remember on B wing the officer said "write down what you want to see him about." I think it's none of their business, they're nosey." (PH2)

"There's no privacy in prison." (PH2)

Frustration can build up over the forms:

"They [two other prisons] give you a form to fill in and they say "put down as much detail as you can", there's probably enough room to write about 10 lines, and then when they come back to you after, they say "well we can't really do this, or do that because you didn't give us enough information" so I mean, you make an application to see someone, you've got to fill out a form telling them what you want to see them for in as brief as possible, then they come back at the end of the day and say we couldn't really do it because we didn't have enough information...you get frustrated because you know then that you've got to wait till 7 o'clock the following morning before you can put another application in to sort it all out again." (PH10)

This can lead to the prisoner being placed on report:

"In locals where they try to see probation and they get fobbed off and start banging away and screaming and shouting, then they get labelled...happened when my daughter in trouble..saw Governor about visit, few days later someone said "what visit?" Got annoyed, down the Block, lost week's remission." (PH1)

The result of this experience is that the applications system becomes a bit of a game for those who know how to use it and a barrier for those who for various reasons can't or won't use it:

"If someone put a good enough story in then got to see them....application system, bit of a lottery." (PH1)

"It's a game the apps. business." (PH5)

"In Prison X we had apps. for everything, eg. growing a beard!" (PH2)

There was recognition that the applications to Probation Officers

could be time wasting:

"If you're doing a short sentence people do actually use the Probation Service in the wrong way...to get visits (describes "welfare visits" arranged by the Probation Officer). I'll get into welfare and spin 'em an old tale...that's what happens..they're getting used in the wrong way, although the person wants his visit, probably important to him that he gets his visit, and 9 times out of 10 he will get the visit." (PH9)

"You get people with real problems and the ones that con the Probation Service...they waste a lot of time, just want a phone call, makes the probation officers wary..you've got to sort them out, must waste a hell of a lot of time, most of them want a phone call..just unfortunate, people with genuine problems just can't get through, get fobbed off." (PH1)

"Probation Officers need to sort out the cons from the pros, some want help (cons) but don't know how to go about getting it, others (pros) it's a way of life." (PH11)

This problem was not likely to be affected by the applications being written, because the "con merchants" would use the written applications as well to get what they wanted. In addition, the prisoners returned to the need to have access to someone, even for the little things:

"I think most problems are small, if somebody was here all the time you'd get a load of fellows coming in, might be a pain in the arse but as I say it's part of the job. If someone's had a bad letter or something he wants a whine, should be somebody here that he can just tap on the door, come in and have 5 minutes, go away, rather than sit worrying about it for 2 weeks." (PH14)

Comment

It seemed that the Probation Officers might as well dispense with a compulsory written application system and simply take a list of people each day who wanted to see them, with the option of prisoners being able to write a note if some action was needed from the Probation Officer before they were seen. The current system was seen as a definite barrier between the Probation Officers and the prisoners. Where the Probation Officer was on the wing regularly there was no need for a formal applications system. Where the Officer was not on the wing regularly access and applications depended on the Prison Officers.

3. **Prison Officers (not Shared Working Officers)**

"*If Prison Officers decided it was worthwhile then that was it, if not worthwhile gets filed away somewhere.*" (PH1)

"*I feel if I want to see him I just ask one of the staff and if he's not on the wing they just phone up, as soon as he can, it's usually the next day, works for me, odd hours of the day.*" (PH4)

The influence of landing officers and wing staff on the contact between Probation Officers and prisoners was seen as considerable, even if experience differed. The general attitude of Prison Officers towards Probation Officers was seen as suspicious, if not unhelpful. The roles were seen to be in conflict:

"*The Probation Officers try to do more to help the prisoners than the staff do. All the staff see as their job is lock 'em up. They haven't changed since the beginning of time, Prison Officers.*" (PH7)

"*They'd do away with you...very insecure, fear, jealousy, you're more intelligent...you can go where you like [conditions of service].*" (PH1)

"*They make life difficult for 'em. I've seen it myself, petty jealousy.*

If you've got an office, they want it. They're worse than kids sometimes." (PH1)

"..nowadays where you're getting a lot more younger prison staff coming in, Prison Probation Officers are part of their life, prison working life. The older ones coming up for their retirement pension, they're the bedbugs in the system, stopping a lot of change for the good."
Interviewer: *"How would they see Probation Officers?"*
"..as a damned nuisance..taking work away from them. I see them as reckoning they should run everything you know? They see probation as outsiders coming in, stopping them from doing their job." (PH4)

"You're just busybodies, help to us." (PH5)

"I think Prison Officers are a bit like cons really, they're a bit territorial and it wasn't really so much that they were losing territory, it's just that they were having less to do I suppose because before Probation Officers you had to go and see a screw or a governor, so it seems to be taking away their jobs, but I can't say for sure." (PH6)

"Do-gooders, that's how the screws see you." (PH7)

"Especially not at prison X, probation were seen as angels by the prisoners, by the screws they were non-persona grata...snide remarks or if you go to them with a problem or if you're moaning they'll say put down for the welfare, some snide remarks behind your back, can end up with someone turning round and giving a screw a smack, down the block on GOAD [Good Order and Discipline] whatever, unnecessary provocation is all it is." (PH10)

"Prison Officers, 90% doesn't like the Probation Service...that is speaking from experience way way back, because they think that you're a threat, because why, all the time that there's an independent body...inside the prison, you undermine their authority, that's the way

they see it."

Interviewer: "*So they would be in favour of withdrawal?*"

"*Oh yes, yes, the POA would love that, they would love it, there's no ifs and buts about that Mary...you hear there's the brutality in the prisons and all that goes on, well of course it does but where there's independent bodies in the prisons and things like that, it clamps it down to a certain extent.*" (PH15)

There were many comments about the need for independent, civilian staff on the wings and the possibility that Prison Officers might resist this.

"*I don't know in these locals, if they're [PPOs] asked to keep off the wings when they're unlocked....It's a lot to do with the way the prisons are run. They don't want them on the wings...if anything goes off, the way they handle prisoners, someone might get upset, complain.*" (PH1)

Examples were given of Probation Officers who had complained and then been given a hard time by the Prison Officers. This was not a universal view:

"*When something goes wrong, eg. making a complaint, everybody closes in including Probation and don't speak out.*" (PH11)

This was not therefore a joint construction, though some degree of separation, distance or difference between Prison Probation Officers and Probation Officers was commented on by all prisoners.

The Prison Officers' Association ("POA") were seen as an organisation which did not have the prisoners' welfare as its central concern:

Interviewer: "*What stops them [PPO] from doing things?*"

"*The prison POA, 'cos they don't want them on the wings.*" (PH1)

Some examples were given of deliberate obstruction:

"In a place like this it's a bit difficult but in the locals, they'd gear everything against it...say they put the probation interviews on between 9 and 10, change the exercise periods to between 9 and 10 so that people prefer to go out rather than come and see them." (PH4)

Comment

The point is not whether these observations were fair on the Prison Officers, but the fact that the image held by the prisoners of Prison Officers generally was of not being co-operative with the Probation Officers, with the odd individual exception. This undermined the position of the Probation Officers in the wing and presented another barrier to be overcome. The exception to this was C wing as outlined in the section on Shared Working, and to a lesser extent M wing. The atmosphere on C wing positively encouraged contact between prisoners and Probation Officers who were seen as part of the wing team. Not surprisingly the C wing prisoners suggested that as a model for the "main" prison system. At the other end of the scale came a graphic description of the atmosphere in one local:

"POA orientated, makes it a very paranoid nick, hard to do your bird there, very heavy on the head. They're just like the military, mufti-squad type, every time you come down staircase you expect the mufti to come flying up, the whistle goes off, they're coming fists and boots flying first...if a bell [alarm] goes in dispersal you know they're just going to run in and grab somebody." (PH4)

4. **Female Prison Officers** (*"Really it's like a little gift"*)

The main change in the prisoners' image of the landing officer was the introduction of female Prison Officers on the landings. This had had a far reaching effect on atmosphere and role. The violence had decreased and the macho hold on the wings had been broken:

"..that takes the sting out. OK if there was a bloke trying to tell you what to do, laying down the law, you could just turn round and smack him one [hits fist] but if it's a woman PO trying to tell you what to do you'd think twice about turning round and thumping her, you might tell her to ....but at least it doesn't get you...." (PH7)

"Everybody's happy and it livens the place up. The opposite sex is there. It's perfectly obvious nothing's going to take place but the thing is seeing a woman in prison is, if I see a woman come on here, even visitors, I like to see women walking around, it feels like really we ain't that much in prison....really it's like a little gift." (PH9)

"..when I was on M wing for a while they've got 3 over there. That I would definitely say is very, very good, very, very helpful, there's no ifs and buts about it." (PH15)

Comment

The relationship with the female officers had done a lot to break down the stereotype that the prisoners had of the Prison Officers. Stereotyping was to emerge as a key theme of the research for all three stakeholder groups. Once assumptions had been challenged and individual relationships formed between people in the three groups, constructions became much more positive. The prisoners laid great emphasis on personal relationships with Probation Officers and Prison Officers and it seemed that this was an essential factor in whether they subsequently engaged in planned or substantial work. This was also a key in their view of the Shared Working scheme.

5. **Shared Working** (*"Sensible, older, trained, otherwise it's a recipe for disaster"*)

Experience of Shared Working varied a great deal, both within Parkhurst and between different prisons. However, there was agreement on the need for the Shared Working Officers to be discreet, skilled, trained, motivated and consistent.

"My experience has been excellent over the last four years...All been good so far...With Prison Officers it's easier, they're more available, there's more of them, when probation's not there they see you." (PH5)

"Shared Working, yeah, I think that's a good system, yeah. That system's evolved over the years. When I come in a Probation Officer was just left alone to do the work, that created a barrier between the Prison Officers and the Probation Officer [who was] seen as somebody who was getting used, they didn't see the relationship, didn't see the value because they didn't have access to the records." (PH8)

Prison Officers were seen as useful by some to pass on messages:

"..whereas you don't want to use the Probation Officer for everything you can ask the Prison Officer to contact your family so that <u>they</u> can phone the solicitor, <u>they</u> can do this, they can do that, they can pass the messages on, so you're not using the Probation Officer as a glorified telephonist." (PH8)

However, there were some real problems of continuity and access in relation to Personal Officer/Shared Working schemes:

"You see you go to a certain prison, they tell you you've got a certain personal case officer, that's the biggest laugh of the whole system that, because you might have a personal case officer, I had one for 2 years at prison X and I never met him. I had one in prison Y for 11 months, I never seen sight nor light of him, I'm supposed to have one here, I've been here nearly 10 months now, I haven't seen him, I don't know him." (PH15)

There was a profound mistrust in relation to confidentiality:

"There's no real trust between a prisoner and a Prison Officer, there's no real trust there?"

Interviewer: "*Can that be changed?*"
"*No, there's no trust there at all, you take a Probation Officer, civilian like yourself, it's your job. I could talk to you, I know it's confidential where if I talk to one of them they could go and have a drink tonight and they'd have a good laugh over it.*" (PH9)

Many examples were given of the indiscretion of the landing officers and this was also an issue for the shared working officers and Probation Officers in their interviews. The results were not harmful in all cases:

"*I'd had a letter through the censor, gone all round the wing. I didn't mind, looking back it was helpful, showed it was true.*" (PH1)

However, most prisoners were not happy about personal details going round the wing.

Continuity in any scheme was vital:

"*When I was at prison X, that was before Fresh Start, so you had the same officers there day and night, 7 days in the week, 52 weeks in the year, but now you got this Fresh Start there's one or two staff down here that I get on with pretty well, but I come down to have a chat and they're on nights or a week's leave or something, so you never see them.*" (PH14)

Motivation and interest were seen as crucial for Shared Working Officers.

"*..in a local prison where you've got lots of faces coming in and going out, Prison Officers acting as Probation Officers. Now when I come up against Prison Officers acting as Probation Officers they're downright rude and they're just given the job, they're not asked if they want to do the job...and they consider it a burden, that they don't really want.*" (PH10)

"Personally there's a distinction between screws and officers because there are some officers who I would call screws because of their attitude...others just try to muck in and help where they can." (PH6)

One man compared it to the seventies when he felt the prisoner and the Probation Officer could not work together:

"..there was always the middle man."
Interviewer."*Is that still the case?*"
"Not so much. I think it's a bit more subtle these days, what they, use a shared office so they can go through the files and pick up bits and pieces that way, have the odd bit of paper lying around." (PH4)

Shared Working was beginning to emerge in the study as an additional potential barrier between prisoners and Probation Officers:

Interviewer. "*With that scheme could you see the Probation Officer if you wanted to?*"

"*Only if you kept making applications and the Probation Officer turned up. If you asked to see the Prison Probation Officer then whether or not the screw had taken anything along he'd say "you'll only get to see me anyway because I'm allotted to you." You could ask to see the Senior Probation Officer because you're always entitled to do that and many a time I've made a complaint regarding this.*" (PH10)

This prisoner talked about the authorities needing to produce a "*real Probation Officer instead of a toy-town one*". However, in the end he said that what was needed was both wing Probation Officer and a good Shared Working scheme, which he saw in terms of a Personal Officer scheme.

It seems vital for Shared Working schemes to be seen as enhancing throughcare rather than a rationing system for Probation Officers.

"*It comes over here that you probation can't be bothered to come*

over and, I don't know where the main office is but obviously you must have one somewhere, 9 days out of 10 I pass this office on my way to work, there's nobody in there. If somebody puts down to see probation and...the officer there will say "oh no, don't do that, put down to see the Shared Working Officer". It comes over as though you can't be bothered to come over and help you." (PH14)

One prisoner saw a definite deterioration in relationships with Prison Probation Officers since Shared Working began:

"..because when you come along now it's all this new things that's took over, since they done it in Prison X, I think it was a year and a half ago, they come along and said that Prison Officers was now taking over a shared task with the Probation Service, well that made every prisoner that I know, it made 'em all paranoid, double paranoid....what it's doing like it's giving the prison authorities more scope....they're delving too much into your personal life as well as not only what's going on in here." (PH15)

"The reason that people don't go near 'em [PPO] now it is all this, "Oh you have to go through the prison staff" and all that now, and the way we look at that is that there's some things that's personal in the family, that you want to keep it that way, your family's life is really not got to do with these people." (PH15)

"At prison X I really wanted, just shipped out from Brixton on the A van, wanted to contact my wife, (she was going up to Brixton). 2 days later a Prison Officer turns up, "I'm your probation". I didn't like that. I just clammed up." (PH4)

"At prison X, I just left it. I wouldn't use it."
Interviewer: *"Would this affect prisoners' attitude to probation?"*
"I would think when cons got to other prisons it would tar the Probation Officer a bit, people used to a screw as a Probation Officer, other Prison Probation Officers would get the same reputation and the

same kind of attitude, would make them a bit less approachable." (PH4)

Once again while the general idea is unpopular, the particular experience of having a good Personal Officer, or case officer changes the attitude, or breaks down the stereotype.

"..but here with the Personal Officer system we've practically got probation on the wing 24 hours a day, although we actually need a Prison Probation Officer for specific reasons, you can't do without a Probation Officer." (PH10)

"If they done this what they do in this wing, throughout every nick, there'd be less trouble in nick because on here they don't treat you as a prisoner...they treat you as a normal bloke like outside, they don't care what you're in for or anything like that, all they care about is to getting you to where, up to a standard where you can survive in other prisons and also to getting out..but in the normal prisons they don't bother with all that sort of stuff, all they see the person is, once he's come in to do his sentence, lock him up, keep him under lock and key, keep him inside the walls until the day he's released." (PH7)

"I always work though my case officer, they will listen to what I've got to say, at whatever time of day I've got to say it and advise me whether I should contact X, [PPO] and maybe organise doing something on the wing...if my case officer's not on I'll see the S.O. [Senior Prison Officer] and make an appointment to see the Probation Officer, he'll say "I'll ring up now.....but he'll ring up and say "he wants to see you" but not necessarily outline the reasons why because it's not their job and they don't want to get involved in it." (PH8)

"It'd be better for the same officers to be on it [Shared Working]. At prison X, Personal Officers had 4 prisoners each, if you get any trouble have to go to them first. This would be better, could do phone calls, contact family." (PH3)

These prisoner repeated the need for both Personal Officers and Probation Officer working closely together. However, there were drawbacks in too much liaison, especially with joint records which were not popular:

"*There also seemed to be much independence between Probation and the Prison Officers there. If you had a barney with an officer you could go down and slag him off to a Probation Officer next morning and it would be between you two whereas on here if I come in and said to you "I think, Oh so-and-so is a right ..., it's all going to go down in the file somewhere.*" (PH14)

The prisoners all saw to a greater or lesser extent, limitations on the role that the Prison Officers could undertake in relation to personal and family situations and problems. The need for training was seen as very important as also was a mature and genuine approach.

"*You and I know that these screws only go on courses for the money, go on courses for 5 or 6 weeks, come back and think they know everything, doesn't compare with 2-3 years training...they're not equipped to deal with deep problems.*" (PH11)

"*If you had a really difficult problem, say a telephone call to ---- about my wife and kids, these Prison Officers are going to make a mountain out of it. You'd get the job done...Prison Officers wouldn't be professional enough, banging doors etc. No experience of sorting out problems, particularly difficult ones...they would be OK for everyday sort of things..they're there for the immediate things.*" (PH11)

"*Well I know probation's like, if you have problems you can go and see 'em in the office. I know you can with officers [Prison Officers] like but sometimes all he'll tell you is to go and see the SO or PO or..probation like.*" (PH13)

Probation Officers were seen by one man as having more confidence in relation to other agencies:

"I give you for example, when I spoke to the Prison Probation Officer, please phone the Home Office, check what's happened with my case, if I go to the Prison Officer..he must think about [it] and he thinks "can't call the Home Office" and he doesn't know the maybe number and he says "no, we can't" because he never phoned the Home Office....it's not only the telephone calls, different ways. I mean Probation Officer is Probation Officer, when he call somewhere, Home Office, High Commission, he say "Probation Officer speaking" it is different, it's something, they know Probation Officer." (PH12)

Because of the lack of training and expertise of the Shared Working Officers the prisoners felt that they might complement the Prison Probation Officer but could not undertake all the throughcare work or be used as substitutes. Reference was made to the need for a "proper probation person".

Interviewer: *"What makes a "proper probation person?"*
"Their understanding, they know. You're a Probation Officer, you know what sort of problems what people are going to come to you with and you know how to handle him. You get a screw and I go to him and say can you do this, sort this out and they go "I don't know, I'll have to check that up" or something, when they haven't the qualifications of being a Prison Probation Officer or anything." (PH9)

Comment

The construction that these prisoners had of Shared Working seemed to be that a well resourced and motivated Personal Officer scheme, linked to a wing Prison Probation Officer who was also available, could dramatically improve throughcare services. However, a badly resourced, inconsistent Shared Working scheme seemed to be worse than not having one at all, certainly in its damaging effect on contact between prisoners and Probation Officers. This was also a key to planned work taking place with the Probation Officer. Where planned work was backed by an understanding and consistent approach from the Prison Officer, the prisoner seemed to make a lot of progress.

These findings are similar to those in the Wandsworth/Prison Reform Trust study of Shared Working, Emes et al (1992). They comment on the importance of confidentiality and suggest that case officers (Prison Officers) should not act as filters for the Prison Probation Officer.

6. **Approach** ("*You either got an interest or you haven't, you can't be trained to be interested in the job*")

Once the prisoners had managed to get to see the Prison Probation Officers the next important factor governing future contact seemed to be their approach. Experience varied widely:

"*I've not come across one Prison Probation Officer that I didn't feel I could trust, that I didn't get to know.*" (PH10)

This prisoner talked about them all having a "*decent bedside manner*".

"*..some come across as if "I couldn't give a toss", you know that attitude, you can tell more or less straight away, some you can tell that they're genuine.*" (PH15)

"*Being able to bite [your tongue] when a con's wound up and not get wound up yourselves..if the inmate's wound up himself he's purposely going out to wind you up.*" (PH10)

"*At least s/he's got an understanding and that's what you've got to have.*" (PH1)

"*Some of them do a good job, sit and listen and try to help, some sit and listen and do nothing. It's pointless you talking and them talking and nothing's getting done...you need some answer, even if it's not the right answer.*" (PH3)

Time is important to prisoners.

"Time is different in here." (PH2)

"He called me up within 2 days of arriving here." (PH2)

There was total agreement amongst the prisoners, as well as the two other groups, on the need to give quick and reliable feedback to queries.

"PPOs have always got back to me OK. Sometimes 2 to 3 days but I can see why it might take that long." (PH2)

"She did it well, checked it out, came straight back to me...they don't do it a lot in other prisons, they just fob you off." (PH1)

"If I get an answer to a query it's a bonus." (PH3)

"Sometimes you can't be there when she's making the phone call like." [call to family by PPO]
Interviewer: *"But she'll come back and tell you what happened?"*
"Oh yeah, some do like?"
Interviewer: *"Some do, some don't?"*
"Ay."
Interviewer: *"What happens when they don't?"*
"You get in a bad mood with them." (PH13)

There was some recognition that not everything was urgent:

"At times I think things are very urgent, but afterwards they didn't seem that damned urgent...On some things it's important to get back quickly but there's other things I've seen officer X about and about a week later he says....if it's important he would get back." (PH4)

The need for follow up was not just seen in terms of practicalities.

"If somebody gets a problem at home they write out an application to see probation right? I can't see any fault in that, but when the

interview is over, rather than say OK that's it, bye, follow it up...I think sometimes people need to know they're not going to be forgotten as soon as you walk out the door..so the person knows he's not just a number." (PH6)

Comment

The transition from the practical query through an application, to engagement in ongoing work with the Probation Officer seems crucial. If the Probation Officer comes across as uninterested, non-receptive or unreliable then this has repercussions not just for that prisoner's relationship with the officer, but also for the reputation of the officer on that wing. In a close knit community, one or two influential prisoners can have a significant effect on the standing of the wing Probation Officer and this is an important factor in contact.

7. **Other prisoners' attitudes**

There was no agreement that other prisoners could put a person off seeing a Probation Officer but it seemed to be a factor of potential influence.

"Sometimes they might turn round, if they ain't got an good result what they was after and they might say "What a waste of time, what a f..ing waste of time that person was," but I would probably turn round to them and say "well he did something for me and it was good." (PH9)

"Speaking from experience actually I've had some nasty comments thrown about me because I've seen officer X, I see officer X quite a lot, more often when I first came, now I tend to concentrate on Y [other specialist]. Mostly dirty, smutty stuff, same with probation and Y, [other specialist] because they're both women." (PH6)

"Other prisoners' views don't matter to me, might to some, you get strong and weak in everything." (PH5)

"What other prisoners think hasn't put me off...can see it happening on a big wing, boredom, just annoy people (maybe jealous)." (PH4)

Not all these men identified with the other prisoners anyway:

"Just a bunch of people I've no choice but to put up with...I remember saying to him [Probation Officer], I don't class myself as "with them". It was good to be able to say that to someone." (PH2)

Comment

Because the interview group was of prisoners who had engaged in ongoing work with the Prison Probation Officers they had obviously coped with any pressures from other prisoners not to do so. However, they acknowledged that this could cause difficulties for other prisoners and it is also a factor mentioned by the two other stakeholder groups.

8. **Prison/wing atmosphere**

The general climate or approach adopted in the wings, and to a lesser extent in the prison overall, was a factor in the contact between Probation Officers and prisoners. Some mentioned the contrast between the privacy of the interview room and the landings:

"That office can be considered as something of a fantasy world because here we are in this office coming to the right decisions at the right time and everything seems rosy and you come outside and they say "get your tray mate, come on, where've you been, in that probation office, look let's never mind that, keep it short in future." But as people get older they've got to try and adapt, everything's not perfect. Some people would find that difficult." (PH8)

"It's funny that you should mention that actually because it's something X mentioned to me..s/he always asked me to prepare for our interviews and I said "well I can't because I'm not in there", when

I come for the interview I switch on and when I leave I switch off..I don't think I even do it consciously, as soon as I'm out there I'm back in the prison life, but I couldn't speak for anybody else." (PH6)

"*It's the same as when I bang up at night, totally shut out the prison. I'm in my own little house. My cell's all set out like a living room, that's where I live.*" (PH6)

There was no agreement about whether Parkhurst was a regime which encouraged probation contact but there did seem to be agreement that there was a contrast between the private interaction between prisoner and Probation Officer and the general atmosphere in most prisons, especially local prisons. This atmosphere could rub off on the Probation Officers:

"*It's difficult to see probation [in locals] but that's because of the numbers coming in and out. I think they're a different breed than the dispersal Probation Officers. They probably have worked in a dispersal but since they go to a local they tend to pick up the mood of a local and go with that mood.*" (PH5)

The atmosphere was not generally seen to support rehabilitation:

"*If there is any rehabilitation, probation, they're the ones who play a small part in it, prison play no part.*" (PH5)

The Governor was seen as influential by some, though not as much as the POA, in setting the mood:

"*I think the main point is the number 1, some number 1s are new generation, he knows what he is doing like here, but some are old fashioned, they follow the old days, rules and ...formality, too much formality.*" (PH12)

The exception to this pattern was C wing where the Prison Officers were seen to be supportive of the Probation Officer's role and

engaging in joint work to help resolve the prisoners' problems. This also happened in a few cases on the other wings between individual Shared Working Officers and Probation Officers but was not reinforced by the wing culture.

Comment

This aspect of the study highlights a major discrepancy between the aims of the Prison Service and the aims of the Probation Service. It is significant that even in February 1993 a stated goal of the Prison Service reads: "*provide positive regimes which help prisoners address their offending behaviour and allow them as full and responsible as life as possible*" but the Key Performance Indicators ("KPIs") are "*time spent in work, education, other activities and time spent unlocked each day*" none of which are unique to the Probation Service's activities in relation to offending behaviour and rehabilitation. (Prison Briefing No.57.) The KPI for the goal of helping prepare prisoners for return to the community is simply "visits". This discrepancy will be commented on later in the study. For the prisoners it would appear that it is much easier for them to pursue contact with the Prison Probation Officer when that contact is acknowledged in the wing, and the prison, as having value and purpose.

9. **Perceptions of role** ("*He was there*")

The main construction of the role of the Prison Probation Officer was as a go-between for prisoners and their families. This was the perception of prisoners without families as well:

"*Well I didn't have a view at all because I didn't have a need for them, having no family. I was sort of isolated in jails I suppose. Probation are sort of like a go-between, I see it as that.*"
Interviewer: "*Between families and prisoners?*"
"*That's right.*" (PH6)

"*No contact before, didn't have family ties as such then. Now it's*

different."
Interviewer: *"So you think if you don't have family ties there's not much reason to see."* [PPO]
"No." (PH4)

"They do a number of things, concerning visits, keep in contact with my kids, so if I need to see 'em I'll ask him." (PH9)

"..like me I mean, I been 5 years in the prison and I didn't see my kids, I mean I don't want to see my kids in this circumstance, but I had to contact them, you know they're studying..if the Prison Probation Officer don't help me how can I contact? I can phone here (wing) but this is different." (PH12)

"My opinion is, the whole idea of Probation Service is to keep a contact with your outside relatives, to make sure like that at least you had something to go out to, that links wasn't broken, now all that, it's just gone." (PH15)

"It's a kind of a liaison officer as I see it with the probation staff outside and person's family." (PH8)

One prisoner felt that it was not appropriate for Probation Officers to be contacting his children, but did feel his marital problems would have been helpfully discussed with a Probation Officer.

General liaison with outside organisations and individuals was also felt to be an important part of the role and for some, especially the lifers, this was specifically in relation to release in the future.

"To prepare a bloke for when he's released and all the things he might come up against when he gets out."
Interviewer: *"When does that start?"*
"In my opinion it should start when you first get your sentence because at some time that person must go outside the gate...Probation Officers should be looking at that, what is going to

happen to this person, in the long term and what can we do to help him when he gets out of that gate." (PH7)

"Looking towards the outside." (PH4)

"When you come out you're going to have a Probation Officer anyway. Then you know what's expected of you, what you have to do." (PH3)

This role was also important for the foreign prisoner who said he had no outside contacts.

The second major role for the Prison Probation Officer was to be there for the prisoner, listen and undertake a basic counselling role.

"You can't let off steam with a screw because he won't stand for it but a Prison Probation Officer, if it's a decent one, they just let you...rattle on. I mean one of the reasons I see Officer X is because I can speak to her/him about some of my experiences and s/he'll understand whereas I can't do that with any of the screws, because it's not their job, they're not trained or they just say "Oh that's interesting" and then they don't give anything back." (PH6)

"Confidentiality with the Probation Service, inside or outside, I've always experienced that." (PH15)

"The reason people go to the Prison Probation Officer is for help, feedback is important, if people don't get it they're going to shun you in the future." (PH11)

"If prisoners and Probation Officers want to build a relationship they must be fair on each other. It may not sound much but when you're behind this cell door, it is." (PH11)

"I wouldn't want to open my heart to someone unless I knew them very well." (PH2)

"Sometimes you're up and sometimes you're down. You need help when you're down. Otherwise when someone comes along you say "you never helped me before when I was down, why should I see you now?" (PH11)

"To make decisions because a person's probably incapable of doing that himself, that's important."
Interviewer: *"What sort?"*
"Well it could be all sorts, personal decisions, assist him, not make the decision, "what I say, do", but he can talk to him to help him make up his mind." (PH8)

"It's not only calls, anything I want they help me." (PH12)

"A lot of talking, some talk too much! They're not bad though." (PH13)

"Once they know that that person cares about them, no matter how disturbed they are they know they've got a friend who they can relate things to, they can build up a very good relationship, and that, but what they may not always be aware of, that PPO when he sees an individual always puts a report in about him, or should make some indication in the file as to whether, you know, how that interview..." (PH8)

"Prison Probation Officers. They're there to help. If not there's no point.....The Probation Service is far from perfect." (PH5)

The main role that the Probation Service would define for itself in relation to prison probation work, i.e. focusing on the offence, was not one primarily defined by prisoners, though they did talk about it in relation to reports, covered in a later section. Only one man described the role from this angle:

"Overall the Probation Service is vital in terms of helping people sort themselves out. My part in this crime was ignorance and drink.

Working on the offence etc would be a good start plus working out what went wrong with my marriage." (PH11)

Another prisoner said that he did not like talking about his offence and that had put him off contact with some Prison Probation Officers.

"...that's the hardest bit, if they tell me, they said oh, who you killed and all that, it puts me in a bad mood you see but you never know in case I might hit, punch somebody in here, saying my case like, because I know it's all over with and somebody says that about my case, probation outside, I just snap you know, so, I think that's why people snap like, if someone mentions the case to 'em lifers or not." (PH13)

One prisoner had seen a substance misuse specialist:

"She'd had some experience [on drink and drink-related problems] and it certainly did help to a certain extent. I found I was able to open up and talk about my past and.." (PH15)

The prisoners most likely to talk about the offence being part of the role of the Prison Probation Officers were the lifers.

"I've also realised, doing a life sentence, life can mean life and if I'm let out it's at the mercy of the government of the day."
Interviewer: *"So when Officer X raised it did you know her quite well?"*
"I was on quite good terms with her but it was raised within 3 weeks of her being placed on the wing and it was with her suggesting it and me explaining it to my outside Probation Officer. He came back to me and said it'd be a good idea, it's what he thought as well that I sat down and had a think and came back to Officer X and said "yeah, let's do some work. Until she mentioned it I hadn't thought of it....The con normally won't think about it [offence]. If he's a lifer and he's not as daft as a brush he'll come across it at some time in his sentence but most cons wouldn't think about it, no, if Officer X

hadn't have raised it with me I wouldn't have thought about talking about it myself. It would have been raised at some point, being a lifer." (PH10)

This seems to be an important point, emphasising the responsibility of the Probation Officer to raise the offending with the prisoner, who is unlikely to raise it himself, unless he has reached the stage where he wants to talk about it. The section on reports will discuss how prisoners felt about the difficulties of raising the subject of the offence when there is no prior contact. However, the lifers were realistic:

"*If you don't do anything about it at all the Home Office may think you want to get out and kill, get out in revenge, do another killing, in which case you won't get out so...*" (PH14)

"*Offence is also important.*" (PH3)
Interviewer asks if part if the job concerns the offence.
"*If they see it as important, if they see it as the root of the problem. Obviously if somebody's in here and all they do all the time is cause fights and that's what they're in for then obviously there's a connection, but I don't run around stabbing people, although my case if different because I have to talk about it.*" (PH6)

Finally, in relation to role there were some views about stages of sentence but no concurrence. The need to have contact was mentioned at all stages of sentence.

Comment

The construction of the role of the Prison Probation Officer was primarily in terms of a link with the outside world, especially with families. There was also an important counselling role within the prison. There was no agreement on particular roles at particular stages of sentence. There was less mention of work on offending, though many in the sample had undertaken planned work on their

offending and saw it as important when asked specifically about it. There was a lack of knowledge about the range of duties of Prison Probation Officers and the working of the Shared Working scheme. There was no agreement about the power of the Prison Probation Officer, or their independence. Some, mainly lifers, saw Probation Officers as being extremely influential, others saw them as being insignificant, or part of the system.

This construction has implications for contact, as the prisoners without families would be less likely to seek it as a general rule. If this is the image held by those who had actually done work with the Probation Officers, then the image in the rest of the prison is even less likely to relate to offence-focused work and is probably even less well informed about the duties and functions of the Prison Probation Officer.

10. Phonecards

In another study, Williams (1991a), there was reference to Probation Officers being replaced with a 10p coin. At the time of this study phones were being installed on the wings and prisoners commented on this development.

"*I think it'll help greatly. Until the phones were installed the only way of getting a telephone call was through probation. That's the only reason probation was seen as being able to get a telephone call. Now if a man can't afford to buy a card [phonecard] out of his private cash, from December the basic wage is going up to £2.95, 25p for 4 weeks and there's your card.*" (PH10)

Lack of money was seen as a considerable problem but the ability to make their own phone calls did not replace the Prison Probation Officer. There would still be a need for the Probation Officers to make calls on the prisoners' behalf:

"*Say I have a telephone call and I put the card in and I phone the*

Home Office. "Home Office" I said, "Mr Brown, I'm prisoner X. How are you?" I think it's not right. Calling straight to Home Office. When the Prison Probation Officer phone, Mr Y phone, "Probation, Mr X sitting next to me" this is different." (PH12)

Some would continue to try to get the Probation Officer to let them use the phone, partly because of the finance and also because all the pay phonecalls would be taped.

"*Phone cards? Won't get rid of the need for the Prison Probation Officer...with the phones 100% recorded, with Prison Probation Officers, about 80% to 85% private and a little percentage not. I prefer it that way.*" (PH4)

Comment

There did not seem to be agreement that the coming of the phone cards would remove the need for Prison Probation Officers. There was some agreement that it would stop some of the current games being played in relation to applications, which were a waste of everybody's time.

11. **Attributes/ gender issues**

There was a leaning towards female workers and an emphasis on experience but the only area of total agreement seemed to be about having the right attitude, whoever the person was. The least favoured officer was someone with no experience, usually seen as female:

"*I wouldn't like someone of 19, no experience of life, even a 25 year old, sheltered life, when they start hearing the problems of the poorer people they're disgusted, haven't a clue.*" (PH5)

"*I've seen some pretty good younger officers...most Probation Officers want to help when they first start.*" (PH1)

"I think everyone has their own preferences. Myself I always prefer females, it's the only thing that seems to be lacking in here...I do as well [find it easier to talk to women]." (PH6)

"Some people might feel they can talk to a female as opposed to a male Probation Officer and vice versa, some people who's had problems with females mightn't want to talk to that..." (PH8)

"I find that more middle aged tend to be more straightforward, more easier to get on with like...bit of experience in the job.." (PH15)

"Having more females because you can talk more openly with them." (PH9)

"I'd prefer a female, find it easier to talk to a woman, experience important." (PH2)

Provocative dress was unpopular:

"If it's a mature woman OK, if it's a dolly bird that comes in and winds a con up they're asking for trouble somewhere along the line." (PH7)

"No, approach, attitude to job, being relaxed is helpful." (PH4)

Having prison experience was seen by one man as useful for resettlement work later:

"..if they work in prison first, they're going to get their first hand of it because after when they go outside they're going to work in an office outside, they're going to have prisoners coming to them anyway, say "oh well, I've been into this prison, I've done this in that prison, the probation, she's already had prison experience so she's going to know what it's like." (PH9)

"I think Probation Officer, woman, man, doesn't make any difference,

my idea, what I see, they're OK and we need them, all the prisoners need the Probation Officer." (PH12)

"Age/sex, not important for Probation Officer." (PH3)

Comment

There would appear to be no agreement about attributes. Attitude was felt to be more important.

12. **Race issues**

As the file survey showed there were no black prisoners on C Wing. One man commented on this:

"I've been here 5 years and we've had no coloured people at all, any colour apart from white. And there's got to be someone in that system out there. I know plenty, (mentions one particular man), he'd have benefited immensely from it....maybe a West Indian would get on better with a West Indian. I get on if it's West Indian or white or Asian, doesn't matter what culture with me but I think yeah the person would identify more with the person from that culture." (PH7)

"Personally I'm not racist but I know plenty of people who are, including some of the blacks themselves, don't think it's a bad idea to have PPOs of other ethnic minorities around, it's like the moslems, if they've got a problem they go and speak to their moslem priest or whatever." (PH6)

"I've had experience of quite a few black officers and Black Probation Officers and they've been good as gold." (PH15)

"My personal position is I'm not heavily into that (black culture) but I might prefer to talk to a black officer...black prisoners, among some, don't want to talk to probation because it might go against them or because culture is different..black prisoner culture - not to talk to

staff..If POs were black it might make a difference to some, might help understanding because of shared culture." (black prisoner, not numbered here for anonymity).

The problems facing Black Probation Officers and Prison Officers were recognised:

"I was in one nick and I was down the block and a Black Prison Officer came in they was running him down blind, prejudiced, and I come onto the yard, exercise, and he's standing there and I said, "They give you a bit of stick didn't they?" He said "I don't care." I said "Prejudice" and he said "So what?" I mean they're calling him things like "Sooty" and all this and he's working as one of their own, 12 of them in the block and 1 of him, but he didn't care."
Interviewer: *"Do you think he didn't care?"*
"Really he had no choice, if he wanted to work there he's going to have to take the stick but that's just racial wit and that's no good." (PH9)

"I saw a Black [Prison] Officer with 3 others on the landing, the 3 others were playing cards, they're not talking to him, he's just staring straight ahead, they're not taking any notice of him, that's bad." (PH3)

"..black people who become screws and that, they tend to be worse than the cons, it kind of changes them, they've got to work that little bit harder, to be accepted by the POA." (PH9)

"Yeah I think there should be a proportionate amount of Black Probation Officers, so that they've got a choice, see some black people won't see a Black Probation Officer...because they think they shouldn't be in the job because they're part of the system...There should be more black POs, definitely, from different cultures, many cultures." (PH8)

"As far as the staff goes there's a great deal of it, racist remarks, it's

more common in the South, less in London where you've got black screws." (PH11)

"*It would make a difference to have several Black Prison Officers, especially Senior Prison Officers.*" (PH3)

Some prisoners expressed racist attitudes themselves:

"*Coloured people and white people are different, in themselves aren't they? So there's a lot of fighting, coloured people always burn cars down and run them over, but white people, they do it but they don't do it like the coloured people, like you see on telly.*" (PH13)

"*The staff here bend over backwards for the blacks anyhow, they get away with a lot more than I do.*" (PH14)

There was also mention of discrimination against Irish prisoners.

Comment

There was an absence of any experience of working with Black Probation Officers, apart from some minimal contact in London prisons. The construction thus tended to be based on a degree of ignorance, experience of Black Prison Officers and the need for Black Prison Probation Officers was seen in terms of their cultural usefulness. There was some awareness of the difficulties facing black staff members and some overt racism. This seems to indicate a construction of the Prison Probation Service which is almost exclusively white. It was not within the scope of the study to explore this further with the black prisoners to see if this was a significant factor for them but it is unlikely to be without significance.

13. **Report writing** ("*The pen's mightier than the sword*")

This was seen as a major function of the Prison Probation Officer. There was universal dissatisfaction with Probation Officers writing

reports on prisoners on the basis of one or two contacts:

"You've got to have an element of trust, you can't come in and tell some complete stranger your innermost thoughts, that sort of thing....probation reports are based on interviews where you're allowed to get to know the person you're interviewing, or vice-versa in fact, so that I think they're a better balanced report at the end of the day." (PH6)

"If I hadn't had this problem with my daughter I probably wouldn't have seen probation...if they'd had to do a report they wouldn't have known a lot about me would they?...If you've only seen someone once in 9 months and you've got to do a report, what the hell can you say?..you can't spend 5 minutes on an assessment." (PH1)

"Way I sees it at the moment here, you're all hiding away in your ivory tower and you come over here and make reports on us and then beetle off again...we can't understand how reports are being made on us when you don't know...." (PH14)

"He knows my niece, kids, where they live, where I come from, he knows my character, not too much but you know, he knows what I want." (PH12)

The Probation Service was seen by most as being open with their reports and this was very important, both for feedback and accuracy:

"I've broken into probation office to read records, it's scandalous what I've read, couldn't believe the bullshit, what's the purpose at the end of the day? They're just sitting there like the Old Bill. You're entitled to know what's written down. Probation Officers should keep to what they're doing, not have flights of fancy." (PH5)

There was a powerful acknowledgement of the labelling process and the part that inaccurate reports can play in that:

Interviewer: "*So seeing someone for a short amount of time?..*"
"*You get some wrong impressions of a person and it could bugger up that person's life for a long time to come afterwards...because the Head Office always reads..it doesn't matter what <u>you</u> say, because they do say that the pen's mightier than the sword.*" (PH7)

"*Being able to change things in a report if you want. Sometimes people put things down they don't mean, then other people put it in a different context later.*" (PH11)

"*One Probation Officer told me a report where the Prison Probation Officer said I didn't get on with authorities/Prison Officers/probation. Don't know where it came from, never discussed. Not saying I'm a saint, lot of things bad about me...*" (PH3)

The openness of the Training Plans on C Wing where assessments were discussed with the prisoners was applauded:

"*Well you can actually say what you think, if they're wrong, you say so and at the same time the person that you're seeing can tell you why she put that report in and what/how come she drew her conclusions to that.*" (PH7)

Openness through the Criminal Justice Act 1991 was seen as great progress.

"*It's like if you did a bad report on me and I ain't going to see it, but now I've got access to my file, and I read that, I can come back to you and say why the hell did you put that and that didn't happen. I'm not that sort of person, when you ain't seen me for years on end.*" (PH9)

"*I'd rather be told the truth than be patronised and let down at the end of it, built up, "you're going to get this, you're going to get that, we're going to recommend this, going to recommend that" and at the end of the day you get a knockback.*" (PH10)

But not all the prisoners had this experience:

"If probation reports are made on people, you should get feedback. I've never seen a probation report or been aware of content." (PH11)

"I know they're not allowed because they didn't tell me like, they don't tell you like what they have in reports like, they just call you up and that's it really." (PH13)
Interviewer: *"Have you seen your reports?"*
"Lifers don't do they."

There was an awareness of the skills involved in report writing and risk assessment:

"..when I read it, like I read what I've told her/him and s/he's put all that in from what s/he's read in my record and that, then I come to her/his own assessment of me and from what s/he's read, and it's the judgement, s/he's a brilliant Probation Officer Mary because s/he's seen through things that I never said to her/him and it was an honest opinion and it was a valued opinion in my expression, it was the opinion of an experienced person in that field, not like one of these, [Prison Officers]...and like there's some times you get to some of it that you mightn't like but it's an honest and it's a professional opinion and you value it." (PH15)

"There's never been any secrecy...they'll always say "this is what I've wrote and what are your comments or is there anything that needs changing?" (PH10)

Comment

The prisoners' construction of the report writing role of the Probation Officer was that it was an area of specific skill for the Probation Service. At its best the reports were open and prepared in collaboration with the prisoner. They did not define reports leading to further contact, as the Probation Officers were to in their interviews.

Rather they saw contact leading to reports and all disliked the experience of having reports prepared by people who did not know them. Apart from the lifers, they did not agree about the amount of influence the reports had.

14. **Withdrawal** ("*You wouldn't be aware of the feel of prison life*")

This was one question that the researcher asked the prisoners, rather than allowing it to arise from their material. This was because the withdrawal debate has been alive in the Probation Service for many years and it seemed that the arguments were shortly to be resurrected with the commencement of Sentence Planning, and the enhanced role of the Prison Officers. There was complete agreement that the Prison Probation Officers should not withdraw from the prison setting, even when they had been critical of the service they received. Some saw Shared Working as the beginning of withdrawal.

"*It's frightening for people like me that they would take probation out of it because to me the only way I can see a way out of this or a way out of my life sentence, is through the Probation Service. I don't see it through these [Prison Officers]. Certainly not.*" (PH15)

"*I wouldn't agree with it..there should be someone there you got permanent access to really.....That'd be the fear I think, if probation did disappear, that you'd get a lot of screws, they think they're amateur psychiatrists you know.*" (PH14)

"*...because I know they're there to help like, some they do help you and they understand you and you understand them like. So I think it's better in a way.*" (PH13)

"*No that'd be wrong because I'd like to sit here and talk to you as a Probation Officer than having a screw here and sit in here and talking and him thinking he's a Probation Officer.*" (PH9)

"*That would be, personally I wouldn't like that....I'd miss knowing*

that I can just get out of bed and pop down stairs and take my problems straight to...if they came from an outside office they'd have all the outside work they've got to do and that would become more important than...because they're facing people every day out there. When they're supposed to come something turns up outside, they go to the one outside, no that'd be bad." (PH4)

"Withdrawal, bad idea, what about people with problems?" (PH5)

"I'd argue with those people myself. I would say that you need probation in prison because everyone has got it in them that you can only say so much to a screw but to probation you can become a bit more forthcoming.." (PH10)

"Prisoners need Probation Service really, if they take Prison Probation Officers out of the system anything could happen, they could write anything about you. At least with the PPO you've got a bit of help on your side." (PH3)

Two prisoners considered the alternatives:

"Well you can't discount the idea, it's got to be looked at, analysed properly and see whether there is any value in doing that, but personally I think that the more aware the Probation Officer is the better equipped he is to make the right decisions." (PH8)

"I think maybe a lot of the time you'd need somebody who's not actually employed by the, well not employed by the Prison Service, but not in uniform, rather than get just a screw to come in, in casual clothes because he's got probation training and the next minute he's banging you up...not really a good idea." (PH6)

Comment

As there was complete agreement about this it forms a central part of the prisoners' construction of the Prison Probation Officer. This view

was echoed by Jimmy Boyle in response to a question at the Howard League Annual Conference at Oxford in September 1992.

15. **Field Probation Officer**

There was no joint construction about the way that the contact with the field Probation Officer affected the Prison Probation Officer although many of the sample had regular field Probation Officers. At its best it could obviously enhance the work inside:

"*The more contact you've got with inside probation, makes you keep more contact with the outside probation because they both work hand in glove, especially for lifers, the more contact they've got with probation outside, I mean I'm not talking about exchanging letters but it's like my field Probation Officer personally, we've got a thing where he writes to me quarterly but I write to him when it's necessary..*" (PH10)

This could include the Personal Officer:

"*..he has done his job well I'll say that for him because if I'm not in contact he's always in contact with J, my Personal Officer, works brilliant..that's what you need probation for normally.*" (PH7)

"*or then he might feel that he can liaise with his field Probation Officer and the value, where a Prison Probation Officer can't find out too many details about his past without a lot of searching and things like that, a Prison Probation Officer can say "well this lad's been on probation, I'll speak to his Probation Officer, look at the file and see which way I can best help him, more efficiently.*" (PH8)

At the other end of the scale there were bad experiences, mostly through lack of contact and feedback, which could have an effect on the prisoner's attitude to the Prison Probation Officer. The following illustrates this point:

"like your outside probation, for instance, maybe people have different field Probation Officers but the 5 years experience I've had with this one we've got, I mean, he'll write you a letter, "I'm coming up such and such a date," then you'll be called down to the office on that day and it'll say he's had to do something else, he'll make another appointment. OK yeah, that'll be like months away, not weeks away, then you'll come down again months afterwards and you'll get a message he's cancelled it again, this has happened, he only comes up once a year if he does." (PH15)

"A lot of these new Probation Officers, all they're worried about is seeing a bloke when he first comes in and just before he goes out and nothing in between and what's the use of that because some bloke might be in prison, nowhere to go, then the Prison Probation Officer comes in and sees him the day before he goes and says well I hope everything's all right, bye-bye and you're at the gate and nothing's been done about it." (PH7) (General experience in short term prisons.)

Comment

Experience of the field officers varied but bad previous experiences were seen to be potentially harmful to the relationship with the Prison Probation Officer and where the contact with the field Probation Officer was good this reinforced contact with the Prison Probation Officer. Close liaison between the two was highly valued.

16. Conclusion

The prisoners had defined a series of potential barriers which seemed important factors in determining whether they engaged in focused work with the Prison Probation Officer. Clearly experience varied but all had to overcome one or more of these barriers in order to engage with the Prison Probation Officer(s).

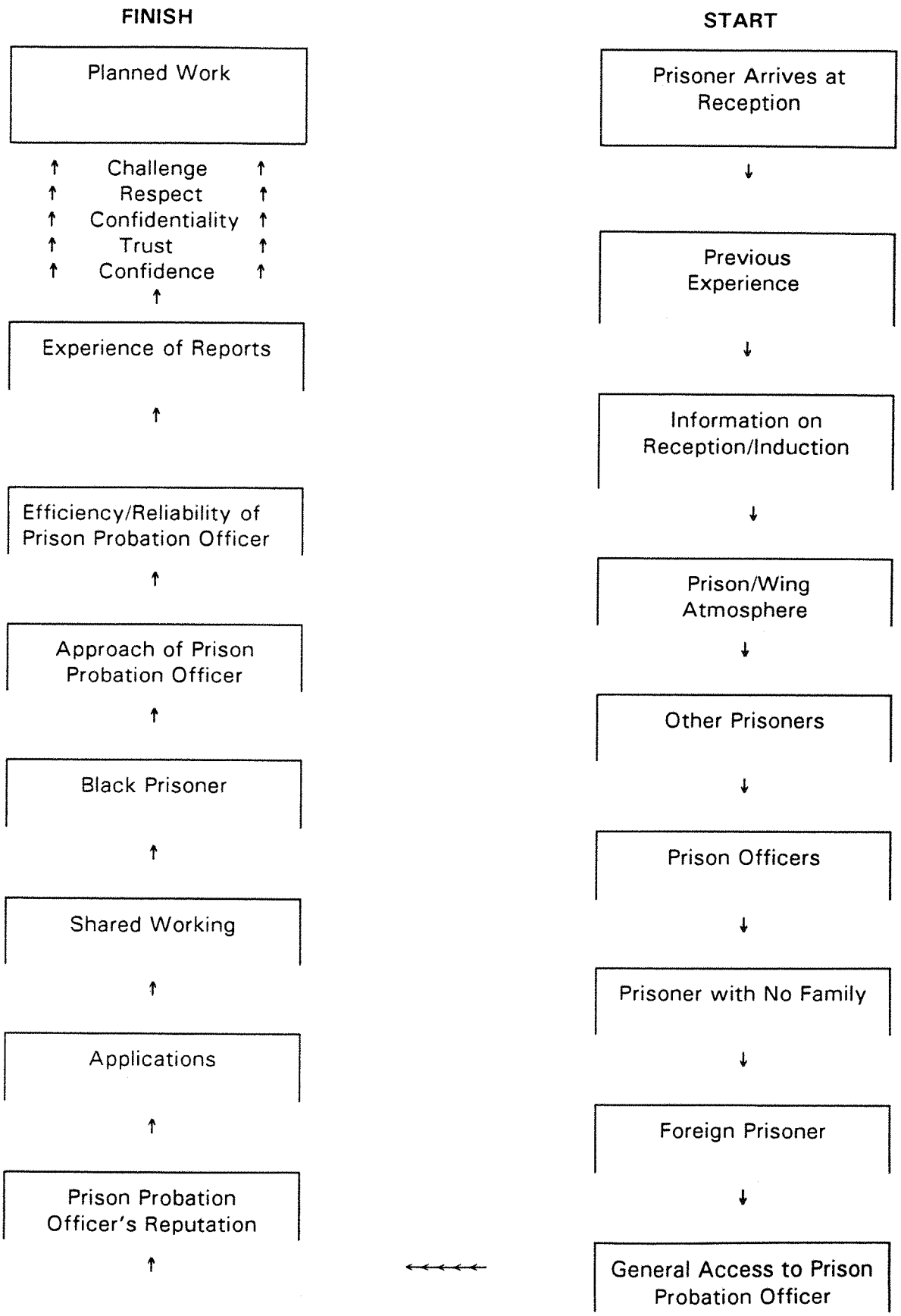
Access

Applications system

Prison Officers (gender and race issues)
Shared Working
Prison Probation Officers' approach
Other prisoners' attitudes
Prison/wing atmosphere
Perceptions of role
Presence of phone cards
Prison Probation Officers' attributes (gender and race issues)
Experience of reports
Experience of field Probation Officers
Being a foreign national prisoner
Being female

Their construction is represented by Figure 6.1. The prisoner arrives at the prison and has to surmount a number of hurdles or potential obstacles in order to engage in planned work with the Probation Officer. These are over and above the prisoner's desire to engage in planned work at the time it is on offer and his/her attitude to the offence. Despite all these barriers they all saw the role as having enough value to them to defend it in terms of criticising the withdrawal policy.

Figure 6.1 Potential barriers between prisoner and Prison Probation Officer



Prison Officers

Four Prison Officers were interviewed. They were chosen by the researcher in consultation with team members as having a wide experience of the Shared Working scheme. One had not worked specifically on the scheme but had worked in another prison on Shared Working. They were interviewed between October 1992 and December 1992. The interviews with this group were subject to many changed arrangements, mainly because of the Prison Officers' having to go on other duties, but also because the researcher was changing jobs and engaged in some training for the Criminal Justice Act which came into force on 1st October 1992. This included Sentence Planning at Parkhurst which radically altered the duties of the former Shared Working Oofficers and this was commented on during the interviews.

The officers all agreed for the interviews to take place and to be taped. The transcription methods were the same as for the prisoner interviews. The major themes are described below.

1. **Access**

The Prison Officers saw a need for the Probation Officers to be available to the prisoners and themselves when necessary.

"*Well it's certainly the amount of time they're seen on the wing, time is the major..I can't say anything else. I don't know basically what goes on behind the door, what rapport they have with inmates but basically the time spent...Officer X spends more time on the wing than Officer Y, so obviously they see Officer X more.*" (POR3)

"*It's different here, because we don't seem to be able to get in touch with you as easy.*"
Interviewer: "*Does that affect the contact the prisoners have with us?*"
"*I should imagine it does..yeah because if they're finding it hard to get hold of you it must have an effect.*" (POR4)

Interviewer: "*So you think more could be done for Probation to be more part of B wing?*"
"*Yes, if they knew they could see you when they actually needed to see you and that something was going to be done about that original problem.*" (POR4)
Interviewer: "*So should the Probation Officer be on the wing full-time?*"
"*No, way it's done now is fine, I think, yeah it's good.*" (POR1)
"*Officer Z gets to see a lot of people, through me [Shared Working Officer] I think, he's always popping up to see others and people quite often ask me to ask him to pop up.*" (POR1)

Interviewer asks about appointment systems:
"*That's always going to be a sticky one because you have to work around the prison regime. There's only certain times that you can get to see them and it's a hard one, although it's eased because probation seem to have made themselves far more available mornings and afternoons, not many days of the week when they're not mornings and afternoons, and there's normally one period of time where an agreement can be made.*"
Interviewer."*Between appointments?*"
"*Yes...*" (POR3)
"*My last prison had a really successful probation system. There Probation Officers actually came on the wing at 8.30 a.m. at unlock, they actually interviewed any prisoners who had probation applications there and then, and that used to take sort of half an hour to do them all and then during the daytime they would then get back to them with their answers, it if was something they could do themselves, if it was just a quick telephone call about, it was done there and then and they got an answer, 11 a.m...anything more serious they called them up later in the day and discussed it at length with them.*" (this was after an initial sift by the Shared Working Officer) (POR4)

Office facilities were mentioned by two officers as facilitating access to the Prison Probation Officer.

Comment

The Prison Officers' experience of availability of the Prison Probation Officers varied, as also did their knowledge of the other duties of the Probation Team. However, they were in agreement that it was important to the prisoners to be able to get hold of a Probation Officer when it was needed and frustrations in this area could lead to less contact overall. In this respect they were in agreement with the prisoners.

2. **Applications system** ("*Stick us down to see probation, it's personal*")

Once again the Prison Officers agreed with the prisoners that a quick referral system was needed and existing paperwork systems were sometimes bypassed.

"*What I did was just try it the other way and nobody's ever complained, if they complained I'd have had to say well I'll do it your way or go back to the way you were supposed to do it, but try different ways, different things, if it's going to be quicker and easier for the inmate, the Shared Working Officer and the Prison Probation Officer, then use it. Obviously you need to keep some sort of record, in a diary or whatever...it's not necessary, just piles of paper, most of it ends up in there [points to wing office] and gets used as scrap paper for people to write notes on the back, total waste of money as well.*" (POR1)

Interviewer: "*Big wings?*"

"*I'd have the same system we have on here, it's a good system. The guy'll come down and say "Who's Shared Working please, can you get probation," and in 3 to 4 minutes the whole thing's done, I mean that paperwork thing, I can understand the reasons for it on a big wing because might get a big backlog but there again if it was run properly and both happy to do it that way then it would run as smoothly as it does here.*" (POR1)

"*Applications? Nine times out of ten they'd come to you and speak to you and speak to you personally anyway, they never gave you*

anything in writing....we had the probation form, that's gone out the window, some time ago, it ended up if you were lucky on a F35."

But some record of the application could be useful:

Interviewer: "*Do you think they should be written?*"
"*They should be yeah, just an officer somewhere on a centrepoint, and they come down and you say "You've got until 8.45 a.m. to make your applications" and they'd all be written and brought up because wherever, I'm on this job at present, when they make an application I always write it down because then it's actually on somebody's desk and they can't say "Oh I forgot that telephone call", that happens sometimes when you're doing an application and something else comes along, you can miss something.*" (POR4)
Interviewer: "*What about the ones that don't want to put what it's about down on paper?*"
"*Well, just put personal, we don't ask to know what it's about because if they want to see probation just come along and see probation.*" (POR4)

The question of whether the officer asked the prisoner what it was about and tried to sort it out seemed to indicate an area of skill, or experience on the part of the officer:

Interviewer: "*So if they want to see Probation they can get straight to see the Prison Probation Officer, they don't have to go through Shared Working?*"
"*They don't <u>have</u> to go through Shared Working but normally the fellows come down off the landing and give it to Shared Working anyway, either put the application forms in or ring up, arrange it verbally first of all.*"
Interviewer: "*Would you go back to the prisoner and say "Is it anything I can sort out?*"
"*I think that's good practice. If the prisoner comes straight to me (on Shared Working) and says "Can I see the Prison Probation Officer?" I'd say "Well is it anything I can do at the moment?" I'd say that as*

Shared Working Officer. As a landing officer I think you'd have to know your prisoner. He wants to talk to you, he'll say "I want to see the Prison Probation Officer and I've got this problem", then he'll want to see you, but if he says "stick us down to see probation , it's personal" you can tell by the way he asks you, that's why we've got a better type of person being Shared Working officers and Prison Probation Officers than just giving it to anyone."

There was no real recognition of the problems facing the prisoners who couldn't write:

"Well all they have to do is come down and see the officer, say they want to see probation, if they want to say what it's about, if not just put personal."
Interviewer: *"Would you know the ones that can't read and write?"*
"There's only one to my knowledge and he's come down and said can you write it out for us, you just do it for them." (POR4)

Comment

The Prison Officers saw the applications system from a largely practical point of view, i.e. whatever system worked quickly and efficiently. They did not share the prisoners' construction of the applications being a major barrier between themselves and probation, particularly for the non-writers. There did seem to be an area of skill in determining when to try to divert an application to the Probation Officer and this area would benefit from further research and scrutiny. If handled inappropriately it could become a barrier, if well it could lead to a satisfactory outcome.

3. **Prison Officers/Shared Working**

The Prison Officers view of their colleagues' image of Probation Officers was not dissimilar to that described by the prisoners. The interesting thing was that they were also grouped with the Probation Officers by their colleagues.

"The same way they see Shared Working Officers, as do-gooders and welfare officers, that's a lot of feedback I've had on my job." (POR1)

"There's so many Prison Officers that I've met here who live in the past. They would like to do this and do that to inmates, inmates shouldn't have this, or shouldn't have that, fine perhaps they shouldn't....but I mean the Rules say they <u>can</u> have that so you can't stop 'em having it, so live with it, that's what I say." (POR1)

This seemed to imply that the Shared Working Officers, or "welfare screws" as they were called by the other officers, considered themselves to be somewhat removed from their colleagues and perhaps closer to Probation Officers. However, there was a shared construction of the roles being different because the Prison Officers were on the wing all the time and also in a custodial role.

"..I think we have to work harder. I'm not saying that Prison Probation Officers don't find it hard, but here sometimes you've got a situation where you'd just like to turn round and tell a guy to "bugger off" but you can't do that because you know you've got to be here till 9.00 p.m. at night and this might be in the morning at 9.00 a.m " (POR1)

"The Prison Probation Officer doesn't have so much contact with the prisoners as the Prison Officers do. I mean when you're locking people up all the time they do get a bit of respect for you, they're going to go behind their door, but a Prison Probation Officer hasn't got that little thing, so they're going to see a Prison Probation Officer as one who's always pleasing to the prisoner...so whenever the Prison Probation Officer's got to tell them something that's not so good, they're not too pleased with it, a bit of a shock, but they half expect it of a landing officer." (POR2)

This could lead to the prisoner sharing more with the Probation Officer:

"More leeway with PPOs, tell 'em that little bit more without that risk of getting nicked, not just that, I think they keep at the back of their mind this bloke might be nicking 'em one day where the PPOs won't be out banging 'em up, so we'll get this dual role." (POR2)

The uniform was seen as a barrier and the Probation Officers, being "civilian" were perhaps more likely to form relationships with prisoners.

Shared Working itself was seen as a good scheme when it was well resourced with consistent and motivated officers, a very similar construction to that of the prisoners. The difference was that the Prison Officers did not see the full potential of the scheme as a barrier between prisoners and Probation Officers, though they recognised problems. In fact they thought that the scheme would increase contact between Probation Officers and prisoners. Close liaison between Prison Officers and Probation Officers was seen as the key.

"I try and push them across to probation sometimes because some as I say won't go and I certainly, their expertise is more than mine." (POR1)

"What I do in here, strange thing, I tout for business here. If I'm walking around the wing or on the landing, and I hear a prisoner discussing something with another one, I'll ask him and I think well I can sort that out myself...there's a lot of them that don't know what's available to them and what goes on." (POR1)

"That he is dealt with by people that know how to deal with him, know how to deal with the situation and the case, and there has been times when they've had people doing the job through no fault of their own, are sort of press-ganged into or pushed into it and they've had cases where inmates wanted so and so doing, and they've had bad results purely because the bloke doesn't know what he's doing and maybe it has disillusioned them a bit." (POR3)

"They act as the middle link [Shared Working Officers]. They came to us, we contacted your department who either came back to us or direct to inmate."

Interviewer: *"That worked?"*

"Of course it did, yeah, because when I first went on the wing if they wanted to see Probation just put form in and over it came and we had nothing to do with it but when Shared Working got itself going they got to understand that there was a link, it seemed....a lot of the problems we could deal with without putting them to you, or we knew how to give you the information, they would come to you with perhaps a mumbled jumbled story and we'd decipher it, we'd come to Probation and say "look so and so wants so and so" and you had it sorted out for them, it certainly was an improvement." (POR3)

"Prison Probation Officer working in wings, they mustn't ever be seen to be working against the staff, if a prisoner can play one off against the other...it's like parents..it always ends up with the Mum punishing the Dad." (POR2)

One example was given of a prisoner who, unknown to the officer, was part of the research sample for interviewing:

"When he first got here he wouldn't talk to staff at all, he likes talking to women doesn't he. He'll talk to X, he'll come down and have quite a relationship with X and he was a different person on the landing, nasty, banged up, wouldn't have anything to do with us, and gradually he couldn't keep the two personalities apart so gradually they're merging and now he's quite acceptable." (POR2)

The question of confidentiality was seen as important and the Prison Officers thought that if it was not concerning security then they could keep confidentiality, sharing with the Probation Officer but not the other officers on the wing as discretion could not be guaranteed.

"If you're told something in confidence, if it's not too much of a security problem, personal life, I've had prisoners come up and tell me

things in confidence and I've not told anyone." (POR2)

"I mean what I say to any guy who comes in to see me is anything he tells me is as confidential as it can be between, obviously management, if it needs to go that high, or the Probation Officer and myself and they're happy with that, I stipulate sometimes, all depending on who the inmate is, that what he tells me doesn't go into the office out there." (points at general wing office) *"...if an inmate hears people in there talking about something on the landings that we've discussed during the day then he knows where it came from straightaway, he knows it came from me, well then my credibility just goes down the drain."* (POR1)

"At first when they saw an officer doing probation applications they weren't too happy with it, but once they realised that he was on the initial contact point and anything serious that need to be discussed that they didn't want the Prison Department to know about wasn't getting discussed with him, which it was, not to their knowledge, but it was upstairs." (POR4)

[Before] *"One of your staff would come in and...quite cold...at least we'd done a bit of groundwork...like prisoner X, you can approach him, he might sound a little bit hard but you can get through to him, it was useful."* (POR3)

"It was letting us know what was going inside the inmates, because a lot of them are very secretive, they wouldn't tell us things but they would tell probation..your office would come back and say so and so's got something going on can you keep an eye on him.....s/he would tell them that s/he was going to let them know, nothing was done behind their back, good thing, on a few occasions there were things going on with inmates that Officer X was involved with and I was involved with as well, while I was in Shared Working because things at weekend would happen obviously, evening, when s/he wasn't there and they would come and say so and so. I would know all about it and I'd take it on straight away." (POR3)

"I think that's very important...knowing any problems lately, not on his record, his father could have been taken ill, he could be prejudiced against groups of people and bring that up in conversation, or he could be just, be very loud and intimidating but he means nothing, like B for instance, he'll shout and ..but he's nothing, it's his way of getting things across. Some people are very calm but they're wound up, and knowing that person as best you can before you interview him." (POR2)

This point, about sharing information and experience of the prisoners, before interviewing, was seen as helpful as it could avoid difficult situations. By the prisoners it had been viewed with much more suspicion.

Some degree of skill was built up by the Shared Working Officers. One mentioned the prisoners' tendency to start to talk when being locked up.

"You've got to make sure that they're aware that you know, say "come down to my office and talk about that, or come to the landing box and talk about that after unlock, I've got to go off now," but you can get unto a quite hearty conversation and it's just when they're going away usually." (POR2)

This seems to be classic "hand on the door" interaction which the officer had picked up as important. It seemed clear again that once individuals had broken out of the stereotypes they were able to do some important work with the Shared Working Officers and consequently with the wing Probation Officers. The positive influence of a good scheme on the possibility of focused work between prisoner and Probation Officer seemed clear to the Prison Officers. One officer described Shared Working at another prison:

"So you were a close knit family, anybody that came into that family..you were all right, treated as part of the family, didn't matter if you were probation, typist, just treated as part of a unit." (POR4)

Continuity, as mentioned above, was seen as crucial:

"*You found certain ones would come to you more because you'd sorted it out for them, had a Shared Working team, once they'd started with a person they didn't like chopping, they liked to stick with one person which is understandable really.*" (POR3)

Comment

Shared Working and Prison Officer attitudes were seen as influencing the contact between Probation Officers and prisoners. There was some recognition that a poor or inappropriate service from Prison Officers could reduce contact with the Probation Officer but Shared Working was seen mainly in terms of its ability to enhance the contact. There was a difference between Prison Officers and Probation Officers in terms of role and skill and one could not replace the other.

4. **Prison Probation Officer's reputation** ("*Getting a good result*")

The Prison Officers were agreed that the reputation of the Probation Officer on the wing was an important factor in contact and that it hinged on the officer's reliability, as well as general approach.

"*Prisoners always want to have an answer, they don't want to be fobbed off all the time..I think being able to have an answer, even if it's not the one he wants..*" (POR2)

Interviewer: "*What else affects contact?*"
"*I think if they can actually see that you're doing things for them.*" (POR4)
Interviewer: "*What do you mean, result?*"
"*Some help that they might have asked for and it's been sorted out. To us it's always small but to them it's magnified a thousand times because they can't get out to sort it out.*" (POR1)

"Not only the personality of the Probation Officer but the reputation from other inmates, they talk a lot to each other, who they can trust, who will get you results, same with Prison Officers, they know which ones to go to because of their reputation." (POR2)

"No matter how small or big they're getting something back which I think's very important." (POR3)

"I would say 99% of the time s/he's here that day or the next day, and if it goes over that s/he'll come back with a reason, say "can you tell so and so I'll be up so and so?" (POR1)

Sometimes prisoners were seen to stay away from Probation Officers because of general attitudes or past experience:

"Well there's a lot that won't have nothing to do with probation, you get that in any jail."
Interviewer: *"Why?"*
"They just don't see them as maybe perhaps from previous times, maybe they've had bad experience...a lot of them see 'em as only just being do-gooders and that...certain prisoners don't believe in all that...I'm here to do me bird and...there is one or two in there would walk past the probation door and probably never glanced at it since they've been on the wing, quite polite but..." (POR3)

A firm, "straight" approach was favoured:

"But then again it's down to personalities...take Officer X ...s/he could say yes and no couldn't s/he and when Officer X said no it was no wasn't it. Whenever a prisoner was told 'No' by Officer X he knew it was no...people likes to know what's happening, decisive action." (POR2)

"You've got to be level, if you give them a no for a certain thing once next time you don't give them a yes for it." (POR4)

Comment

The Prison Officers saw getting back to the prisoner with some sort of an answer as paramount and having an impact on their reputations. This in turn would affect contact. Their construction included clear boundaries and consistency of approach.

5. **Probation Officer's approach/attributes**

"*...the amount they put into it, the approach that they give to the inmate. Because I think the workload has certainly increased, the results are certainly more, there's far more people using probation on the wing now than what there was a couple of years ago.....some will just skimp over it, some will put in more than others.*" (POR3)

This seemed to be the general view, which paralleled the prisoners', that attributes were not as important as the right attitude, though experience was useful.

"*I think it's the same in any walk of life, as long as they can see that you're doing your job, you know, they will take you at face value, the same as us, if somebody comes in the office and says will you do so and so for us and they come back 3 hours later and you haven't done it, next time they won't come in the office and ask you, you've got to be reliable.*" (POR4)

"*Prisoners are definitely different to work with than persons on the out, there's no doubt about that, must be a tremendous help to have had previous experience.*" (POR3)

"*No matter how good they are at the job when they come in, if they're young they're always going to get better with age.*" (POR2)

Comment

The attributes of the Probation Officer were not seen as important,

apart from experience, but having interest in and commitment to the job was seen as influential on the level of contact.

6. **Race issues**

Two aspects were explored: the attitude of black prisoners to Probation Officers and the presence or absence of black staff.

"Black prisoners are black prisoners, I know some staff have attitude problems but so do black prisoners, they all got a chip on their shoulder, they like to use it, "well I'm black and you're picking on me". Majority of staff don't pick on them because they're black, pick on them because of their attitude." (POR4)

"I think the black population we've got on the wing, there isn't many that don't go to probation." (POR3)

"I do know if a black prisoner makes a telephone call on <u>this</u> phone, they lapse into their own kind of slang, so you can't understand half of what they're saying, now I don't know if that's because they don't want you to understand or if that's their culture throughout the country, and when they're talking to another black and there's whites around perhaps they don't want them to hear, but I think that's probably it. We treat them the same as we'd treat anyone else." (POR1)

However, the same Prison Officer also said:

"I make a beeline for 'em sometimes to talk to 'em because the way this country it's almost as if you've still got this great divide all the time so I just go along and find out if I can, in a roundabout sort of way, if there's any problems." (POR1)

Another officer talked about stereotyping through ignorance:

"Small little societies always work with stereotypes, little tribes in

Africa, what they don't know they make up, if you don't know something you make it up, you've got to save your own curiosity." (POR2)

There seemed to be no shared construction about the way black prisoners might experience and react to Prison Probation Officers, though some recognition of stereotyping. Regarding Black Probation Officers this was generally felt to be a good idea but one officer felt that they would have to work that much harder:

"..if people are against Black Prison Probation Officers and you get them straight on the wing and he makes a few mistakes, where a normal person might make a few mistakes, it's just written off, but if he comes on and makes a few mistakes, that's his reputation there, that's what he's got, "don't go and see him, he's no good." I think you've got to fix it a little bit to start with, give him the more pleasant jobs because he's got his reputation, it's a very hard balance, you're not dealing with people here, intelligent animals." (POR2)

"I think some prisoners are a bit racist, some of the white ones." Interviewer: *"Might not see the Prison Probation Officer?"* *"Because they were black. In some respects it would be a good thing because they'd have to eventually and once they'd got across, it is a good thing...because you have to talk to them and find out "Oh that's not so bad like" especially when they help you, can be a bit of a gamble but sometimes it's quite good."* (POR2)

This officer felt strongly about positive action over recruitment:

"I think it's a big mistake and I think the Home Office are very guilty of recruiting people because they're a certain colour. If everyone was equal, they said "no matter what colour or race you are we're going to give you a fair test". When, for instance, they start lowering exam results to get Prison Officers in that are black now that goes quite the opposite way, strain it a little bit, but if they lowered their test results just to get more Black Prison Officers in the ethnic representation for

that group would all be stupid..." (POR2)

The officer that the prisoner had described as sitting on the landing ignored by his colleagues was referred to:

"*Well, Officer X has settled in on our wing all right...some inmates might see him as a traitor.*" (POR4)

Comment

There was no overall construction relating to black issues. Only one officer showed an awareness of the problems of discrimination and appeared to target black prisoners. There was some similarity to most of the white prisoner respondents that the black prisoners sometimes used the race issue to gain more favourable treatment. The difference in the construction of the Prison Officers and Probation Officers toward race issues will be described later.

7. **Gender issues**

There was agreement similar to the prisoners' view, that female Prison Officers had had a beneficial effect on the wing:

"*It's had a good effect, you'll find a lot of Prison Officers don't agree with that, they think it's detrimental. I think it's totally the opposite and rubbish. To have women on the wing makes a big difference for us because to a certain extent their behaviour's better..has a calming effect on people.*" (POR1)

"*They might try and act macho when there's a couple of boys there, but when there's a girl stuck in the middle they're not as bravado and it can help defuse situations.*" (POR4)

"*It was going to be a bit iffy, because all the macho prisoners were saying "we don't want them on the wing" but within 2 weeks they were accepted.*" (POR3)

It was felt that prisoners would find it easier to talk to a woman:

"*Surprising how many of the inmates go to them and they can cool situations down.*" (POR3)

"*He's a completely different person, quite a rapport going with him now, he won't come in demanding and shouting, he'll come in and say - and he's not the only one, there's been a few.*" (POR3)

"*Women can communicate well, sometimes see a man's problem probably better than a man.*" (POR1)

"*It might take a bit of trivial work off the Prison Probation Officer...if they just want someone to listen to them, preferably female.*" (POR2)

Only one officer felt that women and men had distinctive roles in prison:

"*You might call it sexist but women and blokes have got different personalities, they have different outlooks, you'd expect some things of a woman that you don't expect of a man...women and men have got different roles in prison, now I don't see women going in with shields and hauling blokes down the segs.*" (POR2)

This officer thought women might have to work hard to prove their reputation and counteract the prisoners' stereotypes.

Comment

The construction of the Prison Officers in relation to gender issues was very much influenced by their recent experience of having female Prison Officers on the wing. It seemed that the presence of female Prison Officers had done a great deal to break down the macho culture, made the place more relaxed and would make the female Prison Probation Officers' role more acceptable. There were some instances of prisoners who had found it easier to talk to female

workers (both Prison Officers and Probation Officers) and comment was made about their change of behaviour. The joint construction was that a mixture of male and female workers was helpful.

8. **Wing atmosphere/prison atmosphere**

"If they're sort of happy with the staff and the way the wing goes and their life is comparatively easy without any harassment, yes if there's somebody that can help them with an outside problem or one of their own problems then..." (POR1)

"You get very few nicking on this wing and I think it's got nothing to do with being soft, it's people and officers and managers willing to talk a problem out instead of just nicking a person, because from what I can see nicking somebody is just a way out of the problem." (POR1)

"Well, I think B Wing, it's been very out, on a limb, and I think when probation over the last 6 months/year seemed to have been a little bit cold and since your present staff have worked here they've certainly got it a lot more, they've brought it closer, got it going." (POR3)

"Parkhurst is a unique prison I think in the dispersal system..."
Interviewer: *"In what way?"*
"In the relationship the staff have towards the inmates, an inmate can - if he has a flare-up of temper and it's all his pent up feelings. Say R picked up the custard and threw it down, he's had a lot of problems, he loses his temper a lot, and he want up there and slammed his door, he was expecting to get taken down the Seg and no-one came to take him down the block...what's the point of nicking him and building up that barrier? It wasn't aimed at anyone....your man'll come up and he'll talk to Prison Officers now and he'll say "I lost my temper" and he regrets it and he was expecting to go down and be punished for it...next time he does something again he'll make sure it's not at a member of staff." (POR2)

"We had a very relaxed regime at Prison X at the end and that was to do with having somebody seconded onto the probation because he actually did all the pre-release courses."
Interviewer: *"How did that make regimes more relaxed?"*
"I think the prisoners actually saw that we were trying to help them on release.." (POR4)

Comment

The Prison Officers felt that a wing or prison atmosphere which promoted respect for the prisoner and talking problems through, rather than relying on disciplinary procedures, would enhance probation contact with prisoners.

9. **Perception of prison probation role**

The main construction was in relation to family work, similar to the prisoners' view.

"A lot of prisoners see probation staff as a bridge to the civilian side, visits, things like that, my missus is getting a hard time from her "ex"...they can't afford to come up for visits, can you see Assisted Visits..it's the listening ear, the problems but I think probation are doing a lot more now in prisons than they ever were." (POR2)

"I think there's more trust put in a Prison Probation Officer by virtue of the fact that they're outside as well, they're not actually prison staff which probably makes a big difference I would think." (POR1)

"I think they certainly see them as a link to their families on the outside, there's no doubt about that... They also like the non-uniform side especially dealing with their family, they'd sooner go to probation than come to us because I think the uniform is a barrier, they don't like us knowing a lot of their family happenings, quite understandable." (POR3)

The counselling, listening role was also acknowledged.

"I think sometimes they like to blow their tops as a release perhaps to hitting somebody or doing something like that and they either blow up at us or a Probation Officer." (POR1)

There was agreement about being able to absorb anger and not be deflected by it:

"So Officer X didn't let that sort of phase him/her, with the nonsense s/he got from Z. I mean s/he looks a bit flushed there sometimes but s/he doesn't look it to them which is good, and s/he'll come in here sometimes and say "Oh I just had this and that..." S/he's good, at least s/he's human about it, not trying to be superman/woman." (POR1)

"S/he's always willing to help, even if s/he's just been used the day before by one of them, s/he'll still have that guy the next day." (POR1)

"I think a lot of them look for company as well because they don't like talking to the uniform." (POR3)

Comment

The Prison Officers saw the role much as the prisoners, as being primarily about family liaison and individual counselling. The offence focus was not mentioned in this context. There were some comments about the limitations of work with long sentence men in the middle of sentence. It seems as though the image has moved on from practical welfare work to include a wider social work role, but not yet to include a central focus on offending.

If Prison Officers and prisoners have this joint construction then there are problems for teams who wish to see the offence as the centre of their work.

10. **Reports** (This section refers to the various reports prepared by Probation Officers relating to offending, risk assessment and social background)

"They also know that they do a lot of their reports, to go to their favour, all the different ones, they know that, they get in probation's good books and get good report, it all goes, I would be the same." (POR3)

Although the Prison Officers did not have much experience of whether probation reports led to further work, in relation to themselves they felt this to be the case.

"If a bloke really wants parole and you're writing his parole report...I'll quite often mention it to the bloke, especially if it's a good one. "I've just got to do a report", just open up a conversation and some don't want to know but others say, "Oh yeah? Hope it's going to be a good one," have a joke, has led quite often..they want to know if there's anything bad in there so they can prepare themselves." (POR2)

"They saw you in a different light." (POR4)

The need to do some homework and find out about the prisoner was seen to be important. Liaison between Prison Officer and Probation Officers over reports was felt to be good practice. Feedback and being open with the prisoner was to be encouraged but could be hard on the officer if an offender was denying responsibility:

"A lot of prisoners, although they've done the crime, they do try to blame it off on other people and they know they've done it. They know they've killed someone or they've blown up this or whatever, they're trying to put it off on someone else. "You've done the crime, these things are true about you," but they don't kill to face the truth. You've probably learned about this, blaming someone else because you can't take it yourself. Prison Probation Officers would probably have to burden a lot, take the guilt from them, the prisoner knows in

the back of his mind but he's unburdened himself by blaming them." (POR2)

Another officer discussed attempting work on the offence himself.

"I don't think you actually have to have expertise all the time, it's just a one on one, man to man, or woman to man chat, mentioning a few points saying "why don't you do this instead of that" and sometimes they say "Oh yeah, I didn't think of that, I might try that next time, I mean fine, it might work, it might not, it's a start." (POR1)

Comment

When asked specifically about report writing, the Prison Officers saw it as a central task of the Prison Probation Officer and one which could lead to further work being undertaken. However, like the prisoners they felt it was important to know the prisoner and did not place risk assessment or offence-related work at the centre of the role in the way the Probation Officers did.

11. **Withdrawal of Prison Probation Officers** (*"We can bumble through if we have to but that's not good enough"*)

All the Prison Officers thought that the Prison Probation Officers should remain in prison.

"You definitely need somebody who can contact the outside family." (POR4)

"I don't think Prison Officers would have the time that Prison Probation Officers can give to these people." (POR1)

"I think before they go the people who are going to actually fill that gap I suppose like shared working officers/sentence planning officers are going to need a damn good grounding in what the Probation Officer's taken away because we'll need to know that as well...at the

moment we can bumble through if we have to but that's not good enough." (POR1)

12. Conclusion

The Prison Officers agreed with the prisoners that the Probation Officers needed to be accessible when needed. They saw the applications system as a practical aid rather than a barrier, as the prisoners saw it. Shared Working was seen mainly as enhancing contact though there was some recognition of the adverse effects of a poor service. The reputation of the Probation Officer on the wing was seen as crucially influencing contact and this was linked to reliability and consistency. The approach of the Probation Officer was seen as more important than particular attributes, a similar view to prisoners. However, female officers were generally thought to have an advantage. There was a predominantly white construction of race issues. The atmosphere on the wing was seen as important, as also was the regime. The perception of the prison probation role centred on contact with families and the outside world, together with counselling. Work on offending and risk assessment was not described. Reports were seen as central to the role but there was little knowledge of their contents and purpose. All Prison Officers thought that withdrawal by Probation Officers from prison was an unhelpful idea.

Prison Probation Officers

The Probation Officers' views were similar to those expressed by the prisoners and the Prison Officers in that they identified potential barriers and blocks to contact with the prisoners. However, their views centred more on their own attributes and positions than the views of the prisoners and the Prison Officers. Major themes are as follows:

1. **Approach of the Prison Probation Officer**

All four laid emphasis on the approach of the Probation Officer and the general attitude. First impressions were felt to be crucial:

"*First impressions of POs important, whether they can trust us.*"

One Officer commented on the chemistry:

"*..some people the chemistry makes it difficult to relate.*" (PPO3)

but a great deal was felt to be within the control of the Probation Officer.

"*Presentation is very important, especially initially..*" (PPO1)

The same officer referred to:

"*Trust they feel they have in you, i.e. based on how concerned, understanding you are, how sympathetic you are, good listener..*" (PPO1)

"*If an inmate feels he can disclose things to you trust has been established.*" (PPO2)

This perception linked to the prisoners' comments about the approach of the Prison Probation Officer which could make or break the contact. Respect was felt to be important:

"Manner in which PO approaches a prisoner enhances relationship. If you make him feel like a person in his own right, and not just a number." (PPO4)

Giving the prisoner the feeling that there was time to explore his problems was important:

"..giving the person good time to deal with problems/issues, spare and quality time necessary..being a good listener..straight with them, don't fob them off, do what you say you'll do, keep your word." (PPO3)

"Giving them respect, calling them "Mr"...giving them appointments in sealed envelopes, putting quality time aside for them, being straight and honest." (PPO2)

This comment highlights a major tension for Prison Probation Officers, between availability and planned time with prisoners. Within the team there were a variety of approaches between structured and unstructured contact with prisoners, none of which suited everyone, but all of which suited some prisoners very well. However, there was agreement that getting back to the prisoners was very important:

"..keeping your word, whether you do what you say you'll do and get back to them." (PPO1)

"Whether you can come up with the goods quickly." (PPO2)

2. **Attributes**

All four agreed that age could be a negative factor (i.e. a large age gap between prisoner and Prison Probation Officer) but only for certain individual prisoners, and it could be overcome by approach. Gender issues were seen as important, summed up nicely by one officer:

"If you are a woman you are less threatening but you cop more sexist attitudes." (PPO1)

Positives were seen for prisoners seeking:

"*..that mothering, nurturing thing.*" (PPO2)

and curiosity could encourage contact:

"*..curiosity being a woman, i.e. sexual usually. Short-lived when they see how you operate.*" (PPO2)

This links with the prisoners' view that having women on the wing had had a significant impact.

Negative effects could arise from the gender of the officer:

"*..would like to forget, e.g. wife.*" (PPO2)

and the same officer felt that female officers could be bullied because the prisoners thought they were softer.

Privacy was also an issue:

"*..such as inmates going to the toilet and shower can make life difficult, have to look away, otherwise you are accused of being voyeuristic.*" (PPO2)

Although one officer felt class could be an issue, attributes such as class, dress and background were generally felt to have less impact on contact.

3. **Skills/professional approach**

This was mentioned far less by the Prison Probation Officers than either the prisoner group or the Prison Officer group and there was less specific itemisation of skills that might be important to the prisoners:

"*During sentence they see POs as having the skills and being able to*

treat matters confidentially." (PPO4)

"Core factors are..there being an advantage having contact..being bumbling and incompetent will have an effect..giving them time and trust..all other factors are secondary." (PPO3)

"..look for strength of character in POs, eg. whether you can fight battles for them." (PPO2)

This is highly significant and may connect with the pressures on the role of the Prison Probation Officer. It seems as though the Prison Probation Officers may underestimate their level of skills and the impact they have on the prisoners.

4. **Reputation**

The standing of the Prison Probation Officer on the wing was seen by all as crucial. There was acknowledgement that the role was a very public one (compared say to field work) and the influence of prisoners on each other was a major factor. Reference was made to "street cred", "standing" and the impact of previous work:

"The reputation you have on the wing through the work you have done with others, you become known and judged." (PPO4)

5. **Prisoner status**

Category A (high security) status was felt by all to affect contact, insofar as Category A inmates would be less likely to seek contact as it was not part of this image. If their category status was dropped they would be more likely to have contact. This factor was close to significance for determinate sentence prisoners in the file survey but not in the interviews with prisoners, probably because most Category A prisoners interviewed were lifers.

6. **Previous experience**

Previous experience ("*i.e. previous service delivery*" (PPO2)) could influence contact:

"*Previous dealings with Probation Officer, whether it was positive/negative..of paramount importance.*" (PPO1)

although this officer felt that previous negative experience could be overcome in time.

This was linked by one officer with perception of role:

"*..group mentality re: POs, what the culture says, previous involvement/experience with POs..that they perceive what our role is, eg. whether they consider us intrusive..confusion sometimes about our role.*" (PPO3)

7. **Resources/facilities**

A number of factors were outlined by the Probation Officers in relation to facilities, including an available, clean room, ("*cockroaches undermine status*") interruptions by telephone or through having a glass door which outsiders could see through, and location of interviewing and groupwork facilities away from the wing to enable more privacy and facilitate ventilation of strong emotions. Two officers felt they were not a major factor, though important.

8. **Shared Working with Prison Officers**

There was recognition that Shared Working could affect contact, though one officer was not sure how. The other three felt that a good Shared Working scheme would decrease the contact:

"*Whether there is a Shared Working or Personal Officer scheme, if not they are forced to have contact with us. Whether they feel they can*

trust shared Working or Personal Officer, if not they contact us." (PPO1)

"About 50% use them, 50% will not trust them so Shared Working Officers who are most like POs are used more, and we would see less, and be consulted more by Shared Working Officers." (PPO4)

"If a good one (Shared Working Officer), have less contact with us." (PPO3)

9. Other factors

Other factors about which there were no shared views were the general prison system, stage of sentence and type of prisoner.

10. Conclusions

Prison Probation Officers' construction of the contact between themselves and prisoners focused on their own approach, attributes and reputation. Approach and reputation had been shown in the interviews with prisoners to be important, but not attributes. The Prison Probation Officers appeared to under-estimate the importance of their skills compared to prisoners' views. Resources were more important to the Probation Officers than to the other two groups, but this is not surprising as these related to their daily working conditions. Views about shared working were largely similar to the other groups although the Probation Officers did not perceive the scheme to be the major barrier to contact that the prisoners described. The application process which was also seen as a major barrier by prisoners was not mentioned. The difference in constructions would appear to reflect the different experience of prison life and roles of the three groups. Some central elements are shared but described differently. The major difference appears to be the under-selling of social work skills on the part of the Probation Officers and the fact that shared working may be seen more positively by both Probation Officers and Prison Officers, than it is by prisoners.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Literature Search

The literature search revealed a lack of a theoretical framework for prison probation work. The task would appear to have been shaped by ideological trends within the Prison Service and Probation Service rather than a measured response to evaluation of the role. The prisoners' writings showed little mention of the Probation Officers. They featured largely as official figures, identified with the prison establishment. Reports prepared by Probation Officers were often resented and the prisoners particularly disliked being defined largely by their offence. Contact with families and the outside world is referred to as part of the Probation Officer's role. However, the power inherent in this is resented. There is no mention of working on the offence. The conclusion might therefore be that the view, or image of the Prison Probation Officer is not generally a favourable one amongst prisoners. Prison Officers occupy an even less favourable image. This means that any welfare system within prisons is going to have to prove itself in order to break down the stereotype held by prisoners. In addition, if the Prison Probation Officers' main task is working on offending then they have a very strong "welfare" image to change with the prisoners, and there may be very different expectations when the two meet.

The literature on prison regimes and management displays a natural tension between the need of the institution to maintain control and the needs of the individual. However, where whole regimes have been changed to support rehabilitative purposes, particularly centring on prisoner responsibility and expanded opportunities, then rehabilitative efforts have more chance of success. However, some control problems have been experienced when generally liberal regimes have been introduced. Some cognitive behavioural programmes have been found to reduce offending, when linked to resettlement in the community. There appears to be tension between the justice model and responsiveness to the individual's situation, as there is in sentencing. There is no doubt however, that an open, easily understood system which does not depend on discretion, as

recommended in the Woolf Report (1991) is welcomed by prisoners. The impact of long-term imprisonment is not inevitably harmful; much depends on the individual. The culture of the Prison Service may have changed at senior management level but quite massive changes are needed throughout the main body of Prison Officers to develop new attitudes and regimes. The development of Shared Working and then Sentence Planning places the Prison Officer centrally in the task of throughcare. The intention is that Probation Officers should remain in prison but that their tasks should be much more tightly drawn up and specifically related to offending and resettlement. Thus we have arrived at a mixture of the bureaucratic-lawful and rehabilitative models, superimposed on the old prisons. There is no evidence so far that Sentence Planning has permeated through the system as intended and the cynical observer would draw attention to the increased ticking of boxes and paperwork. It seems that Sentence Planning may suffer the fate of young offender throughcare (McAllister et al, 1992). Beneficial changes in the prison system must, as argued in Woolf (1991), be accompanied by a curb in prison sentencing. As it is the current Home Secretary is returning to "Victorian values" of Du Cane, increasing solitary confinement as a punishment and the general austerity of prison regimes, treating the prisoner as an object of punishment rather than the subject of his/her own destiny. This is accompanied by a rise in the prison population in 1993/94. With this collision of ideologies it is hard to be optimistic about the setting for future prison probation work.

The advent of contracts between local Governors and Chief Probation Officers, together with greater scrutiny of the service offered now it is locally financed by the Governor through his/her own budget, will bring changes for the Prison Probation Officers. Governors are likely to want to use the training and support element of the job to enable Prison Officers to undertake Sentence Planning. Tasks relating to risk assessment and specific programmes are also likely to be required by Governors, as a certain degree of expertise is required which is not generally possessed by Prison Officers. It is likely that the welfare side of the work, together with the outside links, will not continue to be seen as the exclusive province of Probation Officers, if it still is at present in some establishments. Neither will the Governors wish to pay for it. The focus will therefore be on outcomes tied to the specific skills of the Probation Officers. This might suit the Probation Officers better, feeling that their skills are being

fully utilised. However, the interface between focused work, the general daily welfare problems and outside contact remains complex, as it is for supervision in the field. The research on "What Works" shows the need for programmes to be underpinned by social skills acquirement and resettlement links. Unless the Probation Service is centrally involved in all three, or has very good liaison systems with those undertaking the other aspects of the work, the specific programmes have little chance of effectiveness.

Pilot Questionnaire, File Survey and Interviews

The pilot questionnaire supported the findings of the literature search. The Probation Officers were seen largely in terms of contacts with the outside world and general welfare tasks. Families were of great importance to prisoners and they saw the Probation Officers as playing a role in keeping relationships going. There was a lack of knowledge of the range of work of the Prison Probation Officers and a gap in services to foreign prisoners. Contact in Parkhurst appeared to be higher than in previous prisons.

The file survey also showed a high level of contact with half the sample of prisoners, and a quarter had engaged in planned work with their Prison Probation Officer(s) at some point over the previous two years. The sample was divided into four groups relating to different levels of contact. There was no significant difference between the groups on a whole range of variables, except that prisoners who were serving life sentences and prisoners on "C" Wing were more likely to engage in planned work and determinate sentence prisoners were less likely to. There was some evidence of a trend of higher contact with prisoners with problems relating to drugs, alcohol, self-injury and psychiatric history. The conclusion is that Probation Officers target lifers who in turn have reason to co-operate with them. The "C" Wing prisoners were also targeted through the nature of the multi-disciplinary team approach. It is highly likely that Probation Officers would also target those prisoners with problems relating to drugs, alcohol, self-injury and psychiatric history. However, apart from these factors there did not seem to be significant differences between the four groups and no profile is indicated for the prisoners doing focused work with the Prison Probation Officers.

The interviews with prisoners revealed a major problem of access to the Probation Officers. They defined a series of important factors which need to be addressed before a prisoner has a fair chance of engaging in planned work with the Probation Officers (Fig 6.1). These factors can be summarised as follows:

1. Access on the wings. There was a perceived need for the Probation Officers to be available on the wings, though not necessarily all the time.

2. Application system. The overwhelming view was that this system should be abandoned and replaced by a list of prisoners who want to see the Shared Working Officers or Probation Officers. Any filtering appears to be bureaucratically useful to the officers but a major barrier for the prisoners.

3. Prison Officers seem to have a significant influence on contact. If they are not working together with the Probation Officers and are unco-operative then contact may be affected. The impact of female Prison Officers appears beneficial, breaking down the stereotypes on all sides.

4. Shared Working can apparently be a recipe for disaster, but can also work well with certain pre-requisites. Confidentiality is valued, along with continuity, motivation and efficiency. It is potentially a major barrier between prisoner and Probation Officer. The aim of Shared Working is to enhance throughcare, which it can sometimes do, not act as a rationing system for Prison Probation Officers. Good Shared Working schemes can break down the stereotypes but can't apparently replace Prison Probation Officers in the view of these prisoners.

5. The initial approach of the Probation Officer would seem crucial to future contact. Williams (1990) found this with field Probation Officers.

6. Other prisoners could put off less determined prisoners than those in the high contact group.

7. If the prison/wing atmosphere values the role of the Probation Officers and the latter is central to the regime then contact is enhanced.

8. The role of the Prison Probation Officer is still perceived by the prisoners as related to families and counselling, even when those prisoners had engaged in work on their offending. There was some discussion of the latter but some felt talking about the offence was a "wind-up". Lifers were more likely to acknowledge this aspect of the role. This perception would also decrease the likelihood of a single prisoner initiating contact.

9. There was no agreement about desirable attributes, apart from a dislike of inexperience.

10. The prisoners' joint construction was mainly of white Probation Officers.

11. Reports (by Probation Officers) were mentioned as a major function. Reinforcing the comments in the autobiographies, the prisoners disliked and resented reports being written on the basis of one or two contacts. Open reporting was welcomed. Reports were described, however, as an area of skill for the Prison Probation Officers, as opposed to the Prison Officers.

12. Foreign national prisoners do not seem to feel that they receive an equal level of service to British nationals and some positive action would seem appropriate for this group.

On the positive side, when the prisoners had overcome the above barriers, or one might say learned the rules of the game, and established regular contact with the Prison Probation Officers, they were very positive about the work that had been done. They valued their basic social work skills and did not think that Probation Officers should withdraw from prisons. The help, friendship and challenge presented by the Probation Officers was of benefit to these long-sentence men and they did not think that these services would exist without the Probation Officers. Many of the descriptions read like an old-style casework book: positive listening, not giving direct advice but helping the prisoner find their own solutions, understanding and acceptance, reliability, good communication, tact and respecting confidentiality, appropriate boundary setting and encouragement. It seemed as though these experienced consumers of the Probation Service could recognise a good service when they saw it and were

willing to take advantage of it.

The Prison Officers reinforced some of these themes. They described access to the Probation Officer as important when needed. They thought that the approach and reputation on the wing of the Probation Officer was very significant. Reliability was crucial. Prison Officer colleagues were seen as separate from both Shared Working Officers and Probation Officers at times and sometimes unhelpful. Similarly, the wing atmosphere might be important. They said that having interest and commitment were more important than particular attributes. They thought that having female Prison Officers and Probation Officers on the wing was helpful, though they might have to prove themselves more than men. They saw the role of the Probation Officer as being largely to do with contact with the outside world and counselling, not mentioning work on offending. Reports were mentioned as an area of skill which might lead to planned work. There seemed to be some limitations to the understanding of the role and potential work of the Probation Officers. Where they differed from the prisoners was in terms of the applications system which they saw as useful and practical. They defined an area of skill on their part in knowing when to pass problems on to the Probation Officers but did not recognise this as a rationing system. They did not see shared working as a barrier, like the prisoners, but did define problems if it was badly resourced.

The Prison Probation Officers also saw approach and reputation as being important and so concurred with the views of the prisoners and Prison Officers. However, they also thought attributes were significant, a view not shared by the other two groups. They appeared to underestimate their social work skills compared to the other groups. They did, however, feel that they were doing an important job with the prisoners, focussing on offending and resettlement. They concurred with the Prison Officers about shared working enhancing contact, rather than being a barrier, and similarly did not see applications as a barrier. Working conditions were important for this group, rather than the other two groups.

The value of using the stakeholder evaluation approach to the interviews had been demonstrated to the researcher who had not anticipated the number of potential barriers to contact, particularly the very Shared Working scheme which

she herself had set up in accordance with governmental policy guidelines. The prisoners had also articulated the subtle interplay between welfare work and planned work which has become so much of an "either or" in current prison documentation. The validation of basic social work skills was also a surprise. Allowing the respondents to frame their own areas of concern had produced quite a different construction from the researcher's original view. All participants had feedback on their own and others' views and some were able to reshape their own perceptions. Some interesting discussion has consequently taken place at HMP Parkhurst on the development of the Personal Officer scheme following the research results.

Conclusion

The interviews highlighted the interface between access and planned work with Probation Officers. If Probation Officers are to withdraw from general work on the wings and focus on specific programmes, then the problems of access to those programmes need to be addressed. If the programmes are voluntary, ie. entered into as part of the Sentence Plan, then the participants are likely to be those prisoners with the motivation and determination to engage in them. Other prisoners, who might be in greater need of help and intervention, may not sign up. It is crucial, if the programmes are to be equally accessible, that the Probation Officers develop some way of regularly contacting all prisoners to review their situation. An interview for Sentence Planning purposes will not do on its own. It is likely that the interview for Sentence Planning by the Probation Officer will suffer the same fate of the report interviews, largely resented by prisoners in their autobiographies and interviews, as shown above. Information must be gathered in the overall context of the prisoner's life, both inside and outside prison. A single contact may alienate rather than engage. Induction groups and programmes which include all prisoners are one way of making future programmes and intervention equally accessible. It is not necessary for Probation Officers to return to the situation where they were inundated with applications. Neither is it necessary, realistic nor desirable to try to train all Prison Officers to a level where they can answer all welfare problems. It is, however, necessary for someone to provide that service. The State has put the person in a position of dependency in prison, with multiple problems to face as a result of the sentence. It has a responsibility to see that the prisoner has access

to help with his/her problems, preferably from outside the prison on a voluntary, self-help basis. Regular visits from CAB, education and employment services, DSS, Black organisations, women's organisations, prisoners' partners groups, housing agencies and substance misuse agencies, enable the prisoners to make their own referrals and seek help on a model that they can continue to use on release. NACRO articulated comprehensive proposals for a community-based resettlement service in 1983, and many prison teams have developed good links with community-based organisations. Winfield and Riddick (1983) have described some of these initiatives. The Probation Service can be central to the setting up and maintaining of these services. It is unique in having the contacts before and after sentence, the statutory responsibility for licences and liaison skills to establish the contacts. This is a major challenge for the Service.

The future for the Prison Probation Officer is at the moment unknown. There are real fears that the service will be drastically cut as Governors struggle to balance budgets with increasing numbers to manage. The Service needs to identify the throughcare services it can itself provide and those it can engage through brokerage. There seems no doubt that Probation Officers should not withdraw from prison, especially long term prisons. However, secondments need to be for limited time spans to maximise the networking ability of the officers and minimise their institutionalisation. Given the value that prisoners place on the work of the Probation Officers, when they do make contact with officers who are not institutionalised, it seems that there is something well worth preserving and developing.

The original enquiry had been about the factors influencing contact with Probation Officers in prison. The researcher has tried to show that the achievement of contact is extremely complex and depends largely on success in accessing the Probation Officers and achieving a satisfactory response. It also depends on stability of location during sentence and is enhanced for those serving life sentences. The Parkhurst team showed that it is possible to have contact with around half the prisoners, and work more closely with a quarter of them. This is, of course, under ideal circumstances in the current prison system. In a local prison the situation is quite different but the same principles apply. In fact, it is easier to organise voluntary input in a local prison because the organisations are usually nearer. The question remains, are those prisoners

who work closely with the Probation Officers, those in the greatest need of work, or those who have managed to overcome the obstacles to contact? This is the challenge for prison probation teams in evaluating work they do at any level. The value of focused work, when it is done, is clearly articulated by prisoners in this study and this should encourage prison teams to develop their work with confidence.

Implications for Future Research and Policy

1. A more extensive file survey to find out extent of work with Prison Probation Officers. Is Parkhurst atypical, i.e. able to have above average contact with prisoners? If so, then Parkhurst presents a best scenario and the barriers are likely to be much greater in other prisons.

2. Further stakeholder evaluation especially in locals and women's prisons and with prisoners who do not have regular contact with Prison Probation Officers.

3. Further research into Shared Working/Personal Officer schemes and the attitude of prisoners to the effect on contact with Probation Officers. Does it matter if the welfare task is being undertaken efficiently? There seems to be a need for welfare work with prisoners but perhaps other groups need to be involved, particularly community groups like Moss Side Initiative. Anyone setting up a Personal Officer scheme should involve prisoners in the planning. Access routes to the Probation Officers need to be defined and regular monitoring/profiling of prisoners should check that the most appropriate prisoners are reached.

4. Probation Officers should remain in long term prisons, recognising their skill areas and supplementing them with other organisations, especially those who can help preserve family ties, support ethnic minority prisoners and help with finance and employment.

5. Given the impact of the overall prison regime on individual rehabilitative efforts, as demonstrated in this study, the Woolf recommendations on regimes should be followed. Regimes such as that at HMP Blantyre House

and HMP Grendon would appear to support rehabilitation.

6. It is argued in this study that when prisoners are treated with dignity and respect, they are more likely to engage in rehabilitative programmes. This is demonstrated in prisoner autobiographies, where prisoners describe the impact of being treated in a civil and adult manner on their arrival at units such as Barlinnie, HMP Grendon Underwood, HMP Blantyre House and in this study "C" Wing, HMP Parkhurst, contrasting with the main prison system. A Statement of Minimum Standards by the Prison Service, based on the European Declaration would strive for a basic level of provision to support this approach.

7. Since the period of time in which this study took place the prison population has risen dramatically, making it extremely difficult for prison staff to engage in basic Sentence Planning paperwork, let alone the welfare task. If Sentence Planning and other reforms are to be at all effective, the use of imprisonment should decrease at least to the average level in Europe.

8. Female Prison Officers have a beneficial effect on the regime and positive action should be taken to increase their numbers.

9. The proportion of Black Prison Officers and Probation Officers does not reflect the prison population and positive action should be taken to increase their numbers. The disproportionate imprisonment of Black offenders urgently requires redress.

10. Prison Probation Officers need to be experienced and trained. This study argues that a comprehensive range of social work skills is integral to effective prison probation work.

11. To ensure a more effective approach to tackling offending during and after sentence, the Prison Service should have a Probation Service representative at top management level.

12. Field Probation Officers should reexamine systems to maximise personal contact with prisoners and effective links with prisoners' community ties.

Postscript

An unsolicited letter from a prisoner's mother to a Parkhurst Probation Officer sums up the value of good throughcare work on all sides:

"Thank you for all your help and understanding while my son was in Parkhurst. I am not writing this for X, or because I think it will get him out, but because you helped me get through the real bad times by talking to X when I could not. If I had said this to you while he was there, it might have been assumed that I was crawling, now is different. I have to say as well all the officers and the atmosphere at Parkhurst made things so much easier for visitors. Everyone on the Island who stayed at the overnight stay all said the same. Everyone was so helpful and cheerful. The children could believe they where visiting a hospital. Thanks again to you and the officers, especially when it was closed visits, they where really great."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ACOP (Association of Chief Officers of Probation), (1989), "Principles of Throughcare". Wakefield. ACOP.

ADVISORY COUNCIL (1963) "The Organisation of After-Care - Report of The Advisory Council on the Treatment of Offenders" HMSO.

ANGELL,R. **GOTTSCHALK**,L. **KLUCKHORN**,C. (1945), "The Use of Personal Documents in History, Anthropology and Sociology". New York. Social Science Research Council.

ANONYMOUS prisoner, (1971), Probation. 17,2.

BARAK-GLANTZ,I.L. (1981), "Toward a Conceptual Scheme of Prison Management Styles" The Prison Journal Vol.61 No.2 .

BECKER,H.S. (1970) in Filstead et al. (1970)

BELL,C. and **NEWBY**,H. eds. (1977), Doing Sociological Research. London, George Allen and Unwin.

BELL,R.E. (1991), "Staff Inmate Relations - The Personal Officer Scheme" in Bottomley,K. and Hay,W.(eds) (1991). "Special Units for Difficult Prisoners". The Centre for Criminology and Criminal Justice. University of Hull.

BERNTSEN,K. and **CHRISTIANSEN**,K. (1965), "A Resocialisation Experiment with Short-term Offenders". In "Scandinavian Studies in Criminology" Vol.1. Ed. K. Christiansen. London. Tavistock.

BOCHEL,D. (1976), "Probation and after-care - its development in England and Wales". Edinburgh. Scottish Academic Press.

BOTTOMS,A.E. and **LIGHT**,R. eds. (1987), "Problems of Long-term Imprisonment". Aldershot. Gower.

BOTTOMS,A.E and **McCLINTOCK**,F. (1973), "Criminals Coming of Age". London. Heinemann.

BOULTER,R. (1990), "Probation in Prisons. A Distance Learning Guide" Distance Learning Guide No. 5. Leeds. Probation Service Regional Staff Development.

BOYLE,J. (1977), "A Sense of Freedom". Edinburgh. Pan.

BRODY,S.J. (1976), "The Effectiveness of Sentencing". Home Office Research Study No. 35. London. Home Office.

BRODY,S.J. (1981), "Review of Effective Correctional Treatment". British Journal of Criminology 21. pp279-281.

BURNETT,R. (1992), "The Dynamics of Recidivism". Unpublished report to the Home Office. Centre for Criminological Research. University of Oxford.

CAREY, R.J., **GARSKE**, J.P., **GINSBERY**, J. (1986), "The Prediction of Adjustment to Prison by Means of an MMPI-based Classification System". Criminal Justice and Behaviour. Vol.13 No.4. December 1986.

CARLIE,M. (1990), "The Role of the British Prison-Based Probation Officer." (1990) International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice. Vol.14.No.1.

CARLISLE REPORT. (1988), "Report of the Review Committee into the Parole System in England and Wales". Cmnd. 532 HMSO.

CASALE,S. (1984), "Minimum Standards for Prison Establishments". London. NACRO.

CARROLL,L. (1974), "Hacks, Blacks and Cons: Race Relations in a Maximum Security Prison". Lexington, Ma. D.C.Heath and Co.

CLEMMER, D. (1962), "Prisonisation", in Johnston et al. ch.42.

COGGAN,G. and **WALKER**,M. (1982), "Frightened for My Life" in association with PROP (National Prisoners' Movement), Fontana.

COHEN and **TAYLOR**. (1972), "Psychological Survival". Harmondsworth. Penguin.

COKER,J. and **MARTIN**,J. (1985), Licensed to Live. Oxford. Blackwell.

CONN, R. (1971), "Prison Welfare and After-Care: a Comment". Probation, vol.12, 3.

COOKE,D.J. (May 1991), "Violence in Prisons: The Influence of Regime Factors". Howard Journal Vol.30 No.2.

CRAIG,J. (1984), "The Probation Through-Care Services, A Report on a Consumer Survey". Stormont, Belfast. Policy, Planning and Research Unit Occasional Paper, No.3.

CRAVEN,T. (1993), "The Importance of the Secondment of Probation Officers to Prisons". Unpublished MA dissertation. University of Kent.

CRESSEY,D.R. (ed) (1961), "The Prison: Studies in Institutional Organisation and Change." New York. Holt Rinehart and Winston.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE (November 1991). (Magazine of the Howard League) Vol.9 No.4.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT 1991.

CROFT,S. and **BERESFORD**,P. (1991), "Giving is better than you get". Social Work Today Vol.23 No.6.

CUSTODY, CARE AND JUSTICE. (1991), Cmnd. 1647. London. HMSO.

DAVIES,M. (1974), "Prisoners of Society : attitudes and after-care", Routledge and Kegan Paul.

DITCHFIELD,J. (1990), "Control in Prisons: A Review of the Literature". Home Office Research and Planning Unit Report. London. HMSO.

EMERY,F.E. (1970), "Freedom and Justice within Walls". London. Tavistock.

EMES,P. **MANN**,R. **MILLER**,H. and **SAMPSON**,A. (1992), "Evaluation of the Casework Officer Scheme" Unpublished Study, HMP Wandsworth.

FILSTEAD,W.J. (ed) (1970), "Qualitative Methodology. Firsthand Involvement with the Social World". Chicago. Markham Publishing Company.

FITZGERALD,M. (1977), "Prisoners in Revolt" Harmondsworth. Penguin.

FLANAGAN,T.J. (1980), "The Pains of Long Term Imprisonment", British Journal of Criminology, Vol. 20.

FOWLES,A.J. (1978), "Prison Welfare" Home Office Research Study No.45.

FOREN,R.J.W. (1969), "An Investigation into the Origins and Development of Social Casework in Prison". Unpublished MA thesis. University of Bradford .

FOX, Sir Lionel. (1952), "The English Prison and Borstal System". London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

FRIZZELL,E.W. (1993), "The Scottish Prison Service: Changing the Culture" Howard Journal of Criminal Justice Vol. 32 No.3.

GARLAND,D. (1992), "Criminal Knowledge and Power" British Journal of Criminology. Vol.32. No.4.

GENDERS,E. and **PLAYER**,E. (1989), "Race Relations in Prisons" Oxford. Clarendon.

GENDREAU,P. and **ROSS**,R. (1987), "Revivification of Rehabilitation: Evidence from the 1980s" Justice Quarterly.Vol.4.No 3.

GIBBONS,J.S. et al. (1979), "Clients' Reactions to Task-Centred Casework: A Follow-up Study". British Journal of Social Work 9.2. pp203-216.

GLADSTONE COMMITTEE Report (1895), "Report of the Departmental Committee on Prisons", Cmnd. 7702. HMSO.

GLASER,B.G. and **STRAUSS**,A.L. (1968), "The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Quantitative Research" Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

GONCZAL,K. (1989), Lecture delivered to a conference, "The Meaning of Imprisonment", at Bishop Grossetste College, Lincoln.July 1989.

GRAPENDAAL, M. (1990), "The inmate subculture in Dutch prisons", British Journal of Criminology, Vol.30, 3.

GUBA,E.G. and **LINCOLN**,Y.S. (1989), "Fourth Generation Evaluation". London. Sage Publications.

GUBA,E.G. and **LINCOLN**,Y.S. (1987), "Naturalistic Inquiry" London. Sage.

GUNN,J., **ROBERTSON**,G., **DELL**,S. and **WAY**,C. (1978), "Psychiatric Aspects of Imprisonment". London. Academic Press.

H.M. CHIEF INSPECTOR OF PRISONS, (1993), "HMP Blantyre House Report". Home Office.

H.M. INSPECTORATE OF PROBATION (1990), "The Practice of Young Offender Throughcare by the Probation Service in Four Young Offender Institutions and Six Probation Areas". Home Office.

HAINES, K. (1990), "After-care Services for Released Prisoners". Institute of Criminology. University of Cambridge.

HALLIDAY,J. Criminal Department, Home Office. (28th November 1991) "The Aims and Objectives of the Criminal Justice Act 1991". Speech given at a National Special Conference.

HAMM,M.S. and **SCHRINK**,J.L. (1989), "The Conditions of Effective Implementation. A Guide to Accomplishing Rehabilitative Objectives in Corrections". Criminal Justice and Behaviour. Vol.16 No.2.

HAMMERSLEY,M. (1989), "The Dilemma of Qualitative Method". London. Routledge.

HAXBY,D. (1992), "secondhand and out-of-print books". Brooklands, Carlton Road, Carlton Miniott, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, YO7 4NF.

HEALY,J. (1992), The Observer.19th January 1992.

HERCULES,T. (1989), "Labelled a Black Villain". London. Fourth Estate.

HESSE,M. (1980), "Revolutions and Reconstructions in the Philosophy of Science". Brighton. Harvester Press.

HOBHOUSE,S. and **BROCKWAY**,F. (1922), "English Prisons Today, Being the Report of the Prison System Enquiry Committee". London. Longman.

HOLBORN,J. (1969), "Prison After-Care, Public Responsibility". Howard Journal. X11,4,1969, pp 288-296.

HOLBORN,J. (1975), "Casework with Short-term Prisoners". Home Office Research Study 28 London. HMSO.

HOME OFFICE. (1969-71), "Report on the Work of Probation and After-care Department". Cmnd. 5158. HMSO.

HOME OFFICE. (1974), "Social Work in the Custodial Part of the Penal System - A Discussion Document by the Home Office Prison Department and the Home Office Probation Department".

HOME OFFICE. (1984), "Managing the Long Term Prison System". Report of the Control Review Committee. London. HMSO.

HOME OFFICE. (1984), "Statement of National Objectives and Priorities".

HOME OFFICE. (1987), "Special Unit for Long Term Prisoners: Regimes, Management and Research". Report of Research and Advisory Group on Long Term Prison System. London. HMSO.

HOME OFFICE. (1990), "Crime Justice and Protecting the Public" White Paper Cmnd. 965 HMSO.

HOME OFFICE. (1991), "Custody Care and Justice" Cmnd. 1647 HMSO.

HOME OFFICE. (1992), "Report of a Short Inspection of H.M.P. Parkhurst by H.M. Inspectorate of Prisons". Judge Stephen Tumin, HMIP.

HOME OFFICE CPO LETTER 13/1992 "National Standards for the Supervision of Offenders in the Community" (1992) Home Office, London.

HOME OFFICE CIRCULAR 241/1965 "The Prison Welfare Service".

HOME OFFICE CIRCULAR 130/1967 "The Role and Functions of the Prison Welfare Officer".

HOME OFFICE CIRCULAR 64/1986 "Prisoner Throughcare/Shared Working".

HOME OFFICE PRISON DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR INSTRUCTIONS :

CIRCULAR INSTRUCTION 48/1974 "Social Work in Prison Department Establishments"

CIRCULAR INSTRUCTION 1/1977 "Social Work in Prisons"

(ADDENDUM 1 TO CIRCULAR INSTRUCTION 1/1977 "Social Work in Prisons" Plus Annex "Some Shared Working Schemes" 1980)

CIRCULAR INSTRUCTION 25/1986 "Prisoner Throughcare/Shared Working"

CIRCULAR INSTRUCTION 30/1992 "Sentence Planning"

CIRCULAR INSTRUCTION 22/1993 "ACR Sentencing Planning"

HOME OFFICE PRISON DEPARTMENT, (1994), "National Framework for the Throughcare of Offenders in Custody Through to Completion of Supervision in the Community". HMSO.

HOWARD LEAGUE for PENAL REFORM. (1979), "Losing Touch. Restrictions on Prisoners' Outside Contacts".

INSIDE TIME. (1991). London. The New Bridge.

IRWIN,J.and **CRESSEY**,D.R. (1962), "Thieves, Convicts and the Inmate Culture". Social Problems Vol 10. No. 2 pp145-55.

IRWIN,J. (1980), "Prisons in Turmoil". Boston. Littlebrown.

JACOBS,J.B. (1974), "Street Gangs behind Bars", Social Problems. Winter 1974.

JACOBS,J.B. and **STEELE**,E.H. (1975), "Prisons: Instruments of Law Enforcement or Social Welfare?". Crime and Delinquency October 1975.

JACOBS,J.B. (1977), "Stateville: the Penitentiary in Mass Society." Chicago. The University of Chicago Press.

JARVIS,F.V. (1967), "The Prison Welfare Service: a survey". Probation 13,1. March 1967.

JENSON. In Toch (1977) p21.

JEPSON,N.A. and **ELLIOTT**,K.W. (1985), "Shared Working Between Prison and Probation Officers" The Report of the Working Group on the Review of the Role of the Probation Service in Adult Penal Establishments". Directorate of Regimes and Services Management Unit, Home Office.

JOHNSON,T. et al. (1984), "The Structure of Social Theory". Basingstoke. Macmillan.

JOHNSTON,N. et al. (1962), "The Sociology of Punishment and Correction". New York. J. Wiley and Sons inc.

KELLY,G.A. (1991), "The Psychology of Personal Constructs". London. Routledge.

KING,R.D. (1991), "Maximum Secure Custody in Britain and the USA. A Study of Gartree and Oak Park Heights" British Journal of Criminology. Vol.31 No.2.

KING,R.D. and **ELLIOTT**,K.W. (1977), "Albany: birth of a prison - end of an era". London. Routledge and Kegan Paul.

KING,R. and **McDERMOTT**,K. (1988), "Mind Games". British Journal of Criminology, Vol.28 No.3.

KINGSTON,R. (1979), "Throughcare: The Client's Point of View". Probation Journal. Vol.26. No.2.

KREUGER,R.A. (1988). "Focus Groups. A Practical Guide for Applied Research". London. Sage.

LEECH,M. (1992), "A Product of the System: My Life In and Out of Prison". London. Victor Gollancz Ltd.

LEIBLING,A. (1989), "Temporary Release: Getting Embroiled with Prisons" Howard Journal Vol 28 No.1 February 1989.

LEIBLING,A. (1993), Review of "The National Prison Survey 1991: Main Findings", by R Walmsley, L Howard and S White. British Journal of Criminology Vol.33 No.4. Autumn 1993.

LOWRY,P. (1973), "The English Prison Welfare Service" International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology. 17, pp29-40.

MacFADYEN,I. (1991), "The Caring Role of the Scottish Prison Officer." Unpublished Msc. in Applied Social Research. University of Stirling.

MacKENZIE,D.L., **GOODSTEIN**,L.I., **BLOUIN**,D.C. (1987), "Personal Control and Prisoner Adjustment: An Empirical Test of a Proposed Model". Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, Vol.24 No.1.

MacKENZIE,D.L., **ROBINSON**,J.W., **CAMPBELL**,C.S. (1989), "Long-term Incarceration of Female Offenders" Criminal Justice and Behaviour. Vol.16 No.2.

McALLISTER,D. (1991), "Is the Probation Service Through Caring for Young Offenders". Paper presented to the British Criminology Conference, York University.

McALLISTER,D., **BOTTOMLEY**,K., **LEIBLING**,A. (1992), "From Custody to Community: Throughcare for Young Offenders" Avebury.

McCLEERY. (1960), "The Governmental Process and Informal Social Control" in Cloward, R.A. et al "Theoretical Studies in Social Organisation of the Prison". New York: Social Science Research Council.

McDERMOTT,K. and **KING**,R. (1989), "A Fresh Start: The Enhancement of Prison Regimes" Howard Journal Vol.28 No.3.

McDOUGALL,C. (1980), "Prisoners' Problems as Viewed by Prisoners and Probation Officers at Acklington Prison". Directorate of Psychological Services. DPS Report Series 1 No.18.

McGURK,B. **THORNTON**,D. and **WILLIAMS**,M. (1987) "Applying Psychology to Imprisonment." London. HMSO.

McNEILL,P. (1985), "Research Methods". London. Tavistock Publications.

McWILLIAMS,W. and **DAVIES**,M. (1971), "Communication about After-Care". British Journal of Social Work,Vol.1.No.4. pp381-407.

MARSHALL,J. (1974), "How to Survive in the Nick". London. Allison and Busby Ltd.

MARTINSON,R. (1974), "What Works? - Questions and Answers about Prison Reform" The Public Interest. V.35. pp 22-54.

MAXWELL REPORT. (1953), "Report of the Committee on Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies". Cmnd. 8879 HMSO.

MAYER,J.E. and **TIMMS**,N. (1970), The Client Speaks London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

MEGARGEE,E.I., and **BOHN**,J.J.Jnr., with **MEYER**,J.Jnr., and **SINK**,F. (1979), "Classifying Criminal Offenders: A new system based on the MMPI". Beverly Hills, CA. Sage.

MIDLANDS EXPERIMENT. (1970), "The Place of Social Work in Prisons - The Nature and the Content of Voluntary Throughcare" (June 1970).

MIDLANDS EXPERIMENT. (1970), "The Place of Social Work in Prisons (1968-70) - Report on the Findings of the Co-ordinating Committee" (November 1970).

MONGER, M. (1967), "Casework in After-Care". London. Butterworths.

MORGAN,R. and **JONES**,H. (1991), "Prison Discipline. The case for implementing Woolf." British Journal of Criminology. Vol.31 No.3 Summer 1991.

MORRIS,T. and P. (1963), "Pentonville, A Sociological Study of an English Prison". London. Routledge and Kegan Paul.

MOSER,C.A. (1958), "Survey Methods in Social Investigation". London. Heinemann.

MOUNTBATTEN REPORT. (1966), "Report of the Enquiry into Prison Escapes and Security". Cmnd. 3175 HMSO.

NACRO. (1983), "The Resettlement of Ex-Offenders: Towards a New Approach". Report of a NACRO Working Group.

NACRO. (1986), "They Don't Give You a Clue. Some Views About Resettlement". London. NACRO.

NAPO. (1971), "Probation Officers in Prison". A Report of the Treatment of Offenders Committee.

NAPO. (June 1976), "The Work of Probation Officers in the Welfare Department of Prison".

NAPO. (1984), "Community-based Throughcare: The Case for Withdrawal of Seconded Probation Officers in Prisons".

NORMAN,F. (1970), "Lock 'em Up and Count 'em". London. Charles Knight & Co Ltd.

O.P.C.S. (1992), "The National Prison Survey 1991". SS 1329 HMSO.

OHLIN,L. (1962), "Modification of the Criminal Value System", in Johnston et al. ch.44.

PADEL,U. and **STEVENSON**,P. (1988), "Insiders: Women's Experience of Prison". Virago.

PARKER,T. (1970), "The Frying Pan: A prison and its prisoners" London. Hutchinson.

PARKER,T. and **ALLERTON**,R. (1962), "The Courage of his Convictions". London. Hutchinson.

PARRIS,K.C. (1968), "Casework in a prison setting". Probation 14,2. pp 36-40.

PEELO,M., **STEWART**,J., **STEWART**,G., **PRIOR**,A. (1992), "A Sense of Justice: Offenders as Victims of Crime". Wakefield. Association of Chief Officers of Probation.

PLOTNIKOFF,J. (1986 rev. 1988), "Prison Rules : A Working Guide". London. Prison Reform Trust.

POWELL,J. and **LOVELOCK**,R. (1987), "The Role of Consumers' Views in the Evaluation of Services: a Case Study - The Travelling Day Hospital". Social Services Research, No.1.

POWER,D.J. (1990), "Prison Riots", Justice of the Peace.

PREWER,D. (Undated). "The Juvenile Prison". H.M.P. Parkhurst.

PRIESTLEY,P. (1989), "Jail Journeys". London. Routledge.

PRIESTLEY,P. (June 1972), "The Prison Welfare Officer - A Case of Role Strain". British Journal of Sociology, 23, 2, pp 221-235.

PRISON BRIEFING No.57

PRISON REFORM TRUST. (1992), "Implementing Woolf: The Prison System One Year On".

PRITCHARD,C. (1971), "A Consumer's Approach to Child Mental Health", Medical Officer. 1st January 1971.

PROBYN,W. (1977), "Angel Face: The Making of a Criminal". London. George Allen and Unwin.

PUNCH,M. (1991), "In the Underworld", Howard Journal Vol.30 No.2.

RADZINOWICZ REPORT. (1968) "The Regime for Long-Term Prisoners in Conditions of Maximum Security" Report of the Advisory Council on the Penal System. HMSO.

REES,S. (1973), "Power and Influence in Social Work", Social Work Today, vol.3,21.

RENTZMAN,W. (1992), Prison Information Bulletin No.16.Council of Europe.

RICHARDSON,C. (November 1989), New Statesman Society.

ROBERTS,R. (1968), "Imprisoned Tongues" Manchester University Press.

ROBSON,R. (1989), "Managing the Long-term Prisoner: A Report on an Australian Innovation in Unit Management". Howard Journal, Vol.28.

RUDDOCK,R. (1969), "Roles and Relationships". London. Routledge Kegan Paul.

RUTHERFORD,A. (1986), "Prisons and the Process of Justice" Heinemann.

RYALL,R. (1990), "Inside Story", Community Care. 20th September 1990.

RYAN,B., **SCAPENS**,R.W., and **THEOBALD**,M. (1992), "Research Method and Methodology in Finance and Accounting". London. Academic Press.

SCHRAG. (1944), "Social Types in a Prison Community". Unpublished MA Thesis. University of Washington.

SHAW,M. (1974), "Social Work in Prison". Home Office Research Studies No. 22, London. HMSO.

SILVERMAN,D. (1985), "Qualitative Methodology and Sociology". Aldershot, Hampshire. Gower.

SCATON,P. and **SIM**,J. (1991), "Prisons Under Protest". Milton Keynes. Open University Press.

S.I. No. 388 (1964) "The Prison Rules"

SHELDON,B. (1986), "Social Work Effectiveness Experiments: Review and Implications" British Journal of Social Work. 16, pp223-242.

SILBERMAN,M. AND **CHAPMAN**,B. (1971) in "Explorations in After-Care" Home Office Research Studies No. 9, London. HMSO.

SIM,J. (1990), "Medical Power in prisons. The Prison Medical Service in England and Wales 1774-1989". Milton Keynes. Open University Press.

SMITH,K. with **WAIT**,D. (1989), "Inside Time". Mandarin.

STANLEY,A.R. (1971), "Casework in a local Prison". Probation, vol.12,3.

STERN,V. (Summer 1990), "An Open Letter to Lord Justice Woolf". Prison Service Journal.

SYKES,G. (1962), "The pains of imprisonment" in N. Johnston et al. "The Sociology of Punishment and Correction". New York. J.Wiley and Sons inc.

THOMAS,J.E. (1972), "The English Prison Officer Since 1850: A Study in Conflict." Routledge and Kegan Paul. London.

THOMAS,J.E. and **POOLEY**,R. (1980), "The Exploding Prison: Prison Riots and the Case of Hull". London. Junction Books.

THORNTON,D. (1987), in McGurk et al (1987)

TOCH,H. (1977), "Living in Prison". New York, London. The Free Press.

TOCH,H. and **ADAMS**,K. (February 1986), "Pathology and Disruptiveness may be Situationally Responsive". Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency" Vol.23 No.1.

TROTTER. (1969), "No Easy Road" London. George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

WALKER,N. (1970), Preface to Emery,F.E."Freedom and Justice within Walls". Tavistock. London.

WHITEHEAD,A.J. (1985), "The Literature of Extreme Situations. Prisoners' autobiographical writings and their contribution to social work thinking and practice". Unpublished MA dissertation. University of East Anglia.

WILLIAMS,M., **NOONEY**,K. and **RAY**,I. (1982), "Social Work Needs of Prisoners: A Survey" in McGurk et al (1987).

WILLIAMS,B. (1990), "Probation Work with Long-Term Prisoners in a Dispersal Prison". Unpublished M.Phil Thesis. University of Leicester.

WILLIAMS,B. (1991a), "Work with Prisoners". Birmingham. Venture Press.

WILLIAMS,B. (1991b), "Probation Contact with Long-term Prisoners" Probation Journal 38:1 pp4-9.

WILLIAMS,B. (1991c), Prison Report, No.14. Prison Reform Trust.

WINFIELD,M. and **RIDDICK**,M. (1983), "Links or Chains". A Guide to Community Involvement with Prison. London. Prison Reform Trust.

WOOD,I. (1990), "A Prisoner's View of the White Paper 'Crime, Justice and Protecting the Public'". Prison Service Journal. Autumn 1990.

WOOLF REPORT. (1991), "Prison Disturbances April 1990 - Report of an Inquiry". Cmnd. 1456 HMSO.

WOOTON,B. (1962), "Socrates, Science and Social Problems" New Society. No.1.

ZAMBLE,E. and **PORPORINO**,F. (March 1990), "Coping, Imprisonment and Rehabilitation". Criminal Justice and Behaviour Vol.17 No.1.

ZELDITCH, in Filstead,W.J.ed.(1970).

APPENDIX A

H.M.P. PARKHURST 30 Respondents out of 41 Questionnaires Sent Out

Parkhurst Prisoner Questionnaire : Probation Team

Please tick the box which best fits your answer unless there is some other instruction, or you are asked for a particular answer.

1. **How long is your sentence?**

Average	10 years	10 months	Out of 24 Determinate Sentences (+ 4 Lifers)	(28 Replied)

2. **How long have you served?**

Average	3 years	5 months	Out of 28

3. **How long have you been at Parkhurst?**

Average	1 year	3 months	Out of 28

4. **What is the most important part of the job of your Wing Probation Officer in your view?**

Answers attached. 30 replied.

5. **How do you rate the way the Probation Officers do their job?**

Badly	1	
	2	
	3	
↓	4	
	5	
↓	6	
Average	7.3	(27 replied)
↓	8	
	9	
Well	10	

(Please circle the number which best reflects how you feel. If you think they do the job very well, circle number 10, etc).

6. **Is your answer based on your personal experience?**

26 Yes 3 No

7. **How often have you met with the Probation Officer on your Wing over the past three months?**

7 Once a Week 23.3%	3 Once a Fortnight 10%	5 Once a Month 16.6%	Total: 49.9%
10 Once or Twice 33.3%	5 Not at All 16.6%		Total: 49.9%

8. **Did you see him/her mainly as a result of making applications or were you called up for planned interviews?**

3 Mainly Applications 10.7%	6 Mainly Call Ups 21.4%	12 Mixture of Applications and Call Ups 42.8%	
2 Not Seen 7.1%	*5 Informal Chat 17.8%	* Also 7 added informal chat to call ups or mixture.	28 replied.

9. **At the Prison you were in before Parkhurst how often did you see the Probation officer on average?**

2 Once a Week 6.6%	2 Once a Fortnight 6.6%	2 Once a Month 6.6%	30 replied Total: 19.8%
14 Once or Twice 46.6%	10 Not at All 33.3%		Total: 79.9%

10. **If you have seen a Probation Officer in Parkhurst, what kinds of things do you normally discuss with him/her? (Tick more than one box if you wish).**

11 Release Plans	14 Reports/Boards	5 Your Offences
10 Family Problems	11 Friends or people outside the Prison being contacted	
1 Arranging goods/ services for yourself	7 Your feelings (e.g. depression, anger, anxiety, confusion)	
3 Queries about your sentence or the Prison System	10 Other - Can you say what? Answers attached.	

11. **What do you think your biggest problem is as far as staying out of trouble when you leave prison is concerned? (Tick more than one box if you wish).**

6 Finding a job	5 Keeping a job	3 Somewhere to live	4 Partner
3 No friends	2 Keeping away from friends	3 Obligations to friends	
6 Being accepted by people at work	1 Being accepted by friends	7 Money/Lifestyle	
4 Drink	2 Drugs	1 Gambling	
2 Losing Your Temper	6 Health	4 Breaking the habit of offending	

10 Other - Can you say what? Answers attached.

27 completed. 3 had no problems. 1 had all of them.

12. **Are there any problems which you feel Probation Officers ought to be able to help you with, which they do not now?**

18 No 11 Yes 1 Don't Know 30 replied

13. **If you have answered 'yes' to question 12, can you say what?**

Answers attached.

14. **What is the most difficult thing about your sentence for you to cope with?**

Answers attached. 28 replied.

15. **What ought Probation Officers in Prison to be doing in your view? (If you wish to continue overleaf please do so).**

Answers attached. 25 replied.

16. **Are you in touch with a Probation officer outside the Prison?**

18 Yes 11 No 1 Blank

(If answer is 'No' skip questions 17 and 18)

17. **What do you think he or she can do for you?**

Answer attached.

18. **Do you get letters and/or visits from him/her?**

8 Several Times a Year	10 Once or Twice a Year	2 Never	1 Sometimes

Thank you very much indeed for filling in this questionnaire. We hope that the results will help us improve the way we work in Parkhurst.

If you have any more questions about this research, please ask to see the Senior Probation Officer, Mary Anne McFarlane.

MAMcF/LS

Question 4

Outside Links/Family:

1. Help prisoners, especially with family problems - keep each informed.
2. Help get in touch with the outside.
3. Liaison with families.
4. Contact with families.
5. Keep in contact with family.
6. Keep prisoners in touch with outside world.
7. Telephone calls to family.
8. Keep in touch with family and friends.
9. To make sure we keep in contact with the outside.

Approach:

1. Being genuine.
2. Be straightforward.
3. Honesty (PO is very helpful, understanding - does a good job)
4. Friendship/love.
5. Someone who cares.

Problem Sharing:

1. Discuss problems - give help.
2. Help people. Do good. People to trust.
3. Someone to talk to re: problems.
4. East to talk to, help with problems and worries, speak on behalf.
5. Help with personal problems.
6. Helping one on the wing.
7. Available when needed.
8. Solve problems - inform authorities re: behaviour and change in character and personality.

No Contact:

1. None.
2. Never had any contact.
3. Knowing when to leave people alone.
4. No probation help for foreigners.

Release:

1. Source of information concerning release preparation and outside contact (few other uses).
2. Preparing situation and circumstances for when I am to be finally let back into the community.

Practical:

1. Advice.
2. Help with legal problems.
3. Between Home Office and other authorities.
4. Help handle other officials - Housing Department.
5. Provide general information.

Psychiatric:

1. In depth psychiatric assessment.

Question 10 : Other

1. The PO does not have sufficient power to the authorities, specially for what concern foreign prisoners, who are also human beings and deserve consideration.
2. Expose my family problems to the Home Office in order to take in serious consideration of my transfer to my country to be near my children.
3. Want to know contents of record to see what grounds there were for putting me on 'E' list.
4. Group meeting once per week.
5. Contact Police and Solicitor about property.
6. PO helpful with a problem over compulsory purchase of a business and various writs.
7. Prison visitors.
8. Renewal of housing waiting list every month.
9. Through reading this leaflet I did not know I could discuss such matters.
10. Educational classes. Tutorial with Chaplains within the context of a psychotherapy relationship.

Question 11: Other

Family:

1. If my children can live a normal life and be left alone and me knowing my mother and my children are there for me once I get out then I know nothing else bothers me and know that I shall never return to prison.
2. Personally no problems, because I will meet my family.
3. None - as my attitude has changed completely - I don't intend to spend any more time in prisons and I have got a lot of support from my family when I get out.

Misc:

It is the duty of the brotherhood to have concern for welfare of the under privileged.

All of them:

1.

Other People:

1. Living honestly. Keeping away from bad friends.

Health:

1. Due to my crippled left hand I must take narcotics for the rest of my life - only alternative amputation.

General Comment:

1. This is my first prison sentence - please God never again.
2. I have no worry of staying out of prison when I leave prison as I have no intention of re-offending but I feel I get no help in prison to help me do this.

Innocence:

1. Only hope that the London CID do not fit me up anymore.

Help:

Knowing where to go for help.

Rehabilitation:

1. It will be very difficult to start new life when I will be 50 years old. This system of justice has destroyed my life.
2. I have been thinking of moving away from the area I was living in at the time of my arrest. I want to try and lead an honest life and settle down with my fiancee and I think a change in the area I live will help.

Question 13

Prison System:

1. Probation and Welfare (?) work more closely together to see inmates treated better - monitor feed/clothing, etc.
2. Power to do more - or assert power already have to get more problems sorted out.

Resettlement/Practical:

1. Money.
2. Clothing grant needed.
3. Renewal of housing waiting list each month.

Resettlement/Offending Behaviour:

1. Adjustment - how does one alter a lifetime of bad habits?
2. Rehabilitation - the process of restoring a person to the best possible level of functioning following a physical, mental or emotional disorder - process involves training in finding employment and helping with adjustment to his or her status in

the interpersonal sphere.

Foreign Prisoners:

1. As a foreigner no help - nor for family. No-one speaks language - everything very difficult.

2. Because I am a foreigner is there a way you might help me - no family in this country. Authorities should be helping to start my new life - why deportation?
3. Repatriation because foreigners do twice their sentences and are discriminated against.

Family Work:

Counselling for families and cons showing each effects of long term imprisonment and how to close the gap.

Question 14

Family and Partners:

1. Being parted from my children is the most hardest of all sentences, there is not anything else that could ever hurt as much as that.
2. Wife's sentence.
3. The distance from my family - the sentence keeps me too long time from my parents and wife.
4. Being away from my family.
5. Being parted from my wife and family.
6. The worry of holding my family together with the length of sentence and I am doing and being away from my wife and daughter.
7. Lack of women, lack of letters. At Parkhurst being so far from family and friends.
8. Not seeing my family (i.e. kids).
9. To be away from my child.
10. Outside family problems.
11. The separation from family and friends.
12. Being without my family.
13. Family, this place is too difficult to visit.

Other Prisoners:

1. As a first offender I have found it most difficult in staying clear of the tendency to blame myself - caused situation on anyone else but myself. This seems to be the prison trend. One can (if one yields to those temptations) be swept away in the bitterness, false morals and twisted ethics that are, in my opinion, the biggest cause of recidivism. There is a very old saying - one bad apple spoils the whole bunch - the complete oppositve is also true and I strongly feel that 'first timers' should be isolated from those already firmly fixed in their criminal way of life. In short - to survive you have to assimilate - assimilate and you become contaminated.
2. Other inmates talking bull-shit.
3. Having to live with people who are filled with so much bitterness and hatred, who do not stop complaining and make my life a misery.

Innocence:

1. Having to do twenty years for a crime I did not commit.
2. Being not guilty.

Release:

1. There ain't nothing I cannot cope with on this sentence but I do worry about my future release, things such as somewhere to live, work.

Guilt/Regret:

1. The waste, remorse, regret.
2. None that I can think of as I have accepted my sentence for the offence I committed although I think I have wasted six years of my life by being in here.

Health:

1. My health.
2. Mainly the problem of health.

Isolation:

1. The most difficult thing is my solitude and it will be for a long time.

Prison System:

1. Screws.
2. Other people annoying me and the screws being sarcastic.
3. This outdated system - there are third world countries with better systems.
4. Being on Rule 43 and having to settle for second best (quotes restrictions on exercise classes and being locked up 23 hours a day).
5. Sex offenders. Officers' reports.

<u>Question 15</u>

As now:

1. The way the Probation Office runs now I totally agree with.
2. Nothing more they can do for you than I have already mentioned.
3. One PO in Wormwood Scrubs was extremely helpful to me when I was first sentenced - otherwise limited experience so cannot comment.
4. POs in prison do as much as they can for each individual so I would say they should carry on doing the best they can for each prisoner.
5. Carry on the way they are but should be given a bit more freedom from the prison authorities to be able to help inmates more.
6. Exactly what they are doing now - aiding and abetting with the resettlement of offenders.
7. Only the job they do already.

Question Unclear:

1. Don't understand the question.

Wing Based PO:

1. Probation Service helpful in contacting outside - personal problems, etc., but scarcely know the individual. I would suggest "resident Probation Officers" on each wing so there is more understanding of the "hidden pressures" we all endure.
2. They should be case offenders working more closely with inmates checking their progress as well as helping with legal and parole problems.

System:

1. Earning their keep.
2. More freedom from authorities to help prisoners.
3. More say in what happens to the prisoners - I feel that their job is slowly being taken from them in prison.
4. Arrange transfers - more concern for inmates.
5. I think they ought not to be 'spokesmen' for the prison staff and Home Office, but 'spokesmen' for inmates, especially when there is blatent injustice.
6. To have the power that all the applications should be listened to and taken in consideration from their competent authorities.
7. I have gotten from the PO an interview and a visit from a voluntary visitor. I believe he has many things to do, for example, most contact with the prisoner - family and to worry for their future. What happens is the prisoners do not trust in the authorities of the prison.
8. Maybe to try to bring a system where inmates work for a proper image and can save money for their release and try to break the habit of crime, etc.

Foreign Prisoners:

1. Do all work with seriousness - speaking clearly.
2. PO should communicate to the competent authorities difference between professional criminal and mistake being made - so that prisoner can get parole.

Help:

1. Making sure each man has help in his problems when he needs it with trust.
2. Helping one plan a new future explaining what the outside holds for a released person.
3. Help prisoners with personal problems - general advice.
4. Help where possible.

<u>Question 15</u>

Psychiatric Training:

POs .. study psychiatric social work as part of their training .. especially a knowledge of psychotherapy.

Family:

Keeping me in touch with Probation at my wife's prison.

Question 17

General:

1. Writes and visits.
2. As much as you do for me in here.
3. I do not know.

Information:

1. Information.

Family:

1. Keep me informed how my family are and maybe help me when I get out.
2. Help me to get home to my wife as soon as possible.

Support/Release/Outside Links:

1. Moral support and encouragement will help find a flat when I am released.
2. Keep me in line and help me with my problems outside.
3. Find accommodation for home leave and release - also keep in contact with relatives.
4. Help with family matters, etc, and help put me in contact with employers when I am released.
5. Keep me in touch with the outside world.

Nothing:

1. Nothing (x 2) + 1 "If last time was anything to go by nothing" (this prisoner has no current contact).
2. Not a lot when I am behind bars.
3. Nothing and he agrees but then again I have not asked him to do anything for me - he very likely does a lot of good with others who need his help. Not everyone has the problems that a PO can deal with.

Parole:

Should not raise unrealistic expectations over parole.

Comment:

One prisoner not in touch, very negative about response from outside field office.

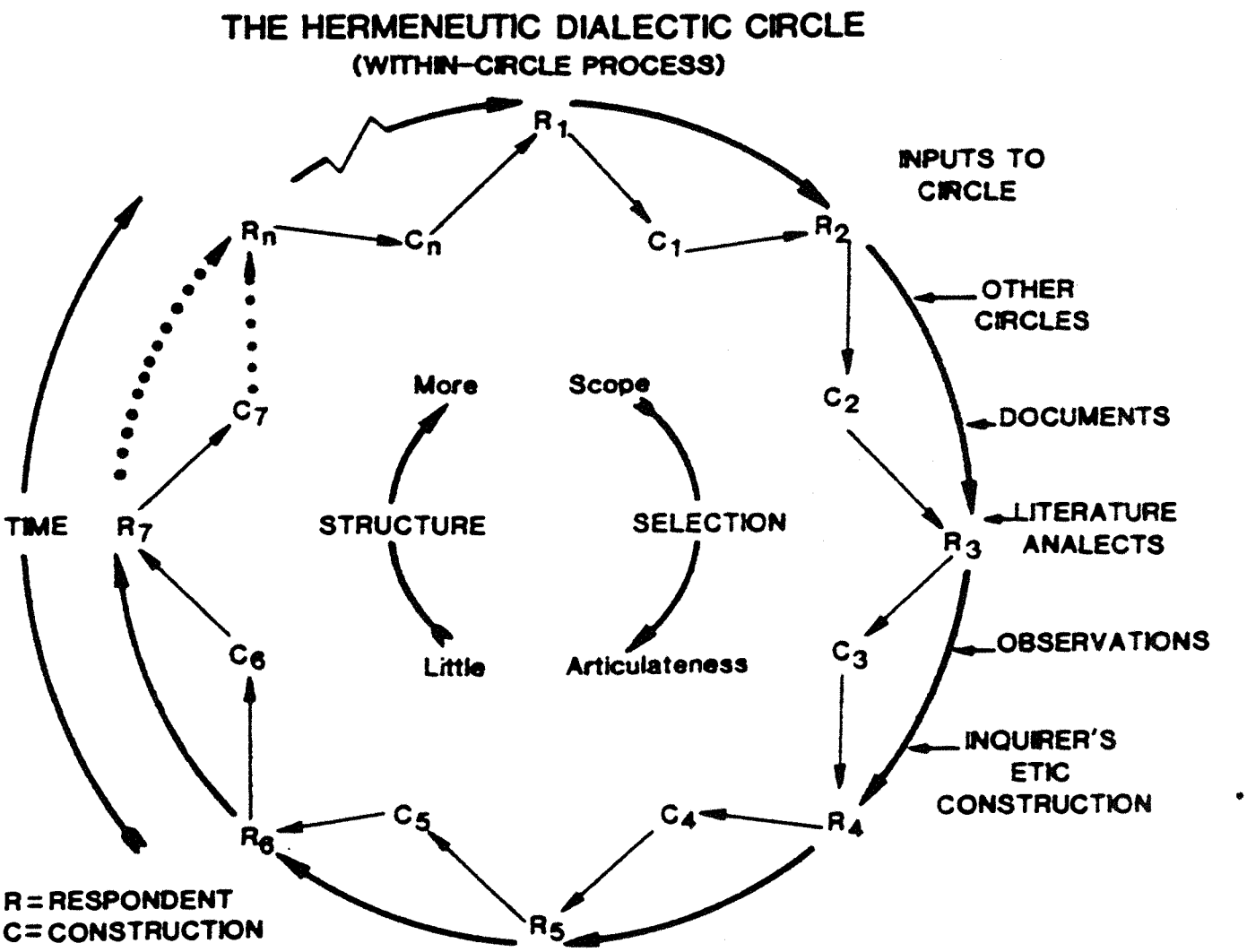
Introduction to Grendon Group

"Good afternoon. Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in today's discussion.

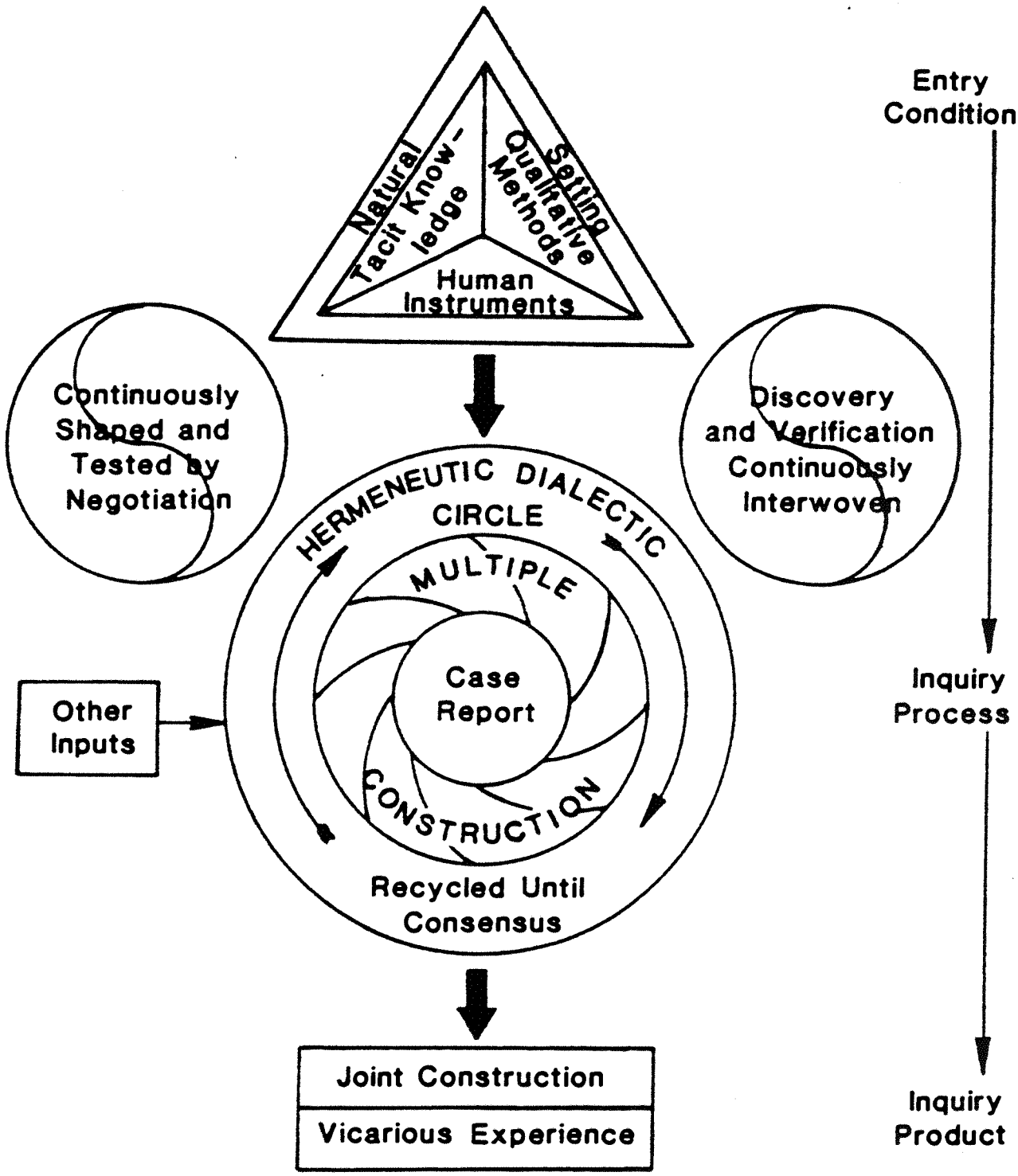
My name is Mary Anne McFarlane. I work as a Senior Probation Officer in Parkhurst and I'm doing a part-time research degree at Southampton University. First of all I plan to tape today's discussion to save writing notes and trying to remember what is said. No names will be used in my study and comments will not be linked to any particular individual. You may be assured of complete confidentiality. But if anyone minds my using the tape recorder I'm happy to take notes instead. Would any of you have any objection to taping? (pause) Please try to speak up and one at a time or the tape will be garbled.

I sent a letter to Mr (SPO) about today's meeting. Have you seen it? Just to recap. I am interested in looking at the contact between prisoners and the Prison Probation Officer. Some prisoners do quite a bit of work with the Prison Probation Officer and some have very little contact. I am interested in your views and experience about contact with Prison Probation Officers. There are no right or wrong answers, simply differing points of view. I will use what you say to build up a better picture of prison probation work. I'm just as interested in negative comments as positive ones.

Our session will last about an hour. To start us off can we go round the room? Could you say a few words about your own views or experience of contact with Prison Probation Officers either here or at a previous prison. Could <u>you</u> begin?"



THE METHODOLOGY OF CONSTRUCTIVIST INQUIRY



PROBE VARIABLE CODE DESCRIPTIONS

Inmate's Religion

Variable Format (II)

Religion should be entered as on reception. This information should be given on page 1 of the F1150 and also on the reception sheet. Atheists and agnostics are to be entered as 'nil'; C of E is to include C of Wales and Ireland, but NOT Scotland, which is Non-Conformist; and Orthodox includes Greek Orthodox, Russion Orthodox and Coptic. The Home Office does not recognise Rastafarian as being a religion and it should not appear on page 1; however, should it do so, enter the inmate as 'nil'. In cases of doubt, the advice of the Chaplain should be sought.

(0) Nil
(1) Church of England
(2) Roman Catholic
(3) Non-Conformist
(4) Muslim
(5) Jewish
(6) Pentecostal, Orthodox, Lutheran, Quaker
(7) Sikh, Hindu, Buddhists
(8) Jehov, Mormon, Christian Scientist, Christadelphian
(9) Other

Race

Ethnic Code - [Race] (N)

Variable Format (II)

Race is recorded on the reception sheet and also on page 1 of the F1150.

(0) Other
(1) White
(2) West Indian
(3) Indian
(4) Pakistani
(5) Bangladeshi
(6) Chinese
(7) African
(8) Arab
(9) Mixed Origin

PROBE PROGRAMME DESCRIPTIONS OF VARIABLES

Sentyy
Sentence Length Years - (YY)

The number of complete years of the inmate's sentence should be given, using two digits, i.e. 4 years would be entered as 04. Where the inmate is a life sentence prisoner, this should be entered as 99.

Off1_Off2_Off3
Prison Index Offence Codes - (NN)

The OFF1, OFF2 and OFF3 variables relate to the offence(s) for which a conviction was obtained against the inmate and should be entered in the order of seriousness, which will generally be the same as the order in which the offences are recorded on page 1. However, it is as well to check other sources within the F1150 in order to ensure that the offences listed on page 1 resulted in convictions for that offence rather than either an acquittal on one or more charges, or a conviction on an alternative charge.

(0) Not applicable
(31) Murder
(32) Homicide or Attempted
(33) Wounding
(34) Assaults
(35) Cruelty to Children
(36) Other Violence
(37) Buggery of Male and Indecency
(38) Rape, buggery of Female
(39) Gross Indecency with Children
(40) Other Sex Offences
(41) Aggravated Burglary
(42) Burglary
(43) Robbery
(44) Theft of Motor Vehicle
(45) TADA or being carried in Veh
(46) Thefts
(47) Receiving
(48) Frauds
(49) Forgery
(50) Malicious Damage
(51) Brothel Keeping, etc
(52) Drugs
(53) IC Driving under Drink or Drugs
(54) Firearms Offences
(55) Arson
(56) Explosions
(57) Immigration
(62) Other indictable offences

Drughist
Evidence of Drugs Prior to Sentence - (N)

If there is reference to drugs, but no indication as to whether cannabis or other drugs, enter this as cannabis only. Glue sniffing, while similar in certain respects to drug abuse, is not to be entered here.

(0) No Evidence of Drug Use
(1) Cannabis Only

(2) Other than Cannabis
(9) Information Unavailable

Alchist
Evidence of Alcohol Abuse History - (N)

"Alcohol Abuse" covers a broad spectrum, from heavy social drinking or frequent drunkenness to recognised alcoholism. Generally, if a report writer has seen fit to comment upon an inmate's drinking habits, this may be taken as an indication that they regarded it as excessive.

(0) No Evidence of Alcohol Abuse
(1) Evidence of Alcohol Abuse
(9) Information Unavailable

Selfinj
History of Self Injury - (N)

"Self injury" covers the entire range of intentional personal injury engaged in by the inmate; this covers the ingestion of objects (e.g. needles), drug overdoses, stabbings and slashings, etc. The severity of the injury, or the suicidal intent (if any) is not of relevance here. This variable covers self injury prior to custody, since being taken into custody and both before AND after being taken into custody. Custody included remand.

(0) No Evidence
(1) Prior to This Sentence
(2) This Sentence
(3) Both Prior to and This Sentence
(9) Information Unavailable

Psych
Psychiatric History - (N)

If there is mention in the F1150 of a psychiatric history prior to sentence, this should be coded as 1. However, routine psychiatric reports do not constitute a "psychiatric history" unless they give an indication of the existence of psychopathology, or there is some actual intervention. This point needs to be stressed, since it seems to be common for psychiatrists to assess homicidal inmates prior to trial in order to ascertain whether they are fit to plead.

(0) No Psychiatric History
(1) Yes, Prior Psychiatric History
(9) Information Unavailable

Psychuta

This is similar to the Psych variable in record 1, except that it is restricted to psychiatric diagnosis obtained whilst in prison on this sentence, (even if the condition had existed prior to reception). Information for this variable may be available from the history page, or from page 2, or from internal reports.

(0) No Psychiatric History Inside
(1) Yes Psychiatric Diagnosis Inside

Reports
Record 4 - Disciplinary Reports

Most of the information needed to complete this record should be available from the offences sheet in the F1150, augmented where possible by the actual white sheets often to be found in the pouch at the back. Where a single incident has given rise to a number of separate charges, each should be entered. Should we later wish to look at incidents rather than at offences, the date and time variables will allow appropriate groupings. All adjudications should be entered here.

APPENDIX F

Dear

I am writing to ask if you would agree to my interviewing you as a "consumer" during the coming month, about some research I'm doing on Prison Probation Officers. I have taken a random sample of prisoners who have done some work with Prison Probation Officers over the past two years and your name was included.

I'm interested in hearing about your views and experiences of contact with Prison Probation Officers during your sentence, not just at Parkhurst. The interview will last no more than an hour and I will have very few questions. The time is yours to tell me why you think prisoners sometimes work with Prison Probation Officers and what helps or doesn't help this happen.

Because I'm asking you for your views rather than personal details, it should not be possible for you to be identified in the study. Neither will I discuss your interview with anyone else, simply note your ideas. I hope this will reassure you about confidentiality. I will try to check things out with you after the interview and show/send you the final report. This will also be available in the prison library.

What do I get out of this? A higher degree and the opportunity, I hope, to influence the way Probation Officers see their job. What do you get out of it? An opportunity to make your views known and your experience count for something. Very little consumer research has been done in this area. Woolf was one of the first people to ask prisoners what they thought and I think your views are crucial to improving the services you are offered.

I have asked your wing Probation Officer to talk to you about this first. I will arrange to see you within a few days to see if there are things that need explaining or changing. I will check out with you at that point whether you would like to take part in the study.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

Mary Anne McFarlane
Senior Probation Officer

APPENDIX G

West Sussex Probation Service
61 North Street
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1NB

23rd July 1993

Dear

I am sorry that it has taken me so long to get back to you. After I started my new job in January I had very little time for the research. I have only recently completed a draft of the interview chapter and discussed it with my tutor. If I'd realised how long it was going to take I'd have dropped you a line earlier, just to say what was happening.

The interview with yourself and other prisoners form the central part of the research, along with a record survey. You'll remember we talked about other prisons as well as Parkhurst and between you, you had a great deal of experience of the Probation Service. You have already been described as "experienced consumers" of the Probation Service! As I explained originally I have analysed the main points of agreement about contact between prisoners and Probation Officers. What has emerged is that some very useful work takes place between some prisoners and some Prison Probation Officers when they can get to meet on a regular basis. However, there are a whole series of things that can either prevent or encourage them getting to that stage. I describe these below. Where I refer to "you", that means you as a group.

You all said that access was crucial. If the Prison Probation Officer came onto the wing regularly, or you knew you could get hold of them quickly, that increased confidence in them. The applications system was very much seen as a game which could be done away with, although you recognised that there had to be some system for organising those prisoners who need to see the Prison Probation Officer, as time was scarce. Shared working, or personal officer scheme, could work well, if the prison staff were discreet, efficient and motivated to do the job, and if it didn't prevent you seeing the Prison Probation Officer when you needed to. It could become a real barrier. Nearly everyone felt that contact between prisoners and Probation Officers had deteriorated since shared working began, though there were a lot of good experiences of individual Prison Officers.

The approach of the Prison Probation Officer was very important to you. If they were interested, gave you their undivided attention during the interview and got back to you quickly with any follow-up, that would increase the likelihood of further contact. This could also affect their reputation which didn't necessarily bother you but could put some prisoners off. Previous experience of Prison Probation Officers was also important.

continued.../

Comments were made about the wing atmosphere and there was agreement that prison life is not geared towards rehabilitation, and therefore not supportive of the Prison Probation Officer. However, C Wing was seen as an exception to this. Female Prison Officers had greatly improved the atmosphere where they had been allowed on the wings. However, there was no agreement about one type of Probation Officer being better than another, i.e. race, sex, class, age, though experience was much valued and very young female officers could be a "wind-up". Most of you had no experience of Black Probation Officers but plenty experience of racism.

You saw the Prison Probation Officer's job mainly as having to do with links outside, particularly with the family, and therefore felt that single prisoners would have less contact with the Prison Probation Officer. However, you also talked about reports and working on offences and felt that the Probation Officers had the expertise to deal with this aspect of work, even though this was sometimes uncomfortable! Everyone thought that reports should be open and that they should not be written on the basis of one interview.

Despite the introduction of phonecards, which had cut down on applications, you felt that the Probation Service should not withdraw from prison, that they could provide an important social work service and an independent presence on the wing. There was no real agreement about the power of Prison Probation Officers. Most of you saw them as not powerful, except for lifers who recognised the importance of the probation role, especially in relation to reports and risk assessment.

You described some of the work you had done with Prison Probation Officers as being very important and helpful to you, though some were just making a start.

I hope that this makes sense to you. I'd be glad to discuss it further if you would like to write or arrange for me to phone you. I shall be back at work on 19th August. At the moment, the Home Office is working on some new guidelines for the job of the Prison Probation Officer, so it is just the right moment to use the ideas you shared with me to try to influence the way things go. I hope to publish an article soon in the Probation Journal, if I ever find the time! I shall also be discussing the findings with the Governor at Parkhurst and the Probation Team there, but your contribution remains unidentifiable.

I wish you well with this part of your sentence and thank you very much for your co-operation. I hope you feel it was worthwhile.

Best wishes.

Mary Anne McFarlane
Assistant Chief Probation Officer