Staff culture, use of authority and prisoner quality of life in public and private sector prisons

Ben Crewe, Alison Liebling and Susie Hulley
University of Cambridge, UK

Abstract

Drawing on data collected in five private sector and two public sector prisons, this article highlights the complex relationship between prison staff culture and prisoner quality of life. Specifically, it explores the link between the attitudes of prison staff and their behaviour, particularly in terms of their use of authority, and seeks to explain the somewhat paradoxical finding that those prisons rated most positively by prisoners were those in which staff were least positive about their own working lives and most negative in their views of prisoners. The article highlights the importance of experience and competence, as well as attitudes, in determining how authority is exercised and experienced in prison. It also draws attention to the different kinds of staff cultures that exist both between and within the public and private sectors.

As Liebling (2007a) contends, prison staff cultures vary considerably, and these variations have significant consequences for the quality of life of prisoners: a crucial difference between prisons is 'the *way in which power is used*, and how this *feels*' (Liebling, 2007a: 117; emphasis in original). Based on a 30-month study comparing quality of life and practices in public and private sector prisons in England, this article highlights the complex relationship between the attitudes of prison staff and their behaviour, particularly in relation to their use of authority – a key determinant of the prisoner experience and the wider legitimacy of criminal justice agencies (Sparks et al., 1996; and see Tyler, 1990).

One of the aims of the introduction of private sector competition in England and Wales, and in Australia, was to develop staff cultures that were more positive, respectful and rehabilitative than those that existed in the public sector (Harding, 2001;

Corresponding author:
Dr Ben Crewe, Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA, UK
Email: ben.crewe@crim.cam.ac.uk

Moyle, 1995). Previous studies suggest that this aim has in many places been realized, in part through the recruitment of staff with no prior experience of (public sector) prison work. Moyle (1995) found unusually progressive staff attitudes in Borallon, the privately run Australian prison, while Newbold (2007: 225) describes being 'struck by the professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm' of the employees of Auckland Central Remand prison in New Zealand. Reporting on the UK, Shefer and Liebling (2008: 262) note that 'a surprising number of findings indicate that many (although not all) private prisons significantly outperform traditional public sector prisons in the areas of staff attitudes, levels of fairness, respect and humanity towards prisoners' (see also James et al., 1997; Liebling assisted by Arnold, 2004; National Audit Office (NAO), 2003). Such findings challenge the view that officer culture is invariably cynical, authoritarian, distrustful of prisoners and resistant to change as a functional response to the nature of prison work (see, for example, Crouch and Marquant, 1980; Lombardo, 1985).

However, an equally important aim of the privatization 'experiment' has been to decrease the costs of imprisonment (Harding, 2001; Moyle, 1994). This has meant reducing staff expenditure in ways that can undermine attempts to run legitimate regimes. While heavily unionised and generously staffed prisons often have rather traditional, regressive cultures, with negative consequences for prisoners, the 'immiseration of working conditions' (Taylor and Cooper, 2008: 26) brought about by prison privatisation can lead to negative consequences for both prisoners *and* staff. For example, Cooper and Taylor (2004, 2005) argue that, in driving down labour costs in HMP Kilmarnock (Scotland), the conditions of staff were degraded 'to such an extent that the public interest was undoubtedly compromised' (Taylor and Cooper, 2008: 7). A poor-quality and inexperienced workforce, low staffing (and staffing shortfalls), and problems with recruitment, training and retention undermined the safety and well-being of prisoners and staff, and created a threat to institutional order.

Similar problems with staffing levels and staff inexperience have been identified in other private prisons in the UK and Australia, in reports by independent prison inspectorates (e.g. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) 2002, 2005, 2007a) and in academic and official studies (Home Affairs Committee 1997; James et al., 1997; Moyle, 1995; NAO, 2003; Rynne et al., 2008; although see Hatry et al., 1993). Rynne et al. (2008: 124) describe staff inexperience as having 'compounded' a serious prison disturbance in Queensland, Australia. James et al.'s (1997) evaluation of HMP Wolds, the first privately managed prison in England and Wales, found staff attitudes that were more humane, and staff-prisoner relationships that were more positive, than in a comparable public sector prison. However, staff complained of 'a sense of powerless and vulnerability related to understaffing' (Shefer and Liebling, 2008: 267), and their low numbers, inexperience and lack of confidence led to high levels of bullying and assaults, and other problems linked to their general lack of 'jailcraft'. The implication is that even when staff attitudes are positive, the nature of private sector staffing means that the prisoner experience is not necessarily any better. In some private prisons, staff–prisoner relationships are 'good' (rather than 'right') because staff feel overwhelmed and intimidated by prisoners (Liebling assisted by Arnold, 2004).

Logan's (1992) comparison of women's prisons in New Mexico, USA, provides a further puzzle. The staff survey data consistently pointed to superior quality in the private prison, but prisoners rated the state-run prison more positively: 'Obviously,

the staff and inmates had very different perceptions and perspectives on many indicators of confinement quality' (Logan, 1992: 592), particularly in relation to prison security. In some UK prisons, staff are relatively happy because they are not challenged by their managers and are disengaged from prisoners. In others, they are stressed and uneasy because they are working hard to address prisoners' needs (Liebling et al., 2005). Such findings suggest that the link between staff satisfaction, staff attitudes and outcomes for prisoners – where outcomes are defined in terms of the prison experience (see Liebling assisted by Arnold, 2004; Logan, 1992)[1] – might be far from straightforward. Yet few studies have directly explored the relationship between staff culture and prisoner quality of life, and much of the research on public versus private sector imprisonment has been exploratory, superficial or limited in scope (for an overview, see Harding, 2001).

Drawing on data collected in five private and two public sector prisons, this article seeks to explain a somewhat paradoxical finding: the prisons that were most highly rated by prisoners were those in which staff were *least positive* about their own quality of life, and were *most negative* in their views about prisoners. The article highlights the importance of experience and competence, as well as attitudes, in determining how authority is exercised and experienced in prison. It draws attention to the different kinds of staff cultures that exist both between and within the public and private sectors, highlighting varying levels of naivety, professionalism and cynicism among staff. It suggests that more attention should be paid to understanding the relationship between staff quality of life and prison quality as experienced by prisoners.

Data and research methods

Our original research design proposed an ethnographic comparison of two public sector and two private sector establishments in England, matched as closely as possible in terms of function, age, and size. Advice on which prisons were comparable was taken from senior practitioners in both sectors. The plan was to include public and private sector establishments that were known to be performing reasonably well, and to exclude one prison known to be particularly expensive in terms of its cost per prisoner place (HMP Altcourse). Following the selection process, access was successfully negotiated with two 'local' prisons, HMP Forest Bank (private sector) and HMP Bullingdon (public sector), and two category-B (medium/high security) training prisons, HMP Dovegate (private sector) and HMP Garth (public sector).[2] The research team spent several weeks in each of these establishments between September 2007 and November 2008, where its members were given keys and allowed unaccompanied access to all areas of each prison.[3]

Prisoner perceptions of their quality of life were gathered using a revised version of the Measuring the Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) survey, a 140-item self-completion evaluation questionnaire that asks prisoners directly about their experiences of prison life (for further details of the development, revision and administration of this survey, see Crewe et al., under review; Liebling assisted by Arnold, 2004; Liebling et al., in press). The views of staff were gathered using a Staff Quality of Life (SQL) survey, developed in consultation with prison staff (see Liebling, 2007a; Tait et al., in progress).[4] In all four prisons, these surveys were distributed and collected by the research team following a brief presentation to all staff present during a full staff meeting. This sampling process is imperfect, in that the resulting 'opportunity sample' is skewed towards

staff who attend the meeting, but it is certainly 'good enough' and is highly effective. Efforts were made to supplement the sample by handing out surveys to staff who were not present in the prison on the day of the staff meeting or were unable to attend it. This yielded a small number of additional surveys. A total of 628 staff were surveyed in the four main prisons in the study, including 270 uniformed staff and 358 non-uniformed staff (primarily civilian staff and managers). As uniformed staff have more sustained contact with prisoners than other staff, and shape their quality of life very directly, their views are the primary focus of this article.[5]

One of the central aims of the study was to explore whether there were differences between the two sectors in terms of staff cultures, attitudes and practices, and to investigate the impact of these differences on quality of life for prisoners. In order to meet this aim, a large number of semi-structured interviews were conducted with prisoners, uniformed staff and prison managers.[6] In addition, the research team was allowed to freely observe management meetings, disciplinary hearings, and a range of staff–prisoner interactions on the prison wings and in other areas of each establishment.

Supplementary data (prisoner and staff surveys, observations and a small number of interviews) were collected over shorter time periods at three further private sector prisons: HMP Rye Hill, HMP Lowdham Grange, and HMP Altcourse.[7] The inclusion of Rye Hill resulted from an invitation from the Office for National Commissioning to assess the prison's quality at the end of its 'rectification notice'.[8] HMP Lowdham Grange and HMP Altcourse were incorporated into the study primarily because prisoners in our main research sites consistently referred to their quality. It is worth noting that there is therefore some asymmetry in the research design, in that data have not been collected from the known highest-performing public sector prisons in the same way. Further details of the seven establishments in the study can be found in Table 1.

It is important to acknowledge that the kind of research design employed in this study risks overemphasizing the importance of what could be relatively transient cultural traits. Each establishment was studied at a particular point in its life cycle and these contexts shaped the attitudes of staff in some distinctive ways. Both of the main private sector prisons were on a self-conscious trajectory of 'improvement', having emerged from periods during which there had been problems with control and safety. In the two main public sector prisons, proposals for 'workforce modernization' were generating discontent among staff at the time of the research. We return to this matter in the conclusion.

Quality of life in public and private sector prisons

We have described the results of the prisoner surveys elsewhere (see Crewe et al., under review; Hulley et al., under review). For the purposes of this article, and based on the overall pattern of results across all 21 prisoner survey dimensions, the prisons were grouped into four 'clusters', each representing a different level of overall 'quality' as evaluated by prisoners. Cluster A contains Dovegate and Rye Hill, the (private sector) prisons whose results were consistently poorer than the other establishments. Cluster B comprises Forest Bank, also a private sector prison, whose scores were generally higher than the prisons in cluster A but lower than those in clusters C and D. Bullingdon and Garth, the two public sector prisons in the study, make up cluster C. These prisons generally scored higher than the (private) prisons in clusters A and B, but lower than

Table 1. Details of the seven prisons included in the study

	Main study				Supplementary prisons		
	HMP Forest Bank	HMP Bullingdon	HMP Dovegate	HMP Garth	HMP Rye Hill	HMP Lowdham Grange	HMP Altcourse
Sector/ company	Private, Kalyx	Public	Private, Serco	Public	Private, G4S	Private, Serco	Private, G4S
Function	Local prison	Community prison*	Category B training prison	Category B training prison	Category B training prison	Category B training prison	Local prison
Operational capacity	1124	994	860	847	664	690	1324
Year of opening	2000	1992	2001	1988	2001	1998	1997
Fieldwork period	Sept–Oct 2007	Apr–May 2008	Nov 2007–Jan 2008	Sept–Nov 2008	Sept 2008	Jan 2009	Apr 2009

*Although HMP Bullingdon described itself as a community prison operating 'as an adult male Cat C training prison with a Cat B local function' (see HM Prison Service, 2004), it was, in effect, a local prison taking prisoners from the nearby courts while also holding general category C prisoners. In Prison Service performance comparisons, it is normally treated as a local prison.

Table 2. Quality of life in prisons, by cluster: Uniformed staff

Uniformed staff	Cluster A DG and RH	Cluster B FB	Cluster C BN and GA	Cluster D LG and ALT
Management dimensions:				
Attitudes towards the governor/director	3.69***B, C **D	3.15	3.18	3.34
Attitudes towards senior management team	3.31***C, D	3.09	2.94	2.84
Treatment by senior management	3.45	3.36	3.31	3.20
Treatment by line management	3.53	3.51	3.55	3.48
Relationships with line management	3.75	3.70	3.64	3.68
Job satisfaction dimensions:				
Relationship with the organization	3.31***C	3.32**C	2.99	3.15
Commitment	3.63	3.46	3.41	3.33
Recognition and personal efficacy	3.18	3.15	3.03	2.92
Involvement and motivation	3.93***C	3.82**C	3.55	3.68
Stress	2.92	3.18**C	2.76	3.02
Relationships with peers	3.81	3.91	3.90	3.86
Authority dimensions				
Safety, control and security	3.50	3.61	3.39	3.36
Punishment and discipline	2.96***D,*C	2.78	2.71	2.52
Dynamic authority	3.06	3.13	3.17	3.11
Prisoner orientation dimensions				
Professional support for prisoners	3.79	3.77	3.60	3.71
Positive attitudes to prisoners	2.68*C	2.83***C	2.48	2.60
Trust, compassion and commitment towards prisoners	3.65	3.70	3.65	3.56
Relationships with prisoners	3.64	3.77	3.63	3.77

those in cluster D. Cluster D consists of Lowdham Grange and Altcourse, the (private sector) establishments that were rated consistently higher than the other prisons in the study.

Table 2 shows the results for uniformed staff in all seven prisons in the study, organized by the same clusters used to differentiate the prisoner results. The figures shown for each 'dimension' are mean scores derived from a series of items rated on a 1–5 Likert scale. Generally, scores above the neutral of '3' reflect somewhat positive views, with higher scores always reflecting more positive attitudes. The highest possible mean score would be 5, but in practice, few mean scores approach 4. The asterisks indicate statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the clusters, using an analysis of variance.[9] The initials adjacent to the asterisks denote the clusters whose mean scores are significantly *lower* than the mean of the cluster against which they appear. For example, on the dimension 'Attitudes towards senior management team', cluster A scores significantly higher (i.e. more positively) than clusters C and D ($p < 0.001$).

The staff results are intriguing in that they do not correspond with the prisoner results in the expected direction. Cluster A scores significantly higher than cluster C on six of the 18 staff dimensions, and higher than cluster D on three of the 18 dimensions. Meanwhile, cluster B scores significantly higher than cluster C on four of the 18 dimensions. Neither clusters C or D score significantly higher than clusters A or B on any of the staff dimensions. It should also be noted that, of the four clusters, cluster D achieved the lowest (i.e. the least good) score for eight of the 18 staff dimensions (and six for cluster B), while cluster A received the highest score for nine of these dimensions (and six for cluster B). Although some of these differences are minor and statistically non-significant, the pattern is clear: staff were *most* positive in the establishments where prisoners were *least* positive, and *least* positive in the establishments where prisoners were *most* positive.[10]

Traditional culture and punitiveness

In their study of police culture and coercion, Terrill et al. (2003) found a link between a certain set of police *attitudes* – mainly negative views of managers and citizens – and certain kinds of *behaviours* – notably, the over-use of force. Officers who held traditional occupational values were more coercive than those who did not, 'suggesting that police use of force is a function of officers' varying attitudinal commitments to the traditional view of police culture' (Terrill et al., 2003: 1003). In a study of local prisons in the UK, Liebling et al. (2005) found a similar relationship between traditional prison officer culture and prisoner outcomes. Traditional culture was defined as a 'them and us' culture, comprising negative attitudes towards prisoners and senior managers, and a pre-occupation with issues of safety (Liebling, 2007a). Prisoners' feelings of fairness and being cared for, and their levels of distress, were negatively affected by the proportion of staff who adhered to this defensive attitude set, as measured by a reliable composite dimension, which can be seen in Table 3.

We expected prisons with more traditional (more anti-prisoner and anti-manager) staff attitudes to receive the most negative evaluations from prisoners. Table 3 shows the mean score for each cluster in this study for the dimension 'traditional culture', the mean score for each item that comprises the dimension, and – in parentheses – the percentage of uniformed staff who agreed or strongly agreed with each item. The results confound expectations. The *least* traditional staff cultures were found in cluster A – the prison cluster rated *least positively* by prisoners (and significantly less well than the prisons in clusters C and D). Meanwhile, the prisons that were most positively rated by prisoners appeared to have quite traditional staff cultures. Compared to uniformed staff in clusters A and B, staff in clusters C and D expressed lower levels of trust in their senior managers, were less likely to trust prisoners, and were more likely to agree that: 'The level of power that prisoners have in this prison is too high.'

A discrete 'punitiveness' dimension measuring attitudes to prisoners revealed a similar pattern (see Table 4).[11] Although uniformed staff in all of the prisons in the study were relatively punitive in their attitudes – in that all scores were below the neutral mark of '3' – uniformed staff in cluster A were significantly less punitive than those in clusters C and D. The least punitive uniformed staff were in the establishments rated least positively by

Table 3. Traditional culture among uniformed staff – all prisons by cluster

	Cluster A DG & RH (N = 122)	Cluster B FB (N = 75)	Cluster C GA & BN (N = 125)	Cluster D LG & ALT (N = 75)
Traditional culture:	3.13***D, **C	2.98	2.83	2.78
I trust the senior managers in this prison	3.40 ***C, D, **B (55.0)	2.93 (36.8)	2.86 (28.0)	2.75 (31.6)
I feel a sense of loyalty to the governor/director of this prison	3.76 ***C, **B (66.4)	3.29 (47.4)	3.21 (44.4)	3.40 (49.3)
I feel a sense of loyalty to the	3.41 (49.6)	3.26 (45.5)	3.31 (49.2)	3.14 (34.2)
Prison Service/company				
I feel safe in my working environment	3.52 (58.5)	3.66 (67.6)	3.33 (53.7)	3.45 (59.5)
I trust the prisoners in this prison	2.08 (5.1)	2.32 **C, *D (4.0)	1.91 (0.8)	1.89 (2.6)
I level of power prisoners have /in this prison is too high	2.60**D (54.7)	2.47 *D (56.6)	2.35 (61.3)	2.07 (72.4)

Table 4. Punitiveness among uniformed staff – all prisons by cluster

|	Cluster A DG & RH (N = 122)	Cluster B FB (N = 75)	Cluster C GA & BN (N = 125)	Cluster D LG & ALT (N = 75)
'Punitiveness' (α = .766)	**2.85*****C, D	**2.73**	**2.52**	**2.48**
This prison is too comfortable for prisoners	2.58**C, D (49.6)	2.33 (57.3)	2.14 (68.0)	2.08 (70.7)
Prisoners spend too much time out of cell in this prison	2.89***D (34.2)	2.99***D (33.8)	2.89***D (33.6)	2.30 (59.5)
The adjudication system in this prison does not teach prisoners anything	2.97***C, **D (32.2)	2.60 (47.1)	2.31 (61.8)	2.43 (56.8)
Prisoners should be under strict discipline	2.30 (66.4)	2.37 (60.0)	2.39 (57.4)	2.19 (63.0)
There are times where governors in here fail to support staff in dealing with prisoners	3.00***C, D, **B (36.2)	2.53 (52.8)	2.18 (72.1)	2.21 (67.1)
Most prisoners are decent people	2.96 (21.1)	3.04 (21.3)	2.76 (10.4)	2.85 (14.7)
If a prisoner lies to me, I don't make an effort to help them	3.31*C (15.8)	3.27 (21.6)	3.00 (28.1)	3.22 (17.6)
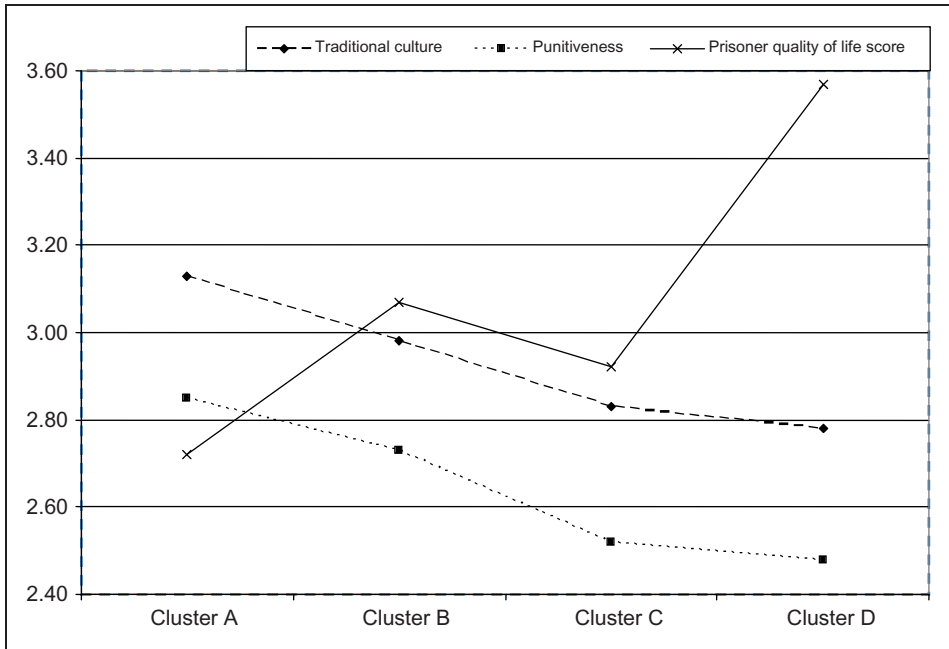
Figure 1. Traditional culture, punitiveness and prisoner quality of life – all prisons by cluster.

prisoners, while the most punitive staff were in the prisons that were rated most positively by prisoners.

Figure 1 shows the staff scores for 'traditional culture' and 'punitiveness' alongside a single 'prisoner quality of life' measure. The prisoner scores derive from a survey item that asks prisoners to rate their overall quality of life on a scale of 1–10 (for the purposes of this table, these scores have been collapsed into a score from 1 to 5). It should be noted that the prisoner and staff survey scores cannot be directly 'compared', as such. Rather, we want to highlight what appears to be an in inverse relationship between staff attitudes and prisoner quality of life.[12]

Drawing primarily on interviews with both prisoners and staff, our task in the remainder of this article is to explain this relationship. Why are more positive staff attitudes not related to better outcomes for prisoners? What is preventing them from being translated into positive prisoner experiences, and what is stopping more 'traditional' attitudes from leading to negative outcomes? The following section describes the staff cultures in each cluster – with clusters A and B merged into a single descriptive category – focusing in particular on three areas: attitudes to prisoners; staff behaviour, especially their use of authority and its impact on prisoners; and staff satisfaction and attitudes to managers.

Staff culture in the poor-performing private sector prisons – clusters A and B

Corroborating the survey data, prisoners in clusters A and B consistently described custody officers as 'more personal', 'less judgmental' and less punitive than

public sector officers.[13] They were less likely than prisoners in cluster C (public sector) prisons to say that staff 'looked down on them' or went out of their way to make their lives harder. In principle, the private prisons in these clusters conformed more closely to the dictum that prisons should be used '*as* not *for* punishment'. Private sector staff frequently vocalized this distinction, often referring to the emphasis that had been placed on it during their training.

However, these benign intentions were undermined by deficits in staff professionalism and low staffing levels. Although uniformed staff were hard-working and well-disposed to prisoners, they were often overwhelmed by prisoner requests and under-supported by their administrative departments. Wing staff made the same complaints about their colleagues as prisoners did about them, complaining that they were 'fobbed off' or left 'chasing around in circles':

> It's only my personal opinion, but two or three officers on the wing isn't enough ... It's not so much the inmates [that cause problems], it's trying to get the answers off the various departments and trying to get things sorted. (PCO, Dovegate)

In relation to meeting prisoners' needs and dealing with their queries, custody officers were hindered by their lack of knowledge. In other areas, such as exercising authority and implementing rules, problems resulted from their lack of confidence (see McLean and Liebling, 2008). Often, they reported losing faith in their decision-making abilities after being overruled by their managers. As a result, many deferred their decisions until they could consult more senior staff, causing significant frustration for prisoners.

Prisoners in these establishments consistently complained about how staff exercised authority. In particular, they reported that custody officers under-used their power, that they were 'almost too friendly', or that, having under-enforced the rules for a period, they would overreact to particular incidents:

> A lot of the staff are very young; their inexperience shows, just in their social skills, the way they communicate with inmates: either not enough or coming at you too hard on. ... Not enough authority to be accepted and then overboard with aggression. (Prisoner, Forest Bank)

Uniformed staff in these clusters were somewhat naive. They felt more trusted and respected by prisoners than they actually were, and prisoners described them as easy to manipulate, intimidate or ignore. As described elsewhere, naivety can lead to over-lenient behaviour – a style characterized as 'avoidant' by Gilbert (1997) and as 'patronage' by Ben-David (1992):

> *How do they use their authority?*
>
> They're quite weak about it. If they try and use their authority in a forceful way they'd get told to sling it and called names – 'who are you?!' (Prisoner, Dovegate)

Prisoners in these establishments wanted staff to use power appropriately, which meant not avoiding its use or confusing friendliness with either laxity or a lack of clarity

about rules and boundaries. Generally, prisoners did not want to live in an environment where conduct was unregulated (Liebling assisted by Arnold, 2004: 441; and see Wachtel and McCold, 2001) and wanted penalties to be imposed when rules were breached:

> [Prisoners] call them 'dickheads' and all sorts and they just turn a blind eye to it. No, they should treat them with respect and if they can't they should be penalized. (Prisoner, Forest Bank)

> You can back-chat the staff and nothing really happens. . . . They don't put their foot down early enough, so when an inmate sees that then he just has to take advantage. (Prisoner, Dovegate)

Prisoners wanted staff to deploy their power to protect them from themselves as well as from other prisoners. In describing the wing atmosphere as 'like a council estate' or 'a boozer' (prisoner, Dovegate) they depicted an over-permissive environment where it was too easy to 'get into trouble'. Although these establishments were generally less oppressive than their public sector comparators, they lacked the kind of 'supportive limit-setting' (Wachtel and McCold, 2001) that prisoners expected a prison to provide. Without such constraints, prisoners could not exercise what Bottoms (2009) calls 'dia-chronic self-control' – it was harder for them to resist impulses and temptations that they knew were self-destructive. They wanted some protection from their own impulses (what philosophers call 'weakness of will'; see Stroud and Tappoulet, 2003). They also sought guidance about how to make important life decisions, and often felt that this could not be provided by young, inexperienced staff.

Part of the explanation for these problems lies in the experience of uniformed staff. Over a quarter of uniformed staff surveyed in clusters A and B had less than a year's experience of prison work and over half had less than three years' experience. Very few had over ten years' experience (Forest Bank 2%, Dovegate 0%, Rye Hill 5%). Turnover rates were high, and good custody officers were quickly promoted. As a result, there were few experienced staff on the wings to model confident authority. Senior managers in these prisons accepted that their staff were less knowledgeable than public sector staff and less good at following procedures – 'very keen amateurs', explained one private prison director. The 'youthful enthusiasm' (Hatry et al., 1993: 199) of custody officers was as much a weakness as a strength. Senior managers also acknowledged that running prisons on such low staffing levels was challenging:

> This place is a very, very, very cheap contract, our staffing ratios are ludicrous, 50% of our staff are women, and they're young women. I've got PCOs running units, with long-term sophisticated [prisoners], who are younger than my [child]. (Director, private prison)

In the staff survey, less experienced uniformed staff in both sectors were significantly more positive than their more experienced colleagues about their prison's senior management team, their relationship with the organization and other areas of job satisfaction. In the private sector prisons, inexperience was also associated with significantly lower scores on 'relationships with prisoners'. It therefore seems likely that one reason

why the prisons in these clusters scored relatively well on staff satisfaction but relatively poorly in terms of prisoner quality of life is that such a high proportion of their staff were inexperienced.

Another reason relates to the different occupational views and expectations that were found in the private sector prisons. Since private sector custody officers are not recruited from public sector prisons, their professional perceptions and expectations are shaped by a different kind of culture, as well as different working conditions. Such factors are particularly relevant to the positive views of senior managers that were found among uniformed staff in clusters A and B. In these prisons, much of the respect for, and faith in, senior managers was directly linked to their previous experience in the *public* sector. The directors of all three prisons had held senior roles in high-profile public sector establishments, and were perceived as very experienced operators. Among inexperienced private sector staff, these backgrounds were regarded with something close to awe.

Staff in these prisons also admired their directors for having 'worked their way all the way up to the top' (PCO, Forest Bank), and for the commitment to staff well-being that was a corollary of improving the performance of their establishments. Forest Bank's director had introduced a 'zero tolerance' policy in relation to prisoner assaults on staff. Dovegate's director was credited with having 'done absolute wonders' (PCO, Dovegate) for the establishment in terms of supporting staff in their efforts to regain order and control. All three of these establishments had recently been through periods of turbulence, in which, to varying degrees, they had been unsafe and under-controlled (see HMIP, 2005). Staff in these prisons were extremely grateful to their senior managers for rescuing them from disorder, increasing staffing levels and 'backing them up' when dealing with incidents.[14]

> [The director] hasn't been here that long and it's improved so much in just a few months....Just little things have been tightened up and everything seems a hell of a lot safer, we're not having as many alarms...safer for us, safer for the prisoners. (PCO, Dovegate)
>
> There's been a dramatic change over the last two years. It's gone from a dark, dismal, unsafe prison to a clean, friendly, safe environment. (Unit manager, Forest Bank)

In many respects, this sense of gratitude, and the esteem in which managers were held, reflected the fact that uniformed staff were relatively powerless and somewhat 'innocent'. Without a union to represent their interests, senior managers were the conscience of the workforce and the main body on which it relied. These factors help explain why staff in this cluster were so positive about their senior managers and their feelings of safety.[15] They were evaluating their safety against a low benchmark set in more chaotic times, so that although *prisoners* reported low levels of safety and order, staff felt more secure than in previous months. In the public sector, where staff were more accustomed to stability and more generous staffing, the benchmark for feelings of safety was higher.

Custody officers in this cluster also had lower expectations of their senior managers than public sector officers. For example, while they consistently reported that they had little contact with directors (despite much flatter management structures than in the

public sector), and were often rather isolated on the wings, they did so with little sense of grievance:[16]

> You're left on the wing basically and just expected to get on with it. You just do your job and get on, don't you?...I just work. We don't particularly have a lot to do with them. It's the senior management team and they're all up there and that's where they stay. We see them every now and again but they leave us alone....You can go for weeks without seeing one. (PCO, Forest Bank)

Custody officers in the private sector had little expectation that senior managers should take a personal interest in them or that the company should orient itself to their welfare. Despite widespread irritation about shift patterns and promotion decisions, they were fatalistic about their powerlessness – only a minority complained about the weakness of their union, for example. Most felt that they were paid a salary to carry out certain duties, and that they should either implement management demands or leave the job. The relationship between employer and employee was highly *contractual*, a form of what Giddens (1992), in another context, has called the 'pure relationship': good until further notice, explicitly voluntary, sustained only for as long as it meets the needs of both parties, and easily terminated.

This contractual mindset – bolstered by the knowledge that it was relatively easy for the company to terminate staff contracts – also impacted on organizational loyalties. Custody officers in this cluster expressed almost no commitment to the National Offender Management Service and had little warmth for the company that employed them. Most were primarily committed to the particular prison in which they worked, with few horizons beyond the local employment sector. Generally, they were local people looking for a local job, without a strong vocational commitment to prison work. This looser connection to the career and the employer meant that fewer unhappy, change-resistant staff remained in post. However, it contributed to the high turnover rates that were highly problematic for the establishments in this cluster.

Staff culture in the public sector prisons – cluster C

In contrast to the 'pure', contractual ethos of staff in clusters A and B, the staff–employer relationship in the public sector looked much more like a 'traditional relationship' (Giddens, 1992), enduring due to external constraints rather than intrinsic satisfaction. Most public sector officers could not envisage earning an equivalent salary with equal benefits elsewhere, leaving a minority of them 'locked in' to a form of work that they did not enjoy. This bind, and a union presence in both prisons that promoted a highly defensive worldview, shaped their prevailing cultures. In both public sector prisons, while the staff ethos varied between wings, it was consistently tinged with a tone of weary cynicism about prisoners, senior managers and the Prison Service. Officers in this sector who talked about 'just doing the job and going home' did so with a sense of bitterness about their position in the organization, and they were generally more loyal to their union than their managers. They were resentful of the kind of young, driven governors who were admired by private sector custody officers, regarding them as

self-serving careerists. Compared to their private sector equivalents, they were also more cynical about performance targets and the possibilities of rehabilitation:

> They'll tell you about rehabilitation and things like this, but I think what you'll find is that you've got your hard-core criminals if you like. They are never going to change (Officer, Garth)

> I don't try to get these not to re-offend because I know it's not going to work so I won't waste my time. (Senior officer, Garth)

As well as being more vocal than their private sector equivalents in their complaints about feeling under-valued, public sector officers often made direct comparisons between their treatment and that of prisoners:

> [The prison] puts this huge emphasis on duty of care to prisoners. I'm not convinced that there's that much duty of care to the staff, though. Not as much, sometimes, as it is towards the prisoners. (Officer, Bullingdon)

> *How would describe the range of activities available to prisoners?*

> Huge, yeah, huge for prisoners. Not so huge for staff. (Officer, Bullingdon)

Grievances of this kind betrayed a conception of the Prison Service as an organization whose priority should be the welfare of uniformed staff. In this model, the employer was expected to provide for its employees' general needs (almost serving as a club for its members), rather than just pay a rate for their labour. Public sector staff appeared to have a needier relationship with their employer, regarding prisoners almost as sibling rivals in competition for organizational attention. They were highly emotionally invested in issues of crime and punishment, insisting that imprisonment had no deterrent effect:

> If I didn't have a mortgage and [children], I could do prison stood on my head. Prison is that easy . . . Prison is no longer a deterrent, you know, these guys look at it as a youth club. (Officer, Bullingdon)

There was greater resistance than in the private prisons to calling prisoners by their preferred name, and a stronger rhetorical focus on custody and discipline. Both characteristics were linked to a stronger commitment to punishing prisoners:

> I would never call them Mr . . . like you're supposed to do, I won't.

> *Why is that?*

> Because I don't think they deserve it. They don't deserve to be called Mr at all, they are prisoners, sentenced by courts. They are on a punishment, why call them Mr? I don't agree with that at all. (Officer, Garth)

What do you think is the main purpose of this prison?

To keep all these in custody basically. That's what I'm paid to do, to keep this lot off the streets. . . . I mean I am quite cynical about this, all we are doing is just keeping them off the street. They have an easy life as far as I'm concerned. Because they've got everything they need. The only thing they've lost is their liberty.

Yeah. And you don't think that's enough?

No . . . Because I think they're here for punishment and they don't get punished. (Officer, Garth)

As indicated in these quotations, and in the widespread use of derogatory language about prisoners ('this lot', 'shitbags'), officers in the public sector sought to distance themselves morally from prisoners and were often highly censorious of their ethics and behaviour. Custody officers in clusters A and (particularly) B more often did the opposite, describing prisoners as 'just normal, everyday individuals who have committed a crime' (PCO, Forest Bank), or noting that 'we've all done something bad in our lifetime' (PCO, Forest Bank).

Such attitudes had some impact on the way that staff used their authority. When prisoners in the public sector prisons described the over-use of staff authority, they were not referring to the kind of nervous misjudgement exhibited by officers in clusters A and B. Rather, they meant staff being deliberately 'heavy' and provocative: over-exerting their power because they disliked, or were indifferent to, prisoners, or revelled in their position of authority. This kind of overbearing behaviour, shaped by a confident-cynical culture, has been described in officer typologies as a 'punitive' (Ben-David, 1992) or 'enforcer' (Gilbert, 1997) approach.

Yet prisoners in these prisons were much more likely than those in clusters A and B to describe the use of power as balanced, fair and 'professional'. Generally, they 'knew where they stood', were confident that officers could use their authority if they needed to, and recognized that when officers under-used their power, this was deliberate, rather than a mark of fear or avoidance. There were fewer friction points between prisoners and staff because both parties understood the limit-points at which authority would be imposed. This might be referred to as 'dynamic authority' (Liebling, in press), a form that is used prior to disciplinary action in order to prevent its necessity, and is generally invisible. As Richard Sennett (1981: 174) notes: 'naked power draws attention to itself, influence does not'.

Here, then, the confidence and professionalism of staff diminished the impact on prisoners of negative staff attitudes, while enabling a well-oiled regime that was safe, predictable and psychologically reliable. In Garth, for example, no uniformed staff agreed that 'most prisoners are decent people', compared to almost 19% in Dovegate, yet staff were self-consciously proud of their 'professionalism', by which they meant taking their tasks seriously and pursuing prisoner issues. In the quality of life surveys, prisoners in the cluster C prisons rated the professionalism of their staff significantly more positively than those in clusters A and B. Thus, even though staff in the public

sector prisons were somewhat standoffish with prisoners, relationships were relatively good because staff were confident, competent and consistent.

Staff experience was again relevant here. Compared to uniformed staff in Clusters A and B, there were far fewer uniformed staff with less than a year's experience of prison work (Bullingdon 10%, Garth 2%) and a much larger proportion with over 10 years' experience (Bullingdon 40%, Garth 57%). Since, according to our surveys, staff experience was associated with more negative views of senior managers, but with higher scores for 'dynamic authority', the profile of staff in the public sector prisons helps explain both the more cynical *attitudes* towards managers and the more professional *behaviour* towards prisoners.

Staff culture in the high-performing private sector prisons – cluster D

Although we spent relatively little time in the prisons that comprise Cluster D, it is important to try to account for why these establishments were so highly rated by prisoners despite staff expressing more punitive and traditional attitudes than those in the other clusters.

First, uniformed staff in these establishments shared some characteristics with those in the other private sector prisons. In Lowdham Grange, for example, one senior manager said that staff were 'less sophisticated than prisoners', while one of the team of controllers – the public sector representatives who monitor the contract – described custody officers as 'a bit too nice for their own good', in terms of trusting prisoners excessively and not always being wise to risks. Yet, as in the public sector establishments, staff were fair and professional in their dealings with prisoners, able to set aside some of their personal prejudices when interacting with them and to exercise their authority judiciously (see Crewe et al., under review). It is notable in this respect that the levels of staff experience in the prisons in this cluster were somewhere in between those of the other clusters. Fewer staff than in the poorer-performing private prisons (clusters A and B) had under a year's experience while fewer staff than the public sector prisons had over a decade's experience. Overall, despite some signs of naivety, staff in this sector had enough experience to avoid the more serious professional deficits of the other private sector establishments, without having too many 'old-school' officers whose length in service was a different kind of cultural handicap.

Second, both establishments in this cluster were well led, by able and clear sighted directors, who were explicit about moral boundaries – i.e. what behaviour was expected of staff and what was unacceptable – and able to articulate a coherent philosophy of treatment. In Lowdham Grange, for example, a dynamic psychology department consistently promoted the idea of pro-social modelling and the language of legitimacy among all staff. The contractual mindset of private sector staff meant that punitive and disparaging views about prisoners were represented as 'personal views' that were irrelevant to the professional role and could be set aside in practice. Relative to public sector officers, uniformed staff in all of the private sector prisons saw themselves less as arbiters of crime and punishment, and more as providers of a service.

Third, whereas negative staff attitudes in the public sector prisons reflected a particular kind of public sector occupational ethos, anchored in the culture of the Prison

Officers' Association, staff sentiments in Lowdham Grange and Altcourse appeared to be a response to a distinctive set of conditions and insecurities. When uniformed staff expressed views that the prison was 'too comfortable for prisoners', that prisoners spent 'too much time out of cell' and that prisoners needed to be 'under strict discipline' (see Table 4), their beliefs were linked to real institutional circumstances. In Lowdham Grange in particular, prisoners' material conditions were relatively good (prisoners had in-cell telephones, access to Sky television, and high private-spending allowances), while staff were relatively isolated on the wings, leaving them nervous and beleaguered when supervising prisoners. Comments that the prison should be stricter revealed insecurities about order and control, in an environment where the model of safety was somewhat precarious – based partly on respectful treatment, but also on the provision of material incentives. One of Lowdham Grange's senior managers acknowledged this trade-off – 'there's a lot to lose if you get involved with drugs and so on...prisoners understand that deal' (fieldwork notes) – and recognized that prisoners had rather more power than was ideal: 'staff may be under-using power, but that's much safer than over-using it' (fieldwork notes).

It is not difficult to see why such conditions might produce a reactionary workforce. Unlike in the other private sector prisons, staff powerlessness manifested itself in resentment rather than gratitude. This is also different from the cultural dynamic in some public sector prisons, where staff report feeling unsafe even when they are relatively safe (see Liebling, in press), and are resentful of prisoner conditions despite these conditions being relatively poor.

Conclusion

Our findings raise a number of issues about the relationship between staff attitudes and prisoner quality of life. First, 'traditional culture' and 'punitiveness' have lower as well as upper thresholds, beyond which there are negative consequences for prisoners. Problems arise if staff are too anti-management and anti-prisoner, with resistant and cynical officers over-using their power and standing off from prisoners. But they also result if staff are too yielding or favourable towards managers and (especially) prisoners. Staff of this kind might trust prisoners excessively, under-police the wings, or avoid using their authority. In other words, what appears to be a positive staff ethos might lead to some negative prisoner outcomes.

Second, there are negative and positive forms of 'traditional culture': negative where it is 'traditional-resistant', i.e. cynical, petty, disrespectful and preoccupied with control; positive where it is 'traditional-professional', i.e. confident, boundaried, clear, vigilant and knowledgeable. There appears to be a close variant of traditional culture that, although not necessarily sympathetic towards prisoners, contributes to high levels of safety, fairness and service delivery. In other words, what appears to be a somewhat negative staff ethos might, under certain conditions, lead to some positive prisoner outcomes.

Third, then, attitudes do not translate into behaviour in a straightforward manner. Instead, they are mediated by forms of competence and professionalism, which are themselves related to levels of experience and staffing ratios. Prisoner experiences are also shaped by factors such as prison design and material conditions, but these are less significant than staff behaviour in determining the quality of prison life for prisoners.

One implication is that there are dangers in using staff satisfaction and attitudes as standalone measures of prison quality (cf. Logan, 1992).

Prison staff cultures are not static, and they are shaped by local factors, such as the nature of the local employment sector, and the particular history and ethos of a prison (Sparks et al., 1996). None-the-less, the fact that there are some structural determinants of staff attitudes and behaviour means that it is possible to generalize, albeit tentatively, about staff cultures and prisoner experiences in the public and private sectors. Our findings suggest that the onset of privatization may have unintentionally broadened the spectrum of staff behaviour. At the under-enforcement end of the spectrum, in particular, the range is wider than previous scholars have suggested. Avoidant behaviours are not just explained by staff indolence, or by staff over-identifying with prisoners and failing to maintain a 'sufficient degree of scepticism and detachment' (Wheatley, 2003: 5, cited in Liebling assisted by Arnold, 2004: 436). Even in high-performing private sector prisons, the under-use of power seems to reflect an uneasy balance of power between prisoners and staff. That said, critics of privatization should not disregard the fact that some private prisons have succeeded in recruiting, training and managing staff in a manner that produces relatively humane and respectful prison environments (James et al., 1997; Liebling assisted by Arnold, 2004; Moyle, 1995).

Our findings are broadly consistent with much of the international literature on prison privatization, which has found *both* highly positive staff attitudes in private sector prisons *and* problems with certain sorts of outcomes, including low levels of order and control. They are corroborated by official reports on the four privately run prisons for adult men in England and Wales that are not included in this study (e.g. HMIP, 2007b, 2009, 2010), and by our familiarity with these and other establishments (Liebling, 2004, 2007b). They are consistent with research into public sector prison culture, in particular the manner in which staff training socializes officers into a culture of cynicism and suspicion (Arnold, 2008; Crawley, 2004). Some public sector prisons may combine the high levels of professionalism that we found in our research sites with more positive attitudes towards prisoners, but this question remains unexplored.

'Experiments' into new forms of staff culture and practices should be carefully and dispassionately evaluated and the implications widely discussed. Studies should look at staff attitudes and behaviours, but should not make assumptions about how these determine prisoner outcomes. Future research should also consider management styles and practices, and how they shape the boundaries of staff action.

Notes

1. As Logan (1992: 579) argues, it is 'both equitable and possible to evaluate any prison's performance in the competent, fair and efficient administration of confinement'. Our previous research indicates that some internal outcome measures, such as well-being and distress, are correlated with outcomes such as prison suicide rates (Liebling et al., 2005) and observed over expected reconviction rates.
2. Local prisons primarily serve the courts and hold prisoners on remand, those given short sentences, or those who are sentenced but have not yet been allocated to training prisons. Category B training prisons are relatively high-security establishments, designed to hold prisoners for whom escape must be made very difficult. Most prisoners in such establishments are serving sentences of at least four years, with at least 12 months left to serve before release.

3. Each author participated in the fieldwork, with Susie Hulley and Clare McLean working as full-time research assistants for the duration of the project. Sara Snell, a prison governor on secondment from the Prison Service, was involved in the fieldwork phases in HMP Forest Bank and HMP Dovegate, and the majority of the period in HMP Bullingdon. Jennifer Cartwright provided additional assistance with the distribution of surveys in HMPs Garth, Bullingdon, Dovegate and Rye Hill, as did Marie Hutton in HMP Rye Hill.

4. Full details of both the prisoner and staff surveys, including all of the items in each dimension, and the dimension reliabilities, are available from the authors.

5. In both sectors, we defined 'uniformed staff' as basic grade officers and first line managers.

6. In total, in the four main prisons in the study, the research team carried out 114 interviews with prisoners and 138 with prison staff, including members of the senior management teams.

7. In Rye Hill and Lowdham Grange, the prisoner and staff surveys were distributed and collected in the same way as in the four main establishments. In Altcourse, they were administered by a team from the Prison Service Audit and Assurance Unit, with a member of the research team present.

8. The Office for National Commissioning (ONC) was the body within the National Offender Management Service that oversaw the monitoring and performance of all of the private sector prisons. The 'rectification notice' was served upon the prison's contractor (GSL) to highlight serious shortcomings in the prison's performance (principally in the areas of prisoner safety and regime activities). The notice required the company to produce a written action plan and to address the issues identified in an operational review of the establishment.

9. Significance levels are reported as follows: $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$.

10. These are differences of degree, so that staff perceptions of their quality of life and attitudes to prisoners in the least good prison should be seen as 'poorest' rather than 'very poor'.

11. Like 'traditional culture', the dimension, 'punitiveness' was initially developed through the identification of relevant items from existing staff survey dimensions. Factor analysis was used subsequently to check that the dimension was reliable ($\alpha = .766$).

12. Listed in order (with the highest, or most positive score first), the means for each cluster were: cluster A 4.91, cluster B 5.53, cluster C 5.31 and cluster D 6.64. The score for cluster D was significantly higher than for all other clusters. The score for cluster B was significantly higher than for cluster A.

13. The term 'prison custody officer' (PCO) or 'custody officer' is used in the private sector to refer to basic grade staff, while in the public sector these staff are simply called 'officers'.

14. In terms of the matched pairs of prisons, 37% of uniformed staff in Dovegate and 53% in Forest Bank agreed with the item 'There are times where governors in here fail to support staff in dealing with prisoners', compared to 72% in Garth and 73% in Bullingdon respectively.

15. A total of 67% uniformed staff in Forest Bank agreed or strongly agreed with the item 'I feel safe in my working environment', compared to 56% in Bullingdon, and only 4% agreed or strongly agreed with the item 'The general atmosphere in this prison is tense' compared to 21% in Bullingdon.

16. A total of 60.0% uniformed staff in Dovegate and 51.4% in Forest Bank agreed or strongly agreed with the item 'I often see senior managers around this prison', compared to 73.5 in Garth and 75.4% in Bullingdon.

References

Arnold H (2008) The experience of prison officer training. In: Bennett J, Crewe B and Wahidin A (eds) *Understanding Prison Staff*. Cullompton: Willan, 399–418.

Ben-David S (1992) Staff-to-inmates relations in a total institution: A model of five modes of association. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 36(3): 209–219.

Bottoms A (2009) Desistance and diachronic self-control. Paper presented at the Cambridge Institute of Criminology 50th Anniversary Conference, Sept 2009. Cambridge, UK.

Cooper C and Taylor P (2004) KPIs and lies – go directly to Kilmarnock Jail. Presentation at the Fourth Asia Pacific Interdisciplinary Research in Accounting Conference, 4–6 July, Singapore.

Cooper C and Taylor P (2005) Independently verified reductionism: Prison privatisation in Scotland. *Human Relations* 58(4): 497–522.

Crawley E (2004) *Doing Prison Work: The Public and Private Lives of Prison Officers*. Cullompton: Willan.

Crewe B, Liebling A, Hulley S and McLean C (under review) *Prisoner quality of life in public and private prisons*.

Crouch B and Marquant JW (1980) On becoming a prison guard. In: Crouch B (ed.) *The Keepers: Prison Guards and Contemporary Corrections*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, 63–106.

Giddens A (1992) *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity.

Gilbert M (1997) The illusion of structure: A critique of the classical model of organization and the discretionary power of correctional officers. *Criminal Justice Review* 22(1): 49–64.

Harding R (2001) Private prisons. *Crime and Justice* 28: 265–346.

Hatry H, Brounstein P and Levinson R (1993) Comparisons of privately and publicly operated corrections facilities in Kentucky and Massachusetts. In: Bowman G, Hakim S and Seidenstat P (eds) *Privatizing correctional institutions*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 193–212.

HMIP. (2002) Report on a full announced inspection of HMP & YOI Ashfield, 1 – 5 July 2002.

HMIP. (2005) Report on an unannounced inspection of HMP Rye Hill, 11 – 15 April 2005.

HMIP. (2007a) Report on a full unannounced inspection of HMP Rye Hill, 11–15 June 2007.

HMIP. (2007b) Report on an announced inspection of HMP/YOI Peterborough (Men), 9–13 October 2006.

HMIP. (2009) Report on an unannounced full follow-up inspection of HMP & YOI Parc, 7–11 July 2008.

HMIP. (2010) Report on an announced inspection of HMP Wolds, 7–11 December 2009.

HM Prison Service (2004) Website. Available at: www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk.

Home Affairs Committee (1997) *Second Report: The Management of the Prison Service (Public and Private): Volume I Report together with the Proceedings of the Committee*. London: Stationery Office.

Hulley S, Liebling A and Crewe B (under review) Re-thinking respect in prison: Results from a study of public and private sector prisons.

James A, Bottomley K, Liebling A and Clare E (1997) *Privatizing Prisons: Rhetoric and Reality*. London: Sage.

Liebling A (2007a) Why prison staff culture matters. In: Byrne J, Taxman F and Hummer D (eds) *The Culture of Prison Violence*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 105–122.

Liebling A (2007b) *A Report on the Outcomes of the Acacia Prison Annual Performance Review*. Perth: Western Australian Correction Services.

Liebling A (in press) Distinctions and distinctiveness in the work of prison officers: Legitimacy and authority revisited. *European Journal of Criminology*.

Liebling A assisted by Arnold H (2004) *Prisons and their Moral Performance: A study of Values, Quality, and Prison Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Liebling A, Hulley S and Crewe B (in press) Conceptualising and Measuring the Quality of Prison Life. In: Gadd D, Karstedt S and Messner S (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Criminological Research Methods*. London: Sage Publishing.

Liebling A, Tait S, Durie L, Stiles A, Harvey J and assisted by Rose G (2005) *An Evaluation of the Safer Locals Programme, Final Report*. Cambridge: Cambridge Institute of Criminology, Prisons Research Centre.

Logan CH (1992) Well-kept: Comparing quality of confinement in private and public prisons. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 83(3): 577–613.

Lombardo L (1985) Group dynamics and the prison guard subculture: Is the subculture an impediment to helping inmates? *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 29(1): 79–90.

McLean C and Liebling A (2008) Prison staff in the public and private sector. In: Bennett J, Crewe B and Wahidin A (eds) *Understanding Prison Staff*. Cullompton: Willan, 92–114.

Moyle P (ed.) (1994) *Private Prisons and Police: Recent Australian Trends*. Australia: Pluto Press.

Moyle P (1995) Private prison research in Queensland, Australia: A case study of Borallon Correctional Centre 1991. *British Journal of Criminology* 35(1): 34–62.

NAO (2003) *The Operational Performance of PFI Prisons Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General*. London: The Stationery OfficeHC Session 2002–3: 18 June 2003.

Newbold G (2007) *The Problem of Prisons: Corrections Reform in New Zealand since 1840*. Wellington: Dunmore.

Rynne J, Harding R and Wortley R (2008) Market testing and prison riots: How public-sector commercialization contributed to a prison riot. *Criminology and Public Policy* 7(1): 117–142.

Sennett R (1981) *Authority*. New York: Vintage.

Shefer G and Liebling A (2008) Prison privatization: In search of a business-like atmosphere? *Criminology and Criminal Justice* 8(3): 261–278.

Sparks R, Bottoms AE and Hay W (1996) *Prisons and the Problem of Order*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stroud S and Tappoulet C (eds) (2003) *Weakness of Will and Practical Irrationality*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Tait S, Gadd V, Shefer G, McLean C and Liebling A (in progress) *Measuring prison staff quality of life: Implications for research on prison culture*.

Taylor P and Cooper C (2008) 'It was absolute hell': Inside the private prison. *Capital and Class* 96 (Autumn): 3–30.

Terrill W, Paoline III EA and Manning P (2003) Police culture and coercion. *Criminology* 41(4): 1003–1034.

Tyler T (1998) *Why People Obey The Law*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Wachtel T and McCold P (2001) Restorative justice in everyday life. In: Strang H and Braithwaite J (eds) *Restorative Justice and Civil Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 114–129.