

**Prisons Research Centre**  
Institute of Criminology  
University of Cambridge

*Annual Report*

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## PRISONS RESEARCH CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2019

The Cambridge Institute of Criminology Prisons Research Centre (PRC) was established in 2000 under the Directorship of Alison Liebling. It is now well established and attracts funding from the Prison Service, several research councils (for example, the Economic and Social Research Council, the European Research Council, the British Academy, The Leverhulme Trust) and from other organisations. Its members include Professor Alison Liebling, Professor Ben Crewe (Deputy Director), and nine Research Associates: Dr Ruth Armstrong, Dr Katherine Auty, Dr Susie Hulley, Dr Alice Ievins, Dr Julie Laursen, Dr Ben Laws, Dr Kristian Mjåland, Dr Anna Schliehe, and Bethany Schmidt. There are also currently 11 PhD students conducting individual research projects, often linked to other research going on in the Centre (see below). Louise Foster is the Acting Centre Administrator. Associate Members include Helen Arnold (a past Research Associate), Dr Adrian Grounds, Dr Joel Harvey (a former PhD student and Research Associate), Dr Amy Ludlow, and A/Professor John Rynne (currently visiting). Centre members are provided with intellectual support by Professor Sir Anthony Bottoms, and other colleagues in the department.

The Prisons Research Centre aims to provide a lively research environment in which a coherent strategy of high quality research can be pursued, and integration between funded and non-funded, and applied and theoretical projects can be facilitated. We investigate how prisons operate, socially, morally and operationally, how they are experienced, and the relationship between these moral and social qualities, and their effects. Members of the PRC team carry out methodologically rigorous and theoretically relevant field-based studies addressing problems of human and social values, punishment practices, and the organisation and effects of aspects of prison life. We strive to forge links with other prisons researchers, scholars in the broader fields of criminology and sociology, and with practitioners. Our vision is to develop a rigorous and person-centred model of social inquiry.

This Report provides summaries of on-going projects, including PhD theses, as well as a summary of new and recently funded research. The Annual Research conference takes place on October 17th-18th 2019. We are again discussing 'values, methods and quality in prisons research: developing deep structures of practice'. It will be attended by a range of academics from the UK and overseas, as well as a number of engaged practitioners. See our website for further information: <https://www.prc.crim.cam.ac.uk>

## OVERVIEW

### Professor Alison Liebling

Alison is the Principal Investigator of the PRC's ongoing 'Conceptualising and Measuring the Quality of Prison Life' work, and the NHS-funded 'Evaluation of Shared Reading in Prison' study (see below). She continues to act as an editor for the Oxford Clarendon Series and the Oxford Handbook of Criminology. During the last year, she gave lectures in Finland (at the Criminal Sanctions Agency) and in Leicester (at a conference on George Eliot), and co-hosted a workshop on the Stanford Prison Experiment with Dr Stephen Bottoms, of Manchester University, in May.

Alison was made a Fellow of British Academy for the Humanities and Social Sciences in 2018. She is a member of the HMPPS Close Supervision Centres Advisory Committee, a Trustee of the Butler Trust and an Advisor to the Prison Phoenix Trust.

### Recent publications

Auty, K. and **Liebling, A.** (2019) 'Exploring the Relationship between Prison Social Climate and Reoffending', *Justice Quarterly*: 1-24

**Liebling, A.**, Skar, M., Lokdam, N., Muriqi, A., Haliti, D., Rushiti, F., & Modvig, J. (2019) 'Quality of prison life, violence and mental health in Dubrava prison'. *International Journal of Prisoner Health* 15(3) <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPH-10-2017-0047>

**Liebling, A.**, Laws, B., Lieber, E., Auty, K., Schmidt, B., Crewe, B., Gardom, J., Kant, D., Morey, M. (2018). 'Are hope and possibility achievable in

prison?' *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice* 58(1): 104-26.

**Liebling, A** and Williams, R. (2018) 'The New Subversive Geranium: Some notes on the management of new troubles in maximum security prisons'. *The British Journal of Sociology* 69(4): 1194-1219.

### Professor Ben Crewe

Ben is the Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded study *Penal policymaking and the prisoner experience: a comparative analysis* (see below). He was recently made a Professor of Penology and Criminal Justice. He continues to be series editor of the *Palgrave Series in Prisons and Penology*, with Professor Yvonne Jewkes and Professor Thomas Ugelvik, and, with the same colleagues, has recently begun the process of launching a new journal, published by Sage: *Incarceration: An International Journal of Imprisonment, Detention and Coercive Confinement*. His book, co-written with Dr Susie Hulley and Dr Serena Wright, titled *Life Imprisonment from Young Adulthood: Adaptation, Identity and Time*, will be published by Palgrave later this year. Ben continues to serve as a member of the HMPPS Separation Centres Advisory Committee and the HMPPS Close Supervision Centres Advisory Committee, and as a Trustee of the Prison Reform Trust.

### Recent publications

**Crewe, B.**, Hulley, S. and Wright, S. (in press) *Life Imprisonment from Young Adulthood: Adaptation, Identity and Time*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

**Crewe, B.**, Goldsmith, A. and Halsey, M. (eds.) (in press) *Power and Pain in the Modern Prison: Revisiting the Society of Captives*. Oxford: OUP, Clarendon.

**Crewe, B.**, & levins, A. (2019) The prison as a reinventive institution. *Theoretical Criminology*, 1-22, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1362480619841900>

Bickers, I., **Crewe, B.**, and Mitchell, R. (2019) Offender Supervision, Prisoners and Procedural Justice. *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hojo.12343>

Hulley, S., **Crewe, B.** and Wright, S. (2019) Making sense of 'Joint Enterprise' for murder: legal legitimacy or instrumental acquiescence? *British Journal of Criminology*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azz034>

Laursen, J., Mjaland, K. and **Crewe, B.** (2019) "It's like a sentence before the sentence"—exploring the pains and possibilities of waiting for imprisonment. *British Journal of Criminology* <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azz042>

**Crewe, B.**, Hulley, S. and Wright, S. (2019) 'Long-term imprisonment from young adulthood', National Offender Management Service analytic summary. [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

**Crewe, B.** (2018) Process and insight in prison ethnography, in Rice, S. and Maltz, M. (eds.) *Doing Ethnography in Criminology: Discovery through Fieldwork*. New York: Springer International Publishing. 83-89.

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Conceptualising and Measuring the Quality of Prison Life

*Professor Alison Liebling, Dr Katherine Auty, Dr Ben Crewe, Aiden Cope, Judith Gardom, Deborah Kant, Dr Julie Laursen, Dr Ben Laws, Elinor Lieber, Martha Morey, Bethany Schmidt, Dr Alice levins, Ben Jarman (with Ryan Williams)*

The Prisons Research Centre's work on prison moral climates has developed over 20 years and uses innovative methods combining deep qualitative exploration with quantitative measurement: a methodology we refer to as ethnography-led measurement. We draw in particular on Appreciative Inquiry: a creative exploration of 'what matters most' to participants, peak experiences, and moral meaning in the measurement of the quality of prison life. The main outcome of these explorations has been the development of a 'moral climate survey' (MQPL: Measuring the Quality of Prison Life), which is now widely used, both by the Prison Service in England & Wales and by prison services and research teams internationally. This methodology (the survey, used together with observational and

interview methods) has allowed us to find significant relationships between aspects of prison quality and key outcomes over a substantial number of research projects carried out between 2000-2019, mainly in England and Wales: (i) distress and suicide, (ii) order and disorder, (iii) personal development and reoffending, and (iv) 'political charge' or anger and alienation among prisoners (assumed to be relevant to the risk of extremism). The main explanations for variations in these outcomes derive from a set of prison quality dimensions that include fairness, respect, humanity, staff-prisoner relationships, bureaucratic legitimacy, safety, and good uses of authority by prison officers. In other words, the relational and moral characteristics of prisons shape outcomes. The use of authority is central to prisons, and its form and quality varies significantly. This idea is neglected in most narratives of punishment.

'MQPL+' attempts to combine the strengths of ethnography with survey work in an efficient and intensive way, in individual prisons. 'MQPL+' exercises are in-depth, intensively-conducted, descriptive analyses of the social environment for staff and prisoners in a prison establishment, using the conceptually validated version of the Measuring the Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) and Staff Quality of Life (SQL) surveys, alongside detailed observation, and sensitive, appreciative interviews with staff and prisoners. Each research exercise is conducted by a highly experienced team of at least six members of the research centre, who spend around 40-60 person days conducting the work. Data analysis is carried out collaboratively, with data from many other prisons in mind, so that any cultural diagnosis of the prison is well informed and fully contextual, taking into account local conditions, and also the historical trajectory of the prison system. The empirical data and the written report provide senior managers with a thorough basis for understanding and improvement, and an assessment of effectiveness and progress. Each study is treated in a cumulative way, adding to our developing expertise in understanding and assessing prison quality and culture. In 2019, we conducted MQPL+ exercises at HMP Whitemoor

(High Security) and HMP Highpoint (Category C) and HMP Drake Hall. A new prison quality dimension, exploring the meaning and experience of 'trauma-informed' practice, developed for an MQPL+ research exercise in Drake Hall (a women's prison) was also used in the 2019 Whitemoor project.

Detailed reports summarising the results and 'culturally diagnosing the prison' are written for each establishment. The reports provide insights into some of the general changes in prison life in England and Wales as well as analyses of widely different cultures and climates in individual prisons. Establishment Senior Management Teams often request feedback meetings, at which the detail, meaning and implications of the results are discussed. An increasing number of requests have come to us from international jurisdictions wanting to use or adapt the MQPL survey (for example, in Chile and Argentina). We try to support these requests where possible, and often learn a great deal and develop exciting collaborative partnerships as a result.

### **Penal policymaking and the prisoner experience**

*Professor Ben Crewe, Dr Kristian Mjaland, Dr Alice levins, Dr Julie Laursen, Dr Anna Schliehe and Dr Sarah Doxat-Pratt*

Funded by the European Research Council, this research programme (known as 'COMPEN') is a comparative analysis of policymaking and prisoner experiences in England & Wales and Norway. Its primary goal is to bring into relief the nature and experience of penalty in countries that are considered 'exclusionary' (or 'neo-liberal') and 'inclusionary' (or 'social-democratic') respectively in their social and penal practices. Specifically, a key objective of the research is to test empirically the assumptions of the 'Nordic exceptionalism thesis' i.e. the claim that penal practices in the Nordic countries are milder and more humane than those in other nations.

Conceptually, the research draws upon a framework that has been developed to understand different aspects of the prison experience, formed around the ideas of the

‘depth’, ‘weight’, ‘tightness’ and ‘breadth’ of imprisonment. This framework seeks to move beyond the kinds of metrics (such as imprisonment rates and material conditions) that have often been used as indicators of levels of punitiveness and penal harshness. The research also foregrounds the roles of shame, stigma and ‘penal consciousness’ – the prisoner’s sense of what is being done to him or her through state punishment – in shaping prisoners’ attitudes and adaptations to imprisonment.

The project comprises four sub-studies, each of which is being conducted in both jurisdictions: an exploration of processes of entry into and exit from the prison system; ethnographic analyses of the exercise of and responses to penal power among female prisoners and men convicted of sex offences; a study of the experience of deep-end custody; and an analysis of policy formation and the penal field.

In the last twelve months, much of fieldwork has taken place in Bredveidt and Send, both of which are women’s prisons (in Norway and England & Wales respectively), and in Ila and Trondheim, the research sites for the Norwegian part of the ‘deep-end’ study, holding men serving indeterminate (‘forvaring’) sentences for public protection in Norway. In both jurisdictions, we also continued to interview prisoners as part of the ‘entry/exit’ study, mainly those who have now been released from prison into the community.

All of the prison-based fieldwork has now been completed, and we have begun the process of analysing the qualitative and quantitative data from all of these studies. The survey data reveals significant differences in prisoners’ experiences in the two jurisdictions, with prisoners in Norway reporting much more positively than those in England and Wales on almost all aspects of their custody. Further exploration of this data will continue in the coming year, alongside completion of the study of penal policymaking in England & Wales and Norway, drawing on interviews with politicians, civil servants, and other key penal policy players in both jurisdictions.

Among the publications that are in process are articles on: forms of loneliness in prisons; the

‘depth’ of imprisonment; ‘lateral tightness’ in prisons; and the idea of ‘relational normalisation’ – a supplement to more common conceptualisations of ‘normalisation’ organised around legal status, material conditions and citizenship. Our aim is to produce a range of outputs, some of which will discuss the comparative dimensions of the study, and others reflecting on more general and conceptual aspects of imprisonment.

The project website [www.compen.crim.cam.ac.uk](http://www.compen.crim.cam.ac.uk) provides further information about the research programme, including a regular blog from members of the team and from scholars working in related areas.

In June 2019, at the University of Agder, Norway, we hosted a conference titled ‘Punishment and imprisonment in the Nordic countries’. The conference included talks and round-table discussions on a variety of topics related to Nordic penal practice, gathering leading researchers and key practitioners in the field.

### **Publications**

Laursen, J., Mjaland, K. and Crewe, B. (2019) “It’s like a sentence before the sentence” – exploring the pains and possibilities of waiting for imprisonment’. *British Journal of Criminology* <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azz042>

### **Violence, Friendship and Legal Consciousness in the Context of ‘Joint Enterprise’**

*Dr Susie Hulley and Dr Tara Young (University of Kent)*

The goal of this project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), is to make a theoretical and empirical contribution to the debate on joint enterprise, to help inform policy makers, criminal justice practitioners and young people. ‘Joint enterprise’ is a complex set of legal principles, which outline the circumstances in which two or more people can be held liable for a single criminal act (CPS 2018). The study has four central aims:

- To examine young people's social relations and how these relations shape their involvement in serious group violence;
- To document young people's legal consciousness – their perceptions and experiences of the law – as it relates to serious violence generally and joint enterprise specifically;
- To explore criminal justice practitioners' interpretations of young people's social relations and the extent to which these influence practice in cases of serious group violence; and
- To document criminal justice practitioners' legal consciousness and the impact of recent changes to the law on practice.

All fieldwork has now been completed, with the research assistance of Dr Gary Pritchard. This includes semi-structured interviews with:

- 41 legal practitioners with experience of cases of multi-handed violence (Homicide and Trident 'gang' police detectives, and prosecution and defence lawyers);
- 36 prisoners convicted of serious group violence when they were aged between 16 and 25 years; and
- 56 young people in the community, aged between 16 and 25 years old, with various experiences of serious group violence.

We have also undertaken creative workshops with nine young people in the community and five male prisoners, to explore young people's social relations and prisoners' experiences of being implicated in a criminal case involving the principles of joint enterprise. Body maps were used 'to visually represent [these] aspects of [their] lives, their bodies and the world they live in.' (Gastaldo et al 2012).

Drawing primarily on the interview data, we are currently working on four papers, two of which are summarised below:

- *'A 'good job' in difficult conditions: detectives' reflections, decisions and discriminations in the context of 'Joint Enterprise': 'Joint enterprise' is described as a 'dragnet' drawing disproportionate numbers of Black and minority ethnic (BAME) young men into the criminal justice system in England and Wales. While stereotyping by the police and prosecution has been blamed for this*

distributive injustice, empirical research in this area is limited. This paper reports on interviews with homicide and 'gang' detectives in London in which they rebut accusations of racial stereotyping when investigating multi-handed crimes. Instead, they argue that disproportionality is the result of larger numbers of BAME men being involved in violent crime and that they are simply trying to achieve their 'ultimate concerns' of justice for victims and public protection within this 'difficult' structural and cultural context. Drawing on Margaret Archer's social realist theory, we argue that police action cannot be divorced from the context in which detectives practice but that there are racialized aspects to this process that reflect the concept of 'colourblind racism'.

- *'Practices of silencing in the investigation of serious violence among young people': Internationally, the 'wall of silence' has been identified as a threat to successful police investigations and criminal trials related to incidents of serious violence. Commonly the issue is interpreted as communities not cooperating with the police for fear of reprisals. However, based on research involving police detectives, lawyers and young people involved in serious violence in the UK, this paper argues for a broader discussion of the reasons why information is and is not transmitted between citizens and agents of the criminal justice system during criminal investigations and trials. It contends that the 'wall of silence' is constructed by a range of actors - including young people, the police, lawyers, defendants, witnesses and members of the young person's moral community – all of whom affect what is *said* and what is *heard* during testimonial exchanges, to the extent that particular voices are amplified, quietened and ultimately silenced during criminal investigations and trials.*

During the past year our dissemination activities have included a plenary speech at the 5th Biennial Alberta Criminal Justice Symposium in Edmonton, Canada, a presentation at the Edmonton Police Department Conference, Canada, and a paper at the 'Critical Conversations on Criminology and Gender: Innovations in Research' conference at City University, London. Further activities include a discussion of creative research methods at the

Festival of Ideas, Cambridge University, October 2019, and a one-day conference in London in October 2019 – ‘In It Together’: Discussing Serious Violence and Joint Enterprise Conference – hosted by Susie and Tara, in which they will disseminate the findings of their study using creative techniques to an audience of police officers, lawyers, youth workers and young people.

### **An Evaluation of Shared Reading Groups in Psychologically Informed Planned Environments**

*Professor Alison Liebling, Dr Katherine Auty, Judith Gardom, and Elinor Lieber, for NHS England/HMPPS*

The aim of this 20-month research project is to identify and describe the contribution that Shared Reading groups make to the work of Psychologically Informed Planned Environments (PIPEs) in prisons. PIPEs have been developed jointly by the NHS and HMPPS as part of the Offender Personality Disorder Pathway, to consolidate the benefits of more formal treatment, and to support (particularly ‘stuck’) prisoners and former prisoners through a pathway of change. Shared Reading groups, run by The Reader Organisation, are offered weekly in all prison PIPEs. The Reader Organisation has developed a distinctive model which differs from other reading groups in that literature is read aloud in the group session, rather than in advance. A wide range of participants are therefore able to share the literature, whether or not they are confident readers. Short stories, sections of novels, and poetry are made accessible to participants by a trained Leader, who elicits the discussion of individual and shared responses.

Phase 1 of the Evaluation involved fieldwork at three sites: HMP Send, HMP Wayland, and HMP Warren Hill. The research team attended and observed Shared Reading groups, spent time learning about the environment of each PIPE, engaged in informal conversations with participants, group facilitators and staff members,

and recorded one-to-one interviews. In May 2018, the team hosted the Reader Organisation’s three-day ‘Read to Lead’ training event at the Institute of Criminology, at which eight prison officers were trained to become Shared Reading group facilitators, alongside one member of the research team, Judith Gardom, who is now a qualified Reader Leader.

On the basis of the qualitative data generated during Phase 1, the research team developed a new research tool, the Measuring the Experience of Reading Groups (MERG) survey. The MERG consists of 50 statements, and invites a response on a 5-point Likert scale. Its development makes use of the methodologies of Appreciative Inquiry and ‘ethnography-led measurement’, used in the creation of the MQPL survey. It is intended to provide a way of measuring the often nuanced aspects of the Shared Reading experience which might contribute to growth or positive change. The statements for the MERG attempt to authentically reflect the language of participants, who have been consulted throughout the development of the survey, and fall into two broad groupings: experiences of ‘safe containment’, and experiences of ‘growth’. Aspects of ‘safe containment’ include security, absorption, recognition, and mutual support; aspects of ‘growth’ include agency, confidence, authenticity, flexibility, and openness to other views.

During the second phase of the evaluation, completed in March 2019, the MERG was administered twice at six-month intervals in six prisons to members of the Shared Reading Groups, alongside a well-being survey (the Intermediate Outcomes Measurement Instrument: IOMI<sup>1</sup>) which was completed by the wider PIPE populations as well as reading group participants, for comparison. Baseline and follow-up data were collected at six different PIPEs; 77 MERG surveys were completed by reading group members at baseline and 66 at the six-month follow-up. The IOMI survey was completed by

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<sup>1</sup> See: Maguire, M., Disley, E., Liddle, M., Meek, R., Burrowes, N., & Lewis, G. (2019). Developing a toolkit to measure intermediate outcomes to reduce

reoffending from arts and mentoring interventions. Ministry of Justice Analytical Series. London: NOMS.



78.5% of all PIPE residents at baseline and 71.5% of all PIPE residents at the six-month follow-up. The research team continued to develop their contextual understanding of PIPEs as diverse relational environments, and of the variety of Shared Reading groups, throughout the fieldwork.

Preliminary analysis of the quantitative data indicates that the MERG captures aspects of Shared Reading that are recognised and valued, with scores of 3 (out of 5) or above for almost all dimensions across the sites. Contextual understanding is important in interpreting the results. The PIPEs which we considered to fulfil PIPE criteria more fully had higher scores for effects beyond the reading sessions, indicating that better PIPE environments may enhance Shared Reading experiences. We found some general movement upwards in scores at two sites, which may partly be explained by specific improvements such as the arrival of a new outstanding Reader Leader, or the presence of a stable and experienced group. Some downward movement in scores at two other sites may reflect changes in the population, high turnover, or problems in the way the group was conducted.

Analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data suggests that participants in Shared Reading groups experience complex processes that can contribute to positive change, in ways that are very close to the overall aims of PIPEs. These processes include: moving between comfort and discomfort; being able to experience discomfort from a secure base; moving between familiarity and difference, or support and conflict, in the group; being able to read or hear literature that is imaginatively engaging without being overwhelming; and taking a personal risk of the right size. However, these processes are neither predictable nor linear, and may include a degree of turmoil, sometimes taking place at the limits of what can be tolerated by PIPE residents. Individual participants engage or draw back from these processes in a non-linear way, and we sometimes observed them stalling, being avoided, or breaking down. Overall, the Shared Reading groups were regarded very positively by participants, and

engagement with literature in this 'shared' and open way was described as highly meaningful.

The team presented interim findings at a workshop on 'Shared Reading for Mental Health in Secure Contexts' in June 2019 and will produce a final report at the end of the year. A book contract has been signed, with Anthem, for a more extended reflection on the project. The MERG research instrument is still a work in progress but has already been very positively received by The Reader Organisation, who plan to use it in their own internal evaluations. The Institute of Criminology reading group, which follows a reading aloud model inspired by this project, is entering its third year.

## POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

**Dr Katherine Auty** joined the Prisons Research Centre as a Research Associate in 2012, having previously been a PhD student in Forensic Psychiatry at Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary, University of London. Katherine continues to work with the Measuring the Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) and Staff Quality of Life (SQL) survey data, producing quantitative analysis from the datasets, and participating in fieldwork exercises. Recent analyses have involved an attempt to design a survey tool to capture trauma-informed practice in two female prisons and this work is currently being written up in collaboration with several other colleagues. Katherine is also part of the Shared Reading Groups study team (see above).

In collaboration with Alison Liebling, Katherine recently finished a study that analyses the relationship between prison moral and social climate and reoffending. It relates data from the MQPL survey carried out in all prisons in England and Wales to official data on proven reoffending from the Ministry of Justice. The sample contains data from 224 prison surveys conducted between 2009 and 2013 (a total of 24,508 prisoners completed the survey). Results indicate that several of the MQPL dimensions are related to rates of proven reoffending for each prison. As the MQPL survey measures the moral, relational and

organizational quality of prison life for prisoners, overall these findings suggest that higher moral quality of life, or higher interior legitimacy, supports better outcomes for prisoners on release. This is consistent with theoretical expectations about the links between legitimacy, engagement in prison programs, well-being, and compliance with the law. This work was published earlier this year in *Justice Quarterly*.

#### Recent publications:

**Auty, K. M., & Liebling, A.** (2019). Exploring the Relationship between Prison Social Climate and Reoffending. *Justice Quarterly*, 1-24.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2018.1538421>

Flanagan, I. M. L., **Auty, K. M.**, & Farrington, D. P. (2019). Parental supervision and later offending: A systematic review of longitudinal studies. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*. 215-229  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2019.06.003>

Liebling, A., Laws, B., Lieber, E., **Auty, K.**, Schmidt, B. E., Crewe, B., Gardom, J., Kant, D., Morey, M. (2019). Are Hope and Possibility Achievable in Prison? *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 58(1), 104-126.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/hojo.12303>

**Auty, K.**, (2019). Meditation in Prison in M. Farias, D. Brazier & M. Lalljee, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Meditation*, Oxford: OUP.

**Auty, K.**, (2019). Mindfulness-Based Interventions in the Criminal Justice System in H. Graham, F. McNeill, P. Raynor, F. Taxman, C. Trotter, & P. Ugwuodike, . (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Rehabilitative Work in Criminal Justice*. London: Routledge.

**Auty, K.**, (2019). The Intergenerational Transmission of Psychopathy in M. DeLisi, (ed)., *Routledge International Handbook of Psychopathy and Crime*, New York: Routledge.

#### Presentations:

**Auty, K. M., & Farrington, D. P.** (2019). The intergenerational transmission of personality disorder severity and mediation via family factors. Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, CA. November 13-16, 2019.

**Auty, K. M., & Farrington, D. P.** (2018). The intergenerational transmission of personality disorders – general or disorder-specific? Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Atlanta, GA. November 14-17, 2018.

**Dr Alice levins** has spent this year as an ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow, a fellowship which has allowed her to develop her work on the imprisonment of men convicted of sexual offences. She has published book chapters and journals articles to academic and policy audiences on topics including prison officer professionalism, narrative criminology and shame. She has also contributed a chapter to a forthcoming edited collection marking sixty years since the publication of *The Society of Captives*, and, with Ben Crewe, has co-authored an article theorising why prisoners sometimes say that imprisonment has ‘saved’ them.

In May 2019, Alice organised a symposium in Cambridge for leading practitioners and academics on the topic of ‘Key issues in the imprisonment of men convicted of sex offence’. She presented on the idea of ‘lateral tightness’ at the European Society of Criminology conference 2018, arguing that the ‘tightness’ of the late-modern prison is partly exerted by prisoners. She also presented at the University of Agder in Norway on ‘Inclusion and exclusion within and beyond the prison: Exploring the punishment of men convicted of sex offences in Norway and England & Wales’, alongside Kristian Mjåland. She hopes to develop these two presentations into journal articles which will be published in the next academic year.

As well as disseminating her findings, Alice has spent much of this year developing her thinking. Her PhD research found that shame is a central pain of imprisonment for men convicted of sex offences, and argued that how people ‘do their time’ and experience *the prison* is linked in with how they think about the justice of their conviction and sentence. This year, she has grown increasingly interested in the links between the lived experience of imprisonment and philosophical theorisations of punishment, and

she hopes to publish a monograph building on her PhD research on this topic in the coming year.

In addition to developing her PhD research, Alice has co-convened (with Beth Phillips) a Learning Together course at HMP Whitemoor on 'The Good Life and the Good Society'. This course will run again next year. In addition to being pedagogically stimulating, the course has helped to prepare her for her new project, 'A good life in prison? Everyday ethics in a prison holding young men', which starts in October 2019. This project, which will last three years and be funded by an ESRC New Investigator's Grant, will explore how young adult male prisoners (those aged between 18 and 24) define and pursue a 'good life' while they are incarcerated. The imprisonment of young people has long been a topic of scholarly and political concern, and existing studies have outlined the ways in which prisons can hurt young people, with a particular focus on bullying and peer violence, suicide and self-harm, and constraints on development. Prisons are more than just places of pain, however; they are also places in which people try to live morally meaningful lives, and to find 'goodness' even in a context defined by stark power imbalances, severe deprivation, and complex social relationships. In exploring the moral dimension of the prison society, Alice will make use of the growing literature in the anthropology of ethics, and she hopes that this project will significantly advance an emerging field in criminology and penology – a move towards ethics and its relevance for understanding crime and justice.

### Recent publications

**levins, A.** (in press) The society of 'sex offenders'. In B. Crewe, A. Goldsmith & M. Halsey (ed) *Power and Pain in the Modern Prison: Revisiting the Society of Captives*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

**levins, A.** (in press) Power, shame and social relations in sex offender imprisonment. *Prison Service Journal*.

**levins, A.** (2019) Finding victims in the narratives of men convicted of sex offences? In J. Fleetwood, L. Presser, S. Sandberg & T. Ugelvik (eds.) *Doing Narrative Criminology*. Bingley: Emerald.

Crewe, B. & **levins, A.** (2019) The prison as a reinventive institution. *Theoretical Criminology*, 1-22,

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1362480619841900>

**levins, A.** (2019) Prison officers, professionalism and moral judgement. In N. Blagden, B. Winder, K. Hocken, R. Lievesley, P. Banyard & H. Elliott (eds). *Sexual Crime and the Experience of Imprisonment*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 85-108.

**Dr Julie Laursen** joined the Institute of Criminology and the PRC in June 2016. She holds a Research Associate post in the ERC-funded project 'Penal Policymaking and the Prisoner Experience: A Comparative Analysis', led by Professor Ben Crewe, and was recently awarded a two-year extension of her College Research Associate post at King's College, Cambridge. As a postdoctoral Research Associate, she is primarily engaged in research, but also in supervising, marking, teaching and developing practices at the intersections of anthropology, criminology and sociology of prisons in the PRC.

Julie recently co-published an article in the *British Journal of Criminology*, based on the fieldwork undertaken as part of this project. Titled 'It's Like a Sentence Before the Sentence'—Exploring the Pains and Possibilities of Waiting for Imprisonment', the article discusses experiences of 'queueing' for imprisonment in Norway.

### Recent publications

**Laursen, J., Mjåland, K. & Crewe, B.** (2019) "It's like a sentence before the sentence" – exploring the pains and possibilities of waiting for imprisonment. *British Journal of Criminology*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azz042>

**Laursen, J. & Henriksen, A.K.** (2018): "Altering violent repertoires: perspectives on violence in the prison-based cognitive-behavioural program Anger Management". *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 48 (2): 261–286. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0891241618771153>

### Other dissemination

**Laursen, J** (2018) *Interviewing in People's Homes*. Available at:

<https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/centre-criminology/centreborder-criminologies/blog/2018/04/interviewing> (Accessed 18.08.19).

**Dr Ben Laws** began a 30-month research project, titled 'Prisoner Emotions at the Margins: Understanding the pathways to destruction and healing among prisoners in solitary confinement' in March 2019. Funded by an ESRC New Investigator grant, this study sets out to explore the emotional dimensions of segregation units in England and Wales. The short longitudinal design aims to examine the emotional world of segregation and the trajectories of prisoners who experience this form of 'deep confinement' over time. Solitary confinement is often described in the academic literature as an ecology of cruelty and even a form of psychological torture. Yet there is debate over the effects of segregation units in England and Wales, with some arguing that impacts are either short-lived or even enlightening for some prisoners. At a time when HMPSS practitioners are debating how best to manage segregation units and to reduce the length of time that prisoners spend within them, the study will provide greater understanding of the use, effect and implementation of segregation units on prisoners' development.

The main aims of the study are twofold. The first is to examine the key dynamics of the emotional world of solitary confinement. To this end, prisoners will be asked about the specific ways they manage their emotions (including levels of expression, suppression, 'reframing', etc.) and the intensity and prevalence of different emotion states. This will include emotions like fear, anger, sadness, and anxiety, but also positive emotions such as joy, care and serenity. Second, the study will explore the emotional 'pathways' of prisoners who experience segregation. Little is known about the patterns of emotional development of these marginalized sub-groups over time. In light of this, the study will examine how cycles of infractions in segregation can deepen entrenched pathways of violence and long-term patterns of despair. But the study will attempt to explain triumphs as well

as tragedies, understanding how some prisoners progress out of segregation.

The fieldwork phase will be formed of two stages (Time-1 and Time-2) separated by a six month gap, and will include interviews and a survey. The objective is to interview around 20 male prisoners who have been placed in segregation (Time-1), and then re-interview each participant after a 3-6 month interval (Time-2), providing a total of 40 in depth interviews. The interviews will examine whether particular emotional management strategies and ways of 'handling' feelings emerge, stabilize or decrease over time. The follow-up interview (Time-2) will necessitate locating prisoners who have been moved from segregation and reintegrated back into the mainstream prisoner population or transferred on to other establishments. Alongside the interviews, the Brief Symptom Inventory (BPI) survey will be distributed to all interview participants and a 'control' group of prisoners who have experienced imprisonment but not segregation for a similar time period. This survey will provide a snapshot of prisoners' mental and physiological well-being.

The findings will be disseminated in academic journal articles and a book monograph. The first of these publications is now in preparation (see below). This article sets out to offer an alternative perspective on the solitary confinement debate, which has often revolved around questions of the effects of segregation rather than focusing on how segregation forms one component of prisoners' broader experiences of incarceration. Ben has a number of other articles under review emerging from his doctoral study of emotions in prison.

### **Recent publications**

**Laws, B.** (In preparation) Putting prison segregation in its place: an alternative perspective on the solitary confinement debate.

**Laws, B.** (under review) Reimagining 'the self' in Criminology: transcendence, unconscious states, and the limits of narrative criminology.

**Laws, B. & Lieber, E.** (under review) "King, Warrior, Magician, Lover": Understanding expressions of care among male prisoners.

**Laws, B.** (2018). The return of the suppressed: Exploring how emotional suppression reappears as violence and pain among male and female prisoners. *Punishment & Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1462474518805071>

**Dr Kristian Mjåland** joined the Prisons Research Centre in 2016, and holds a Senior Research Associate post on the ERC funded project led by Professor Ben Crewe, 'Penal policymaking and the prisoner experience: A comparative analysis' (COMPEN). He is also an associate professor at the University of Agder, Norway. Kristian's research interests include comparative penology, prison social life, offender rehabilitation, and drug use and drug economies in and beyond prisons.

Until recently, Kristian has been devoting most of his time doing fieldwork on the COMPEN project, focussing in particular on the fieldwork being undertaken in Norway. As well as taking primary responsibility for the organisation of the COMPEN conference in June 2019 (see above), Kristian has also organised and hosted several public conversations in Kristiansand, Norway, through his role in a 'public social science' initiative at the University of Agder, Norway, on topics such as Homework and Compliance (September 2018), Democracy and Emotions (November 2018), Plan S (January 2019), Norwegian Middleclass Culture (March 2019), De-colonisation in academia (April 2019), Justifications for Punishment (May 2019), Public Apologies (August 2019) and Ideals of excellence in academia (September 2019).

### Recent publications

Laursen, J., **Mjåland, K.** and Crewe, B. (2019) "It's Like a Sentence Before the Sentence" – Exploring the Pains and Possibilities of Waiting for Imprisonment. *British Journal of Criminology*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azz042>

Lundeberg, I. and **Mjåland, K.** (2019) "Rus, roller og skjønn [Drugs, roles and discretion]", in Westrheim and Eide (ed.) *Kunnskapsbasert straffegjennomføring i Kriminalomsorgen i Norge [Knowledge based prison practice in the Norwegian prison service]*, p. 278-309. Oslo: Fagbokforlaget.

**Mjåland, K.** (2018) 'Fuck politi [Fuck the police]', chronicle, Politiforum [Police membership journal], December 11<sup>th</sup>, <https://www.politiforum.no/artikler/fuck-politi/453409>.

### Presentations

levins, A. and **Mjåland, K.** (2019) 'Inclusion and exclusion within and beyond the prison: Exploring the punishment of men convicted of sex offences in Norway and England & Wales', paper presented at the Comparative Penology conference *Punishment and imprisonment in the Nordic countries*, University of Cambridge/University of Agder, Kristiansand, June 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Mjåland, K.** (2019) 'Mellom inklusjon og eksklusjon – seksuallovbruddsdømtes soningsferinger [Between inclusion and exclusion – the experiences of imprisonment among men convicted of sexual offences]', plenary talk, Strafferettskonferansen [The Criminal Justice Conference], Loen, Norway, April 1<sup>st</sup>.

### PHD STUDENTS

**Ellie Brown** – 'Understanding the use and experience of segregation in English prisons'.

Ellie is entering the third year of her PhD, supervised by Professor Alison Liebling and Professor Nicola Padfield. Her research seeks to understand the current use and experience of segregation. As a qualified lawyer, Ellie is interested in how the law has shaped the experience of segregation and is adopting a socio-legal approach to her research. Ellie has returned from fieldwork in HMP Whitemoor, a high security prison, where she spent four months conducting interviews with prisoners and staff, as well as observing prison practices. During her fieldwork she explored: (i) the processes involved in segregating individuals; (ii) how segregation was typically used; and (iii) the experience of segregation.

Over the past year, Ellie has undertaken a number of associated projects. She has lectured on the Law and Justice course at HMP Grendon and taught advocacy on the Butler Law Course at HMP

Warren Hill. She secured funding from the Arts Council to deliver a creative arts project in HMP Whitemoor which, through the medium of photography and film, explores themes of identity and the role of art in prison. Ellie also led a project for the International Legal Aid Group which examined online dispute resolution and HMCTS' proposals for a new online court system in England and Wales (see <https://law-tech-a2j.org/odr/online-dispute-resolution-an-international-snapshot/> for the published report).

### **Aiden Cope** – ‘Opening new prisons: a comparative study of the penal field’

Aiden is entering the fourth year of his PhD, supervised by Professor Alison Liebling. He is conducting a comparative study of the penal field in two legal jurisdictions, focusing on HMP Berwyn (England and Wales, UK) and Ravenhall Correctional Centre (Victoria, Australia). Aiden's study aims to describe the changing shape and purpose of new prisons in different jurisdictions. It explores the changing nature of the penal state and the tension between increasing financial pressures and the high aspirations apparent in recent penal policy.

Aiden spent the third year of his PhD analysing interview data and creating case studies of his fieldwork sites following a fieldwork trip to Victoria, Australia in the summer of 2018. These case studies will describe the composition of the penal field in both jurisdictions and describe how this composition mediates macro level trends and pressures to shape and influence policy outcomes. The aim is to deepen knowledge of what takes place in the gap between global political and social trends and specific policy outcomes. During the coming year Aiden will complete his interviews in both jurisdictions, analyse the data he has already collected and write up his results.

### **João Costa** – ‘How does it feel to be fair? Building peace behind a “veil of ignorance”’

João has completed the first year of his part-time Ph.D., supervised by Professor Alison Liebling.

During this period, his main focus has been finalising a paper explaining the scientific foundations of the conflict resolution tool he is developing as a doctoral student. It seeks to create pockets of peace in communities surrounded by armed conflict by translating Rawls' ‘veil of ignorance’ into an innovative social justice exercise that inspires context-specific interventions in local communities. This adaptation builds on various areas of knowledge, including political philosophy, peacebuilding, criminology, sociology, psychology, neuroscience, and behavioural economics. The exercise is expected to have a transformative effect on individuals, changing perceptions of the other by appealing to participants' intuition. The social interactions it proposes resemble what Durkheim called moments of ‘collective effervescence’ - emotionally charged events that foster intellectual and moral feelings of communion. Ultimately, the project seeks to replicate the process in multiple communities in order to influence overall conflict dynamics and promote peace at the national level.

While conducting his research part-time, João is working full-time as the Head of the Portuguese National Preventive Mechanism against torture and other cruel, degrading, and inhuman treatment of persons deprived of their liberty.

### **Recent publications**

**Costa, J.** (forthcoming). ‘How does it feel to be fair? The concept of intuitive peace behind a ‘veil of ignorance’

**Costa, J.** (forthcoming). ‘The monitoring work of the National Preventive Mechanism. Qualitative and Quantitative Elements’.

### **Presentations**

Moderator in the conference Integrity and Dignity – Preventing ill-treatment, Lisbon (November 2018)

Portugal Representative in working groups of the international meeting organised by the Association for the Prevention of Torture and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights on migration detention, Milan (December 2018)

Speaker at the 40th Training Course for the Portuguese National Guard, a police body, on

prevention of torture and ill-treatment (December 2018)

Portugal Representative in Panel Discussion on the Monitoring of Forced Returns of Migrants in the EU, organised by the Greek Ombudsman and the Council of Europe, Athens (March 2019)

Speaker in the Portuguese Prisons Photo Project, an international conference held in Lisbon (May 2019)

### **Sophie Ellis** – ‘Compliance and legitimacy in prison-based forensic psychology practices’

Sophie is commencing her PhD with the Prisons Research Centre in October 2019, supervised by Professor Ben Crewe. Her work will explore forensic psychology practices in prisons in England and Wales from the perspective of legitimacy theory. The Prison Service is the biggest employer of forensic psychologists in England and Wales (British Psychological Society, 2018), and has placed psychologists in positions of considerable power and influence over prisoners’ experiences of their sentences. Sophie’s research will investigate how psychologists negotiate and sustain their legitimacy with prisoners, other prison staff, and themselves. By conducting ethnographic observation of psychological practices in prisons, she hopes to understand the context in which these practices are viewed as legitimate or illegitimate, and what happens when legitimacy is built up or broken down. She hopes this research will document how the increased reach and scope of forensic psychology has come to shape the modern experience of imprisonment for many.

### **Judith Gardom** – ‘The Meaning of Reading in Prison: an exploratory study in two prisons in the East of England’

Judith is a part-time PhD student, co-supervised by Professor Loraine Gelsthorpe and Professor Alison Liebling. Her research explores the meaning of reading in prison, and is funded by the ESRC and supported by the University of Cambridge ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership.

Library provision and access is a statutory requirement for prisons in England and Wales, reflecting a presumption that reading is beneficial for prisoners’ literacy, education and well-being. However, beyond basic literacy statistics and individual biographical accounts, research data is lacking on the reading practices and experiences of men in prisons in England and Wales, and the meaning and value they give to it; and prisoners’ reading has not been theorised either in relation to ethnographic research on everyday reading practices or prisons research.

The aims of Judith’s research are to develop a theoretical framework for understanding the roles that reading plays for men in the process of ‘making a life’ in prison, using an interpretive ethnographic approach; and to examine some of the assumptions about reading in prison in the light of empirical findings. Judith has conducted fieldwork in two Category C men’s prisons in the East of England, HMP Highpoint and HMP Warren Hill, contrasting in size, ethos and regime. Following exploratory visits to the two sites to establish contacts, and to identify potential participants, Judith spent three months visiting each site. Using prison libraries as a base, she: observed and took part in everyday activities including reading groups, programmes linking prisoners with their families through recording stories, and peer mentoring of beginner readers; shadowed librarians in their work in the library and other areas including Segregation and Induction units; and conducted a total of 58 semi-structured interviews with prisoners and staff.

Many participants reported that the most important role that reading plays is in coping with and surviving prison time. For some, the process of becoming a reader in prison can play a key role in the development of identity; and self-education through reading can be a means for developing qualities such as open mindedness and intellectual courage. Judith’s interviews and observations suggest that reading in prison should be understood as a social practice which can play an important role for some men in sustaining relationships with family members, and in forming bonds between prisoners. Phenomenological

descriptions of reading in a shared cell, or in segregation, contribute insights to both the literature on life in prison and the literature on reading. Preliminary analysis of the data therefore indicates that there are complex dynamics between the restrictions of prison environments and the opportunities and freedoms associated with reading.

**Ben Jarman** – ‘Moral development and ethical self-governance among men imprisoned for murder’

Ben is a second-year PhD student, supervised by Professor Ben Crewe, whose research explores ethical development among prisoners who are serving life sentences for murder: how their ethics are affected by the conviction and the sentence; how they respond to the moral messages conveyed by punishment; how their priorities change as the sentence proceeds; how their personal ethics interact with the systemic demand to self-govern and ‘reduce risk’; and how some generate feelings of hopefulness and meaning despite the extreme predicaments they find themselves in.

Ben’s PhD will build on and develop pilot research carried out for his MPhil. A particular focus is how the perceived *moral* status of an offence affects lifers’ feelings about the rehabilitative opportunities on offer in the prison. Do people who have committed particularly heinous offences feel a heavier burden of shame, and if so how does this affect their engagement with the idea that they should change, and the rehabilitative services and opportunities (such as work, training, education or offending behaviour programmes) on offer from the prison?

Ben spent the first year of the PhD reviewing existing research literature and preparing to work at two sites. His fieldwork at Swaleside is now underway, and will be followed later in the year by fieldwork at an open establishment. During the year, he also published work (see below) based on archival research into the history of youth imprisonment. The work was commissioned by HMPPS to improve their institutional memory and

inform the evidence they gave to hearings of the Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse in July 2018. The project resulted in a published report and journal article, as well as conference papers.

### Recent Publications

**Jarman, B.,** and Lanskey, C. (2019). ‘A Poor Prospect Indeed’: The state’s disavowal of child abuse victims in youth custody, 1960–1990’. *Societies* 9 (2): 27. <https://doi.org/10/gf2m87>.

**Jarman, B.,** Delap, L., Jackson, L., Lanskey, C., Marshall, H and Gelsthorpe, L. (2018). Safeguarding children in the secure estate, 1960-2016. Apollo - University of Cambridge Repository. <https://doi.org/10/c4kh>.

**Jarman, B.** (2018). Scandal and reform, 1960-2016: can better policies guarantee child welfare in secure custody?” *History & Policy*. 2018. Available from <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/scandal-and-reform-1960-2016-better-policies-child-welfare-secure-custody>.

### Presentations

Confronting the Violence of the Archive – workshop at Oxford Brookes University (presented – <https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/293309>)

Linking Past and Present in Criminological Research – inaugural BSC Historical Criminology Network conference (co-wrote paper presented by colleague – <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.39128>)

**Deborah Kant** Deborah is a finishing PhD student, supervised by Professor Alison Liebling. Her research explores the relationship between personal biography, institutional culture and locale in the personal and professional narratives of prison officers. Previous research (for example Liebling 2008; Crawley 2004) has shown that prison officers share certain occupational traits such as a sense of camaraderie and social cohesion, an appreciation of humour and ‘straight talk’, as well as a cynical outlook, sense of nostalgia for a shared past, and mistrust of people



outside their group. However, research has also shown that there are distinct 'schools' of officers, whose philosophies affect their approaches to care, punishment, management, and other matters. (see, for example, Tait 2008, Liebling & Kant 2017), which are influenced by broader institutional cultures specific to the prison. Deborah's research explores this distinction in order to answer the question of whether there is an 'essential prison officer', or whether the professional role and self-definition of uniformed staff can be shown to have developed within the context of changing socio-economic contexts and prison officer demographics, ideologies of punishment, and the cultural norms of individual establishments.

Adopting a mixture of semi-ethnographic and biographical research methods, Deborah conducted interviews with uniformed staff and managers at two large and busy men's Category B local prisons, located in the North and South of England. Her findings suggest that while different generations of prison officers hold some distinctive attitudes and approaches toward some aspects of their work and each other, the culture of their establishment, and the geography and history of the respective locations may be more powerful in influencing their professional identities and how they behave in practice. This suggests that officer cultures are informed by a complex interplay of individual agency, and structures of the penal field, work role, and locale. The internal organisation of each prison in this study was influenced by broad economic and social shifts experienced at a national level. However, layers of history, labour relations, kinship and community ties unique to the cities (and regions) in which these prisons were located lent a distinct character to each locale. Officers' motivations, experiences, and narratives were coloured by these 'local flavours' and contributed to distinct organisational cultures. These findings suggest that the concept of the 'total institution' needs to be re-evaluated in the context of the late-modern prison. In the words of the late Doreen Massey, 'Geography Matters!'.

## Publications

Liebling, A. and Kant, D. (2017) 'The Two Cultures: Correctional Officers and Key Differences in Institutional Climate', in J. Wooldredge and P. Smith (eds) *The Oxford Handbook on Prisons and Imprisonment*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**Elinor Lieber** - 'Caring Encounters: exploring kindness and support among male and female prisoners'

Elinor is entering the second year of her PhD, supervised by Professor Alison Liebling. Her research aims to explore forms of care, kindness, support and friendship among female and male prisoners. Prison researchers will be familiar with statements such as 'prison is a dog eat dog world', and 'in here, kindness equals weakness'. That such assertions are repeated over time and across different prisons suggests that they must accurately describe some features of the prison environment. Without seeking to dispute this reality, Elinor's research aims to present another side of prisoner social world, one which is often hidden and undocumented. It suggests that communion and mutual support are also fundamental features of the prison society, operating alongside aggression, exploitation and individualism. Yet while researchers often observe such features, and prisoner memoirs are full of moving descriptions of it, care among prisoners has largely been neglected in academic accounts of prison life. In an environment filled with mistrust, fear and violence it becomes particularly important to ask the question: how does care grow, and how is it regulated? This project does not aim to explore whether care exists, but rather how it functions: what forms and structure it takes and how prisoners, staff, and the structural characteristics of the prison constrain and encourage it.

During the past year, Elinor has been developing her theoretical and empirical framework, and working on her literature review. She has also continued to work alongside Professor Alison Liebling, Dr Katherine Auty and Judith Gardom on the Shared Reading Group Project (see above).

Over the coming year, Elinor intends to undertake fieldwork in two prison wings, one in a women's establishment and the other in a men's establishment. This will involve conducting semi-structured interviews with prisoners, carrying out semi-ethnographic observations and the administration of a Social Network Analysis (SNA) survey in both institutions.

### **Recent publications**

Liebling, A., Laws, B., **Lieber, E.**, Auty, K., Schmidt, B. E., Crewe, B., Gardom, J., Kant, D., Morey, M. (2019). Are Hope and Possibility Achievable in Prison? *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 58(1), 104-126.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/hojo.12303>

Laws, B., and **Lieber, E.** (under review). King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Forms of care among male prisoners.

Williams, R., Liebling, A., and **Lieber, E.** (Under review). More 'Mind Games': How have 'the action' and 'the odds' changed in prison?

**Martha Morey** – 'The construction of prisoner masculinities through experiences of work'

Martha is completing her PhD, supervised by Professor Ben Crewe, on how prisoner masculinities are constructed through experiences of work. She has developed a typology of prisoner masculinities based on over 80 interviews across three establishments and is exploring how men found diverse purposes in 'purposeful activity', as well as the extent to which prison work assists them in leading 'a good and useful life'. The study finds that without more nuanced and individualised understandings of the men who do prison work, including their past lives and work experiences and their imagined futures, prison work will continue to serve primarily instrumental purposes that are limited to improving prisoner's lives while inside, as opposed to on release.

**Daniel Packham** – 'The experiences of former military service personnel in prison in England and Wales'

Daniel has continued work on his PhD part-time, supervised by Dr Ben Crewe, studying the experience of imprisonment amongst ex-military personnel in prisons in England. Drawing on insights provided in Goffman's (1961) analysis of the 'Total Institution', Daniel's research is concerned with the similarities and differences between military institutions and prison institutions and how experience of life in the military might impact upon the experience of imprisonment. The study aims to investigate and establish how ex-military prisoners experience their time spent in prison with a particular focus on concepts of identity and self-conception, social status, attitudes towards authority, perceptions of state legitimacy, and the dynamics of interpersonal relationships with other prisoners and staff.

Daniel's research study involved completing more than forty semi-structured qualitative interviews with former military prisoners and members of prison staff in seven prison establishments of various security categories around England. Daniel is currently writing up his findings, while continuing to apply his research and analytical skills learned from his PhD training in his full-time role as the Deputy Head of the Middle East and North Africa Research Hub at the Department for International Development.

**Bethany Schmidt** - 'Democratizing Democracy: Re-imagining Prisoners as Citizens through Participatory Governance'

Bethany is a finishing PhD student, supervised by Professor Alison Liebling. Her research explores the work of the innovative non-profit organisation User Voice and its ex-offender-led prison deliberative democratic council model. Her research employs both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine and understand the processes at work when a prison-based council, which aims to give a voice to prisoners in order to facilitate collaborative problem-solving with staff, is established in the prison environment. Three English prisons with *User Voice* councils were selected for observation and Bethany has continued her fieldwork within them, including the collection and analysis of MQPL and SQL data (Measuring the Quality of Prison Life for prisoners and staff). Her focus is on the impact of democratic participation on institutional life, staff and prisoners' perceptions of procedural justice, legitimacy, and how these intersect with humane care, decency, and order.

This research has produced important evidence in support of a prison-based cooperative and co-producing council model that assists prisoners in developing civil dispositions through democratic engagement. The data suggest that fostering democratic principles in the prison setting has the potential to 'civilise' individuals and institutional practices, and more closely align them with democratic virtues that endorse community, trust, and dialogical work towards collectivist objectives. This study illustrates how the de-civilising process of incarceration can, in some ways, be diminished or mitigated, through the establishment of a normative pattern of civic reciprocity through responsibility and inclusion. For prisoners, council participation promotes civic skills, positive identity transformation, and encourages responsibility within their 'community'. This in turn strengthens penal legitimacy through fair proceedings and justifiable decision-making. Re-enfranchising prisoners through forms of participatory governance and agential engagement could therefore lessen exclusion and marginalisation and

in turn, possibly strengthen civic culture and democratic character.

Bethany was appointed to the post of Research Associate in the Prisons Research Centre in January 2016. This role involves project management responsibilities for the conduct and development of 'outreach' MQPL+ activities, including international projects, and other projects which form part of the overall research activities of the Prisons Research Centre. The aim of the post is to maximise the Centre's efforts to diagnose and describe prison cultures, and to conceptualise and measure changing aspects of the quality of prison life.

From 2015, Bethany, with Dr Andrew Jefferson from DIGNITY, has been working on a longitudinal study of the quality of life in Tunisian prisons. Intensive ethnographic fieldwork has been carried out in four prisons, alongside interviews with former prisoners, and other criminal justice and NGO stakeholders. The study has explored several aspects of prison life in Tunisia: e.g., prison policy and the practice of punishment pre- and post-revolution; the gendered experience; the role of civil society and human rights in reform; terrorism; staff-prisoner relationships; and, how power and authority are exercised in this transitioning context. This work is ongoing

#### **Recent publications**

**Schmidt, B.E.** and Jefferson, A.M. (forthcoming) 'Sensorial Encounters in Tunisian Prisons: Embodied Spaces and Sensing', in Herrity, K., **Schmidt, B.E.** and Warr, J. (eds.) *Sensory Penalties: Exploring the Senses in Spaces of Punishment and Social Control*. Emerald Publishing.

Jefferson, A.M. and **Schmidt, B.E.** (2019) 'Concealment and revelation as bureaucratic and ethnographic practice: Lessons from Tunisian prisons', *Critique of Anthropology* 39(2): 155-171. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0308275X19842922>

#### **Presentations**

October 2019: 'How do prisons change? Reform and politics in transitioning penal landscapes'

presentation, Federal Prison Service Workshop, ICPA conference, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

September 2019: 'Doing prisons research: methods, ethics, and being there' seminar, Master's in Criminology and Prevention of Delinquency course, University of Tunis, Tunisia.

September 2018: 'The pains of extreme overcrowding: sensory coping in Tunisian prisons' presentation, European Society of Criminology annual conference, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Fabio Tartarini** – The process of Human Flourishing in prison: a short-longitudinal research in a local English prison.

Fabio is writing up his PhD research on the process of human flourishing in prison. In the research literature, human flourishing is defined as the experience of life going well, and is the combination of feeling emotionally positive and functioning effectively, in psychological and social terms (Huppert and So 2013; Seligman 2011). Flourishing is intrinsically linked to concepts of health intended as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (WHO, 1948) and represents a protective factor against self-harm and suicide in prison (see for example, Kelliher Rabon et al. 2018; Liebling 1992). At the same time, enhancing positive well-being in prison creates the necessary basis for rehabilitation and desistance, and for prisoners to lead law-abiding lives on release (Laws and Ward 2011). Based on research undertaken in a local prison in England, Fabio's research represents the first short longitudinal and systematic exploration of the process of human flourishing in custody. Starting from an exploration of prisoners' own definitions of what it means to flourish in prison, the research aims to identify which social, psychological, and structural factors affect variations in both definitions and individual levels of human flourishing over time. The research aims to inform theory and practice related to rehabilitation, as well as support the identification of prison environments that are conducive to well-being

and rehabilitative culture (see Mann et al. 2018), in prisons and on release. It also aims to explore the connections between the process of human flourishing and the early stages of desistance.

In the past two years, Fabio has been a Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Suffolk, contributing to the Unlocked Graduates programme: an acceleration programme supported by the Ministry of Justice, aimed at training graduates to be prison officers with a specific focus on rehabilitation.

## Publications

**Tartarini, F.** (under review) 'Human flourishing in prison and well-being: an exploration of prisoners' definitions and experiences of imprisonment' in Searle, B., Pykett, S., and Alfaro, M.J. (eds) *A Modern Guide to Well-Being Research*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

## Presentations and talks

'Prisoners' experience of flow: rehabilitation, personal development, or just passing the time?', *ESC Workshop on 'prison life and the effects of imprisonment'*, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 28-29 March 2019

Holiday Camps and the Good Life: What's Prison Got to do With Human Flourishing?', *University of Suffolk Psychological Society, Ipswich, Suffolk*, 11 February 2019

'Upward and downward: exploring prisoners' accounts of Human Flourishing'. *ESC Workshop on 'prison life and the effects of imprisonment'*. Konstanz University, 12-13 April 2018

## VISITING FELLOWS

**Dr Moran Benisty** was a visiting scholar at the centre from December 2018 to October 2019. During her stay, Moran assisted the Families and Imprisonment Research (FAIR) project, a longitudinal study of families' experiences of paternal imprisonment and resettlement (commenced in 2011), learning about prisoners and their family members, and the various hardships that relate to paternal incarceration. Dr Benisty also helped to organize

and run the FAIR project conference day in June 2019, attended by around 75 guests from academia, politics, criminal justice agencies and third sector organizations. As well as presenting her PhD research ('An Offspring's Incarceration as a Family Crisis') to members of the PRC, Moran also spent her time writing three articles based on her thesis, which are all now under review.

**Liv S. Gaborit** was a visiting scholar at the centre from May to August 2019. She is writing her PhD in a collaboration between Roskilde University and DIGNITY – the Danish Institute Against Torture, on Experiences of Imprisonment in Myanmar. While at the centre she was writing up publications based on long term fieldwork in Myanmar. The publications include work on conceptions of 'access' within ethnography, the importance of recognition for reintegration after release, a genealogical analysis of penal practices in Myanmar and a discussion of spiritual experiences and hallucinations in meditation and solitary confinement inside prisons.

**Anja Emilie Kruse** (PhD Candidate at the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies/Department of Criminology and Sociology of Law, University of Oslo) visited the Prisons Research Centre in March 2019. She presented her PhD dissertation on explanatory- and self-narratives of imprisoned sex offenders in Norway (Kruse, forthcoming) at a seminar with PRC researchers, and partook in several one-on-one analysis, development and exchange meetings with members of PRC academic staff.

**Mojca M Plesničar** from the Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana, visited the PRC for three months over summer 2019, focusing on writing and planning future research. Her work lies at the crossroads of sentencing, decision-making and punishment.

**Dr Julienne Weegels** is a postdoctoral researcher with the University of Amsterdam's Centre for Latin American Research and

Documentation (CEDLA). She is being accommodated at the PRC as a visiting scholar for a period of three months, between 1 September and 30 November 2019 to work on her book manuscript *Performing Prison: Power, Agency and Co-Governance in Nicaraguan Prisons*, which is based on her doctoral research. The book addresses the negotiation of state and prisoner power, and the politics of (dis)order writ large. It is based on long-term ethnographic research with (former) prisoners and takes an interdisciplinary approach, bridging debates in Latin American studies, critical criminology and the anthropology of the state, to understand not only everyday life inside Nicaragua's prisons, but also the evolution of its hybrid carceral state. Julienne is a founding member of the Anthropology of Confinement Network, the *Red de Investigación Penitenciaria de las Américas*, and co-organizer of the Global Prisons Research Network.

We also continued to host **Hakbong Kim**, a prison officer from South Korea, who was working on the classification of dangerous prisoners, and on modern management reform.

## OTHER NEWS

In the last year, two PhD students successfully defended their PhDs: Dev Maitra ('Faith, race, gangs and 'the street' in prison: an inductive analysis') and Ben Laws ('Emotions in prison: an exploration of space, emotion regulation and expression'). Many congratulations to both!

For further information, please visit our website: <https://www.prc.crim.cam.ac.uk> or get in touch by email.