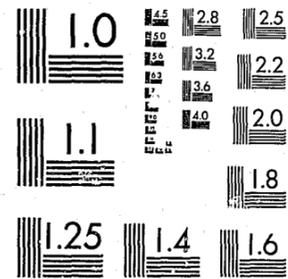


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Ameliorative Environments Within Maximum Security
Correctional Institutions

By

John Seymour

A dissertation submitted to the School of Criminal
Justice, State University of New York at Albany, in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ACQUISITIONS

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unit, a unit for youthful, white prisoners, and a special unit for the emotionally disturbed) are designed for small sub-populations of formally designated vulnerable prisoners. Our case portraits of these units, involving the interviewing of an additional sample of 118 prisoners, include descriptions of the settings themselves, categorizations and typing of the positive and negative features of the settings, and population profiles. The efficacy of such settings in resolving prison problems is discussed, as well as the trade-offs often necessitated by prisoner placement into a formal niche.

Finally, Chapter 16 is devoted to the practical and theoretical implications of our research, including a discussion of strategies for the reduction of prison stress.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation is about environments, and about man's satisfaction and dissatisfaction with them. It is also about prison, and the special satisfactions and dissatisfactions expressed by men living in prison. We know as much about man's behavior in prison as we know about behavior in most places, but we find that we do not know much about the 'places' themselves, the settings that prison contains or the ways in which these settings become meaningful for men in them. We know little about the universe of social and physical characteristics of prison settings that are of importance, or irrelevant, to men exposed to them, or the ways in which those characteristics are perceived, evaluated and labelled by prisoners.

This dissertation has as its objective an exploration of the relationships between stress expressed by men in prison and characteristics of prison settings perceived by prisoners as stress-reducing. We are concerned with understanding the personal meanings prisoners apply to ameliorative prison settings, and with understanding the personal susceptibilities and environmental features that produce such meanings.

The major portion of the dissertation, the "informal niche study" surveys prison program, work and special living settings that are discovered or created and defined by prisoners living in them. We are concerned with settings for the victim of assault, for the rebellious state raised youth, for the elderly lifer preoccupied with environmental predictability and privacy.

While we shall survey prison environments that become informally adopted as niches, a second concern is with officially defined ameliorative subenvironments. We shall explore, in a "formal niche" study, four subenvironments for special subpopulations of vulnerable offenders. These settings, a traditional protection company, an elderly and handicapped unit, a company for the insulation of physically weak and socially inept adolescent prisoners, a therapeutic community for the emotionally disturbed, are surveyed to explore common environmental interventions for special prison subpopulations as well as the advantages and disadvantages of placement.

Architectural Determinism

In the main, prisons have been described as presenting generic, onerous and essentially unyielding prison problems. We have heard, with respect to prisons, that "a prison is a prison is a prison." Prisons are one species of total institution; they are Houses of Darkness, Ultimate Ghettos, the Underground, the joint, pervasive in their influence, relatively homogeneous and monolithic in character. We are perhaps too aware of the dangers of calling the same rose by different names. We express justifiable cynicism at the habit of renaming of an otherwise unchanged prison, a 'correctional facility,' but we simultaneously avoid distinctions in our portraits of oppressive environments that can make the difference between survival and non-survival.

Citing group violence, random self-injury, widespread

anxiety and fear, endemic sick call complaints, depression, anti-staff aggression, both supporters and opponents of prisons view prison stress as inevitable and virtually insoluble, although they accord various degrees of legitimacy to behaviors evoked. Abolitionists cite prison abolition as the only means of reducing prison stress. Prison champions pore through security equipment catalogues, assuming that consequences of stress may be controlled through security and case-hardening.

Even those concerned with disaggregating the total and negative press of large institutions have focussed on such plausibly and dramatically salient characteristics of prison as crowding, sensory overload, personal space limitations, threatened privacy, conspicuous denial of choice, limited resources and structural competition.¹ Such conditions have been more assumed than explored. Those who argue that the environments of prisons may be modified and humanized through architectural alterations (Nagel, Benton and Obenland, Newman) have been concerned with reducing the size of prisons, introducing normal fixtures and furnishings, stimulating activity through enriched programs.² However, whatever the face validity accorded such plausibly noxious conditions of prison life, or however plausible particular interventions for amelioration appear, there is little research to validate the seriously stressful effects of the constructs hypothesized to be stress-inducing, or the effectiveness of many proposed environmental interventions.

While research has lagged, we have proceeded without it.

Courts and standard setting bodies have been concerned with such issues as double celling, eliminating dormitories, mandating square foot requirements in cells, improving sanitation, placing prohibitions on bio-medical experimentation, improving health and legal services, among other issues. While such reforms are oftentimes effective in improving the often archaic, dilapidated physical structures to which they are applied, they also often miss their target or impact unfairly.

An example of a critical reform is that of prisoner safety. Safety as a right now extends to the safety of the prisoner with respect to his physical environment, the safety of the physical plant, issues of plumbing and sanitation, (prisoner health and hygiene), with abuse from correction officers (curbs and controls on brutality and corporal punishment), with quantity of supervision, with medical screening procedures and controls on contagious diseases, with safety in the work place. However, safety as a phenomenal concern of prisoners, refers primarily to other prisoners. There are racial problems and gang disputes, youth-aged incongruence, class schisms and idiosyncratic interpersonal disputes. This social matrix does not translate easily into environmental intervention, and is only marginally addressed by judicial decrees. Safety concerns are also not expressed with similar intensity by all prisoners. Safety relates to differential skills, physical strength, cultural liabilities and differences which make some inmates more concerned with safety than others in the same environment.

Personal and interpersonal competencies mediate both the genesis of the safety or nonsafety issue and its realization in prison. Across the board amelioration of particular prison conditions may unintentionally increase the vulnerability of one group by increasing the power of another.

While prison is stressful, some environmental conditions may be evocative of particular kinds of stress for one sub-population while other populations perceive other threats, or none at all. We do not humanize by calling conditions inhuman, we humanize by specifying the referents of stress and by targeting reforms at those most sensitive to threat.

A transactional approach to prison stress assumes a multiplicity of environmental conditions and human concerns. To target safety (or other forms of prison stress) requires an understanding of the relationships between prisoners reporting stress, and salient portions of their environment. Such a portrait may also dictate variegated modes of intervention and settings for amelioration. We need to know who unsafe prisoners are, what they see in their settings as helping them, what can be altered to reduce stress, what tradeoffs are necessitated thereby.

Some Examples of Prison Setting Transactions

Stressful transactions in prison may involve such generic and presumably objective environmental attributes as crowding,

noise levels, racial distributions, and levels of supervision. But stress at the level of the inmate is caused by the intersection of immediate environmental conditions to which he is exposed and his personal goals, strengths and vulnerabilities. Stress or non-stress, in practice, are composites such as the following:

Situation A

A habitual offender enters prison knowing that he will serve three years and return to resume his criminal career upon release. His friends, both inside the prison and outside, are convicts. He is introduced upon admission to a supportive group of professional criminals. His interest in programs is generated by a need to occupy himself, and by the lack of a family to contribute to his support. He knows the classification sergeant from times past and solicits a job as legal clerk. His tractability and typing skills, and the lobbying of his friends, results in his assignment to the position. He charges a pair of new sneakers per writ, and awaits his first board appearance. He lives in honor housing and is credited by the administration with being a mature, nondemonstrative, easy-going prisoner.

Situation B

A young black prisoner is received by a youthful offender institution that has a reputation for control, order, and discipline. The prisoner is assigned to the school program all

day because of illiteracy, and finds the school regimen suffocating and demeaning. He demands respect with expletives, walks out of class frequently, or orchestrates disputes with teachers. Staff reciprocate by defining him as a trouble maker and charge him with infractions. The cycle continues with periodic segregation placement. Finally the farm is broached by a counselor appraised of the prisoner's continual failure within the walls. He is placed there, and drives a tractor on the grounds crew. The officers tolerate his militant rhetoric, demand hard work, and provide a great deal of praise. He relaxes and receives no additional infractions.

Situation C

A white rural first offender is received at the same facility. His first assignment is in the messhall. The messhall is populated by newcomers and prisoners who have been placed there as punishment. Some of the latter are state raised youths who spend much of the time humiliating newcomers. The prisoner finds himself approached for both sex and property. He demands reassignment, and is assigned to the pasteurizing plant on the farm. While the plant has the advantage of being familiar to the upstate farmer, it also has the disadvantage of being populated by more state raised youths. The prisoner is sexually assaulted on the farm and is placed in protective custody. He is termed a weak sister and a passive dependent personality. In protection the prisoner attempts self-injury and almost succeeds in committing suicide.

Situation D

A 30 year old married high school graduate is assigned to a plumbing program, and attends school at night. He has an intact family, and his relatives visit him frequently. He also has a post-release job with his brother-in-law's construction company. He has little time for participation in prison social life, and little interest in it. He is encouraged by his progress in the plumbing program, and by his quickly accumulating college credits. He is hopeful about release and is committed to self-improvement. He notices little of what goes on about him, and ignores most prisoners. His world revolves about school, work, and correspondence courses.

Situation E

A youthful mentally retarded offender serving a term for a sexual offense is assigned to the school program which appears to be full of people who enjoy themselves by bouncing erasers off his head, or soliciting him for sex. He informs staff of his problem, and they suggest protection, but he refuses. He meets a similarly handicapped and traumatized friend who suggests that he apply for the outside greenhouse where he is accepted, after a considerable wait. A few other prisoners work there, the teacher is supportive and patient, the setting is small and self-contained, and holds no surprises. He spends the next year potting geraniums and tending the flower beds, which he finds relaxing.

We see that some men experience threats to personal safety and well-being in prison, or suffer threats to their integrity and independence. Other inmates experience little stress, evidence consuming interest in programs, or value participation in the prison opportunity systems.

We see additionally that stress is partly the product of imported interests, skills, and personal liabilities, which condition one's responses to environments and determine in part what potentials reflected by the environment will be seen as meaningful. We see too that environments within prison differ. The environmental characteristics of settings relevant to different kinds of stress may include goods on hand, environmental control over invaders, the extent and quality of supervision, the racial distribution and social climate created by the modal population, the kinds of activities permitted or restricted. Such characteristics assist in organizing and setting limits on behavior. People sort themselves out and, if they can, select environments that provide opportunities for insulation, for new forms of criminal activity, for the acquisition of skills, for the avoidance of custody. We see additionally that a single setting (the farm), while it is ameliorative for some inmates may be stressful for other inmates, who are mismatched with their peers.

We see a relativity rather than a totality of environmental conditions. And we see, in these impressionistic but real-life vignettes, that a mosaic of small scale prison settings characterize traditional prisons. The task is to identify

environments that are perceived by prisoners to match needs, and to explore the perceived (rather than structural) attributes of such environments.

Organization of the Dissertation

In Chapter 2 of the dissertation, the techniques of the transactional perspective are outlined and relevant research and theoretical contributions cited. Chapter 2 includes a discussion of the concept of congruence. Congruence implies that environments can generally be described as permitting or restraining categories of behaviors and as matching some needs more harmoniously than others.

Chapter 3 applies a transactional perspective to the problem of prison adaptation. The prison literature is reviewed and studies are highlighted that deal with differential prison adaptation. The chapter also includes a discussion and review of evidence supporting the existence and importance of subsetting differentiation in large prisons.

Chapter 4 describes the genesis and theoretical underpinnings of the term "niche", a concept originating in biology that we have modified to highlight the issue of stress-reducing subenvironments.

Chapter 5 outlines our methodology, including data collection instruments, samples, coding forms, instructions to coders, and reliability coefficients. Chapter 6 provides tabular analysis of the statistical findings. Chapters 7 to 11 describe the taxonomy of man-setting transactions resulting from content analysis of prisoner interviews.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 include portraits of the characteristics of prison niches which respond to stressed concerns for safety, privacy, freedom, etc. Chapter 10 describes the transactions of men who express general dissatisfaction with prison and report little in the way of amelioration (Mismatches). Chapter 11 describes our final category of man-environment transactions, the transactions of non-stressed prisoners and the setting characteristics which are salient to the non-stressed ("good-time" settings, "ego-enhancing" settings).

Chapters 12-15 make up the Formal Niche Study. In the final chapters we describe subenvironments confining special sub-populations of vulnerable prisoners. Our case portraits include descriptions of the setting itself, categorizations of perceived positive and negative features of the settings, and population profiles.

Chapter 16 examines some theoretical and practical implications of our work, including the practical implications of creating small diverse functional units within large prisons, and modifying social and physical settings to build communities within prisons.

Footnotes

1. William G. Nagel, "Prison Architecture and Prison Violence," in Prison Violence, ed. by Albert K. Cohen, George F. Cole, Robert G. Bailey (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1976), pp. 105-114. Edith E. Flynn, "The Ecology of Prison Violence," in Prison Violence, pp. 115-134. Also Edwin I. Negargee, "Population Density and Disruptive Behavior in a Prison Setting," in Prison Violence, pp. 135-144. Robert Wallace, "Ecological Implications of a Custody Institution," Issues of Criminology 2 (1966): 47-60. David Marrero, "Spatial Dimensions of Democratic Prison Reform: Human Space and Political Participation in Prison," The Prison Journal 57 (1977): 31-41.
2. F. Warren Benton and Robert Obenland, Prison and Jail Security (Urbana, Illinois: National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice Planning and Architecture, 1973). William G. Nagel, The New Red Barn: A Critical Look at the Modern American Prison (New York: Walker and Co., 1973).
3. Holt v. Sarver, 309 F. Supp. 362 (E.D. Ark. 1970), affd. 442 F.2d 304 (8th Cir. 1971) established that prisoners are entitled to live in a safe environment, or at least one lacking in gross health and safety violations. A number of "general conditions" jail cases have included detailed and specific orders to jail administrators ordering the correction of fire safety violations, plumbing and sanitation problems, and conditions which may permit the spread of contagious diseases. Hamilton v. Landrieu, 351 F. Supp 549 (E.D. La. 1972); Rhem v. Malcolm, 371 F. Supp. 594 (S.D. N.Y. 1974) affd. 507 F.2d 333 (2nd Cir. 1974).
4. Leo Carroll, Hacks, Blacks and Cons: Race Relations in a Maximum Security Prison (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1974). Carroll chronicles the rise of black nationalism in prison and the success of black prisoners in solidifying rights to form religious and cultural groups. Such a rise was perceived as threatening and alienating by white prisoners.
5. Daniel Lockwood, "Sexual Aggression Among Male Prisoners," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Albany, 1977).
6. Hans Toch, "Prison Environments and Psychological Survival," (paper presented at the First Bi-Annual Law-Psychology Research Conference, University of Nebraska, October 1975).

Chapter 2: Transactions of Men and EnvironmentsIntroduction

A number of disciplines have described their primary goals as a search for consistency in relationships between environmental dimensions and human behaviors.¹ Environmental dimensions have proven exceedingly difficult to specify however; we simply do not know a great deal about environments. Attempts at dimensionalizing man's world have ranged from the ecological perspective of Park and Burgess,² using census tracts as a relatively large and convenient environmental unit, to Sell's encyclopedic listing of the variables involved in a stimulus situation.³ Diverse approaches with different units of analysis are found in Newman's descriptions of the effects of architectural variables in housing projects,⁴ Goffman's inventory of the consequences of salutations,⁵ Barker's portrait of all the environmental transactions of one child in one setting,⁶ and James Agee's surgical descriptions of the Richetts, Gudger and Woods homesteads in Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.⁷ Settings, milieu, ambiance, context, surroundings, all are synonyms of "environment." There are a variety of adjectival forms as well; the built environment for architects, the social environments for sociologists, the behavioral, perceptual, objective environments for psychologists. Environment has been referred to as press related to needs, as sets of reinforcers, task requirements, informational input cues, everything from rabbit holes to the Wonderlands they lead to.

We know that environments are complex, and we suspect that many of the variables relevant to the perception and understanding of the environment have not yet been defined. More importantly, we know that when we are concerned with largely observable and objective environmental conditions, we tend to ignore organism factors, or to regard them as secondary influences to the primary stimulus. When we focus on environmental cognition and perception, we often lose sight of important situational influences altogether in our concern for understanding the intrapsychic determinants of behavior.

An interactionist or transactional portrait of behavior denies the primacy of settings or of people. It suggests that behavior depends upon complex relationships between objective conditions and cognizing organisms who construct a personal view of such conditions. Behavior must depend both upon the particular kind of setting, and the individual who defines it.

The Transactional World

Transactional perspectives of various kinds have been adopted by a large number of behavioral scientists. Hunt studied the nature of intelligence, concluding that hereditary and environmental factors should be viewed as interdependent potentials.⁸ Sherif and Cantril early criticized psychological theorists who studied behavior in isolation from situations.⁹ Rotter's social learning theory assumed that people maximize pleasant experiences consistent with multiple needs, and that settings vary in the degree to which they provide reinforcers for desired behavior.¹⁰ Attribution theory (Maslow, Heider) made similar assumptions, stating that people seek to control

their environment, to establish a sense of consistency and predictability within it, and to then seek satisfaction within the personal environmental structures they have built.¹¹

Roger Barker, whose name initially crops up when one is studying man-environment relations, provided the first major attempt at establishing a discipline of "environmental or ecological" psychology, a discipline that, more than any other, attempts to operationalize transactional theory.¹² Barker was concerned with the temporal and physical attributes of settings, and particularly with behavioral consistency within settings, the "extra-individual forces" creating "behavior settings." Barker's units of analyses were such settings as ballparks, church congregations, commencement exercises, and his interest lay in the cyclical patterns of behavior occurring within specific time intervals and spatial boundaries.

The two major theorists who probably come closest to defining holistic theories invoking transactional concepts of behavior are Henry Murray and Kurt Lewin. Murray conceptualized a model in which personal needs and environmental forces interact to shape behavior. As he puts it,

In crudely formulating an episode, it is dynamically pertinent and convenient to classify [the stimulus situation] according to the kind of effect, facilitating or obstructing, it is exerting or could exert upon the organism. Such a tendency in the environment may be called a press. It can be said that a press is a temporary gestalt of stimuli which usually appears in the guise of a threat of harm or promise of benefit to the organism. It seems that organisms quite naturally classify the objects of their world in this way, 'this hurts', 'this is sweet', 'this comforts', 'this lacks support'.¹³

In contrast to Barker, Murray was concerned with a matrix of personal needs and cognitions, and the situational variability of behavior, predictable in terms of perceived press.

Kurt Lewin's field theory, using the concept of life space, which is adopted by Barker, emphasized a continual process of inner and outer forces (personal needs, values, attitudes; as well as environmental conditions) together determining behavior. In Lewin's formula $B = f(PE)$, behavior is conceptualized as a function of a person and a perceived environment.¹⁴ As Stern notes with respect to Lewin and his formula,

"Lewin's classic definition of behavior . . . was first enunciated largely for didactic reasons, to stress the need for new strategies in psychological research emphasizing functional relationships and interactive states. Lewin's purpose was to conceptualize behavior as a molar event, involving an actor and a broad contextual setting . . ."¹⁵

Brunswick shared a similar perspective but with a theory more intimately linked with individual processes of cognition and perception.¹⁶ According to Brunswick, man's perception of the particular environment he is in is mediated through a set of ecological cues which man attends to and codes differently. The occurrence of perceptual differences among subjects is expected, and denotes individual cognitive operations, and the external cues and environmental concerns one differentially attends to.

Helson has defined personality as "the product of external and internal forces acting in specific times, in specific situations, and having specific outcomes characteristic of the individuals."¹⁷ Mischel likewise has adopted a transactional

orientation, using the concept of behavior-contingency units, or the association between a person's behavior and the properties of the setting in which it occurs.¹⁸ Cronbach has used the term "organism-in-situation," Angyal the word "biosphere,"¹⁹ Murphy, the term "organism-situation field." All these are attempts to broadly categorize man-environmental transactions.

Dewey and Bentley are, however, the originators of both the term and the perspective of transaction.²⁰ These authors applied the term transaction primarily to the development of knowledge, however, and to the history of science, rather than as a method for the study of behavior. Dewey and Bentley discuss three levels of action in the study of knowledge:

"self action: where things are viewed as acting under their own powers. Interaction: where thing is balanced against thing in causal interaction. Transaction where systems of description and naming are employed to deal with aspects and phrases of action, without final attribution to 'elements' or other presumptively detachable 'relations' from such detachable elements . . ."²¹

At the level of transactions, objects relate to one another within a field, and (1), each part of the field has no independence outside the other parts, and (2) one part is not acted on by another part but instead there is a constant reciprocal relationship, and (3) action in any part of the field has consequences for other parts. Using such a perspective, we cannot speak of men independent of the situation in which they are found, and cannot understand the situation without studying the relationship of particular stimuli to the psychological functioning of the person.

Ittelson and Cantril illustrate the emphasis on action, and the interdependent nature of the perceiver and his world in describing a baseball player:

It is immediately apparent that the baseball batter does not exist independent of the pitcher. We cannot have a batter without a pitcher. It is true that someone can throw a ball up in the air and hit it with a bat, but his relationship to the batter in the baseball game is very slight. Similarly, there is no pitcher without a batter. The pitcher in the bull-pen is by no means the same as the pitcher in the game. But providing a pitcher for a batter is still not enough for us to be able to define and study our batter. The batter we are interested in does not exist outside of a baseball game, so that in order to study him completely we need not only pitcher, but catcher, fielders, teammates, officials, fans, and the rules of the game. Our batter, as we see him in this complex transaction, simply does not exist anywhere else independent of the transaction. The batter is what he is because of the baseball game in which he participates and, in turn, the baseball game itself is what it is because of the batter. Each one owes its existence to the fact of active participation with and through the other. If we change either one, we change the other.²²

Recent transactional approaches have generally modified Dewey and Bentley's assumptions of inseparable environments and persons, and have substituted emphases on relational and intervening concepts such as stress, threat, and congruence, but not to the exclusion of individuals and environments conceived as separate (Overton and Reese, Pervin, Lazarus, Brunswick).²³ Using this perspective, processes are assumed to be primary, and the elements themselves derived. And such a perspective does not generally maintain that one cannot separate

processes back into elements. One begins, however, by studying mother-child relationships, heredity-environment relationships, prison-prisoner relationships. It is an essentially descriptive effort that describes regularities and stabilities in man-setting relationships, relationships that, as Lazarus emphasizes, "must be first described before they can be analyzed for their determinants."²⁴

However, transactional approaches do imply a relativistic and phenomenological rather than a bedrock and objective view of behavior. Environments present fluid potentials, and men act as active agents within such potentials. Lazarus states, "In short, there is reciprocity of causation: the person thinks and acts and thereby changes the person-environment relationship; information about this is fed back to the person through cognitive activity. Moreover, the environment often actively resists our efforts to cope by changing it."²⁵

Transactional approaches then typically make several assumptions about men and environments. Several of these assumptions are discussed below.

The Phenomenal Environment

Increasingly there is recognition that knowledge of the environment presupposes a "knowing" organism. The phenomenal environment, those human, non-human, and inanimate objects perceived by men, is the environment of interest.²⁶ The phenomenal environment is not independent of an "out there" measurable environment, but is influenced as well by the perceiver's personality, attitudes, beliefs, dispositions, and preferences, and by attributes derived from family membership,

social class, ethnicity, life style. The physical environment and the environment of other people are important parts of the phenomenal environment. The phenomenal environment is in turn a functional one. It is the environment as construed and defined by the perceiver, and it both enables him to carry out his purposes, and it limits him by those same purposes from other realms.

The Importance of Physical and Social Settings

Personality does not, in this analysis, determine behavior. While there are individual differences in the quality and intensity of response to equivalent events, the stability of behavior has also been demonstrated within settings. Highly controlling, or troubling events do occur. Social demands may be intense, escape routes delimited. One does not fight in church, or fall asleep in job interviews. Some settings maintain, as Barker and Wicker have emphasized, mechanisms that regulate behavior in them.²⁷ Consistent, inviolable rules about the appropriateness of certain ranges of behaviors are often established in settings, and defended by inhabitants. When events threaten a setting's stability, mechanisms may be evoked to correct the dissonant people or behaviors. Doris Lessing, in The Four Gated City illustrates situational cues influencing dress codes in a restaurant.

The place was muted, dingy, rather dark, and no single object had any sort of charm or beauty, but had been chosen for its ability to melt into the scene. And the people had no sort of charm or flair; yet looking closely things were expensive; money had obviously been spent and obviously since the war, to keep the

restaurant as it had always been, in an expensive shabbiness, dowdiness . . .

A lean elderly man (the headwaiter) whose whole life had been dedicated to the service of minutiae, he again flicked his eyes fast over here and again with an annoyance of bad manners that astounded her, so naked did it seem to her. Her sweater and skirt were adequate. But wrong? Why? She did not know, but he did. He left her to wait.²⁸

Thus settings often advertise themselves, subtly or dramatically as appropriate for certain people or behaviors. Sometimes people recognize that they are not performing at the level of, or in time with, those behaviors required by the setting. If they cannot improve, they may voluntarily remove themselves or be rejected. Sometimes they do not have past experiences and shared assumptions which permit them to adapt adequately to a setting. Sometimes the setting proves itself incompatible with desired activity. For instance, the "Quiet Little Table in the Corner" in New York City is a restaurant designed for intimate dining, and permits no other kind of dining. Lights are very low, privacy (with screens and curtains) absolute, tables are arranged so that knees must touch under them. For patrons other than young lovers, the setting may be inconvenient. Environments thus place limits on behaviors, providing congruence with some needs, preempting others.

Other settings may be more "total" and accordingly resist or control behaviors with strong architectural and social restraints. Bruno Bettelheim, whose main concern was with psychoanalytic theory, writes about his growing awareness of the power

of situations to effect alterations in men.

"While in the camp, I was little concerned with whether psychoanalytic theory was adequate, and only with the problem of how to survive in ways that would protect both my physical and moral existence. Therefore what struck me first was probably more urgent and more shocking in terms of my immediate needs and expectations. It was the realization that those persons who, according to psychoanalytic theory, as I understood it then, should have stood up best under the rigor of the camp experience, were often very poor examples of human behavior under extreme stress. Others who, according to the same body of theory and the expectations based on it, should have done poorly, presented shining examples of human courage and dignity. I also saw fast changes taking place, and not only in behavior but personality too; incredibly faster and often more radical changes than any that were possible by psychoanalytic treatment. Given the conditions of the camp, these were more often for the worse, but sometimes definitely for the better. So one and the same environment could bring about radical changes both for better and worse . . .

I could no longer doubt that environment can and does account for important aspects of man's behavior and personality . . . Neither his heroic nor his cowardly dreams, his free associations or conscious fantasies permitted correct predictions as to whether, in the next moment, he would risk his life to protect the life of others, or out of panic betray many in a vain effort to gain some advantage for himself."²⁹

Bettelheim's observation that environmental changes could produce radical changes in inmates later led to his use of "milieu therapy", which involves the creation of a purposively designed environment in which to work with children. Bettelheim assessed potential environmental impact from the first encounter a child has with the institution, until its release.

"The questions a prospective patient asks during the pre-admission visits - what he worries about, what he indicates doesn't interest him - reveal

much about him and his disturbance, and given his concerns, they permit us to offer him the reassuring experiences that count most."³⁰

Bettelheim's Orthogenic School was designed to ensure that the experiences to which children were exposed were carefully framed within a physical and social setting designed to provide freedom from fear and trauma, satisfying relationships with other staff and patients, environmental predictability and normative legibility. Bettelheim insisted that "The institutional setting dominates the style of life that is possible within it,"³¹ and as a result created settings that "don't lie" to children, that provide freedom of choice, and are attractive and unobtrusive.

Fritz Redl similarly notes the importance of milieu influences on children. He talks about;

...the very nature of the physical equipment, the very design of the rules and regulations, the basic policies governing the behavior of adults as well as of the children, and the very strategy employed in the selection of life situations to which the children are exposed and in the decision as how they will be handled, that all of this basic design is an essential element in the treatment of the children over and above the individual handling from case to case."³²

Redl found the social demands of a situation to be particularly powerful determinants of behavior. He described the power of specific milieus to enforce conformity of behavior, the tendency of some situations to demand similar behaviors from children with very different personalities. Gump, Schoggen and Redl noticed large differences in the quantity and quality of interactions

of the same boys in different summer camp milieus and concluded that particular settings or activities seem to direct behavior into particular patterns, and that specific attributes of milieus could be identified and manipulated for certain effects.³³

Social ecologists, such as Moos and Insel, have measured dimensions of environments that affect the behavior of people in them. The degree to which environments reflect relationships dimensions, personal development dimensions and system maintenance dimensions were found to determine differentially man's perception of and satisfaction with such settings. Moos and his group at Stanford have concentrated on developing instruments for the systematic description of specific settings, mental hospitals, correctional institutions, universities, and on understanding how the climates of environments in which people live relate to personal satisfaction, prestige, mood, and survival. Moos found that his instruments were useful in forecasting treatment outcomes, recidivism, and the frequency of human breakdowns, events facilitated or alleviated by specific social and physical environments. One study concluded that patients and staff in mental hospital wards that were perceived to be low in involvement, support, and order by residents were characterized by high dropout rates, and high rates of observed maladaptive behavior. Wards with high success rates (community release rates) were perceived as emphasizing autonomy, order,³⁴ and open expression of feeling.

Ittelson and others at the City University of New York have focussed on some of the practical implications of Moos' research and have reconstructed and altered specific environmental conditions in institutions, and measured their impact. Hospital ward environments have thus been constructed to provide institution-scarce conditions such as privacy, or involvement,³⁵ or freedom, and patient behavior has been monitored.

Milgram, in his now classic study on authoritarianism and obedience, demonstrated situational factors causing a variety of people to administer aversive shocks.³⁶ Zimbardo, Haney, Banks and Jaffe, in their laboratory study of prison life, demonstrated that situations could be orchestrated to elicit presumably abnormal social reactions in a wide range of subjects.³⁷

The Importance of Individual Differences

Our concern for setting influences implies that consistency in behavior may be as much a function of environmental stability as of stability in personal traits. But we cannot ultimately attribute too much effect to environmental stability. To some extent, men choose or create environments that will have certain effects. Not only do men respond differently in response to equivalent settings, but men engender the climates of such settings. John MacMurray has insisted that "human behavior cannot be understood, but only caricatured, if it is represented as an adaptation to an environment."³⁸ And Bowers has stressed in his critique of situationalism that, "people do foster consistent social environments, which then reciprocate

by fostering behavioral consistency." ³⁹ Aggressive children have been known to foster aggressive situations to which they then respond aggressively. ⁴⁰ Some men express needs by choosing settings which permit the expression of such needs, while others shape congenial or uncongenial settings through their behavior. Wachtel, for instance, maintains that many people create their own social environments through their own behavior. Behavioral consistency in settings is then seen as the result dispositional rather than situational consistency.

We must ask why for some people the situation is so rarely different. How do we understand the man who is constantly in the presence of overbearing women, or constantly immersed in his work, or constantly with weaker men who are cowed by him and offer little honest feedback? Further how do we understand the man who seems to bring out the bitchy side of whatever women he encounters, or ends up turning almost all social encounters into work sessions, or intimidates even men who are usually honest and direct. ⁴¹

Additionally, there are always individual differences in response to the same equivalent event. Individual competencies of various kinds may determine whether particular environmental events will be appraised, and how they will be dealt with. Ervin Staub discusses some person differences that affect the expression of pro-social behavior:

...individuals vary in their beliefs of their ability to influence events, to bring about important and/or desirable outcomes: in what is usually referred to as locus of control. ...Individuals also vary in the extent that they have plans of action for dealing with varied circumstances, and perhaps even more importantly in their capacity to generate appropriate plans to satisfy some personal goal in a situation. Finally, specific competencies to engage in particular acts that are necessary

for helping someone are, obviously an important determinant whether a person will help another and in what manner. The capacity to swim is essential if one is going to jump into a river to save someone from drowning; interpersonal sensitivity and skills are necessary if a person is to be of genuine help to someone in psychological distress. ⁴²

Differences in social learning, cultural and ethnic allegiances, class differences also affect perceptions of and behavior within situations. Experiments by social psychologists have surfaced differences in perception due to differences in past experience associated with different cultures and subgroups within cultures. Toch and Schulte, in a study of binocular rivalry, presented violent and non-violent scenes simultaneously to police officers and students. Police trainees saw a much larger number of violent pictures. Toch and Schulte comment:

It means that the law enforcer may come to accept crime as a familiar personal experience, one which he himself is not surprised to encounter. The acceptance of crime as a familiar experience in turn increases the ability or readiness to perceive violence where clues to it are potentially available. ⁴³

Thus meanings, and relevance of stimuli, vary in terms of prior experiences accumulated. Since no two people have identical experiences, differences in perception of similar experiences are assumed. More systematic differences depend on cultures, sub-cultures, and such hypothetical qualities of the self as ego strength, locus of control, helplessness. ⁴⁴

Person-Situation Interaction

The importance of transactional approaches lies in their recognition that just as a person's behavior is not always consistent across situations, the effects of situations are not

always consistent across people. Transactionalism rejects a notion of men buffeted by external forces, or driven internally. Behavior is perceived to be regulated by the interplay of internal and external forces. Environmental stimuli activate reactions and emotions and direct responses because of their association with consequences, and serve as informational sources. At the same time, internal processes mediate the objective stimulus, gauge its significance, and guide strategies of dealing with it.

There has been some recent research performed with a concern for multiple determinism. Stern, Stein, and Bloom analyzed and evaluated scores derived with common methods of personality assessment and concluded that behavior can be predicted adequately only if one carefully defined a functional environment, or setting in which behavior takes place, to include the social demands of the situation.⁴⁵ Kelly has used transactional approaches in his definition of and studies of psychopathology:

"Behavior is not viewed as sick or well but defined as transactional - an action of reciprocal interactions between specific social situations and the individual . . . research task is to clarify the precise relationships between individual behavior and social structure that differentially affect various forms of adoptive behavior."⁴⁶

Wolf, in one of the few personality research studies to use environmental variables as well as person measures, produced one of the highest correlations to be found in such research.⁴⁷ By viewing the environment as made up of a number of subenvironments, with each subenvironment operating to influence the

development of a particular characteristic (in this case academic achievement), Wolf proceeded to sample various processes and conditions found within a setting believed to be related to achievement, and to summarize them as defining the environment of relevance.

Rausch, Farbner and Llewelyn, in an experimental setting consisting of children in a play area, noted that the behavior occurring within a particular setting was to a considerable degree related to the personality of the child, and conversely, the kind of behavior a child produced was to a large extent related to the dimensions of the particular setting that were salient to it. Rausch concluded that the major determinant of behavior seemed to be the "meaning" of a particular situation for a particular child, and that, "In general, there is individual consistency in social behavior across different settings and there is setting consistency across individuals. But the interactive effects between child and setting contributed far more information about behavior than did the sum of the independent components."⁴⁸ An analogous point is made by Wohler, who observed troubled boys in home and school settings and found that (1) behaviors clustered in different ways in home and school settings; (2) clusters within each setting were relatively consistent over time; and (3) different patterns of deviant behavior occurred in relatively stable patterns in the two situations.⁴⁹

On a more microscopic level, research by Glass and Singer on human responses to noise, treated auditory stimuli as having psychological components.⁵⁰ While the actual intensity of noise was important, it was found to be of less importance than its

controllability in causing felt stress. Controllability in turn is a transactional concept which involves personal beliefs about choices, anticipations of benefits and harm as well as the ambiguity and intensity of the stimulus itself. Similarly, research on crowding has developed transactional concepts of density, meaning that crowding is not defined in terms of physical units (persons/per unit of space) but as a perceptual and experiential state. Stokols, Altman, Rapaport, and Freedman have studied human crowding with particular attention to the meaning of crowding, a meaning that in considerable degree is attributable to culture, personality, as well as to the tasks being performed.⁵¹

Kenneth Bowers, in a review of studies whose designs permitted the partition of sources of variance into person, situation, and person-situation interactions found that interaction of person and setting accounted for a greater percentage of the variance in nearly all studies than any single source alone. Bowers was convinced that a 'biocognition view of behavior' was necessary, recognizing that in partitioning the affects of personal or environmental variables on behavior, "Whatever main effects do emerge will depend entirely upon the particular sample of settings and individuals under consideration."⁵²

It is not enough to say, however, that environments interact with people, or that behavior is both individual and situational. The task is to define relevant person and environmental variables that lead to differential (or similar) perceptions. If one elects a phenomenological approach, this does not necessarily lead to idiosyncrasy in perception. We know that to the extent that two person's positions overlap, including

not only their orientation in time and space but also their interests and purposes, they will tend to have common perceptions or common experiences. Individuals belong to social groups, reflecting similarities in age, sex, culture, class. Such groups have oftentimes common norms, preferences, and attitudes deriving in part from common experiences. Consensual perceptions reported by persons with shared competencies, motivations, and experiences then permit an analysis of perceptions not as personal idiosyncracies but as shared portraits of environmental characteristics.

One assumes too that environments, as perceived, share some common presses. Many things of importance to one man are important to many men because of shared humanity. Some environmental events affect us similarly (fires, flood, a mosquito in the tent).

Thus while knowledge of the situations will not always provide adequate predictions of individual behavior, knowledge of activities, physical settings, in combination with individual characteristics, (variables related to class membership, prior experience with setting, age, race, etc.) and individual goals and aspirations provide considerably more information about environmental satisfaction than either information about the person alone, or of the situation.

Stress and Transactions

Men can occasionally, in the free world, and when fortunate or particularly skillful, create or select an environment in which life's transactions are to them and at that moment at least, close to ideal. A man may elect a scene that reflects

a life-style, the South of France for the young filmmaker, the West of Ireland for the expatriate writer, the quietly pastoral academic Amherst for Emily Dickinson, the solitude and seclusion of John McPhee's Alaska for the xenophobic and eremite lifestyles of upcounty Alaskans. ⁵³ Man may, in considering other levels of his surround, select an activity, a relationship, or a round of friends, an occupation, or a system of beliefs, any of which may become preemptively significant, important to self, congruent with needs, and full of meaning to the actor at that moment in time. Tastes change, interests change, places may prove inconvenient, and undesirable side effects may become apparent. New environments, reflecting a somewhat different configuration of needs, a somewhat more desirable set of environmental forces, may be chosen, or new environments reflecting changed circumstances may be forced upon us.

In our transactions as welfare clients, skid row alcoholics, and prisoners, we begin to enter the arena of stress transactions, and the special concerns and environments of the stressed. Stress transactions typically include settings limited in size, and scope and options, and people with limited competence and special vulnerabilities.

Such transactions are varied and describe a relationship between a vulnerable person and a taxing situation. Lazarus has defined stress transactions as a process in which:

Stimuli resulting in threat or non-threat reactions are cues that signify to the individual some future condition, harmful,

benign or beneficial. These and other processes are evaluated by the process of appraisal. The process of appraisal depends on two classes of antecedents. The first class consists of factors in the stimulus configuration, such as the comparative power of the harm-producing condition and the individual's counter-harm resources, the imminence of the harmful confrontation, the degree of ambiguity in the significance of the stimulus cue. The second class of antecedents that determine the appraisal consist of factors within the psychological situation of the individual, including motive strength and pattern, general beliefs about transactions with the environment, intellectual resources, education and knowledge.⁵⁴

Stress is then a relational concept. For instance, the objective dangers of mountaineering will vary with the weather, rock surface, day, companions, as well as subjective difficulty translated into felt competencies (skills, self-competence, investment in reaching the top). Objective conditions are important, and may be threatening or overpowering (Annapurna will result in greater felt stress than will Mount Marcy) yet do not guarantee stress. Janis, for instance, in a study of pre-operative fear, found stress itself only mildly correlated with the objective seriousness of the operation, and explainable as a function of the personality, supports, strengths of the patient, and other factors making up the "situation."⁵⁵ Grinker and Spiegel, studying the relationships between airmen and combat situation, concluded:

Combat experiences of sufficient intensity cannot be measured or averaged because they are not objective, even though they seem so real at the moment. What is traumatic to one may be innocuous to the other. One man may crack up after the death of his buddy and

yet be unafraid of enemy planes. For the other the reverse may be true. The personal meaning of stress is ultimately more important than its superficial appearance.⁵⁶

Melzack, in a study of physical pain itself, states that "pain becomes a perceptual experience whose quality and intensity is influenced by the unique past history of the individual, by the meaning he gives to the pain-producing situation, and by his state of mind at the moment."⁵⁷

Competence

One cannot translate objectively harsh and forbidding conditions into stress because an occupant may have sufficient resources with which to deal with apparent threats. For instance, Susan Shaheen describes, in The Welfare Mother, a special unassuming, narrow competence of the welfare recipient, finding surprising levels of satisfaction in an objectively harsh New York City slum.⁵⁸ The functional world is one of the Department of Social Services' regulations, welfare payments, occasional trips orchestrated to Puerto Rico, Spanish language television. A person who "has never seen a play or a circus, visited a museum, or belonged to a social or political organization" acts consistent with instrumentalities that are closer to the bone than most.

Competence involves, as Sundberg, Snowden and Reynolds have recently noted, "personal characteristics which lead to achievement having adaptive payoffs in significant environments. The notion of adaptation points to the need to assess both the motives of the person and the demands and resources of the environment."⁵⁷ The concept of competence avoids the danger of

"repackaging problems in our terms," and asks that we consider the person's own solutions when faced by particular problems of living. We are concerned with how, at what time, under what constraints, a person acts to reach a goal. Edmund Love describes for instance the human-environment transactions of a competent New York City bum in his search for a niche providing warmth:

The peculiar advantages of the microfilm room of the New York Public Library, which he came upon almost by accident, are probably Shelby's unique discovery. He had been advised by another vagrant that the library was a good place to keep warm on a cold day, and that it offered an opportunity for an hour or two of sleep. Several days later he made his first call there, provided with what he considered a plausible excuse for visiting the institution. He went to the main desk and asked for a copy of the New York Times for November 10, 1936. He was referred to the microfilm room. . . . He was then escorted to one of several viewing machines. . . . He since has become cognizant of several things. Most men in his condition who visit the public library go to the reading rooms. Either they have never heard of the microfilm room or they underestimate its possibilities. Consequently, the attendants there have never met a real vagrant face to face. They assume that anyone who has heard of microfilm wishes to use it in search of learning. They check the film out to the applicant and never follow up. . . . The room is warm and the upright film display stands give a man an excellent place to rest his head.⁶⁰

The concerns of the vagrant as Love describes them are withdrawal from the world, "getting by," self-respect and personal autonomy. Concern with physiological needs, sleep, food, lodging, as well as with the possibilities of losing respectability induce special competencies with respect to the maintenance of both sets of needs. The vagrant's world and his

competence can be understood only in relation to his concerns and motives. However, environments not only prompt unique methods of adaptation but may greatly interfere with coping.

Environments may be threatening because we sense we cannot cope with their demands, and such environments may surface adaptive strategies that are very different from those evidenced when we feel that our native ability, integrative capacities, flexibility, experience (all those things subsumed under competence) give us the self-assigned ability to cope with particular situations. And some settings do provide extremely difficult problems of adaptation. Resources in a setting may be minimal or lacking, physical features may be dangerous, the social matrix rejecting and threatening to esteem. In some environments, people have less power to alter environmental conditions created by others. Residents of skid row, mental institutions, and correctional facilities act, but they have less power to alter or to set the limits of their socio-physical milieu than do others. Bloom has commented on the pervasive effects of some powerful environments:

Perhaps the major point to be made about such environments is their pervasiveness, that is the individual is completely engulfed in a situation which presses him from every angle toward a particular type of development or outcome. It is the extent to which a particular solution is overdetermined that makes for a powerful environment."⁶¹

Stress and adaptation is still relational but the relativity of individual or situational weight in Lewin's equation varies. Thus while stress requires a judgement on the part of the experiencing person that his transactions with the setting involve

the possibility of harm, such judgements will be more likely in some life settings than in others. However, the concept of competence implies that organismic factors temper even seriously distressing events. Thus within most settings events may include both stress relevant and non-stress transactions.

Congruence

A construct that helps to typify the individual and unique transactions between men and environments is the concept of congruence. Although competence refers to the personal skills and abilities of a setting resident, congruence refers to the purposes to which he applies his skills. Congruence, like stress, is transactional, in that it refers not to people or to environments but to a match of diverse human goals and equally diverse environmental demands.

Congruence assumes that there are features of environments (social and physical) which more closely match the needs, interests and concerns of a given person than do other features. Generally congruence with environments is a notion that has been applied to surface conditions that limit or maximize satisfaction. Gans has illustrated this process with respect to suburban communities. A young wife, electing a new life style in Levittown, finds that she cannot see her mother every day and feels lost; or a childless Jewish wife, in a community of Italian mothers finds incongruence multi-dimensional, reflecting differences in culture and life styles. For the vast majority of Levittown, Gans finds relative satisfaction expressed by residents, and relatively minor tradeoffs and costs of adjustment. Those experiencing incongruence migrate.

Stern was one of the few social scientists to operationalize the concept of congruence in exploring the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of students in colleges. Using an Activities Index to measure the interests and needs of students, matched with a College Characteristics Index, Stern found significant differences in and between colleges, with independent liberal arts colleges characterized by a pronounced intellectual climate, with denominational colleges and university-affiliated liberal arts colleges below average in intelligence oriented activities, and universities stressing a high level of collegiate play. Stern also found significant differences within colleges, noting in one instance that:

The most striking group of students are those enrolled in business administration programs. Decidedly anti-intellectual . . . they are notably self centered in their interests, but at the same time non-aggressive and strongly group oriented. Their scores in fact suggest incipient organization men, anxious to please and preoccupied with the impression they are making on others.⁶³

Pace and Stern in a subsequent study concluded that "the total pattern of congruence between personal needs and environmental press will be more predictive of satisfaction than any single aspect of either the person or the environment."⁶⁴ Patton, using a similar approach to explore student-college congruence, found that students scoring high on authoritarianism indices (as he notes, a very small minority of the college of interest, the University of Chicago) dropped out significantly more frequently than did others, complaining of little structure, Socratic techniques, too little specific information and looseness.⁶⁵

Using a developmental model of congruence, hospital environments have been altered in specific ways to provide supportive physical settings believed to be matched to developmental needs.⁶⁶ For instance, for infants, a relatively structured but nurturing environment is provided, with heavy levels of staffing, high levels of surveillance, control, privacy for parents, chairs with rockers, areas for nursing, carefully controlled areas for the development of infant motor skills, giant playpens stimulating sensory area for touching and playing. For adolescents, settings are provided to match needs for the exploration of values, for privacy, for peer stimulation, group game rooms, as well as private rooms, a mixture of settings providing both freedom and independence.

Congruence has also been studied as an interpersonal phenomenon alone. Smelser found in focussing on this aspect of congruence that the most productive group in experiments designed to test cooperation to be composed of 'congruent' pairs, a dominant subject in a dominant role, a submissive subject in a submissive role.⁶⁷ Altman and Haythorne's study of sailors in an experimentally contrived confinement situation found complementarity between certain dispositions and needs (dominance-territoriality) to be important factors in reducing conflict.⁶⁸

Behavior-environment fit, or match, has been explored by other people concerned with human transactions. Barker has offered a concept of "milieu-behavior synomphy" (although primarily concerned with the power of settings to enforce a common

behavior in occupants); Wicker has advanced a congruence model with its focus on social learning processes accounting for predictable patterns of behavior in settings.⁶⁹ Michelson has presented an "inter-system congruence" concept focussing on the ability or inability of the physical environment to help or hinder certain kinds of described activities; Stokols writes about "human-environment optimization," or ways in which individuals or groups rationally and creatively alter settings in accord with specific goals; Pervin's "individual-environment fit," Jahoda's match, or "best fit;" all are concepts that assume that while congruence does not guarantee contentment, there are environments that match the goals interests of residents, or fail to do so.⁷⁰

While congruence may or may not result in wellbeing, it is assumed that congruence is a necessary antecedent of satisfaction. Rahana, in several studies testing a model of congruence, found that congruence is most important where environmental or individual options are limited. Factors that most commonly result in such limitations are "(1) Restrictiveness in environmental characteristics, (2) limited degrees of individual freedom, (3) internal perception of limited degrees of freedom . . . Restrictive environmental characteristics may be exemplified by the total institution, limitations of individual freedom may be seen in personal vulnerability."⁷¹

When a milieu is particularly non-supportive, or in Rahana's words, "restrictive," congruence is different from

choosing Amherst or Oberlin. Environmental profiles in institutions are skewed in terms of stressful environmental presses and greatly varying competencies.

People may not be able to leave, or may be otherwise vulnerable to the modal environmental press. In public housing, for instance, people with few other alternatives are placed into available apartments without a consideration of different needs, ages, interests, health, social problems of others. Poor families with handicapped children are placed with poor people with social problems, the elderly are mixed with the very young, the transient family with the established resident. Stressful transactions result as the needs of young adults for peer group stimulation create noise and prevent the elderly from using public spaces, and tradeoffs and agreements become difficult because there is too much diversity and disagreement in needs (Do we use the back court as an area for playing checkers and raising petunias, or for basketball?). Residents particularly vulnerable to lack of privacy or safety, suffering from marginal structure, but unable to leave, many find themselves subject to stress. Issues of environmental congruence are increasingly important when studying vulnerable people and stressful transactions.

We know with respect to prisons that environmental threats are relatively more powerful and frequent than in the free world. Social interaction is subjected to severe controls, physical factors change chiefly as a result of administrative practices and procedures and court ordered reforms, not as a result of

one's own efforts. The arenas prison provides for action are generally small and badly equipped, and the symbolic meanings of situations are threatening. However, most men survive relatively intact, some men flourish, and some men break down. What makes a prison a prison is a function of man's needs for autonomy, safety, self-expression, personal growth in a physical and social setting particularly impoverished in providing means to meet such needs. And what makes a prison only a prison is the tendency of man to create or find congruence with the environment, to assert freedom where possible, to garner safety, or find outlets for self-expression.

In all settings, including such high-stress settings as prisons, people differ in their competencies and vulnerabilities, their skills in attending to and encoding information, in predicting the behaviors of others, and in meeting needs and maximizing satisfactions. People differ as well in the type and qualities of stress they feel in a setting, and in the kinds of solutions they elect (congruence). Some men may be concerned with lack of freedom, others with securing privacy or order, others with physical safety. Thus even stress-relevant congruence is not monothematic but involves different kinds of vulnerabilities and different kinds of environmental press. Our task is to describe such transactions that lead to stress reduction in prisons. Such a task includes the description and typing of the various goals and commitments of inmates that can be threatened, as well as the varying qualities of prison environments that translate into felt stress reduction.

Footnotes

1. For a review of environmental psychology, see William H. Ittelson, Harold M. Proshansky, Leanne G. Rivlin and Gary H. Winkel, An Introduction to Environmental Psychology (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974) pp. 75-78. See also Daniel Stokols, ed., Perspectives on Environment and Behavior (New York: Plenum Press, 1977) for a wide range of contributions by researchers in the fields of ecological and environmental psychology. Environment and behavior is discussed within the fields of biology, sociology, and psychology by J. Douglas Porteus, in Environment and Behavior: Planning and Everyday Urban Life (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1977). The volume provides an exhaustive study of the behavioral aspects of urban planning and architectural design, integrating material from environmental psychology, behavioral geography, social biology, architectural psychology, urban anthropology, urban sociology and related fields. The volume also contains an excellent set of references from a wide range of disciplines. Also Rudolf Moos and Paul Insel, eds., Issues in Social Ecology: Human Milieus (Palo Alto, Calif: National Press, 1974).
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CHAPTER 3: PRISONERS, PRISONS, AND SUBENVIRONMENTS

Although prison theorists have in the main abandoned earlier conceptions of environmental determinism (architectural differences and effects, such as the Auburn and Pennsylvania models are no longer seriously or forcefully argued), they have not evolved conceptions of prison stress highlighting the differential impact of prison environments. The dominant portraits of prison adaptation center around universal "pains of imprisonment" as well as assumptions of common, functional and interdependent prisoner solutions to those pains. Influenced initially by Clemmer, who maintained that "every prisoner was subject to certain influences which we may call universal factors of prisonization,"¹ and strengthened by later observations postulating a shared and pervasive inmate normative system (Sykes, Sykes and Messinger),² prison theorists focussed on structural prison deprivations characterizing "total institutions."³ Sykes' inventory of pains of imprisonment included deprivation of liberty, deprivation of goods and services, deprivation of heterosexual companionship, deprivation of autonomy, and deprivation of security.⁴ The inmate social system developed, according to this perspective, as a response to such pains. Group norms, such as consensus in opposition to facility regulations, solidarity, mutual non-interference were perceived as assisting prisoners to cope with both physical and psychological threats. Resolution of prison degradations and mortifications and the neutralization of societal condemnation, was believed to strengthen the prison subculture by providing a restorative

value system.⁵ The subculture that results permits a measure of renewed self-esteem, an illegitimate opportunity system, access to goods and services, and relative protection from anomie and chaos. The prison administrative structure is perceived as a cause of the development of the subculture and as benefactors of it. The formal organization cannot tolerate extreme violence, riots, escapes, breakdown. Hence the organization accommodates the subculture by granting special privileges, including tolerance of an illegitimate and corrupt social and economic system,⁶ in exchange for relative order. Adaptation is seen as restricted to the influences of the prison environment. Former free world values, interests, concerns are substantially transformed or tabled, and a new "prisoner" identity is conferred and confirmed with time.⁷ The model posits a new form of social-environmental determinism in which men, although not totally passive recipients of environmental stress, are moulded, shaped, and distributed among roles in a prison community united in its opposition to conventional values.

The nature and strength of the prison community resulting has been variously described however. The portrait of consensus and solidarity in prisons has oftentimes been found to be weak and temporary, characterized by small primary group ties resulting from ethnic, racial, criminal identity, or revolving about common interests and occasionally deriving simply from propinquity.⁸ Prisoners have been found to provide only verbal recognition and agreement with prison norms, and prisons themselves described as anomic, fractured, and characterized more by conflict and dissensus,⁹ than consensus.

The origins of what normative agreement and interdependence is evident has been likewise disputed. Instead of a functional response to universally felt pains, prison adaptation patterns have been posited to be oriented to particularistic interests, as with Irwin's descriptions of a variety of "less encompassing social phenomena" to which convict behavior is oriented.¹⁰ Similarly the system of roles, and patterns of adaptation have been described as "imported" into the prison, and as reflecting subcultural beliefs, and attitudes and interests that arise in other settings, not in response to indigenous prison deprivations.¹¹

Compounding the problems are important differences in adaptation found within various prisons, and for prisoners with different backgrounds and orientations, and with respect to particular prison behaviors. Within a single traditional prison, a wide range of prisoner responses have been demonstrated to similar "objective" prison presses. Factors such as age, race, socio-economic status, security classification, marital status, education and a variety of other characteristics have been found to have a major affect on the structure of the prison population, and in the types of concerns and behaviors expressed by different prisoners and groups of prisoners.¹²

Time and historical context present additional variables. Jacob's Stateville only marginally represents Clemmer's Stateville. The differences in social climates, prisoner expectations, prison philosophies, prisoner demographics, and the availability or unavailability of legitimate opportunities in the two time periods perhaps are more important in surfacing

adaptation differences between Irwin and Cressey's observations and Sykes and Messinger's observations, than the differences in paradigms used.

What is clear is that research into prison adaptation can no longer be focussed on hypothesized universal responses to prison environments. Such a perspective assumes too few differences in the press of environments, and the modes of adaptation within which prisoners deal with those portions of the environment they find to be salient. It is more plausible that prisons vary in the pains and problems they present to prisoners, and that prisoners similarly vary in the degree to which particular prison stimuli are perceived as threats, and in the kinds of solutions they perceive to be available at reasonable cost.

Prisoners are Different

Prison theorists, even those most firmly wedded to environmental and social determinism, typically assume some measure of differential adaptation to prison. Sykes has commented, in qualification of his main theme of universal pains of imprisonment:

It might be argued . . . that in reality there are as many prisons as there are prisoners - that each man brings to the custodial institution his own needs and his own background and each man takes away from the prison his own interpretation of life within the walls. We do not intend to deny that different men see conditions of custody somewhat differently and accord these conditions a different emphasis in their personal accounting.¹³

Sykes concludes however, "the dominant fact is that a hard core of consensus (is) expressed by the members of the captive

population with regard to the nature of their confinement."¹⁴

Similarly, Goffman states:

Man enters an institution with a presenting culture derived from a "home world" - a way of life and a round of activities taken for granted until the point of admission to the institution . . . Whatever the stability of the recruit's personal organization, it was part of a wider framework lodged in his civil environment, a round of experiences that confirmed a tolerable conception of self and allowed for a set of defensive maneuvers, exercised at his own discretion, for coping with conflict, discrediting, and failures.¹⁵

Goffman maintains however, as does Sykes, that institutions de-file and disrupt imported cultures, and substitute or super-impose a new one. The assumption is that the problems and pressures associated with prison life confront prisoners with general tasks of adjustment which encourage a collectivistic and antagonistic response. Lloyd Ohlin, in describing some of the prescriptions and proscriptions of the subculture states:

The (inmate) code represents an organization of criminal values in clearcut opposition to the values of conventional society, and to prison officials as representatives of that society. The main tenet of this code forbids any type of support or non-exploitative liaison with prison officials. It seeks to confer status and prestige on those prisoners who stand most clearly in opposition to the administration . . . They place a strong emphasis on in-group loyalty and solidarity and on aggressive and exploitative relations with conventionally oriented outgroups . . . if the code is not actively promoted by the majority of the inmates in the prison systems of the United States, it is at least respected and deferred to by them.¹⁶

A number of studies, however, have questioned the accuracy of such a portrait. Glaser, in his study of federal prisons, found ". . . inmates have a predominant interest in adjusting to the demands of the institution and that they have strong non-criminal aspirations."¹⁷ Glaser concluded with respect to

friendship among prisoners and the evidence of significant levels of chosen isolation that "inmates are far from being an integrated social body, and strong ties between them are either entirely absent or else are limited to a few chosen friends."¹⁸ Glaser found that inmate solidarity was virtually lacking, and generally both the dangers of entangling alliances and the attractiveness of legitimate prison opportunities and conventional pursuits eroded any movement toward consensus.

Mathieson, in his study of a Norwegian institution, found that "the population was characterized by a profound lack of solidarity."¹⁹ However, Mathieson qualifies his remarks by noting shared values within small groups. Mathieson states for instance, "An inmate population consisting of numerous small and highly cohesive groups may have very low total solidarity because each group has different attitudes."²⁰ Mathieson found that overall prison solidarity and the existence of an oppositional inmate code reflecting shared attitudes and behaviors did not characterize the prison studied. Bettelheim similarly describes the phenomena of relatively strong integrated prison groups within a generally anomic prison world. He describes the strong, disciplined Jehovah's Witnesses and the well organized Communists as constituting pockets of variously oriented solidarity within the political camp.²¹ Solzhenitsyn mentions the well integrated groups of thieves, or predatory non-political prisoners who dominated life in the Gulag, as the most code-abiding and consensually oriented group.²² However, the existence of such groups served merely to underscore the general lack of solidarity within the institutions.

In a federal narcotics hospital studied by Tittle, privacy and self-isolation appeared to be more potent concerns than group behaviors or shared norms. Tittle found that less than half of male patients reported having one or more good friends.²³ Similarly, Kassebaum, Ward and Wilner, in a study of a medium security prison concluded, "At the time of our study, the inmates did not seem to be a well organized community solidified in their resistance to an oppressive prison regime . . . (we are prompted) to question the extent to which inmates internalize criminal norms as a result of prison confinement . . ."²⁴ Charles Wellford, in his study of prisoner socialization in correctional facilities, found in general that "inmate society (is) not cohesive but organized around roles, which are in many respects conflicting."²⁵

Even Clemmer's study, which first proposed universal factors of deprivation and regimentation determining and strengthening a prisoner subculture did not suggest that such factors result in much solidarity.

"The prisoner's world is an atomized world. Its people are atoms acting in confusion. It is dominated and it submits. Its own community is without a well established social structure. Recognized values produce a myriad of conflicting attitudes. There are no definite communal objectives. There is no consensus for a common goal. The inmate's conflict with officialdom and opposition toward society is only slightly greater in degree than conflict and opposition among themselves. Trickery and dishonesty overshadow sympathy and cooperation . . ."²⁶

Thus, a number of studies demonstrate a great deal of prisoner diversity and suggest that prisoners very often have little in common with one another. The prison social structure

may be best conceived, in Conrad's terms, as a "superstructure erected over deep and irreconcilable fissures within each faction."²⁷

What consensus exists may be represented as a kind of pragmatic solidarity, based on mutual dependence taking various forms, in terms of behaviors, outlets, mores, and values. It may well be that "solidarity" itself is a term best left to the Old Left. As one prisoner, interviewed following the Attica riot, commented with respect to prisoner solidarity:

Well I think the actual expectations, what individuals want, varied. There were guys that all they wanted was more pink ice cream . . . there were guys in there that were concerned with getting cake in the mess hall and there were guys that were deeply concerned about improving the parole system and trying to get fresh minds into the institution and to do something about rehabilitation. I got the impression myself that there wasn't any real consensus between any more than 50 people. I don't think you could have gotten 50 people that could have agreed on any one point.²⁸

Irwin and Cressey have been most vocal in reasserting the importance of what people bring with them to prison as significant influences causing differential adaptation. In the formulation of what has been generally referred to as the "importation model" they argue that the prison subculture, while exant,²⁹ is weak, fragmented and disorganized. The importation model assumes that free world experiences and identities in part determine a member's participation in various roles and kinds of subcultures that describe the prison. Although the prison environment itself is an important influence, it serves primarily as a context for behavior, with prior socialization determining the extent to which prisoners may see characteristics such as

programs as significant, become involved in the pursuit of status and privilege, or withdraw, relax and do the time. Irwin's description of life in California prisons portrays diverse cultures with considerable variety in modes of adaptation. As Irwin summarizes with respect to the adaptation of California convicts:

The convict population in California tends to be splintered. A few convicts orient themselves to the prison social system and assume roles in regard to the prison, and a few others withdraw completely, but the majority confine themselves to one or two groups of convicts and attempt to dissociate themselves from the bulk of the population.³⁰

Studies of women's prisons suggest additional qualifications of universal, rather than differential, susceptibility to prison stress and typical, rather than individual, modes of prison adaptation. Giallombardo notes that adaptation to prison stresses involves issues other than a functional response to structural prison pains. She asserts that prison patterns of adaptation cannot be understood with respect to prison pains alone, but require an understanding of the external culture as well as immediate environmental stresses. Giallombardo states:

The culture that emerges with the prison structure may be seen to incorporate and reflect the total external social structure; that is, the way in which roles are defined in the external world influence the definitions made within the prison. General features of American society with respect to the cultural definitions and content of male and female roles are brought into the prison setting and they function to determine the direction and focus of the inmate cultural system.³¹

Similarly, Giallombardo found that the women's prison culture was not characterized by consensus and solidarity, but resembled

a weak grouping based on a kind of "calculated solidarity," or a "social unity based not on automatic conformity to a common set of moral norms perceived to be morally binding, but rather a unity which is subject to constant interpretation by the inmate as she perceives each situation from the point of view of her own interests."³²

Ward and Kassebaum similarly found that women prisoners were organized around prison pains and solutions markedly divergent in priority and emphasis (although the catalogue of pains was similar to Sykes') than were typically described for men's institutions. They found that women's concerns for belongingness and for affection, resulted in the orientation of prison society about homosexual alliances rather than an³³ oppositional, normative, solidarity expressing structure.

Within male prison populations, particular subpopulations of offenders have been found to express differential perceptions of stress and to adopt different modes of adjustment. Schrag, one of the few early prison theorists to emphasize prisoner differences in reactions to prison stresses, hypothesized that differences in social orientation, personal background and criminal identity, served as important mediating forces in prisoner socialization. Schrag postulated the existence of pro-social, asocial, pseudosocial and anti-social prisoners. He maintained that prisoners differed greatly in their affective and cognitive orientations to prison life, and that these orientations in part defined for them salient portions of the prison world. Anti-social offenders employ illegitimate norms and behaviors as standards of worth (and participate in the

illegitimate prison society) prosocial offenders look to the prison as a source of legitimate opportunities. Such orientations may reflect imported prisoner concerns for stability, autonomy, growth, and different methods of securing such concerns. Schrag comments:

Generally prosocial offenders are cultural conservators for whom the stability of even a somewhat oppressive order is preferable to the uncertainties of social revision or experimentation. Pseudosocial inmates, in contrast, are great innovators. Their exploitative interests, varied resources and affective neutrality make them natural catalysts of social invention and change. Anti-social prisoners are rebels who have a cause, namely the subversion of established authority.³⁴

Schrag maintains that pre-prison socialization, including integration of middle class values, family ties, involvement in criminal subcultures, concerns for dependency and autonomy, affect modes of prison adaptation.

Recent prison studies have consistently pointed to the importance of ethnicity in mediating, and determining, the impact of prison stress. As Carroll, Johnson, Bartollas and others have emphasized, black prisoners often enter prison with a prepotent concern for dignity, autonomy, manhood.³⁵ Johnson, in discussing the relatively low rates of black self-injury in prison, states:

A ghetto background may give a man an edge in confinement because ghetto and prison share a number of important characteristics. For one, both settings are peer centered, unpredictable and dangerous, and explicitly attuned to the issue of surviving. Both settings reward an image of manliness and features traits of strength, forbearance and courage. Conventional indices of status and manliness are scarce in both settings, which creates a premium on supportive peer groups...³⁶

Black prisoners, because of relative free-world and prison congruence in skills and learning, may stress emotional control and inviolability in prison. Latin prisoners, disproportionately represented among self-injury groups, may find critical that stress, incident to removal from a supportive dependent, family-centered world. Some white prisoners may find their espousal of success inconsistent with their status as prisoners, and may find themselves generally "strangers in a strange land."³⁷

One man's congruence may intensify another's incongruence. The unity, and strong peer centered groups described among black prisoners may be strengthened by norms permitting or mandating the victimization of other groups. Cultural revival among blacks in prison have, according to a number of authors, further polarized racial groupings. Conrad states that, "the new black prisoner is aggressive, resentful of the real and painful grievances of blacks everywhere, and often disposed to express accumulated anger in ways that intimidate or threaten white inmates."³⁸ Environmental changes may increase the solidarity of one group at risk to the survival chances of another. The new permeability of prisons have facilitated and strengthened ethnic and cultural differences.³⁹ Thus environmental alterations and presses, and prisoner characteristics, can combine in immunizing or infecting ways with respect to stress. Black prisoners may find that imprisonment increases already overdetermined concerns for autonomy and freedom (stresses that may reach crisis proportions for some blacks in confinement) but that most pains of imprisonment are relatively manageable.

White prisoners may find safety concerns prepotent and consuming, and enhanced by the concerns and norms of the black coping group.

Similar distinctions in environmental impact are found with respect to other prisoner characteristics. Toch found that young prisoners are more likely to be responsive to pains resulting from perceived freedom loss, as well as to threats to safety. Older prisoners were found within the same study to be more concerned with facility regulation, predictability, stability.⁴⁰ Glaser writes that, while younger prisoners are often concerned with sociability and increased interaction in prison, older prisoners primarily seek to maximize privacy, as well as to secure a measure of predictability in their lives.⁴¹ David Jones found that for both very young prisoners and old prisoners, the health risks of confinement were disproportionately high, suggesting differential susceptibility to prison stress.⁴²

The extent of prior experience with institutionalization may make one relatively immune to particular prison stresses. Irwin's state raised youths, Cressey's reform school graduates, find many common prison stresses familiar, easily habituated, and non-serious.⁴³ Goffman makes a similar point with respect to mental patients:

Some lower class mental patients who have lived all their previous lives in orphanages, reformatories, and jails, tend to see the hospital as just another institution, to which they can apply the adaptive techniques perfected in similar institutions.⁴⁴

Such prisoners may perceive the prison world as a vacation from the streets, or at worst, a temporary disruption of a firmly entrenched criminal career.

It is clear that one cannot talk of generic and structural prison stresses and consensually recognized phenomenological stresses. Prison may subject inmates to "a series of abusements, degradations, humiliations and profanations of self" but these clearly differ in range and degree across people.⁴⁵ Stressors affect different people, and subpopulations differently. Solitary confinement can cause stress in black subpopulations immune to other prison stresses.⁴⁶ Some prisoners seek out segregation as a relief from salient prison stresses that other subpopulations generate.⁴⁷ Even within the most purposive, designed, controlled laboratory of stress, reactions often prove differential and unexpected. Zimbardo's experiment is commonly discussed as one in which the prison situation transformed subjects who played the role of guards into sadists, and those playing the roles of prisoners into abject, disturbed and disoriented persons. However, the specific results of the experiment demonstrate that some prisoners, and most guards may have escaped situational transformation. Zimbardo notes that the percentage of "sadistic" guards was estimated at one-third, with the remainder distributed between "tough but fair" roles, and friendly supportive roles.⁴⁸ While the experiment was designed to provide serious humiliations and degradations, and did result in considerable stress for prisoners involved, the situational transformation of behaviors so often said to characterize the study may be considerably overstated. Zimbardo's thesis, consistent with the structural foundations of prison stress, that individual's values, convictions, ethics, orientations do not mediate environmental compulsion, may be, as we have seen,

rather narrowly conceived.

A comprehensive understanding of human adaptation to stress must include both the immediate prison subenvironment, its personally translated restrictions and potentials, personal motives, beliefs, convictions, liabilities as well as skills imported from a homeworld, the constructs that prisoners have concerning the lives they wish to lead, and the opportunity systems open to them for involvement both within the prison and outside.

Prisons are Different

Prisons vary with respect to resources, size, levels of staffing, physical design, the population being processed, location, a myriad of legal factors affecting free world entry and institutional exit and numerous other factors. Such a point may seem hardly worth mentioning, except for the fact that institutions are treated generically by most theorists with differences within them subsumed as minor. While differences in American prisons may not approach the level of differences outlined by Solzhenityn in his description of Special Camps, the Corrective Labor Camps of One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich and the "sharanska" or scientific prison described in The First Circle,⁴⁹ American prisons do have varying environments, with varying levels of and kinds of stress. While we should not confuse semantic juggling with real changes in the purposes, goals, and ethnics of corrections, it is obvious that prison differences are often "real" and perceived by prisoners to be relevant to the felt pains of imprisonment. The difficulties are that (1) many significant reforms have been obscured

by apparent ones, and (2) environmental changes, like stresses themselves, have differential impacts. Guards on the wall are termed "correctional officers" and those who have obtained a college degree and a concern for upward mobility, "correctional counselors." Prison industries are transformed into manufacturing training opportunities, while machinery remains antiquated and unique to the prison. However, it is equally clear that the recent history of corrections represents a move away from harsh, discretionary, arbitrary and capricious treatment of prisoners and toward humanitarian reforms. In many states, the judicial tenet that "prisoners are confined in prisons as punishment, not for punishment," has stimulated significant changes in prison physical plants, as well as the administration and management of prisons. It is doubtful whether one can maintain with any accuracy (1) prison reform is unsubstantial and hypocritical, or (2) that prison conditions are relatively uniform in the majority of correctional facilities (particularly when including those designed for males and females, juveniles or adults, maximum and minimum security community oriented, and rural entrenched.) Indeed, it is unlikely at any time that prisons were as monolithic and similar as implied by Clemmer in his introduction to the Prison Community:

Our prison is fairly typical in respect to discipline, labor and the various practices found in most other adult correctional institutions. It has been described by a distinguished penologist who has inspected every American Penitentiary as, "Just another place where men do time."⁵⁰

While prisons are, of course, committed to the goal of maintaining effective custodial control over exclusively involuntary partici-

pants, it does not follow that this purpose prevents either significant differences in the manifestations of coercion or the amelioration of significant prison stress. Even monomaniacally custodial prisons vary in the degree to which they guarantee prisoner safety, provide for occupational health in industry programs, provide adequate medical care, provide access to the free world, emphasize issues of equity, fairness, decency. The prison farms of the 19th century South presented very different climates, and different problems for prisoners to solve, than did the "meditative cells" of the Pennsylvania system.

While it may perhaps be argued that the prisons of the 30's and the 40's, as nascent institutions, were dominated by particular architectural and organizational models, prison settings today are increasingly diversified. The paradigm of the "Big House" that Irwin claims dominated popular as well as academic speculation about prison life until recently becomes even less accurate, and overly stereotypical, as we move into the 1970's.⁵¹ Prisons have not been immune from social changes characterizing a pluralistic, democratic society, trying to come to terms with both its pluralism, and its democratic ideals. New concepts of prisoner "rehabilitation" and "reintegration," while rarely pursued seriously as change-oriented programs permitted the emergence of a concern for prisoners that became translated into individual rights rather than individual treatment. A humanitarian ethic led to the elimination of many of the more obviously degrading and vestigial prison conditions. Rehabilitative goals also provided an infusion of legitimate

opportunities and programs into the prison, and a diversification of settings within prisons.

Concomitant with the movement toward redesigned, hopefully conceived prison environments with organizational climates markedly divergent from earlier prisons, and in response to a paradigmatic shift to individual treatment and to the individual's response to prison, researchers began to take a more variegated view of prisons as environments. Street, Vintner, and Perrow studied the organizational climates of a number of different juvenile institutions with goals oriented toward obedience/conformity, reeducation/development, or treatment. They demonstrated that differences in organizational goals influenced relationships between prisoners and staff, as well as patterns of prisoner leadership and degree of opposition to conventional values expressed by prisoners.⁵² Moos provided a more dimensionalized portrait of prison social climates. He found that different organizational goals and climates resulted in very different prison setting "personalities." As Moos states:

...environments have unique personalities, just like people. Some people are more supportive than others. Likewise some social environments are more supportive than others. Some people feel a strong need to control others. Similarly some social environments can be extremely rigid, autocratic, and controlling. Order, clarity, and structure are important to many people. Correspondingly many social environments strongly emphasize order, clarity and control.⁵³

Moos found, within a number of studies within both juvenile and adult correctional facilities, that as Relationship dimensions in the programs increased (spontaneity, free expression, support and assistance) residents felt that they had greater opportunities for personal growth. As Control dimensions increased

(emphasizing order, organization, control) residents felt that they have less to gain from the programs. However, there was variation in inmate preferences and perceptions of ideal and real inmate climates in settings reflecting equivalent dimensions.

Gibbs found that jail and prison environments were characterized by very different rates of prisoner self-injury. Gibbs postulated that jail environments, characterized by the summary removal of prisoners from the streets, shock, disorientation, high turnover, unpredictability and low prisoner activity, contributed to serious and unresolvable dilemmas for some prisoners, particularly for prisoners concerned about family abandonment. Prison environments more frequently were found to present serious problems with respect to concerns for physical safety and fear of victimization for prisoners confined in the more stable, but dangerous, prison settings.⁵⁴

Other studies of organizational influences on prisoners (normally dichotomized to a treatment-custodial orientation) present evidence of varying organizational climates altering prisoner perceptions of shared and individual threats, alienation, and prisoner solidarity. Oscar Grusky studied a prison camp under different managerial types and concluded that:

When treatment is the dominant goal of a small prison, a pattern of cooperation between the informal leaders and the authorities may be established which promotes rather than hinders treatment. The inmate culture . . . was organized not around the most hostile, but rather around the most cooperative offenders.⁵⁵

Studies of prison units within larger prisons have also pointed to environmental variation and to differential effects

of such variation on adaptation. Wilson and Snodgrass examined a prison therapeutic community within a large prison, and found a strong positive relationship between residency in the community and conventional values, and a negative relationship between residency and oppositional solidarity.⁵⁶ Jesness found that the social climates of various institutional units varied with the type of treatment modality employed, and that the climate was found to predictably affect the individual and group behavior in the units.⁵⁷ Jesness similarly found that small, informal units resulted in less regimented, friendlier, more informal communication than was evident in larger settings. The size of facilities alone promoted "prosocial attitudes among inmates and a greater emphasis on treatment rather than custody among staff." However, Jesness notes that the quality and relations between staff and prisoners within the same size unit can differ markedly. He found that optimal solutions involved the matching of prisoners to staff and settings on the basis of staff attitudes and preferences and client I-level (interpersonal maturity) score. Congruence was facilitated by an understanding of both the maturity level of the child, and aspects of his treatment setting.⁵⁸

Newcomb, in his study of correctional program size and youth outcome following completion of program, found that large size (as well as facilities holding a critical mass of older timers) is a condition which leads to criminalizing influences and behavioral problems in prison. Small size was found to be related to positive behavior in the program, and successful outcomes to parole.⁵⁹

Giallombardo suggests that the prison climate results oftentimes not from purposive formal efforts to operationalize organizational treatment goals, but from informal goals affected by implicit cultural stereotypes. Implicit beliefs about the kinds of people confined can determine in part both the physical design of the facility, and the manner of supervision of inmates. As Giallombardo states with respect to women's prisons:

Treatment for women meant instilling in them certain standards of sexual morality and sobriety and preparing them for their duties as mothers and homemakers. Such goals, of course, have important consequences for the formal organization of the prison. If the task of the formal organization is to train women to occupy roles in society as mothers and homemakers, this can best be accomplished under conditions which approach home life . . . In the ideal case, women's prisons sought to surround their inmates with many of the so-called good influences; small home-like residences, individual rooms, attractive clothing to develop self-respect, educational classes, and recreation. In addition, the view that criminal women were sinful and misguided had much to do with the development of a benevolent maternal orientation of the staff toward their charges.⁶⁰

In part, the structural-functional school, with its assumptions concerning prisonization, contributed to the increasing interest in altering environmental conditions to produce changes in people. The beliefs that prison degradations cause solidarity and particularly criminalizing solidarity, implies that a reduction in degradations is needed to stimulate prosocial behavior. Accordingly, we see in many of today's prisons, reception and classification procedures that only marginally resemble Goffman's entry mortifications, or McKorkle and Korn's "degradation ceremonies." Restrictions of rights to programs, opportunities, training, and rights to expression, association and assembly, religious freedom on the

part of prisoners have been answered at least in part by the increasing recognition of such rights and availability of such services. Increased services and opportunities have led to new styles of coping (gleaning, programming, profitting).

Today, as Charles Silberman noted:

Prisoners' rights have become an eminently respectable cause. The politicization of prisoner dissent and rebellion placed the question high on the agenda of the left and brought inmates into a loose and often uneasy coalition with civil libertarians, prison reform groups and other liberal groups. Sympathy with legitimate inmate grievances . . . led church groups, charitable organizations, and so called establishment organizations such as the American Bar Association to take up the cause of prison reform. At the same time old line civil rights and civil liberties organizations and new public interest law firms began representing prison inmates in suits challenging the conditions of prison life and the nearly total discretion that prison administrators have always enjoyed . . .⁶¹

While prison conditions have been altered, judicial intervention and other sources of reform have fallen unevenly. Changes have often ameliorated uncompromisingly bleak conditions correcting serious health and sanitation threats, or have been concerned themselves with procedural fairness in the management and administration of prisons. Conditions have been altered, but with respect to issues that are most obvious, and which may or may not be related to the concerns of the vast majority of confined prisoners.

Stresses may be only in part a function of the "objective" harsh or depriving conditions of physical prison environments. A highlighting of dramatic differences in prisons and of the manifestly different kinds and degrees of stress evident within

them is provided by the analysis of two "general conditions" suits settled within several weeks of one another in the summer of 1977. One of the cases was initiated by prisoners in the Rhode Island Jail, a poorly maintained, crumbling, 19th century dungeon.⁶² The second case was decided in New York City, with respect to the recently completed Federal Metropolitan Correctional Center.⁶³ The Center is a modern, and modernistic, glass and steel structure in lower Manhattan.

Conditions in the Rhode Island Prison were found by the court to represent among the worst of existing environments for the confinement of prisoners. The physical plant was described as encrusted with "decades of dirt and grime," the entire structure "massively infested with cockroaches, rats and mice," the shower areas "filthy and covered with mold and mildew . . . glass, trash, and dead cockroaches found everywhere; pigeons and cats wander about at will;" "colostomy bags deposited in trash baskets in the infirmary." The prison was described as rampant with violence, and its corollary, fear.⁶⁴ Of 650 prisoners in the facility, over 120 inmates were in voluntary protective custody. The prison was characterized without serious refutation by the facility administrators, as presenting serious and immediate threats to prisoner health and safety. The facility was found lacking in sanitation, lighting, heating, ventilation, prisoner safety, programs. The court rules that, in addition to the severe health, safety and sanitation threats, "the absence or inadequacy of programs of classification, education, physical exercise, vocational training, or other constructive activity creates a total environment where debilitation is inevitable, and which is unfit for habitation and

shocking to ⁶⁵ the conscience of a reasonably civilized person."

The second case addresses conditions within a clean, modern, well equipped and well staffed federal detention center in New York City. The court prefaced its opinion with the note, "The Metropolitan Correctional Center, which opened on August 2, 1975, has the appearance, and results from a course of planning markedly divergent from the bestial institutions of the American jail." The facility is separated into functional units, with a small population within each modular, carpeted, and serviced unit. Nearly all prisoners are provided with private rooms. Each module is outfitted with common areas with color televisions, chairs, tables, telephones, mail boxes, recreation and exercise equipment, one or more typewriters, laundry facilities, water fountains, educational areas, pantries and microwave ovens. Obvious security apparatus were missing or disguised and the facility generally has the appearance of a small, modern, and well equipped college dormitory. Litigation revolved primarily around issues of prisoner autonomy, particularly with respect to religious freedom, issues of due process in grievance decisions, self-government, freedom of assembly and movement between units, controls on officer discretion and additional due process, increases in support services (access to law library, length and frequency of telephone calls, rights of Jewish prisoners, commissary practices and limits) and issues with respect to dignity (controls on cell and personal body searches, wearing apparel requirements).

Prison stress cannot be eliminated. As prison theorists

agree, loss of freedom itself constitutes a significant and stressful loss for most prisoners. However, stresses are clearly relative. Stresses may be understood with respect to a baseline of hopes and expectations as well as objective conditions. It is likely that as conditions revolve around serious physical threats to health and safety, a relative correspondence may be reached between objective prison conditions and their phenomenological counterpart. With amelioration of serious threats, divergence and dissonance in concerns and a multiplication of environmental conditions ameliorative of concerns may be more evident. In part, humanitarian reforms may have led to increasing difficulties in predicting the impact of further environmental changes. We do not expect, as the second case illustrates, a reduction in expressed discontent with reformed and reconstructed prison settings, but a change in the types of stresses described, as well as an increasing diversification, subtlety and complexity to environmental issues. As one moves from a prison characterized in Bruce Jackson's terms, as "a place where all sorts of things are not there" to a place where, at least embryonically, things are there, modes of adaptation may become more different, less solidarity expressing. People respond to opportunities, activities, freedoms, with more variety. They find that potentials are created, that competencies may be applied to new things. The impact of benevolently designed institutions is difficult to predict. It would be in error to translate organizational purposes, an expressed humanitarian ethic, progressive engineering, directly into either improved conditions, or stress

reduction. Environments have effects we do not always understand well. When prisoners were removed from the pre-trial detention center in Manhattan (The Tombs, a facility whose conditions were scrutinized and found constitutionally violative by a federal court) and moved to a more modern, and sanitary facility on Rikers Island, a large number of prisoners objected, and refused to leave.⁶⁶ Superordinate environmental influences, in this case proximity to the courts and family, constituted a stronger source of satisfaction for many prisoners confined in The Tombs, than the objectively more "pleasant" environmental qualities of the more distant Rikers Island facility.

The difficulty is that environmental descriptions of prison life are concerned with conditions plausibly related to inmate stress for most prisoners (crowding, monotony, lack of services, noise levels, sanitation). Conditions most often remediated are those that are most easily remediated and most egalitarian in impact. But such descriptions, and such remediation, often ignore conditions that prisoners perceive to be noxious, or perhaps even more significant, ignores differential environmental impact. Mathieson describes an incongruous inmate preference for an old, damp, "dungeon like" prison near Oslo, compared to a second setting that was more attractive, modern and well staffed. Inmates preferred the first setting, because of clear criteria for parole, known rules, and an unambiguous custodial policy. Prisoners disliked the second prison because of its emphasis on "treatment", the unpredictability of its philosophy, the difficulty in predicting release requirements.⁶⁷ Similarly, Shannon and Taylor, in measuring prisoner satisfaction and

adaptation prior to and following a prisoner move from an old dilapidated prison to an elaborate new women's campus found important trade-offs required. They found that the new facility had a negative effect on social atmosphere and staff-inmate relations, although providing more quiet and privacy. The new modern prison was perceived as more authoritarian, with formal relations maintained, and more confining. The old prison was perceived as lacking in privacy and safety, but providing warmer, friendlier relationships.⁶⁸

One difficulty is that our clients are not all alike, they do not want the same things in a setting. An additional difficulty is that settings are multi-dimensional, with some environmental alteration preempting some needs while meeting others. Transactions involve the intersection of people with concerns and interests, strengths and liabilities in settings providing constraints of an enabling and restraining kind.

Traditional custodial practices were double-edged, providing both a preeminent concern for perimeter security, and a concern for stability, social control, and prisoner safety within the confines of the facility. Coercive control and authoritarian measures were introduced to protect the weak from the strong, as well as the community from prisoners. Although prison violence, as with violence in the free world, is difficult to assess and measure, it is at least possible that prison reform may have contributed, indirectly, to increased prisoner management problems and to violence.

Conrad states,

It is not too much to say that the change is from a prison in which force and intimidation by force were monopolized by custody to one in which the most intimidating force is now in the hands of prisoners. It is a community of fear . . . In many prisons the surest hope for the unaffiliated prisoner is protected segregation . . . Increasing numbers of prisoners are choosing to survive by this means, even at the cost of serving their sentence in solitary confinement.⁶⁹

Increased prisoner freedom of movement, increases in the level and kinds of prisoner property, limitations on searches, increased prisoner choice and freedom of expression, ethnic and cultural expression and identification have, while reducing some pains, often heightened safety problems. Judicial mandated reforms, changes in management philosophy, prisoner demands, have markedly reduced Sykes' "deprivation of goods and services." The increased permeability of the prison to the outside, longer visitation hours, contact visits, and in some facilities, conjugal visits, have significantly reduced pains incident to "deprivations of heterosexual companionship." Autonomy and freedom concerns have been partially met with limits on disciplinary hearings, due process controls on transfers and reclassifications, the expansion of furlough and work release options. Prison stability and safety, however, have become more equivocal. Silberman examines the relationship between increased prisoner activity, mobility and freedom, on prison social control problems:

The problems of control is complicated still more by efforts to make prisons more humane and more effective in rehabilitating inmates. Inmates move about the prison for a variety of reasons apart from work and meals; they go to and from the gymnasium, recreation yard, and movie theater, they have appointments with counselors for individual and group therapy;

they visit the prison hospital or clinic to see a doctor or dentist; they go to school, they attend meetings of the Jaycees Alcoholics Anonymous, or any of a number of other self-help, religious, or fraternal organizations.⁷⁰

Jacobs has emphasized that court mandated changes in prison environments have challenged previous staff assumptions about the purposes of confinement. Changes have led to role confusion, lack of enforcement of facility rules, and a general attitude of indulgency resulting in an abdication of custodial responsibility by many staff.⁷¹

A Transactional Alternative

As we have noted, a number of prison theorists often maintain that prisons are characterized by alienating and depersonalizing pressures that vary only in intensity. Thus, some theorists would argue that as prison pains grow more intense, inmate solidarity would increase. The fewer the deprivations, the more likely a code of normative solidarity and shared responses will disintegrate into idiosyncrasy. Such a conception maintains that prison stresses are universal and solutions shared and functional, and that a reduction in stresses translates neatly into a reduction in the need for solidarity and opposition. The problems with such an extension of the indigenous origin theory is that it shares the same faults as the theory unmodified. Threats are perceived as differing not in quality, but merely in degree. Subcultures are perceived as functional and strong.

Improvements on the "importation theory" advocated by Thomas and Petersen suggest an extension of imported influences

to include, "Those which exert an immediate effect but which are not direct reflections of the structure of the prison; and (2) the manner in which inmates construct understandings of the kinds of lives they are likely to have, the alternative opportunities that are likely to be open (or closed) to them after their release from prison."⁷²

In the main, theorists modifying major theories of prison adaptation maintain as do Thomas and Petersen, that similarities in prisons far exceed dissimilarities in importance, and that explanations of prison subcultures best involve an understanding of imported subcultures and superordinate environmental characteristics. Alternately, as indigenous origins theorists have argued, prisons are characterized by relative consistency in levels of stresses they present to prisoners, with changes in level translating evenly into the types of subcultures that develop.

While it is obvious that inmate adaptation is related to a broad range of prisoner demographics, (socio-economic status, educational attainment, age, race, marital status, degree or prior criminal involvement) and a wide range of variables that reflect contact with the outside world, it is likely that the importance and explanatory power of such variables vary across facility, over time, and according to the particular prison behaviors explored. It is likely that changes in prisons over time, their organizational climate, the accessibility and permeability of the prison to outside influences, physical and ecological factors, all influence the type and quality of solutions prisoners find to deal with prison conditions.

The prison society that was once described as uniform, oppositional, and functional is and probably was a patchwork society of old and young, blacks and whites and Latins, conventionally and criminalistically oriented, pursuing interests of enjoyment, or survival. The social system that was perceived to run smoothly has been altered by the rapid and significant changes of prison and free world environments. The reasonably simple solutions posed by the functionalists (improve prison conditions) has resulted in differential and unpredictable impacts. Prison amelioration has often simply substituted new stresses for old. Empowerment and physical plant improvement has, as in the general society espousing myths of equal talent, skills, and distributed liabilities, resulted in inequalities of impact.

Subsettings and Adaptation to Prison

In prison there are, in comparison with the free world, few places to hide, few refuges, no corner bar, not even a corner, no understanding family, no late movie on television, few drugs, minimal alcohol, few supportive people to relieve the pressures of living with, nothing to push the realities of doing time into the background for a while. For a very long period of time, prison becomes a relatively closed world enclosing an alienated population, providing a restricted set of behaviors, providing a poor set of program options. The environment is closed to voluntary migration, one traditional escape for the alienated thereby dissolved. Withdrawal psychologically is a possibility, but with a disturbing permanency about it.

We have argued that coping is a process by which man perceives a situation, weighs the stresses present, inventories his capabilities for managing them, and constructs a strategy to deal with them. He may reconstruct values and attitudes, defend old ones, seek out new areas of action, or withdraw. But whatever its difficulty, or relative ease, coping with new disequilibrium becomes essential. The first efforts of many inmates under stress, is to transfer out of the institution. The stresses encountered are often felt to be particular to the specific institution rather than a more generic feature of institutionalization, and transfer requests become the first easily recognizable indice of inmate-environment discontent. However, movement out of facilities voluntarily, via transfer, may be highly restricted, essentially prohibited, during the first six months at any facility. Within the first six months of a sentence, a critical time for many inmates, when free floating anxiety is most heavy, the inmate must deal with the immediate physical and social environment, using what resources he can locate to reduce stress.

A few inmates break down at this point, becoming so disturbed or evidencing so many symptoms of imminent breakdown that they are sent to the correctional system's equivalent of a mental hospital. To the vast majority of residents, both the strategies needed to gain access to the mental health route (self-injury, bugging out) and the possible consequences of such actions are so severe as to preclude it as an option. The possible hazards of longer sentences, parole board stigma, and the complex difficulties of doing time surrounded by people

for whom behavior is expressive of dangerous and unpredictable goals, makes one try to do the time within the prison.

For the majority of prisoners than, the long slow process of controlling, eliminating, and reducing noxious stimuli and gathering, seeking out and harvesting resources that facilitate doing the time becomes a major coping task. To a large extent, prisoners find that they are faced with a prison environment divided into an assortment of prison subenvironments, reflecting different configurations of stimuli.

While the importance of subenvironments in prison adaptation has been recognized by most prison theorists, recognition usually takes the form of studying prisoner roles in settings within a functional prisoner social structure. Thus, subsetting differentiation is seen as the result of an unofficial prisoner social system regulating prisoner conduct with respect to a number of critical problems derived from consensually viewed pains of confinement and the need to cooperate in optimal solutions. The social system that emerged was believed to be common to prisons and both collaborative and accommodative. It functioned to resolve two critical prison problems: (1) the reduction of prison deprivations, and (2) the maintenance of prison stability and social control.⁷³ The functionally integrated system was postulated to provide privileges, notably work assignments and special living arrangements, to prisoners as incentives to adhere to and support prison stability. Social control for the prison, and restored self-esteem and moderate comfort for prisoners were hypothesized to form the symbiotic basis for the model.⁷⁴ The emergent prison elite, those whose

tractability, control over others, and stake in the status quo were rewarded with privileges, used such privileges to solidify their order, to socialize new members, and to perpetuate the collaborative system. McCleery notes the control over other prisoners postulated to attach to the inmate elite:

Older inmates . . . could share on their own terms the physical goods and adaptive myths which made prison life tolerable. This control over the rites and tests of initiation gave senior inmates the power to assign new men a subordinate status and hold them there until they accepted the norms of the inmate culture.⁷⁵

Prison poverty, a need to understand rules, the dangers of ostracism and isolation, all conspired to make new prisoners dependent on the old, and perpetuated their normative adjustment. Shared responses to the solution of particular prison problems were believed to lead to inmate distinctions in roles, and to perceived differences in assignments and settings. Distributions of roles and settings were related to self-esteem maintenance, to the procurement of sex and other scarce prison commodities, as well as to the solidification of relative power and privilege. The formal prison administration is perceived, in this paradigm, to participate in the allocation and distribution of scarce resources through selective classification and assignment of prisoners. Desirable positions are allocated, in the main, to a conservative prisoner elite, in return for prisoner participation in facility control and custody maintenance. Thus the importance of subsetting differences is attributed to a symbiotic relationship between prisoners and the prison system in which accommodations of power and privilege are differentially made available to selected prisoners in return for social control. The control over prisoners is in turn felt to derive from the

experience of select prisoners, the fear of ostracism felt by new prisoners in the prison community, the dependency of new prisoners on the elite for information and services, the functional dependence of all prisoners on a relatively safe, controlled, predictable prison life.

Typical portraits of subsettings, consistent with the structural-functional paradigm, have described such settings as providing widespread opportunities for graft, power, corruption. Prisoners in the mess hall participate in the food rackets, workers in the store room pilfer items for sale, hobby shops misappropriate supplies for later creative use of resale, laundries sell creases and give wrinkles free. Settings are also perceived to serve as a kind of illegitimate opportunity system, responding to inmate's rejections and degradations by providing a system of roles and prestige symbols that are restorative. Richard Cloward has been most influential in positing the existence of subsetting differentiation based not merely upon differential access to goods and assumptions of social control or conflict, or accommodations of power, but on the need to develop alternative opportunity systems to restore prisoner self-esteem. ⁷⁶ Smuggling, pilfering, conniving, gambling, differential access to information and goods provide means of upward mobility and status attribution for a rejected population. The deprivations of prison life are, in this model, not only physical but psychological, and settings and the rewards and status attached to them provide not only resources and services but also symbolic rewards. Cloward's merchants,

politicians and right guys are oriented not only around material possessions but around power and honor in the prison community.

While Goffman agreed that subsettings were functional in terms of facility social control and material comfort, he emphasized the individual self-esteem rewards of subsetting residency, and the important privacy and self-isolative aspects of such settings. Goffman emphasizes the self-adjustment and self-defining value of subsettings:

Perhaps the most important way in which patients worked the system at Central Hospital was by obtaining a "workable" assignment, that is, some special work, recreation, therapy or ward assignment that alone could make available certain secondary adjustments and often a whole set of them . . . For example some patients pressed for gym periods because in the basement gym they could sometimes manage to use the relatively soft gym mats for a daytime nap . . . men who worked in the hospital laundry could manage to shave in the basement bathroom alone and at their own pace - a great privilege in the hospital.⁷⁷

Goffman also provides an insightful and detailed analysis of physical places, using anthropological concepts of personal territories, group defense, personal spaces, and control over levels of restriction and surveillance. Goffman uses the term "free spaces" to denote areas controlled by inmates, existing so that some forbidden activity can be undertaken, or simply gaining significance because they permit relative freedom from the noisy, crowded, controlled atmosphere of a ward. One such place described by Goffman is illustrative of the principle involved.

Underneath some of the buildings there was an old line of cart trucks once used for moving food from central kitchens; on the banks of this underground trench patients had collected benches and chairs and some patients sat out the day there,

knowing that no attendant was likely to address them... All of these places seemed pervaded by a feeling of relaxation, and self-determination, in marked contrast to the sense of uneasiness on some wards. Here one could be one's own man.⁷⁸

Concerns for personal freedom and privacy, Goffman argues, are prepotent in total institutions and spaces and activities of importance because they demonstrate "to the practitioner, if to no one else - that [the inmate] has some selfhood and personal autonomy beyond the grasp of the organization."⁷⁹

Irwin states with respect to inmate group and subenvironments that the prison populations at the various prisons are too large (for a strong, common, social structure). Thus "only a very small group of convicts in any one prison are known well

by enough convicts to constitute their having a role in regard to the prison as a whole."⁸⁰ The types of adaptation are diverse and relatively idiosyncratic, the structure splintered and casual.

(The groups in California prisons) vary from small, close-knit primary groups to large, casual groups... Many are formed on the basis of of neighborhood and/or racial ties, others on the basis of shared criminal identities . . . but the great majority of the groups are formed on a rather random basis. Many convicts who cell together or close to each other, who work or attend school together, maintain friendship ties which vary greatly in strength and duration.⁸¹

The type of settings chosen and the relative importance of the characteristics of settings are similarly diverse, and non-collective. Irwin states that some inmates "Jail" or attempt to construct a life within prison. Jailing is perhaps closest to the traditional portrait of role-setting matching. Men

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who jail, seek positions of power, influence and sources of information, whether they are called "shots," "politicians," "merchants," "hoods," "toughs," "gorillas" or something else. Other prisoners "do time" or try to maximize comfort and luxuries, and avoid trouble. Positions that permit little work, and a great deal of time for relaxation and self-indulgence characterize the settings sought by such prisoners. A third coping stance, "gleaning" is oriented around self-improvement and program involvement. The opportunity system for gleaners lies in formal prison programs, and is motivated by the need to overcome educational or intellectual deficiencies.

In Heffernan's study of woman's facility, she states that the "cool" (professional criminal) and the square (non-criminal prisoners) were attracted to jobs with the possibility of relatively high status and reward in the formal prison structure, while the "life" (habitual, career criminals) were oriented toward settings and positions that permitted success in illegitimate prison economies and status hierarchies. She found that the same position could have different meanings, depending on the orientation and concerns of the prisoner. Thus some clerk positions were preferred because of relative job contentment, ease, or skills provided, or because of their exploitative potential for political or economic ends. Some settings became the "preserve" of particular dominant subcultures. For instance, Heffernan describes the laundry as a setting for the "life", who thrives there, yet squares find it unbearable.⁸²

Mathieson discussed groupness and setting preferences in the facility he studied. He writes:

The groups developed in conjunction with place and type of work, attendance in school programs and sections in cell blocks in the institution. In other words, the various institutional arrangements that created and barred opportunities for interaction seemed to some extent to contribute to the development of particular cohesive groups of inmates.⁸³

Emery, in his study of an English jail, similarly noted that the ecological arrangement of the facility was a determinant of the type of behaviors that characterized prisoner interaction. Groups were facilitated or impeded by interaction patterns that evolved in work places and living units. Groups and friendship patterns followed from proximity to one another rather than from a social structure elaborately formed to share scarce resources and redistribute status and prestige.⁸⁴

In less benign environments, settings may become more survivalistically oriented. Subsetting differences described by Bettelheim and Solzhenitsyn are gradations of power and privilege contributing to survival rather than to status and opportunity. Solzhenitsyn comments:

The genuine camp trustees were cooks, bread cutters, stock clerks, medical assistants, bakers, instructors of the Cultural and Education Section . . . not only were they well fed, clad in clean clothes, and exempt from lifting heavy weights and from crooks in the barracks, but they had great power over what was needed by a human being and consequently power over people.⁸⁵

Bettelheim records that:

The division between skilled and unskilled labor . . . often meant the difference between life and death to a prisoner . . .⁸⁶

Kogon similarly notes with respect to concentration camp survival:

In all the labor details, the concern of the prisoners was primarily directed toward two things: shelter and fire. This meant a great rush on certain desirable details during the winter season. Huge premiums were paid to corrupt Prisoner foreman for jobs near a fire, even out in the open.⁸⁷

Different types of environmental conditions result in different subsetting attributes that in turn will be perceived by some, or many, residents as ameliorative.

Glaser provides perhaps the most varied, complex, and empirical portrait of prison work and program assignments in contemporary prisons. In looking at work assignments and prisoner preferences, Glaser found that the nature of the job assigned to the inmate during confinement was a significant factor in promoting either harmony or friction among prisoners, with over 60% of prisoners making a determination that assignments do make a difference in adaptation (either facilitating or hindering) and designating particular assignments with which they could cope most easily.⁸⁸ Glaser found that legitimate prison incentives (high pay, extra good time credits) were a major inducement for involvement in industry assignments, and by themselves, made industry a preferred assignment. He found that kitchen assignments, while rich in available materials for graft and corruption, were disliked, often for that very reason. Most prisoners found proximity to prisoners with anti-social concerns both dangerous and jeopardizing. The most important characteristics of settings that were described as stressful for most prisoners were large numbers of other prisoners, a disproportionate number of unstable or trouble-making inmates, large racial discrepancies, and access to services and resources

valued by other prisoners. Preferred jobs and settings were removed from the institutional mainstream, had few co-workers, a careful selection process to screen those allowed within the setting, a relatively low turnover rate of inmates, and a high degree of freedom. Skilled trades were named most often by inmates as assignments in which prisoners were likely to get along best. Glaser concluded that a modal prisoner description of a good assignment would be a reasonably clean and comfortable job, relatively isolated from other prisoners, and with a few congenial peers.⁸⁹

The prisoners Glaser studied did express differences in their preferences. Black prisoners often chose the laundry because of the large number of other blacks there, rural youths often chose the farm, while city youths invariably avoided it. The prison industry, while providing good pay and incentives, was attractive to many relatively well adjusted prisoners, yet avoided by many others as dangerous, noisy, confusing, with little supervision and many opportunities for violence and homosexual propositioning.

Recent analyses of prison life have also noted differences in subsetting importance that are divergent from earlier models. Carrol and Jacobs describe prison social structures organized around race and gang affiliation, with such issues dominating perceptions of the importance of settings. In Carrol's prison, work assignments and living assignments were rigidly segregated, and segregation enforced by prisoner groups. Carrol maintains that among the most significant of the recent prison reforms was the development of a number of inmate run and managed

voluntary organizations; the Jaycee's, newspapers, Afro-American society, art clubs, drama clubs, Alcoholic Anonymous Inc. organizations, Lifer's Association, etc. Social types in prison were more often oriented to diverse, formal prisoner organizations, rather than to a single culture with shared concepts of "good places, jobs, settings." Carroll found that the informal social structure that developed bore little resemblance to that commonly described with respect to the solidarity expressing and status-conferring old prison worlds:

White inmates evaluate each situation from the perspective of their own needs and interests, and solidarity exists only to the extent that one's needs and interests are satisfied by the situation or activity in question. The coincidence of personal and group needs and interests occurs most commonly only within small cliques, and the basic unit of the white inmate social structure is the three to five member clique.⁹⁰

Prisoners were found to identify primarily with external reference groups. However, the great majority of prisoners regard other prisoners with disdain and remain aloof from them. Prevailing relations are described as characterized more by conflict than cooperation, and status and privilege are important to and sought by only a small minority of prisoners. Black prisoners are described by Carrol as comparatively more cohesive as groups, expressive of strong concerns for individual and group autonomy, and for freedom from officer and staff control and surveillance. Black prisoners ascribe to their own set of values and maintain their own measures of self-worth, status and power. Race relations dominate the work place atmosphere, and although there was found to be opportunities for

interaction between prisoners of both races, interracial interaction in work settings was characterized as "sporadic and superficial."⁹¹

Jacobs similarly describes the importance of free world reference groups and the domination of the inmate social system by street gangs, with organizational structures, ideologies (of a sort) and symbol systems from the streets. Jacobs notes that:

The old prison reward system, which promised better jobs and the opportunity to score for hooch, coffee, and extra food, was no longer compelling. Unlike the Muslims, the gang members had no specific issues and no concrete agenda. They brought to the prison diffuse goals and a general attitude of lawlessness and rebelliousness . . .⁹²

and

Status and power within the prison prior to 1968 depended on status within the formal organization. Inmates competed for good jobs. Those inmates who held the clerk jobs were in key positions to "lose" disciplinary tickets, arrange cell transfers, and collect daily parley (gambling) slips. Runners had mobility to arrange homosexual liaisons and to relay parlay slips. Certain inmates under the (old) regimes accumulated great influence and power. When the gangs emerged at Stateville in 1969 they placed the old con power structure in physical and financial jeopardy. For the first time those convicts with good jobs were not necessarily protected in their dealings.⁹³

In part, the new prison system, with its emphasis on prison reform and meaningful work, may have contributed to the decline of "key" political and collaborative positions. Jacobs explains that inmates were removed from clerical jobs in accordance with facility professionalization, leaving gaps in the prisoner power structure and weakening inmate leaders. Inmate control

was proportionately reduced, as the conservative elite was weakened and officer patronage was reduced. McCleery described a similar process in Oahua Prison, in which a reform warden summarily, but unintentionally destroyed the inmate elite's source of power and status. With a concern for the egalitarian and treatment oriented classification of offenders to available assignments, the warden displaced the old inmate elite by tying the allocation of privileges and good jobs to rehabilitative goals. McCleery records that:

As the authority of the old inmate leaders narrowed to their immediate circle of associates, the inmate body ceased to be a community in any meaningful sense of that term and became a set of conflicting factions confined by all-too-narrow walls.⁹⁴

While there is some evidence that a functional model of prison environments and accommodations of power may explain some variance in inmate choice of setting (particularly in the past), it is likely that such a model is not definitive. With a large mass of unaffiliated prisoners (even in Jacobs' gang run prison he estimates that 30 to 50% of the prisoners were unaffiliated), the prison literature has ignored the environmental choices made by prisoners without economic esteem, or power gratifications attached. Similarly, the factors of inmate proximity and environmental dimensions such as privacy and safety have been largely ignored as factors contributing to choice of work, program and living assignments. Earlier theorists ignored assumptions of differential need, and differential relevancies of specific privileges made available to an inmate "elite." It ignored the fact that the inmate elite was not often held in high esteem and were not well-known in the

prison community; and it ignored the fact that the functional and supportive nature of the prisoner code was often exploitative for many prisoners, and increased rather than reduced many significant prison pains. Essentially the theory assumes similar people and similar environments, assumptions largely untenable during the periods when such studies were done, and increasingly less applicable today. While later studies shared many of the assumptions of the early theorists, and attempted to translate apparently conflicting findings with earlier premises, the importance of pre-prison identities, the judicial and legal revolution in prisons, the increasing racial polarization in prisons, the rising levels of prisoner violence, began to necessitate a shift in theory toward postulating increasing heterogeneity with respect to prison stress and its reduction.

The functional-structural perspective specifically ignores the following findings:

- (1) The large numbers of prisoners within subsettings without apparent power, prestige, or economic benefits, or other restorative powers who not only have chosen such settings but chose to remain in them;
- (2) The relative unimportance of many of the hypothesized setting benefits as a way to significantly reduce important prison pains, particularly concerns for safety;
- (3) The large numbers of prisoners who share a conventional non-criminal orientation, and who wish above all to avoid trouble and complications while imprisoned;
- (4) The documented importance of primary groups and small

cliques with diverse orientations as the basis for prisoner groups, not shared inmates norms;

(5) That ostracization from the prisoner subculture may be an ineffective and irrelevant sanction for many prisoners, suggesting that dependency on an inmate elite for status attribution and for acceptance and integration into the prison hierarchy may be overstated.

And even if it can be assumed that prison subcultures were once characterized by solidarity, accommodations and collaboration, the following changes may have occurred:

(1) Shorter sentences may have resulted in somewhat less social stability in the prison. (Jacobs notes that one former guard in Stateville in the 1950's commented that of 150 inmates he had supervised in the furniture factory, 50 served twenty calendar years.)⁹⁵ Work and cell assignments may thus have become proportionately more important as a way of imposing some stability and safety on an increasingly brief, yet unpredictable, prison world.

(2) With the prison world containing relatively fewer of the old line modal coping prisoners who respected ethics of "do your own time," power may have shifted to the "state raised youth". Traditional powers and privileges may no longer be compelling and prisoners for whom violence is a positive value may increasingly dominate the prison.

(3) The increasingly objective classification and assignment process may have reduced the influence of the guard force and prisoner influence in initial work and housing assignments.⁹⁶ Prisoner preferences, inexorable waiting lists, and rehabilitative goals may replace favoritism and particularistic relations as primary factors in determining the subsettings to which prisoners will initially be exposed.

(4) With racial polarity and importation of free world reference groups, settings may become increasingly segregated and important because of cultural congruence, rather than privilege and status in the prison world.

(5) With greatly increased prisoner-community ties, expanded package lists, a plethora of ethnic and cultural picnics and festivals, expanded commissary limits, and free and open correspondence and visitation rights, prisoners are no longer subject to severe deprivations of goods and services. Although such new wealth is distributed unequally, it may have resulted in an erosion of part of the old prison social structure. Those for whom control over prison resources was paralleled by control over other prisoners no longer profitted.

(6) The introduction of formal negotiating bodies such as grievance committees may have increased the direct communication between individual prisoners and prison authorities. Even relatively powerless prisoners thus become less dependent on other prisoners and can directly seek a cell change, or a work release review, or a job reclassification.

(7) Inmate run and managed organizations have begun to flourish in many prisons, and there is a wider range of educational and vocational programs. The "good job" no longer means a choice of select maintenance positions, but may include a job training program with street transfer value, or an evening college course.

(8) The introduction or resurgence of particularistic prison stresses, particularly prisoner violence, increasingly make the unaffiliated vulnerable. Superordinate threats suggest increasing individual and group withdrawal into protective settings.

Prison subsettings today do not play the role they have been typically described as playing in the prison community. Although at one time social control and conflict, and illegitimate prison opportunity structures may have molded and determined the meanings and importance of settings in prison, there has always been considerable evidence of differential adaptation. Men have always had difference preferences and aversions in prison. The old social structure that emphasized a transformation of imported preferences in the face of universal prison problems within monolithic prison worlds disregarded substantial evidence of prisoner and prison differences suggesting complex and individual responses to prison conditions.

Prison reform and openness may have led to different forms of inequality, new kinds of prison problems to solve, and increasingly variegated skills and liabilities distributed among prisoners. Environmental characteristics ameliorative to prison pains for many may be less incentives to social control, status, or economic gain, than to closely held requirements for safety, privacy, autonomy, growth and involvement. The situational approach or indigenous origins approach bears the critical and flawed assumption that similar objective conditions are perceived and responded to similarly. Importation theory on the other hand often disregards or deemphasizes the troubling and demanding effects of environmental conditions, postulating largely non-contextual determinants of behavior within essentially similar prison worlds. In contrast, a transactional approach assumes both diverse environmental demands and human responses, with stress and adaptation referring to a changing balance between the two.

Footnotes Chapter 3

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Att N 10: Everybody seems to be fogged out into their own separate personal, you know, niches

Chapter 4: The Human Niche

A transactional concept that may prove useful in thinking about prison subsettings and their role in prison adjustment is the concept of niche. As we shall use the term, niche refers to a subset of congruent transactions in a subsetting. A niche is a perceptual concept, a perceived ameliorative subsetting including a complex of relations between an active and developing person and an active environment, in an immediate physical setting containing that person. A setting is a place with particular physical features in which a person engages in particular activities with or without other persons, in particular roles for particular periods of time. The functions of time, place, physical features, activity, and person make up the portions of the objective environment. The factors of perceived stress, and similarly perceived stress reduction, make up significant portions of the participant's subjective world.

The reliance on perceptual definition implies that one man's niche may be another man's precipice. Additionally, man may create his own environmental niche by shaping, selecting, and constructing elements of his surroundings, or by presenting himself in ways that elicit desired responses. Niches are perceived by their inhabitants as defined and delimited, with a space-time locus, and as self-controlled, or controlled by others with their interests in mind. Niche-creation is integral to the concept. Niches reflect human preferences. Men seek congruence, or environments that are compatible with prioritized needs. One man's niche

may be almost invisible, a personal and private space carved from an impersonal superstructure. Another man's niche may be highly visible, with a great deal of social stimulation and involvement present.

A niche reflects then, for a particular person faced with particular problems of living and with satisfying particular potent needs, a specifically identified subsetting that surfaces reasonable solutions to such problems and satisfactions to needs. We require as well, in the case of prison niches, that congruence be related to stress, and that the setting be perceived as ameliorative to felt stress. While a setting may not be recognized as stress reducing for others, setting characteristics resonate to needs and concerns of the niche inhabitant that translates into perceived stress reduction. It is this transaction, the response to fears and concerns rooted in situation aggravated vulnerabilities, that gives the setting its essential quality and its meaning as a niche.

This definition of "niche" is a revision and amalgam of traditional and contemporary definitions. The niche concept first grew from a concern with understanding species differentiation in the same physical environment, and ecological and biological definitions of the term still predominate. Probably the first use of the term niche was by Charles Elton who, in 1927, defined it as "an animal's place in the biotic environment, its relation to food and enemies ¹." Independent of Elton, John Grinnell conceptualized the concept of "ecological niche," or that spatial range occupied by a species, to which that species is restricted by structural and instinctive limitations of food, housing, climate, and aggressors. ² Hawley elaborated on these earlier definitions by

describing the biological community as an "organization of niches, since the activities of each class of organisms influence the activities of every other class", and later he compared the human community with the ecological community and describes the niche as "the fundamental position of the individual or group within that community." ³

Prior to the elaboration of the concept of niche, each ecological setting was generally conceived as an assemblage of organisms living uneasily together within the same environment, and competing for available resources. It was clear, however, that ecological communities were characterized by functioning interacting populations of organisms with very different biological needs and environmental preferences. The concept "niche" was evoked to give some sense to the systematic differentiation in relationships between species and physical environments. Work on niches focused on the ways in which species related to species within the same general habitat. It was noticed, for instance, that two bird species feeding on insects in the same forest occupy different ecological niches if one feeds in the treetops and the other in the undergrowth. Two herbs of the forest floor differ in niche if one grows in light intensive areas and the other in shade. Insects feed on different leaves, some on birch leaves, other on maple, and live in contented propinquity in different niches. ⁴ The implications of niche lies in species success and survival. Survival of different organisms is possible because they differ in the kind of resources they use, or in place or time of activity, or in the way in which they interact with other species. Optimal match of species and settings containing necessary species requirements makes coexistence among complexity possible.

Ecologists, in further refining niche, began to abandon concepts of absolute niche stability (a kind of functional pigeonhole with specific boundaries) and to substitute a more transactional definition. Niches are now conceived to be flexible and evolving, and to respond to changing organism demands and environmental events.⁵

Anthropologists, concerned with human variation and socio-cultural differences in human survival and preferences, extracted the term niche from its ecological foundations and translated it for their purposes. Anthropologists emphasized man's unique ability to choose among, and to create, a large variety of environmental conditions. Downs and Bleibtreu state:

Equipped with the potential for culture our ancestors were able to free themselves from the interminably slow pace of biological adaptation and survive by making cultural adaptations - that is, create their own ecological niche. Man is not specialized for a specific physical environment; rather he is specialized for the use of culture as a shield between himself and his surroundings - even as a device for altering those surroundings.⁶

Niches began to take on not only a spatial, and survival-oriented significance, but a significance that involves highly active men, with cultural differences, concerned with matching culture with culture, and with "finding a way of life, not a place where life may be led." Rene Dubos has emphasized recently,

Man does not react passively to physical and social stimuli. Wherever he functions, by choice or accident, he selects a particular niche, modifies it, develops ways to avoid what he does not want to perceive, and emphasizes that which he wishes to experience.

While the concept of niche has been typically used to describe a functional place, it has also been often equated with

subsettings or micro-environments. The size of the physical setting that responds to organism needs has often both colloquially, and in anthropological and ecological definitions, been referred to as integral to the concept of niche. Flannery has used the terms niche and micro-environment interchangeably to describe the culturally and physically delimited portions of gross habitats.⁸ Cain, in ecological literature, uses niche synonymously with biotope, or the smallest division of the habitat with definite physical characteristics.⁹ Dice similarly defines niche as ". . . the habitat that the species occupies for shelter, for breeding sites, and for other activities."¹⁰ Both place and function have been used by various authors to describe the essential qualities of niche. Niche has been used to describe both a small scale environment, and an adaptive zone which explains organism-environment behaviors.

Our use of the term niche presupposes both size and function. We are concerned with the adaptive match between an inmate and his environment, and we are concerned with small scale prison sub-setting adaptation. Porteus uses a similar concept of niche, in his study of beggars in Chile.¹¹ While Porteus uses the term niche to describe small portions of city streets chosen by beggars with different vulnerabilities, the implications bridge definitions of niche as micro-environment and niche as an abstraction of conditions for survival and man-setting congruence. Porteus noticed that beggars could choose to exhibit themselves among five possible niches along a city street. They could be immobile on the sidewalk, move along it, position themselves along buildings, or in shelters of alcoves or recesses, or in the deep recesses of arcades. Significant differences were demonstrated in the distributions of beggars

with different liabilities. There was a tendency for the aged to withdraw, and for the crippled to occupy exposed positions, while the blind occupied all five niches. Porteus interprets the results in terms of environmental competence. The aged and most fearful withdraw into safety more often. The blind, most of who played instruments or sang, took up wall side positions, the best compromise between exposure and withdrawal. Crippled beggars, unable to attract attention in any other way, exposed themselves to public view more frequently. Porteus concludes:

In the case of begging, the physical environment in no way determines behavior, but permits a variety of behaviors, the choice of one of which depends to some extent on individual competence.¹²

The concept of niche has been appropriated, and its definition modified, by psychologists as well as anthropologists. S.B. Sells, an interactionist psychologist concerned with specifying the universe of environments as a necessary first step in the understanding of behavior, comments:

. . . It seems reasonable to infer that differences among species, and viewed more microscopically differences among individuals, reflect historical patterns of adaptive interactions of organisms with different environmental conditions. For every species of living organism there is a particular pattern of environmental dimensions, corresponding to what is usually referred to as an ecologic niche, which represents its naturally selected match between circumstances and species schema.

The behaviors related to survival and typical functioning in the ecologic niche of every species are the behaviors with which psychology must be primarily concerned.¹³

George Stern likewise has used the term niche to refer to man-environmental match:

. . . adaptation will be unique for any given person. But insofar as we can assume that there are sufficient similarity in need configurations among subgroups of individuals this model (congruence) also permits us to postulate the existence of personality "strains."

Individuals of the same type or strain may be expected to respond in similar ways to similar environmental press configurations. Furthermore, groups of such individuals are likely to be found in any sufficiently congruent environmental niche.¹⁴

Stern has used the term niche to denote effective match or congruence between individual tolerances and requirements and characteristics of environments. With respect to student choices of colleges, Stern comments:

Each of these schools may be viewed then as an ecologic niche for a particular kind of student. The independent liberal arts college caters to students concerned with intellectuality and autonomy. Engineering schools also emphasize independence but are otherwise more aggressive, thrill seeking and achievement oriented. The denominational subculture is group centered . . . the business administration program is decidedly anti-intellectual.¹⁵

Except for the use of the term niche to describe individual congruence with significant environments, neither Stern nor Sells nor Lawton (who also uses the term niche to describe the adaptation of older people) further elaborate the term. While such authors have been concerned with dimensionalizing environments, they have focussed on the general ambiance, or climates, or universal presses of environments to which people respond similarly. No exploration of individual variation in perceptions of environmental conditions, the essential significance of niche, has been attempted.

Stern maintains that congruence has perhaps more meaning when one considers the environment as composed to subsettings, with varying characteristics. Individual programs, classrooms, teacher-student relationships may be more important than institutional level differences in congruence. Moos concludes from Stern's studies,

It appears clear that college environments are not monolithic and undifferentiated but are composed of various subenvironments which may have considerable impact in themselves on students and also on the larger college environments.¹⁶

The problem of congruence, and of niche, again is linked with the level of environment of salience. The entire environment is nested with physical settings, larger structures such as institutions, even larger social and cultural structures such as neighborhoods, units of government, and over-arching economic, legal and political systems. Level of analysis depends in large part on the behaviors of interest, the malleability of environments, man's purposes in them. But subsetting differentiation has been hypothesized to explain more variation in many kinds of behavior than do large social structures or institutional arrangements. Wolf found that subsettings may be a fruitful approach to the study of man-environment behavior; "Instead of viewing the environment as a single entity, we have postulated that a single environment may be made up of a number of sub-environments with each sub-environment operating to influence the development of specific characteristics." ¹⁷ Moos, in his study of prison environments as well as other institutional environments, although not concerned with individual variation and congruence, found that subsetting differentiation was evident in the social climates of larger institutions.

Some environments show large variations in social climate, particularly institutions that are organized into smaller units (e.g., hospitals, prisons, high schools and colleges). The social climate may vary extensively from one classroom to another in the same high school... We believe that many applications of the social climate concept make somewhat more sense in these smaller environments in which individual inhabitants ¹⁸ usually have direct face-to-face contact with one another.

Our concept of niche attempts to wed the two major themes; the concept of niche as micro-environment or small scale environmental unit, and the concept of niche as congruence, or adaptive man-environment match. We are concerned with niche as physical place, and as

small physical place. There are reasons for this beyond definitional consistency. For one, (as we have seen in Chapter 3) subsetting differentiation within prison environments has been consistently found to be important in prison, and proves functional in responding to diverse inmate concerns, and especially in the reduction of stress. Although few theorists have recognized the existence of qualitatively different settings within institutions amenable to reconstruction or differential interpretation by residents, there is considerable evidence that adaptation is related to subsetting differences, and to differences in people exposed to such subsettings. We have also noted that theorists concerned with issues of congruence often find that congruence benefits from a mosaic-like approach to environments. We are especially concerned with the small size aspect of niche because of a practical concern with disaggregating the larger environment and specifying some portions of it to simplify relationships.

Niche, as subsetting, places one restriction on the transactions in which we are interested. Niche as stress-reducing, places another. When using prison as one's research universe, it becomes necessary to recognize a skewed coping distribution. In prison, optimal solutions to stress rarely extend to perfect matching of needs with environment. The prison environment is still characterized more by what is lacking than the variety of things it offers. In prison, locating a setting where life can be led is often the goal, not one of searching for fulfillment or for involvement. Within what shall be labelled niches in our study, it is not expected that residents focus on securing sandwiches, or collecting college credits (although any of these may be ancillary benefits to niche residents). We shall be concerned

with congruence as it relates to overcoming perceived threats, and serves to guarantee physical or psychological survival, as opposed to contemporary psychological definitions of niche, which typically describe the niche as reflecting congruence with any of life's purposes, whether stress-seeking, stress-reducing, or environmentally complacent. Such usage makes sense given the obvious fact that one man may choose a setting for social stimulation, for educational achievement, for pragmatic rewards, consistent with idiosyncratic configurations of needs. In prison, we expect that some settings may be ego-enhancing for inmates in that they provide opportunities for growth or development. Other settings may be termed privileged or good time settings, in that they may be congruent with concerns for privilege, status or enjoyment. While such forms of congruence are important in describing and accounting for the wider range of congruence, they remain a peripheral concern to us. With our deployment of the concept of niche, we invoke the survivalistically functional concepts of early biological definitions of niche, though threats faced by inmates are not typically physiological threats (food, shelter). Threats to both physical safety and psychological functioning constitute important prison stresses requiring environmental responses. Environmental threats faced by men in prison may include incongruence with safety needs, or needs for protection from physical harm or the need to manipulate bits of privacy. Needs for affiliation, affection, warmth may be potent as well, as may needs for personal recognition, respect and autonomy, and the securing of a measure of personal integrity (Maslow).

There are limits to the construct of niche built into our definition. Subsetting influences may be irrelevant for some men, particularly those for whom larger environmental structures (e.g.,

an overriding sense of injustice, the pressures of time, family loss) may dominate perceptions. Farber, and Cohen and Taylor, in studies concerned with prisoners serving relatively long sentences found a relative lack of importance accorded institutional routines, activities, work and programs by such prisoners.¹⁹ Subsettings may not prove ameliorative for all stresses, or at all times for particular stresses.

Niche perception may be the product of perceptual mistakes. That is, while a subsetting may not actually reduce the possibility for or incidence of threat, it may be perceived to do so. The reduction of stress and reported amelioration may also be caused by the expression of primitive, uncontrolled and brutal impulses as well as fearful, or avoidance concerned impulses. Prisoners may, in protecting themselves from change and the stress of dissonance, seek impulsivity permitting situations as well as those more plausibly related to amelioration (structured, controlled, safe settings). That a niche is perceived as ameliorative does not mean that it is adaptive. Also, that a niche may be adaptive does not mean that it promotes growth and development. A defense in a setting that permits such defense may be successful in that it reduces immediate stress, but maladaptive in that it increases the likelihood of future threats, or involves significant and unintended environmental tradeoffs and costs. Self-segregation may be perceived to be the best short-term solution to prepotent safety needs, but involve unplanned psychological costs of enhanced self-consciousness and reduced self-esteem. Similarly, while a niche may be adaptive to prison stresses, it may not provide optimal environmental stimuli necessary for growth. A niche, while ameliorative and providing long term satisfactions and benefits, may be unduly conservative

and reduce stress that may otherwise prompt beneficial changes.

When entering the participant's world, we are forced to use his calculus of pain and his calculus of tradeoffs and costs. Lack of significant information about other available and possibly "better" settings, a wrong computation about the effects of long-term commitments to environments, a set of poorly understood motivates to one's behavior, may combine to make a perceived niche more of a mirage than an oasis.

Finally, niches change, as needs and environments do. While we examine niches as static entities, we obtain a cross sectional portrait of a flow of changing transactions. We use niches to describe present satisfaction with settings. Niches may be more prominent however at one period of an institutional career than at others. Ittelson has proposed a model to illustrate environmental perception and selection as an ongoing process of transactions between active men and environments.²⁰ The first step delineated by Ittelson is an affective stage. With respect to imprisonment, for instance, the first response to a person finding himself in a new environment is likely to be emotional, an anxious feeling, a feeling of fear for the uninitiated, a heightened awareness or suspense for others. The next process, one of resolving the disequilibrium caused by affect reaction, is one of orientation. In a new setting, a person invariably tries to understand, to determine "what's happening," to know where he is, his place within his world. In prison, the inmate seeks out cell neighbors, or homies, or responsive staff to try to fill out the environment. The third process is one of cataloguing. Inmates in jail do more than identify and map out a new setting,"(they) evaluate various aspects of it and in this sense

impose (their) unique meaning on it."²¹ Men in prison give to people, or areas, or roles, perceptual identifiers: "that guy seems all right," "that shop seems to be confused or dangerous." Descriptions of warmth, acceptance, similarity, hostility, coldness, rejection given to relevant aspects of the prison setting. Ittelson states that "what happens here is that the individual is extending the meaning of a physical setting and social setting and functionally relating its various aspects to his own needs, pre-dispositions, values."²²

Next the inmate creates a system to his life in the setting. He organizes and catalogues places, people, and things into structures, ways of dealing with the world, ways of minimizing or maximizing various types of interactions. He establishes a sense of "where I can make it," or "where I can escape this, where I can find people to talk to, who must I deal with to get by, who must I avoid." If resolved adequately, the inmate may achieve a sense of mastery over his functional world, limited though it may be, as well as an enhanced sense of safety, autonomy, privacy, structure derived from a predictable world.

Lastly a process of manipulation follows, the inmate ordering, systematizing, and controlling component parts of his world to attain specific goals. Guided by needs, and with a newly found competence and mastery over heretofore overpowering stress, he may begin both to formulate new needs and strategies to achieve them. It is this active, seeking, reconstructing process, the creation of a setting, that translates into coping processes. Man, as a responsive intelligent animal, maximizes survival by marshalling resources. Cantril writes that "the business of making sense out of what goes on around us involves the fashioning of an environment

for ourselves within which we can carry out the process of living.

It means creating in some way for ourselves through our own experience a pattern of interpretation or assumption that will serve as reliable guides for action, bringing the satisfaction we seek." ²³

This five-stage process of learning and controlling one's environment need not flow smoothly. As with any developmental model of stages and rungs, obstacles may block progress. Both characteristics of the environment and of the inmate may interact to prevent optimal coping. Typically, an institutional environment initially appears threatening and unpredictable, and inmates often have marginal perceptual clarity, great fear, together reflecting a tremendous amount of error and distortion in the orientation process. And it might be that orientation and manipulation make little sense within a maximum-security institution, where the variety of things to orient oneself around, and the payoff of manipulation, would offhand seem to be minimal. At first glance, institutions have a pervasive sameness, a dull grey monotony, that seems to make work, cell time, leisure time, blend into one another.

The constraints against options for the creation of personal worlds is evident. The regimented equivalency of everything, the controls over the most usual aspects of life, the pervasiveness of authority, the scheduling, all seem to operate against the possibilities of systematization and manipulation.

But it can be argued that the more stressful and less differentiated an environment, and the more marginal a man's coping skills, the easier certain places, people, relationships are perceived as havens, special environments, personal worlds. Numerous authors have described the social worlds of institutions, their underlives, roles, values, status-seeking and comfort gathering

attributes. Goffman, Clemmer, and Glaser have skirted the periphery of the niche concept, recognizing that settings are perceived and utilized in different ways for different reasons, and that settings are endowed with positive and negative qualities and avoided or sought out accordingly. But these writers have not described niche settings, nor have they noted levels and types of stress and concomitant needs for special settings to help reduce stress, nor the qualities and characteristics of a setting that have stress-reducing properties for particular residents.

The niche concept, which connotes safety, self-protection, refuge, amelioration of stress, can illuminate some prison adjustment issues. It is admittedly a difficult concept to operationalize, since a niche is not a niche to everyone but comes into existence for some individuals under conditions of stress, when necessary predispositions arise. Thus, a setting which serves dramatic functions for one inmate, may remain "just another assignment" to another. In fact, what is ameliorative for one, may increase to a critical level another's stressful state.

Given the heterogeneity of the population in prison, one might also expect an impossibly complex matrix of needs and "matched" and "unmatched" subenvironments. However, even the larger society responds within narrow limits to discrepant needs and expectations and skews them directionally. Although a difference is evident in the choice between a split-level in Levittown or a Second Avenue condominium, and the inmate's choice between the metal shop and the outside gang, the choice in both cases is based on gross differences in needs and expectations. Particular environmental priorities override others, and given a restricted set of options with which to try to meet them, a finite set of transactions seem

to stand out. It becomes possible to look for patterns of niche-searching, and for characteristics of settings that inmates perceive as ameliorative.

FOOTNOTES

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14. George Stern, People in Context: Measuring Person Environment Congruence in Education and Industry (New York: John Wiley, 1970), p. 8.
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17. Richard Wolf, "The Measurement of Environments," in Issues in Social Ecology, pp. 508-518, at p. 509.

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20. William Ittelson, Harold Proshansky, Leanne Rivlin and Gary Winkel, An Introduction to Environmental Psychology (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974), pp. 93-98.

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Chapter 5: Method of Analysis

Theory and Methodology; Some Working Assumptions

Transactional perspectives maintain a holistic, relational and process orientation to action that is at once provocatively integral and deceptively simple. The perspective assumes that behavior is a process of transactions between active environments and similarly active men with causation mutual, but as a result exceedingly difficult to retrieve or decipher. Taking transactional theory seriously (as distinct from research in which variables of people and environments are described independently of one another) requires a primary concern with the relationships between men and settings. With their description being of essential concern, the antecedents themselves are derived.

Such perspectives would seem to imply a rejection of conventional analytic procedures in which man's actions are distilled into causes, and causes partitioned into portions caused by "traits" or "situations." This emphasis seemingly divorces transactionalism from conventional research paradigms. However, it is evident that, without a specification of separate sets of variables defining persons and environments, one cannot begin to approximate or describe the relationships themselves, much less their determinants. Most students of human behavior are understandably unwilling to reject the existence of separate organisms and separate environments.¹ With everything reduced to action, one might argue there is no one to act. Social and

environmental psychologists have in the main found that, while simplifying reality, the independent conception and analysis of man-environment features may be necessary for research purposes.²

What remains is that the study of behavior using a transactional perspective attempts to embrace the reciprocity of man-in-setting by making the primary object of concern the relationships and processes that describe the transactions themselves, without ignoring internal or external determinants of behavior. One can, once having described a phenomenon in relational terms, consider it in terms of the interaction between specifiable and measurable internal and external determinants. To fulfill this primary purpose, we shall be concerned with the process of congruence, and with describing and categorizing portraits of prisoner reality worlds that refine the range of congruence. In the portraits of congruence and incongruence that we elicit, we shall, where possible, search for antecedant personal history and institutional history variables that are related to types of congruence.

The Phenomenological Approach

We assume that the world of the prisoner can be understood, as well as described, only as experienced.³ We assume that the prisoner, who gives meaning to his setting, and indeed defines it through his interaction with it, is the best informant concerning it. We assume that the best way to understand that personal meaning is to ask the one who imbues it with meaning. Precategorization of settings along various externally definable

dimensions is ruled out in favor of a picture of the environment as perceived by those living in it. Using this approach, we wish to study how the prisoner himself characterizes his world, and define our transactional constructs (our environmental concerns, and environmental-person transactions) in terms of his own perceptions.

We do become, however, in permitting the reality to emerge from prisoners' subjective portraits, enmeshed in problems of corresponding realities. However, there are, we suspect, both personal and environmental characteristics that may be related to particular problems in prison and to commonly recognized sets of feasible and optimal solutions. People in prison share certain needs because of shared humanity. Environments are perceived in common ways because of their commonly recognized restrictions on actions. People who remain in the same physical and social environment over time may be expected to be subject to similar conditions and to share beliefs about the significance or insignificance of things, events, occurrences. Use, commerce, feedback, familiarity tend to imbue situations and things with continuity and consistency. Worlds are both personal and consensual. We know from Stern and others that there is considerable consistency in men's phenomenological world and that relatively healthy, (non-primitive, non-pathological) humans show considerable consensus in the way they perceive situations.⁴ We are rescued from a phenomenology of the idiosyncratic by going from the things themselves to the consensually validated things themselves.

Also, noting the postulate of I.W. Thomas that if the consequences of a percept are real, then the percept is real, any disparity between the perceived reality and the veridical one does not exist for the perceiver.⁵ There is typically both some degree of correspondence between a personal and objective reality, and when there is not, the personal reality is not error but information leading to an understanding of behavior. To be sure, the further we move from the modal or the average prisoner and his perceptions, to "stress transactions," the further we move from consensus into idiosyncrasy, and from shared meanings to personal ones. But idiosyncrasy may not be based on imagination only, but may be related to real concerns and real characteristics of participating individuals and setting characteristics.

The Setting:

Our research was conducted in five large institutions, and an array of subsettings within New York's prisons. The five prisons selected as targets for study included three of five major adult maximum security prisons for men in New York State, and both maximum security prisons for young adults. New York has a centralized system of prison administration, with no sharp divergence in patterns of staffing, or emphases upon security or treatment goals. This does not imply that there are not differences among our target prisons, but merely that the target prisons are representative of the universe of New York maximum security prisons for men. However, because of our selection of maximum security prisons, we have a disproportionate share of

serious offenders as well as of more security-oriented and environmentally inflexible physical plants, and our generalizations are limited by both factors. Our exclusion of women's prisons from our sampling frame similarly limits the applicability of our findings.

We undertook our research with the cooperation of the Department of Correctional Services. Our tasks were greatly facilitated by the involvement and interest of innumerable facility staff. Members of our research team were permitted full and unrestricted access to all subjects selected for interviewing, including those in various kinds of disciplinary status, or in mental observation. We were permitted access to settings that traditionally have been closed to researchers, such as protection companies and segregation units, and units for prisoners with emotional problems.

Mechanics of Inquiry

Our major purpose in this study was to locate and type "ameliorative prison subenvironments." However, our final units of analysis are not actually physical subsettings, but the self-described stress-reducing transactions between prisoners and those physical settings. Thus, our units (niches, mismatches, non-stressed) reflect what remain after distilling a large set of sampled subenvironments by selecting those that prisoners describe as special.

However, we did begin by focussing on physical settings. Our first task was to reduce the universe of prison settings to a manageable subset, hopefully selecting an enriched sample of possible ameliorative subenvironments. The development of a

sampling frame to look for prison environments that were perceived by prisoners as special in as yet undefined ways proved to be a difficult problem. While we were concerned with prisoner-perceived environments, we saw immediately that the number of shops, blocks, and special living assignments in a number of large maximum security prisons did not permit manageable exhaustive randomized sampling frames. There were simply too many possible kinds of subsettings, and we knew too little about the range of significant prison environments to focus more clearly ourselves. Accordingly, the unwieldy task of selecting a set of prison environments within which to sample for prisoner validated special settings was initially simplified by using staff interviews. (See pages 139-142). Staff with considerable experience in handling prisoner assignments were interviewed concerning special prison settings. Lists of such settings then provided the population from which we sampled. While such a method takes us immediately away from our avowed commitment to phenomenology, the sampling frame merely provided us with a convenient way to define a subset of environments, in no way characteristic of the universe, containing what we hoped was a refined residue of niches. While this early selection process does not correspond to perceived ameliorative subenvironments, our later coding process is concerned wholly with such settings, and resumes its commitment to phenomenology.

We wished, to examine not only prisoner defined ameliorative subenvironments but also those traditional institution-defined subenvironments such as protection companies, units for the elderly, and for the emotionally disturbed. It was our feeling

that a concern for the reduction of stress in prison, and the environmental correlates of stress-reduction, must benefit from study of those settings traditionally provided prisoners with special needs. While such settings are dramatically unrepresentative of the prison population generally, their uniqueness presented special attractions. We hoped to provide a complement to our study of informal prison ameliorative subenvironments with parallel study of the perceptions of prisoners in formally designated ameliorative environments. This study, termed the Formal Niche Study, and reported in Chapters 12-15, is aimed at exhaustive samples of prisoners in four small, special settings.

The two environmental studies, using different methodologies and sampling designs, are discussed separately below.

Informal Niche Study

The primary goal of this study was to locate and examine the transactions of stressed prisoners with stress-reducing environments. Additionally, we are not concerned with simply the degree of stress felt, but with the forms that stress may take. We, therefore, needed (1) a way to classify and categorize prisoner environmental concerns, (2) a way of classifying stress within such concerns, (3) a way of gauging stress reduction in significant environments so that environmental congruence could be explored. In order to examine environmental matches (niches), we needed first a method to classify environmental concerns.

A. Our Search for Concerns. Our first task was to obtain portraits of environmental concerns, or dimensionally differentiable requirements or preferences for setting attributes among prisoners. To locate stressed concerns, we first had to cover the wider range of concerns in prisons, reflecting both common and stressful transactions with prison life.

To realize this first task of mapping human concerns, we interviewed random samples of prisoners in the five prisons making up our universe. The samples were randomly drawn from prison housing rosters. Because housing blocks differ, in population characteristics and occasionally amenities, we stratified our sample by housing block, and weighted for the size of each block. Our interviews resulted in a sample of 251 usable interviews (see Table 5.1).

All interviews were tape recorded with the consent of the prisoner. Pledges of confidentiality were given and honored. Written consent was obtained prior to conducting interviews with prisoners in youth facilities. At adult institutions, verbal consent was obtained prior to interview. Such a procedure was followed for all samples and interviews during the course of the inquiry.

Interview Schedule

Our interview schedule is included in Appendix C, labelled Random Interview Schedule. The interviews started with descriptive questions such as: How long have you been here . . ? Have you been elsewhere in the system . . ? Because virtually all prisoners have served time in other institutions, have experienced pretrial confinement in a local facility, or time in

reception and classification prior to receipt at the current facility, such questions were used to provide a context for our interview and a convenient source for environmental comparisons. Following the questions related to history of incarceration, we asked questions such as, describe that prison to me . . ? As a place to do time . . ? Compared to this prison . . ?

We then explored with the prisoner his perceptions of the present prison; i.e., What is this place like as a place to do time . . ? How is it different from other places . . ? What is good about this . . ? Why . . ? What is bad about this place . . ? Why . . ? The interviews contained questions applying to environmental concerns . . . What kinds of things do you find here that help you . . ? What does this lack that would make it better for you . . ? What are its good points; advantages; bad points; disadvantages . . ?

Following our explorations of the prisoner's environmental concerns, we administered an adaptation of the Self Anchoring Scale, originated by Cantril and modified by Toch for use in prisons.⁶ The scale is described by Cantril as a way to tap the reality world of individuals:

"A person is asked to define in terms of his own assumptions, perceptions, goals and values the two extremes or anchoring points of the spectrum on which some scale measurement is desired - for example, he may be asked to define the top and bottom of the scale as the best and worse. The self defined scale is then used as a measuring instrument."⁷

In our study, we asked prisoners to provide their views of the best and worst possible prison environments, of requisites for such environments, and features that would be present or lacking.

The inmate then evaluated his present setting in light of its location on his self defined continuum. A measure of personal environment satisfaction/dissatisfaction was thus obtained, as well as additional information highlighting environmental concerns.

The self anchoring scale, as modified for use in prison, reads as follows:

A. Everyone who serves time in prisons prefers some types of institutions to others. When you think about what really matters to you when you have to serve time, what would the best possible prison be like, for you? In other words, if you have to be confined for a time, what would the institution have to look like - what would it have to offer, for you to be satisfied there? Take your time answering; such things aren't easy to put into words.

PERMISSIBLE PROBES: What would you need in an institution, to serve the easiest bit, or have the most profitable time? What is missing in some places you have been in (besides women) that could have made you happier?

OBLIGATORY QUOTE: Anything else?

B. Now, taking the other side of the picture, what are the things you hate most about some prisons? If you imagine the worst possible institution, as far as you are concerned, what would it be like? What qualities would it have? What would it look like, and feel like?

OBLIGATORY QUOTE: Anything else?

Here is a picture of a ladder. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder (POINTING) represents the best possible institution for you, and the bottom (POINTING) represents the worst possible institution for you.

C. Where on the ladder (MOVING FINGER RAPIDLY UP AND DOWN LADDER) would you place (NAME OF PRISON) as far as you personally are concerned?

D. Why wouldn't you place (NAME OF PRISON) lower than you have? In what ways is it better than the worst institutions?

E. Why wouldn't you place (NAME OF PRISON) higher than you have? In what ways is it worse than the best institutions?

F. One last question. When you first began to serve time, would you have ranked (NAME OF PRISON) higher or lower than you have now? (IF HIGHER OR LOWER) Where would you have ranked it? Why is that?

The interview also contained several questions probing for prison adjustment problems. We asked prisoners whether they had experienced any serious adjustment problems in prison, to describe them, as well as their resolution.

Prisoner satisfaction scores are trichotomized into Highs (10, 9, 8, 7), Mediums (6, 5, 4) and Lows (1, 2, 3). While the utility of the measure is limited by its personal relativity, the scores do provide a quantification of individual satisfaction.

A content analytic scheme for the clustering of concerns raised in prisoner interviews was devised by Toch.⁸ Seven environmental concerns were treated, yielding a profile of inmate preferences and aversions. The concerns, and their definitions, are:

- Privacy: Concern about social and physical over-stimulation; preference for isolation, peace and quiet, absence of environmental irritants such as noise and crowding.
- Safety: Concern about one's physical safety; preference for social and physical settings that provide protection and that minimize the chances of being attacked.
- Structure: Concern about environmental stability and predictability; preference for consistency, clear-cut rules, orderly and scheduled events and impingements.
- Support: Concern about reliable tangible assistance from significant others, and about services that facilitate self-advancement and self-improvement.
- Emotional Feedback: Concern about being loved, appreciated and cared for. A desire for intimate relationships that provide emotional sustenance and empathy.
- Activity: Concern about under-stimulation; a need for maximizing the opportunity to be occupied and to fill time; need for distraction.
- Freedom: Concern about circumscription of one's autonomy; need for minimal restriction and maximum opportunity to govern one's own conduct.

While Toch presents a composite portrait of differences in such concerns in Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival,⁹ a brief vignette containing interview content illustrative of each concern may help clarify the coding process, as well as the concerns themselves.

Privacy

Inmates who describe their coping strategy as one of social isolation, "of doing your own time," and who prefer to be left alone to the point of solitude, are coded as inmates with strong "privacy" concerns.

The specific irritants noted may be "inmates who talk too much," "Noisy" tiers, a proliferation of noxious stimuli, crowded, confusing rooms, tiers, and jobs; places populated by people in whom the private inmate has no interest and who he would much rather avoid than socialize with.

Aub R Q: You sit there trying to do legal work with some clown moaning and humming or singing in falsetto, it can drive you up a tree. And especially when it's unnecessary, it's just nonsense. I mean they ring the quiet down here, because they ring it. For the purpose of giving people a time to do these things . . . But now there are guys doing leatherwork pounding. And that can really get on your nerves.

* * * *

Activity

For these inmates, boredom is a special enemy. When faced with periods of inactivity, such as prolonged cell time with few

resources to keep active, or limited program time, or a job that is done for the day in fifteen minutes, the inmates experience a great deal of distress, tension, and frustration.

Cox S 8: They ain't got no programs on Saturdays and Sundays . . . Laying in that cell, you be thinking about the street, and there ain't nobody there to rap to until you come out of the cell. They're about the worst days I have in here. But during the week, the week goes this way to me. When it comes to Saturday and Sunday, it takes its time going by.

* * * *

Freedom

The most manifest concern is the degree to which staff, specifically correctional officers, circumscribe the institutional lives of the inmates. Such inmates see the world as continually restricting, limiting, watching, ordering, and attempting to emasculate those within it. Every rule and regulation becomes a confirmation of the persecutory nature of the environment.

Att R E: Somebody must have been telling a fib saying that the hacks doesn't harass you when they does. They don't even let them - they can't understand that even though an individual is doing time here is still considered a human being and he should be treated as one. All they know is that they have a job to do and if I catch you doing this you are going to be busted and tell it to the man - the adjustment committee. They don't know how to deal with people in general. They don't use their own conception on how to handle a person and their problems - just problems in general . . . let's take my job in the mess hall. If a guy is late the officer don't want to hear it. He says you have got a time that you are supposed to be here to do your job and if you ain't here we are going to lock you up . . . All they do is - I will get my pencil and

my paper and I will lock you up. You tell it to the adjustment committees.

* * * *

Feedback

Loss, abandonment, nurturance, and emotional support are common themes with feedback concerned prisoners. Physical separation from family and the inability of the prison to concern itself with feelings and emotion are content related to feedback.

Cox S 3: The supervisor is someone special. He's not like the rest of the people in here. He helps me out, not like the guards or the guy in the shop. He really cares about me, and helps me with my problems.

* * * *

Cox S 4: Like me, I would be thinking a lot about my son. When I get our of here I would say within three more years, he's four now, and he will be seven when I get out of here. Even though I do see him occasionally when they bring him in for a visit, or whatever, he might not know who I am or how to relate to me. When I get out of here, or I might not be able to relate to them. I think that is a big gap out of somebody's life . . . all I think about is going home.

* * * *

Support

Support means reliable, tangible assistance from family, staff and inmates. Most typically, the significant services are staff programs that facilitate self-advancement and self-improvement. Inmates who refer to "getting into a program that will help me on the streets," "learning something in here; improving my mind;" "having teachers who are interested in teaching," or who talk about "things that are not beneficial to me," demonstrate concern for this general dimension.

Cox R M: Well, like I said before, you know, it's a good educational facility. It has good trades. I like the trades I have. When I came in here I had a ninth grade education. I have my high school diploma now. I took sociology in college and have three college credits now. As far as that goes, that's about all that benefitted myself, you know, that was something that I didn't have when I was out there. I'm taking music up now. Before when I first came in we didn't have a music class. I spoke with the music instructor at the time and he told me that they would have to get new equipment and things like this. So now they have it set up. They have the whole room remodelled and everything and they have a session now. That's another achievement now. We got a JC organization here which is for the inmate population . . .

* * * *

Safety

Safety themes hinge on issues of vulnerability to dangers and fears. It includes a general feeling of tension resulting from perception and appraisal of threat.

Cox S 17: Well, a lot of white inmates here who aren't particularly strong have a lot of trouble with the black inmates and especially the white inmates that were giving me the problems. They were just constantly harassing me and everywhere - in my cell and the dining room and they would say names and be asking me to do them favors . . .

This guy next to me he wakes up and he has something on his mind and he has tension already and I have tension on my mind, I've been thinking about something. So little things like going to mess hall might cause something. So if you go to the mess hall and there might be a guy who has oatmeal and coffee and maybe he likes to have two spoons. Or sugar in his coffee and on his oatmeal and I give out three and that is an infraction . . . And this guy is giving me a hard time.

* * * *

Structure

Environments lacking structure are characterized as not having enough rules and guides for action. Prisoners feel they need to know what is expected of them by other people, what the routine is; they are concerned that too much variation is permitted.

GH N 13: This is a totally disorganized prison, the staff here. They're the most incompetent, they're incredibly incompetent, some of the people here, it's unbelievable. There seems to be no organization or any type of institution, with hundreds of people here, or thousands. They should have some type of program, and they don't have it. Just on a daily basis. Things change from day to day, nothing is ever together, nothing is ever standardized or established. Everything is just in a flux. You have the staff changes here - you have some permanent staff members, but many of the hacks that you come in contact with on a daily basis are constantly changing.

* * * *

All interviews were coded relative to dimensions surfaced in the content. The theme that seemed to dominate the interview was recorded as its primary theme, but any theme that saliently appeared was coded. The interviews were read and coded independently by two trained coders. Reliability, measured by agreement in primary themes, was .77. In case of discrepancies, each rater would document his reasons for choice of concerns by referring to interview content in a group situation. Reliability was measured by the ratio of coding agreements to the total number of coding decisions. Given the number of themes, and the non-mechanical nature of the coding decisions, such a coefficient is a respectable one.

The coded interviews then provided us with a set of environmental preferences expressed by prisoners. While the entire random sample does not feature prominently in this study, an identical process was followed with respect to the subenvironment sample described below. Using the interviews coded by concern, in addition to our questions concerning subsetting characteristics, we sought to explore settings of interest to prisoners with particular concerns. That is, we began to focus on the particular subsettings of interest to the freedom-concerned prisoner, the safety-concerned prisoner, etc.

B. Our Search for Subenvironments

Our next task was to locate a set of subenvironments in which we hoped to measure definable stress-reduction. The task involved both a refinement of the random sample discussed earlier, and the collection of a new subenvironment sample.

Since our concern was with stress, and not with settings that maximized comfort, privilege and happiness (although all of these ancillary goals may be realized), we needed to include stress in the criterion even in the initial selection process for subenvironments to sample.

A convenient and locatable set of subenvironments proved to be prisoner housing, work and program assignments. To operationalize stress, we asked facility staff (particularly correction officers on tiers, supervisory officers in program areas, correction counselors, classification team members) to list special housing, work or program areas that they thought could be ameliorative for people who face difficulties in routine assignments,

including prisoners with adjustment problems, who occasionally erupt, have been traumatized, or express needs for isolation. A roster of suggested settings within each of the five institutions we sampled was prepared.

It should be noted that staff differed greatly in knowledge, use and perception of subenvironments. Some staff listed protection company and other segregation units only as special resources; some staff could think of no setting as ameliorative. Others suggested Matteawan (at the time of the study, a hospital for the criminally insane), or envisioned a transfer to another facility as the only response if a prisoner didn't 'fit' the setting he was in. Others saw the prison as more differentiated, and provided longer lists of subenvironments. The subenvironment sample is a sample of staff-identified prisoner subsettings, not yet validated as ameliorative.

Many of the settings selected within each facility are solitary, or relatively solitary, settings. In each case, we interviewed the prisoner within the setting. When a setting contained more than one prisoner, we drew a small random sample from the particular setting and interviewed those prisoners.

To maximize the range of our inquiry, we were forced to sacrifice breadth within settings. As a result, we cannot compare disparate views of identical settings. We cannot compare inmate perceptions and individual differences in such perceptions controlling for setting. Our comparisons must group individuals in diverse settings and explore setting matches and setting mismatches and consistencies that evolve as similarities in perceived environmental characteristics across settings.

A total of 158 interviews make up the staff referred sub-environment sample (subenvironment sample). Table 5.1 provides a breakdown of the random and subenvironment samples by institution.

Our subenvironment interviews were identical with random interviews (including the use of the self anchoring scale), but several questions relative to subenvironments were added. The interview schedule is found in Appendix B. New questions included: What do you do here . . . (as a program)?, Where are you assigned (housed) . . . Is it different from other places you've been . . . ? How . . . ? What makes it better or worse . . . ? Would you like to stay there . . . ? Why . . . ? Why not . . . ?

Our interviews were limited to the prisoner's perception of his contemporary setting, and his satisfaction-dissatisfaction with it. We did not explore the antecedents of niche search or creation, the reasons for choice of setting, issues concerning problems that may have led to special housing or reassignment, or a description of physical features or activities within settings. Our questions were designed to establish the existence or non-existence of a helpful setting and the characteristics that provide amelioration. These concerns required interviews of between 35-45 minutes in length. To lengthen the interview was not a practically feasible task.

All staff-referred subenvironment interviews were coded in terms of dominant themes; self anchoring scale scores were recorded. Reliability of themes was determined by the same process as that described initially with respect to the random sample. Reliability for the overall sample (including both random and subenvironment samples) was .77.

Table 5.1

Random and Staff Referred Subenvironment
Samples, By Institution

| <u>Institution</u> | <u>Samples</u> | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|
| | <u>Random</u> | | | <u>Staff Referred Subenvironments</u> | | | <u>Total</u> | | |
| | <u>Inter- viewed N</u> | <u>Usable Interviews** N</u> | <u>%**</u> | <u>Inter- viewed N</u> | <u>Usable Interviews** N</u> | <u>%**</u> | <u>Inter- viewed N</u> | <u>Usable Interviews** N</u> | <u>%**</u> |
| Coxsackie | 43 | 39 | 91 | 50 | 45 | 90 | 93 | 84 | 92 |
| Elmira | 41 | 39 | 95 | 36 | 36 | 100 | 77 | 75 | 97 |
| Greenhaven | 63 | 61 | 97 | 24 | 24 | 100 | 87 | 85 | 97 |
| Attica | 60 | 53 | 88 | 34 | 31 | 91 | 94 | 84 | 92 |
| Auburn | <u>61</u> | <u>59</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>22</u> | <u>22</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>83</u> | <u>81</u> | <u>98</u> |
| | 268 | 251 | 94 | 166 | 158 | 95 | 434 | 409 | 94 |

*The base for the computation of percentages is the total number of prisoners interviewed within each facility (row).

**Tables 5.5 and 5.6 describe interview attrition.

While the concept of niche is a perceptual one and gains meaning and significance only through the perception and recognition of the niche resident, our niche detection process hinges at this point in the setting sensitivity of staff. Many of the staff we interviewed saw no opportunities for intervention or assistance in available subsettings; some saw no prisoner problems other than those attributed to personal traits of prisoners. Also, we know that some settings may exist for prisoners yet remain relatively invisible to staff. Particular supervisors, physical features of settings, roles permitted or mandated, staff-inmate ratios, or a host of variables may create milieus unknown to anyone except the occupants who may have created or perpetuated them, or who resonate to them.

Our perusal of subenvironment interviews in thematic coding indicated that there was indeed error and waste in staff referred subenvironment lists. Many prisoners chosen for interviews in staff referred subsettings defined the settings as irrelevant, unsatisfactory, and undifferentiated from others. Many prisoners occupied such settings for no discernible reason, or were placed there involuntarily, on the basis of information related to early test scores, or a vaguely expressed interest during screening in reception company.

In part, the problem has to do with having to rely on people living in one world to describe the world of another. Moos found in studies of prison social climate that there was "essentially no agreement between residents and staff in the characteristics of their program and its climate,"¹⁰ and no congruence between resident and staff views of what the ideal correctional program would consist of. Similarly, Eynon et al.

measured staff-inmate perceptions of juvenile correctional facilities and found no correspondence between the perceptions of inmates and staff.¹¹ Thus the staff referred subenvironment sample, in sampling from a wide range of settings in which only a few prisoners within each setting may perceive the setting to be a niche, and in which staff and inmate perceptions of the setting may be at odds, includes a large number of non-niche prisoners. However, we have, within the random sample, a subsample of interviews that will (1) augment and supplement the staff referred sample, and (2) provide a convenient comparison group for the staff referred sample. While the interview schedules used for the random sample and the staff referred sample are not equivalent (the random interview probed and explored subenvironment differences only when these were spontaneously mentioned by prisoners), a subset of random interviews is virtually identical to the staff referred interviews. When, as they often were, subenvironment differences were mentioned by prisoners during the random interview, they were invariably explored in detail by the interviewer. Thus, to increase the range of potential niches, as well as to provide a comparison group for the exploration of differences between the staff referred sample and a subset of the random sample, we have extracted a supplemental sample from the already collected random sample.

When all interviews in which subenvironments were mentioned are extracted from the random sample, we obtain a set of 154 interviews (61% of the random sample). These interviews, combined with the staff-referred subenvironment sample, yields a

total of 312 usable interviews from which to distill subenvironment matches, mismatches, and setting indifference. Table 5.2 provides a picture of the staff-referred subenvironment sample with the newly refined random sample (to be termed simply the comparison sample).

C. Our Search for Niches

Our most demanding task was to separate from the subenvironment sample (combined) our refined niche sample. The niche sample includes a subset of ameliorative transactions with subsettings, contrasted with a subset of mismatched stress transactions with subsettings, and a residual group in which setting differences appear irrelevant or insignificant, or related to issues other than stress.

A content analytic scheme for the detection of niches (environmental matches) and mismatches (settings in which incongruence is noted) was devised. Given our assumptions, any physical setting may be a niche for one individual, and for another, a mismatch. Our analysis does not necessarily presuppose that a particular setting (foundry, hospital, state shop) is a comprehensive niche, but requires that it contain particular human transactions reflecting 'niches' for actors resonating to those characteristics. We hope, however, not only to describe individual transactions, but to make inferences from shared sets of transactions and to surface consistencies among various settings in which we find matches and mismatches.

Table 5.2

Comparison Sample and Staff Referred Subenvironment Sample, By Institution

| | <u>Comparison Sample</u> | | <u>Staff Referred Subenvironment Sample</u> | | <u>Combined Subenvironment Sample</u> | |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | <u>N</u> | <u>Percent of Total Sample</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Percent of Total Sample</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Percent of Total Sample</u> |
| Coxsackie | 22 | 14 | 45 | 28 | 67 | 21 |
| Elmira | 31 | 20 | 36 | 23 | 67 | 21 |
| Greenhaven | 32 | 21 | 24 | 15 | 56 | 19 |
| Attica | 33 | 21 | 31 | 20 | 64 | 20 |
| Auburn | <u>36</u> | <u>24</u> | <u>22</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>58</u> | <u>19</u> |
| | 154 | 100 | 158 | 100 | 312 | 100 |

To meet our criterion for niche transactions, we require that a prisoner (1) express, or have expressed, frustration and stress, (2) perceive subsetting differences as assisting in the amelioration of such stress. We require that prisoners have been stressed, because our concern in this dissertation is not with routine, manageable, easily endured problems with settings, but with stressful ones. This means that stress must be operationally transformed into concepts amenable to measurement.

Generally, stress is a condition in which a person perceives environmental demands to exceed his personal resources. Stress requires a judgment on the part of the prisoner that his transactions with the environment involve the possibility of harm or loss. His commitment to a goal, the stakes being held, are both relevant to stress. Stress can refer to damage that has already occurred, or to an anticipated or present threat. The type of threat can involve loss or danger to self-esteem, beliefs, career goals, physical safety. The fact that an environmental concern is present and coded, or even if frequently mentioned and dominant in the interview, does not imply by itself evidence of stress. If an expressed concern is central, and frustrated or blocked, stress can be present. Some concerns are more likely evokers of stress than others. A concern for safety is virtually synonymous with stress. Activity concerns may be less likely to be linked with stress. However, stress is coded independently of the concerns themselves. That is, we are not looking for particular heightened concerns, but for stress. This perception of stress (a recorded expression of such perception) is a necessary condition for our first criterion. The subenvironment resident must perceive

important needs as being blocked, frustrated, or threatened during his prison career. Interview content must relate to anger, anxiety, fear, or felt impotence, and personal resources marshalled to deal with threat must be perceived as relatively scarce, meaning that personal competence must be undermined or limited.

Our second criterion for niche selection reflects content related to the subsetting. The setting may be viewed (for match or "niche") as reducing negative affective states, or increasing competence and self confidence or assisting in satisfying prepotent concerns and reducing stress. Settings may be described uniquely as permitting the inmate to do things of assistance to coping or permitting avoidance of harm. Settings must be described as permitting mitigation or elimination of stimuli related to stressed concerns. This includes improvements in the prison world, and favorable changes in perspective toward doing time. (See Appendix A for coder instructions used in coding interviews.)

Niche = Stressed Concerns + Perceived Ameliorative Subsetting

Criteria Used to Code Interviews

1. Stressed concerns

Environmental stimuli that tax coping
 Affective expressions of anxiety, fear, tension, anger
 Challenged competence, or self assessed inability to easily mitigate or eliminate threat
 Environmental threat perceived as pervasive, chronic
 Relatively powerful agent of threat
 Present or future plans jeopardized
 Self described as non-modal, different, requiring special assistance
 A need to escape, remove self

2. Perceived Ameliorative Subsetting

Environmental choices made, or differences noted
 within subsetting
 Self assessed competence perceived as greater
 Relative contentment in setting expressed
 Negative affective states described reduced
 Expressed preference for characteristics of settings

We cannot be concerned in coding interviews with stress reduction in the absence of an ameliorative subenvironment, that is, through environmental changes unrelated to subenvironments. While such changes (a parole date, a furlough received, a package, a good visit, an imminent transfer) are important, and can be stress-reducing, they are not subenvironment related and are not a primary interest of this study.

Environmental mismatches refer to a subset of prisoners for whom transactions are incongruent. We are concerned here with the criterion of stress identical to that described earlier, and a contrasting criterion of "perceived non-ameliorative subsetting." The subenvironment may be described as irrelevant to stressed concerns, or as noxious to stressed concerns. Content relative to this category (see Appendix A for a more complete description) includes:

Perceived Non-Ameliorative Subsetting

Environmental stimuli in subsetting unrelated to
 personal concerns;
 Personal goals remain blocked;

Affective state unimproved or aggravated;
 Expressions of neutrality, distaste for setting, or
 expressions of satisfaction with setting, yet un-
 related to felt stress and coping;
 Presence of threat or prepotent concerns not reduced
 in setting.

Our third category of transactions consists of the remaining cases, the non-threatened prisoners or those for whom transactions consist of relatively benign reappraisals of their world. Within the third category are cases of prisoners who have not experienced stress, although subenvironment differences may be salient and related to concerns other than stress linked ones. Within this group are non-stressed prisoners for whom subenvironments are salient and described as reasonably good settings, permitting easy time or permitting personal growth; also within this category are non-stressed prisoners for whom subenvironments are salient yet noxious, or of little importance to doing time.

Following the advice of Schultz¹², we divided the task of content analysis into dichotomous decisions, with coding broken down into a sequence of judgements, in which the coder makes a choice between two alternatives. Such a process permits the coder to focus on one decision at a time, and after resolution of one issue, to go on to the next. The first criterion is stress-non-stress, at which point "niches" and "mismatched" are separate from "non-stressed." The second

Figure 1

Categories of Subsetting - Prison Transaction

| | <u>Stress</u> | <u>No Stress</u> |
|---|--|---|
| <u>Satisfaction with prison subsetting with respect to stressed concerns or non-stressed concerns</u> | <u>NICHE</u> Ameliorative subsetting; setting related to stress induced concerns; setting important. | <u>BENIGN</u> Good time, easy time job setting related to pragmatic concerns, to non-stressed concerns; political job, provides benefits; enhancing setting, provides growth, motivation, involvement. |
| <u>Dissatisfaction with or unimportance of prison subsetting, its irrelevance to major expressed concerns</u> | <u>MISMATCH</u> Setting unrelated to concerns; irrelevance of setting; relative unimportance of setting in face of problems or large scale prison or real world influences; setting OK, but unrelated to major concerns, or a relatively good setting but unimportant to self and not able to resolve problems. | <u>INDIFFERENCE</u> Irrelevance of setting or dissatisfaction with setting (non-stress). |

criterion is amelioration-non-amelioration, at which point the subset of stressed prisoners is divided into niches and mismatched prisoners and the same criterion used to divide the non-stressed into benign and irrelevant transactions (though the setting characteristics are related to satisfaction rather than to stress).

All interviews were coded independently by two coders. Coders were trained in the content analysis scheme and were pretested on portions of the interview content. The coding scheme was refined to resolve problems in understanding the categories and all interviews coded. A final reliability coefficient of .81 was obtained. Interviews in which coding differences arose were reread in conference and resolved. Less than 3% of interviews contained insufficient content, or resulted in irreconcilable differences, that made coding impossible. We found as well that the subenvironment sample fit the coding scheme as well as the staff referred subenvironment sample. We found no categories of prisoner subsetting transactions that argued for a different or alternative model to that first hypothesized.

We did, as expected given our sampling, find a great deal of judgmental generosity on the part of staff. The staff referred subenvironment sample resulted in 37.9% niches, but left almost two-thirds of that sample distributed among other than ameliorative transactions. On the other hand, the comparison group drawn from the random sample was less effective as a detector of ameliorative transactions, with niches making up just over 25% transactions. It appears then that the staff

referred subenvironment sample is a somewhat richer source of niches than is the comparison sample.

Table 5.3 lists the final distribution of the Niche sample, which we must explore to search for the components of congruence and incongruence.

D. Demographics

Demographic and criminal history data was collected from institutional and central office files for all subjects. Data on institutional careers (rates of visits, infractions, number and type of assignments and reassignments, psychiatric contacts) proved to be unavailable or unreliably recorded for most prisoners. Consequently, they are not included within the variables analyzed. Indices of stress are also seldom available, even incidents of self-injury are not reliably recorded, and less dramatic indices (requests for counseling, mental health contacts, sick calls) are even less frequently available.

Missing data in our case ranged from no missing data for one variable to 23% for another. Missing data for most variables ranged from 10 to 15% (see Appendix B). The average percentage of missing data is comparable with both samples, and for analytic purposes it will be assumed that missing data are randomly distributed in the samples.

The Limits of Our Design

Our main samples are non-probability samples in which the true population parameters are unknown. We do not have measures of the true universe of subsettings from which our subenvironment samples were derived. Since we have not systematically examined a random sample of prison environments and probed for

Table 5.3
Niche Sample

| <u>Category</u> | <u>Sample</u> | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| | <u>Comparison</u> | | <u>Staff Referred Subenvironment</u> | | <u>Total</u> | |
| | <u>N</u> | <u>%*</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>%*</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> |
| Niche | 59 | 25.3 | 58 | 37.9 | 97 | 31.6 |
| Mismatch | 73 | 47.4 | 46 | 30.1 | 119 | 38.8 |
| Benign | 25 | 16.2 | 34 | 22.2 | 59 | 19.2 |
| Irrelevant | <u>17</u> | <u>11.0</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>9.8</u> | <u>32</u> | <u>10.4</u> |
| | 154 | 100% | 153 | 100% | 307 | 100% |

*The base for the computation of the percentage is the total number of cases within each sample

setting characteristics within them, we cannot be sure that any differences surfacing in our samples are attributable to sampling (unknown numbers of niche or mismatched prisoners in the random sample not identified) or to true differences in populations. We will not therefore be able to estimate the relative prevalence of prisoner niches within prisons, or of mismatches, or the prevalence of stress or insularity within the general prison population.

Additionally, the staff referred subenvironment sample itself is a purposive sample. We expect within it a highly heterogeneous population. We know that people elect, or are placed in, settings for a number of reasons, only some of which may be related to stress. Ameliorative settings may be attractive to prisoners not in need of environmental support, but who translate environmentally ameliorative characteristics into characteristics that respond to non-stressed concerns and which provide relatively easy time. The whims of assignment and reassignment, the requirements of facility maintenance, problems with a work supervisor, success with a supervisor, may also affect a prisoner's classification and assignment.

Given the factors affecting prisoner placement, we do not expect to draw, within the subenvironment sample, a representative sample of ameliorative prison subenvironments from which to examine disproportionate numbers of stress-reducing transactions. We do expect, however, by pooling samples with subenvironment related information, to explore some transactions in which stress reduction appears to be an important relationship and to approximate the range and variety of transactions. We

will explore environmental congruence and incongruence as well as the relationships with subsettings surfacing among the non-stressed.

Our data is nominal (environmental concerns, man-setting transactions) and consequently non-parametric methods of analysis will be used throughout. Tabular analysis presented in Chapter 6 primarily features percentage comparisons.

The strategy of analysis to be followed in Chapter 6 will be first to compare the two subenvironment samples (staff-referred and comparison) to surface differences in environmental concerns, kinds of physical settings, and personal characteristics of residents to generate hypotheses about settings and prisoners that lead to staff designation of a setting as ameliorative. The second task, and the primary one, will be to explore characteristics of prisoners, environmental concerns, and settings within the combined subenvironment sample which lead to perception of a setting as stress reducing, or stressful, or insignificant. We shall examine categories of physical settings with which prisoners report generally high levels of satisfaction, and those that are linked with dissatisfaction. We shall examine the distribution of environmental concerns among our niche types, to surface concerns more likely to be linked to self assessed stress amelioration, or to dissatisfaction. Finally, we shall describe and type the kinds of interactions between physical settings and prisoner concerns that surface in interview content. In doing so, we hope to surface conditions which, to particular stressed environmental concerns, consistently or at least frequently, reflect stress amelioration.

We will not be able to parcel out variance due to people, settings, interaction. Such teasing out would require a specification of human variables of concern, as well as environmental variables of interest, over a period of time. Much of our accounting will be conjecture based upon reliably detected differences in niche perception. We expect that differences in environmental concerns, indices of satisfaction, and perceptions of setting may mesh. We hope, among our distillation of setting transactions, to find clusters of environments which differentially relate to particular environmental concerns.

Reliability

Reliability is generally defined as replicability with respect to observations, in this case the replicability of our taxonomy of environmental concerns, and our process of niche extraction. One meets some prerequisites of measurement replicability as Selltitz notes, by assuring that: ¹³

- (1) the categories of analysis used to classify content are explicitly defined;
- (2) the analyst is not free to seek and report what strikes him as interesting, but must classify everything of relevance in his sample;
- (3) some quantitative procedure is used in order to provide a measure of the importance and emphasis in the material and to permit comparisons with other material.

Reliability with respect to both thematic coding and niche detection was established in this way. Coding schemes were specific, and training arduous. Thematic analysis presented the most difficult coding task (no purely natural units

of information to detect) with no purely quantitative measures of content to fall back on (see Appendix A).

Validity Concerns

Validity is most often discussed as the extent to which measured variation in scores reflect real differences in individuals, or settings, or whatever one is measuring. Validity is sometimes judged by the extent to which some measure correlates with other known measures of the same phenomenon.

We do not have objective measures of setting benevolence, or of stress. While we do have a quantitative prisoner rating of satisfaction (anchor scale scores to correlate with our derived niche taxonomy), it serves as less than ideal validation; the measure is taken at the same time, in the same context, as the information related to environmental concerns and niches.

Our primary validity is the kind of validity Holsti notes ¹⁴ as most commonly relied upon, content validity or plausibility. We answer questions such as, Is the information gathered consistent?, can we explain it?, is it compatible with our theory? We seek an explicit rendering of a subset of transactions, and we shall examine the theoretical support for consistencies that emerge.

Campbell and Stanley have, however noted some problems in research particularly applicable to man-¹⁵ environmental studies such as ours:

- (1) When people are subjected to a number of treatments and variables, it is difficult to generalize to situations in which one or more of treatments is not present.

- (2) There are important interaction effects, with measured variation a function of subject characteristics, as well as setting characteristics.
- (3) The impingement of the large setting, the world outside the special treatment or subsetting of interest may have an unmeasurable effect.

II. The Formal Niche Study

Our concern for the study of stress in prison led us most directly to a set of formally defined ameliorative subsettings. We wished to understand settings made available for prisoners diagnosed as stressed beyond the point of permitting accommodation within the framework of informal ameliorative settings.

The formal niche study is an attempt to describe the characteristics of individuals within several defined subsettings, as well as their perceptions (positive and negative) of their settings.

Formal niches include several traditional and non-traditional ameliorative settings. These include protective settings, (one an orthodox protection company, one a special housing unit for "weak" prisoners, one a special living and program unit for prisoners with emotional problems) as well as a unit for the elderly and handicapped. There is overlap between the formal and informal niche samples, in type of setting, in that we have sampled from several of the formal niches within the informal niche study. We have sampled from C-2 company in our Cossackie random and subenvironment samples, and from various protection companies;

we have also sampled from prison invalid units (units roughly equivalent to the Elderly and Handicapped unit). The only truly unique formal niche with no rough equivalent within the other samples is the ACTEC Diagnostic and Treatment Unit, a unit to which we were directed as a convenient sample for prisoners who had experienced serious coping problems in several prisons.

Table 5.4 describes the samples drawn for this formal niche study. The samples for Attica Protection, Cossackie C-2, ACTEC Diagnostic and Treatment include all prisoners in each unit who agreed to be interviewed. A random sample (20% of population) was drawn from the Elderly and Handicapped Unit.

The interview schedule, including only those questions asked of respondents relevant to the Formal Niche Study, is found in Appendix D. For Attica Protection and Cossackie C-2, the setting relevant questions were a portion of a larger interview schedule which included questions related to other grant tasks. However, for all samples, a standard series of questions **was** asked concerning the setting itself. In the interviews, we were concerned with eliciting information concerning two main areas:

- (1) The reasons for placement or request for residence: Special problems or events resulting in placement, including objects of fear, diagnosed vulnerabilities, catalytic incidents, difficulties faced in other settings;
- (2) A portrait of the contemporary environment, including attributes of concern to the inmate, positive evaluations of setting, negative evaluations of setting ; the costs of life in the setting,

Table 5.4
Formal Niche Samples

| | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> * | <u>Population Size of Unit</u> |
|---|-----------|------------|------------------------------------|
| Attica Protection ¹ | 30 | 88 | 34 |
| ACTEC D&E ² | 25 | 83 | 30 |
| Coxsackie C-2 ³ | 34 | 89 | 38 |
| Elderly and Handicapped ⁴ | <u>29</u> | 24 | 120 |
| Total | 118 | | |

*Base for computation of percentage is the population size of the unit on the day interviews began in that unit.

1. Interviews performed during October through December, 1974
2. Interviews performed in July and August, 1975.
3. Interviews performed during January through March, 1975.
4. Interviews performed in July, 1975.

things lost or traded off.

We felt that by focussing on a subset of prisoners for whom prison stress has been severe or dramatic, and who are placed in settings recognized by actors in the system as being ameliorative, we could obtain portraits of unambiguous, stressed transactions with the larger prison world, as well as information concerning the efficacy of special prison settings in responding to the problems faced by these prisoners.

We do not violate our earlier defined concept of niche by applying it to formally defined subsettings, unless these settings are not perceived as ameliorative by their residents. And we shall see that most of the prisoners in such settings do perceive their environments as significantly threat-reducing. The formal niches were typically chosen by prisoners themselves (except for the Elderly and Handicapped unit, in which involuntary placement was common) and in each unit (again with the exception of the Elderly and Handicapped unit) continued placement is voluntary. Self-selection and voluntary continuation in a program is one index of satisfaction with it (at least relative to the alternatives available). For the Elderly and Handicapped Unit, we sought to validate its legitimacy as a true perceptual niche by including within the interview for that niche the "self anchoring scale" to elicit a quantitative measure of unit satisfaction.

We chose our samples from the formally defined programs available to the Department of Correctional Services during the period of our study.

The case portraits provided in the chapters making up the formal niche study will include a description of the setting

itself, the program, and the characteristics of the population. Finally, we shall present evidence concerning the efficacy of the environment for solving inmate problems.

In all of the formal niche settings in which interviews took place, we were able to observe daily inmate life. The interviews took place in offices, empty rooms, and occasionally in prisoner cells. Each interview required approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. As with our other interviews, the interviews were voluntary, and taperecorded with the consent of the prisoner. As opposed to our other interviews, these interviews were more focussed. In focussed interviews, as described by Merton, Fiske and Kendall,¹⁶ the purpose is to explore a given situation (the setting and its good and bad aspects) and its effect on those who have experienced it. In our case, this was done through open-ended questions, permitting the prisoner to include issues (setting-relevant) that were problematic to him.

Our results may not be generalizable beyond the settings of interest. However, many correctional systems contain environments similar to those we have studied, and prisoners are subject to similar environmental threats.

We will contrast the formal niche prisoners with appropriate subsamples of the random sample, by demographics, criminal and institutional history, to raise questions about the ingredients of vulnerability and prison competence. For example, we will compare the Attica Protection Sample with the Attica Random Sample, and the C-2 Unit with the Coxsackie Random Sample, etc. We shall also explore the special characteristics of the formal niche settings, and point out consistencies and differences among the description provided by prisoners living within them.

Our criteria for validation for these interviews, include: 17

- (1) honesty and credibility of our subjects.
(Our time spent in the units, our introductions stressing co-researcher status and emphasis of topics that were of special interest to the inmate, were means of encouraging respondents to view us with trust);
- (2) the plausibility of the information in terms of our own constructs and assumptions. (Our acquired knowledge of prison stresses, and our cumulating experience in prison life helped validate this);
- (3) internal consistency, or the tendency of people to be consistent in their statements, to make sense. (We shall see considerable consistency both within individual portraits of setting-effect, and in joint portraits of settings.)

This study as well as the informal niche study is primarily designed to raise hypotheses rather than to test them.

A Note on Interviewing

In interviewing, while developing techniques to increase reliability, one must accept the knowledge that contaminating influences exist, that all information is modified by cognitive processes that we do not control. We understand that the interview situation, like other face to face encounters,¹⁸ involves issues of role distance, degree of trust, clarity of understanding, cues that are offered and ignored. Cicourel notes that:

"both the respondent and the interviewer will invariably hold meanings in reserve; much remains unstated even though the interviewer may pursue a point explicitly . . . [an] interview remains interaction in which meanings remain problematic even though it is intended, with full knowledge on both sides, to clarify meaning, intentions, and possible courses of action..."¹⁷

In relying on retrospective-introspective skills, we expect that there will be difficulty in consistently obtaining equivalent frames of references from prisoners.

In interviewing in prison, some additional problems arise. Prisoners oftentimes did not know why they were summoned to see us. While the project was invariably explained to facility administrators, and an accompanying note was attached to call-out requests sent to the blocks themselves, prisoners often received garbled, incorrect, or no information about the purpose of the interview prior to appearing. Accordingly, we prepared our interviews with introductory remarks, dealing with suspicions as well as we could. We explained to the prisoner how he was selected for interview, who we were, the approximate length and general purpose of the interviews. We took pains to describe

our affiliation, and we spelled out the research goals with their possible implications for understanding and improving prison conditions. We took equal pains to disassociate ourselves from the prison administration, and from any current or future decisions to be made concerning the prisoner to be interviewed. Additionally, we stressed the voluntariness of the interviews, the anonymity to be afforded, and our reasons for requiring tape recording.

Several prisoners used the early portions of the interview as a sounding board for their political views. More frequently, prisoners were concerned with gauging the power we possessed, and they often described their cases, ongoing litigation, and the problems of the criminal justice system generally. Since these issues were of current and pressing interest to some prisoners, they were discussed prior to the interview.

Attrition itself may be a problem with interviewing in prison. Prisoners in New York State prisons are, surprisingly, sometimes difficult to locate. At Attica for instance, there are over 20 recurring reasons why an inmate may not be at his assigned location. Prisoners may be unavailable because of a competing call-out, because of illness or a parole hearing. Prisoners selected for interview may have been paroled on the day of the interview, or be out to court, or on a furlough, or on work release. Some prisoners may simply not be reached by call-out requests, or no escort may be available from a particular workplace. The realities of prison interviewing are revealed in tables 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7. Those tables de-

Table 5.5
Sources of Attrition
Random and Subenvironment Samples

| | Random | | Staff Referred Subenvironment | | Total | |
|---|--------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | N | (%)* | N | (%)* | N | % |
| Cases contacted for interview | 329 | (100) | 199 | (100) | 528 | (100) |
| Cases paroled, out to court, CR, or transferred, furlough, prior to interview | 8 | 2.4 | 6 | 3.0 | 14 | 2.7 |
| Cases unavailable because of callout keeplock, illness, parole hearing, other interview | 12 | 3.6 | 8 | 4.0 | 20 | 3.8 |
| Unlocatable, or otherwise unknown no show (callout does not reach, no escort service from work place, etc.) | 15 | 4.5 | 5 | 2.5 | 20 | 3.8 |
| Refused interview | 26 | 7.9 | 14 | 7.0 | 40 | 7.6 |
| Consented to and available for interview | 268 | 81.5 | 166 | 83.4 | 434 | 82.2 |
| Completed Interviews | 251 | (100) | 158 | (100) | 409 | (100) |
| Loss from interview contact group | 17 | 6.8 | 8 | 5.1 | 25 | 6.1 |

*The base for percentage figures in this column is the appropriate number of the cases contacted for interview.

Table 5.6
Reason for Loss from Interview Available Group
Random and Subenvironment Samples

| Reason | Sample | | | | Totals | |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| | Random | | Staff Referred Subenvironment | | | |
| | N | (%)** | N | (%)** | N | (%) |
| Equipment Failure | 5 | 2.0 | 3 | 1.9 | 8 | 2.0 |
| Inaudible | 4 | 1.6 | 2 | 1.3 | 6 | 1.5 |
| Psychological disturbance | 2 | .8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | .5 |
| Language barrier | 3 | 1.2 | 1 | .6 | 4 | 1.0 |
| Could not follow instructions | 2 | .8 | 1 | .6 | 3 | .7 |
| Distraught | 1 | .4 | 1 | .6 | 2 | .5 |
| | 17 | 6.8 | 8 | 5.5 | 25 | 6.1 |

**The base for percentage figures in this column is the appropriate number of consenting and available prisoners.

Table 5.7
Sources of Attrition
Formal Niche Sample

| Samples | Cases Contacted | | Interviewed | | Usable Interviews | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----|-------------|----|--------------------------------|----|
| | N | %* | N | %* | N | %* |
| Attica Protection | 34 (3 cases refused) | | 31 | 91 | 30 (1 interview lost) | 88 |
| ACTEC D&E | 30 (4 cases refused) | | 26 | 87 | 25 (1 interview inaudible) | 83 |
| Coxsackie C-2 | 38 (4 cases refused) | | 34 | 89 | 34 | 89 |
| Elderly & Handicapped | 36 (7 cases refused) | | 31 | 86 | 29 (2 interviews inaudible) | 80 |
| Total | 138 | | 122 | 88 | 118 | 85 |

*Base for computation of percentage is the appropriate total number of cases contacted.

scribe sample attrition for both Informal and Formal Niche Studies. As we can see, for the Informal Niche Study, and for both samples within it, attrition from cases contacted for interview approached 20% with an almost 8% rate of refusal from each sample. A caetera of other reasons make up the remaining 12% attrition. An additional 6% of interviews were lost after interview, for reasons of equipment failure or language barriers (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.7 provides sources of attrition for the Formal Niche Study. In this case, the small size of the units and interviewer freedom of movement within the unit permitted contact of the entire populations of Attica Protection, ACTEC Diagnostic and Evaluation Unit, Coxsackie C-2. Refusals accounted for nearly all attrition from these samples. Rates of refusal within the Formal Niche Study were remarkably consistent across settings, ranging from 10 to 15%. Only four interviews within the Formal Niche sample were lost after interview.

Memory places additional limits on data. Prior stress may have faded over time. Goffman describes this problem with reference to adaptation, noting that "normal appearances are what the individual has come with time and practice to learn that he can cope with easily. As his competencies mature, what he remembers of his surroundings will become decreasingly available to his conscious mind." ²⁰ Habituation may erase past stresses and substitute new ones. Threat amelioration may appear to be a facile task, as do examinations after successful completion. ²¹

Prisoners may vary in their candor with respect to threat.
 In prison, insularity and manliness is normative. ²² Some prisoners may be reluctant to discuss or 'confess to' coping difficulties. They may prefer to emphasize personal harassment; 'hatred' rather than 'fear'.

Finally, while men under stress themselves must become "close students of everyday life," it is clear that some men are able to describe their impressions better than others. Some men not only have greater experience with 'good' and 'bad' prisons and hence see them in more complex and differential ways, but they can translate their knowledge better into felt concerns and needs, give examples, amplify. Flaubert makes this point, noting that even when men wish to be accurate, they may not succeed:

Since no one can ever express the exact measure of his needs, his conceptions of his sorrows, and human speech is like a cracked pot on which we beat out rhythms for bears to dance to when we are striving to make music that will wring tears from the stars.²³

Many of these problems cannot be totally resolved. Beyond them, the validity of our information depended to some extent upon our ability to understand what we were told, in our respondents' terms, as described with their own language.

Footnotes

1. Lawrence Pervin and Michael Lewis, "Overview of the Internal-External Issue," in Perspectives in Interactional Psychology, ed. by Lawrence Pervin and Michael Lewis (New York: Plenum, 1978), pp. 1-22. This chapter contains an excellent discussion of the internal-external issue in psychology, the tendency to emphasize characteristics that may be characterized as organism and those that are described as setting, in explaining behavior.
2. Ibid.
3. For a review of theory and research in the area of environmental psychology which builds in part upon this assumption, see Daniel Stokols, "Origins and Directions of Environment-Behavioral Research," in Perspectives on Environment and Behavior: Theory, Research, and Applications, ed. by Daniel Stokols (New York: Plenum, 1977), pp. 5-36.
4. George Stern, "B=f(P,E)," in Issues in Social Ecology: Human Milieus, ed. by Rudolf Moos and Paul Insel (Palo Alto, Calif.: National Press, 1974), pp. 559-568, at p. 561.
5. William I. Thomas, Social Behavior and Personality: Contributions of W.I. Thomas to Theory and Social Research, ed. by Edmund Volkart (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1951).
6. Hans Toch, Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp. 10-13; Hadley Cantril, The Pattern of Human Concerns (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1965).
7. Cantril, p. 22. Also see F.P. Kilpatrick and Hadley Cantril, "Self-Anchoring Scaling, A Measure of Individual's Unique Reality Worlds," Journal of Individual Psychology 16 (1960): 158-173.
8. Toch, Living in Prison, pp. 16-17.
9. Ibid.
10. Rudolf Moos, Evaluating Correctional and Community Settings (New York: John Wiley, 1975), see particularly Chapter Nine, "Congruence and Incongruence in Correctional Environments," pp. 207-230.
11. Thomas Eynon, Harry Allen and Walter Reckless, "Measuring Impact of Juvenile Correctional Institutions by Perceptions of Inmates and Staff," Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 8 (1971): 93-107.
12. William Schutz, "On Categorizing Qualitative Data in Content Analysis," Public Opinion Quarterly 22 (1958): 503-515.

13. Clair Selltitz, Marie Johoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart Cook, Research Methods in Social Relations (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1959), pp. 166-186.
14. Ole Holsti, Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 143.
15. Donald Campbell and Julian Stanley, Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963).
16. Robert Merton, Marjorie Fiske, and Patricia Kendall, The Focused Interview (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1956).
17. Holsti, p. 142-143.
18. Erving Goffman, Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order (New York: Basic Books, 1971).
19. Aaron Cicourel, Method and Measurement in Sociology (New York: The Free Press, 1964), pp. 99-100.
20. Goffman, p. 259.
21. David Mechanic, Students Under Stress: A Study in the Social Psychology of Adaptation (New York: The Free Press, 1962).
22. See Robert Johnson, Culture and Crisis in Confinement (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1976) for a description of "the manly man" norm regarding proper prison deportation, pp. 3-7.
23. W.J. Harvey quotes from Gustave Flaubert in his Introduction to George Eliot's Middlemarch (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin, 1965), p. 25.

Chapter 6: Data Analysis

Introduction

This chapter provides (1) a profile of the inhabitants of the staff referred subenvironment sample and a comparison group of prisoners in non-special prison subenvironments (comparison sample) by examining aggregate population characteristics, the distribution of environmental concerns within each sample, as well as the relative distribution of grouped setting categories; (2) an analysis and discussion of environmental concerns expressed by prisoners through comparisons of personal, criminal, and institutional history characteristics of prisoners associated with the expression of particular concerns; and (3) a final analysis of the derived taxonomy of man-setting transactions.

The purpose of this chapter is to first determine whether differences are apparent between the two separately collected samples and whether such differences systematically relate to differences in people, settings, or expressed concerns. We will be concerned next with examining the distribution of environmental concerns within the two samples, to determine whether charted differences in types of concerns expressed in prison are reflective of differences in prisoners. Last, we will analyze the niche taxonomy by comparing the distribution of environmental concerns and the distribution of grouped setting categories for each category of the niche taxonomy to determine whether certain environmental concerns, or particular kinds of settings are related to environmental stress, or to perceived stress amelioration.

Special and Non-Special Settings: Person Differences

Both as a method of increasing the accuracy of niche detection and as a possible method by itself to surface differences in the transactions prisoners have with settings, we hypothesized that staff may be able to point out and refer to us for disproportionate sampling, a plausibly accurate set of ameliorative subenvironments. We hoped that these may differ from 'non-special' assignments and settings. Great variability in staff recognition and designation of environments made us question the efficacy of this procedure. However, our impressions notwithstanding, our first concern was to test differences between our two samples. Our first analytic task was to compare the staff referred subenvironment sample with the comparison sample distilled from the random sample by personal history, criminal history and recorded institutional history variables. The tables which display the comparisons between the two samples are found in Tables 6.1 to 6.3. Of the 20 background variables used, age, history of alcohol abuse, history of prior arrests, prior jail history, and lengths of minimum and maximum terms of sentence, resulted in differences between the two samples significant at or below the .05 level. Tables 6.1 to 6.3 reveal that prisoners in staff referred subenvironments are typically younger, less likely to have a history of alcohol abuse, less likely to have a prior recorded arrest or to have served a jail sentence before, and are serving considerably shorter sentences than are prisoners in the comparison sample.

It is apparent that the differences are consistent in direction and plausibly related to age. While less than 15% of comparison prisoners are under 21 years of age, over 30% of staff referred subenvironment prisoners are under 21. This age disparity could, in part, account for the other differences between the two samples, in that the older the prisoner the more likely he may be to have a recorded history of alcohol abuse, or a prior arrest and jail record. These variables may in turn account for sentencing differences, the more frequent history of arrests translating into longer sentences.

An important sampling problem may in turn be significant in explaining age differences. We saw in Chapter 5 that in the proportions of interviewees drawn from different facilities, clear differences are evident which are related to age. We see for instance in Table 5.2 that over half (51%) of staff referred subenvironment samples were drawn from youth facilities (Coxsackie and Elmira) while less than one third (31%) of the random sample (and a proportionate 34% of the comparison sample) was gathered from the two youth facilities. The remainder was gathered within the three adult facilities (Auburn, Attica, Green Haven). Such a finding lends credence to a possible age effect accounting for sample differences across the various variables.

In order to determine whether the findings are independent of possible systematic sampling bias, the samples were divided into youth and adult facility subsamples and the comparisons repeated. Tables 6.4 to 6.9 report the findings of these comparisons. We find that when a control is introduced for type

Table 6.1

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Comparison of the Subenvironment Sample With The
Comparison Sample, By Personal History Variables

| Variable | Sample | | | Chi-Square |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---|
| | Comparison (N=138) % | Subenvironment (N=149) % | Total N | |
| Ethnicity | | | | |
| Black | 53.6 | 49.7 | 148 | $\chi^2 = .45$ not signif. at .05 level |
| White | 37.7 | 40.9 | 113 | |
| Puerto Rican | 8.7 | 9.4 | 26 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 287 | |
| Age | | | | |
| | Comparison (N=154) % | Subenvironment (N=158) % | Total N | |
| Under 21 | 14.9 | 31.3 | 72 | $\chi^2 = 11.0$ Significant at .001 level $\phi = .19$ |
| 21 or Over | 85.1 | 68.7 | 240 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 312 | |
| Marital Status | | | | |
| | Comparison (N=141) % | Subenvironment (N=149) % | Total N | |
| Married | 32.6 | 22.1 | 79 | $\chi^2 = 3.5$ not signif. at .05 level |
| Not Married | 67.4 | 77.9 | 211 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 290 | |

Table 6.1 (Cont'd)

178

Comparison of the Subenvironment Sample With The
Comparison Sample, By Personal History Variables

| Variable | Sample | | | Chi-Square |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---|
| | Comparison (N=137) % | Subenvironment (N=142) % | Total N | |
| Education | | | | |
| Less than high school | 86.9 | 81.7 | 234 | $\chi^2 = 1.0$ not signif. at .05 level |
| High School or greater | 13.1 | 18.3 | 45 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 279 | |
| Size of Home Town | | | | |
| | Comparison (N=129) % | Subenvironment (N=136) % | Total N | |
| Large City | 77.5 | 77.9 | 59 | $\chi^2 = .03$ not signif. at .05 level |
| Other than Large City | 22.5 | 22.0 | 206 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 265 | |
| History of Mental Commitment | | | | |
| | Comparison (N=141) % | Subenvironment (N=148) % | Total N | |
| No | 86.5 | 91.5 | 257 | $\chi^2 = 1.2$ not signif. at .05 level |
| Yes | 13.5 | 8.5 | 32 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 289 | |

Table 6.1 (Cont'd)

179

Comparison of the Subenvironment Sample With The
Comparison Sample, By Personal History Variables

| Variable | Sample | | Total N | Chi-Square |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---|
| | Comparison (N=130) % | Subenvironment (N=143) % | | |
| History of Alcohol Abuse | | | | |
| Yes | 19.2 | 9.8 | 39 | $\chi^2 = 4.2$ significant at .05 level $\phi = .13$ |
| No | 80.8 | 90.2 | 234 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 273 | |
| History of Drug Abuse | | | | |
| | Comparison (N=139) % | Subenvironment (N=148) % | Total N | |
| Yes | 36.7 | 41.9 | 113 | $\chi^2 = .61$ not signif. at .05 level |
| No | 63.3 | 58.1 | 174 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 287 | |

Table 6.2

180

Comparison of the Subenvironment Sample With The
Comparison Sample, By Criminal History Variables

| Variable | Sample | | Total N | Chi-Square |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---|
| | Comparison (N=139) % | Subenvironment (N=147) % | | |
| Use of Weapon (Instant Offense) | | | | |
| Yes | 66.2 | 60.5 | 181 | $\chi^2 = .75$ not signif. |
| No | 33.8 | 39.5 | 105 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 286 | |
| History of Violent Offense | | | | |
| | Comparison (N=141) % | Subenvironment (N=150) % | Total N | |
| History | 34.8 | 26.7 | 89 | $\chi^2 = 1.9$ not signif. at .05 level |
| No History | 65.2 | 73.3 | 202 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 291 | |
| History of Property Offenses | | | | |
| | Comparison (N=141) % | Subenvironment (N=150) % | Total N | |
| History | 76.6 | 71.3 | 76 | $\chi^2 = .8$ not signif. at .05 level |
| No History | 23.4 | 28.7 | 215 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 291 | |

Table 6.2 (Cont'd)

181

Comparison of the Subenvironment Sample With The
Comparison Sample, By Criminal History Variables

| Variable | Sample | | Total N | Chi-Square |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|---|
| | Comparison (N=141) % | Subenvironment (N= 150) % | | |
| History of Drug Offenses | | | | |
| History | 34.0 | 30.0 | 93 | $\chi^2 = .36$ not signif. at .05 level |
| No History | 66.0 | 70.0 | 198 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 291 | |
| History of Sex Offenses | | | | |
| History | 12.8 | 6.7 | 28 | $\chi^2 = 2.5$ not signif. at .05 level |
| No History | 87.2 | 93.3 | 263 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 291 | |
| Arrest History | | | | |
| History | 94.3 | 84.7 | 260 | $\chi^2 = 6.1$ significant at .05 level $\phi = .16$ |
| No History | 5.7 | 15.3 | 31 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 291 | |

Table 6.3

182

Comparison of the Subenvironment Sample With The
Comparison Sample, By Institutional History Variables

| Variable | Sample | | Total N | Chi-Square |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|---|
| | Comparison (N=141) % | Subenvironment (N= 150) % | | |
| Prior Prison Terms Served | | | | |
| History | 28.4 | 34.0 | 91 | $\chi^2 = .8$ not signif. at .05 level |
| No History | 71.6 | 66.0 | 200 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 291 | |
| Prior Jail Terms Served | | | | |
| History | 39.7 | 22.7 | 90 | $\chi^2 = 9.1$ significant at .01 level $\phi = .18$ |
| No History | 60.3 | 77.3 | 201 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 291 | |
| Minimum Sentence Length | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 78.6 | 88.0 | 242 | $\chi^2 = 4.0$ significant at .05 level $\phi = .13$ |
| 5 Years or More | 21.4 | 12.0 | 48 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 290 | |

Comparison of the Subenvironment Sample With The Comparison Sample, By Institutional History Variables

| Variable | Sample | | Total N | Chi-Square |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|--|
| | Comparison (N=144) % | Subenvironment (N= 150) % | | |
| Maximum Sentence Length | | | | |
| Less than 10 years | 59.0 | 75.3 | 198 | $\chi^2 = 8.2$ significant at .01 level phi = .18 |
| 10 years or more | 41.0 | 24.7 | 96 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 294 | |
| Time Served on Sentence to Date | | | | |
| | Comparison (N= 141) % | Subenvironment (N= 150) % | Total N | |
| Less than 2 years | 67.4 | 78.0 | 212 | $\chi^2 = 3.6$ not signif. at .05 level |
| 2 Years or More | 32.6 | 22.0 | 79 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 291 | |
| Time Remaining to Conditional Re-lease Date | | | | |
| | Comparison (N= 130) % | Subenvironment (N= 128) % | Total N | |
| Less than 2 years | 46.9 | 57.0 | 134 | $\chi^2 = 2.2$ not signif. at .05 level |
| 2 Years or More | 53.1 | 43.0 | 124 | |
| | 100% | 100% | 258 | |

CONTINUED

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of facility most of the original differences disappear. Additionally, the new analyses resulted in no additional significant differences between the two samples. We see in Table 6.4 that when controlling for type of facility, age still discriminates the two samples for youth facilities. We find that, while the strength of the relationship has been considerably reduced, prisoners in the subenvironment sample in youth facilities are significantly younger than their counterparts in non-special settings in youth facilities (60.5% of staff referred prisoners are under twenty-one compared with 41.5% of comparison prisoners). With respect to adult facilities, an additional dichotomy of the age variable was required. Since virtually all prisoners in adult facilities are over 21 years in age, the sample comparison was made for prisoners 30 years or older and prisoners under 30 years. The distribution of prisoners within the two categories is virtually identical (see Table 6.5). Except for the variable alcohol abuse, all other significant differences originally noted between the two samples proved not to be independent of type of facility (and by extension, independent of age). We find that, controlling for youth or adult facility, prisoners in staff referred subenvironments are only slightly more likely to have shorter sentences, and slightly less likely to have served prior jail terms. While the direction of the relationships remains (and remains consistent across types of facilities), the relationships no longer reach significance. While significant difference remains for alcohol abuse in youth facilities only, the small N's involved in that table make such a finding less useful.

The data presented in Tables 6.1 to 6.9 surface few differences between the two samples in the characteristics of setting inhabitants when controlling for type of facility. We would expect, given the prison literature with respect to prison and coping (Johnson, Gibbs, Carroll, Bartollas),¹ that staff referred subenvironment prisoners may be younger, uninitiated, less violent, more often white, and we find that the prisoners in staff referred subenvironments are (within youth facilities only) significantly younger than prisoners in non-special settings. This finding may be consistent with what we know about the special and severe stresses of prisoners in youth facilities (Bartollas et al).² Immaturity and youth and differences in development and maturity may create special problems for the young among the young. Such differences may be most apparent in late adolescence and provide more obvious a flag for staff intervention.

While we find that variables suggestive of relative competence in prison (prior institutional experience, time served to date, sentence length, time to release date) do not reflect different frequency distributions between the two samples, there are slight but consistent differences. These differences suggest that staff referred subenvironments contain a relatively less violent population, with less criminal and confinement experience.

In general, however, the two samples do not surface significantly different frequency distributions on the variables examined.

Table 6.4

Comparison of the Comparison Sample With The Subenvironment
Sample Controlling for Type of Facility, By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample and Facility | | | | | |
|------------|---|---------------------------------|------------|--|---------------------------------|------------|
| | Youth Facilities | | | Adult Facilities | | |
| | Comparison (N= 53) % | Subenvironment (N= 81) % | Total N | Comparison (N= 101) % | Subenvironment (N= 77) % | Total N |
| Age | | | | | | |
| Under 21 | 41.5 | 60.5 | 71 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 1 |
| 21 or Over | 58.5 | 39.5 | 63 | 99.0 | 100.0 | 177 |
| | 100% | 100% | 134 | 100% | 100% | 178 |
| | $\chi^2 = 4.0$ significant at the .05 level phi = .18 | | | $\chi^2 = .01$ not significant at the .05 level | | |

¹Youth facilities include Cossackie and Elmira Correctional Facilities;
 Adult facilities include Attica, Auburn, and Greenhaven Correctional Facilities.

Table 6.5

Comparison of the Comparison Sample with the Subenvironment
Sample for Adult Facilities Only By Age Recorded

| <u>Variable</u> | <u>Adult Facilities Only</u> | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| | <u>Comparison (N=101) %</u> | <u>Subenvironment (N=77) %</u> | <u>Total N</u> |
| Age | | | |
| Over 30 Years | 58.4 | 57.4 | 103 |
| 30 Years or Under | <u>41.6</u> | <u>42.6</u> | <u>75</u> |
| | 100% | 100% | 178 |

2
 $\chi^2 = .00$
 not significant at the .05 level
 $\phi = .01$

Table 6.6

Comparison of the Comparison Sample With The Subenvironment
Sample Controlling for Type of Facility, By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample and Facility | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------|---|---------------------------------|------------|
| | Youth Facilities | | | Adult Facilities | | |
| | Comparison (N= 49) % | Subenvironment (N= 78) % | Total N | Comparison (N= 81) % | Subenvironment (N= 61) % | Total N |
| Alcohol Abuse History | | | | | | |
| Yes | 26.4 | 4.9 | 17 | 14.8 | 16.4 | 22 |
| No | 73.6 | 95.1 | 110 | 85.2 | 83.6 | 120 |
| | 100% ² | 100% | 127 | 100% ² | 100% | 142 |
| | X = 10.9 significant at the .001 level phi = .31 | | | X = .0005 not significant at the .05 level | | |

¹Youth facilities include Coxsackie and Elmira Correctional Facilities;
 Adult facilities include Attica, Auburn, and Greenhaven Correctional Facilities.

Table 6.7

Comparison of the Comparison Sample With The Subenvironment
 Sample Controlling for Type of Facility, By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample and Facility | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|------------|--|---------------------------------|------------|
| | Youth Facilities | | | Adult Facilities | | |
| | Comparison (N= 52) % | Subenvironment (N= 77) % | Total N | Comparison (N= 92) % | Subenvironment (N= 68) % | Total N |
| Maximum Sentence Length | | | | | | |
| Less than 10 years | 84.6 | 91.5 | 114 | 44.6 | 55.9 | 79 |
| More than 10 years | 15.4 | 8.5 | 15 | 55.4 | 44.1 | 81 |
| | 100% | 100% | 129 | 100% | 100% | 160 |
| | $\chi^2 = .9$ not significant at the .05 level | | | $\chi^2 = 1.6$ not significant at the .05 level | | |

¹Youth facilities include Cossackie and Elmira Correctional Facilities;
 Adult facilities include Attica, Auburn, and Greenhaven Correctional Facilities.

Table 6.8

Comparison of the Comparison Sample With The Subenvironment
Sample Controlling for Type of Facility, By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample and Facility | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------|--|---------------------------------|------------|
| | Youth Facilities | | | Adult Facilities | | |
| | Comparison (N= 52) % | Subenvironment (N= 77) % | Total N | Comparison (N= 88) % | Subenvironment (N= 68) % | Total N |
| Minimum Sentence Length | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 84.6 | 91.5 | 114 | 67.0 | 73.5 | 109 |
| More than 5 years | 15.4 | 8.5 | 15 | 33.0 | 26.5 | 47 |
| | 100% | 100% | 129 | 100% | 100% | 156 |
| | $\chi^2 = .89$ not significant at the .05 level | | | $\chi^2 = .49$ not significant at the .05 level | | |

¹Youth facilities include Coxsackie and Elmira Correctional Facilities;
 Adult facilities include Attica, Auburn, and Greenhaven Correctional Facilities.

Table 6.9

Comparison of the Comparison Sample With The Subenvironment
Sample Controlling for Type of Facility, By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample and Facility | | | | | |
|------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------|--|---------------------------------|------------|
| | Youth Facilities | | | Adult Facilities | | |
| | Comparison (N= 52) % | Subenvironment (N= 76) % | Total N | Comparison (N= 89) % | Subenvironment (N= 68) % | Total N |
| Jail Term Served | | | | | | |
| No Prior Jail | 71.2 | 84.1 | 101 | 53.9 | 69.1 | 95 |
| Prior Jail | 28.8 | 15.9 | 27 | 46.1 | 30.9 | 62 |
| | 100% | 100% | 128 | 100% | 100% | 157 |
| | $\chi^2 = 2.5$ not significant at the .05 level | | | $\chi^2 = 3.1$ not significant at the .05 level | | |

¹Youth facilities include Coxsackie and Elmira Correctional Facilities;
 Adult facilities include Attica, Auburn, and Greenhaven Correctional Facilities.

Special and Non-Special Settings: Setting Differences

Our comparisons of sample differences with respect to demographics, and criminal and institutional history variables reveal few differences among samples. But are differences in the settings themselves evident? Table 6.10 provides a comparison of the comparison sample and the staff referred subenvironment sample by grouped setting category. It must be noted that the setting categories are gross ones, and may conceal important differences within particular groupings. Although we may have been referred to a particular porter company by staff as representing a particularly kind of supportive setting, other porter companies may have been described as non-ameliorative. Similarly, such a category as "Special Housing" may include such diverse units as protective housing, disciplinary housing, mental observation units, and therapeutic units. The great heterogeneity in the settings designated as ameliorative, as well as the heterogeneity in non-special settings, and accompanying small N's, require gross classifications in which a large set of often disparate work, program and living assignments must be grouped into categories large enough to permit statistical comparison.

Nevertheless we see in Table 6.10 differences in the categories of settings designated as special by staff, compared to the distribution of settings among the comparison sample. In particular, the staff referred subenvironment sample has a substantial underrepresentation of school (academic) assignments compared to the comparison group (the proportion of comparison prisoners in school assignments is three times as great as that

Table 6.10

Comparison of the Comparison Sample with the Subenvironment Sample, By Work, Program and Special Living Assignment

| Work Work* Program or Special Living | Comparison (N = 154) | | Subenvironment (N = 166) | |
|--|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|
| | % | N | % | N |
| 1 Clerical | (9.6) | 15 | (12.6) | 21 |
| 2 Maintenance | (40.7) | 63 | (54.0) | 89 |
| 3 Vocational | (19.2) | 30 | (13.2) | 22 |
| 4 Academic | (12.6) | 19 | (4.2) | 7 |
| 5 Industry | (9.3) | 14 | (3.0) | 5 |
| 6 Special Housing | (8.6) | 13 | (13.0) | 22 |
| | (100%) | 154 | (100%) | 166 |

²
X² = 18.89
Significant at .01 level
for 5 df

*Some prisoners are involved in more than one assignment, in the comparison case we used most prominently mentioned one, with staff referred we used staff referred setting.

- ¹Clerical includes clerks, administration workers, messengers and runners, library workers, correspondence clerks; special assignments such as radio operator, censor, chaplain's assistants.
²Maintenance includes inside and outside maintenance, food service, porter assignments, garage workers, grounds crews, farm workers, storeroom workers, cell block workers, waiters, skilled and unskilled plumbers, painters, mechanics, welders, all health services.
³All vocational training programs.
⁴Academic, school, college, drama, music.
⁵Industrial production shops.
⁶Protective custody, invalid housing, hospital, idle or unemployed, disciplinary housing, unassigned, reception and orientation, mental health units, mental observation.

of the subenvironment sample). The subenvironment staff referred sample surfaces an underrepresentation of industry assignments, with 3% of the sample involved in industry compared with 9.3% of the comparison sample. Vocational assignments are similarly underrepresented among the special assignments (19.2% of comparison, compared with 13.2% of staff referred). We find an overrepresentation of staff referred subenvironment assignments among the following: clerical, maintenance, and not surprisingly, special housing assignments.

The data suggest that the two samples differ with respect to grouped setting categories. The staff referred subenvironment sample contains a disproportionate share of non-technical, non-training assignments. Additionally, vocational and educational assignments, settings that may be sought out by prisoners concerned with personal growth, involvement, and commitment, are rarely designated by staff as ameliorative for stressed prisoners. Industry assignments, places typically described by both staff and prisoners as crowded, noisy, large, and often dangerous, are similarly rarely designated as special. Clerical assignments, and maintenance assignments, settings which oftentimes prove less visible, more isolated work places receive more frequent designation by staff as ameliorative.

Special and Non-Special Settings: Environmental Concerns

Tables 6.11 and 6.12 compare the two samples by the typology of environmental concerns. Our purpose in this analysis is to surface and explore differences in environmental concerns that in turn may be illustrative of reasons for prisoner selection of or placement in ameliorative subenvironments. In general, Tables

Table 6.11
Comparison of the Comparison and
Subenvironment Samples by Environmental Concern
(Primary Concern Only)

| Environmental Concern | Sample | | | | | | Total N |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------|------|--------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| | Comparison (N = 151) | | | Subenvironment (N = 157) | | | |
| | N | % | Rank | N | % | Rank | |
| PRIVACY | 22 | (14.6) | (3) | 20 | (12.7) | (3) | 42 |
| SAFETY | 16 | (10.6) | (5) | 18 | (11.5) | (4) | 34 |
| STRUCTURE | 8 | (5.3) | (6) | 13 | (8.3) | (5 tie) | 21 |
| SUPPORT | 26 | (17.2) | (2) | 21 | (13.4) | (2) | 47 |
| FEEDBACK | 17 | (11.3) | (4) | 13 | (8.3) | (5 tie) | 30 |
| ACTIVITY | 6 | (4.0) | (7) | 11 | (7.0) | (6) | 17 |
| FREEDOM | 56 | (37.1) | (1) | 61 | (38.9) | (1) | 117 |
| | 151 | (100%) | | 157 | (100%) | | 308 |

$\chi^2 = 4.87$
not significant at .05 level
for 6 df

Table 6.12

Comparison of the Comparison and
the Subenvironment Sample by Environmental Concern
(All Concerns)

| Environmental Concern | Sample | | | | Total N |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|---------|
| | Comparison (N=151) | | Subenvironment (N=157) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | |
| PRIVACY | 65 | (42.9) | 71 | (45.3) | 136 |
| SAFETY | 61 | (40.3) | 57 | (36.3) | 118 |
| STRUCTURE | 37 | (24.7) | 43 | (27.4) | 80 |
| SUPPORT | 72 | (47.4) | 69 | (43.9) | 141 |
| FEEDBACK | 74 | (48.7) | 33 | (21.2) | 107 |
| ACTIVITY | 47 | (31.2) | 51 | (32.5) | 98 |
| FREEDOM | 95 | (63.0) | 117 | (74.5) | 212 |
| | 451* | | 441* | | 892 |

$\chi^2 = 17.3$
Significant at .01 level
for 6 df

*Total number of coded concerns exceeded the number of cases because a single prisoner may express several concerns.

6.11 and 6.12 surface few differences in the distribution of concerns among the two samples. The overall chi-square value for the difference between the two samples for primary concerns is not significant, and the ranking of concerns is closely similar among the two samples. While the overall chi-square for the sample comparisons using all concerns mentioned (including minor yet coded concerns) yields a significant value, it is apparent that the difference surfaces chiefly with respect to a single concern, Feedback. Almost half of comparison prisoners express some concern for Feedback while less than one quarter of the prisoners in the subenvironment sample express such a concern. We find that for each sample, the modal environmental concern is Freedom. Freedom themes are expressed by 63% of comparison prisoners, and 74.5% of staff referred prisoners. Freedom is expressed as a primary concern by 37% of comparison prisoners and 39% of staff referred prisoners. Safety, Privacy, and Support concerns share second prominence among concerns, followed by Structure and Activity concerns.

We would expect that staff referred ameliorative subenvironments may reflect concerns more obviously evocative of serious prison threat than others (Privacy, Safety, Structure, Freedom). However such a hypothesis was not supported. The distributions and rankings of the concerns are closely parallel in the two samples. The distribution of environmental concerns for the samples reveals little difference in the distribution of concerns between staff referred and comparison interviewees. Such a finding further supports either evidence of heterogeneity in the two samples or a lack of relationship between concern and assignment, or a lack of predictive validity in the concerns

themselves. More directly it implies a need for further refinement of the samples and analysis.

Special and Non-Special Settings: Prison Satisfaction

The measure of general prison satisfaction (a prisoner's relative position between a hypothetical best and worst prison world) is obtained by the self anchoring scale. Table 6.13 provides comparisons of the two samples by self anchoring scale score. We would generally expect that prisoners who have felt both stress as well as stress amelioration to be more likely to express higher prison satisfaction than other prisoners. A contrasting hypothesis is that prisoners in ameliorative subenvironments may be relatively dissatisfied with the prison world, having experienced stress significant enough to require entry into a special subsetting.

Prisoners in staff referred subenvironments are, however, neither more satisfied or less satisfied than prisoners in the comparison sample. Table 6.13 reveals virtually identical distributions of satisfaction within anchor score categories. The table reveals that, while prisoners are twice as likely to rate the prison low than high, prisoners in staff referred subenvironments are no more likely to rate the prison low or high than are prisoners in non-special settings.

* * * *

These comparisons have highlighted the need to examine ameliorative transactions that are validated by prisoner descriptions and perceptions rather than staff designations.

Table 6.13

Comparison of the Comparison Sample with the Staff Referred Subenvironment Sample by Anchor Scale Score

| Anchor Score | Sample | | Total N | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------|----------|-----|
| | Comparison (N=147) | Subenvironment (N=152) | | | |
| | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | |
| Low (1, 2, 3) | 63 | (42.5) | 63 | (41.7) | 126 |
| Medium (4, 5, 6) | 55 | (37.7) | 59 | (38.7) | 114 |
| High (7, 8, 9, 10) | 29 | (19.9) | 30 | (19.6) | 59 |
| | | (100%) | | (100%) | 299 |

$\chi^2 = .03$
Not significant at .05 level

An examination of staff designated special settings compared to non-special settings revealed few differences in prisoner characteristics, expressed environmental concern, or level of prison satisfaction. Settings, when grouped into the five categories provided in Table 6.10 reveal differences between the samples, but it is clear that there is heterogeneity within and between samples. Our reading and coding of prisoner interviews further convinced us that prisoners within both "special" and "non-special" samples described settings variously as beneficial, noxious, useful, ameliorative, or irrelevant. With respect to the comparisons performed thus far, summary statistics have been generally unimpressive. Because of the similar lack of a neat correspondence in the interviews between the settings to which we were referred and inmate evaluations of those settings, the comparisons surfaced the need for a more efficacious and valid method to search for prisoner validated stress reducing subenvironments.

A number of factors may contribute to the lack of correspondence. We have noted earlier that staff sensitivity to subenvironments may be variable and imprecise. Also stress is qualitative, as well as quantitative. Stress involves different kinds of people responding to different kinds of environmental conditions. We know, or strongly suspect, that stress may be felt by the freedom concerned "intransigent" as well as the safety concerned "traumatic." That is, even though the staff referred sample may well contain a larger percentage of prisoners with coping problems, the staff referred subenvironments collapsed into a single sample subsume many types of environments responding to many types of stress. A relative

lack of differences thus far may be attributable more to the variety of people and settings within our samples than to error in selecting a broad category termed "ameliorative subenvironments." It is clear that such categories as special and non-special, particularly when defined not by prisoners but by staff, are not exceedingly useful as a way to explore such relationships.

Because of these findings and assumptions, and because our primary concern is with the description of transactions, we pooled the two samples to form a common subenvironment sample, and coded man-setting transactions using the categories we outlined in Chapter 5. Table 6.14 provides the coded niche taxonomy distilled from the pooled subenvironment sample. As we already noted, the staff referred subenvironment sample did prove to be a richer source of inmate validated ameliorative transactions than the comparison sample. Almost 38% of staff referred subenvironments were classifiable as Niches compared to 25% of the comparison sample. However, over 62% of staff referred subenvironment prisoners did not consider their setting to reduce stress significantly. In contrast to the comparison sample, however, the staff referred subenvironment sample contained significantly fewer mismatches, which means prisoners who have experienced stress but find no stress reduction or relief in their subsetting.

The niche taxonomy will be analyzed in a later section. The next section will examine the correlates of environmental concerns themselves. Prior to examining settings that respond to or ignore particular concerns (particularly concerns linked with prison stress), we wish to explore the relationships be-

Table 6.14
 Comparison of the Comparison and
 Subenvironment Samples by Niche Taxonomy

| Niche Type | Sample | | | | Total N |
|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|------------|
| | Comparison (N=154) | | Subenvironment (N=153) | | |
| | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | |
| NICHE | 39 | (25.3) | 58 | (37.9) | 97 |
| MISMATCH | 73 | (47.4) | 46 | (30.1) | 119 |
| NONSTRESS | <u>42</u> | <u>(27.3)</u> | <u>49</u> | <u>(32.0)</u> | <u>91</u> |
| | 154 | (100%) | 153 | (100%) | 307 |

$\chi^2 = 15.4$
 Significant at .01 level

tween the expression of environmental concerns and prisoner characteristics.

Association Between Environmental Concerns and Personal Characteristics

In order to examine man-setting transactions at levels less homogenized and summarized than presented earlier, it was necessary to begin to examine the qualities of concerns expressed by men in prison. A portrait of men's environmental concerns in a setting, and the characteristics of prisoners that are associated with the expression or non-expression of a particular concern is a necessary first step to an examination of prison setting congruence. This section provides an examination of environmental concerns expressed by prisoners with varying personal, criminal, and institutional histories. Generally, environmental concerns are conceived as psychological priorities which vary among prisoners, and which are differentially realized in different settings. This section shall describe several relationships which surface between particular environmental concerns and personal characteristics. The analysis in this section parallels the work of Toch in Living in Prison. Using different samples than used within the current study, Toch sought similarly to decipher the correlates of environmental concerns. Several of the tables reported in this section are closely similar to those reported earlier by Toch. While the purpose of this section is not to explore differences in the expression of concerns between the comparison and staff referred subenvironment sample, the tables examining the relationships between concerns and characteristics will be presented separately for each sample. As we shall see, the relationships that surface

show considerable consistency in both strength and direction across samples.

The tables reported include those comparisons for which we expected to find differences and for which the expected differences did emerge. For example, we would expect that white prisoners may be more concerned with Safety than other prisoners, from what we know about the significance of ethnicity to prison survival. The data supports such a hypothesis. Additionally, where differences emerge equivalent tables are presented for both primary concern and all concern comparisons. Generally, the relationships that surfaced were found to be consistent across concern level.

Safety

Table 6.15 presents the comparisons which evidence differences between expression of an environmental concern for Safety and several personal and criminal history variables. A concern for Safety is found to be associated with ethnicity, size of home town, age, and a single offense variable. The data indicate that white prisoners are more likely to be concerned with Safety than are black prisoners. Eighteen per cent of white prisoners express primary concerns for Safety compared to four per cent of black prisoners in the comparison group. The subenvironment sample surfaces even more dramatic differences. Over one-quarter of white prisoners in that sample express a primary concern for Safety, compared to three per cent of black prisoners. When examining tables concerning all concerns, the relationship between Safety and ethnicity remains. Over half (comparison) and exactly half (subenvironment) of white prisoners

express some concern for Safety while less than 30 per cent of black prisoners express such a concern. The relationship remains consistent. Whites are heavily overrepresented among prisoners expressing Safety concerns while blacks and Puerto Ricans remain heavily underrepresented.

Table 6.15 also describes the relative frequency of city and non-city prisoners who express concerns for Safety. (Large city prisoners are those prisoners who live in a city of 100,000 in population or more.) The data reveal that prisoners from rural, small town, or small city residences are more likely to express a concern for Safety than are prisoners from large cities. Approximately twenty-five per cent of prisoners from non-large city areas express primary concerns for Safety (twenty-three per cent of the comparison sample and twenty-eight per cent of the subenvironment sample) compared to between four (comparison) and seven (subenvironment) per cent of prisoners from large cities. This relationship also surfaces for all concern comparisons. Approximately one-half of prisoners from non-large city residences compared to approximately thirty per cent of prisoners from large cities express a concern for Safety.

Table 6.15 also offers a comparison of the relative prevalence of Safety concerns by age. Consistently, young prisoners are more likely to be concerned about Safety than are older prisoners. Thirty-one per cent of comparison prisoners under the age of twenty-one express a primary concern for Safety compared to eight per cent of older prisoners. Similarly, twenty-three per cent of young subenvironment prisoners express such a concern compared to less than seven per cent of older prisoners. The relationship also remains for all concern comparisons. Fifty

TABLE 6. 15
Distribution of Environmental Concerns
Among Prisoners of Varying Personal, Criminal and
Institutional History Backgrounds for Both Comparison
and Subenvironment Samples

| Primary Environmental Concern | Sample and Ethnicity | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| | Comparison (N=135) | | | Subenvironment (N=141) | | |
| | Black | White | Puerto Rican | Black | White | Puerto Rican |
| Safety Present | 3 (4) | 9 (18) | 0 (0) | 2 (3) | 15 (26) | 1 (7.7) |
| Safety Absent | 69 (96) | 42 (82) | 12 (100) | 68 (97) | 43 (74) | 12 (92.3) |
| | 72 (100%) | 51 (100%) | 12 (100%) | 70 (100%) | 58 (100%) | 13 (100%) |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Sample and Ethnicity | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| | Comparison (N=135) | | | Subenvironment (N=141) | | |
| | Black | White | Puerto Rican | Black | White | Puerto Rican |
| Safety Present | 20 (28) | 30 (59) | 3 (25) | 16 (23) | 29 (50) | 2 (17) |
| Safety Absent | 52 (72) | 21 (41) | 9 (75) | 54 (77) | 29 (50) | 10 (83) |
| | 72 (100%) | 51 (100%) | 12 (100%) | 70 (100%) | 58 (100%) | 12 (100%) |

| Primary Environmental Concern | Sample and Size of Home Town | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|--|------------------------|------------|--|
| | Comparison (N=126) | | | Subenvironment (N=129) | | |
| | No Large City | Large City | | No Large City | Large City | |
| Safety Present | 7 (23) | 4 (4) | | 8 (28) | 7 (7) | |
| Safety Absent | 23 (77) | 92 (96) | | 20 (72) | 94 (93) | |
| | 30 (100%) | 96 (100%) | | 28 (100%) | 101 (100%) | |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Sample and Size of Home Town | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|--|------------------------|------------|--|
| | Comparison (N=126) | | | Subenvironment (N=129) | | |
| | No Large City | Large City | | No Large City | Large City | |
| Safety Present | 16 (53) | 32 (33) | | 14 (50) | 30 (29.7) | |
| Safety Absent | 14 (47) | 64 (67) | | 14 (50) | 71 (70.3) | |
| | 30 (100%) | 96 (100%) | | 28 (100%) | 101 (100%) | |

TABLE 6.15 (Cont'd)
Distribution of Environmental Concerns
Among Prisoners of Varying Personal, Criminal and
Institutional History Backgrounds for Both Comparison
and Subenvironment Samples

| Primary Environmental Concern | Sample and Age | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------|--|------------------------|------------|--|
| | Comparison (N=151) | | | Subenvironment (N=156) | | |
| | Under 21 | 21 or Over | | Under 21 | 21 or Over | |
| Safety Present | 5 (31) | 11 (8) | | 11 (23) | 7 (6.4) | |
| Safety Absent | 17 (67) | 118 (91) | | 37 (77) | 102 (93.6) | |
| | 22 (100%) | 129 (100%) | | 48 (100%) | 109 (100%) | |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Sample and Age | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|------------|--|------------------------|------------|--|
| | Comparison (N=151) | | | Subenvironment (N=156) | | |
| | Under 21 | 21 or Over | | Under 21 | 21 or Over | |
| Safety Present | 11 (50) | 50 (39) | | 22 (46) | 33 (30) | |
| Safety Absent | 11 (50) | 79 (61) | | 26 (54) | 76 (70) | |
| | 22 (100%) | 129 (100%) | | 48 (100%) | 109 (100%) | |

| Primary Environmental Concern | Sample and Use of Weapon (Instant Offense) | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------|--|------------------------|-----------|--|
| | Comparison (N=136) | | | Subenvironment (N=130) | | |
| | Weapon | No Weapon | | Weapon | No Weapon | |
| Safety Present | 4 (4.4) | 8 (17.4) | | 6 (7.1) | 11 (20) | |
| Safety Absent | 86 (95.6) | 38 (8.6) | | 79 (92.9) | 44 (80) | |
| | 90 (100%) | 46 (100%) | | 85 (100%) | 55 (100%) | |

per cent of comparison prisoners under twenty-one express some concern for Safety, and forty-six per cent of subenvironment prisoners. This compares with thirty-nine per cent of older comparison prisoners and thirty per cent of older subenvironment prisoners.

The final variable associated with Safety, and the only criminal history variable to be related to such a concern, is the use of a weapon during the instant offense. Prisoners who used a weapon during the commission of the offense were considerably less likely to express a concern for Safety than were prisoners who did not use a weapon. This relationship, however, surfaced substantial differences for primary concerns only. Four per cent of comparison prisoners using a weapon expressed a primary concern for Safety compared to seventeen per cent of those not using a weapon. The percentage differences are virtually equivalent for the subenvironment sample.

Structure

It was expected that Structure concerns, a "concern for environmental stability and predictability, a preference for consistency," may be related to variables of age and institutional career. Generally, it was expected that prisoners concerned with Structure may tend to be older, with a somewhat longer institutionalization, the "old guard." In the main, the frequency distributions provided in Table 6.16 support this hypothesis. We see that Structure is related to age, history of prior prison terms, relatively longer minimum sentence, and relatively longer time served on present sentence.

We see that thirteen per cent of comparison prisoners over thirty years of age express a primary Structure concern compared to no younger comparison prisoner. Likewise, twenty-seven per cent of older subenvironment prisoners express such a concern as the primary concern, compared to less than three per cent of younger prisoners. The relationship remains consistent as well for all concern comparisons. While approximately forty per cent of older prisoners express some concern for Structure, less than twenty per cent of younger prisoners are concerned with Structure.

A relationship also is apparent between Structure and prison history. Table 6.16 reveals that while twelve per cent and seventeen per cent of prisoners with prior prison history express a primary Structure concern, only two and five per cent of those serving their first sentence have such a concern. Similar findings emerge for all concerns. Thirty-eight per cent of comparison prisoners who have a prior prison term recorded express a concern for Structure, as do thirty per cent of subenvironment prisoners. This compares to nineteen per cent and twenty-two per cent respectively of the comparison and subenvironment prisoners without a prior prison record.

Table 6.16 also provides the distribution of Structure concerns among prisoners serving a minimum sentence of five years or more compared with those serving a shorter minimum term, and prisoners with more than two years served on the current sentence compared to those with less than two years served. The frequency distributions are striking, and in the expected direction. Prisoners who are serving longer sentences, and those who have served

TABLE 6. 16
Distribution of Environmental Concerns
Among Prisoners of Varying Personal, Criminal and
Institutional History Backgrounds for Both Comparison
and Subenvironment Samples

| Primary Environmental Concern | Comparison (N= 138) | | Sample and Age Subenvironment (N= 142) | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|--|-------------|
| | Over 30 | 30 or Under | Over 30 | 30 or Under |
| | Structure Present | 7 (13.5) | 0 (0) | 10 (27) |
| Structure Absent | 45 (86.5) | 86 (100) | 27 (73) | 102 (97.1) |
| | 52 (100%) | 86 (100%) | 37 (100%) | 105 (100%) |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Comparison (N=138) | | Sample and Age Subenvironment (N= 142) | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--|-------------|
| | Over 30 | 30 or Under | Over 30 | 30 or Under |
| | Structure Present | 20 (38.4) | 14 (16) | 17 (46) |
| Structure Absent | 32 (61.5) | 72 (84) | 20 (54) | 85 (81) |
| | 52 (100%) | 86 (100%) | 37 (100%) | 105 (100%) |

| Primary Environmental Concern | Comparison (N= 138) | | Sample and Prior Prison Terms Subenvironment (N= 142) | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|
| | No Prior | Prior | No Prior | Prior |
| | Structure Present | 2 (2) | 5 (12.8) | 5 (5.2) |
| Structure Absent | 97 (98) | 34 (87.2) | 90 (94.8) | 39 (83) |
| | 99 (100%) | 39 (100%) | 95 (100%) | 47 (100%) |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Comparison (N= 138) | | Sample and Prior Prison Terms Subenvironment (N= 142) | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|
| | No Prior | Prior | No Prior | Prior |
| | Structure Present | 19 (19) | 15 (38) | 22 (23) |
| Structure Absent | 80 (81) | 24 (62) | 73 (77) | 33 (70) |
| | 99 (100%) | 39 (100%) | 95 (100%) | 47 (100%) |

TABLE 6. 16 (Cont'd)
Distribution of Environmental Concerns
Among Prisoners of Varying Personal, Criminal and
Institutional History Backgrounds for Both Comparison
and Subenvironment Samples

| Primary Environmental Concern | Comparison (N=137) | | Sample and Minimum Sentence Subenvironment (N= 142) | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---|--------------------|
| | Less than 5 Years | 5 Years or More | Less than 5 Years | 5 Years or More |
| | Structure Present | 3 (2.8) | 4 (13.8) | 8 (6.5) |
| Structure Absent | 105 (97.2) | 25 (86.2) | 116 (93.5) | 13 (72.2) |
| | 108 (100%) | 29 (100%) | 124 (100%) | 18 (100%) |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Comparison (N= 138) | | Sample and Minimum Sentence Subenvironment (N= 142) | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---|--------------------|
| | Less than 5 Years | 5 Years or More | Less than 5 Years | 5 Years or More |
| | Structure Present | 20 (18.7) | 13 (43) | 28 (22) |
| Structure Absent | 87 (81.3) | 17 (57) | 97 (78) | 8 (47) |
| | 107 (100%) | 30 (100%) | 125 (100%) | 17 (100%) |

| Primary Environmental Concern | Comparison (N=138) | | Sample and Time Served to Date Subenvironment (N= 142) | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| | Less than 2 Years | 2 Years or More | Less than 2 Years | 2 Years or More |
| | Structure Present | 1 (1.1) | 6 (13.3) | 5 (4.6) |
| Structure Absent | 92 (98.9) | 39 (86.7) | 104 (95.4) | 25 (75.8) |
| | 93 (100%) | 45 (100%) | 109 (100%) | 33 (100%) |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Comparison (N= 138) | | Sample and Time Served to Date Subenvironment (N=142) | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---|--------------------|
| | Less than 2 Years | 2 Years or More | Less than 2 Years | 2 Years or More |
| | Structure Present | 13 (14) | 21 (47) | 22 (20) |
| Structure Absent | 80 (86) | 24 (53) | 88 (80) | 17 (53) |
| | 93 (100%) | 45 (100%) | 110 (100%) | 32 (100%) |

relatively long prison terms to date are considerably more likely to express a concern for Structure than are prisoners serving less time, with less time in prison. Thirteen per cent of comparison prisoners who are serving terms with relatively long minimum sentences compared to less than three per cent of other prisoners express primary concerns for Structure. Equivalent percentages for the subenvironment sample are twenty-seven per cent to less than seven per cent. For the all concern comparisons more than half of long term subenvironment prisoners express some concern for Structure compared to twenty-two per cent of short-time prisoners.

The relationship between time in prison and Structure is similar. Thirteen per cent of comparison prisoners and twenty-four per cent of subenvironment prisoners serving two years or more to date express primary concerns for Structure compared to one per cent and five per cent of those serving less time. With all concern comparisons, forty-seven per cent of both comparison and subenvironment long term prisoners express some Structure concern compared to fourteen and twenty per cent of short term prisoners.

In summary, older prisoners, those with prison experience, those serving longer sentences with more time served to date, are more likely to express a concern for Structure.

Freedom

Freedom is "a need for minimal restriction and for maximum opportunity to govern one's own conduct." One variable that was found to distinguish prisoners expressing a concern for Freedom from other prisoners was the variable of race. The

data in Table 6.17 indicates that black prisoners and Puerto Rican prisoners are considerably more likely to express a concern for Freedom than are white prisoners. Half of black prisoners in the subenvironment sample express a concern for Freedom and forty-two per cent of black comparison prisoners express such a concern as primary. This compares to twenty-four per cent and twenty-six per cent of white prisoners respectively. While Puerto Rican prisoners are even more likely to express primary concerns for Freedom than are black prisoners, the small N's evident for our Puerto Rican population makes such frequency distributions less impressive. The same strong disparities are obvious in the all concern comparisons. Eighty-six per cent of black subenvironment prisoners express some concern for Freedom, as do over seventy per cent of comparison black prisoners. This compares to approximately sixty per cent of white prisoners.

Privacy

A similar relationship was found between Privacy and race. Generally, Privacy (a concern about social and physical overstimulation, a preference for isolation, peace and quiet) surfaced a relative overrepresentation of white prisoners and an underrepresentation of black prisoners, for primary concerns only. Table 6.17 reveals that twenty-five per cent of white prisoners express a primary concern for Privacy in the comparison sample, and nineteen per cent of white subenvironment prisoners are primarily concerned with Privacy. This compares to eight and eleven per cent of black prisoners, and a negligible percentage of Puerto Rican prisoners.

TABLE 6.17
Distribution of Environmental Concerns
Among Prisoners of Varying Personal, Criminal and
Institutional History Backgrounds for Both Comparison
and Subenvironment Samples

| Primary Environmental Concern | Comparison (N= 135) | | | | | | Sample and Ethnicity Subenvironment (N= 141) | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------------|--------|--|--------|-------|--------|--------------|--------|
| | Black | | White | | Puerto Rican | | Black | | White | | Puerto Rican | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Freedom Present | 30 | (42.5) | 13 | (26) | 8 | (67) | 35 | (50) | 14 | (24) | 7 | (54) |
| Freedom Absent | 42 | (57.5) | 38 | (74) | 4 | (33) | 35 | (50) | 44 | (76) | 6 | (46) |
| | 72 | (100%) | 51 | (100%) | 12 | (100%) | 70 | (100%) | 58 | (100%) | 13 | (100%) |
| Total Environmental Concerns | Comparison (N= 135) | | | | | | Sample and Ethnicity Subenvironment (N= 141) | | | | | |
| | Black | | White | | Puerto Rican | | Black | | White | | Puerto Rican | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Freedom Present | 52 | (71) | 28 | (56) | 11 | (92) | 60 | (86) | 36 | (62) | 10 | (77) |
| Freedom Absent | 20 | (29) | 23 | (44) | 1 | (8) | 10 | (14) | 22 | (38) | 3 | (23) |
| | 72 | (100%) | 51 | (100%) | 12 | (100%) | 70 | (100%) | 58 | (100%) | 13 | (100%) |
| Primary Environmental Concern | Comparison (N= 135) | | | | | | Sample and Ethnicity Subenvironment (N= 141) | | | | | |
| | Black | | White | | Puerto Rican | | Black | | White | | Puerto Rican | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Privacy Present | 6 | (8.3) | 13 | (25) | 1 | (8.3) | 8 | (11.6) | 11 | (19) | 0 | (0) |
| Privacy Absent | 66 | (91.7) | 38 | (75) | 11 | (91.7) | 62 | (88.4) | 47 | (81) | 13 | (100) |
| | 72 | (100%) | 51 | (100%) | 12 | (100%) | 70 | (100%) | 58 | (100%) | 13 | (100%) |

Feedback

It would be expected that Feedback, or a concern with "being loved, appreciated and cared for, a need for intimacy" may be related to marital status. This expectation was borne out, as the comparison on Table 6.18 reveals. For all samples, and for each level of concern, married prisoners are more likely to express a concern for Feedback than are unmarried prisoners. Significantly, over sixty per cent of married prisoners express some concern for Feedback in the comparison sample, compared to thirty-seven per cent of unmarried prisoners. Thirty-four per cent of married prisoners in the subenvironment sample express such a concern, compared to eighteen per cent of unmarried prisoners. The comparisons for primary concern for Feedback reveal similar disparities for the subenvironment sample, although the frequency distribution of the comparison sample reveals little difference between married and unmarried prisoners.

Support

A concern for Support, a concern for "reliable and tangible assistance and services that facilitate self-advancement" was, not surprisingly, associated with level of education. Table 6.18 indicates that, with respect to all concern comparisons, prisoners whose level of educational attainment has reached the high school level or greater are substantially more likely to express some concern for Support than are prisoners with no high school experience. Over eighty per cent of comparison prisoners and seventy per cent of subenvironment prisoners with a relatively higher educational attainment express some concern for Support, compared to less than forty per cent of other prisoners for both samples.

Distribution of Environmental Concerns Among Prisoners of Varying Personal, Criminal and Institutional History Backgrounds for Both Comparison and Subenvironment Samples

| Primary Environmental Concern | Comparison (N= 138) | | Sample and Marital Status Subenvironment (N= 141) | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|---|-------------|
| | Married | Unmarried | Married | Unmarried |
| | Feedback Present | 6 (13%) | 10 (11%) | 7 (21.9%) |
| Feedback Absent | 40 (87%) | 82 (89%) | 25 (78.1%) | 105 (96.3%) |
| | 46 (100%) | 92 (100%) | 32 (100%) | 109 (100%) |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Comparison (N= 138) | | Sample and Marital Status Subenvironment (N= 141) | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|---|------------|
| | Married | Unmarried | Married | Unmarried |
| | Feedback Present | 29 (63%) | 34 (37%) | 11 (34%) |
| Feedback Absent | 17 (37%) | 58 (63%) | 21 (66%) | 89 (82%) |
| | 46 (100%) | 92 (100%) | 32 (100%) | 109 (100%) |

| Total Environmental Concerns | Comparison (N= 127) | | Sample and Education Subenvironment (N=142) | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|--|---------------|
| | Less than HS | HS or greater | Less than HS | HS or greater |
| | Support Present | 45 (38.8%) | 17 (80.9%) | 40 (35%) |
| Support Absent | 71 (61.2%) | 4 (19.1%) | 75 (65%) | 7 (26%) |
| | 116 (100%) | 21 (100%) | 115 (100%) | 27 (100%) |

Summary

Our analysis of environmental concerns and their relationship to personal, criminal, and institutional history variables has revealed that what differences are noted are generally consistent across sample and across concerns. The differences noted are related to some of what we know about prison stresses. We see that white, young, non-metropolitan prisoners are more likely to express concerns for Safety (Bartollas et al, Lockwood)³; similarly white prisoners are more concerned with Privacy than are other prisoners; older prisoners, doing relatively long time, with a relatively long period served to date may be concerned with carving out a predictable life in prison and are concerned with Structure (Irwin, Clemmer)⁴; black and Puerto Rican prisoners are more likely to be concerned with Freedom, a finding suggestive of cultural and social learning differences in response to authority (Carroll, Jacobs)⁵; more highly educated prisoners are more likely to be concerned with Support, a finding that suggests that growth and involvement may be linked to or associated with at least moderate academic success and perseverance (White, Herschi, Cohen)⁶.

Toch surfaced similar relationships in his earlier analysis of the random and subenvironment samples. Toch found that black inmates were differentially concerned with Freedom, older prisoners concerned with Structure, Safety linked with youth, and Feedback linked with marital status. The relationships described during the present study differ in some respects from those reported by Toch (the present study uses subsets of Toch's data) although the similarities are, as expected, much more striking than the differences.⁷ The results of our analysis of

the distribution of environmental concerns, while limited, are plausibly related to what we know about prison as environments, and the particular concerns that such environments may engender among prisoners with different life histories, purposes, skills and liabilities.

Environmental Concerns and Prison Satisfaction

Our final tables in this section provide a measure of prison satisfaction expressed by prisoners with various environmental concerns. We are concerned with whether particular levels of prison satisfaction are related to the expression of particular environmental concerns. Tables 6.19 and 6.20 provide the distribution of environmental concerns among prisoners expressing low, medium and high levels of prison satisfaction as measured by the prison self anchoring scale. While Table 6.19 reveals significantly different distributions of environmental concerns for varying levels of prison satisfaction for primary concerns, the equivalent comparisons for all concerns does not reach significance. In general, however, the relationships are consistent in direction across concern level.

We see that among satisfied prisoners, Freedom concerns are heavily unrepresented. Twenty per cent of satisfied prisoners express concerns for Freedom, compared to over thirty per cent of middle range prisoners, and over half of dissatisfied prisoners. With respect to all concern comparisons, almost eighty per cent of dissatisfied prisoners express some concern for Freedom, compared to approximately forty per cent of satisfied prisoners.

Table 6.19

Distribution of Environmental Concerns Among Prisoners of Varying Levels of Prison Satisfaction (Combined Sample)

| Primary Environmental Concern | Level of Satisfaction | | | | | | Total N |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|----------------|--------|-------------|--------|---------|
| | Low (N=124) | | Medium (N=115) | | High (N=59) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| PRIVACY | 15 | (12.1) | 17 | (14.8) | 9 | (15.3) | 41 |
| SAFETY | 11 | (8.9) | 12 | (10.4) | 11 | (18.6) | 34 |
| STRUCTURE | 11 | (8.9) | 8 | (7.0) | 2 | (3.4) | 21 |
| SUPPORT | 12 | (9.7) | 23 | (20.0) | 9 | (15.3) | 44 |
| FEEDBACK | 9 | (7.3) | 13 | (11.3) | 7 | (11.9) | 29 |
| ACTIVITY | 3 | (2.4) | 5 | (4.3) | 9 | (15.3) | 17 |
| FREEDOM | 63 | (50.8) | 37 | (32.2) | 12 | (20.3) | 112 |
| | 124 | (100%) | 115 | (100%) | 59 | (100%) | 298 |

2
 $\chi^2 = 35.84$
 Significant at .001 level
 at 12 df

Satisfied prisoners tend to report an overrepresentation of Support and Activity concerns. To some extent, such findings are not surprising. Freedom itself is a concern which in prison is both symptomatic of alienation and evocative of further frustration. On the other hand, Activity and Support concerns may be an expression of involvement, and a relatively benign appraisal of the future. Freedom concerns are by their very nature an expression of environmental unhappiness and frustration (one rarely expresses a satisfied Freedom concern because it ceases to be a concern) while Support and Activity may well be more potent when realized, and therefore not linked to dissatisfaction, but to satisfaction.

Somewhat surprisingly, satisfied prisoners also tend to be somewhat more concerned with Safety and Privacy than are dissatisfied prisoners. In general then, satisfaction in prison is related largely to a desire to keep active, an interest in program involvement, and relative lack of concern for authority.

Niches, Mismatched, and the Non-Stressed

The remainder of this chapter examines man-setting transactions coded as environmental matches in ameliorative sub-settings (niches), environmental mismatches, and non-stressed transactions. The purpose of this section is to surface consistencies and inconsistencies in environmental concerns, levels of satisfaction, and grouped setting categories that may provide insights into the components of congruence. We shall explore (1) the distribution of levels of satisfaction within the niche taxonomy, (2) the distribution of environmental concerns among niche types, and (3) differences in grouped setting categories

Table 6.20

Distribution of Environmental Concerns Among Prisoners of Varying Levels of Prison Satisfaction (Combined Sample)

| All Concerns | Level of Satisfaction | | | | | | Total N |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------|----------------|--------|-------------|--------|---------|
| | Low (N=124) | | Medium (N=115) | | High (N=59) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| PRIVACY | 50 | (40.3) | 54 | (47.5) | 27 | (44.3) | 131 |
| SAFETY | 48 | (38.7) | 40 | (34.8) | 29 | (49.1) | 117 |
| STRUCTURE | 28 | (22.3) | 35 | (30.4) | 16 | (27.1) | 79 |
| SUPPORT | 43 | (33.8) | 65 | (56.6) | 26 | (44.1) | 134 |
| FEEDBACK | 50 | (40.3) | 40 | (35.6) | 26 | (44.1) | 116 |
| ACTIVITY | 34 | (27.4) | 37 | (31.4) | 24 | (41.0) | 95 |
| FREEDOM | 98 | (79.0) | 80 | (69.5) | 24 | (41.0) | 202 |
| | 351 | | 351 | | 172 | | 874 |

$\chi^2 = 16.42$
 Not significant at 12 df

over or underrepresented by niches, mismatches, or non-stressed.

To facilitate statistical analyses, an environmental non-stressed category has been formed by collapsing the two coded non-stressed categories (Benign and Irrelevant transactions). The size of each separate subcategory is relatively small, and the common denominator of non-stress permits a larger and more useful category. Similarly, the comparison and staff referred subenvironment subsamples have been abandoned in this analysis. The separate samples provided to reveal heterogeneity within samples and few consistent and significant differences between the two samples. Accordingly, comparisons in this section will examine niches, mismatches, and non-stressed transactions distilled from both samples and combined.

Niche Taxonomy and Prison Satisfaction

We would expect prisoners in self-defined ameliorative subenvironments to express a relatively higher degree of prison satisfaction than prisoners not in such environments. Table 6.21, describing the level of prison satisfaction recorded on the prisoner self anchoring scale for all categories of the niche taxonomy, provides results which meet this expectation. Of prisoner coded niches, thirty per cent report high levels of satisfaction compared to less than five per cent of mismatches. Analogously, almost two-thirds of mismatched prisoners report low levels of prison satisfaction compared to thirty per cent of niches and less than twenty-five per cent of the non-stress category. Non-stressed prisoners report a distribution of prison satisfaction roughly equivalent to that of prisoners in niches.

However, these relationships may, in part, be an artifact of differences in environmental concerns expressed within each. We saw in Tables 6.19 and 6.20 that particular environmental concerns are more commonly expressed by satisfied prisoners (notably Support and Activity concerns) while some concerns are related to dissatisfaction (Freedom concerns). Similarly, we shall see in subsequent analyses that certain categories of the niche taxonomy contain disproportionate numbers of prisoners expressing particular environmental concerns (see Tables 6.22 and 6.23). The relative prevalence of concerns within the various categories may then independently affect prison satisfaction. To test this possibility, Table 6.21 compares the distribution of the niche taxonomy among various levels of prison satisfaction controlling for type of environmental concern. Table 6.21 provides such comparisons for all concerns only. Primary concern comparisons would result in cross-tabulations of insufficient N's in most cells to prove useful.

Prisoners in niches for all concerns report significantly greater levels of prison satisfaction compared to mismatches. Non-stress prisoners parallel niches in most respects. For Privacy, Safety, Structure, Activity and Freedom, prisoners in niches report the highest levels of prison satisfaction, while for Support and Feedback, the non-stress prisoners report the highest percentage of satisfaction. For all concerns, prisoners in mismatches report negligible percentages of high satisfaction ranging from a low of zero per cent to a high of ten per cent (Activity and Safety).

We see that prison satisfaction, while related to concerns, varies within concern and consistently within the

Table 6.21

Distribution of Levels of Prison Satisfaction
Among Categories of the Niche Taxonomy
(Combined Sample)

| Level of Satisfaction | Niche Taxonomy | | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------|--|--------|------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=96) | | Mismatch (N=113) | | Non-stress (N= 88) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Low | 28 | (29.2) | 75 | (66.4) | 21 | (23.9) | 124 |
| Medium | 39 | (40.6) | 33 | (29.2) | 42 | (47.8) | 114 |
| High | 29 | (30.2) | 5 | (4.4) | 55 | (28.3) | 59 |
| | 96 | (100%) | 113 | (100%) | 88 | (100%) | 297 |
| | $\chi^2 = 52.1$ Significant at .001 level | | | | | | |

| Level Satisfaction | Privacy Concerns Niche Taxonomy | | | | | | Total |
|--------------------|--|--------|------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=62) | | Mismatch (N= 41) | | Non-stress (N= 27) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Low | 18 | (28.6) | 26 | (63.4) | 6 | (22.2) | 50 |
| Medium | 26 | (42.8) | 13 | (31.7) | 14 | (51.9) | 33 |
| High | 18 | (28.6) | 2 | (4.9) | 7 | (25.9) | 27 |
| | 62 | (100%) | 41 | (100%) | 27 | (100%) | 130 |
| | $\chi^2 = 18.6$ Significant at .001 level | | | | | | |

Table 6.21 (Cont'd)

Distribution of Levels of Prison Satisfaction
Among Categories of the Niche Taxonomy
(Combined Sample)

| Level of Satisfaction | Safety Concerns Niche Taxonomy | | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------|---|--------|-------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=48) | | Mismatch (N= 48) | | Non-stress (N= 21) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Low | 15 | (31.0) | 31 | (64.6) | 2 | (9.5) | 48 |
| Medium | 15 | (31.0) | 12 | (25.0) | 13 | (61.9) | 40 |
| High | 18 | (38.0) | 5 | (10.4) | 6 | (28.6) | 29 |
| | 48 | (100%) | 48 | (100%) | 21 | (100%) | 117 |
| | $\chi^2 = 26.13$ Significant at .001 level | | | | | | |

| Level Satisfaction | Structure Concerns Niche Taxonomy | | | | | | Total |
|--------------------|---|--------|-------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=20) | | Mismatch (N= 29) | | Non-stress (N= 29) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Low | 2 | (10.0) | 20 | (69.0) | 6 | (20.7) | 28 |
| Medium | 10 | (50.0) | 8 | (28.0) | 17 | (58.6) | 35 |
| High | 8 | (40.0) | 1 | (3.0) | 6 | (20.7) | 15 |
| | 20 | (100%) | 29 | (100%) | 29 | (100%) | 78 |
| | $\chi^2 = 25.21$ Significant at .001 level | | | | | | |

Table 6.21 (Cont'd)

Distribution of Levels of Prison Satisfaction
Among Categories of the Niche Taxonomy
(Combined Sample)

| Level of Satisfaction | Support Concerns Niche Taxonomy | | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=31) | | Mismatch (N=50) | | Non-stress (N=53) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Low | 3 | (9.7) | 28 | (56.0) | 12 | (22.6) | 43 |
| Medium | 21 | (67.7) | 19 | (38.0) | 25 | (47.2) | 65 |
| High | 7 | (22.6) | 3 | (6.0) | 16 | (30.2) | 26 |
| | 31 | (100%) | 50 | (100%) | 53 | (100%) | 134 |
| | | | 2 | | | | |
| | | | X = 27.48 | | | | |
| | | | Significant at .001 level | | | | |

| Level Satisfaction | Feedback Concerns Niche Taxonomy | | | | | | Total |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=32) | | Mismatch (N=52) | | Non-stress (N=32) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Low | 12 | (37.5) | 34 | (65.4) | 4 | (12.0) | 50 |
| Medium | 11 | (34.4) | 15 | (28.8) | 14 | (44.0) | 40 |
| High | 9 | (28.1) | 3 | (5.8) | 14 | (44.0) | 26 |
| | 32 | (100%) | 52 | (100%) | 32 | (100%) | 116 |
| | | | 2 | | | | |
| | | | X = 26.68 | | | | |
| | | | Significant at .001 level | | | | |

Table 6.21 (Cont'd)

Distribution of Levels of Prison Satisfaction
Among Categories of the Niche Taxonomy
(Combined Sample)

| Level of Satisfaction | Activity Concerns Niche Taxonomy | | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=31) | | Mismatch (N=26) | | Non-stress (N=38) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Low | 10 | (32.2) | 18 | (69.2) | 6 | (15.8) | 34 |
| Medium | 10 | (32.2) | 8 | (30.8) | 19 | (50.0) | 37 |
| High | 11 | (35.6) | 0 | (00.0) | 13 | (34.2) | 24 |
| | 31 | (100%) | 26 | (100%) | 38 | (100%) | 95 |
| | | | 2 | | | | |
| | | | X = 23.9 | | | | |
| | | | Significant at .001 level | | | | |

| Level Satisfaction | Freedom Concerns Niche Taxonomy | | | | | | Total |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=56) | | Mismatch (N=85) | | Non-stress (N=60) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Low | 22 | (39.4) | 61 | (71.8) | 15 | (25.0) | 98 |
| Medium | 23 | (41.0) | 22 | (25.9) | 34 | (56.7) | 79 |
| High | 11 | (19.6) | 2 | (2.3) | 11 | (18.3) | 24 |
| | 56 | (100%) | 85 | (100%) | 60 | (100%) | 201 |
| | | | 2 | | | | |
| | | | X = 34.6 | | | | |
| | | | Significant at .001 level | | | | |

niche taxonomy. There is not an equivalence between niche and satisfaction however, or mismatch and dissatisfaction. We find that of niches, thirty per cent rank the prison low, while among mismatches over four per cent rank the prison high. We do not expect to find correspondence but an association. Overall satisfaction with life, or with large encompassing conditions, may not be related in consistent ways with small scale environments. Additionally, we know that some men find dissatisfaction relatively easy to express, even when rating specifics (places, relationships) highly. Prison satisfaction itself is a contradiction to some prisoners, even when relative of the measures is explained. On the other hand, some men have low expectations of prison life, or past prison experiences that suggest that doing time is routine and manageable. Such men rate the prison highly even while describing particular components as noxious and stressful.

We do, however, find the expected association between coded niche and prison satisfaction, and mismatch and prisoner dissatisfaction. A relationship is also apparent between relative lack of stress content in interviews and recorded prison satisfaction.

Niche Taxonomy and Environmental Concerns

How does the niche taxonomy vary in the distribution of environmental concerns? What can such variation reveal about the psychological priorities of men in ameliorative and non-ameliorative settings? Tables 6.22 and 6.23 provide data responsive to these questions. Tables 6.22 and 6.23 provide the relative frequencies of each environmental concern for all

Table 6.22
Distribution of Environmental Concerns
Among Niche Taxonomy
(Primary Concerns)

| Primary Environmental Concerns | NICHE TAXONOMY | | | | | | | | Total |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|--------|---------------------|--------|------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|-------|
| | Niche (N=96) | | Mismatch (N=117) | | Benign (N=58) | | Irrelevant (N=32) | | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| PRIVACY | 17 | (17.7) | 18 | (15.4) | 5 | (8.6) | 1 | (3.1) | 41 |
| SAFETY | 20 | (20.8) | 10 | (8.5) | 2 | (3.4) | 2 | (6.3) | 34 |
| STRUCTURE | 6 | (6.3) | 7 | (6.0) | 8 | (13.8) | 0 | (0.0) | 21 |
| SUPPORT | 6 | (6.3) | 10 | (8.5) | 20 | (34.5) | 11 | (34.4) | 47 |
| FEEDBACK | 12 | (12.5) | 9 | (7.7) | 3 | (5.2) | 4 | (12.5) | 28 |
| ACTIVITY | 7 | (7.3) | 3 | (2.6) | 3 | (5.2) | 4 | (12.5) | 17 |
| FREEDOM | 28 | (29.2) | 60 | (51.3) | 17 | (29.3) | 10 | (31.3) | 115 |
| | 96 | (100%) | 117 | (100%) | 58 | (100%) | 32 | (100%) | 303 |

Table 6.23
Distribution of Environmental Concerns
Among Niche Taxonomy
(All Concerns)

| All Concerns | NICHE TAXONOMY | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| | NICHE (N=96) % | MISMATCH (N=117) % | BENIGN (N=58) % | IRRELEVANT (N=32) % |
| PRIVACY | 64.9 | 36.1 | 30.5 | 31.5 |
| SAFETY | 49.5 | 41.2 | 20.3 | 31.3 |
| STRUCTURE | 21.6 | 25.2 | 39.0 | 18.8 |
| SUPPORT | 33.0 | 44.5 | 62.7 | 56.3 |
| FEEDBACK | 34.0 | 46.2 | 32.2 | 43.8 |
| ACTIVITY | 33.0 | 24.4 | 37.3 | 50.0 |
| FREEDOM | 58.8 | 75.6 | 67.8 | 71.9 |

categories of the niche taxonomy. Table 6.22 provides such a comparison for primary concerns only. Table 6.23 provides equivalent comparisons using all concerns.

We see in Tables 6.22 and 6.23 that Freedom remains the modal category for all types and for each level of concern. This is not unexpected given the heavy prevalence of Freedom concerns among the sample generally. However, differences do emerge. We find that niches are associated with a relatively high proportion of expressed Safety and Privacy concerns. (Almost 65% of the prisoners in niches express a concern for Privacy, and almost 50% express a concern for Safety.) With mismatches, Freedom is by far the dominant concern, with over three-quarters of mismatched prisoners expressing a concern for Freedom, and with over 50% expressing Freedom as the primary concern. Non-stressed prisoners are characterized primarily by the disproportionate expression of Support concerns (almost 60% of non-stressed prisoners express a concern for Support, and with over one-third of such prisoners, Support is a primary concern.) Non-stressed prisoners are also concerned with Freedom, but not to the extent of the mismatched.

Table 6.24 compares the distribution of concerns between niches and mismatches only. Table 6.24 reveals that niches contain, in comparison with mismatches, an overrepresentation of Safety concerns for primary concerns, as well as for all concern comparisons. Similarly, Privacy concerns are overrepresented among the niche category when compared with mismatches. Mismatches, in comparison with niches, are characterized by a strong overrepresentation of Freedom themes.

Table 6.24

Distribution of Environmental Concerns Among Niche Taxonomy
Niche and Mismatch Comparisons
(Combined Sample)

| Environmental Concern | LEVEL OF CONCERN | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------|-----------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| | Primary Concern | | | | | All Concerns | | | | |
| | Niche (N=96) | | Mismatch (N=117) | | Total | Niche (N=96) | | Mismatch (N=117) | | Total |
| | N | % | N | % | | N | % | N | % | |
| PRIVACY | 17 | (17.7) | 18 | (15.4) | 35 | 62 | (64.9) | 42 | (36.1) | 104 |
| SAFETY | 20 | (20.8) | 10 | (8.5) | 30 | 48 | (49.5) | 48 | (41.2) | 96 |
| STRUCTURE | 6 | (6.3) | 7 | (6.0) | 13 | 21 | (21.6) | 29 | (25.2) | 50 |
| SUPPORT | 6 | (6.3) | 10 | (8.5) | 16 | 32 | (33.3) | 52 | (44.5) | 84 |
| FEEDBACK | 12 | (12.5) | 9 | (7.7) | 21 | 33 | (34.0) | 54 | (46.2) | 87 |
| ACTIVITY | 7 | (7.3) | 3 | (2.6) | 10 | 31 | (32.3) | 29 | (24.4) | 60 |
| FREEDOM | 28 | (29.2) | 60 | (51.3) | 88 | 56 | (58.8) | 88 | (75.6) | 144 |
| | 96 | (100%) | 117 | (100%) | 213 | 283 | | 342 | | 625 |

$\chi^2 = 14.3$
Significant at .05 level

$\chi^2 = 17.4$
Significant at .01 level

Table 6.25

Distribution of Environmental Concerns Among Niche Taxonomy
Niche and Non-stress Comparisons
(Combined Sample)

| Environmental Concern | LEVEL OF CONCERN | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|-------|-----------------|--------|----------------------|--------|-------|
| | Primary Concerns | | | | | All Concerns | | | | |
| | Niche (N=96) | | Non-stress (N=90) | | Total | Niche (N=96) | | Non-stress (N=90) | | Total |
| | N | % | N | % | | N | % | N | % | |
| PRIVACY | 17 | (17.7) | 6 | (6.7) | 23 | 62 | (64.9) | 28 | (30.8) | 90 |
| SAFETY | 20 | (20.8) | 4 | (4.4) | 24 | 48 | (49.5) | 22 | (24.2) | 70 |
| STRUCTURE | 6 | (6.3) | 8 | (8.9) | 14 | 21 | (21.6) | 29 | (31.9) | 50 |
| SUPPORT | 6 | (6.3) | 31 | (34.4) | 37 | 32 | (33.3) | 54 | (60.4) | 86 |
| FEEDBACK | 12 | (12.5) | 7 | (7.8) | 19 | 33 | (34.0) | 33 | (36.3) | 66 |
| ACTIVITY | 7 | (7.3) | 7 | (7.8) | 14 | 31 | (32.3) | 38 | (41.8) | 69 |
| FREEDOM | 28 | (29.2) | 27 | (30.0) | 55 | 56 | (58.8) | 62 | (69.2) | 118 |
| | 96 | (100%) | 90 | (100%) | 186 | 283 | | 266 | | 549 |

$\chi^2 = 36.3$
Significant at .001 level

$\chi^2 = 30.9$
Significant at .001 level

Table 6.26

Distribution of Environmental Concerns Among Niche Taxonomy
Non-stress and Mismatch Comparisons
(Combined Sample)

| Environmental Concern | LEVEL OF CONCERN | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|-------|---------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|-------|
| | Primary Concerns | | | | | All Concerns | | | | |
| | Mismatch (N=117) | | Non-stress (N=90) | | Total | Mismatch (N=117) | | Non-stress (N=90) | | Total |
| | N | % | N | % | | N | % | N | % | |
| PRIVACY | 18 | (15.4) | 6 | (6.7) | 24 | 42 | (36.1) | 28 | (30.8) | 70 |
| SAFETY | 10 | (8.5) | 4 | (4.4) | 14 | 48 | (41.2) | 22 | (24.2) | 70 |
| STRUCTURE | 7 | (6.0) | 8 | (8.9) | 15 | 29 | (25.2) | 29 | (31.9) | 58 |
| SUPPORT | 10 | (8.5) | 31 | (34.4) | 41 | 52 | (44.5) | 54 | (60.4) | 106 |
| FEEDBACK | 9 | (7.7) | 7 | (7.8) | 16 | 54 | (46.2) | 33 | (36.3) | 87 |
| ACTIVITY | 3 | (2.6) | 7 | (7.8) | 10 | 29 | (24.4) | 38 | (41.8) | 67 |
| FREEDOM | 60 | (51.3) | 27 | (30.0) | 87 | 88 | (75.6) | 62 | (69.2) | 150 |
| | 117 | (100%) | 90 | (100%) | 207 | 342 | | 266 | | 608 |

$\chi^2 = 31.14$
Significant at .001 level

$\chi^2 = 14.62$
Significant at .05 level

234

Table 6.25 compares the niche and the non-stress categories by relative prevalence of environmental concern. Again niches surface strong and consistent overrepresentation of Privacy and Safety concerns. The non-stressed surface similarly strong and consistent Support concerns. The overrepresentation of Support concerns also is evident in non-stressed-mismatch comparisons (Table 6.26). Non-stressed prisoners, in comparisons with mismatches, also surface differences in Activity concerns (overrepresentation of Activity concerns among the non-stress). Mismatches are, as with mismatch-niche comparisons, again differentiated from the non-stressed by a disproportion of Freedom concerns.

In general then, niches stand out as containing prisoners with Privacy and Safety concerns, mismatches concerned with Freedom, and non-stressed prisoners as primarily characterized by Support and to a lesser degree Activity concerns. Structure and Feedback concerns are more evenly distributed among types and provide no distinct partiality. However, Structure concerns appear to be more prevalent among the non-stressed, with Feedback concerns slightly more dominant among niche categories.

Freedom concerns remain everyone's concerns. Freedom appears in part to be almost a background theme, the canvas before the paint is applied. However, evidence of stress reduction for such a concern is provided in findings that among niches, almost 30% report a primary Freedom theme.

The Niche Taxonomy and Prison Settings

Our final table, Table 6.27, provides information concerning general types of settings in which prisoners reporting niches,

mismatches and non-stressed experiences are found. We see that niches contain an overrepresentation of clerical assignments compared with mismatches (16.5% of matches in clerical assignments compared to 6.7% of mismatches). Niches reflect an overrepresentation of maintenance and special housing assignments in comparison with the other categories, and an underrepresentation among vocational, academic, and industry assignments. Mismatches are characterized by a relative underrepresentation of clerical assignments and an overrepresentation in industry programs. Non-stressed prisoners are found disproportionately among vocational and educational programs (non-stressed prisoners sampled are three times as likely to be in such programs as prisoners in niches, and over twice as often as mismatched prisoners). Non-stressed prisoners occupy an intermediate position between niches and the mismatched with respect to clerical and industrial assignments and reflect a sizeable underrepresentation of maintenance assignments. Not surprisingly, no non-stressed prisoners are found within special housing categories. Thus, non-stress prisoners are found within settings that may be oriented to personal growth and tangible supports, and less often among non-training (maintenance) or protective (special housing assignments) settings.

Niches and mismatches both are associated with an overrepresentation of maintenance assignments, as well as special housing. The data suggest heterogeneity within such assignments, and from what we know about prison settings, we would expect to find polarity among these categories. Within special housing settings, we find relatively alienating and harsh environments (disciplinary segregation, idle companies, and mental observation units) as well as purposefully protective settings

Table 6.27

Distribution of Grouped Setting Categories Among Niche Taxonomy

| Setting Category ^a | Niche (N=97) | | Niche Type Mismatch (N=119) | | Nonstress (N=91) | | Total (N=307) | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------------------|--------|------------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Clerical | 16 | (16.5) | 8 | (6.7) | 12 | (13.2) | 36 | (11.7) |
| Maintenance | 54 | (55.7) | 61 | (51.3) | 32 | (35.2) | 147 | (47.9) |
| Vocational | 8 | (8.2) | 14 | (11.8) | 28 | (30.8) | 50 | (16.3) |
| Academic | 3 | (3.1) | 8 | (6.7) | 15 | (16.5) | 26 | (8.5) |
| Industrial | 2 | (2.0) | 13 | (10.9) | 4 | (4.4) | 19 | (6.2) |
| Special Housing | 14 | (14.4) | 15 | (12.6) | 0 | 00.0 | 29 | (9.4) |
| | 97 | (100%) | 119 | (100%) | 91 | (100%) | 307 | (100%) |

^aDescription of the settings found within each grouped setting category described in Table 6.1.

$\chi^2 = 54.9$
Significant at .001 level

(protective housing, programs for the elderly, for the emotionally handicapped). Similarly within maintenance programs, there are wing waiter assignments providing relative privacy and freedom, as well as kitchen assignments providing long hours, close supervision, and less benign conditions. Similarly, maintenance assignments may contain skilled assignments permitting considerable mobility and benefits, outside gangs, farm positions, as well as menial inside maintenance and waiter positions.

Clerical positions (positions often described as prized in prisons, see Chapter Eleven) reveal both niche and non-stress overrepresentation. Rarely are such positions occupied by prisoners describing stress but no stress amelioration (mismatches). Such assignments seem to be occupied by prisoners relatively insular to prison stresses (Glaser's inmate politician) or prisoners who find the subsetting ameliorative.

The findings reported in this chapter are modest ones. We know that prisoners describing niche transactions express relative prison satisfaction, and mismatches less. Such a conclusion, while providing evidence of the validity of our niche coding process, approaches tautology. We know additionally that prisoners in niches are more likely to express concerns for Safety and Privacy than are other categories of the niche taxonomy. Similarly, mismatches are concerned with Freedom, and the non-stressed with Support. Such conclusions too are expected ones, certain concerns are more closely linked with stress and frustration than are others. Additionally, we have some evidence that

particular settings are linked to niche transactions, while others are related to mismatched transactions, or are found among the non-stressed. These findings are suggestive of differential setting influences. However, we do not know what combinations of people and settings may intersect to result in a perceived niche for various concerns. We do not know, for instance, whether safety niches and safety mismatches reflect similar life histories and backgrounds, or are found in different kinds of prison environments. We do not know then whether congruence is yet attributable to setting differences, or to clear and distinct differences in people which may be associated with differential need for or selection for niche placement. A further refinement of congruence would require greatly expanded samples. However, in subsequent chapters, we will explore congruence as it emerges from the interview content. We will highlight in Chapters Seven through Eleven the characteristics of settings that prisoners coded Niche, Mismatch, or non-stress describe as ameliorative or non-ameliorative. Additionally, we shall discuss, where possible, information which may shed additional light on the person and concern findings reported in this Chapter.

Footnotes

1. Robert Johnson, Culture and Crisis in Confinement (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1976); Jake Gibbs, "Stress and Self-Injury in Jail," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Albany, 1978); Leo Carroll, Hacks, Blacks and Cons: Race Relations in a Maximum Security Prison (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1976); Clemens Bartollas, Stuart Miller, Simon Dinitz, Juvenile Victimization: The Institutional Paradox (New York: John Wiley, 1976).
2. Bartollas et al.
3. Ibid., Daniel Lockwood, "Sexual Aggression Among Male Prisoners," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Albany, 1977).
4. John Irwin, The Felon (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), at p. 84; Donald Clemmer, The Prison Community (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1958), points out that assimilation into a relatively stable prison career varies with age and time served, pp. 297-302.
5. Carroll; James Jacobs, Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), particularly, Chapter Three: "Challenge to Institutional Authority," at pp. 52-70.
6. Robert White, The Enterprise of Living: A View of Personal Growth, Second Edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), See Chapter Sixteen, "Education and Intellectual Growth," pp. 379-410. Travis Hirschi, Causes of Delinquency (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1969), presents data to support among young delinquents a causal chain which "runs from academic incompetence to poor school performance to disliking of school to rejection of the school's authority to the commission of delinquent acts." at p. 132. Albert Cohen, Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang (New York: The Free Press, 1955), notes that delinquency is a means of relieving anger and frustration created by an unpleasant school experience. Boys who do poorly in school reduce their interest in school, while those who do well continue schooling, and react more positively to school. pp. 112-119.
7. Hans Toch, Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp. 124-132.
8. Ibid., pp. 124-126. See Table 8.2 which reports similar findings for the samples used in Toch's study.

CHAPTER 7

Autonomy Niches

Introduction

Chapters 7 to 11 will explore the niche typology by referring to the interview content. The qualities of subsettings responsive to particular concerns will be examined for each subtype of the niche typology. Niches, Mismatches, and Non-stressed Transactions will be sifted and the characteristics of settings described by prisoners as ameliorative or non-ameliorative will be grouped. The groupings will not only be divided by niche types but by concerns. The perceived setting characteristics will be described as they relate to the taxonomy of environmental concerns within each category of the niche taxonomy.

The analysis of the niche taxonomy will be divided into five chapters as follows:

- Chapter 7: Autonomy Niches (primary concern for Freedom);
- Chapter 8: Insulation and Protective Niches (primary concerns for Privacy, Structure, and Safety);
- Chapter 9: Stimulation and Communion Niches (primary concerns for Activity and Feedback);
- Chapter 10: Mismatch Transactions;
- Chapter 11: Non-stress Transactions.

We saw in Chapter 6 that environmental concerns are not distributed evenly within the taxonomy. Thus each category of the taxonomy will not invariably be divided into sections corresponding to the environmental concerns. For instance non-stress

transactions are characterized by Support concerns and by heavy underrepresentations of Privacy and Safety concerns. There is no subcategory of the non-stressed corresponding to such concerns. Some ameliorative characteristics of settings are also responsive to several concerns. For instance among the niches, prisoners expressing concerns for Structure or Privacy report closely similar environmental characteristics. As a result the Niche type of "Insulation" includes interview content from both concerns.

Niche types are kept separate during the search for environmental characteristics of subsettings. We look for ameliorative transactions only among the interviews coded Niches, and describe mismatched transactions only among the coded mismatches. However, we may include vignettes and interview content expressed by a single prisoner within several niche types. For example, a prisoner may describe characteristics of his ameliorative subsetting that he may perceive to be responsive to both Safety, and Privacy concerns. His views may then be used in both Protective, and Insulation niche subsections.

Even within a model subdivided in such a fashion, distinctions may be lost. Concerns represent the things men strive for, and environments the things men strive within. When typing and prioritizing individual concerns (Freedom, Safety, etc.) and environmental transactions (Niches, Mismatches) we are simplifying reality considerably. Thus while we shall discuss settings responsive to Safety, we often lose the links between Safety and other concerns. For instance, adequate Safety may be linked with Support,

as energy is freed for new directions. Structure may provide the necessary external control leading to amelioration of stressed Freedom. Privacy may permit a task orientation (Support) as well as room for free and protected communication with others (Feedback).

Our major concern is in exploring the perceived qualities of particular prison subsettings that prisoners describe as stress-reducing, or aggravating. We will not, in the main, explore the particular subsettings themselves (special housing, maintenance, utility, kitchen, porter, clerical assignments within each niche type) but shall concentrate on the characteristics of subsettings that cross individual work, housing, and program assignments. These characteristics will be described using material from the interviews themselves. Redundancy is inevitable as a means to underscore the generality of the characteristics across settings as well as to describe the subtlety in quality such characteristics take.

Autonomy Niches: Settings for Freedom

Whatever the other stated purposes of confinement, prisons limit freedom (We can't treat 'em if we can't hold 'em). The walls and gates and security apparatus limit prisoner commerce with the world, and restrict his movements to several acres of crowded terrain, with movement doubly restricted by facility rules and regulations. The physical plant of the prison, moreover, provides a context and a setting for more significant forms of freedom limitation. Inmates typically accept the inevitability and irrevocability of limitations on mobility and on the loss of important free-world supports. They understand the implications of imprisonment very early, including the more obvious freedom limitations (the structural and physical aspects of confinement, those things that strike the visitor with the impact of theater). The loss of liberty is clear and obvious, advertised in everything one sees, unhypocritical, broaching no challenge and little sarcasm. One can come to terms with a wall.

Stressed freedom concerns expressed by prisoners arise in response to the everydayness, the noxious minutiae, the pettiness of everyday rules and regulations, the daily submission to facility prescriptions and proscriptions. Such concerns are highly personal, involving face to face interactions with facility staff members in whom power, without consent is somehow vested. What is complained about are relatively minor life events, particularly when perceived by prisoners as compromising a personal self image or self worth, and these involve greater threat and stress than intimations of facility repressiveness. Confrontations of the kind where the autonomy of personal acts is not

respected, are painful.

Autonomy niches are settings which permit the avoidance of sources of autonomy restriction, or in which egalitarian staff-prisoner communication is permitted, or settings in which the disciplinary machinery is modulated. Additional characteristics of settings that are ameliorative to stressed freedom concerns include enhanced freedom of movement, the self-chosen nature of participation and involvement in settings, or the degree to which such settings reflect the free and open life of the streets. Ameliorative characteristics of subsettings described by some prisoners include a range of physical and social characteristics that permit the displacing, camouflage, or even the expression, of resentment.

We shall examine several themes underlying Autonomy Niches. The themes are avoidance, communication, reactance, choice, mobility and normalcy.

Avoidance

The most frequently mentioned characteristic of settings that are ameliorative of stressed freedom concerns is the ability of a person within such settings to establish distance between himself and various sources of freedom restriction. Settings that permit avoidance of officers are particularly prized where officers present a potential for conflict. Albert Cohen comments:

One of the very important methods of conflict resolution is avoidance. Like any other method of conflict resolution, it depends on an "opportunity structure." In a prison these opportunities are at a minimum. The back-against the wall situation is

a systematic product of the physical and social ecology of the prison. 1

Goffman noticed that one of the major reasons for a person to take on an assignment in a mental institution was to get away from the level of supervisory control on the ward, and the autonomy threat such supervision provided.² Carrol and Glaser separately concluded that avoidance of officers was a major concern of prisoners.³

Prison assignments that permit the avoidance of officers, particularly officers who emphasize security concerns and who are perceived as asserting their superiority inappropriately, are sought. Staff often cooperate in the creation of positions in which the security apparatus is not as prevalent, and in which supervision does not require, or advertise, its presence. Most often such settings are beyond the prison security perimeter, on outside gangs, farms, gate crews, gardening crews. Outside the prison mutual avoidance is easier, with officers overlooking events and actions that would mandate intervention within the walls. Horseplay and boisterous behavior are less problematic and less out of place in the more open milieu of outside assignments.

Cox R 5: See, I was the one who asked for the outside, you don't have all the restrictions. Somebody standing over you telling you you got tickets and all that.

* * * *

* * * *

Cox S 6: (Outside) you don't have people telling you all the time to do this and do that and you can have time to just sit down and relax out there. It is a lot better outside on the farm than it is inside. I went out on a furlough and when I came back they told me that

I couldn't go back on the farm and they keep me in here for three months, and it was bad . . . See outside the time goes by faster and there ain't nobody out there always nagging you.

* * * *

* * * *

Avoidance may involve escape from the arbitrariness with which rules are enforced. Prison rules are rarely abolished, but permitted to lie dormant, only to appear when staff require them. Rules themselves are vaguely drawn, prohibiting acts such as loud and boisterous behavior, abusive conduct, horseplay, abuse of privileges, or unauthorized assembly. Such rules defy either realistic definition or consistent application.⁴

Cox R 14: Step off, shut up, on the gate, off the gate . . . in line, all kinds of things like that all the time . . . I don't know anybody who hasn't got at least one ticket in here . . . It's impossible, and it's bullshit, the stuff you get written up for . . . and some might write you up and others don't, it's ridiculous . . . sometimes they just do it to harass you, like this "out of place" what the hell is that, I must have got five of them alone . . . In upholstery I work and I don't get no tickets, not one, and we do lots of things in there that we might get tickets for on the block . . . but (the supervisor) he's all right, he lets us know what to do and things are fine. And I get away from the officers. I stay in the shop as long as I can every day . . . it's the only way I can make it here . . . I know what to do and what not to do, I don't get any tickets in the upholstery shop . . .

* * * *

* * * *

GH R 12: You either got to obey or get locked up. They lock you up for the stupidest things. You ask them a question and you can -- more or less you consult them about a problem and the officer they have got a more or less attitude about you and he is just like -- he will always be ready to lock you up out there and you can't consult them

about nothing . . . I think before I got out on the farm I think that I had 30 something tickets (infractions) . . . Ever since I have been on the farm -- I have been on the farm for two and a half months or something like that but I haven't received one ticket since I have been on the farm . . . You feel more at ease out there. Like you have got at least a little bit more freedom. The police don't be down on you as much as they do in the building and you get away from them and you can do things . . . And more or less they need the people who are doing bad in school and in the programs and they feel that there is nothing on the inside so they go to the outside. . . . I dropped a bomb because I just couldn't take all this police and everything. I wanted to get on the farm because it seemed as though every place that I went there was somebody that was trying to hassle me.

* * * *

* * * *

Arbitrariness may be acutely felt when a prisoner is subject to a number of supervisors. The avoidance of overlapping and often conflicting sources of control may be the chief referent of avoidance for some prisoners.

Cox S 6: It was the inconsistency I couldn't take. There was always somebody telling me to do something in the kitchen, the guards or the cooks, or some other inmates training me and stuff. It wasn't so much what they said to me but everybody seemed to have to say something . . . See the whole thing now is, like I can take orders, and on the outside paint crew I have only one supervisor and he tells me what is what, I don't have seventeen people all telling me something different and locking me up when I do one thing instead of another.

* * * *

* * * *

A prisoner with stressed Freedom sees himself as particularly vulnerable to autonomy limitations. He may understand the interactions that result in infractions, yet remain locked into his

behavior. Avoidance permits him to break the cycle of reaction and counterreaction. It permits a way to correct one's path of confrontations before it becomes inalterably fixed.

Elm N 17: I think that I have an authority complex also and I guess that I have to learn to adjust to that also. But it seems to me that I get a lot of unnecessary harassment and that is what is the main thing bothering me right now. . . . Sometimes it makes me cry. Tears come out of my eyes and I think about some of the things that you have to do and you can't do nothing about it. There is no one. You can write Albany or anyone that you want and there is no way around it. You have to try to get away from it . . . But my assignment, the foundry, it's different . . . It's the most beautiful assignment that you can have when you come in here. Besides work release I think . . . For the simple reason that we don't have that much contact with the police and the administration, so that cuts down on the hassles that we get from them . . . Without the foundry, I think that I would have more problems than I have now. And the fact that I'm in the foundry now and I don't have that many dealings with the police and that lightens the burden of my bit. Now if I don't have my job, then that means that I'm taking full impact of everything. And there is going to be much more and I'm going to be in bigger trouble. We're out all day and we're to ourselves and we have a civilian here and a police officer here and they're alright. They don't give us no static. The officer is good people and we respect him and he respects us. And I think that if I wasn't in here then there might be a dark hole inside this place.

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Some settings permit, through a combination of relatively un-surveilled and personally selected activity, a release from anger. Where harassment is aggravated by self-perceived vulnerability, avoidance serves the self in protecting it from volatile and counterproductive rage.

Cox S 21: Before I went outside, I was in a lot of fights. And since I been outside, I haven't gotten in any. I've got a sense of freedom out there. I can come back in not as wild as I used to be. My whole personality changed when they had us outside . . . I think I just changed when I got outside. I just changed my attitude. I mean, I had to. I'm out there. I don't care about anything except getting further out there. It was all right. It's a good thing, for me, for my mind.

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Att R 30: Well, I work outside the walls, and I take it out on whatever I'm doing out there. Like if I release it all, while I'm working, I take it out on that. It saves me more trouble in here if I do it out there . . . If I didn't there'd be some people hurting in here. That's why I let it outside the wall too . . . the job is very important. You take a lot of frustration out out there, working it out. You think a lot out there. In here you don't, you can't think . . . Well, everything's confusing. Like you say, take for instance the death of my mother. When my mind went haywire, I literally mean it. In my mind, I thought I was going to go crazy because of it. But to a vantage point, I didn't quite go that far . . . I can do the time . . . providing that I was working outside.

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When a prisoner sees himself as mature, yet treated like the modal prisoner who (in the eyes of the mature) requires control and limits, he must deal with the dissonance that disrespect for his atypical and unrecognized maturity may cause. Avoidance then means avoiding the incongruity of maintaining a self-perception as mature and enduring public treatment as immature. Avoidance may involve the avoidance of conditions that invite freedom-limiting and humiliating acts of officers. Such conditions require that one avoid certain prisoners.

Cox S 5: It's more rough here to do a bit, because the average inmate in here is real young. And with these young dudes, the police have to be strict on them. And by them being strict on them, they get used to being strict on them and it makes it more difficult for the older inmates . . . Like a young dude, he can take it. But I can't take that. Like a kid, the officer might say something to him, and then he'll look at me and say the same thing to me. Whereas he won't say nothing, I'm the one that'll tell him how I feel about it. So I get into even more difficulties . . . Yeah, it's hard. For the simplest things. Like if an officer tell you something, and you say something back to him, he's going to be right all the time. You know, if you just stand around and tell him how you feel about it and everything, he's ready to lock you up . . . But you don't have that much trouble inside on the farm. You get a lot of officers they ain't like inside, they ain't like that. Because inside, it seems like the police try to be more stricter with you. When you walk in the corridors, they tell you you can't talk in the corridors. On the farm, you just go out there, the man take the count, you just go out and go to your spot, do whatever you got to do. They don't allow kids out there, so the officers see they don't get on you.

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Cox N 14: They got a whole lot of kids in here. With men all this wouldn't be jumping off. Like up in Clinton, places like that, them dudes don't do all this . . . Well, it's just that with a whole lot of kids here, the police treat everybody like they're kids. And they treat everybody like a kid, that's how a whole lot of people get beat up. Cause they try to treat everybody the same. And it don't go like that. But the job I got is all right. The job I got now is all right. I work in the barber shop in the reception center . . . The police over there, they don't say nothing to you, you know. You mind your business, they mind theirs. They don't jump on your back if you do something wrong . . . Mostly because see, the inmates over there aren't kids, and they don't need the kind of stuff that's coming down in here. And the guards know that.

The proximity of those who require formal control may remind one of one's own sensitivity. Other prisoners may provide replay of unsuccessful coping, and memories of the self struggling with

similar concerns. Avoidance may involve removal from a round of activities that one sees as self-defeating, including similarly freedom concerned peers who may demand confrontations with staff as "honorable" confrontations.

Cox S 12: When you are here you be going back to acting like the way you were when you were 17 and 18 and when I was 20 years old I used to act different before that age - saying that I always had to prove myself and all that. When I first come here when I was -- when I was 16 or so I trying to talk to all the superflys and all that you know and killers and I try to talk to them and all that, and I get in trouble with both officers and inmates . . . On the farm you go out there and you don't have no police bothering you and you can go anywhere you want -- and out on the farm it is a little different and like you say you want to go to the bathroom and you just ask and then they let you go and you don't have too many fights and all that, and you don't have to prove yourself . . . There are men out there, they aren't messing up all the time, and you can kind of relax . . . people get along, at least mostly.

Communication

The pervasiveness of supervision may not be as critical a concern of prisoners as the way in which supervision is executed. Freedom concerned prisoners make gross distinctions among supervisory styles, and often describe supervision as inflexible and inhuman, (in which prisoners are treated as animals, particularly, with an allusion to the upstate rural upbringing of their keepers, as "cows"). Sometimes, on the other hand an officer or a supervisor may be described as an exception, an all right, a "good guy", regular.

Glaser found that the most frequently cited reason for disliking an officer was his manner of expressing himself toward inmates, rather than for the things he did. Glaser writes that "a

necessary condition for a staff member's favorable influence upon a prisoner appears to be the capacity to treat the prisoner pleasantly."⁵ Communication that is perceived as fair and consistent, and that attempts to provide answers to legitimate questions, and that assumes inmate maturity is differentially praised by prisoners. Communication that relies upon formal authority, including the gratuitous and frequent dispensing of infractions, or that abrogates responsibility by referring prisoners to other "human services" staff is held in contempt. Settings ameliorative for Freedom provide more normal and equitable subordinate-superordinate relationships. Negotiation is permitted in some work or living setting, and is communicated as a style of supervision.

Att N 1: There are officers out there, but the officers are more or less, see they know you're older . . . and they know you've just about made up your mind what you would like to do, and see out there they pretty much let you do it . . . not everything see, I mean it's a prison, but compared with inside see there's usually respect as far as the individuals and correction officers and civilian workers, their attitude toward us is nice, which I like. It's different from other places I've worked in here.

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Inmates differentiate among officers, and those who push, who harass, who do not "respect prisoners" are avoided, and those who can "relate" and who "respect" sought out. Freedom concerns are tabled while one is subject to the influence of certain supervisory styles, perceived as scarce and distinctly non-representative.⁶

Elm S 3: Yeah, for instance, in the corridor when I used to work for Mr. -- the officer there, and there is things that he used to do

-- like he will tell me to do this and I know that I got to do my job and he wants me to do it his way and it was a harder way and I told him no this is clean, I am doing my job. So he is one of the type of officers that you give him maybe a few mouth words back he will lock you up, and then like the time in the mess hall I asked the officer if I could go and wash my hands you know, coming from rec -- because I wanted to eat. So he said, "you should have washed your hands out there." And I said, "look they rushed us out," and so I asked the officer to wash my hands and he said no, it is too late. And I couldn't even get water on them and so he gave me a hassle in the mess hall and I said "okay, I am not going to eat with these dirty hands," and he said, "what did you say," and I said that I am not going to eat and I said, "I am going to go back out into the gym yard," and he said, "no, you are in here and you got to stay in here." I said "okay," and I go sit down and so he asked me for my ID on the way out and I figured that the static was all over and I went out into the yard and sat down and he came back out and he say I am going to lock you up and I say what are you going to lock me up for, what did I do. Now, he wasn't going to lock me up, he just wanted to see me blow up so that he would have a reason to write something down to lock me up. . . . See now its different because the officers over there (in the armory), I know what to do and they ain't got to be goin' and telling me what to do. In the armory, I got a job, and the officers see it and don't harass us so much, they know we got troubles too . . . They respect us, I can say that.

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GH N 23: It's a nice place to do your bit, but it all depends on the officer in charge. Like the officer that we just had was beautiful people. It seemed like you could relate to him. It was kind of hard to see him as someone in charge or whatever, it seemed like you could relate to him.

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Cox T 1-1: After a while, I remember what could be said as a turning point. I began to fall in with the program. And I admit that, when I first came in here, I had the idea that the police was,

you know, like the Gestapo. And when they kicked me out of school I met an officer that I had to work with all day without -- not these officers here, they were pulling for me. Now this don't happen every day, but they were pulling for me . . .

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Settings in which officers communicate with prisoners as equals, in which social distance and rules are not used as a means of avoiding what prisoners describe as the human responsibilities of officers, are described as staffed by more experienced officers. While new officers may be concerned with providing human services and fair supervision, they often find that there are structural impediments to such interests. The New York Special Commission on Attica notes that new officers are expected to enforce regulations that are "poorly communicated, often petty, senseless or repressive."⁷ Young officers are typically warned of the dangers of indulgency and possible collaboration with prisoners and are instructed "Until you are familiar with what is allowed, tell inmates 'no' when they ask for any special permission."⁸ Inexperienced officers may also be less tolerant for fear of losing control. Some prisoners describe young officers as overreacting, and carrying a front of manliness and strength that hides insecurity and fear of the job.⁹

Cox S 11: I would say that you get more tickets on the inside than you do on the outside, because of the simple fact that there is more old officers outside, you know and you have more I would say more new jacks inside and there is more old jacks on the outside.

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GH N 11: You work with experienced officers once again that don't push people. They know that you

know your job and you'll do it if you're left alone, and they just tell you what you have to do, and the job runs itself -- you just do what you have to do and that's it.

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Cox N 6: All he wants to know is if you are doing your work or not. He ain't pushy and trying to get you to say something to him so that he can come back and give you a ticket, you know. Like the young officers, it's like the kids in here, they have to prove something, they're men and all that.

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Elliot Studt describes a process in a California prison in which settings were orchestrated to provide egalitarian and flexible communication between officers and prisoners. Studt describes the classification process for a prisoner who was constantly in trouble, and possessed very limited social skills. Studt comments: "The counselor would search the institutional program for a job assignment in which W. could learn, where at first not too much would be demanded of him, and with a supervisor who could both understand his limitations and be relaxed in response to his occasional hostility."¹⁰ McCleery, in discussing possible solutions in resolving the freedom concerns of his "Promethean hero" suggests replacing industry programs with a "craft shop type of enterprise in which major responsibility for production (would be) delegated to inmates under light and cooperative supervision."¹¹ In one small foundry program in Elmira, and in several arts and crafts programs in other New York prisons, such a model has been adopted. In such programs, some labeled intransigents are trained and supervised by a sensitive "easy-going" civilian who tolerates many

of the symptoms of freedom assertiveness, including militant rhetoric, and allows for inmate rejection of compliance to strict standards of behavior. A supervisor may appeal to the prisoner's sense of pride in the trade.¹² One such supervisor notes:

I try to keep a low pressure environment without losing control . . . They know where the line is drawn, but I also tell them there is a reason why I enforce it. The work is decent and it is acceptable and there is such a thing as pride in doing hard and at times somewhat dangerous work. And for this reason this degree of pride that they exhibit in what they are doing helps to generate some type of low pressure setting . . . I have a lot of success with this particular type of inmate, the one who can't seem to quite fit in . . . Who get in trouble all the time . . . I don't let myself get taken in by the horseplay, and the screwing up, these men have a low opinion of themselves and it's necessary to correct that.

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Goffman notes that more flexible supervision can be provided by a work supervisor than by an officer, because for them, "The milieu of the work place tended to be maintained."¹³ Work supervisors have a clearly defined training role, which permits leniency without violation of norms requiring impersonal relations with the cons.

Cox N 2: Brick mason is a shop where you can learn something you see. The instructor there he will teach you, you know . . . Like I had a lot of problems before, but this guy is good, it's like going to work . . . My instructor, he will come into each individual and show him how to lay the foundation and how to start a project and he is all right. He doesn't push nobody and as long as everybody gives him respect you know, he will instruct everything all right in the shop, and he will respect us. That is the way I believe more of the officers should treat you know -- inmates inside of institutions. It is just he treats everybody as an individual. He treats them with respect, not like a kid -- a child.

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Cox R R: (The teachers) they're pretty nice men, you know. I know some of them when I went to school and they're all right with me. I see a lot of the other inmates get along with them, too. See, they don't try to push their superiority around, you know. They can tell you what to do just like the guard can, but if you don't bother them, they won't bother you. They just teach, you know, try to make you learn something for your own benefit. They try to help you. They try to help me, I know that. Like Mr. , one of the teachers here, he went out of his way to help me to try to get me into college, you know . . . when I go to the board. But they don't try to push a rap on you, you know, like I can tell you what to do, so you got to do what I say. That's why I like a lot of them. The officers though . . .

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Freedom may involve the freedom to do something by oneself, with an implicit understanding communicated by those in authority that one is mature enough and adult enough not to abuse this freedom. An officer or work supervisor who walks away, sometimes conspicuously, may thereby communicate that he trusts his charges, and respects their judgement.

Cox R 2: Yeah. You're not constantly watched by an officer. He'll give you the assignment, he'll tell you what he wants done, how he wants it done, and he might leave you there for a while and come back later, or you'll finish and report to him that the assignment's finished, would you check it over . . . Yeah, I prefer it because you know, they trust you, it's like a trustee program, they give you the opportunity to prove to them that you're worthy to conduct yourself in a mature manner without constant supervision like you're a child. That's the way it should be. They should have more programs set up within the institution where a guy could be set upon a task by himself. Given the orders or like a blueprint of what to do that day, or for that period of hours. And he should be able to do it himself or with an associate and then present his work at the end of the task. And he should get like graded on it, or if not graded commented if it's wrong or something like that. Because there's no

need for the constant supervision . . . The officers respect you on an adult basis there. And the officers out there understand that these aren't no little kids out here. If they were kids they wouldn't put them out here with the responsibilities. Driving tractors, driving trucks, cooking and pasteurizing milk, they wouldn't give a child that responsibility.

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Att N D: One of the most important things in this -- and this is not only true of my work assignment here in Attica -- you know, I am tempted personally -- I like to have a certain amount of integrity -- uh -- uh -- you know -- awarded to me by say my employer. And this is what I have in the library, like. I know what I have to do and I do it and I do it when I want to and how I want to -- right. And I don't have anybody looking over me, harassing me . . . My supervisor is a civilian. And this is another thing. He is a credit to the place, a young rebel, we are the same, he is a college grad, not a hack, I can talk to him. He trusts me, like I'm an adult, with normal intelligence who can work without supervision.

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Reactance

There are men who may have experienced such trauma with parental or school officials that they see themselves as constantly challenged, disrespected, humiliated. They may reciprocate by refusing casual requests, performing work perfunctorily, baiting or goading authority figures. Their world is one in which constant freedom striving is required, yet doomed by the repression one invites. Brehm has postulated a state of "psychological reactance" which defines a motivational state aimed at expressing and maximizing freedoms that are threatened.¹⁴ Heilman and Toffler, in studying this construct, have concluded that reactance will rarely be manifested if freedom can be obtained in alternate ways,

or if situations can be orchestrated so that freedom limitation is perceived to be tolerable.¹⁵

Studies of prison adjustment patterns invariably describe a kind of rebellion, in which inmate-felt futility and frustration result oftentimes in violence. Clemmer's discussion of the "unadjustable inmate", Sykes' description of the "ball buster", McCleery's "Promethean Hero", Goffman's "intransigent", Cohen and Taylor's "confronter", Toch's "Feared and Respected Opponent", or "Man of Militance"¹⁶ refer to prisoners who refuse to come to terms with perceived helplessness, although they are ruled by it. The coping pattern of such prisoners is to advertise defiance to the world, expressing an honorable volatility which permits a self-image (if not a public image as desired) as feared, not fearful. McKorkle and Korn posit several important sources of self-esteem resulting from such a stance.

By finding reasonable pretexts for aggressive protests he is able to achieve at least three essential psychological objectives: (1) the cathecting of hostilities originally generated by his failures in human relations generally and his resentment at confinement in particular; (2) reinforcement of his self picture in the role of a martyred victim of superior force, with attendant justifications of his "heroic counter-attacks"; (3) absolution of any personal sense of guilt or responsibility for his offense against society by emphasizing and concentrating on society's real or fancied offenses against him.¹⁷

Goffman maintains, that

Even the kind warden's polite request to show one's paintings to visitors may have to be rejected, lest this degree of cooperativeness seems to underwrite the legitimacy of the jailor's position, and incidentally, the legitimacy of his conception of oneself.¹⁸

Even when facing clear approbation (not only by staff for

whom such approbation is expected and required but from inmates for whom such actions seem to embrace a naive, uncool, and self-defeating concept of honor) one may adopt reactance as a stance of integrity.¹⁹ Reactance is likely to provide short term gains with long periods to study those gains (one wonders whether Prometheus had second thoughts). In Settings in which reactive inmates pay the price of reactivity, they experience significant tradeoffs, often loss of support, activity, loss of good time, loss of wages and commissary, parole compromising, increased vulnerability to control. However, the settings are perceived by prisoners as meeting badly understood but preemptively obeyed freedom concerns. Such settings are typically labeled special housing, and may include disciplinary segregation, idle companies, and mental observation units, all reinforcing one's image as special and uncontrolled.

GH R F: I'm in here for not giving up . . . They tried to force this job on me. So they come out and told me that I got to take this, but I don't want to take this. So when you don't want it they put you down here . . . here . . . you're not compelled to work. The only reason a person will work is to get some money for his commissary and things of this nature. But I will not work. I do not want to work you know. In other words, "Take this." Why should I? . . . But they were going to force it on you. "We want you to." I want to do what's beneficial to me. What I want, not what they want.

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To some prisoners, the segregation area becomes a bastion erected against a world that has conclusively proven its injustice and inhumanity. One's non-cooperation can permit one to demonstrate one's contempt for the system and all its appendages.

GH R I: I'd die before I'd work in any institution. I wouldn't work. I wouldn't even accept parole. If I ain't good enough to get no justice, I ain't good enough to get up in the witness stand and tell the truth. I ain't no good to go on parole or nothing else. They can't make no deals with me. I'll file a fifty million dollar suit against the state; that's supposed to be in front of the court now. I don't know what they're doing about it.

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GH R II: You see I've been through that regular routine that you're talking about, in my cell and going out and going to work, that regimentation thing. And right now I feel more comfortable without doing that. I get spaced out and I don't want to have nothing to do with it. I don't want to have nothing to do with the State and I don't want to be a guinea pig. I get obsessions and then I just stay in my cell. A year, eight months, or however long. I'm spaced out. I'm tired of being a robot. I get tired of being a robot and walking in and out of my cell and the routine you see . . . these changes that invariably they put me through. Their attitudes and their rehabilitation and all this. "Be a man and we'll treat you like a man" and all this. All them little heads. Like I said, I have ten years to do and these years have been kind of hard for me, but I haven't bent, you know? Bent for nobody, you know? Officers, I wouldn't want them to say nothing to me. Keep going. I wouldn't want to have to come out of my cell until I wanted to come out. They could just leave me alone. They could leave me up here for the rest of my life. Why should I -- if they catch me doing something out of order they could send me up here for the rest of my life. So why should I be giving them the chance. They know where I stand and I know where they stand. My actions prove that.

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Prisoners may see themselves as surrounded by officers who not only restrict autonomy, but do so even while ostensibly friendly and congenial. Prisoners allude to the cleverness of staff, and

the necessity of staying away from emasculating and ingratiating staff, and their attempts to change one to suit their ends.

GH R HH: And I have to suffer because of this, because the fact that I don't come into work in the morning and smile or because I don't stick my head in the office in the morning and give him some information, about somebody. See everybody knows -- in the population when you come in here that they say, there ain't nobody in the officer mess hall except the rats. And the mess hall is infested with rats. And you know what they're talking about. So you go in there and try not to be associated with them. You see that everybody is running in the halls and giving guys slips and you see the officers coming in and sitting and everybody is getting shaken down . . . I don't want no officer being my friend.

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GH R II: I don't want to submit. I don't want the administrators to think that they are doing something for me. I don't want to go through the exchange . . . If you have these jobs then you put yourself in these positions.

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Strong autonomy concerns sometimes shield potent concerns for personal safety. Bettelheim states:

The assaultive patient presents special problems to staff. He is overwhelmed by the need to beat down or destroy so that he may be safe. Hence his real underlying need is safety. He imagines his physical or moral existence to be in danger, witness the many acts of violence which are committed by "normal" persons in defense of their honor. When one feels that his honor is being respected rather than threatened, one experiences no need for violent defense . . . Unfortunately mental patients are exposed to messages that tells them that the environment in which they live expects, and hence fears, that they may act destructively.²⁰

The marshalling of rage and control are linked in complex fashion to its expression, and one's propensity to react may be controlled only through self-segregation.

GH R R: See I am doing an easier bit up here. You find that up here (segregation) I stay out of trouble more, because I am the type of individual that I do most of my time in the box you know . . . I never ask for the box, it's just that I just sometimes fly off and strike one of these officers in here and you know then they put you automatically in the box. One thing leads to another. While you are there someone might say something and then you are into something . . . problems out there.

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GH R S: Some mornings you will be cranky with the world and the guy next door and you want to destroy everything and then you are okay the next day . . . so I'm better off up here.

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Mobility

One cannot walk unimpeded through a maximum security prison for even short distances. Officers interrupt one's movements to check the legitimacy of one's presence, and the propriety of one's pass. and physical restrictions of gates are everywhere apparent. Settings that permit relatively free movement through the facility are therefore prized as liberating and conducive to greater autonomy.

GH R AA: Well, now as I say my work is different and I hear a lot of guys complaining about them putting up the gates and you can't go here and do this no more. I am not involved. I go to my program at 4:30 and then you know, I go in and go to sleep for a couple of hours or stay out there all day and then I don't come back in until 6:00 at night so you know really whatever they do is not too much to me because my program does not change. I am pretty fortunate on that, I am completely free outside.

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GH N 13: I can escape practically all of it. I have my own schedule. Most of the good clerk's jobs you'll find have the same privileges. But you have a within institution pass, which you really don't need because you're known anyway. And you pretty much have the run of the prison, nobody ever bothers you. It's about as far removed as you can get from it.

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Jobs with institutional passes, runners and clerks, maintenance personnel find that mobility permits a more varied and changing prison life. Such prisoners can move about, see things, interact with fellow-inmates, and reduce one's sense of restlessness and boredom:

GH N 10: A lot of the times you might have a whole lot of hostility build up because you got to stay in one place and you don't have anything to do. But this way, you can move around. You can go over here and talk to this guy, go over there and fix something, keep you moving around . . . Well, as far as mobility, I think it's about the best job. Because you have access to all the blocks, to the catwalks.

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GH N 15: Well, as far as myself, I'm an inmate plumber, so I get around very well. I start out at 8 o'clock in the morning on pass, and I don't return to my block until 4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Yes, it provides a tremendous sense of freedom. The first time since I've been upstate that I've really felt that I can do this time, plus involve myself into other things. Oh, they can get you very excited, very uptight. I know myself it gets me very uptight. I'm confined to the same area day after day, and I'm doing twelve years. And just to know that I'm going to see the same thing, see the same faces and be in the same place every day, there's nothing to look forward to. Sure, because I get around the whole institution. Without any problems. I'm not confined to an area, I walk in different blocks.

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Choice

Choice itself, the freedom merely to choose an activity, however mundane, may in itself be ameliorative. Prisons generally provide few opportunities for self-selection of activities and goals. Classification procedures accommodate personal needs and values idiosyncratically, occasionally according them importance, but usually emphasizing staff criteria of security considerations, age, educational attainment. Where actions are in the main controlled, even tiny symbolic acts may take on ameliorative properties.

Bettelheim has experienced situations which highlight the importance of making a mark, of exerting some force, when subject to total control. He writes, "What was implied (in confronting an SS officer, and courting death directly) was the necessity, for survival, to carve out, against the greatest of odds, some areas of freedom of action and freedom of thought, . . . (S)ome minimal choices, some leeway . . . I need to prove to myself that I had some power to influence my environment . . . I acted on the unconscious realization of what I needed to survive."²¹

Stotland's work with respect to the maintenance of hope has emphasized that action itself, or the perception of one's capacity to act, is often critical in reducing anxiety.²² Action helps in convincing oneself that one is not helpless and ruled by others whose motives are not clear. It is for this reason that in prisons where choice is found, stress is often reduced.

GH R AA: The freedom you have that you can come out if you want to -- that means pretty much to me even though I spend most of my time in my cell -- just knowing that I can come out if I want to. See I can do it when I want to, I can choose it. Most other places you can't, if I wasn't a porter I couldn't choose to do things . . . I would be told.

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Cox R G: Like in the plumbing and heating program like it was one of the few things in here that I like because I chose it . . . nobody said I had to do it, like school. I did really bad in school, I can't be made to do nothing. I have to like it . . . And the program itself is different too, you can pretty much do what you want in it, as long as you abide the rules.

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Att R T: It's one of the few places where I can do what I want (porter) . . . it's little things that I like, I can do my job, without anyone always harassing me, I can relax, I don't like to be told what to do, I like to choose what I like to do, and all I do is sweep the tier and nobody ever tells me anything . . . I'm pretty free there.

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Choice may involve the freedom to choose an activity congruent with a self-image. When ordered to do something, particularly when the activity seems servile or demeaning, one's image of self may be violated. Amelioration occurs when new activities, perceived to be congruent are found.

Att R 5: Working at something that I wasn't adapted to. That would get to me. If you put me in a job, like working in a laundry or a mess hall or something, I couldn't hack it -- I would go stark raving mad. It's just not my type of work and I didn't ask for it. Now if you put me doing something over here -- there's different types of work that I'm able to do. If

you put me in one of the things that completely turns my stomach, that's completely against my grain -- like working in a mess hall. When I was in the service, they had me in the mess hall. And there's just certain things that I just can't handle and things I won't do and that's one of them. I definitely think a person should be doing the type of work that he's qualified for. Not just putting him off somewhere just to get him out of the way. That's the way a lot of these people do. But then a lot of these people don't want to work. I have friends of mine, one of them he must have had 10 different jobs since we've been here. He came out of reception with me. And he'll last a half hour and he'll listen to some guy say "mop the floor". "I ain't mopping no floor." And that's his attitude, he came in with that. I'm like that myself . . . But I was able to get into the shop and I like it, and I'll probably stay until I leave here, see, I chose it.

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Normalcy

Flynn suggests that environments promote prisoner health and well being when they reflect "normalcy", or abstention" from traditional surveillance, physical barriers, deterrence by intimidation and "target hardening".²³ Prisoners often seek out settings that are reminiscent of the Free and Open street life remembered, and less evocative of confinement. The characteristics to which prisoners resonate are described as familiarity and naturalness, a feeling of relaxation and release. The rituals of security are deemphasized within such settings and individuals feel as though they are, at least marginally, free. Outside the walls of the prison, where security is deemphasized, supervision casual and individualized, many prisoners may see the setting as pleasant, and less bastille-like than most. Inmates argue that in more normal settings, people act more normally.

Elm N I: Yes, as far as infraction reports, as far as getting into any type of physical contact, all this you avoid for the simple reason you're more or less open. And everybody is more or less doing what they know they're supposed to be doing and acting just exactly who they are, for the simple reason that they're out, open, and everybody's feeling a little bit better as far as being -- out and going through the things on the inside world, and when you come out it's a little bit more open, a little bit more free to move, and fresh air to breathe.

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Att N K: And when your work is done you can sit around the shack and you can talk and play cards and be human. That is the good thing about the whole thing. But -- uh -- there is a whole general thing -- you can go out there and do your time and be away from everybody. And you don't have to worry about the harassment -- the hassle of being in line, but we don't go back and forth. We work in no kind of formation and -- well -- we cook out there too. I mean we have got a hot plate out there, a coffee pot. It is more like, you know -- you are on a job where you can do as you please.

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Cox N 6: Once you finish your work and you have nothing else to do you and the others can go outside and sit down and relax or even you can go for a walk over to one of the others squares or another squad and inside you have to wait until everyone is done and sit and wait for them to be done. That is why I stay out there and since I have been out there I see that as long as you do what you are assigned to do, you know, ain't nothing to it. You stay out of trouble, you can relax and you won't get no tickets like in the mess hall that is all they give out. It's different out there.

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Freedom concerns can also be ameliorated by association with outsiders who provide contact with non-prison persons and tangentially, with a free world.

Att N L: Well, something like our instructors -- our civilians and teachers from Genesee Community College. You feel much more comfortable around them.

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In extreme instances, settings may provide a sense that the prison is no longer there, in a surround with cues and images of the free world.

Aub R 18: I always try to, no matter what institution I ever went to, you know, would try to get to work outside. I try to work out in the yard. I always liked to work outside even though the time that I am doing I cannot get outside of the walls or gates and it is like being outside with the sun and shit like that. Like I grow flowers and have flower beds and shit like that. Like I have a lot of trees that we grow and shit like that. Well it is better to work out there for myself personally. I would not like to work in no factory or no shop or nothing like that. I worked in the sheet metal shop in Auburn and I did not like it. I like the outside and the wind blowing in my face and shit like that. There is something in that, like home a bit . . . Well not like home, but at least a little less than inside.

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Aub R 6: We come in the morning and have our food in there too and you can forget pretty much you are in there. And that is what is pretty nice about it.

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In normal settings one can follow one's own pace, choose one's own activities, elect spontaneity, shed careful self-control, and marshal amenities for relaxation. While settings that are described as normal are occupied by prisoners only for a short time during the day they are often described as providing an important respite from the surrounding "abnormality" of prison

life. As with many of the subsettings described as ameliorative, the stress reduction extends to other spheres of prison life. They are able to look forward to "free" time in a niche, and they are able to preserve an arena of autonomy within the prison.

Conclusion

Prisoners live in a world in which cigarettes become as important as they were in the seventh grade, and in which a cup of coffee and space to drink it are scarce and often staff dispensed. The necessity to be adult, and the accompanying necessity to approach staff for most services creates frustration, particularly when those same staff communicate in a non-egalitarian manner, and are the source of punishments as well as resources.

Even in prison, freedom concerns must be accommodated, if not to respond to prisoner demands for respect, then simply as a natural consequence of running a facility, receiving cooperation and stimulating compliance. The industry must produce goods, the farm must be managed, the flower beds cleaned, breakfast prepared, the lid kept on. Some prisoners are provided considerable freedom within the walls as a natural consequence of performing certain tasks, and staff similarly temper rules, and abandon restrictive patterns of communication, in return for compliance.

We saw that characteristics of settings that resonate to the freedom-stressed prisoner include the ability to avoid officers, or to elect supervision from particular officers, the

ability to advertise autonomy through reactance, or experience it through choice, mobility, normalcy. Particular prison sub-settings have more potential as freedom niches than do others. Farms, outside gangs, gate crews etc. provide avoidance, as well as mobility and felt normalcy. However avoidance is also an ameliorative theme expressed by prisoners in isolated settings within the walls. Communication styles are described as a function of the personalities of officers themselves and are described in a number of settings. Mobility is facilitated in clerical and skilled maintenance positions. Choice involves not the setting itself but the degree of prisoner control over his assignment to the setting and the personal autonomy such control reflects. Normalcy involves a combination of characteristics that defy easy referent, but are described by prisoners as "street like" and "not maximum security".

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3 OF 7

FOOTNOTES

1. Albert Cohen, "Prison Violence: A Sociological Perspective," in Prison Violence by Albert Cohen, George Cole, and Robert Bailey (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 1976), pp. 3-22 at p. 17.
2. Erving Goffman, Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates, Anchor Books (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1961), pp. 224-225.
3. Leo Carroll, Hacks, Blacks and Cons: Race Relations in a Maximum Security Prison (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 1974), pp. 139-141. Daniel Glaser, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System Abridged Edition (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), pp. 83-89.
4. Selective enforcement of prison rules is also common, with explanations for the seeming arbitrariness withheld by staff as either unnecessary, or excessively revealing. As Sykes has noted, guards often feel that, "providing explanations carries an implication that those who are ruled have a right to know - and this in turn suggests that if the explanations are not satisfactory, the rule or order will be changed. But this is in direct contradiction to the theoretical power relationship of the inmates and the prison officials . . . If the inmate population maintains the right to argue with its captors, it takes on the appearance of an enemy nation with its own sovereignty; and in so doing it raises disturbing questions about the nature of the offender's deviance." Gresham Sykes, The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 75.
5. Glaser, p. 84.
6. E.M. Forster illustrates the impact of power differentials in creating stereotypical portraits of the British in British-ruled India:

Aziz joined in. "Why talk about the English? Brr...! Why be either friends with the fellows or not friends? Let us shut them out and be jolly. Queen Victoria and Mrs. Bannister were the only exceptions and they're dead."
 "No, no, I do not admit that, I have met others."
 "So have I," said Mahmoud Ali, unexpectedly veering.
 "All ladies are far from alike." There mood was changed and they recalled little kindnesses and courtesies. "She said 'Thank you so much' in the most natural way." "She offered me a lozenge when the dust irritated my throat." . . .
 "But of course all this is exceptional. The exception does not prove the rule. The average woman is like Mrs. Turton, and Aziz, you know what she is." . . . He too generalized from his disappointments - it is difficult for members of a subject race to do otherwise." A Passage to India, Harvest Books (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1952), pp. 12-13.

7. New York State Special Commission on Attica, Attica: The Official Report of the New York State Special Commission on Attica (New York: Bantam, 1972), p. 74.
8. Ibid.
9. Older officers are however likely to be able to choose settings and assignments in which leniency is possible. Typically officers with seniority choose settings apart from large numbers of prisoners, and help to establish criteria for entry. Officers in such settings are likely to know inmates, and may recruit selected inmates.
10. Elliot Studt, Sheldon Messinger, and Thomas Wilson, C-Unit: A Search for Community in Prison (New York: Russell Sage, 1968), p. 247.
11. Richard McCleery, "Communication Patterns as Bases of Systems of Authority and Power," in Theoretical Studies in Social Organization of the Prison, Richard Cloward et al. (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1960), pp. 49-77 at p. 63.
12. Galtung comments with respect to the advantages of particularistic guard-prisoner interactions: "This particularistic role has the advantage that it can, if played by a skillful guard, fit the prisoner like a tailor-made suit, and its effects can be adjusted to the changing moods of the prisoner. Further, in a particularistic relation less drastic sanctions should have higher efficiency than they have in a universalistic relationship, for greater sensitivity to subtleness will be cultivated," Johan Galtung, "Prison, the Organization of Dilemma," in The Prison: Studies of Institutional Organization and Change, ed. by Donald Cressey (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1961), pp. 107-148 at p. 137.
13. Goffman, p. 235.
14. Jack Brehm and John Sensenig, "Social Influence as a Function of Attempted and Implied Usurpation of Choice," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 4 (1966): 703-707.
15. Madeline Heilman and Barbara Toffler, "Reacting to Reactance: An Interpersonal Interpretation of the Need for Freedom," Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 12 (1976): 519-529.
16. Sykes, p. 99; Richard McCleery, p. 60; Goffman, p. 62; Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor, Psychological Survival: The Experience of Long Term Imprisonment (New York: Pantheon, 1972), pp. 140-150; Hans Toch, Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp. 110-116.
17. Lloyd McCorkle and Richard Korn, "Resocialization Within Walls," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 293 (1954): 88-98 at p. 95.
18. Goffman, p. 181.

19. Ezra Stotland states that aggression following confrontation and failure, is often an effort to restore self-esteem. Aggression may not be instrumental in the sense of being important to the achievement of long term goals, but seemingly gratuitous violence may be essential to permit an individual to handle a revised self-concept. The Psychology of Hope (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1969), pp. 122-127.

20. Bruno Bettelheim, A Home for the Heart (New York: Knopf, 1974), pp. 69-70.

21. Bruno Bettelheim, The Informed Heart: On Retaining the Self in a Dehumanizing Society (New York: Avon, 1960), pp. 148-150.

22. Stotland, pp. 122-132.

23. Edith Flynn, "The Ecology of Prison Violence," in Prison Violence, pp. 115-133 at p. 124.

CHAPTER 8

Insulating Niches and Protective Niches

Insulating Niches: Settings for Privacy and Structure

Eysenck's studies of extroversion and introversion and Helson's concept of adaptation levels, surface evidence of individual differences in both need for and tolerance of stimulation.¹ Some men choose solitude more often than others, limit their exposure to situations, seek quietude and privacy. In prison (while we have no reason to believe that needs for involvement and arousal are distributed in ways different from the distribution of such needs in the general population) the situation for many encourages self insulation rather than activity and involvement.² Prisoners often cope with prison life by reducing the level of their experience, and controlling its range to arenas easily managed, personally controlled, solitary, or non-threatening in their familiarity.

Settings ameliorative for stressed Privacy and Structure concerns, insulating niches, provide separation from the bulk of the prison population, and particularly from personally defined irritants. They are "quiet" settings, including secluded clerk positions, wingwaiter and porter positions (particularly on tiers where the majority of prisoners are at industry, or at school, or are otherwise occupied for the majority of the day), settings that permit a maximum amount of cell time, or permit control of particular spaces for specified periods of time, or permit access to areas with group-respected rules for conduct and behavior. We shall discuss several themes underlying stressed

Privacy and Structure concerns. The themes are compatibility, environmental clarity, privacy and work, and disengagement.

Compatibility

Seeking privacy may include a search for compatible companions. The concept of social congruence, while as old as match-making, is about as well developed. What we know is that typically interpersonal congruence is facilitated, or made less fragile by shared interests and common values.³ One makes serious errors, of course, but one can choose new companions, divorce a wife and generally elect new and more refined goals with clearer and more valid sets of selection criteria. Homogeneity of background and upbringing often leads to shared expectations. Bettelheim states that,

The members of a family, whether they realize it or not, have a great deal in common, background, outlook and how things are done...And if things become unpleasant, one can always retire to one's room, go outdoors, or busy oneself elsewhere.⁴

However, not only are prison relationships relatively incapable, but they are encumbered by great heterogeneity in inmate personal characteristics. Prisoners find that they have little in common in terms of background or outlook, with most other prisoners. Vischer reports that the major complaint among French and German prisoners of war during World War I was the enforced constant contact with other people. Vischer's account emphasized prisoners' expressions of irritability and resentment expressed in excessive fault-finding and boasting.⁵ Indeed much of the

literature describing prisoner relations emphasizes the self-insulation stance of many men doing time. Polansky found low scores related to measures of prisoner liking for one another, and he concurs with Clemmer's observation of a generally "atomistic" and egocentric prisoner world. Polansky found that "many of the inmates despise others of their number for the very crimes from which they themselves were introduced . . ."⁶ Glaser, similarly concluded that "As a whole prisoners seem more inclined to maintain voluntary isolation than to seek solidarity with other prisoners . . . voluntary isolation seems to be greater when there has been prior imprisonment and when there is a great degree of heterogeneity among the inmates of an institution."⁷ Studt and Messinger report that in C-unit severe problems occurred between youth and adult prisoners, who uniformly "hated each other and distrusted each other."⁸

One of the most significant variables in interpersonal compatibility is age, a variable which, as Toch maintains, is both of developmental and chronological interest.⁹ One tries to avoid settings in which the setting and the activities within it are "defined by the requirements of the less mature."¹⁰ Maturity involves descriptions of oneself as having serious, long-term interests that must be methodically pursued. The immature on the other hand, "play", and seemingly are unconcerned with the effects of their actions on themselves or on others in their environment.

Cox N 17: And I just think that we are more mature in the storeroom than the other people . . . the majority of the people are from New York.

A lot of guys are playing games and I am just interested in doing my time and getting the best out of it that I can and getting out of here.

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Aub R 22: See I'm fortunate . . . I'm an electrician here, in maintenance. Now like I was saying you have some inmates you just don't want to be around, and it's trying at times to avoid being near them, because you go to the mess hall with them and so forth . . . probably the biggest benefit of the assignment is that it permits time to be alone . . . Well, everyone has their specific attitude. And I myself, as a man I try to be a man. Rather than constantly fooling around; . . . But you have other inmates who do joking around, they just don't face reality. Everything is a joke, and when they got to the parole board and they get hit with time they want to know why . . . See they can really mess up your bit if you let them. And it's hard to stop them, I try to ignore them, it's hard. But I can avoid them.

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Elm N 3: Yes, Now, like now I've been here 17 months. The population has turned over. When I came the inmates were more mature, but now they're getting a lot of youngsters in here. I'm not very old myself, but I've always been ahead of myself, more advanced in certain fields than the average individual my age. I think I've been through a lot more than the average person my age. And getting back to the inmates, they turned over, they're coming in a lot younger, they're a lot what you might call looser inmates than was here before. But at times, some of the things that they participate in, I feel that I'm over that. So I feel left out of a lot of things that they do that I can't participate in. And I just don't feel all in all together with them. I don't function with them as I probably should. But I just can't deal with them, those younger ones are a lot looser than I was when I was their age. Like I said, some of them are the same age as me, but I can't deal with those that are my age but more or less immature than I am . . . I pretty much avoid everybody now. As a clerk in the censor's office, well that is the only job that I really

like since I got that floor downstairs. Because everybody upstairs in the office is acting like grownups and downstairs they're all acting like kids, playing cards and throwing cards around and tapping you on the back and calling you names and this and that.

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GH N 15: I feel that I'm over this gangbusting age, you know, I'm not looking to break a head, get in trouble with the institution . . . I'm very happy to be by myself, see I'm permitted to do this here (plumber - institutional maintenance). See there's too much immaturity, too many kids, there aren't enough people who are quiet like me, so I avoid them.

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Elm R CC: Yeah, I like it, because mostly all of them up there are adults. The young people they keep them other places. Everyone that's up there are clerks and typists and they are always working and reading . . . I feel comfortable there, I never had no problems with them people.

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For old cons, who follow the ethic of "do your own time" the new generation may be perceived as having little respect for old patterns of non-interference and tolerance, and presenting problems through intolerance. As one inmate put it, "Because a lot of them they haven't done too much time in like me, they think that this is outmoded and outdated, doing time like this, the way I do it." Such an ethic concerning doing time may be shared by those who see themselves as behaviorally mature, though chronologically they may be youthful offenders. The other side of the coin is that many youths find particular difficulties in prison settings in which the majority of prisoners have not yet

settled down, have not discovered a personal coping style that takes care not to intrude on others.

Prisoners often find themselves in the company of others who not only don't "walk the same walk", (are behaviorally different) but who don't "talk the same talk", and express different values, beliefs, interests. Not only does prisoner behavior interfere with others, but prisoner dissonance is expressed in personal interests and preferences. Prisoners who cannot find companions who think the way they do, or who talk the same, or like the same things are apt to isolate themselves completely:

Aub R L: I like to do my time alone. There are not too many people in here that think like I do . . . Well see 95 percent of the dudes in here, they are always talking about the same things, cars, and this and that . . . I don't want to talk about that, you want to get yourself together . . . Like up here, there's a lot of things you don't have, but I would say that I have come to enjoy being secluded by myself, it is the mere fact that when I get involved with these guys there are problems . . . it is all the same talk and conversation and I have been down since 1967 right and you know, it is the same talk.

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Att R G2: I don't like the rat race anymore here than I do on the street. I don't like to hear guys talking silly all the time and playing. And nothing happens in here so what can people talk about . . . Like with the place I'm in now, people keep quiet when they have nothing to say . . . -- just I don't like to talk unless there is something to talk about and it is something that makes sense, what is the sense in talking about the same old stuff every day. So and so is going to school and there is nothing to talk about, so why talk? . . . Like I said I have been here almost two years, and I think that I have only been to night rec only twice. I lock in every night and I read and I listen to the radio. I got a lot of books and that is fine.

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GH R BB: Self-proclaimed gangsters, that's who I avoid in the shop. You see everybody that was arrested had at least \$2500 in their pocket. If they had this, and yet they can't go to the commissary because they don't have any money on them but they are arrested with \$25,000 and they all drive Cadillacs and I don't want to hear that. Because you are constantly hearing the same thing over and over again -- everybody is a pimp and everybody had 15 girls out there working for them and I had a Cadillac and it is just too much and it starts to rub against the wrong nerve and I was just waiting for someone to say something to me.

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Compatibility in prison also involves issues of class and race. Michelson has concluded in a review of studies concerned with class congruence, that integration of neighborhoods by class and socio-economic level often presents serious problems for all residents.¹¹ Gutman examined the considerable difficulty working class residents experienced in adjusting to middle class suburbs without requisite social skills.¹² Keller noted the disintegration in social life occurring under enforced class integration, concluding that "The evidence as gathered from new towns and housing estates throughout the world suggests that mixing groups may actually lead to hostility and conflict rather than to a more interesting and varied communal life."¹³ Of course, some dissonance is attributable to needs preempted by a modal culture (Gans noted the control of many community social activities by middle class residents in Levittown, with the working class left essentially out of many programs,¹⁴ and Lawton discusses a housing complex in which even a few children preempted the environment of the elderly).¹⁵

In prison, a kind of social contamination theme also may arise, with self-perceived middle class prisoners avoiding most prisoners out of contempt, which may at times conceal a modicum of fear (Safety). Irwin notes that "when conventional offenders come into contact with criminals in city jails and prisons, they discover that they are quite different...They find it difficult to understand these criminals who often offend their conventional sensibilities."¹⁶ The offending variable in this context can be lack of education, drug or alcohol addiction, violence-proneness, or any other pattern of habits.

Aub N 6: For instance in my case, one of the most difficult part of being in prison - I am a college graduate right and I have - all my life I had friends on the same level - like I have a few friends in New York that are college professors so I could have a great deal to sit down or a good movie or whatever and since I come in here you don't find any. Very seldom, once in a while you will find someone to talk to about politics or something. So you don't have anybody to talk to unless you talk about Playboy magazine or something. And some of them tell me what they did and that can be very shocking you know. One of the clerks where I work is a cultural person and I have some interests with him. I work all day and we try to get jobs for the people that haven't got one - we write letters for them and prepare resumes and how to go about an interview you know - that kind of program - and this one man I talk to he teach people how to read braille you know.

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GH R BB: First of all I don't like drunkards and the greatest percentage of the people right now are drunkards and that bothers me to begin with and then they are all gangsters. I never met so many gangsters in my whole life . . . Well you have the little kids come in here and they are all killers. Everybody is a killer and if you are arrested for loitering but

you are a killer when you come in so I find it very tough to stay there for the two months that I was there. It was very tough to stay out of problems because everybody is a tough guy . . . They are all killers they say . . . Big deal . . . See, with my friends, people are little quieter, no big fronts are pulled . . . They may be big men on the block, but here they are just cons like me. We relax, pull time, stay with each other.

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GH R KK: Not only maturity levels, but by different kinds of violence too. Like child molesters too, that is one of the worst that any of the guys could come in with. A lot of the guys hate them . . . There aren't many people in here to associate way, so I avoid them. I'm a porter, I have this little side yard I go into. It's ok . . . there aren't many people here I want to associate with . . .

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Elm N 8: Yeah, I'm a school clerk . . . Yeah, now I don't have any hassles and I can stay away from the crowd and I like that much better . . . I don't have to associate with any radicals, and I can sit in my room and take care of business and then I can go back to my cell and read a little bit and that is it.

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The importance of race as a variable along which people choose segregation and communality in neighborhoods has been examined by Suttles, Gans and others.¹⁷ In prison, racial segregation is as apparent as is free world segregation. Carrol states:

Spontaneous and expressive interaction associated with informal peer group activity is clearly segregated, usually accompanied by the withdrawal of small groups into areas of the shop that have been appropriated as their own space.¹⁸

Feld similarly found that "Inmates tend to segregate themselves by race whenever a 'critical mass' of about three or more

members of a racial minority were housed in a particular cottage."¹⁹ Ethnicity does not by itself result in enhanced privacy concerns and segregation. With respect to privacy an increase in ethnic separation occurs most frequently under conditions of imported prejudice and antagonism, scarce resources, and few opportunities for easy avoidance of others.

In this context, privacy is primarily a concern of white prisoners. (Table 6.17) One of the dominant expressions of privacy by white prisoners is the feeling of having no place, and of being immersed in a world over which they have little control. Stressed privacy concerns derive from white inmates' feelings that ethnicity places them at a distinct disadvantage, exposing them to a dominant culture in which they may lose their self-respect and which may expose them to victimization. It is in some ways a reversal of the free world situation. In heavily white universities for example the preference for a strongly segregated (100 percent) setting was found in our study to be twice as great among blacks as among whites.²⁰

In prison it is whites who select isolation or ethnic enclaves as an option. It is the whites who often feel patrolled, typically ignored when their concerns are raised, when time to choose television programs or when soul sounds and country and western music are weighed, or when other priorities involving inmate selection or facility dispensing of resources are allocated.

GH N 11: It's just like it's living in a black war; it's like living in a ghetto like, I guess, . . . like they live in the ghetto and they move right in here and bring the ghetto. You're living in a black society more or less;

everything is black this and black that and you get sick of hearing it after a while. They're all running around identifying themselves in here you know . . . and they get first shot at everything. Outside of that, I guess they look out for each other . . . See here (in this block) yea, it's predominantly black, but there's a little more white there; that's about all I can say. Yea. I was on the gallery with like five guys; like out of 40 something, there was five white guys. I only talk, actually only bother with one or two of them . . . But it's better than most blocks though. From a white person's standpoint there's a great difference because there's more white people in there, no more, but they're congregated more in some of these jobs. In some blocks you can use more persons in the gallery and you're lost. You don't get all that talk stuff, all that stuff that these guys talk all the time . . . no one bothers you personally not usually . . . like, you know, it's just that you have to hear it; you can't listen to the radio; there's nothing but black stations and Spanish stations, and I have nothing in common with that.

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GH R KK: They have two gangs in there, the block porters and the yard porters. You have about two white guys on the block porters and the rest are yard porters . . . The blacks, they act like fools, luckily I can stay away from them, in fact most of the inmates in here are like that . . . it's ridiculous; we can't do nothing, have nothing in here, the blacks have everything.

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Att R 21: I like the place for one because it is very clean here . . . not like population . . . but mostly because all the farmers (rural whites) are up there and it is nice up there and it is not like population.

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At times privacy concerns and assessed incompatibility with others blend into safety concerns. While safety will be examined later, the line between privacy and safety is a fine one. Dislike

of people who are different and irritating, may with a threat or a veiled remark, dissolve into fear. Avoidance may evolve into a concern for self-preservation.

Environmental Clarity

Insulation niches have a Structure component, providing predictable and minimally confusing stimuli, and oftentimes containing guides for action. A niche provides environmental clarity to the extent that it protects its inhabitants from ambiguous, excessively novel, overloaded, or conflicting demands, or too few or inaccurate guides for action.²¹ Kenneth Neale hypothesized that the "routine" of the prison world itself, characterized by the regularity of meals, the uniformity of appearance, scheduling, and rules and regulations, is an important and stress-ameliorative influence, permitting prisoners to perceive the world as moderately controlled.²² While the formal structure can cut down on some of the frustration and increase predictability, one can increase structure further by avoiding highly stimulating and minimally structured situations such as the mess hall, recreation yards, tv rooms and other common areas.

Aub N G: The number one benefit as far as I am concerned is not having to get out and eat in the mess hall. The mess hall here is a claustrophobic mess. All mess halls are bad in prison because you have so many different types and some people are moody and you are across from a perfect stranger and that it is noisy and so the big benefit is not having to eat in the mess hall - we have our own little mess hall because there are only about 20 men that work up there and most of them are porters and some attendants and then a few clerks, so that is the big benefit - not having to eat with

the population. I have more privacy and a little more room. Privacy is such a big thing you know - it is so important to have a little privacy and not see people so much.

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Aub N L: Up until recently I didn't have to participate in the daily routine - go then to the mess hall and wait in lines and things like that so I stayed by myself and that is why I took the job. I would just say that there are ways that you can do it (the time). You can avoid complications - that is the way I do it. I avoid them all . . .

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GH N 11: Well, I don't have to go to breakfast in the morning if I don't want to and I don't like to eat breakfast. So I can stay on the block and then you don't have to go to the mess hall and that is always confusing to go to the mess hall all the time. That's where trouble jumps off. I avoid night rec too. I never go, and being able to work in the evenings helps me do that.

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Settings which impress upon one the volatility of prison and the relative impotence of staff who should have authority and control, are also avoided.

Cox N 4: Like say for instance in the classroom the teacher asks them to do certain problems and they start throwing books at the teacher or some stuff like that - they don't really want to learn - all they want to do is joke around. They can't control themselves . . . like talking in formation or something like that. They tend to blab and this gets the officer to look real bad on the inmates. Instead of just doing what they got to do and get it over with they want to give them some lip.

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Elm N D: The school, I had to get out of there. Nobody was in control. I never saw anything like it. Nobody wanted to learn, the teacher didn't want to teach, it was ridiculous. Now, it's quiet, it's better, at least the place isn't breaking up all the time.

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Environmental change can be disruptive in that it disrupts the transactions we formerly relied on. To counter the disruptive effects of change some men create stability zones, or relatively enduring man-environmental relations that are carefully nurtured and protected from change.²³ Inmates establish routines, in order to impose some order on their lives, to control the interface of their lives and the lives of others, and to preserve the self from the deleterious effects of unpredictability.²⁴

GH R PP: Well, this is it: My whole bit is the hobby shop and I am down there with two different individuals and one is black one is white and we put in 8 or 10 hours a day and this is beautiful because for the two or three years that I have been working with them we have failed to have a disagreement or a bad word and we have privacy and respect for each other and it is very good because you can insulate yourself for those 8 or 10 hours from the rest of the institution you know and plus the fact that I enjoy the work and everything. But when you come back it is a different story. In five or ten minutes you have to readjust and condition yourself to listen to this noise and that noise . . . But down there, well it's different, quiet and I'll stay there if I can my whole bit.

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Att R 2: I am the type of guy that don't like switching around even on the street. Once I got a job I stayed right there. Yeah, that's what I say. A routine is important. Once I get used to something, then I find out how to do it and then I stay right there unless there is some necessity for change . . . Well, privacy I guess and it is quieter too. Nobody is hollering down the hallways and you can read or something without being disturbed. But mostly I just don't want to change.

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GH N 5: I work until four o'clock and I leave my job and go back to my cell . . . It's always the same, and I like it that way. . . . Me, I just do the time. Set a routine and stay with it.

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Cox N 2: You see this shop is orderly. When I was in the sheet-metal shop it was disorderly. Guys running around and like playing like little kids - throwing things at each other you know and all that stuff. It wasn't like it was supposed to be you see. Over here in the masonry everybody is quiet and everybody is working on their project and there ain't no noise and no disorderly conduct from anybody.

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Settings can act as sedatives by providing clarity, and modulating transactions with the world and thereby providing self-control.

In the words of Fritz Redl;

Even the best ego is meant to fulfill this task of behavioral control only within a certain level of complexity. If circumstances pile up . . . or if an unusual pressure of impulsivity hits, at a certain time, even the normal and most well developed ego is not expected to maintain the task of behavioral control by itself.²⁵

Reducing stimulation in the outside environment can serve -- temporarily, at least -- as a measure of self-control.

Elm N 10: I have a quick temper and that is why I don't say nothing to anyone, because if somebody says something to me and it gets me upset then I'm going to react to it. So with this job, I stay mostly away from the population and I don't go through the hustle and bustle that everyone else goes with . . . See the job clears up a lot of problems.

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Elm N 19: It's hard for a guy that isn't sure of himself in that block, because he can blow up. Everybody blows up. They're waiting in there to go to court a lot of them. They don't know what's going on, it's unpredictable . . . why be around a bunch of people that you can get in trouble with when you don't need it . . . In the printshop there aren't very many people, it's small, and there's little traffic in there, I haven't had any problems and I think the shop is a big part of it. I used to get upset at every little thing on the block.

The shop helps me control my temper . . .

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Att R 30: Either side of you there's some kind of noise, you can't think. And there's a vantage point if you work outside. You get really upset inside . . . There's no control over anything, you don't know what's happening.

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Privacy and Work

Privacy can be task oriented, and linked to Support concerns. Because insulation may permit one to do things of importance to oneself, Privacy and Support are interdependent with respect to coping for many prisoners. It is often difficult to determine which concern is primary, whether solitude is sought as its own reward or as a precondition to doing the important things in life.

Prison environments provide very little formally allocated private space for the performance of individual tasks. Most of the available settings are provided for public use, and study and concentration, as well as controlled stimulation, are threatened by an egalitarian yet fluid distribution of space and control. High privacy persons find not only that personal characteristics and behaviors of others are incongruent, but that personal purposes may be incompatible. We find persons capable of functioning and performing work alone, expressing dissatisfaction at being exposed to those who cannot seem to function in solitude. Niches for privacy with task components consist of environments in which solitude can be orchestrated, or in which the social setting provides a surrounding of similarly concerned persons, or with

at least those whose behavior is compatible with privacy needs and task concerns.

Prisoners with stressed privacy concerns express anger at "non-reciprocal interactions", the kinds of preemptive interactions which Toch has described as ones in which only one party can influence the other.²⁶ In the free world, one can empathize with the frustration felt by the older homeowner as he attempts to ignore the rock music played next door, or watches the '69 Chevy being jacked up in the neighbor's yard. The fact that one cannot easily move results in long term and inescapable stress, and the interaction is stressful in only one direction.

The uncontrollability of noise is a theme among prisoners. While the volume of noise is sometimes described as irritating, it is the social matrix that causes stress. Noise that originates from those who do not pay any attention to one's concerns for quiet is stressful. Glass and Singer's research on noise concluded that controllability of noise was much more important than intensity in affecting task performance under stressful noise. Aversive (uncontrollable) noise, while not affecting immediate coping appeared to have long term effects on behavior, including increased irritability and lack of habituation.²⁷

Elm S 2: I try to study in here, and being that I am on the outside gang now, our block is pretty quiet. People are just doing their bit, and I'm trying to do mine. I was on about three other blocks since I've been here and they are all noisy, all that hollering and carrying on, it ain't necessary . . . It builds up, see, and you say, "what's the story,?" and

you might want to study there. But they are doing their time, and your's too, they don't listen. It was really a hard bit for a while, I am doing things different from other people in here, and it can be tough. I could take the noise and the playing for a while, it was no big deal at first, but try it for fourteen months.

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A niche may provide a physical environment conducive to private activity (as with honor housing) or it may provide exposure to other prisoners who are less intrusive in their habits than the average inmate.

Aub R Q: Now myself, at night in the cells I like a little quiet. I have a tape player, I like to listen to my music and I enjoy reading. Now you got guys listening to the basketball game on the radio, and they're not listening, they're running their mouths. Or they're listening to some music on the tapes and radio, they're not listening, they're singing. Now this is very distracting when you're trying to read or you're trying to do something else. And sometimes in fact I might be working on my legal work or something. And you sit there trying to do legal work with some clown moaning or humming or singing in falsetto, it can drive you up a tree. And especially when it's unnecessary, it's just nonsense. I mean, they ring a quiet down here, because they ring it for the purposes of giving people a time to do these things . . . It gets on my nerves . . . see in the body shop, like I really like it, it's what I've always wanted to do, I just go in there, and see the inmates are different, they're working and I'm working and you can forget about the night before.

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Aub R EE: At night when I get ready to go to bed I like to be able to go to sleep and I don't want to have the guy upstairs singing and talking and all that. Or if you have constantly a big number of people together all the time. You know, in a place like this it is really hard to have any privacy because you know you are in here with 1400 or 1500 other people - how can you have any other privacy. And what little

privacy that you have you are charged at . . . Both things are important to me, the job and the quiet.

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An assignment, through a combination of solitude, free-floating freedom and conspicuous activity can result in a traveling niche, a personal assignment in which proven expertise confers privacy while one is occupied, and guarantees non-intervention by other prisoners. Technical and skilled maintenance assignments may be of this type.

GH N 14: Well, this job I have, I work all over the place, inside and outside. Outside the buildings and inside the buildings. I work with no officers or nothing. One civilian. And he knows his business, and my business. So it's like we're on the street. We go to work, pick up our tools, this is it, we put up a wall or hang a door, we know what we're doing. And the next thing I know it's three o'clock and my day's work is done. I go take a shower and everything else, and I'm away from the static, I'm away from the congregation, you know what I mean? You know, we're all moving here together, we're all doing this together, something else there. You can say more or less I'm on my own, and I enjoy being alone. I don't like this noise and everything else. If I've got to do the time, I've got to do a job, I'll do it.

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Elm N A: Every job that I've ever had that I got along with there was only two or three other guys in the shop. Like I was an outside and inside electrician . . . and it's ok, you move around, you are away from everybody. Like in prison, other places would be ok maybe . . . I think if I was in a vocational or educational program or by myself I would say that there would be always something that I would want to do. If I was by myself then there is always something that I would be doing. And if there is fifty people around me there isn't anything that would be good.

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Some niches contain persons sharing privacy and work concerns, who find that they respect each other's concerns.

Elm N E: The people that work they have to get up early in the morning and so we go to bed early at night and there was no way that you could rest or concentrate on anything or write a letter. And the rest of the population they don't have to get out of bed at six o'clock in the morning and so they don't think they have to be quiet at 9:30 or 10 o'clock. Now we get consideration for doing our work, people are tired and quiet, we don't have time for a lot of nonsense.

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Privacy and Disengagement

For special subpopulations of people, insulation has been postulated to be, at least in part, a developmental phenomenon, reflecting changed competence and an altered view of self efficacy and personal goals. Normal aging has been described as a "mutual withdrawal or disengagement between the aging person and others in the social system to which he belongs, a withdrawal initiated by the individual himself, or by others in the system."²⁸ Elaine Cumming maintains that older persons often seek a way to adapt to the world without changing it, and particularly without becoming additionally vulnerable to its demands.²⁹ Lawton suggests that :

reduced competence is the occasion for retrenching . . . the attempt to conserve resources, a preference for simplicity, privacy and control of inner feelings . . . there appears to be an attempt to reduce tension through simplification, taking the path of least resistance.³⁰

For the inmate with lowered environmental competence, withdrawal in safety may be difficult.³¹

In prison, hospital companies or invalid companies have typically provided a kind of prosthetic environment for the elderly. Some such programs are formally created (see Chapter 12) and others arise more spontaneously. In these hospital or invalid units of large prisons there is little emphasis on activity, and virtually no structured programs. The days are passed in quietude, with TV and card games available, and generally an air of laissez-faire among inmates, and between inmates and staff.

Att N H: It's really like a small town or village. Because you have a choice. You can go in the yard or the mess hall for recreation and they have a day room and a TV in there. And you can watch TV and some of the ones that can't walk and use crutches, they eat right in the day room. They have clean up men that take care of them . . . we can sit around, and mostly we do. Yes, up here you very seldom see or hear of an argument. Everybody seems to be cooperative and needing somebody else and they get things for each other in commissary and everything.

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Att R 18: Well, see right now I'm in the hospital, that's where the sick people are. And I guess that's alright. You can get along with everyone in there . . . This is about as good a place as any to do time in. Because these people here they don't bother you. These people are young people. And they are the ones that give you trouble. And since I've been in here I've been locked up not once, because I do the things that I'm supposed to. I have no trouble.

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Conclusion

In prison environments, security requires a trade-off of

privacy. Indeed, the U.S. Supreme Court has recently reiterated its holding that prisoners (including it appears, pretrial detainees) have no right to privacy while confined.³²

The physical environments of the prison, in addition to providing large industrial training programs and group eating situations, are badly equipped to provide privacy and insulation in other life settings. Cells have open fronted grillwork, exposed toilets. As a consequence, as one walks a tier, one sees, scavenged portable screens, in the form of towels, pieces of cardboard, clothing, any of various materials, attached to cell bars to provide a degree of privacy for the prisoner. Such screening devices are contrary to regulation, present 'security hazards', but are often permitted with a staff-accepted subterfuge (he's drying his clothes on them) or simply as a personalistic privilege (the guy is ok, he simply needs to be alone). The corridor fronting individual cells requires that prisoners be exposed to staff during frequent and random supervisory visits, as well as to other prisoners, except during lock-in periods. Lack of privacy often entails little structure. Environmental stability exists where people can avoid interference from others. Both Privacy and Structure are made particularly difficult to secure because of the effects of crowding. In general, crowding has been found to be stressful when there is (1) high density, (2) a low level of resources, (3) a long period of time is involved, (4) difficulty controlling the actions of others, and (5) the presence of particular factors such as lack of social skills, introversion, cultural heterogeneity.³³ Such conditions are likely to be found

in prison. Dissonance of interests, cultural differences, a physical environment which enforces intimacy and competition for resources, combine to create stress. It is this phenomenon which Sartre depicted in his play, No Exit, and summarized with the words, "Hell is other people"³⁴

The characteristics of settings ameliorative for stressed Privacy and Structure concerns provide relief from other prisoners. Individual clerical assignments provide access to settings to which other prisoners are forbidden entry. Such settings as the prison hospital, the state shop, the officer's quarters, counseling offices and other administration areas are of this type. Some skilled maintenance assignments permit long working hours, and solitary work. Assignments as glaziers, plumbers, carpenters and electricians are examples. Some assignments are described by prisoners as containing homogeneous populations of "behaved" prisoners. In such settings as some officer's mess's, several small independent outside crews (coal gangs, gate crews) assigned prisoners occasionally are permitted by staff to recruit their own work partners. A behavioral climate is established and perpetuated by similarly concerned prisoners. Since staff have an investment in tractability in such assignments the initial climate is typically one of high Privacy and considerable Structure.

Protective Niches, Settings for Safety

Fear has preemptive power that most of us have experienced, entering a home that has been burglarized, facing a friend after school with fists clenched, walking home at night through an unfamiliar neighborhood. Such situations make us aware of our personal vulnerability, a view that is enlightening but rarely ennobling.

Under conditions of serious prison threat, stressed prisoners typically report overreactions (volatility, aggressiveness) or controlled passivity. The latter reaction characterizes the coping stance of most Safety stressed prisoners. One chooses to be a lamb, rather than play a minimally credible wolf. Protective niches are lamb settings.

Such niches are neither numerous nor varied and often require great personal tradeoffs from prisoners. The most common such setting, and the most visible, is protective custody or its functional equivalents, which we shall describe in Chapters 13 and 14. Protective niches may also include selected work assignments and positions that feature physical separation from the prison population, as well as a high degree of contact with or surveillance by facility staff. In this section, we shall explore those settings, highlighting their functions of isolation and group defense.

Isolation

Toch maintains that the fear-stressed inmate lives in a

"world of low trust, high vigilance, uncertainty and discomfort. Danger occupies his mind, circumscribes his actions and governs his awareness."³⁵ His world is full of lions and tigers and bears with yellow brick roads conspicuous only in their absence. From such a perspective, prisoners view areas with public control, or control by those with suspicious motives and intentions, or settings with few formal protective devices, as areas to be avoided. Settings that are preferentially sought are those that feature insulation, which we have already discussed with respect to Privacy and Structure concerns. Within such settings, which are territorial and solidified by requiring special credentials for access, relief from fearful anxiety is felt.

Elm N 1: It's like, I'm away from the population and I have peace of mind. I'm not always looking over my shoulder . . . In the chapel see I can stay away from all that stuff and relax a little . . . I avoid everybody here. If I wasn't Catholic chaplain's clerk I would be open for ridicule . . . Well, I would be grabbed onto by certain inmates.

Att N 21: I don't care for the noisy inmates. I'd rather be off where it's quiet . . . I work for the movies, in the projectionist room, I'm upstairs away from all the inmates. I stay away from most of the people. Like last night in the yard, there was only two dozen people out there but you never know . . . yeah, somebody got stabbed . . . I just don't go looking for trouble . . . I'd rather stay away from it and stay out of it . . . I applied for the job of projectionist and I work there most of the time, It's away from everyone.

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Att R 16: (Package room clerk) See this job is for me, when I work I can get away from all of them, except for one or two. And nobody can come in here without a pass, which very few people can get, because of the contraband here.

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Like isolated Privacy niches, Safety niches often include an environmental Structure subtheme.

Att N I: (Occupational-Vocational Rehabilitation-Unit)
Because the environments are controlled see, you feel more secure, because one of the things I have found since I've been in here is kind of a general paranoia of large groups, because you can't control a large group as well as you can control a small group, you get nervous around large groups of people . . . you don't know when some guy is going to flip out and run screaming down the hall with a knife, and in this unit there are only 80 guys and I can pretty well judge what their reactions are going to be.

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For some prisoners safety means avoiding entangling alliances. The inmates' concerns for "avoiding trouble" includes protecting his parole chances and time served, as well as ensuring that he is not harmed or does not compromise his personal integrity. Doing a bit in this way involves the careful avoidance of anyone who may be potentially assaultive or involved in conflict. Such a stance also seeks to convince others that, whatever one is doing, it does not have possible bad consequences for them. Isolation serves as protection and as advertisement of non-aggression.

GH R H: Well, especially I like to be by myself because if I get into trouble I can lose my good time . . . If I'm by myself there is no possibility that I can get into trouble. That is why I like to be alone . . . they're playing with my life in here.

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Elm N 22: See . . . like somebody might have trouble with somebody else. You'll be with him and somebody might have a problem and then maybe he did something to him and you might end up in a fight . . . I can avoid that, but you have

to avoid most everybody . . . See they know me now, they know how to do time. I just do the work, I don't play, I avoid trouble that way. And after a while the inmates know I'm a quiet guy, and they don't bother me anymore.

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Att R K: It only takes one guy to start something, but once he starts then everyone else joins him. I would rather be where I am because I am leaving here pretty soon . . . I can't afford to mess up now. I prefer to be away from population.

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Aub R H: I don't like to be involved in a lot of stuff and if you start hanging out with a lot of people you seem to create a problem . . . you have all these different personalities to deal with and you don't know that someone might approach you and you might take it in the wrong manner and he or you didn't mean it that way and before you know it you are in some kind of trouble, this way they know what I'm doing, and I know what they're doing . . . In the officer's mess I work everyday, and when I'm not working I stay in my cell.

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While high Safety prisoners may see the world as dangerous and unpredictable, they may also see themselves as volatile. Some settings are valued because they provide a measure of personal control, by posing few tests or stimuli to explosiveness.

Att N C: I don't really want to hurt other people it's just that right at the moment I don't want to be associated with anyone and I wish they would just fade away. Let me sit down and get myself together for a couple of hours . . . I just want to be left alone and damn if a guy doesn't come up to me and throw some shit at me and I might say something . . . it is like a milk and honey block . . . I can stay on top of it, I don't get in so many hassles in the OVR Unit.

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As we saw in Chapter 6 (Tables 6.15) white prisoners, and prisoners from non-urban settings are considerably more likely to express Safety concerns than are other prisoners. When one is unable to compete or defend oneself in personal or subcultural contests, suspicion is cast on one's right to be in the same area, and to participate on the same basis. Public places suddenly develop partisanship and proprietary dotted lines. Under such conditions personal self-control may become precarious as one tries to assert the legitimacy of one's presence, a kind of auditioning for first class citizenship before hostile or critical directors. ³⁶

Especially, for some white prisoners, for whom the tasks of survival in prison present daily confrontations, coping can prove excessively exhausting. An inmate may be worn down by the ever-present rejections he cannot befriend or neutralize or escape. Acclimation to the prison world may no longer be a desire and a goal, and such prisoners may substitute, often defensively, other goals, including self isolation, or acceptance by a small group of similarly coping friends.

Cox N 22: (E-3 Division) Yes, see where I am now because they understand -- they have a lot of temperamental inmates up there and they don't push them as hard as the other divisions say do . . . Well they sent me there because I had emotional problems and my temper so when I come in they had that division so they put me up there . . . Well what was going through my mind was like you just said -- I had to prove myself to make it in the place and another thing that was going through my mind was all I could think of was getting out of here but there is no way . . . Like there could

be a bunch of inmates sitting at the table and I would walk by to get a drink or something and they may be talking among themselves and and somebody would say something funny and they would all be laughing and at the same time I would be walking by and they would look up and see who was walking by and I think that they were laughing at me and so it started to break on me . . . when someone would just look at me cross-eyed and I would want to fight. And being on this division everybody has a problem and the inmates all realize it and so they don't bother you -- they wait to see what kind of guy you are . . . and anyway, they are kind of like me more there . . . here it is better because I have learned to hold my temper for one thing, that has gotten me in trouble for most of my life and I know a lot of the other white inmates . . .

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 Elm N 16: Well, there are some dudes in here that have very nasty attitudes. That is why I have the job that I have. I'm not more or less in the jail population. I'm out of the population because I don't like it. And they really get to you . . . They hassle you, they make fun, they are kids. I can't play their games. Particularly black prisoners, whites I can get along with, and Puerto Ricans.

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 Isolation may provide physical safety and permit self-control, but it may also leave one convinced of one's inadequacy. Isolation may thus prove a fragile defense. New incursions may mean that one must search for a new refuge in an environment where most settings have been already deeded. Prisoners may finally make careful audited bids for support from similarly stressed peers. While such bids are rare, because vulnerability may be made more visible by having such bids accepted by similarly vulnerable persons, they are occasionally made and reciprocated.

Group-Defense

In a later chapter (Chapter 13) we shall discuss a formal niche, C-2 Company at Coxsackie, which is a staff-created enclave of safety-stressed inmates. A few informal groupings of the same kind have arisen spontaneously, and serve as refuges for the culture-shocked, made fearful or angry by sexual play and racial pressures. Within such settings one is permitted, indeed expected, to be reasonably passive, non-reactive, and quiet. Small groups occupy small spaces in which territoriality is assisted by formal demarcation and institutional assistance in security and surveillance. Group recognition of the similarity of coping problems leads to natural tacit understanding and unassuming sympathy.

Att N F: There are a lot of guys in here like me that are not really from the streets, as everyone else means the streets, New York City . . . I am on the incinerator job, and like for someone who has a lot of trouble in population it's a good job. Like these guys out here are not into ripping people off, or selling tickets, or playing. It is better to have a few guys to do the time with who are your friends and respect one another. You can get really racked up in here, and when you have a few people who are interested in getting out sane, and like we are together most of the day, it can make a big difference in your state of mind.

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Cox S 16: When I first came here, you know it was like come here girl, give a squeeze and all that. Most white guys have to deal with it. Like in this division (E-2) there are more whites than in most of the other divisions, and I can do my bit there. I would be locked up all the time if I didn't have a couple of friends to lock with, I would probably break a chair over their heads and get shipped to

Comstock. Like E-2 there are enough guys in here who don't want to fight and play so that I can get along.

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Group defense does not involve organizing the legions of the dispossessed and retaking the prison world. Settings with safety at their core confine their function to rescuing some degree of prisoner self-esteem, securing reduction of victimization and creating a gemeinschaft of accepting friends.

Att N 9: It is quiet here. You can get into a relationship with the guys that you do time with up here, because there ain't so many of them. And everybody respects one another. If you need something, they're on it. Not like in population, where if somebody thinks you want something they'll try to take advantage of you, this and that. It's not like that over here. Out there, see all those people. You can't get a relationship with anybody, because they're mostly all black, and I don't bother with them. Here, you see white guys and you can have a relationship with them . . . You don't have guys trying to pull you down all the time, here guys are built up (OVR Unit at Attica)

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Aub N A: Where I work the hobby shop, see the percentage is 9 to 1. There's nine white guys and one black guy see . . . Now that's the last outpost. Now they complain that there isn't enough black guys in there. Meanwhile every other job in the prison, it's the reverse, it's nine to one. See we get along o.k., white guys tend to be quiet, there is no arguments, no static, no fights, there is no racial issues at all . . . I don't know how long it will be that way, see not everyone can come down here it's out of the way, you need a pass, and it's out of population . . . I feel very comfortable here.

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Conclusion

Safety concerns seem to require, for amelioration, a significant deviation from the prison mainstream. Most settings designated as relevant for the Safety stressed prisoner are formally designated special housing units. Protection companies, units for the emotionally ill, units for weak prisoners are constructed and maintained to handle such prisoners. Within informal prison work and program assignments safety niches are decidedly rare. We see several small group programs with high levels of staff supervision and limited prisoner access (censor's office, administration quarters, greenhouse crew), several blocks or divisions in housing units in which the racial balance permits traumatized white prisoners to feel safe among peers, several particularly isolated work assignments (movie projectionist, radio earphone repairman) in which solitary work is mandated. However, the prototypal safety niches are formal ameliorative subsettings that provide the security of place, and the oftentimes inoculating stigma of "one needing intervention".

Footnotes

1. Hans Eysenck, The Structure of Personality, 3rd ed. (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1970); Harry Helson, "Adaptation Level as a Basis for a Qualitative Theory of Frames of Reference," Psychological Review 55 (1948): 297-313.
2. Children in highly stimulating open schools have been found to complain that they have no place to withdraw when the stimulation becomes excessive. Leanne Rivlin and Marilyn Rothenberg, "The Use of Space in Open Classrooms," in Environmental Psychology: People and Their Physical Settings, ed. by Harold Proshansky, William Ittelson, and Leanne Rivlin (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), pp. 479-489. Persons in psychiatric hospitals claim that they occasionally act out in order to be placed in seclusion, and to get away from the crowding of open wards. Leanne Rivlin and Maxine Wolfe, "The Early History of a Psychiatric Hospital for Children: Expectations and Reality," Environment and Behavior 4 (1972): 31-71. The relative ubiquity of privacy preferences within institutions is illustrated by Bettelheim. ". . . those who have a choice, the staff, prefer to eat in relative seclusion, be it in a separate dayroom or in a separate eating area." While patients of course prefer such an arrangement as well, they are without the status to procure it. Bruno Bettelheim, A Home for the Heart (New York: Knopf, 1974), p. 82.
3. See Gerald Hanna, Robert Newhouse, Wanda Hudson, Albert Kolb, "An Attempt to Match Students with Instructors," Psychological Reports 39 (1976): 367-370. Also Marquerite Warren, "The Case for Differential Treatment of Delinquents," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 381 (1969): 47-59.
4. Bettelheim, p. 80.
5. Adolf Vischer, Barbed Wire Disease: A Psychological Study of the Prisoner of War (London: John Bale & Danielsson, 1919).
6. Norman Polansky, "The Prison as Autocracy," Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science 33 (1942): 16-22 at p. 22.
7. Daniel Glaser, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System Abridged edition (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), p. 66.
8. Elliot Studt, Sheldon Messinger, and Thomas Wilson, C-Unit: Search for Community in Prison (New York: Russell Sage, 1968), p. 70. In Clemmer's early study of The Prison Community (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1940), he discovered that the category of ungrouped men (including semi-solitary or completely solitary men) made up the largest of the groups (42 per cent) under study. At p. 119. John Irwin also states with respect to prison isolation: "A few convicts orient themselves to the prison social system and assume roles in regard to the prison, and a few others withdraw completely, but the majority confine their association to one or two groups of convicts and attempt to disassociate themselves from the bulk of the population." The Felon (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 66.
9. Hans Toch, Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival (New York: Free Press, 1977), p. 103.

10. Ibid.
11. William Michelson, Man and His Urban Environment: A Sociological Approach (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1976), p. 120.
12. Robert Gutman, "Population Mobility in the American Middle Class," in The Urban Condition, ed. by Leonard Duhl (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 172-184.
13. Suzanne Keller, "Social Class in Physical Planning," International Social Science Journal 18 (1966): 494-512 at p. 504.
14. Herbert Gans, The Levittowners: Ways of Life and Politics in a New Suburban Community, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1967). See particularly Chapter 8, "Social Life: Suburban Homogeneity and Conformity," pp. 153-183.
15. M. Powell Lawton, Planning and Managing Housing for the Elderly (New York: John Wiley, 1975), p. 117.
16. Irwin, p. 33.
17. Gerald Suttles, The Social Order of the Slum: Ethnicity and Territory in the Inner City (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); Gans, The Levittowners; Elliot Liebow, Tally's Corner: A Study of Negro Streetcorner Men (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967).
18. Leo Carrol, Hacks, Blacks, and Cons: Race Relations in a Maximum Security Prison (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath and Co., 1974) p. 153.
19. Barry Feld, Neutralizing Inmate Violence: Juvenile Offenders in Institutions (Cambridge, Mass: Ballinger, 1977), p. 181.
20. Don Bennett, "Interracial Ratios and Proximity in Dormitories: Attitudes of University Students," Environment and Behavior 6 (1974): 212-232.
21. Kurt Lewin states, "an unstructured region usually has the same effect as an impassable obstacle. Being in unstructured surroundings leads to uncertainty of behavior because it is not clear whether a certain action will lead to or away from a goal." Field Theory in Social Science: Theoretical Papers of Kurt Lewin by Dorwin Cartwright (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 255. A recent book review reprinted in its entirety below illustrates the significance of clarity in men's lives. From The New Yorker, November 20, 1978, p. 237.

Nicholas I: Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, by W. Bruce Lincoln (Indiana; \$15.95) An American specialist in Russian history who is also a good writer tells about the thirty-year reign (1825-55) of the czar whose good intentions and unenlightened policies made him a founder, in a way of Bolshevik policy. Nicholas suppressed one revolt against his rule in Poland in 1831 and another against the Hapsburgs' rule in Hungary in 1849, organized Russia's first truly systematic secret police and censorship, and maintained a paranoid vigilance lest Western ideas contaminate his

- subject's minds. He knew that his Empire needed improvements, but he had only the dimmest ideas of what they might be and since he insisted upon sole and total power his reign offers, by negative example, the perfect argument against autocracy. Even so, Mr. Lincoln tells us, most of Nicholas's subjects regarded him as a good czar, because he was predictable.
22. Kenneth Neale, Work in Penal Institutions (Strasbourg: European Commission on Crime Problems, 1976).
23. See Alvin Toffler, Future Shock, Bantam Books (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 377.
24. It should be noted that some prisoners seek unpredictability. Generally, such a concern is an element of freedom. For instance, Johan Galtung found that prisoners sometimes act in opposition to prison routines in order to establish some personal control over their own lives. "Prison: The Organization of Dilemma" in The Prison: Studies in Institutional Organization and Change, ed. by Donald Cressey (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), pp. 115-117.
25. Fritz Redl and David Wineman, Controls from Within: Techniques for the Treatment of the Aggressive Child (New York: Free Press, 1952), p. 27.
26. Toch, p. 32.
27. David Glass and Jerome Singer, Urban Stress: Experiments on Noise and Social Stressors (New York: Academic Press, 1972).
28. Elaine Cumming, "Further Thoughts on the Theory of Disengagement," in Aging in America: Readings in Social Gerontology, ed. by Cary Kart and Barbara Manard (Sherman Oaks, Calif: Alfred Publishing, 1976), p. 19-41, at p. 20.
29. Ibid.
30. M. Powell Lawton and Lucille Nahemow, "Ecology and the Aging Process," in The Psychology of Adult Development and Aging (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1973), p. 657-658.
31. King Lear, for instance, found that even carefully orchestrated disengagement concealed serious threats to his safety.
32. Bell v. Wolfish, U.S. , 60 L. Ed. 2d 447, 99 S. Ct. 1861 (1979).
33. Daniel Stokols, "A Social Psychological Model of Human Crowding Phenomenon," Journal of the American Institute of Planners 38 (1972): 72-83; Harold Proshansky, William Ittelson, and Leanne Rivlin, "Freedom of Choice and Behavior in a Physical Setting," in Harold Proshansky, William Ittelson and Leanne Rivlin, Environmental Psychology: People and Their Physical Settings (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), pp. 170-180.

34. Jean Paul Sartre, No Exit, Vintage (New York: Random House, 1955), p. 47.

35. Toch, p. 42.

36. Successful human transactions require, for shared and politic communication, a common set of assumptions and vocabulary. Prison transactions, to those with little experience with the dominant culture, may be indiscipherable, the scripts and scenarios confused, yet one may have a suspicion that one is not reading well. And even when the game is understood, the rules clear, it may involve combat in an arena in which the outcome is equally clear, and distinctly unfavorable. Both physical and verbal contests may be required from prisoners as rite of passage, with status determined by stamina, courage, heart. Such testing may be more common among blacks than whites. Whites are typically not expected to play, or to erupt angrily at the first intimation of loss of face, both responses signifying failure. Tom Wicker describes an occasion in which interracial retorts were handled equitably, the game played with honor and success, in a situation in which he was appointed master-of-arms of a Naval railway car carrying 27 blacks and 3 white sailors:

Wicker had been keeping out of sight as best he could. He was then something of a Navy veteran; he knew that someone would have to honcho the car, that was the Navy way. Naturally it would be one of the three whites. And he was the taller of them and all too easily spotted. "Yessir" he said, (when appointed) although he knew that he did not have to say "sir" to petty officers . . . The door had hardly closed behind him when a tall black sailor leaning against a tier of bunks at the other end of the car called out. "Hey you, Red." Silence filled the car like soot from a steam engine. "Yeah" Wicker said. "Suck my black dick." Half the blacks laughed, a little uncertainly, most of the others and the two other whites pretended not to hear . . . "Why your buddy there told me you didn't even have one. Said a hog bit it off." "Shee-it" The tall black sailor grinned. The other blacks laughed, all of them this time.¹²¹

In such an encounter, suspicion is cast on the actor's general social skills if he fails. He is perceived at best to be socially incompetent, with possible further intimations of sexual inadequacy. Tom Wicker, A Time to Die (New York: New York Times Book Co. 1975), pp. 157-158.

CHAPTER 9

Stimulation and Communion Niches

Stimulation Niches: Settings for Activity

Most prison jobs and programs require little in the way of prisoner industry. Unavoidable featherbedding is the result of overcrowding and a lack of program space and program staff. Even while engaged, prisoners are constantly interrupted, and their work or programs are interfered with, as packages and visitors are received, sick or psychiatric calls answered, interviews attended. Most prison assignments call for occasional spurts of energy in days characterized by long idle periods, waiting for counts, lock-ins and lock-outs, meals. While many prisoners are content to spend their time talking, playing cards, or involved in other passive activities, and while periods of inactivity are viewed as inevitable and proper, for some inmates under-stimulation and inactivity present serious coping problems. Such prisoners feel a strong need to be occupied, to fill heavy hanging time, and to be distracted from unpleasant thoughts and feelings that assert themselves during periods of inactivity. Boredom is a special concern for such prisoners. Clemmer has noted that

Prisoners work because they want to... (they) know that idleness is not only boring and conducive to great unhappiness, but they also know that unless they keep busy mentally and physically they are possibly heading for a breakdown . . . they do not know the psychiatrist's term of a situational psychosis, but they know they exist.¹

Jobs that reduce the stress of boredom permit flexible and lengthy work hours, provide steady and relatively arduous work, permit the holding of secondary or tertiary work assignments, or the scheduling of free time for involvement in personal activities. These qualities become important to survival when prisoners find the management of time, to be a means to avoid panic or fend off anxiety.

GH RP: For many inmates, time would be the whole nine hours and it is only four hours for me because I continue to move. You must have been seeing me. I am always doing something. I play chess against myself all the time, and I am always doing something . . . Some guys in here don't do nothing. I don't understand how they can stand it. I'm lucky in the job though, I don't have to sit around much . . . I'm out and around. I work everyday, Sundays too, and I am actually busy all day, or as much of it as I can.

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Att N 4: I'm finally doing good. I'm in the hobby class. First of all, I go to school in the morning for shorthand. In the afternoon I take Spanish and food administration. At night I go to the hobby shop, I do glass paintings and I do shows and music and plays, stuff like that. I got myself busy all eight hours, the way I want it.

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GH R EE: Well I do a lot of reading and woodwork, painting, leatherwork, and they have a library here and I go there about twice a week and this helps me . . . I am constantly doing something and idle time just isn't something you need for the person who is doing a long bit . . . I am always studying too, and doing the painting and things like that. That, with work, pretty much takes up the day. Without those things it would be bad.

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Activities can in Goffman's terms, lift the participant out of himself and make him oblivious for a while to his predicament.²

One uses, action as a means of deployment of attention, or as a sedative. It protects prisoners against feelings of impotence or confrontation with a bleak and unpromising future. When activity serves this function, it acquires a feverish and compulsive quality.

Cox N 16: The censor's job is different, you always got something to do, to keep your mind occupied. You don't think about going home. When you think about going home it really gets you down, you keep thinking you got thirteen months to go or something like that. Working in the office, your mind's off that . . . You work there all the time, reading, filing, talking.

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Cox N 17: I don't have time to think like that. I don't have time to do nothing. I don't have time to think because I don't sit there and do nothing because every night if I don't do glass work, or have school . . . I work from 6:00 to 3:30 every day between the two jobs and then go back for about an hour at night and as soon as 5:00 comes I am back out there doing something else again and I go until 10:00 or 11:00 every night . . . This is the only way that I can do a bit.

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Some prison activities orchestrate participation in jobs and assignments that provide lengthy working hours to ward off depression and tension. Busyness becomes equated with peace of mind, activity with rest.

GH N 3: When I was working in the bakery I am at peace with myself because I am not thinking of anything but my work, you know. When I leave the bakery, you know I get the feeling that it's really bad again . . . It's good for me. And it takes my mind off of being in the street and doing other things you know. Sometimes, without really realizing when I am working I am joking and laughing with the other guys and it is just like street work . . . But then

the other prisoners come and I realize that I am in jail all the while. But when I am working well . . . it's different. But I have got to work.

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Lock-up and cell time can be particularly difficult experiences for some inmates, while other prison stresses are easily tolerable. Cell time leaves one vulnerable to the environmental influences of bars and gates and cell-block noises, as well as to the unremitting surround of one's own thoughts. Settings ameliorative for such concerns may simply provide a legitimate way to leave the cell.

Elm N 9: Well, the job is good, because you get to stay out all day and all night . . . I wasn't used to being in the cell all the time, I was used to being out. So that is why I took the porter job. This way I'm out all night and then I just lock in about 11 o'clock at night, and I am not in all day. . . I don't like being in the cell at all . . . When I sit in my cell I think too much. I think about my family and my girl and what is happening out there and that I'm locked up in here. Now I get up in the morning and I do my work and I don't go back to my cell until about 11 . . . and then so I can go to bed and I really don't have that much time to hang out in my cell and think. I don't get down or depressed.

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Att R G1: I started out with a great deal of time, in fact I started out with 50 years to life plus 70 years to life. I can't think about my time . . . and when I'm in the cell I can't help it, getting out to the hospital helps me.

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Activity that is systematically deployed can control and segment time and may be linked to Structure. Some settings are constructed

to serve as routines, the benchmarks people create in a day or week or year and do their time one day at a time. A lengthy prison term in particular may create a prepotent time sense and a concern with activities that lend themselves to the steady and incremental dispatching of moments.³

GM R BBB: Me, I program myself. I get up in the morning and go out to the farm and I am the first one out there every morning and I milk cows and then I come back and wash my clothes and then have a coffee and take a shower and go to sleep and then get up and eat chow and go back out to work at 1:00 and that is the reason that I got the job . . . so that I can make the time go by as fast as possible. . . So I program myself so that the day goes by very fast. I come back at 6:00 every day and take a shower and I go to sleep at 6:30 every night and that is it. I don't stay up to watch no television or anything else . . . I am programmed to work and tire myself out and then go back and crash. I know what I'm doing every moment of the day.

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Aub R EE: That's the way that I do it, I work in the shop I go there and do my bit, get into a routine and avoid everything else . . . Just punch out the plates, one after the other. My time goes by in little spurts.

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Settings with high activity content may have anesthetizing benefits. Work can soften the pains of memories of the street, of family and friends, particularly for inmates who have problems outside which they feel important to address. Such awareness can be acutely disturbing to street-linked prisoners, and somewhat ameliorated by activity.

Att R 5: Okay, I have to be busy, I've got to be busy. If I'm not busy just staying around all day would drive me crazy . . . I have family

problems . . . These depressions you get into like when you're in your cell and you can't get out of your cell to do anything, and you've got to think about it. Your mind says not to but you've got to . . . But see when I'm working and busy, I don't hardly think of it. Every once in a while you'll be walking along and all of a sudden you'll get a thought in your mind. I wonder what she's doing right now and then you just think about different things. I've got a little three-year old son who's just adorable. And I'd like to be playing with him. But I realize I've got to do this thing and I want to do it the best way possible, I know these things are normal to be thinking about but I can't all the time.

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Elm N 25: Like sometimes when I call home and write a letter they don't want to hear about it. You can get very upset and emotional. So I don't drop nothing on them . . . I don't want them to get upset and I don't want them to get upset with me . . . But you have to work at the same time, and I am lucky there, it helps me keep to the inside, and it helps me keep to myself. It's hard to find enough to keep busy in here, but I don't have any choice, I work at anything.

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Att N 11: There are people in here that I have seen suffer terribly because they will have a picture of their wife or kids or loved ones because they will just lie there for hours and just stare at it and look at something that will represent their home. You know I won't allow myself to do these things . . . I have cut myself off from all of that. My work and my other kinds of activities, my cell work and my reading, they are my life now . . .

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Conclusion

With apologies to Marx, it is suggested that, at least in some situations, work is the opiate. Work in prison is neither

self-chosen typically, nor of particular intrinsic value. Instead many prisoners use time to ease the pains of introspection, to segment and cancel time, and to increase the normative legitimacy of their environment. There is no single category of work or program that is described by activity stressed prisoners as ameliorative. Some vocational programs, occasional industrial assignments, maintenance, kitchen, porter, clerical assignments may present potentials for activity maximizing. Particular prisoners then take advantage of the opportunity fields of various settings. In Chapter 6 we found no demographic, criminal history, or institutional history variables linked with the expression of Activity. Activity appears to be linked to the propensity to ruminate, or other qualities of the self that are not illuminated by the personal history variables collected.

COMMUNION NICHES: Settings for Support, Emotional Feedback

Coping for some inmates revolves around interpersonal influences and linkages, and stress relates to the lack of significant interpersonal supports. While other people are not scarce in prison, they generally provide one with insignificant and superficial relationships. Other prisoners tend to be of limited use to the prisoner wishing to express needs for intimacy, personal acceptance, and emotional support. Some men need other men at levels beyond mere sociability and casual communication. Prison however is a milieu in which personal independence and insularity are admired, and where dependency and the need for personal support are seen as evidence of weakness and are disrespected. Relationships with staff, except for those of cordiality and mutual respect, are often suspect and, for most prisoners, avoided.

Prison may increase some people's need for nurturance, yet inhibit their expression at the same time. Cooper noted an increasing susceptibility for interpersonal influence and an increasing need for human contact during conditions of stimulus deprivation,⁴ which he related to the scarcity of feedback about oneself and one's environment. Cohen and Taylor describesimilarly enhanced need for feedback among inmates deriving from loss of self-esteem, which they see thwarted by the relative lack of people with whom to share it:

In everyday life we typically have several friends, several other people whom we rely upon for reassurance about our intellectual, ethical, or sexual attributes. We may go to our wife or girlfriend for reassurance about our sexual ability, we will make use of another friend for

career advice and perhaps another for intellectual reassurance. In prison . . . the audience is always the same and the choice of companions the same . . . there is little opportunity for the presentation of different selves in different contexts. In such circumstances, a single relationship may be called upon to sustain the various functions which would be spread across several other friends in outside life.⁵

Environmental threat is a function of the failure of the prison to provide tangible supports in the form of others who are trained or willing to assist prisoners in everyday coping, in exploring and correcting their deficits, or simply treating dependent prisoners amiably and with acceptance. Setting characteristics that are of most interest to prisoners with such concerns feature staff demonstrations of their ability to care, and to see the human being behind the greens.

Men who find refuge in Communion Niches have found it difficult to secure empathy elsewhere, particularly among fellow prisoners. They have found that the dangers of self-disclosure are too great and that shared vulnerabilities are too few. They appreciate the sufferings of those that are like them, finding such experiences occasionally while at group counseling sessions, Alcoholic Anonymous meetings or religious gatherings. But officers and work supervisors become the most important agents and controllers of emotional support. Civilians, volunteers, chaplains, school and vocational teachers, industry and work supervisors, are occasionally available to respond to prisoner overtures. While staff who are naturally sympathetic, share a knowledge of prison suffering, or simply respond to prisoners as people rather than

objects are described as relatively rare, they are valued by prisoners to whom human communion is important.

Officers assigned to purely security positions, and with little official inmate contact, often find, in Goffman's terms, "Two different social and cultural worlds . . . jogging alongside each other with points of official contact, but with little mutual penetration."⁶ Occasionally however the jogging stops, and officers encounter inmates in such obvious need that they respond to them with bids of assistance. There are also settings in which officers and inmates work closely together and develop very personal relationships.

Att N G: Well, this is my attitude when I walked in the gate and then I sat in my cell and I heard this and what now. And there was one guard (correction officer now), and he saw this attitude and he said you're going to have to change this nervous attitude that you have because if I can see that you're nervous when you get out in the population and they're really going to think that you're weak. And I had thought that the guards were extremely impersonal, that they were extremely tight individuals and you had to do what they said right at that second. They gave you an order and you did it. But then they gave me a job as a porter when I was in the reception company and this helped me associate myself with the inmates and I found out that there wasn't such an impersonal attitude after all . . . if they see that you need something and you are trying to improve yourself and then they're willing to help you they don't treat you like criminals.

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Aub N 7: Like in this job, you are, in opposition to a job in the industry or something . . . you are in closer contact, in everyday closer contact with the civilians and the officers and you develop a rapport and I found that the

brings you above your environment, brings you to what you want to be. It's important to me now, this time, and being in this block, where before it didn't.

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The personal influence and support, encouragement and patience of a facility staff member may provide the necessary impetus for prisoners to develop and continue interest in program activities. In many cases such reinforcement serves as a contributing influence to the strengthening of the intrinsic gains of work.

Cox R R: One of the teachers in here, he went out of his way to help me to try to get into college . . . And they done a lot for me . . . But they don't try to push a rap on you, you know, like "I can tell you what to do, so you got to do what I say." That's why I like a lot of them . . . They teach you, they really do.

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Cox N 8: I'm in the mason shop, that mason shop, if I had to do the whole four years I would do it working there in the mason shop, because in there I just feel a whole lot relaxed. As soon as I walk in the door I feel a whole lot relaxed . . . see the supervisor, he's an all right guy. He cracks jokes with us, makes you laugh every once in a while. If he sees you standing over there and he sees that you're feeling bad, he comes and tries to cheer you up. And rap to you about certain things, what's bothering you. He's all right . . . and he explained the shop to me, bricks and stuff, so I said yeah.

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Some settings permit the increasing integration of feelings and activities. Stern has commented on student-teacher relationships in which students find an ego-ideal, the passionate believer in scholarship and intellectual honesty, who provides support and

biggest thing . . . of this is if I know a civilian and I know his wife through him and I know his kids, and I know what his house looks like and he brings in pictures and now, I can't very well hate this man because I know too much about him. I have developed a rapport. Now this would be the beautiful thing. You would be surprised that they don't want the officer to associate with the inmates because they feel that if the officer associates too much he will bring in contraband and all this, but this is a fallacy . . . see it doesn't happen very often, we very often don't have relationships like that . . . only here, once in the psychiatric department, does it happen.

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Att N 20: And within the institution I could name several people that I had the benefit to meet as human beings. And at first I was very shy, because I had never been exposed to this and I didn't know how to handle it. But I had good insight . . . and from it I've learned to take people on an individual basis, regardless of their capacity or title or where they're from. It's not always easy, because I'm human and I still have hangups. But I'm able to relate to legitimate people. Whether a correction officer or an inmate or what have you.

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Cox R V: We have a little chat session every night after lock-in. He stops by my cell "Hi, how are you doing," and we start from there, you know. "Did you get a letter from your wife today?" Because he passes out the mail, he just asks as a joke thing, you know. And I say, "Yeah I got one," "What'd she say." And I tell him this and I tell him that, and I won't hold nothing back. If she writes in there that she's having problems with the landlord or something like this, I'll tell it to him. He'll come up with either a suggestion or relate a story that happened to him and his wife . . . it helps people. I don't know, but when somebody's concerned about you, you've got the natural instinct to give them something back, whether it's affection or concern. You know, you've got to give them something back. And when you've got a relationship going there that

direction and helps to define standards of aspiration.⁷ Striving and change often require a meaningful model. A measure of identification is provided in some assignments that have a surrogate family quality.

Elm S CC: These new teachers they are coming in with a different understanding and to me it's a different view of being in any institution . . . I figure if I stay here for another year and a half I'll probably gain that rehabilitation that I've always wanted. See I feel very proud of what I do, see the teacher, the individual laughs and he praises me and he said, "You're good, you're a beautiful person, your personality, you carry yourself beautifully." Like now, I'm a part of the place, I'm not just a resident. I feel like I'm being counseled by a counselor to counsel people. I can see now what these programs are bringing us, to show us to be adults so when we get out to society we can show younger individuals what's wrong and what's right . . . like before I was called, I was just helping an individual to go about reading manuscripts and typewriting and what they called production work and I never knew this before. I just learned this about a month ago and now I'm like the teacher himself . . . But they taught me all this stuff here.

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Through a similar process of interpersonal influence prisoners may prove amenable to involvement in spiritual or political groups, particularly inmates who see themselves as lost and alienated, and without a sense of purpose. Involvement in religious organizations may provide an external structure and a sense of purpose.

Elm S 16: We have a minister who does the teaching, and when you feel down or having problems, he is there to advise you and it makes you feel better. Like he has more understanding and more wisdom . . . the temple, see and being a Muslim, they have really changed me . . . Like where I am going, it is what I want and if I want to change myself I have to work for it.

I have been here, like in here I have built up my discipline . . . I became a Muslim and it changed my life. Before I came in here I was a kind of a wild person. It tells you why you're a person . . . and they are there to help you . . . Like a month and a half ago I received a letter from my wife and that she wanted a divorce and it got to me and the next thing I knew my shop teacher knew about it already and my minister he knew about it already too. And this guy he spoke to me he wanted to lift me up. When I went out to the yard he started to speak to me and I started to express myself and told how I felt and it made me feel better, or at least better than before . . . It's hard for a person you know, a high person to relate to a low person because they don't know what it is like to be far down there . . . My minister he really knows me.

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Att R H: And after work I spend most of my time studying my religion because I have only a sixth grade education, and it's helping me a lot, through my religious training. Because they teach you everything in the universe. Mostly they teach you yourself, how to deal with yourself first, how to control mostly emotions and other things.

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Renewal in prison may involve self-examination and increased sensitivity to the problems one has experienced in the past. Some settings provide a milieu in which such examination is facilitated. Among the most popular subjects in prison evening education programs are sociology and psychology, both of which are related to a desire by the offender to better understand himself and his society. Human services work is valued both for this learning experience, and for the opportunity to help other inmates who are even more vulnerable than oneself.

Att N G: I work in the psychiatric department and it helps me understand myself even more and it helps me to understand people. And picking up what the different categories -- I can't say categories -- but the different types of individuals that you meet and the different personalities and stuff like that, I feel the -- plus I work for them and I see them doing different stuff. I'm trying to get more geared to my problems and what I am and what I can do.

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Att R N: And as I said, in the last four years, having this job down here, I've been happier than in any other institution, no matter if it was outside a wall . . . I would have been sunk if it hadn't been for the hospital. I would have still been unaware of myself and the people around me. Now I got into the hospital work and I started working in the hospital, I really got interested in helping people. I found that in helping them I helped myself. And the last four years down here, I have matured so greatly, and I have advanced. . . . My craziness has diminished with this job. I was just trying to get by, trying to survive. And I got into it. I tried it, I like it, it was so fulfilling. Then I started begging, borrowing, I can't say stealing but appropriating books, medical books, and learned, self-taught. Asking questions, because I got interested. As I say, the more I worked around the other people and their weaknesses, the more I learned myself. Now I get about 1,300 people a month through my office.

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Att R 22: This is why I'm so devoted to AA, because it's a program in which you help yourself, and through helping yourself you help others. You must give it away in order to get it. It sounds like an odd statement but it's true. Love is no good to you alone, you must give it to receive it . . . Yes, I do. It's the best program by far of any program that you have in the institution. I mean by this the men that need it and don't know that they need it. In this respect, I mean that it's a wonderful program, it is the best. It has done for me what my wife couldn't do, what my children couldn't do. It has done for me everything.

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Conclusion

While Activity serves as an anesthetic for prisoners, Feedback serves as an emotional stimulant. The settings described as ameliorative for stressed Feedback concerns are a potpourri of vocational, educational, religious and guidance programs, and assorted work assignments. The characteristics of concern are the warmth and guidance received from staff, and occasionally other prisoners. As we noted in Table 6.18, married prisoners are more likely to express some concern for Feedback than are single prisoners. While some stressed Feedback prisoners state unequivocally that they have broken their ties to the streets, they occasionally develop surrogate emotional bonds within the prison. The difficulty is in finding attractive interpersonal relationships. Glaser suggested that one could, if one wished, alter prisoner beliefs and attitudes and prisoner-staff satisfaction by altering, independently, officer and work supervisor communication styles. The phenomenon of inmates "rejecting their rejectors" and the building of prisoner subcultural norms in opposition to trust, is seen, in part, as a response to indifference and non-egalitarian status attribution on the part of officers.⁸ A break in the cycle of mistrust may disconfirm prisoner's expectations and lead to improved relations. It is clear at least that some prisoners relate to some staff in ways that are sharply different from prison norms, and that such relationships are significant and may be change producing. Glaser found that work supervisors were frequently named as persons influential

in prisoner rehabilitation by their charges. Glaser notes that

It is striking that about 90 per cent of the remarks by the successful releasees on the rehabilitative influence of their work supervisors do not mention vocational teaching by these men; instead they stress only their personal relationships to the work supervisor.⁹

In Chapter 15 we shall look "Beyond the Niche" and examine a therapeutic community in which staff support is built into the setting. The community is a plausible extension and refinement of the spontaneous phenomenon of the communion niche.

Footnotes

1. Donald Clemmer, The Prison Community (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958), pp. 280-281; Heffernan states similarly, "As a main consumer of time, the work program of an institution is central and crucial, although the ability of various positions to accelerate the passing of time varies from stop-and-watch jobs to certain clerk positions which run into the evening and early morning hours . . . The relatively few complaints against institutional assignments stem not from overwork but from lack of work." Esther Heffernan, Making It In Prison: The Square, The Cool and The Life (New York: John Wiley, 1972), p. 135.
2. See generally Erving Goffman, Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates Anchor (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1961), pp. 310-315.
3. Cohen and Taylor note that mind-building (reading and studying) and body-building (weight-lifting) both have major advantages of permitting the careful measuring of time. Activities with a high degree of stimulation, and with some measure of both mental and physical exertion are prized as permitting a sense of productively used moments. Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor, Psychological Survival: The Experience of Long Term Imprisonment (New York: Pantheon, 1972), pp. 95-96; Consistent activity is also linked in this context to predictability. ". . . purposive activities shape the perception of individuals in a particular environment . . . if activity . . . is passive, abnormal, or even non-existent, then, the normative legibility of the environment is decreased proportionately." F. Warren Benton and Robert Obenland, Prison and Jail Security (Urbana, Illinois: National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice Planning and Architecture, 1973), p. 61.
4. G. David Cooper, Henry Adams, and Louis Cohen, "Personality Changes After Sensory Deprivation," in Sensory Isolation and Personality Change, ed. by Mark Kammeron (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1977), p. 110; also Henry Adams, G. David Cooper and Richard Carrera, "Individual Differences in Behavioral Reactions of Psychiatric Patients to Brief Partial Sensory Deprivation," Perceptual and Motor Skills 34 (1972): 119-217.
5. Cohen and Taylor, p. 75.
6. Goffman, p. 9.
7. George Stern, People in Context: Measuring Person Environment Congruence in Education and Industry (New York: John Wiley, 1970), p. 169.
8. For a careful examination of this phenomenon, and more importantly, an examination of the issue which includes findings of egalitarian guard-prisoner relationships, see generally, Daniel Glaser, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System, Abridged Edition (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), Chapter 5 "Relationships Between Inmates and Staff," pp. 75-94.
9. Glaser, p. 91.

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CHAPTER 10

Mismatches: Incongruent Transactions in Prison

We assume that men will occasionally perceive the same environmental conditions differently, and that even in the most "enriched" of settings, some men will live marginal lives. In environmental Mismatches we encounter men who feel powerless and helpless under circumstances which mesh with their personal vulnerabilities. We find also men who express dissatisfaction everywhere, including in settings which most men designate as reasonably benevolent.

We suspect that some prisoners express concerns that simply do not lend themselves to easy satisfaction, even in relatively good settings. Other men enter prison expressing at the outset needs, aspirations, expectations that they feel to be reasonable (respect, physical safety, mutual avoidance) or expect commodities they were told to expect (personal change, rehabilitation) or that could reasonably transfer from their pre-prison lives (relationships, family supports, friendship). When conditions prove non-supportive of such concerns, or when initial encounters with prison aggravate such concerns, prisoners may experience stress that becomes chronic, self-perpetuating or diffuse.

Some such stress may be immune to subsetting influence. Some prisoners may carry their setting with them, a kind of personal baggage defining a context. A carefully husbanded and fertilized rage may be transported from prison to prison, and prison subsetting to prison subsetting. A safety stressed concern may translate

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into a portrait of the prison world as irrevocably dangerous, with all refuges temporary and fragile. What is clear in the perceptions of some mismatched prisoners is the relative uniformity of the prison world in terms of stress, and the scarcity of resources with which to fabricate adaptive behavior.

However, some prisoners have simply not been exposed to ameliorative subsetting influences, or have been placed in settings almost calculated to increase their stress. As we have seen in Chapter 6, mismatch settings are, like niches, a mixed bag. There is no composite portrait of "bad" settings. Some mismatch settings are equivalent (clerk, porter, school) to matched settings, except that the wrong inmates occupy them. However, there are differences in the distribution of settings among Niches and Mismatches. In comparison with Niches, Mismatches report fewer clerical positions and more industry assignments. Over 50 percent of Mismatches are found in maintenance assignments, with, in comparison with the total sample, fewer prisoners in vocational and educational assignments, and more in special housing (Table 6.27). Thus some dissatisfaction may be attributable to differences in the settings themselves. Some mismatch prisoners may never have been exposed to a pleasant subsetting, or find the only setting they know to be unpleasant or stressful.

However, Mismatches are perhaps inappropriately labelled. Only rarely do prisoners mismatched with subsettings describe the subsettings themselves as relevant to felt stress. More frequently the setting is simply seen or irrelevant, or even occasionally

described as a relatively good program, living or work assignment. Occasionally, it is described as the worst place, bleak and oppressive. In most cases, however, the subsetting is merely seen as one of many givens or artifacts of prison life, which itself is noxious.

Cox N T: The job? (The block, the program) it's ok.
But this place sucks.

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While niches offer sets of specific environmental characteristics of settings that provide stress reduction and serve as refuges and harbors, mismatches do not translate easily into specific sets of prisoner-subsetting transactions. We instead see portraits of unhappy men in a relatively undifferentiated prison world.

Powerlessness

Over 50 percent of mismatched prisoners express primary Freedom concerns, and over 75 percent express a concern for Freedom. We find a great sense of alienation and estrangement expressed by such prisoners, particularly from sources of authority. Such prisoners feel obliged to live under conditions of continual harassment and injustice, and feel that every attempt at resistance and expostulation is met with defeat. Prisoners are often faced with the need to do nothing, knowing that nothing can be done. Powerlessness translates into a sense of helplessness or into violence. Prisons are not only filled with overwhelming constraints, but the constraints are often perceived as unfair, and signifying

a running personal harassment of oneself, and members of one's caste. The indignation, frustration and resentment one feels is unlikely to make one receptive to assignments that may reduce felt stress, and makes one uninviting as an object of classification. As we have seen, not only are autonomy niches relatively infrequent, but they may require special credentials for entry. It is relatively rare that prisoners with skewed freedom concerns are rewarded for Freedom assertion even when staff understand clearly that prisoners would be more tractable in a less secure setting.¹ Outside jobs, jobs outside the main security perimeter, permitting avoidance of officers and modulated surveillance are unlikely to go to prisoners who evidence their need for freedom through expressions of hostility and chronic indignation.

We saw in Chapter 6 that black prisoners are more likely than those of other races to express concerns for Freedom and seldom perceive their settings to be ameliorative. At least for blacks, there may be an inverse relationship between Freedom expression and admission to a better setting. A history of violent offenses among prisoners expressing concerns for Freedom likewise differentiated prisoners perceiving their setting as a niche, and those who did not. In many facilities an inmate must be within six months of a release date to work in some privileged positions (typically those with a lesser degree of security attached). Prisoners with prior offenses of violence are often restricted to highly secure, heavily surveilled areas.

The mess hall (including the kitchen, although within the

kitchen responses vary) typifies the sort of setting that prisoners with Freedom concerns describe as particularly noxious and harassing. Such settings are typically large, the work relatively menial and requiring little training or attentiveness, the population a population of unskilled prisoners (often newcomers) or those who have demonstrated an inability to perform adequate work elsewhere, the custodial force large and consisting largely of younger officers.

Cox S 14: The mess hall is hard work and there is about five or six jobs in there that is good and the rest of them nobody wants them. And that is why I am in the mess hall. They throw the new guys in there . . . And they give you a hard time in here too.

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Cox R B: Well, when I came here I went into the mess hall and I noticed how the officers in the mess hall are always pushing inmates in the doors and things and doing stuff and they lock them up for this and that if they don't do it. Things that don't even make sense. They don't even know people, but yet they keep pushing them and telling them to do this and that. I believe that if you have a job then you do one thing and that's what you're supposed to do. You don't go and do a thousand different things, then if I don't do them I get fired or locked up and things. That's what changed my mind. The day when I got locked up it was for nothing at all. It was for nothing. Just because I had finished my job and they were telling me to do something else and I said that's not my job and why should I do it?

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Cox R 10: Like right now, I'm working in the kitchen, I've been in the kitchen 8 months. So this new CO came in the kitchen, he don't know how to run the kitchen, he don't know nothing. So he says I left my area dirty, you know? The man

don't like me, I know that. So he's going to come and say I didn't do my area, I didn't do my work. So I had to go to the adjustment committee, right? I went to the adjustment committee and I told them what happened. They took four movies, two commissaries, three days keep-lock, I got a suspended sentence. That's what they did . . . The only time you can avoid it is when you're not in the kitchen. That's the only way. Because when you're in the kitchen, he's looking for something to pin on you.

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Segregation placement can be particularly stressful. While we saw that some autonomy oriented prisoners may perceive special housing to be an honorable and personally adaptive mode of adjustment, for most segregation is a confirmation of everything they fear, hate and find stressful in the environment.

Cox R U: (Segregation) It's bad up here . . . It's not justice. You never get justice in the joint . . . I've been up here four times. I'll be up here most of the bit. I don't care . . . except up here. It's even worse, the food is always cold, the police, they ain't shit up here . . . (Segregation) See up here they (the police) can do anything they want . . . They fuck over us all the time, what are we going to do? It's hell. Shit, they ignore us and we ignore them . . . I think they are trying to make us bug out . . . it's worse than in population, there ain't nobody up here to help out if they want to, you know, beat you or something . . . I don't care, I'll take them all on. I've gotten to the point where it doesn't matter.

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Life in segregation intensifies qualities of the prison experience that are more stressful than others. The milieu is uncompromisingly custodial, and communication is absent, or disturbingly one-sided. Prisoners feel that due process as they define it, is totally absent. Requests for mundane materials, paper,

pens , medicine, visits, mail, go unrecorded and unanswered. What is worst, one's dependence on those one dislikes becomes clear.

Cox S 24: If you want a CO up here to do something for you, you have to wait until he gets ready to do it. Down there if you want a CO to do it and he don't do it, you got another one to go to. But up here you are stuck with what they dish out . . . quite a few people that got beat up up here, by CO's, I never saw it happen, just that people say it happened, that a dude got beat up.

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Cox S 25: The way guards act up here, it gets to you. Like this was about a while ago, I had a headache. I felt like my head was going to rip off. And I asked the guard to get me some aspirin. And he said he was going to call, and I could see down to the desk. He just went to the desk and sat there. So I hollered down to him and asked him to call up. He said he'd call up when he got to it. So my head really hurt and he never did call up . . . See, they figure we are up here for busting balls so they bust right back.

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Mental observation units are sometimes also used to secure prisoners who have erupted violently in prison, typically having assaulted officers. Mental observation units, from the staff viewpoint, have several advantages over segregation units. They are virtually inaccessible to anyone except a few officers and treatment personnel; prisoner possessions and activities and movements can be strictly circumscribed for "medical and safety reasons" (in segregation prisoners are transported for visits, have recreation one hour a day, retain most personal clothing and possessions, have access to law books, etc.); and perhaps most important, prisoners can be held virtually indefinitely, while awaiting transfer to a mental hospital for examination and treatment. Mental

observation units are equivalent to the back wards of a traditional mental hospital. While M.O. cells occasionally function as protection for the extremely Safety stressed prisoner, for the Freedom concerned inmate these settings represent a stigmatizing and painful end to his defiance of the system.

GH R 19: See I was labelled no good you know. I have filed civil suits pertaining to conditions here and they put me in a strip cell with absolutely nothing, right . . . Like I can't get any justice, I keep going to different institutions and I just got frustrated you know? It seems like any time I got to the joint I get in trouble and they put me in a place like this, see I hit a doctor in Matteawan, and I hit an officer over in seg, or so they say. But it is like everything gets out of control, life can get to the point where I'm not going to be able to control myself . . . like I do things when I'm frustrated, it is terrible here, you can't do nothing, you maybe get out one hour a day, some days, and most of the time you don't see nobody, you stay in your cell, you can't even look out, it has these little windows you can't see nothing . . . The CO's are really bad up here, like nothing you ever seen.

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GH N 18: It's hell up here. Like I don't know where they get these officers, they just don't know how to deal with problems, they overreact. It's just a hassle being around them . . . and you can't have anything up here, they take everything away from you, it's ridiculous, like we can't be trusted with anything, we're supposed to be bugs and all. I've been up here for months, I'm supposed to go to ACTEC, but I've only gone to Matteawan and then back here . . . It doesn't seem like I can get any help, just people interrupting me and stopping me from getting some help. It seems hopeless.

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Most frequently, freedom stressed prisoners express a general sense of powerlessness that crosses settings and extends to all

officials. They express chronic frustration with freedom limitations everywhere which they see as calculated and unjust.

Cox R M: They're on my back all the time. I'm not going to take it. It isn't the Army is it? I'm doing time . . . They're trying to provoke us, so they can take us upstairs. They're always telling me you can't talk at night. You can't even talk in your cell block area. They tell you to shut up or you'll get a ticket; take commissary. I don't think it's right to take commissary. You get one of these in the face, man, and they take you upstairs and beat you all up. Can't say nothing about it.

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Most such prisoners practice studied uncooperativeness with staff and are irritated by warmer or more cordial relationships between other inmates and staff. They see corrections officials as the enemy to be avoided or ignored. Tolerance is compromise, and compromise is surrender.

GH R JJ: It is like a plantation you know. Like have you ever heard of house niggers, and jail niggers? Well, that is a place for the house niggers and from all I can see the man is running it on that basis. You have to smile and act in a certain way. You are like an enemy in there. Right. So I went in there, and I try to act in my certain way because I mind my business and do my job and I am working doing my job and the officer he compliments me but the sergeant in there, well one time he called me into his office, right. He says, told me how long I had been in there. He was looking at my little sheet they got in there, right, and he says "you don't mix too good." I said "I mix alright." So the officer smiles, he is making conversation. I could have gone along with it, you know, but I well, I said "I don't smile unless I'm amused and I said I am not amused." And he dismissed me. This is part of my personal make-up, I can't be a nigger for them, or to get along . . . And everyplace is pretty much the same, you play this game.

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Elm S 1: I just round on them. I pretend I don't hear them . . . I ignore them. I'm a con, and they is the police, I don't want them looking to be my friend, I want them where I can see them . . . I don't trust the CO's, just like I don't trust nothing in prison. Like a lot of inmates, they get along as best they can, buddying with the officers . . . It's like collaborating. There's no job I would be happy with because I have to be supervised, and that means I'm less than they are.

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Helplessness

Approximately 30 percent of mismatched prisoners express primary Privacy, Safety, or Structure concerns, typically in response to environmental conditions and effects issuing from the actions of other prisoners. The stressed concerns of these prisoners are similar to those of prisoners in niches. There are comments focused on the dangerousness of the population, on playing youths and menacing blacks, on people whose behavior one finds incompatible with one's own, on a milieu which provides insufficient control and predictability. However, unlike prisoners in niches, mismatched prisoners (by definition) have found no refuge from such stresses.

As with other mismatched prisoners, we find such prisoners expressing strong dislike of large, crowded, and unstructured settings (training programs, industry programs, kitchens, large classrooms in school) but otherwise typically finding prison dangers omnipresent, or the milieu generally oppressive and unpredictable, or prisoners as a class irritating and inescapable. Some settings, however, make such impressions more salient than others.

GH R JJ: Being in jail is a hell of an experience in itself. Like lots of people can't see what a man's mind is going through constantly. If a person was caught on an elevator for five or ten minutes and he thought about how he would feel during that five or ten minutes, that would be like repercussion of being in jail for any length of time. You can't describe it in words, what goes through a man's mind. You can't describe it, and you can't ever escape it.

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Curiously enough school assignments are oftentimes described as noxious or painful by such prisoners. School assignments typically contain a heterogeneous population (inmates scoring below a base score on a standard examination are assigned to school one-half day). And school is often considered an easy assignment, a program whose utility lies in impressing the parole board with one's rehabilitation potential, thus attracting a group of unmotivated and acting-out prisoners. School classes also contain alienated older prisoners who see the school as irrelevant and who spend the time talking, sleeping, staring into space, or causing occasional disruptions. As noted in the Attica Report, ". . . the school was used by the administration as a "dumping ground," since the number of inmates in a class could be increased without an appreciable threat to security."² Such conditions are likely to disrupt prisoners motivated to study (Support concerns) as well as prisoners expecting reasonable privacy and control while engaged in education programs.

Cos R 13: Like the class I'm in, the teacher don't care what happens or what goes on in class, as far as learning anything. I get my books, I sit down, I try to study a little bit. But yet I

can't because all of them others, everybody running around the class, running in and out of the class. That breaks my concentration right there, from what I'm doing. And some people like, they come in class, yeah, what's happening, how you doing? All of this constantly 5, 10, 15 minutes apart. And that breaks my concentration. They say "come on down the hallway", and I ain't got no time for that. And you say no, you got something to do. Then you got to be a punk. Then whoever else is standing around, one of the agitators standing around, he starts running off at the mouth. Then you get into a position where you get ready to fight. But yet still you don't want to fight, but yet still you don't want to fight because you're trying to avoid getting locked up, trying to avoid getting yourself hurt or even hurting him. That's the way it is in here.

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Att N J: I can't take the school, I've been trying to get out . . . It's too confusing, nobody cares about the class, the teacher most times doesn't even teach, he lets them do anything, and he just sits back.

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Prison industries are also disproportionately represented among mismatched Safety, Privacy and Structure stressed prisoners. With rampant featherbedding, large areas of free and uncontrolled space, tools and equipment for the manufacture of weapons, concealed areas and reduced levels of supervision, large industry programs are portrayed as a human jungle.

Att R P: The metal shop is the worst. It is absolutely useless of course, mostly we just sit around and wait for a delivery of supplies and unload them and sit around. It's not safe there, it's not safe at all, the machines aren't safe, and people play around and it can get dangerous now there . . . people can be doing anything, and the officer has too much to do, well not too much to do, but too much space to cover.

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GH R 13: The cab shop? I had to get out, these guys aren't down here trying to do a bit, they're kids, and in there they have lots of people they can cause . . . If you want to do time you have to avoid them and it's not easy.

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Occasionally a setting ameliorative for one concern can cause stress for prisoners with other concerns. The farm, which tends to be ameliorative for prisoners with Freedom concerns, is often seen as dangerous by those with concerns for Privacy and/or Safety. Culinary assignments too may be particularly difficult for such prisoners. Kitchen assignment is often used as a punitive assignment for those who have failed in other settings, yet novices are placed in such settings as well, prior to their classification and assignment.

Cox S 23: You see in the kitchen it has got a lot of blacks and only three or four whites, and they needed whites in there so they said that they were going to even it off because they said that they needed white guys in there and every time a white guy come in they put him in that division. So I kept getting locked up because I couldn't stay out of trouble . . . and I just wanted to get the hell out of here you know. Well, you see it is more or less the mind you know. Like people are talking about the white people did this and the white people did that and they don't even know the white people that they are talking about. And it is just plain stupid stuff you know and they are just a bunch of kids . . . I'm just waiting to get out of there, white guys don't stay there very long. . . .

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While the aforementioned settings crop up, few settings actually stand out as particularly noxious subsettings. We see prisoner expressions of helplessness in response to a dangerous, or at least, unsettling world in which efforts to exert influence

chronically fail. While the elements of stress vary, and concerns may be diverse (Structure, Privacy, Safety) felt unhappiness results from one's view that stresses are omnipresent in the prison, and that they are inescapable. As far as these inmates are concerned, the notion of a niche is an inconceivable one.

GH N 9: Well it gets you aggravated, because there is no way to resolve your problem - you can't go anywhere; you can't do anything; you can't go to no one - if you go to someone, they just send you to someone else. There's no place you can be satisfied in.

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Elm S 19: No matter where you are in key block even, in the guard house, you are always being hassled by someone . . . No matter how you look at it there is no place in here you feel safe. I have taken that into consideration a lot. You get hassled no matter where you go in. No matter who you are, you get hassled. It is a way of life in here . . . So far I haven't been able to find anything that helps.

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Elm S 5: The kids are the population . . . They are all over -- the whole population.

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Cox R I: A hiding place, I don't know of any, so if a riot breaks out and I hope it doesn't, something like that, I don't want to get involved. Cause I don't know a way to escape it.

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Cox N X: The only place that I feel that you can be alone is the library. At times you can stay there and read. At times they throw me out when I go there. It doesn't seem like you can be alone anywhere in here.

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Aub N D: There's nothing you can do . . . you're bursting inside yet there's nothing you can do.

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Uselessness

Prisoners faced with doing time in modern prisons often view the range of available prison programs as useless and meaningless, prison jobs are "slave labor", menial, non-motivating, unsatisfying and unrelated to job opportunities in the free world. Other programs can be similarly discounted.

In actual fact, such observations and criticisms of prison assignments are applicable to many prison jobs. Prison industry involves from 35 percent of the prison population in adult prisons, to negligible percentages in youth facilities.³ Facility maintenance typically involves an additional estimated 25 percent of prison populations, with such prisoners engaged in activities from menial prison cleaning, to serving as clerks, painters, plumbers, runners, officer's mess workers, kitchen workers, etc. Wages paid in New York vary from 25¢ a day while unemployed and awaiting assignment (prisoners in voluntary idle status receive no wages) to a maximum of \$1.15 a day at prison Grade 4. It is ironic that while Glaser found that prison industry assignments were attractive to prisoners in federal prisons, he concluded that the attraction lay primarily in the relatively munificent work incentive allowances provided prisoners in federal industry jobs.⁴ New York State prisons had at the time of our study, recently discontinued pay differentials in industry in order to encourage more prisoners with learning problems to attend school. Such concerns, while well intentioned, resulted in a situation encouraging prisoners not to seek school but to elect a porter's job, or other easily performed work.

Att R BB: I was in cab shop for a year and a half, making halfway decent money, about \$100, \$150 a month. Then all of a sudden they just took our money away from us, and then they wanted the same amount of work. From what I understand, and which I firmly believe, it's a multi-million dollar business, these industries here. And they want the same amount of work and they don't want to give you the money. They jam prices up in the commissary, they raise them, according to the inflation on the outside, and then they take your money away from you, bring you down to 8¢ an hour or something. So then I left the cab shop, so they told me the only place I could go is the school. . . I don't give a damn about school, it's not going to help me now anyway, and I could use the extra money.

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Prison industries and programs are plagued by inefficient management, by supervisors who expect and demand little in the way of work attendance or attentiveness, by production schedules that are typically ignored, and by obsolete equipment (although some relatively new and efficient equipment often goes unused because there are not enough supervisors or because a lengthy period of training is necessary).⁵ Gordon Hawkins has observed that "almost all prison industry enterprises tend to become inflated busywork programs, overmanned and wastefully organized."⁶ We confirmed this observation on our trips through work areas, where we saw more lounging than work, inattention to the job, card playing and chronic idleness. While some prisoners may be content to do time under a relatively indulgent supervisory style, or to do easy time by avoiding programs requiring patience, discipline, job attendance and adequate performance and productivity, some prisoners do not like either the idleness, or the exclusive availability of repetitive, mechanical and alienating jobs. Such prisoners seek challenge and involvement, and expect to be provided tools with which to fashion

a new skill. Some prisoners enter prison with an expectation of developing a skill that will enable them to abandon their past, having accepted the rehabilitative ethic and expecting to be met half way. Prisoners with concerns for Support as well as prisoners with concerns for Feedback (a belief in the efficacy of psychological services and the necessity of personal change) enter prison with relatively high expectations. They express a desire for change, and are indignant when personally relevant programs are not readily available.

Aub R 6: You have a lot of inmates placed in occupations in the institution that they're very dissatisfied with, such as industry where you have them in shops, and things of that nature, where they supply you with beds and license plates and different furniture. And a lot of inmates want to take advantage of the educational opportunities that they have in here, but they're not able to do that.

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GH N 7: Each vocational area are totally obsolete as opposed to the more modern equipment that we have on the outside now. A prime example would be a guy working first in the machine shop. The machines they are using are obsolete - they're a 1930. Or you might go into a sewing machine - a guy might be taking up sewing; and the machines they got there again, is old.

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Aub R 7: I got here and the waiting list was unbelievable on most of the classes. All except things like the mess hall and the laundry and plate, all the shit jobs. I put in for welding after I had been here for about two months and now I just got into welding about a few weeks ago. And I have been here a year. The waiting lists are astronomical man. And it is ridiculous and you get into the courses man and so many teachers that teach have the same attitude that this is really strange - sympathize. Most of the classes that I go into and I have seen this time

and time again - the guy says here is the book - read this and then you go in the class and subsequent classes he gives you very little, if anything you know.

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Since the prison evidences a clear lack of desire to help, prisoners may be convinced that striving is useless. One's goals may be met by performing routinized or meaningless work. The situation is reminiscent of Army basic training where morning and weekend compound police duties involved raking of dirt, painting of small rocks lining paths, picking up cigarette butts from the sides of highways, tasks assigned merely to create work, and unrelated to anyone's skills, interests or abilities. Fear of prison idleness prompts facility administrators to create work which rarely provides anything in the way of interest.

GH R R: I asked them to give me something that's containing air conditioning, you know what they gave me? The broom. Corridor porter. And there's a hell of a lot of psychological impact when it's like "okay I want to learn and I can learn" yet they don't want you to learn. And yet they will tell you, "You have to get a high school diploma and all this here . . . So what do you do, you just walk the line, you say "the hell with both of them."

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Aub R 13: We make license plates in the plate shop and we tell jokes about it, but it's true that if you went outside you couldn't make license plates nowhere because it's against the law. New York State makes their license plates in Auburn Correctional Facility. So if this is the only thing that you have learned since you're in here, how to run one of those machines that is 40 years old, then you don't have a trade. You don't have anything.

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Aub R 10: This here isn't meaningful work, as far as I'm concerned. It's meaningless, and boring, tedious. And then it seems like your whole day is wasted. It seems like you could have been doing something else, some real serious studying or something. And make the time work for you. It's contrary to that.

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Cox S 8: All I do is sweep and mop. And when I get out and go to the street, that's what I'll probably be doing, sweeping and mopping. I don't want that. When I was in Bronx County I took a test, GED. I failed it by 22 points. I need 22 points just to get it. It's a lazy job. All you do is sweep and mop in the morning and in the afternoon you empty out the garbage on the tier. That's all. It's good for some people, but that's only good for people who are in their 60's or 50's.

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Prisoners concerned with Feedback find that therapy is not a major concern of prisons. Typically prisons provide a part-time psychologist, occasionally a part-time psychiatrist, a rehabilitation counselor, several chaplains and a small platoon of "corrections counselors". Professional therapy staff rarely perform therapy and are primarily concerned with preparing required parole reports on prospective releasees. Correction counselors serve as prison clerks, arranging for emergency phone calls, processing requests for furlough and work release and explaining denials, checking inaccurate jail time computations, explaining institutional and system eligibility requirements for transfer, parole, and appeals.

While many prisoners view therapy with wariness and cynicism, others see flaws in themselves they wish to change, and expect to find the opportunities for correction in prison. They too see the prison system as having promised services it fails to provide.

In some cases courts have ordered that prisoners be provided psychiatric counselling as a condition of imprisonment (probably knowing that such an order is impracticable, and services fictitious) and prisoners expect to receive such treatment. For such inmates, the prison is unfeeling, unconcerned with helping, and generally uninterested in human services.

Att R 23: A lot of them don't want to understand. They figure that you want to be a criminal all of your life and it's just a waste of time helping you. That's wrong. There's most guys that want to be from here, they want to go out there and start a decent life. Like they had before. Instead of getting in trouble and everything. But you try to get it here, nobody wants to listen to you. The service unit don't want to help you, they lie to you, the front lies to you. Everybody lies to you here. I'm ready to - right now I've been sitting back since I've been here. I realize that I've been wrong, now I want to get help and try to leave from here where I can do better. But you can't find nobody here who wants to help you. So you just want to go out here and probably rob or kill somebody the next time. And that ain't right.

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Elm N 18: What I would like to see in a prison, right, is therapists, psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, I would like to see all of these people in prison. Because these people in prison don't mainly have a problem, they was all born innocent, right? Innocent babies and what they learned they learned from around their environment. It's really not their fault in a way. Maybe they get to a point in age where they're supposed to understand right from wrong. But their environment has taught them so much, when they're growing up, that it's not their fault all the way, it's the things around them. . . . And it's not, none of these therapists. If there is a few social workers there's not enough to go around for the individuals. In other words, they leave the guy in his cell and when his time is up put him back out on the street. It don't solve anything.

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Att R 20: I saw a man here from the service unit, and all he did was shake his head and say "my God, man, you really did a horrible thing." I know this, he didn't have to tell me. He drove it back he drove me into the ground again. Everytime you go to the parole board or a parole officer, anytime you go to the service unit, they look up your record and they say "25 years, my God, boy have you really goofed. You did a terrible thing." We know this, this we want to forget. This is our past. All we have is our past. I've lost my past, I have no past, I'd rather not discuss it. I have a future. If you want to help me, help me today. Don't help me live yesterday, help me today, to find tomorrow. Because I'm going to live. I live today, help me find tomorrow. Help me go forward, don't keep bringing up my past and jamming it down my throat. I know my past. Maybe other men don't. I do.

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Hopelessness

Irwin, Carrol, Huff have pointed out that there are relationships between a prisoner and the wider society that affect in-prison behavior.⁷ While niches may reduce some felt stress they may be relatively impotent when stacked up against stresses that stem from concerns with family (Feedback). Time may serve to intensify larger environmental concerns and transcend subsetting differences. Johan Gultang has observed that for inmates: "time becomes essential and so important that it is almost considered a thing, concrete and materialized."⁸

Farber, in his study of prisoners (which was performed during a decade when prisoners served much longer median sentences than in the 1970's) found prisoner time to overwhelm in significance

any other prison influences. He noted that while prisoners serving long sentences were aware of setting differences and sought out comfortable prison settings, such assignments were relatively unrelated to the degree of suffering expressed. Suffering and its amelioration were related to time and a sense of injustice.⁹ Cohen and Taylor in their study of men in long term confinement also found work, recreation, planned and purposeful activity to be minimally influential on stress experienced by lifers. They observe that while prisoners discussed prison settings and expressed within prison concerns, small scale setting differences were rarely important.¹⁰ We found among mismatched prisoners that time can intensify concerns for Activity and Support. Lifers often form Lifer's Committees. Long term prisoners may feel ignored in a setting seemingly designed and programmed for the prisoners doing short time.

GH R V: I'm here, I'm just like a dead man. I'm doing a life bit, start with that, I'm doing 15 to life. I got a little over 3 1/2 in, I got 11 1/2 to go to the board. You know, if I could do something that would keep me busy, forget the outside world, let's say a lumber camp where I could operate a heavy bulldozer let's say, or a crane, I could handle this type of equipment. I think the time would be easier. I'd still be out of society and yet I'd be doing something constructive at the same time.

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GH N 9: You can take guys with long sentences and you could put them in the Waldorf Astoria, and they're not going to be happy. They're never going to be happy. I wouldn't be happy anywhere . . . Programs are useless because you've got too much time . . . I went through all different

stages. Like I read a lot, I still read, I studied, I went to school. I just go back and forth. I lifted weights. I do something for a while, I get tired of it, I do something else. And there's nothing really to do . . . You're so close to the outside world, and yet you can't get near it, you can't touch it. I've lost everything I've ever had. And I've watched people grow up, my woman and my children and I don't have that no more . . .

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Att R 14: The programs are mainly for the small bits. There is nothing here that could help, that much, a fella who is doing 25 years to life. Or even 15 years. If you've noticed the programs are set up for people who are doing the small time. The guys who are doing three years, five years, and ten years, all these programs are set up for them. There is always something coming over the radio, that if you're within 10 months, or within 2 months board, you can take advantage of it. No, they're not meeting my needs, no.

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Time can affect Safety and Privacy concerns. Exposure to interpersonal irritants may become more intense. Prisoners may endure present problems, but may fear unendurable pain, a fear intensified by time. Hopelessness derives in the main from stressed concerns for Feedback. For some of the mismatched prisoners the prison experience means loss of family and friends. Of mismatched prisoners almost half (46.2 percent) expressed a secondary concern for Feedback. (Table 6. 23).

Att R V: They just took me out of my environment, snatched me, like it was a bad dream. I was doing very well out there, good business, beautiful home, wife and 2 kids. I had a 2 million dollar business, 2 million dollar gross. I was offered four years in this case, to take a plea of four years, which I just refused. I

wasn't going to take it, I was going to go to trial, and it was mandatory that I get life. I was aware of the consequences. And I had a fairly good idea that I was going to get convicted. I just wasn't going to take it, it was a matter of principal and that was it . . . So now I have the time, and I don't know whether I can do it.

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Concerns for family and friends often create chronic and essentially insolveable prison stresses. Expanded visitation rights (including the rights to contact visits in all facilities), periodic telephone calls, unrestricted and uncensored mail, subsidized transportation for families of prisoners, somewhat retard the erosion of family ties for many prisoners, but also increase the saliency of family problems. When problems occur and prisoners become aware of them (if not the extent of a particular problem) the experience of powerlessness may produce acute stress.

Att N 7: Being away from your family is in itself psychologically devastating. It tears you apart, because there is things that you sit down to do and you just can't ever do. There is never going to be a decent prison, never, because it does that to people.

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Aub R 29: The main thing, I got a letter - my wife wrote me a letter the 19th, I got it the 24th, this month. Now I've sent letters home, I don't even know if she got them. Normally if she gets a letter she'll say she's got it. Now I assume they sent it, but their workload here - they have so many people to deal with and so little staff. I suppose there's a strain on them to get a lot of work out too. But I get mail a week later, two weeks later, I'm thinking my wife's not writing.

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Events in the free world, births, deaths, moves, school problems, in-law problems, become grist for worry. Even relatively mundane events may take on disproportionate significance because one is not there to witness them, gauge their significance, assist in their correction. In this context, both family dependence and family independence may be unsettling.

Att R O: You are alright for yourself but you aren't doing anything to contribute to your family and to help them . . . I don't think there is a man in here that don't feel helpless.

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Aub R 29: Anything that's a strain on my family, my wife, naturally, it's a strain on me. Because I get to see her, let's see, I've been here since March of '74, and I've seen her twice . . . And my son. And he doesn't know his father.

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Aub R 26: You think - geez, if I lose them then what do I have then you know - so should I kill myself or should I just try to get vengeance and it fucks your mind up. You can't concentrate on anything else. Your mind is all in one little circle. It is all around - like in my case it is - everything centers on my family. And if anything disrupts that it disrupts my whole world because that is my nucleus right there. And being in here you can't do anything and when you try to talk to somebody there is really a lot of them think you are trying to con them. You know, maybe it is they have heard so many kinds that they believe everybody is trying to con him. Well, my wife had come to see me Thanksgiving Day and she sat in the visiting room for two hours and just started crying. You know the pressures of raising the kids - trying to raise them right, you know and she doesn't

get out to go anyplace. She just - it wasn't like she was missing sex or anything - it was just that she wanted somebody to lean on to and so she sat there for two hours crying, you know. And you figure that anytime you see anybody cry for two hours you figure, you know, they are ready to snap.

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Subsettings are typically of little interest to such prisoners. A prison can maximize satisfaction merely by minimizing distance from prisoner home of origin for such prisoners. In filing formal requests for transfer with the Division of Classification and Movement, "programmatic reasons" are typically advanced when the real reason is family propinquity. Classification analysts and prisoners play out a jointly recognized charade, following stated DOCS directives that permit transfers only for program purposes, and both understanding that easier and more frequent visitation is the real purpose of the transfer request.

Prisoners at Green Haven prison comment on the one striking characteristic of the facility.

GH R CCC: It is closer to home and I get visits and up there I am so far away from my family and everything like you know, but here for a problem if it arises I can make a telephone call and I can ask for that and my family like it better and like I saw I am more relaxed and I am closer to home . . . Right - that is one of the most important. When a friend of mine writes to me I can write him back instead of having to go through all the rig-a-marole and they are pretty good as far as that. My whole thing is trying to be as close to my family as I can and friends of mine that I know and they come and visit me and they can come in and see me.

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GH N 9: About the only thing that really stands out is the visits. That's about the only thing I've

seen that stands out about Green Haven. I've got me a young wife and a little kid. He was born since I've been here. And with them coming up to see me, it helps me a lot. You can talk over things. And also makes this time go a little faster because you have something to look forward to. Right. But other than that, Green Haven's really nothing.

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GH N 21: See they can visit me a lot easier here. At Clinton I didn't get no visits at all, it is like Siberia up there, there's no place for your folks to stay, it takes a day to get up there and you spend a couple of hours, and nobody feels really good about it . . . Here you can have visits all day and I been getting 2 or 3 visits a month, and it is great . . . Nothing else is particularly great, but the visits are, they are great.

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Conclusion

With Mismatches, when there is a lack of specificity about discontent with environments, we can be less certain than with Niches that environmental concerns relate in systematic ways to setting influences. Expressions of alienation appear generic, and reveal more about people than about the transaction between people and settings. We cannot be certain that providing high freedom settings to the alienated Freedom stressed prisoner, or Support to those who feel useless, or insulating settings to the helpless will increase their satisfaction and reduce their stress. And, given our lack of comparisons between niche and mismatched prisoners on recorded personal, criminal and institutional history variables, we cannot be sure that the people in Mismatches are not similar to those in niches for equivalent

concerns. It may be however that some degree of prisoner dissatisfaction is attributable to the settings in which Mismatched prisoners are found.

On the other hand some of the transactions described by mismatched prisoners underscore the limits of niches. Some Mismatches report concerns that are qualitatively different from those reported by Niches, which may not yield matched transactions through placement in the more beneficent prison subsetting. Some prisoners find that their drive to resist compulsion is more important than any other concerns, and find the drive minimally affected by setting placement. Prisoners traumatized by a lengthy sentence or an imminent divorce may similarly be immune to subsetting influences. Some prisoners find even unequivocally useful programs to be false opportunities, the most benign of settings to be corrupting and compromising. Some men, by talent or taste, simply are not in the market for program involvement, or do not have necessary preparatory skills to motivate or sustain interest. Some Safety stressed prisoners find themselves threatened everywhere, even when staff orchestrate isolation for them. Often such prisoners find that their concerns create additional mismatch. They expect the worst, and assist in its confirmation, as they are placed in punitive, alienating, or claustrophobic settings.

Footnotes

1. Coxsackie was, at the time of our study, the only facility in which a formal policy and practice of removing prisoners who erupted in educational and vocational programs to less secure outside positions was evident.

2. New York State Special Commission on Attica, Attica: The Official Report of the New York State Special Commission, Bantam (New York: National General, 1972), p. 41.

3. New York State Department of Correctional Services, Annual Report: 1975 (mimeographed), p. 12.

4. Daniel Glaser, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System, Abridged Ed. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), p. 69.

5. Susan Sheehan catalogues some of the problems of prison industrial and vocational programs in her account of prison life in Green Haven Prison during 1978:

"Welding was popular with the inmates when it was first introduced at Green Haven, in 1970, but it proved to be a passing fancy. Although a man can be employable after six months of studying welding - mastering the machines in the machine shop takes much longer - the inmates found welding dull . . .

In 1974, Green Haven's vocational supervisor set up a motorcycle repair shop, since repairing motorcycles was an up-and-coming trade on the outside. The inmates received their initial training on small engines; the idea was that they would progress to motorcycles. Three Hondas had been bought. Two months went by, the men hadn't mastered the small engines, and soon half of them dropped out for lack of motivation or were transferred to other prisons." A Prison and a Prisoner (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978), pp. 123-124.

6. Gordon Hawkins, The Prison: Policy and Practice (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 120.

7. See John Irwin, The Felon (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp. 67-85; Leo Carroll, Hacks, Blacks, and Cons: Race Relations in a Maximum Security Prison (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 1974), pp. 63-90; C. Ronald Huff, ed. Contemporary Corrections: Social Control and Conflict (Beverly Hills, Calif: Russell Sage, 1977).

8. Johan Galtung, "The Organization of Dilemma," in The Prison: Studies in Institutional Organization and Change, ed. by Donald Cressey (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), pp. 107-145 at p. 113.

9. Maurice Farber, "Suffering and the Time Perspective of the Prisoner," in Authority and Frustration by Kurt Lewin, Charles Meyers, Joan Kalhoun, Maurice Farber, and John French (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1944), pp. 155-227.

10. Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor, Psychological Survival: The Experience of Long Term Imprisonment (New York: Pantheon, 1972), pp. 100-104.

CHAPTER 11

NON-STRESSED PRISONERS (ENHANCING SETTINGS,
GOOD TIME SETTINGS, ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLACENCY)A Note on Stress

In coding prisoner interviews, our first major coding decision focused on whether prisoners had experienced stress while in prison. Our early concern with understanding prisoners who saw themselves as facing "special" difficulties in living in prison forced us to define specifically and categorically interview content to be coded as evidence of stress. We have discussed the criteria underlying the coding decision in Chapter 5. We have until now adopted, consistent with the transactional perspective, a concept of psychological stress in which stress refers to the condition of the person in a personally meaningful environment. We have learned from Lazarus that stress must involve the presence of threat, that the threat must be perceived, that it must be of sufficient intensity to involve the integrity of the person, and that the person's coping response must be concerned with the removal or reduction of stress.¹

Threat as we have seen in earlier chapters, may derive from a drive to resist compulsion, a need to ensure environmental predictability, to secure physical safety, to resolve dependency needs. In line with this frame of reference, we limited our concept of niche to those situations most suggestive of psychological survival,

with amelioration relating to flight, withdrawal, retrenchment. But, while behavior within such transactions is both purposeful and instrumental, it has relatively conservative goals. People in niches typically seek equilibrium, homeostasis, a reduction in stimuli, or the careful selection of particular configurations of stimuli. This means that niches could be considered survival oriented, and a subset of satisfying transactions. Among other inmates we interviewed there were:

- (1) Prisoners who prized subsettings containing activities which provide intrinsic or self-motivating rewards, means to personal growth or cultural revival.
- (2) Prisoners to whom power, status, access to luxuries and contraband, and ways of doing easy time and obtaining privileges, seemed important.
- (3) Prisoners on whom prison had little serious effects, who expressed relative indifference and complacency and who consequently saw few prison or subsetting differences as either significant or worth seeking.

Our first subcategory (those prisoners concerned with self-enhancing aspects of prison subsettings) may actually seek stress or tension in their transactions with environment.² Settings may be valued because of the challenges they present. One may combat boredom or the powerlessness of total control by pursuing one's own paths as evidence of self-control, and as a means of self-control. With one set of goals foreclosed, one may move to adopt new goals responding to new concerns. Additionally some prisoners

may meet their physical and psychological needs in prisons because of a lack of prison-specific liabilities, imported skills and interests, easy prison assimilation because of past experience, acceptance into a "brotherhood", or any of a number of combinations of underlying strengths and prison opportunities.

Whatever their origin and strengths some men perform well in prison, acting on the setting not merely to mitigate obvious pains of imprisonment but to fashion new modes of behavior, occasionally seeking excellence and involvement. Some authors have postulated a drive or need for mastery, actualization, the maximizing of the quality of value satisfactions, and the prisoner concerned with personal growth and development, appear to show such a drive.³

However, while a search for optimal stress could result in a coding of ego-enhancing prisoners as stressed, such a concept of stress is incompatible with the emphasis on survival and maintenance of psychological and physical integrity used in coding stress within our interviews. We can therefore characterize these inmates as a subcategory of the non-stressed.

Our two additional subcategories of the non-stressed, "good time settings" and "environmental complacency," do not rest on a separation of levels of stress. Within good time settings and with inmates who are complacent, we find few strong concerns, little or no environmental threat, and no new superordinate consuming goals.

Enhancing Settings: (Environmental concerns for Support and Freedom)

With enhancing transactions prisoners express concerns for the quality of available stimulation, not the quantity. Prisoners are concerned with using heavy hanging and empty time as a way to realize their capabilities.

In niches, prison programs and activities may be pursued to fill time and to displace thoughts, and the activity itself is of less importance than the effects of the activity. Without interest and involvement, activity assists in coping primarily as a defense, and does not evolve as its own reinforcer. When activities are pursued because they motivate interest and involvement, activities become not only useful occupiers of time and consumers of excess energy, but become relevant to one's self-perceptions as a growing, maturing, and competent person. As Robert White states:

An object or activity can be said to have intrinsic interest when it is pursued not merely at someone else's behest and not merely to fill time pleasantly but to carry the activity itself continuously forward... the passionate gardener, for instance, does not stop work at the first hint of fatigue, leave the beds half planted, allow weeds and pests to multiply, or let the plants wilt for lack of water or fertilizer. His interest goes beyond the momentary pleasure of gardening to include the work that is necessary to bring the garden to its fulfillment. Friends will say that he has become a slave to his garden, but it is a willing enslavement. The real fun is making the garden grow.⁴

Workers in prison, like workers in the free world, may be, as a whole, alienated from work, finding it marginally involving and uninteresting. Correctional authorities typically lament the lack of programs in modern prisons and reform groups typically include recommendations with respect to increased prisoner programming as a means of reducing tensions and disturbances and

facilitating rehabilitation. Prisons have rather consistently monopolized and limited both the quality and quantity of stimulation to which prisoners are exposed, providing a few islands of activity and several atypical special training programs for involvement. However, with increased prison-community permeability increased funds for training, and heightened prisoner expectations, programs are becoming more varied and relevant to the purposes of prisoners. With the recent introduction of voluntary service organizations, self-help groups, political, social, and religious organizations, college participation and advanced schooling, the possibilities for prisoner involvement and interest in planned activity have greatly increased.

New York is generally credited with developing the first comprehensive program of vocational education for prisoners, at Elmira Reformatory.⁵ Today, New York State prisons provide activities and programs ranging from optical laboratory training to commercial art, with dozens of volunteer programs within each facility ranging from Swahili to Street Theater.⁶ While there are still substantial proportions of the prisoner population engaged in relatively alienating industry employment or menial block maintenance assignments, increasingly prisoners concerned with exploiting available opportunities for achievement, with locating activities that may provide ego support and interest, find at least some such activities available. John Irwin noted similar trends in California,

With the rapidly growing educational, vocational training and treatment opportunities, and with the erosion of convict solidarity, an increasing number of convicts choose to radically

change their lifestyles and follow a sometimes carefully devised plan 'to better themselves', 'improve their mind', or 'find themselves' while in prison.⁷

Glaser found similar concerns among a high proportion of the prisoners he interviewed; he reports that "Learning a trade or in other ways preparing for a better job opportunity outside the prison was the first interest of prisoners . . . the second most frequently designated interest was trying to improve oneself psychologically, or to understand oneself better."⁸ Similarly, Glaser states that "a skilled trade was named most often as the assignment where prisoners were likely to get along best . . . tending to offer career training programs that provide most of the inmates with a strong common interest."⁹

As students of prison have found, many prisoners take advantage of what is offered, and often augment formal program offerings with self-study, correspondence courses, and self-disciplining leisure time activities. They express a strong personal commitment to "you got to do it yourself." Activity for such men has an important directional component, and the amount of work or the quantity of stimulation it affords, is of considerably less importance than its power to involve and interest, or to correct past gaps in skills and education.¹⁰ While prison programs may, in many cases, be only marginally related to post-release success, and many prisoners believe this to be the case, they do so with a cynicism tempered by hope, as well as a resolve to maximize possible gains. Glaser notes that

. . . at present the post-release employment of at least half the men released from prison do not involve a level of skill that requires

an appreciable amount of prior training, but for the minority, who gain skills in prison at which they can find a post-release vocation, prison work experience and training is a major rehabilitation influence.¹¹

Schooling and education is one of the prison programs most commonly chosen by prisoners oriented toward purposeful use of activity. While school generally is perceived as not very educational by the majority of prisoners, (inmates are typically assigned to school no more than one-half day, given low levels of instruction, oftentimes have difficult discipline problems, and often face the sort of classroom experience that they found untenable on the streets), for some prisoners prison education programs denote a second chance, in a context in which one has little to lose and possibly much to gain.

GH R EE: I have never forgotten the fact that I need education and as a matter of fact I need more. I have gotten my high school diploma but I intend to go into some college programs. The one thing that stands out in my mind about here is that they have like inmates and teachers teaching me, . . . and the people that got into it, they really have some meaningful programs here and they have people that come in from the street and they are teaching and they teach day and night school. And I got my diploma going to school at night and that is one of the things that really stands out in my mind about this place. That is very beneficial I believe . . . Now I could relate to people and sit down and discuss problems with anyone . . . and I attribute this to the fact that I have gotten a certain amount of education and I can mostly relate to them and understand where they are coming from.

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Cox R K: Like you feel that you went that far in school and you accomplished this. You need that piece of paper because it could help you in a lot of ways . . . If you didn't have that piece of

you couldn't you know, get certain jobs. And in today's society you need an education to get decent jobs. You know everybody wants the best for themselves, but if you don't have the capabilities or if you don't have what it takes to get the best for yourself . . . then you need to be helped . . . When I first came back they put me in housekeeping mopping floors, threw me in the kitchen. I don't plan on mopping floors when I get out of here. I want to continue my education. I plan to go to college in Syracuse.

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Aub R 25: I was able to get something that I more or less liked and when I went out into society it would more or less enable me to take the trade with me and use it. And like I have in the morning from 8:30 to 11:30 a regents diploma, and I'm taking academic programs. And right now I'm taking general science and American history and English. And in the afternoon from 1:00 to 3:30 I have a cooperative. And at night I take college courses and I take sociology and I wanted to take Freshman English, but they didn't have it. Because at night they were teaching stuff. And all of this is the kind of stuff I really like.

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Att N M: The days is gone of the knife and gun . . . I don't want to come back to these places, I have got - I am thirty-five years old and I have approximately 17 or 18 years in jail and I don't want to come back here any more. You kick a dog long enough and he is going to learn. And so far the college program is really a shot at something because you can't do a thing without education . . . So like it really makes the institution that much more bearable . . . I am getting the experience that I should have learned from the past. . . So with this college program I feel that the place is bearable because I feel that it is training me and I am not coming back.

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Exposure to non-menial work may be a new experience to many, not only introducing the pleasure and challenge of organizing new skills but slowly evolving into a new feeling of self-respect and

self-confidence. While the program may have been chosen in order to do easier time and escape the rigor, or the monotony of manual labor, prisoners may find themselves caught up in the program, compulsively collecting university credits, with an emerging self-portrait as student which surprises even the inmates themselves.

GH R M: At first, see, I was making that junk that passes for industry work in here. And it was really bad, doing nothing all day, no showers, playing cards. So I decided to get involved with Marist College. So I got involved with Marist, and I liked the courses. It was a liberal arts course, and I was taking a lot of courses in psychology. From that I went into Dutchess Community College, because I was trying to get the Associate of Arts degree within a period of one year. Because I felt that the time that I had did behind the wall and the type of reading material that I had exposed myself to, and the type of things that I had learned on my own, I figured that I had the mentality and the persistence and the continuity to deal with that. So I did. So what happened, I was carrying 7 courses a semester. One semester I carried 10, right? I had nine courses and then I took a proficiency exam, in Spanish. Which gave me a sum total of 30 credits in one semester. And as a result of this I took all those credits that I got from Marist and Dutchess, and I transferred them to the ---- degree program because I enrolled in the associate of arts degree program. I did that for the simple reason I'm concerned with the intrinsic value of education. And as a result of this, I have the latitude that I need in order to map out what I consider to be a lucrative and viable education for myself. So what happened, I got the requirements from both colleges within a period of a year. So I wrote to the ---- degree to evaluate those courses and give me the evaluation. And I passed. See you can do things in here . . . You have the academic programs, it gives you your basic cognitive skills. I never saw myself as the student type, and I'm not kidding myself, maybe there's no jobs out there . . . but I did something I didn't think I could, I was never exposed to.

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4 OF 7

Aub R A: See now I took Accounting One during the day-time here when I came back here and I didn't know that they had Accounting One on a college level at night where I could have got credit for it. But anyway I got the knowledge but now I am taking Accounting Two at night and now I have a full year of accounting you know - the basis of it which is from here. I could go out and get another year later on and have a position as a junior accountant you know. So the thing is that in certain areas you can accomplish a few things. You see the thing is with me having the age that I am, I have had a chance to get around a little bit in the outside world so you know for certain - I know certain opportunities when I see them. A lot of these fellows in here are 21 and 22 and they come to jail when they are 18 from Elmira and they don't realize the opportunity of welding and the electrical field or accounting you know. Their minds are young and they are immature. They don't think, so quite naturally they don't like the place. The places does have a lot of bad things about it but there are good opportunities too.

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Prison work assignments occasionally provide prisoners with a valued role, which in turn offers a future a little less dim than the past, and a possible turning point. An occasional inmate even claims that he welcomes imprisonment because of its anticipated rehabilitative impact:

Cox N 8: I know it is kind of awful for a person to say that I am glad that I am here, but like me myself when I was out there and I got sentenced, in a way I was kind of glad. I wasn't happy about coming here, but out there there was just nothing. While I am here at least I will get something beneficial for myself and in a way I am glad. So when I am here I will get what I can. I never knew when I came to institutions that masonry was in here. I just thought you did time and that was it . . . Like a trade is, oh you know, something that will benefit the individual when he goes home . . . I am not a kid anymore . . . In the shop I forget that I

am in jail and I will be smiling to myself and say - wow, I have a job and I am working.

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In Chapter 6 we found that prisoner level of education was linked to Support (Table 6.18) with prisoners with Support concerns more likely to report a high school education than are other prisoners. Support may blossom when it intersects with a congruent opportunity system, but also when the opportunity system calls for skills the person already knows he possesses. For prisoners who have experienced some degree of success, or episodic commitment in school, prisons may provide environmental conditions supportive of the resolve to initiate a long term career. The inmate may also welcome the enforced opportunity to engage in sustained effort that yields tangible quality products.

GH N 12: (Law clerk) I think my job is good primarily because I'm happy in it and I can achieve something, I can go somewhere. This is a purpose I have for myself, if I'm going to have any purpose in life. I can't, I'm not going to do like the average person outside, he works and it becomes a regular routine for him. I don't want to live that way, I don't want to live in a routine, I want to do something I'm happy in. I was always that way, I always had high hopes for myself. So it would have to be self-work, I have to have self-work. In other words, for me to go anywhere. And I can't do it in a job that I'm just taking just to use for time.

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Cox N K: See what I learn up there, nobody can take away from me . . . I know how to help build a house for myself if I want to build a house. I know how to build a chimney . . . I've always liked that, while on the streets, construction and mason stuff, I never thought I'd get a chance to do it.

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Aub N 15: I had some friends in the shop and they pulled me in, I spoke to the bosses. And within two weeks they taught me everything there is to plumbing in the whole institution. And there is nothing I can't fix now.

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Elm N 9: Now I see a job that I can do. See how this place is. If you ask me to do it, see I could scrape it clean and fix it up and then I could come in and paint it and that is me. That is my job. And I know that and that it is beautiful and I do it right.

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"As an interest grows", notes Gordon Allport, "it creates a lasting condition that leads to congruent conduct and also acts as a silent agent for selecting and directing whatever is related to the interest."¹² Interests help to guide and direct behavior, as a way to gauge one's progress toward goals, and as a method through which to evaluate oneself in relation to the goals one has chosen. Interests are important in answering questions about where one is going, and how well one is using one's time, and one's energies. What is probably more important, the inmate who has strong interests has literally transcended his prison, and made his captivity inconsequential.

GH R 24: I make the call-outs . . . I give certain psychological tests, IQ tests and so forth, which is time-consuming and fun . . . I've even got to the point where I can even interpret. You know, needless to say, I am no psychologist, but I have certain basics like psychology courses and so forth . . . But with the training they have given me here, more than the courses I've taken at school, I'm able to administer the tests and to some extent to give an interpretation . . . I'm learning a lot, and I may want to learn more when I get out.

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Elm S BB: . . . The radio and tv shop now that is a good trade. It's something I want, something I need, something I gotta have for me to go out there and survive you see . . . It fascinates me, different wires and stuff like that. I like it.

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Cox N 18: Yeah - well I love acting. That is the first time that I ever did it. When I was out in the streets I never did it and I come here you know and I first hear about the drama class and I said I am going to be in the drama class and maybe I can be an actor some day you know. I really love it. I really love acting and stuff. I was lucky they have that here . . . it's really all I care about.

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Elm S 24: I feel a little different even though I know that I'm still in jail, but I feel better because I'm doing something that I like to do. And the music itself, like it closes my mind to things around the jail . . . and I take that seriously, because that's my own life, the things that I do, here and out there.

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Occasionally prisoners may pursue a kind of cultural revival in prison, the most conspicuous case being the concern of black prisoners with the tenets of the Muslim religion.¹³ Religious involvement can provide a context for alienation, placing imprisonment into a "social and historical context of black repression". Such a system of beliefs can make disorganized bids for freedom unnecessary as one proves one's personal inviolability. Muslim membership also reduces social distance among inmates. Muslims often calmly and emphatically point out the insignificance of physical and social settings and of prisons themselves.

Aub R 1: Irregardless if a man is in here - no matter what he may be in here for - if he makes an honest attempt to become a Muslim he is going to be within himself. He is going to look at himself and what he was involved in before and he is going to put it into a new light of what he is trying to be . . . I adhere entirely to the existence of Islam the presence of that which means that the present establishment by means of - this is where the law is dictated from. Our guidance comes from the holy prophet Mohammed in Mecca and our program is laid out for us - this is in anything that institutions don't have any power over. This is something that there has been on for the last 1400 years.

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The religion can provide a system of ethics, as well as practical guidance on survival under harsh conditions.

Aub R X: See the rules tell us what to do, prison don't matter at all. See the relationship I was going to give is that during the time of the prophet-hood of the holy prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, he was in Mecca, this was about the year 610 I'll say. He was in Mecca and he was confronted by all types of idolatry and drinking, fornication, all type of idol worshipping, things that were negative to the beliefs that he had maintained himself. Now within itself Mecca was the jail and the prophet Mohammed, he himself was the prisoner. Him and those that followed him . . . he stayed there in Mecca in that particular institution he was in, that particular jail, being subjected to the harassment for 13 years. Constantly being subjected to being interrupted when he was saying prayers. By many means, either by cow dung or camel dung being thrown in his path, or being pelted by stones, or thorns being thrown in his path. You know, he was confronted. And it was not only him, it was others. At length they tried to take his and his companions' lives. Because they didn't want Islam to be practiced. But he managed, and we can manage in New York State prisons.

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Elm S 17: Islam is everything for me, it gives you tranquility, and it shows that you don't need tangible things to exist . . . You can go into

yourself. You improve yourself spiritually.

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Enhancing transactions may involve activities by prisoners to help others. Delegation of some supportive tasks and duties by staff to prisoners permits such prisoners to feel altruistic in sharing with others. The outcome of one's actions become important insofar as they benefit other prisoners. Altruism is exceedingly rare in prison, but its expression, as well as the pleasure and self-enhancement it affords, is permitted in few specialized positions. As helping relationships are established, including some that imply special expertise or status, prisoners can see themselves as decent people, worthy of approval and self-approval.

Cox R 04: Well as a minister here, that's one of the ways right there, setting a good example for them, the way that I carry myself. You know that people watch you, different individuals. So if I know that they're watching me and see me doing this and they see the way different officers talks to me, something of this nature, they may reflect and say why don't he talk too. Really what it does is give me an inspiration to help different individuals within the institution, and makes me stronger.

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Cox N 7: My job there is to teach others that are less fortunate. Yeah - when before I taken it I was able to keep and get along with different kinds of people - I have patience and so forth. I got adjusted to it so far. I plan to take up counselling when I get out . . . I like to work with other people . . . and they need my help.

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Cox S 13: Well I am a teacher's aide during the daytime . . . I am dealing with people and I think that is what I do best - deal with people . . . my people and people that come say from the same time and type of environment that I come from

and I can teach them something that I have been able to obtain in the last year. I really like that.

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Environments for self-improvement include, most conspicuously, educational programs, including schooling from elementary to college programs, trade programs in which the programs are congruent with inmate interests or in which supervisors help stimulate or fertilize interest, programs with evident street transfer value, and settings in which a personal sense of pride, accomplishment and achievement is marshalled -- which can include miscellaneous special interest and self-improvement programs. Personal transactions between person and setting are complex and diverse even when our view is limited to self-enhancement. A remunerative dental lab program, may yield less involvement than an objectively less marketable assignment such as teacher or learning lab instructor. Transactions involve the interests, dispositions, and assessed liabilities of the prisoner, as well as the "objective" characteristics of the setting itself.

Good Time Settings: Settings for power, privilege, comfort, wealth. (Primary Environmental Concerns for Support, Freedom, Structure)

The subcategory of the nonstressed in good time settings consists of those prisoners who are concerned with obtaining preferred privileges and comforts, and with avoiding "messing up". The importance of manipulating prison environments for mainly parochial privileges and resources is related most clearly to a combination of Freedom, Support and Structure concerns.

A secondary gain for the inmate may be a measure of personal autonomy, a sense that he has some control over the environment, providing him important evidence of his manhood.¹⁴ The Structure theme enters into a concern for securing and maintaining one's position through formal recognition and rules, and of how one can predict and control power to prevent this loss of privileges. The primary concern, however, is with tangible resources and gains (Support). Prisoners in this category seek relatively self-indulgent goals, and prize settings that facilitate obtaining such goals. This is the type of inmate environment transaction that has been consistently emphasized in the prison literature. Traditional portraits of prisoner adaptation have often been concerned with depicting the "workable assignment," with jobs that permit access to contraband and to power, with connivers and swagging in the foreground. It is hypothesized that problems of status threat and poverty may lead to a system of economics in which strong prisoners play roles as merchant, politician, mafia, and even rat.¹⁵

While we have already discussed the possible overemphasis in such prison portraits, (particularly in a modern prison world that resembles only slightly the material deprivation of the prison of the past) we do find such traditional concerns and roles within our sample. While we can draw no conclusions concerning the relative importance of such themes among the prison population as a whole, we find a small but distinct group of prisoners who are interested in doing time as comfortably as possible, occupying their time with non-menial and perceived "soft" assignments, or with marshalling what power, wealth, and status seem available in prison at reasonable

risk. Since such enterprises risk competition and conflict and involve precarious relations with staff, good-time settings may provide less good times than some prisoners expect or hope.

Att R 7: I've got a room in the cellar and I take care of all the linen, and because I've got a good job, people want me to get more stuff for them and I can't get it. Like the state shop, I run for the state shop, the clothes and all that. And they want me to get more stuff for them, I get hassles this way. I usually work them out, but it can be hard, some people can't take it . . . I don't misuse my privileges. This is why I've kept this job for about a year now. A little bit over a year. Because I don't try to pull any sneak tricks or anything like this, I do my job and that's that. And I can make out, if I'm careful.

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Prisoners who perceive settings as ameliorative often find the good time characteristics of such settings to other prisoners clearly threatening to them. The availability of scarce commodities, or power, or status, for the stressed prisoner may actually increase stress and act as an irritant rather than as an ameliorative setting characteristics. Power and visibility may erode, rather than improve the ameliorative power of a niche.

Elm R 1: See sometimes the job can make it bad, although most of the time it is good . . . My job - I'm the Catholic chaplain's clerk. In the chapel they have candles and I tell them if they want a candle, okay, ten crates of cigarettes. It's a ridiculous price and nobody will pay it. That is why I say ten crates, see and I am no good because I say that. I refuse to sell them the candles . . . I have a lot of pressure from the inmate population because I have access to all this stuff.

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Elm R 21: I have access to the records and stuff . . . and the job brings some problems with it, because of the things that I won't do. I've worked hard at building up a trust with the guards and the administration, and I won't do anything to turn that trust against me. Some prisoners think that I will get them information or change records or something because I work up here, and sometimes I can do some things, but usually I won't do it, I simply won't do it for them, and the inmates use that for ridicule.

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Aub R 18: Like it's ok if they just want some salve, or some cotton swabs or something, but sometimes they want drugs, and you can get them here . . . one young guy that was here before, they kept after him and after him and he couldn't take it and he started stealing drugs and selling it and they took him out of here.

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For other prisoners, for whom prison discomforts derive in part from Sykes' "deprivation of goods and services," rather than from the stresses we have catalogued as prepotent among niche residents, good time aspects of settings are perceptually salient. For some prisoners the poverty of prison life, with its issue of greens and free Auburn grown tobacco, is a major issue. While there are increased limits on weekly prisoner commissary buys, heightened ceilings on prisoner accounts, unlimited correspondence (much of which includes pleas for financial help and assistance), and expanded prisoner package items and amounts, the level of deprivation for some prisoners is perceived to be great. Prisoners may depend upon their prison wages to purchase necessary items. More generally, prisoner expectations of material comforts in modern America may extend far beyond medical care, adequate food, and

serviceable clothing. As Sykes has said of the modern inmate,

A standard of living may be hopelessly inadequate because . . . it bores him to death or fails to provide those subtle symbolic overtones which we invest in the world of possessions . . . He wants - or needs, if you will - not just the so-called necessities of life but also the amenities: cigarettes and liquor as well as calories, interesting foods as well as sheer bulk, individual clothing as well as adequate clothing, individual furnishings for his living quarters as well as shelter, privacy as well as space.¹⁶

For some prisoners seeking wealth reflects a search for a life style. They are concerned with accumulating comforts to permit a familiar life in prison, as well as the solidification of a self-perception as successful using one familiar and commonly respected measure of success, material wealth. Susan Shaheen describes such a prisoner at Green Haven Prison in 1975, who occupied a "good time" work assignment in the facility state shop (outfitting prisoners for release, with both access to contraband and access to valued and salable services, a clothes pressing machine, unique to the prison). She points out that

Manilow has a considerable quantity of personal property - extra pillows and blankets and odds and ends left to him by departing prisoners, such as a desk lamp and an alarm clock that tells the approximate time but no longer rings. He has about three dozen dress shirts, turtle-necks and t-shirts in every color of the rainbow . . . Manilow's lockers also hold three dozen handkerchiefs and a few pairs of shoes, which he has liberated from the parole clothing department; a few books . . . ; a generous supply of groceries, plastic bowls, thermoses, and other eating utensils; half a dozen hair-brushes and combs and an array of toilet articles. . .¹⁷

Prison work assignments may be valued not only because they provide access to contraband, or to saleable services but also because they

permit one to earn, for prison, a relatively munificent salary and hence prevent the need for hustling, a pursuit which can be both demeaning and dangerous. For some inmates, income spells independence:

Aub N 7: A very big part of it in prison is money - money. Now I have had - I never had - much money in prison. But the one big thing that keeps me comfortable in prison is being able to buy cigarettes and the necessities without any strain because a lot of inmates have to hustle because they have to do this and do this because they don't have as much to smoke and all this and this also - there is a lot of gambling of - incidents and fights and stuff are back to the gambling because the person gambles because he needs money or something to buy cigarettes or something right - so the hospital is good because it pays good. That's all it is.

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Aub R I: There is men who make more money than me but very few. Like some men work making plates over here and some work as carpenters. Some men make \$100 or \$50 doing that. I was going to work on the body shop over there. They have a program that the guys can go outside and work and they would be paid \$1.80 an hour. And there is better opportunities over here. And it makes it easier for a man to be here . . . There's not that many jobs in the institution and there is a lot of men in here. As you know money is where everything is happening. If you don't have any then you don't have anything . . . Well, looking at it this way man, I'm doing 25 years and I say to myself I'll get all of the things that I need, like a typing machine and a cassette or anything that I want to get from the street.

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Aub N 10: I choose it for the money. It may not seem like much, but in here, it's a lot . . . it buys me my cigarettes, my coffee, a few little things like hobby materials . . . I don't get much money from my family, they can't really afford it anyway, so I don't like to ask them, I

like to be on my own as best I can.

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While a job may permit one to buy cigarettes and toiletries without resort to becoming a trader or a merchant, or becoming otherwise involved in the prison economy, a position may be critical because of the entrepreneurial pursuits that it facilitates. Prisoners with handicraft skills may elect involvement in prison arts and crafts departments as instructors, not to pursue an avocation but because access to free materials and time permits them to craft items for later sale to prisoners or to staff. Similarly work assignment that maximizes free time and permits unsupervised periods in which to work may be valued by those interested in making money while in prison.

Att N 5: Let's say a guy wants a painting, I tell him 'give me three cartons. This in turn gives him a painting, gives me smokes, and the money I save goes home to my wife. I don't spend no money. I feel she needs it. So I take these cigarettes and if I want something, I trade these to a man that has them. Cigarettes are good for any trade you want. Now we're not supposed to do this kind of thing, but they knew we was doing it, but how could they stop it? You can't prove the guy is doing it or he's not doing it. Now they've changed it to one inmate can't buy a painting from an inmate, because you got to -- the hobby shop. Well, I don't feel it's right and nobody else feels it's right, for them to take 10 percent of your painting. I don't think it's right. I'm no longer in the hospital, I'm a porter over in C Block. Which gives me more time to work, and more money to spend.

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GH R 00: I learned how to make jewelry and this is a very good ready product to sell in here and I get a lot of business outside and I get all that and I am not talking about that 20¢ a day you used to make with what your family sent you and now the average guy -- I got one of the top paying jobs in here \$1.15 a day and

I guess more or less it is by seniority and how long you have been working there and what type of work that you do, and in general the entire population depends on me for these frames that they get for the art shows that they sent out and things of this nature . . . I can save money, and relax in here. It's not something everybody can do, you have to know the ropes and sometimes it takes a long time to get what you want . . . In the hobby shop I can do what I want all day, and earn money at it, and sell my products later.

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Access to relatively scarce commodities, the skills to convert even common prison resources into negotiable items, the time and privacy to perform necessary work, combine to create good time settings.

GH N 4: See right now I got hold of a little lumber, and I am building a cabinet, I'm building shelves, I do a little carpenter work . . . I sell some, and you should see my cell, I do alright in here.

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Food is perhaps the most common prison resource accessible to large groups of prisoners and hence the most commonly appropriated item, both for later use by the prisoner himself or for resale or exchange with other prisoners.

Att N 12: Eat whatever I wanted to down there, which is not the same as the mess hall. Like the food here is something else. Now you see like I was eating the same food that you eat. You know where it was prepared and how it was prepared and it is prepared three times better than in the mess hall. Sure we don't to prepare quite a bit but regardless, food is food. If you know how to cook you have to understand what you are cooking. Yeah. That is why I

wanted to stay there, because, you know. It is relatively prestige job really in a way. It is considered a prestige job. Something like working in the commissary you know.

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Att N 16: The good points of the mess hall are off the record. There are a lot of extras here . . . you have access to a lot of food, and you can get coffee that is expensive in the commissary . . . and a lot of people feel that your being around the officers all the time you more or less have an in with them, and you know what is going on, but mainly it is for the little things that make your time go faster . . . I was never in food service in the streets, so it is mainly the extras that I get here. As far as those things, there is very little that I want, that I don't have.

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Access to illegal goods may be facilitated by involvement in certain jobs and assignments. Kitchen jobs may provide access to materials for the manufacture of wine, while mail room and package room jobs offer the possibility of theft and facilitate the smuggling of contraband.

Elm R 19: Because of the job that I had and because of the people that I was with I could smoke reefer every day. I could do mostly everything that I wanted. Because in here, a person like me, that can (maybe I'm conceited) control what is going on . . . I worked in reception, handling stuff that came in . . . I typed up a few things, and we shared what we could get a hold of, and then I go back to my cell and smoke a couple of joints and eat a little food and run around the block. I make out all right, I have no problems.

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While formerly prisoners were provided few amenities and as a consequence prison goods were valued and scarce, in today's prison both more goods and more services are provided by the facility.

Williams and Fish, in their discussion of prison economies, state that:

While the market economy of the prison has both goods and services, it is heavily oriented toward services. This tendency is understandable when one considers that the provision of services does not create the storage problems, with the attendant risk of discovery created by the manufacture and distribution of goods.¹⁸

Prisoner monopolies on services may have been somewhat broken as facility sponsored and volunteer programs have been introduced. Free and widespread legal training by West Publishing courses, large law libraries with long hours of operation have, in the main, reduced the power of the jail-house lawyers. Increased commissary lists and package lists have reduced the need for prison manufactured items, and the right to receive publications and printed material has largely supplanted prison manufactured pornography. However, some services are still prison run and maintained. Laundry services in particular are often managed by prisoners whose primary concern seems to be with running a profitable enterprise while in prison.

GH N 11: In here you have to pay two packs to get your clothes pressed. I don't think that's right, but everybody pays, otherwise you have to go around looking like a bum or something . . . like the laundry, I don't see how they get away with it, but if you don't pay, your clothes come back looking worse than when you sent them in.

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Support and Freedom concerns within good time settings revolve about status, as well as material, deprivation. In some

settings the major benefits are defined as the advantages of being considered special, privileged, different. Personal mobility may serve non-stressed as well as stressed Freedom concerns thus permitting escape from supervision and non-interference. To have the run of a prison may also confer status. Such a concern is similar to that worker in large bureaucracies where one's status may be defined in terms of freedom from supervision or in terms of whether one has a private office or a semi-private partition, or a desk in an open space.

Att N 6: I can come and go as I want . . . I haven't really anybody on me to tell me what to do or nothing . . . I'm doing an easy bit because mainly I have a good position in here, I got into a job where I have a little recognition, I can go where I want, I have a lot of privileges, like in here I am somebody. . .

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GH R GG: I am a privileged character now, I don't have to go to population much, I can pretty much do what I want, not like everybody else in here, it makes me feel very good.

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Status can also derive from the nature of the position with some positions representing the prison equivalent of "white collar jobs". Some prisoners see themselves as mismatched with a milieu in which occupations and activities are menial. Such prisoners may seek a position permitting clean working conditions, as well as a job that is defined as a job with class.

GH R YY: Well personally I like to have the easiest job in the penitentiary and I like to make things

as easy as possible on me. But like, most of the work in here is not the type of work that is me, you know, or the type of work I would be doing on the streets. Like clerks, see they see as some kind of jail wise people, but really it was the only job that I see that actually is what I could see myself doing, the rest are stupid and dirty.

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GH R 2: I said that I would like a job that would require classy work or something like that. I would like to be in a place that I could maneuver into something good . . . And I got it, I'm a clerk here, and there are a few jobs that have more benefits than mine, say the warden runner and a few others . . . Like I am on my own most of the time, and I have a job that commands a lot of respect from inmates as well as from the administration. I am in the building all the time and everybody gets to know me and they respect me . . . If you can get respect that the authority has with it . . . it was kind of a big ego trip for me kind of like I was always called by my first name or mister instead of just a number or last name.

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Some settings provide access to power. In prison men are dependent on staff to secure scarce resources, including a good parole report, a furlough request acceptance, or approval for work release. Positions which help to solidify one's chances with staff, roles that permit familiarity through fraternization, or provide opportunities for granting and receiving reciprocal and understood favors, may be valued. Prisoners working closely with facility professional staff, particularly those staff charged with making important decisions, may have, or hope to have, an "in". They may also be relatively immune from discipline because they are "needed". Prisoners in front office assignments, in counseling areas (even within relatively menial assignments of porter, cleaners,

runners) in the administration areas, may be considered the inmate elite:

Aub N 4: I'm working in the front hall right now, an administration porter, see I'm trying to get on work release . . . Well see to work in the administration hall, that's a pretty good job. Because a lot of inmates try to get that kind of job, but they have too much time or too much violence on their record, something, and it takes a lot to get it . . . See you get to know the counselors, and the officers that work there, they all get to know you. So if you want to go somewhere, you want to get transferred, or ask for a furlough, or work release, you got an inside because you work around these people. . . And if you have any problems or anything, they are right there, you don't have to go through channels and drop interview slips where you get the runaround. While you're working you have lots of good access.

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Att N D: Now certain administration building quarters have what they call an honor company, which is a misnomer, because it should be called a privileged company. It's not because of your honor that you're there, but because of the fact that you have a certain work assignment. So I had it easy because of my work assignment. Yeah. Also the advantage of working in the administration building is that you can, let me say this, the service unit counsellors cannot hide from you. You can go right to their desks. So they're less apt to ignore your requests, because they can't hide from you, you can go right to them. As I told you I have a beautiful soft job and I have all the time that I want to do my own committees and activities so I have made my own bit . . . I am angling for a transfer though, and I have a lot better chance than most of the inmates because of what I do.

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Cox N 17: In the payroll office you get to know the guards, and you can get along with them . . . not only you don't have the guards on your

case all the time but like they get to depend on you, we know the job, we have a lot of time in here and we like do a lot of things that other inmates can't, there are a lot of privileges with the job, you have access to lots of things . . . like you can get help with requests and just . . . they are a lot more lenient all around.

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Whether such prisoners have the access and advantages they think that they have for themselves or for others, and that other prisoners feel that they have, is questionable. However, even a myth of power may carry with it special benefits. Prisoners may exploit their positions and their familiarity with staff and act as intermediary, or broker for other prisoners, occasionally for a price, but usually for friends only.

Elm S 15: Lots of inmates come to me and tell me that they are having problems and ask me if there is anyway that someone higher up can help . . . usually I tell them to write a letter and I will see that it gets delivered to whoever the source may be and I will recommend sometimes a certain deputy they should write to and will deliver the letter to them and usually they get a reply . . . See I do that for friends only, lots of people if they don't give me respect for it, I ignore them, they are just trying to chump me . . . What I do is evaluate them and their complaint and if I feel that I should take it to someone else then I will. Otherwise I will tell them that they have to go through channels.

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Familiarity and propinquity bring relative freedom from restraint. Stereotypes erode under the pressure of some workplace milieus emphasizing normalcy, and mutual staff prisoner dependency with corresponding tolerance contributes to the good time aspects of the setting.

Elm N 20: I get along with all the officers, I work the restaurant. So everybody knows me and I know them and everything is cool . . . It is the best job in the institution, because you get to know a lot of civilians from the street, a lot of civilians who work here, and the officers and you get to know which officers not to play with and which one to play with, things like this. The officers don't hassle you if you don't hassle them. The restaurant is alright . . . They rely on me to get the job done, they let us do our work, they don't hassle us and we don't hassle them . . .

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Att N 18: Of course being with the officer's mess you just sort of go along with not too much hassle in the institution. You know they know where you worked - in the officer's mess. And that is really how you find out how the officers are. And they are ok there, working there is good, aside from the privileges, there's a relaxation there.

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Prisoners with valued prison skills, typically clerical, mechanical, food service, and maintenance skills, often find it relatively easy to find prison positions. In return for relative efficiency and the occasional assumption of officer duties and responsibilities, prisoners may be rewarded with special privileges and unusual prison freedoms. Glaser has stated that it is his impression that prison clerical jobs tend to attract inmate politicians.¹⁹ Inmate politicians may also occasionally be made, not born, and delegation of power and status may be exchanged for prisoner performance of non-assigned and illegitimate duties.

Elm S 23: I'm not supposed to do this, doing the count sometimes, handling all the paperwork on the block . . . I'm trusted that's for sure, but maybe too much . . . there are a lot of benefits with the job though, I am pretty much

free to do what I want here on the block, and I can avoid all the harassment that other inmates go through . . .

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It seems clear that some men choose to do time by overtly seeking to gain the attention and good graces of facility staff. Whether such prisoners are esteemed as cool and jail-wise or despised as "administration men" depends in large degree on the privileges gained as well as the degree of deference required by the assignment. Trivial rewards or obvious deference are generally considered to be too high a price to pay.

Elm N F: I wanted to do the easiest bit possible and I wanted a job with benefits. And I wanted good food and good job and good pay. I had several clerk jobs and I could type. I've done some accounting, business math and business law and stuff like this. Lots of good stuff . . . Well, there is definitely harassment directed at me and jealousy and the residents they say I was always called the manipulator. Because I try to manipulate people so that it benefits me. And I believe that most people in their lifetime wherever they are, they manipulate to a certain extent. To benefit themselves, whether it be pay or material goods. So when I got in the shop I right away said that I was going to give this boss the impression that I was a good worker and that he could trust me. And I talked to him and we had a good rapport as I said. And he could joke with us and I could joke with him . . . And the inmates feel that they call it is on the zipper or jeffing or tap dancing in other words.

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Goffman has stated that oftentimes, "places to work and places to sleep become clearly defined as places where certain kinds and levels of privilege obtain . . ." ²⁰ Some locations,

during the work day, or after the work day, become relatively relaxing, free and open places, in which those with special credentials are permitted to move about with relative freedom, drink coffee, take showers. Setting normalcy is a theme expressed among good time seekers as well as the freedom stressed.

Aub N 5: We got all the privileges. We can go in the block when we want, we can leave when we want. We got that. We can cook in there. We've got all them privileges. No, I'm just talking about the wing waiters. Then you've got some shops, they have a hot plate over there, they make coffee or something like this. But it's not like where you can sit down and cook your own meal right there on the block. Well, not only that, as I say, once you finish your work, you've got the whole morning that you can have the yard, you can go out in the yard, you can play, you can sit in the sun. And this is another advantage to it. As I say, it's got a lot of privileges to it.

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GH N 1: Well, you can take showers when you want, which is nice. And that's beautiful because you can take a shower every day. As far as the rest of the guys in the block, they imagine guys take a shower once a week. That's a shame man. That was the purpose for me when I first came down, to get on one of those blocks where I could take a shower every day.

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Idleness is revered by some prisoners, and the freedom not to work is informally honored in many program areas. Some prisoners see the prison as deserving little of their attention and energy and consequently they seek work assignments in which little work is demanded. Porter and wing waiter assignments are notorious for those choosing indolence.

Att R D: I work a very short period of time, which is

great, I don't feel like busting my hump for the state. So my work assignment is timed, I work approximately an hour each day . . . I have 100 percent recreation time almost, I have morning yard if I want, I have afternoon yard if I want, I have evening rec.

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Att N 15: It's the best job in here, C block porter. I only work 15 minutes each day. And there ain't nothing hard about it. And you get paid for it, too.

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The few mentions of honor companies in our interview material are disproportionately found among the non-stressed. Honor companies maintain a social milieu of pleasure and permissiveness,²¹ and seem to contain a relatively high percentage of coping prisoners, whose major concern is with maximizing comfort. Though honor units provide additional privacy, the major concern of residents in such settings is with comfort.

GH R I: We get away with a lot. We cook a little bit, we're out till 11 o'clock, we got a t.v. So on and so forth. Now had I been in A block, I'd be locking in at 5 o'clock at night. I'd be eating in the mess hall. I don't eat in the mess hall. I stay out late too.

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Att R D: I'm in an honor company where we have television if I want to watch television. The cells are constantly unlocked. The cells are unlocked at 10 o'clock in the morning except for count periods, which is at lunchtimes, we have a lunch count, and also two counts in the evening. But one of those counts I'm working at, so I don't have to lock in for that one. Honor company is no big deal, it helps a little bit, we have a few more privileges, we stay out longer, there are a few less people.

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GH R AAA: Like I said my needs are small and so in other words I am comfortable in here and I am in J block and I have as much freedom as you can get in here and it's an honor block -- I have been there around 8 months and so I am pretty well relaxed now you get what I mean . . . You have more slack. And you get more things done in here because you don't have to rely on a slip like you do out there in the other blocks. But as far as being one of the lucky individuals, I can rate it there because of where I am and where I am situated. I'm doing an easy bit, no problems.

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Environmental Complacency

For some non-stressed inmates transactions with subsettings are unimportant and deemphasized. Expressions of either contentedness, or significant unhappiness in settings are absent. Prisoners express both a resignation and a complacent acceptance of prison as a place to do time, for a while. They express low expectations concerning prison, and while they may be concerned with that loss of freedom, or with program use and involvement, they seem to expect that prison is there to interfere with, not satisfy inmate concerns. The most common expression among this group is that "jail is jail, you aren't supposed to like it."

Att N 8: I've been to Attica, and I've been to Green Haven, I've been to Comstock, I've been to Sing Sing, I've been to Elmira, I've been to Riker's Island. And I have found in my personal experience basically all the jails are the same.

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Att R 12: I can do it anywhere. I get along with everybody. I have no trouble. A jail is a jail,

no matter where you go.

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Aub N Q: I don't expect much out of this place, which is lucky because there isn't much here, I expect to leave about the same as I came in . . . they have nothing here to help you, or in any prison I've been in . . . they are all basically the same, some is a little better than others maybe but nothing big, no major differences.

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Prisoners may variously describe themselves as "settled", "old time cons" or wise to the ways of prison life. They see their primary stance as non-involvement, as non-participation (though informal socialization with prisoners may be characteristic of this group). They see the collaboration necessary for participation in enhancing and good time settings as untenable, or irrelevant. Interest in programs is interest in "programming" for these prisoners, in doing what is minimally necessary to avoid a label as difficult, or intractable, which may impede parole chances. While such participation may, at times, resemble enhancing transactions, the purpose of participation is pragmatic, and involvement is minimal.

Aub R 015: I don't have no reaction to prison, I just act to it. I don't react to it, I just act to it, and know that I got to get around all this instead of for getting involved in it. And when the environment is getting around me, I more or less go into my own environment. I know what I got to do to get home, and then I set forth to do that. Minding my business, going to school, getting my GED. See when I got to my board, put in a request if I have my GED so that I can get to work release or to the college program, so I could have good

consideration and good reference for when my time come around again for the next board, I'll be able to go home.

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Elm R 5: Sure, I'm involved in a few things, but it doesn't mean much to me . . . night school programs, but that's for the board, see they like to see you in school, for some reason, and a few college courses might look good to them, they don't like to see that you were a porter for a year and a half.

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Prisoners in this subgroup are closest to those Irwin describes as "doing time". Such prisoners according to Irwin, see the prison as:

a temporary break in their outside career, one which they take in their stride . . . They (1) avoid trouble, (2) find activities which occupy their time, (3) secure a few luxuries, (4) with the exceptions of a few isolates, form friendships with small groups of other convicts, and (5) do what they think is possible to get out as soon as possible.²²

The primary focus for time doers is with doing relatively easy time and with expressing disinterest in prison settings themselves. While few prisoners find a home in prison, many prisoners don't need a home. The prison is seen as a benign and temporary intrusion on their life, and they are proud of their ability to define the sting of prison:

Elm N 22: I get my three meals a day, I bring two sandwiches back at night with me, I get a bed to sleep in, I get my medical attention. Like I just got over the flu and they really took good care of me there. I get dental care here, you know. It's OK.

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GH N 12: If you use what you've built up over the years, what they call jailwise, something of that nature, then I would say it's the best time and best place to do time.

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Elm R 9: I've done time before so I know how to do time, not like these guys here who make trouble for themselves and everyone else . . . I have no problems here. I have an easy bit . . . I don't do much, I mean programs and stuff, that's not important to me, I just want to get home and I do things that help me get home . . . I take a few courses, I get along with the officers, pretty much, it's really ok, like there's nothing outstanding that I can speak of, but everything's ok.

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Prisoners often describe themselves as "cool", "relaxed", nonexcitable, as persons who can take life in stride. They also are among prisoners who describe other prisoners in tolerant sociable terms.

Att R 33: Nothing bothers me really. I'm easy going, so I don't let anything excite me too much. I do my time, I don't hang with groups of guys or nothing but I talk to everybody.

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GH R VV: I think that I could get along anywhere because I have acclimated myself to it you know . . . I have no problems doing time, I'm easy to get along with and I get along with everybody really well, officers, inmates. I have no problems.

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This category of prisoners surfaced a significant over-representation of Activity concerns (see Tables 6.22 and 6.23). Activities, while engaged in by such prisoners, are without significant purpose other than to use and to mark time. Activities of concern include leisure time activities, typically sports, weightlifting,

running, physical self-improvement programs of other sorts, attending movies and other social events and reading.

Att N 37: I go in any corner and lift weights, everybody asks me 'you want to lift weights with me?' Sometimes I'll be lifting 400, 450 pounds, 300 in -- . So I can work out with any class . . . And what I do, I just stay away from people and stay in one little corner and lift weights with some other people that done time before. Because all the people that I had, that we stayed lifting weights together, we don't get involved in anything that jumps off unless it's a friend of ours or one of us.

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Aub N S: That's mostly what I do, hang out, play cards, watch TV with my friends, it's not a bad bit at all.

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Elm R 17: I study a little in my cell, play a lot of basketball, go to the movies, hang out and talk with my friends . . . I'm just waiting to go home.

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Footnotes

1. Richard Lazarus, Psychological Stress and the Coping Process (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966).
2. For a discussion of a number of theoretical contributions to the concept "motivation" and "competence" see generally, Abraham Korman, The Psychology of Motivation (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974); and Robert White, The Enterprise of Living: A View of Personal Growth (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976).
3. Ibid.
4. Robert White, p. 389.
5. Blake McKelvey, American Prisons (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), pp. 107-118.
6. New York State Department of Correctional Services, Annual Report: 1974 and Annual Report: 1975 (mimeographed).
7. John Irwin, The Felon (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp. 76-77.
8. Daniel Glaser, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System Unabridged Ed. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), pp. 112-113.
9. Daniel Glaser, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System Abridged Ed. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), p. 69.
10. Irwin, pp. 77-79; See also Clemens Bartollas, Stuart Miller, and Simon Dinitz, Juvenile Victimization: The Institutional Paradox (New York: John Wiley, 1976); See particularly the authors' portraits of the "Boys Who Profit," pp. 113-114.
11. Daniel Glaser, Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System Unabridged edition, pp. 258-259.
12. Gordon Allport, Pattern and Growth in Personality (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 237.
13. Bruno Bettelheim, The Informed Heart: On Retaining the Self in a Dehumanizing Society (New York: Avon, 1960), notes the relative strength of the Jehovah's Witnesses to the rigors of imprisonment, at p. 123. Glaser comments concerning conversion experiences in prison, "Inmates have the time, and frequently are in a mood, to be unusually amenable to conversion to a new conception of the spiritual meaning of their lives and of their relationship to mankind and to their God." Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System Abridged Ed., p. 193. Marvin Opler also found that in prison camps of interned Japanese, resiliency to stress often took the form of religious and cultural revivalism. "Cultural Induction of Stress," in Psychological Stress: Issues in Research ed. by Mortimer Appley and Richard Trumbull (New York: Appleton-Century-Croft, 1967), pp. 209-233.

14. Goffman comments: "I am suggesting that secondary adjustments are overdetermined, some of them especially so. These practices serve the practitioner in ways other than the most evident ones; whatever else they accomplish these practices seem to demonstrate - to the practitioner if no one else - that he has some selfhood and personal autonomy beyond the grasp of the organization." Erving Goffman, Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates Anchor (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1961), p. 314.
15. See Goffman, pp. 219-227 for a description of mental hospital jobs in which patients exploit the assignment for personal gain or for prestige. Glaser, at pp. 170-171 catalogues prisoner assignments that provide access to influence and power in the prison. Significantly, Glaser states that the highest parole failure rates occurred among inmates who occupied such positions. Prison and Parole System Abridged Ed. Sykes also describes prison assignments coupled with prison roles highlighted by their control over information (rats and centermen) and scarce resources (merchants). Gresham Sykes, The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 87-95. Vergil Williams and Mary Fish provide a detailed analysis of the illicit economic activity within prisons in Convicts, Codes and Contraband: The Prison Life of Men and Women (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger, 1974).
16. Sykes, p. 67.
17. Susan Shaheen, A Prison and a Prisoner (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1978), p. 36.
18. Williams and Fish, p. 54.
19. Glaser, Prison and Parole System, Abridged Ed., p. 171.
20. Goffman, Asylums, p. 51. Also at pp. 228-238. "Although the provision of a free place was the incidental aspect of many assignments, it was apparently the main gain of some assignments. For example, off the insulin room adjoining the admission ward on one service was a small anteroom where nurses would lie down and where nourishment could be prepared for patients coming out of shock. The few patients who managed to get the job of helping in the insulin room could enjoy the quiet medical note sustained there and also some of the TLC that was given to those in shock; in the anteroom they could come out of the patient role, relax, smile, polish their shoes, banter with the nurses, and make themselves coffee." At p. 236.
21. Glaser, Prison and Parole System, Abridged Ed., p. 114. "Honor units more often contribute more to the comfort of both the inmates and staff than to the reformation of the inmates."
22. Irwin, p. 69.

Chapter 12: The Elderly and Handicapped Unit

Retirement and old age, with accompanying physical and financial retrenchment often result in a constriction of environmental control.¹ In addition to decrements in performance caused by physical decline, additional problems in adjustment can be created by situations in which the old and invalid find themselves. Schulz and Aderman have demonstrated that erratic or isolative behaviors of elderly patients in institutions often derive from feelings of helplessness resulting from personal failures at mastery, and environmental barriers to control. Lowered personal expectations as well as inadequate environmental structures, combine with individual liabilities to hasten passivity and decline.² Seligman has cited cases in which old age and institutionalized helplessness result in precipitous death among otherwise healthy individuals.³

With respect to prisons, environmental barriers and a modal population of young, vigorous offenders often aggravate the disabilities of the elderly or handicapped offender. Bergman and Amir found, for example, that the physical and mental condition of aged offenders deteriorates rapidly in prison. They note that the younger, aggressive prisoners often frightened, ridiculed, or harmed older prisoners.⁴ Older prisoners were described as disproportionately likely to become depressed and dependent on staff for support. The authors recommend efforts at designing and maintaining special institutions for the elderly. Analogous studies by Adams and Vedder,⁵ Baier,⁶ and Barrett have emphasized that the older prisoner is presented with unique problems of

adjustment in prison requiring special attention and treatment.⁷
 The conclusions of such authors carry implications for the creation of programs and facilities for the elderly within large prison systems.

New York State has maintained, in a small prison within a prison complex at Fishkill, New York, a facility for aged, invalid and handicapped prisoners. The prison, renovated and opened for prisoners in 1973, was formally designated as a "minimum custody milieu, for inmates in the older age ranges and for offenders who are chronically physically handicapped."⁸
 The objectives of the facility and its programs were twofold:

- (1) For the elderly ". . . to ameliorate the dependencies, loss of identity and rejection resulting from long-term incarceration . . . To provide a modicum of comfort in a less rigid and structured environment."⁹ and (2) for the handicapped "to operate a rehabilitation program in cooperation with the New York State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation."¹⁰

The Elderly and Handicapped Unit is a legacy remaining from an earlier effort of the Department of Correctional Services at facility diversification and special classification. Of a number of special units existing at the Fishkill complex and elsewhere in the state during the late 1960's and earlier 70's (units for the Mentally Retarded, for the Emotionally Impaired, for Diagnosis and Evaluation) only the Elderly and Handicapped Unit survives intact.

Setting

The Elderly and Handicapped Unit is a small two-story 50 year old brick building within a complex of large prison structures, including a medium security male prison, a prison

hospital, and at the time of the study in 1975, a prison mental hospital (Matteawan). All non-ambulatory prisoners in the Unit live on the ground floor of the building. The dining hall and visiting room is located conveniently, only 100 feet from living areas, and rooms and corridors are designed without major security barriers impeding traffic. An infirmary and dispensary and occupational therapy area are maintained on the ground floor. The upper floor contains a small library, classrooms, and additional prisoner rooms. Large windowed sunrooms are located at the end of hallways on both floors, an inheritance from its earlier designation as a mental facility. Day rooms, including most conspicuously, a television with rows of chairs facing it, are provided on both floors.

Most prisoners live in two and three-man rooms, although a small number of private rooms are available and allocated according to seniority. The rooms themselves, by prison standards, are large, well-lighted, with large windows. Bathrooms contain nursing home-type fixtures for ease of use by residents. The most immediately obvious physical difference to those familiar with maximum-security prisons, is the relative lack of security apparatus in the prison. Doors on individual rooms are either without locks, or missing entirely. The large percentage of prisoners in wheelchairs, or using orthopedic braces, is, according to the Director, the chief reason for the lack of locks and doors. Dangers of fire, and the need to ease prisoner movement, require a minimizing of locks and gates.

The physical plant is dramatically different from that of traditional prisons. Wood and brick are common building

materials at the prison, replacing concrete blocks and steel-work. Windows are uncommonly abundant. A small enclosed yard, with tables, small trees, and the rudiments of gardens, replace the common prison yard portrait of asphalt and basketball hoops. Security is maintained at the perimeter of the prison. A twelve foot high chain link fence surrounds the prison. There is no wall, and the view from the prison includes heavily wooded hills, and the rolling grounds of the complex itself.

Staff

As with all prisons, correctional officers far outnumber other staff. However, at the Unit, medical needs receive a higher priority than is typically awarded in prisons. Nurses are on duty at all hours, and a prison physician visits the facility daily. An adjacent prison hospital provides emergency medical services, and serves as a daily resource for physical therapy and intensive medical treatment where necessary.

A vocational rehabilitation counselor is available to provide assistance, counseling, and therapy to handicapped prisoners, and in addition to prison professional staff, a number of prisoner aides are provided from the regular prison population. The aides, trained as nurse and therapy aides, assist with bathing elderly prisoners, with meals, with the transportation of prisoners to the dining hall and to visits, and with other related tasks.

The facility, as well as holding elderly prisoners, is staffed by older guards. The work in the Unit is widely regarded as a good prison custodial assignment (an "easy eight").

Elderly and handicapped prisoners are perceived by staff as more tractable and less dangerous than those in main-line institutions. Accordingly, the Unit is a popular assignment, and as a result, is staffed by officers with considerable experience and seniority.

Programs

There are no prison work, vocational, educational assignments at the Unit. What programs and activities are available, are voluntary. Prisoners may, if they wish, supervise the library, attend literacy training, work in the gymnasium, but prisoners residing in the Unit are not required to perform work, or to become involved in activities.

The only daily scheduled activity is the maintenance of a "sheltered workshop," in which an occupational therapist operates a leather craft program, supervising the manufacture of wallets and belts. A civilian teacher, with several volunteer elderly teacher's aides, teaches literacy skills to several prisoners on week days. She runs, in her words, a "one-room school house" in which prisoners at every level from illiterate to college graduate are taught. Five to ten prisoners attend classes daily.

Several volunteer groups periodically visit the facility. Senior Citizen's organizations sponsors weekly bingo games, the Salvation Army donates periodic counseling services. County and state Social Services counselors advise prisoners prior to release concerning Medicare and welfare services.

Such programs involve a small percentage of the Unit population. Staff estimates of prisoner involvement in organized

activities ranged from 10 to 25% of the Unit population. Such estimates were consistent with observations made during periodic visits to the facility.

In the main, prisoners are involved in essentially solitary or small group recreational activities. Most of the elderly prisoners perform housekeeping chores in their rooms, occasionally and on nice days may walk in the yard or tend gardens, watch television or listen to the radio, play cards or checkers. A small gymnasium is available, but seldom used. Most prisoners, according to facility staff and personal observations, sit in their rooms, or in the corridors waiting for the dispensary to open or for the nurses or doctors to come, or simply to watch the hall traffic. Smaller groups of individuals read, and gamble on sports, or on cards.

Prisoners

The Elderly and Handicapped Unit was established as an ameliorative milieu for the aged and physically handicapped, and those who have permanent or semi-permanent medical restrictions (diabetes, epilepsy). Prisoners with serious illnesses requiring extended hospitalization, or those prisoners who would otherwise be eligible but whose offense or past history suggests that they may constitute a threat to institutional safety, are ineligible. The security criterion, however, is a flexible one. Elderly prisoners who have committed serious offenses may be admitted to the Unit upon a physician's recommendation and evidence supporting frailty and weakness that suggests lack of facility threat. Since many elderly prisoners have committed relatively serious offenses,

and are serving relatively long sentences, a flexible interpretation of facility threat, and flexible eligibility to a minimum security facility are necessary to permit placement of many otherwise ineligible elderly.

At the time of our study, the facility held 120 prisoners of whom 84 or 70% were over the age of 50, and 62 prisoners, or approximately 50% of the population, over 60 years of age. A population study performed by the Department of Correctional Services during the same year in which our data were collected indicated that New York State prisons contained 180 prisoners over the age of 60.¹¹ Thus only about one-third of New York's elderly prisoners were confined in the Unit. (That percentage, with the gradual redistribution of the population of the Unit to other prisons, is down to approximately 20% in 1979.) The remaining two-thirds may not all be eligible for placement. Some of the elderly prefer to remain in institutions closer to their home of origin, and refuse or strongly oppose transfer; some elderly prisoners requiring intensive medical care are confined in prison hospital units, some are in prison camps, or within regular prison populations. Some large maximum security prisons maintain separate wards within their hospitals for elderly prisoners, and elderly prisoners in population are often housed together on the "flats," or ground floor of regular prison tiers.

The remaining 30% of the population of the Unit (those under the age of 50) consisted of prisoners with severe physical disabilities, including paralytics, amputees, epileptics, and diabetics.

Table 12.0 lists the medical reasons for Elderly and Handicapped Placement for both the young and the elderly. While epilepsy is the most common reason for placement of young prisoners among those interviewed, elderly prisoners reported a wide range of afflictions. Typically prisoners have served time in traditional institutions on the current sentence prior to assignment to Elderly and Handicapped. While 5 prisoners interviewed were transferred to the Unit directly following classification, the remainder (24 prisoners) had served time in donor facilities following classification, for periods ranging from several months to several years. Placement is typically invoked when maximum security facilities prove medically inadequate, or when a prisoner clearly demonstrates that his health and safety pose great administrative inconvenience to secure, or when he demonstrates that he cannot adjust to the prison population. Contrary to expectations, few Unit residents were prisoners who had grown old while in prison. Table 12.1 compares the frequency of Unit residents having served 10 years or more with a random sample of Auburn prisoners. Auburn is chosen as a comparison group because it is a prototypical main-line prison, because it contains a relatively high percentage of adult prisoners, and because it is, among prisons studied by Toch, a prison with which prisoners are relatively satisfied compared with other prisons. (Table 12.1 also provides a comparison of the age distribution of the Auburn random sample and the Elderly and Handicapped random sample.)

As revealed in Table 12.1, a larger, though not significantly larger, percentage of the Elderly and Handicapped population has served 10 years or more on the current offense (10.7 percent of

Table 12.0

Reasons for Placement in Elderly and Handicapped (Interview Sample)

| <u>Elderly</u> ^a | <u>N</u> | <u>Youth</u> | <u>N</u> |
|--|----------|------------------------|----------|
| Paralytic ^b | 3 | Paralytic ^c | 4 |
| Heart Condition | 4 | Epileptic | 5 |
| Blindness | 1 | Asthma | 1 |
| Ulcer | 1 | | |
| Kidney Disease | 1 | | |
| Diabetes | 3 | | |
| Elderly with age-associated maladies (arthritis, arteriosclerosis) | 6 | | |
| | — | | — |
| | 19 | | 10 |

^aPrisoners over 50 years of age.

^bParalytic cases among the elderly comprise primarily long term and progressive diseases such as calcium deposits and arthritis.

^cParalytic cases among the youthful prisoners are all the result of trauma, injured either in prison or during the commission of the offense.

the E&H sample compared to less than 4% of the Auburn random sample). A study performed by the Department of Correctional Services found that of elderly prisoners in state prisons in 1975 about 10% started their prison careers as young prisoners and have served 25 years or more.¹³ The Elderly and Handicapped Unit, containing some younger prisoners, as well as a relatively select group of elderly prisoners, contains only about 5% of prisoners who have served 25 years or more. The majority of prisoners in the Unit are confined for a crime committed late in life, and for which they have served relatively little time to date. Table 12.1 also provides an additional comparison of the length of time served on the current sentence for the Unit residents and Auburn prisoners. The distribution is virtually identical. Approximately two-thirds of both samples have served less than two years on the current offense.

With respect to the type of instant offense, differences, although not significant differences, emerge between the two samples. Table 12.1 reveals that Elderly and Handicapped prisoners are more likely to be confined for a violent offense than are Auburn prisoners. While half of Unit prisoners are confined for a violent offense, slightly more than one-third of Auburn prisoners are confined for a violent offense. When offense is further broken down into homicide and non-homicide categories, further slight differences emerge. We see that Unit prisoners are slightly more likely to be confined for homicide than are Auburn violent offenders. This again is noteworthy, given the relatively restrictive nature of the Unit, and its formal designation as a

Table 12.1

Comparison of the Elderly and Handicapped Interview Sample with the Auburn Random Sample, By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample | | |
|--|---------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | E&H (N=28) | Auburn (N=53) | |
| Length of Time Served on Current Offense | | | |
| 10 years or more | 10.7 | 3.8 | $\chi^2 = .56$ Not significant |
| Less than 10 years | 89.3 | 96.2 | Phi = .14 |
| | 100% | 100% | |

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| | E&H (N=29) | Auburn (N=59) | |
| Age | | | |
| 20 to 24 years | 3.4 | 16.9 | |
| 25 to 34 years | 10.3 | 59.3 | |
| 35 to 49 years | 17.3 | 13.6 | |
| 50 years and over | 69.0 | 10.2 | |
| | 100% | 100% | |

| Variable | Sample | | |
|--|---------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| | E&H (N=28) | Auburn (N=53) | |
| Length of Time Served on Current Offense | | | |
| More than 2 years | 35.7 | 32.1 | $\chi^2 = .007$ Not significant |
| 2 years or less | 64.3 | 67.9 | Phi = .04 |
| | 100% | 100% | |

Table 12.1 (Cont'd)

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | E&H (N=28) | Auburn (N=54) | |
| Offense - Violent v. Non-violent | | | ² |
| Violent | 50.0 | 35.2 | X = 1.12 |
| Non-violent | 50.0 | 64.8 | Not significant |
| | 100% | 100% | Phi = .11 |

| Variable | Sample | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | E&H (N=28) | Auburn (N=54) | |
| Offense - Homicide v. Other | | | ² |
| Homicide | 28.5 | 18.5 | X = 1.8 |
| Not homicide | 71.5 | 81.5 | Not significant |
| | 100% | 100% | Phi = .15 |

"minimum security" facility for prisoners with less serious offenses. Additionally, all of the homicides recorded for prisoners interviewed in the Unit were committed by prisoners over the age of 50. This may reflect an unwillingness to send youthful murderers (even when handicapped) to the Unit, or it may suggest a likelihood that older offenders are disproportionately confined for the offense of murder. There is at least some evidence in other studies indicating that elderly persons are more likely to be confined for the offense of murder than are younger prisoners.¹⁴

Comparisons of the Elderly and Handicapped prisoners and the random Auburn population reveal, in the main, few significant differences between the samples. We see in Table 12.2 that the Unit sample has a slight majority of white prisoners, while the Auburn random sample is two-thirds black. While the differences are not significant, the relationship of ameliorative setting, both formal and informal, to race again surfaces.

Table 12.2 reveals that the only variables that differentiate the two samples at levels reaching statistical significance are history of prior jail confinement, history of alcohol abuse, and history of mental commitments. Unit prisoners are more likely than Auburn random prisoners to have a recorded history of jail confinement. No such difference surfaced for history of prison confinement. However, Unit prisoners are considerably more likely to have committed an offense resulting in jail confinement. In part this may be related to alcohol abuse. We see in Table 12.2 that a much higher proportion of Unit prisoners have a recorded history of alcohol abuse than do Auburn prisoners. Although we do not have recorded data on the offense resulting in

each prior jail sentence, it might be hypothesized that the higher frequency of jail confinements for Unit prisoners is both a function of age and opportunity, as well as a function of alcohol abuse leading to such common jailable offenses as drunkenness, disorderly conduct, and vagrancy. Alcohol abuse might also in part explain some of the differences in rates of violent crime, and it may have been a contributory agent in homicides.

The last variable discriminating the two samples is that of prior history of mental commitments. One-third of the Unit interview sample has a recorded history of mental commitment in a civilian hospital. Only one out of nine Auburn prisoners have such a record. Several factors may explain this. First, at the time of our study, the Unit was located adjacent to the state hospital for the criminally insane. It was not uncommon for transfer to occur between the two settings. As residents aged in the mental hospital, and particularly if they remained tractable, they were often transferred to the Elderly and Handicapped Unit, where they remained, contingent upon good conduct. Additionally, traditional prison settings may be more likely to ship their elderly to the Elderly and Handicapped Unit if they presented evidence of problems of adjustment in addition to simple chronological age. A functional disability such as mental fragility or instability, may be an additional factor prompting special intervention.

In summary, prisoners in the Elderly and Handicapped Unit are, in comparison with the adult mainline population, slightly more likely to be white, convicted of a violent offense (particularly homicide), and are significantly more likely to have served a jail sentence, to have histories of alcohol abuse and of

Table 12.2

Comparison of the Elderly and Handicapped Interview Sample with the Auburn Random Sample, By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample | | |
|------------------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| | E&H (N=27) | Auburn (N=47) | |
| Ethnicity ^a | | | |
| Black inmates | 48.1 | 66.7 | ² X = 1.8 Not significant Phi = .18 |
| White inmates | 51.9 | 33.3 | |
| | 100% | 100% | |

^aExcluding other ethnic categories because of exceedingly small number of cases.

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| | E&H (N=28) | Auburn (N=54) | |
| History of Jail Confinement | | | |
| No History of jail confinement | 28.6 | 53.7 | ² X = 3.8 Signf. at .05 level Phi = .24 |
| History of jail confinement | 71.4 | 46.3 | |
| | 100% | 100% | |

Table 12.2 (Cont'd)

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| | E&H (N=21) | Auburn (N=35) | |
| History of Alcohol Abuse | | | |
| No history of alcohol abuse | 28.5 | 80.0 | 2 X = 16.2 Signf. at .0001 level Phi = .47 |
| History of alcohol abuse | 71.5 | 20.0 | |
| | 100% | 100% | |

| Variable | Sample | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| | E&H (N=24) | Auburn (N=51) | |
| History of Mental Commitment | | | |
| No history of mental commitment | 66.7 | 88.9 | 2 X = 4.5 Signf. at .04 level Phi = .27 |
| History of mental commitment | 33.3 | 11.1 | |
| | 100% | 100% | |

mental illness.

Prisoner Perceptions of Elderly and Handicapped

The self-anchoring scale was administered to prisoners in the E&H Unit to gauge the effectiveness of the Unit as an ameliorative environment, and its validity as "niche."

Tables 12.3 and 12.4 reveal that, in the main, the prisoners like the Unit. Of 26 scores, 21 scores were recorded as Highs. Table 12.3 compares the self-anchoring scale scores at Auburn prison (a facility relatively well liked compared to the other prisons in our sample) with the Unit scores. While over 80% of Unit prisoners classified their setting as High, less than 30% of Auburn prisoners report high levels of satisfaction with their prison environment. Table 12.4 compares the composite Informal Niche self-anchoring scores with the Unit scores. Again, large differences are evident. Unit prisoners are much more likely to be satisfied with the prison environment than are prisoners in coded niches. To further emphasize the dramatically skewed scores of the Unit prisoners, almost half of those interviewed (46.2%) recorded a self-anchoring score of 10. This compares to less than 13% of Auburn random prisoners and 18% of Informal Niche residents.

As we mentioned in Chapter 5 (Method of Analysis), our major concern in reviewing formal niches is with categorizing responses to questions eliciting positive and negative valuations of the setting. Essentially the structured interview sought to determine "The good aspects of the prison setting," and "The bad aspects of the setting." Responses to the two main sets of questions make up the remainder of our analysis. The responses are

Table 12.3

Comparison of the Self-Anchoring Scale Scores of
Elderly and Handicapped Residents and Auburn Randoms

| Anchor Scale Score | E&H (N=26) | Auburn (N=57) |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Low | 7.7 | 31.6 |
| Medium | 11.5 | 38.6 |
| High | 80.8 | 29.8 |
| | 100% | 100% |

$\chi^2 = 18.7$
Significant at .0001 level
C = .43

Table 12.4

Comparison of the Self-Anchoring Scale Scores of
Elderly and Handicapped Residents and Informal Niche Residents

| Anchor Scale Score | E&H (N=26) | Niche (N=91) |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Low | 7.7 | 29.2 |
| Medium | 11.5 | 40.6 |
| High | 80.8 | 30.2 |
| | 100% | 100% |

those of twenty-nine prisoners in the Unit who provided usable interviews. Seven prisoners refused to participate. Two interviews were lost because of the inability of the prisoner to attend to questions because of advanced age, and because of the inaudibility of the resulting recording.

Positive Characteristics of the Elderly and Handicapped Unit

Table 12.5 categorizes prisoner expressions of satisfaction with E&H, and includes the frequency with which each positive characteristic of the setting was mentioned. The modal category relates to the "nursing home" atmosphere of the unit. E&H is described as permissive, with few strictures, few work or program requirements leaving long periods for rest and relaxation, and permitting a great deal of privacy and many opportunities for withdrawal.

Eleven prisoners cited various characteristics of the population itself as positive features. In particular prisoners mentioned the lack of a youthful group in the unit, the non-ideological and temperate climate of the unit, and the paucity of strong, violent prisoners. The population is generally described as a quiet, small, and self contained one, in which elderly persons live without fear.

Slightly less than one-third of prisoners mentioned the quality of medical care as a congenial characteristic. They particularly emphasized the availability of the adjacent hospital, and the 24 hour nursing coverage.

A similar percentage of prisoners stated that the various

amenities provided in E&H were major positive features. Such features as an all day passive yard privilege, the use of small community gardens, day long visits in the large and airy visiting room, bingo with the Senior Citizen's organization, rooms rather than cells, and the freedom of movement provided in E&H were singled out as positive influences.

Finally, five prisoners mentioned the homogeneity of age and the similarity of interests as important to friendship formation. Prisoners describe a sense of intimacy in the unit that contrasts markedly with the isolation of the elderly in most prisons. Prisoners talk, play bridge, tutor one another, or walk or sit in the yard with similarly aged, or disabled friends.

Positive Aspects of Elderly and Handicapped

As could have been anticipated from the self-anchoring scale scores, positive comments concerning the Unit far exceeded negative comments. Three themes emerged from the interviews with respect to positive expressions about Unit life.

(1) Disengagement: One prominent theory in gerontology, disengagement theory, maintains that under normal life conditions there is a mutual withdrawal between an aging person and other people, leading to a new and positively valued life-cycle equilibrium. Successful disengagement is viewed by many theorists as a correlate of satisfaction rather than a societal imposed casting off.¹⁵ Freedom from obligations, a simplified and structured life, a conservation of interests and energies, combine to make withdrawal harmonious and secure. The Elderly and

Table 12.5
Perceived Positive Characteristics of the
 Elderly and Handicapped Unit

| <u>Features Mentioned</u> | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>Nursing home milieu; can do what we want, no work or program requisites</u> | 16 |
| (2) <u>Characteristics of population; no young fellows; no ideologues, no violent people here; small familiar, self contained group</u> | 11 |
| (3) <u>Good medical care; nice hospital, caring medical staff, always available, unit has ramps, dispensary, no obstacles to movement; helps non-ambulatory</u> | 8 |
| (4) <u>Amenities and activities; yard privileges; gardens, day long visits, Senior Citizens, Salvation Army; freedom of movement</u> | 8 |
| (5) <u>Sense of community; good friends here, welcomed to unit, play bridge, share interests, maturity, quietness</u> | 5 |
| **** | **** |
| **** | **** |
| **** | **** |
| No positive features mentioned | 2 |

Handicapped Unit, with its emphasis on "minimal education and vocation programs for the elderly, in the classic tradition" supports and encourages disengagement, in that a placid, stable, orderly milieu is provided.

* * *

E&H 19: They understand, they don't pressure at all. They're very nice, they don't force you to do nothing. The only thing is, like Mondays you got to get up and get your linen, change your bed, they force you to do that, change your beds, keep your rooms clean . . . If you want to sleep late, sleep late. They don't force you to do nothing. When you're sick and don't feel like getting up, "I don't feel like getting up." When you're sick and need the doctor, they're very nice.

* * * *

E&H 18: I was very old and I was taking it easy and resting, anytime I want. Which in prison you can't accomplish so easily, you know. And then there was no waiting for eating. If you ate anything, the regulation rules, the marching out there together like, standing at the line and waiting to be served, and all the pushing and haggling and arguing, as they are always doing in a crazy house. All that was finished. All you had to do was go anywhere you want, without surveillance of any kind. See, if you want to go anywhere, without any charges or attendants, keepers or anything like that around, you can do that in this Unit.

* * * *

Few demands are made upon prisoners in the Unit, and low expectations are maintained concerning their involvement in activities. The prisoner is permitted the individuation of childhood again, even if his behaviors are dependent, passive, or withdrawing.

Inmate's concerns with finding and following the path of least resistance is met by staff concern with placing as few obstacles in that path as possible. Correction officers exert little control, providing an essentially laissez-faire milieu. Prisoners in turn respond to the freedom and inactivity of the milieu by doing very little, with apparent satisfaction.

E&H 9: I don't do much, mostly read a little . . . I don't write to anyone or anything, I don't have any family anyway . . . I do what elderly people do . . . sometimes play a game of checkers . . . now I don't work, that's all behind me. I'm taking it easy here, this is the only place I've run across where they let me. The officers you know. It's the best place for older people, like a nursing home.

* * * *

E&H 5: You can go to bed when you want, you get up when you want, nobody bothers you. Nobody pushes you here, we're old people, and for once we can relax.

* * * *

E&H 22: If you want to go to lunch you go and if you want to go to dinner you go and you don't have to go to, you know, to the mess hall at all if you don't want to. And the officer don't say like stand up and be counted. The officer has got a - each one of the officers has got about 20 people in the ward and he knows them all and he just looks and sees that they are there and that is it. There is no such of time you have to be back. It is a kind of much easier life to live in here than the state prison.

* * * *

E&H 18: I just like to hang out with the older guys, have a cup of coffee, talk a few words, without a lot of problems from young inmates and officers.

* * * *

E&H 23: I don't do much, I follow the baseball games, once in a while put a bet down, but I mostly sleep, and read, and talk to a friend or two. I don't mingle with people much any more. The officers are different too, they leave you alone, and most of the time we like to be alone here I would say.

* * * *

While disengagement involves a simplified life, and the reduction of tension through the minimizing of interactions, it often requires safety for its success. In an unsafe environment, disengagement can be maladaptive, because a response may be withheld or delayed to the point where an elderly person has no control over potentially dangerous environmental forces. Thus a prosthetic environment for social disengagement provides not only freedom but safety. Virtually all prisoners in the Unit have served time in main-line prison populations prior to transfer and describe a major source of satisfaction in the Unit to be the feeling of safety.

E&H 10: Clinton, now there's a tough place. It's for the young inmates mostly. They are all talking about the same thing and they don't leave you alone . . . there's always one or two who give you trouble, and at this stage all I want is to avoid trouble. I'm past that old ball busting stage . . . In here, I'm treated OK; I'm 70 going on 71, I'm crippled and I don't want to have nothing to do with anybody. Here you can do that . . . I can't really do nothing at my age, anyway.

I like Nick Carter and mystery books, and they have movies here I can get to. In prison I used to avoid the movies, they were too dangerous and messed up. Here it is like being put out to pasture, I can sit in the wards and the hallways and the kids don't harass you.

* * * *

E&H 20: In a regular prison, even if you're old, if a guy threatened you or something, or if you go to the man and tell, you have to expect certain things. Like you can get a label and you can get hurt. Just trying to do the time can get you to be an administration man, a man who is supposed to be sucking on the administration, but really is just trying to avoid trouble or protect himself Here nobody really argues, you can avoid that kind of stuff, you can do a quiet bit, and the officers and the inmates both stand by you when somebody gives you trouble.

* * * *

Not only are prisoners disengaged from activities, staff, and the outside world, but they are disengaged from other prisoners as well. They are alienated from the mores and values of youth. And while some youthful prisoners in traditional prisons avoid the elderly, others either antagonize them or patronize them. Wishes for withdrawal and social simplification by older prisoners are perceived by the younger prisoners as passivity, and compromise. The perception of threat, and of the irritations of militancy, the dangers of collective prison violence in maximum security prisons, combine to give the Unit by contrast a safe, relaxed, and ideologically temperate climate.

Additionally, age is related to violence potential. Both in prison, and in the free world, risking conflict is more characteristic of the young than the old. ¹⁷ Young men, as young prisoners, have fewer investments and commitments, are less secure with themselves as men, are less familiar with

prison discipline, and hence more prone to seek rather than avoid trouble. A study by Elmer Johnson found that the older one is in prison, the fewer the infractions one receives, and the lower the level of measured rebellion. ¹⁸ The relationship between age and infractions remained constant for all races. Age homogeneity is perceived by prisoners in the Elderly and Handicapped program as allowing them to do time undisturbed, with fellow inmates who are similarly inclined.

E&H 25: See the old guys are no problem. Everybody gets along, no racial problems whatsoever. In the prisons though, like you got the Sunni Muslims and the other Muslims, and all this and they are very prejudiced . . . Here nobody does this, like the old white guys and old black guys all get along . . . There are not all these different groups fighting and what now. Here the races all get along . . . Everybody keeps to himself and leaves other people alone.

* * * *

E&H 23: I tried to get together with the guys there that were older try to act different and grown up person's way and that is why it didn't fit between me and the young fellows - because I wasn't acting like they were and I wasn't going along with their ways and I was acting more of an adult person in other words, and I just didn't fit in their private life you know, because they are just - oh the way I would say it - they were not mature. Into an adult's personality. They weren't acting that way. Kiddish ways and playing around and kidding around with their hands and things.

* * * *

E&H 27: People are all old, and very polite to one another, and friendly, and everybody gets along. But like at Green Haven, the young guys, they all got their own attitude, and they are jumpy, if you just look at them they get nervous and jump off, like they have to prove themselves every day. It is very dangerous in the penitentiary, not at all like here.

* * * *

Safety is provided by guards as well. While in other respects officers in the Unit are unlikely interventionists, prisoners who prove a threat to other prisoners are given a warning, and if they persist in intimidation or violence, are transferred to a regular population.

Prisoners with concerns for disengagement must receive support. In the Elderly and Handicapped Unit, prisoners are given the freedom to disengage, and the safety to disengage with satisfaction. Disengaged prisoners do not talk about themselves with confidence, nor are they concerned with challenge, or active mastery. They require an environment with lowered expectations of competence. Such prisoners prize low-pressure comparisons, freedom of choice, and staff respect for dependency needs and their desire to be safe.

(2) A second theme reflecting satisfaction with the Elderly and Handicapped Unit is that of convalescence. Poor health and old age not only limit prisoner's powers and adaptability and create affective losses and subsequent disengagement, but such liabilities by themselves reflect painful health problems requiring amelioration. Special provisions created for the elderly and handicapped have ranged from single ramps to assist with movement, to geriatric facilities crammed with compensatory equipment. The purpose of environmental engineering for the elderly and the handicapped is to increase the functional independence of residents, and to prevent the steady erosion of physical abilities. Since elderly and invalid prisoners are, in the main, continually confined to a small

area, the proximal environment takes on great significance. Prisoners generally perceive the physical environment in the Unit as providing medical and physical supports, and as responsive to their health needs.

To prisoners with liabilities, personal medical problems take on overwhelming significance. They often evaluate a setting in terms of its medical resources, and the physical prosthetic aids that are provided. Compared with the general neglect invariably described as typical of prison hospitals or prison populations, the Unit is generally praised for its health care.

E&H 11: Well, number one the medical facilities here are better than other institutions. I mean if a guy is really sick they have an infirmary, they have nurses around the clock and there is not a guy here that I say or could honestly say that doesn't get the proper medical treatment and other institutions that would not be. If you were in need of something at say 3:00 in the morning, there is always someone here. Of course, and in other institutions, they are more apt to say "well, wait until the morning until you go to sick call."

* * * *

E&H 5: I'm 58 years old and I'm losing my balance and my equilibrium, because I'm losing my eyesight. This is the best place for me because I can't do my time where they don't care about me. In another joint I can't handle the tiers, and if you get sick they don't care, or they take a long time to respond. Here the whole place is geared toward care, not security.

* * * *

In traditional prisons, the physical plant, with three level tiers, steep stairways, insufficient illumination, loud

masking noises, heavy and manually operated locks and gates, and scarce elevators, creates severe difficulties for elderly and handicapped prisoners. Even the few activities provided such prisoners are limited because of access. Older prisoners are often confined on the flats, and find that even movies are difficult to travel to safely and comfortably. Elderly and handicapped prisoners trade off activity against the risks of movement.

E&H 13: I pretty much didn't go anywhere when I was in Green Haven. Like for instance they have lock in. You have to be at your cell pretty quick. Now suppose that I am not on the flats and I am upstairs see-first gallery . . . Now by the time I have to wait for all these guys that are running and tripping by you know . . . see I have to wait because if I don't I will be knocked down and these steps are all concrete or steel, I have to wait for them. By the time I get up and then my cell is down the hallway, I am late and trouble is created for everyone. I avoided the yard, too, it is too active for men of our age, and it's too hard moving there and back.

* * * *

Not only is the typical prison environment poorly designed to support the needs of the elderly and handicapped but health problems are often described by prisoners as denigrated by staff, or perceived by staff as subterfuges for attention getting.

E&H 6: You might have a seizure in there, and you're in an environment with kids. Like if I got into a seizure and the man next to me, he calls for the officer, "There's a man in here in trouble." Then the whole gallery calls, "Officer, help me, something's wrong with me too, something's wrong with my head." See these guys play around, and the officer doesn't take it seriously, and I'm in serious trouble. In a hospital kind of like here, it's different. People take illness seriously, both

the officers and the old guys here.

* * * *

E&H 15: I used to get sick a lot at night. In the cell by myself, at night after 7 o'clock, if you get sick, the officer has to go through all kinds of changes to get the door open. Here you get the attention you need, the administration knows you're sick, you don't have to convince people at sick call you're not pretending.

* * * *

The Unit provides physical prostheses ranging from well-lighted and pleasant rooms and wheelchair ramps to geriatric-use bathrooms, and kitchen facilities designed for easy and non-taxing use. The physical limits of old age are recognized in the Unit in a way that is impossible in the inflexible and case-hardened environments of traditional prisons. Accessible dispensaries and infirmaries adjacent to individual rooms provide reassurance. While many of the prisoners do not visit the dispensary or infirmary frequently, its accessibility provides, to those confined within a tiny area, a sense of surety. Many prisoners wait at the infirmary or at the dispensary to talk with nurses, or to say hello, even though they have no need for medical services.

E&H 7: They seem to care a lot more about health problems. The nurses are cheerful and helpful . . . In prison, just to get to sick call is a big deal, dropping slips and all . . . Most of us go to sick call (they don't call it sick call here, it's always open) every day. Sometimes for nothing at all, just someplace to go . . . it's nice to see a doctor, maybe there's something new for arthritis, and we sit and talk with the nurses. It makes me feel good knowing they are here.

* * * *

(3) A final theme linked to satisfaction with the Elderly and Handicapped Unit revolves about the degree of community found in the Unit. Disengagement does not necessarily call for solitude. Aging has been described as a process leading to a decrease in bonds of function but to an increase in bonds based on similarities and common sentiments. Prisoners with little else to do, with few family members with whom to correspond, little instrumental work to perform, find that participation in informal friendship groups is important. Such prisoners either find a single confederate, or a small group with similar value systems with whom to associate. With the handicapped or elderly a single relationship or small group takes the place of other commitments, investments and hopes. Such a relationship must be carefully controlled. Homogeneity helps protect relationships from disintegrative differences. It is not the quantity of interaction that is of importance, but the quality. While prisoners may be involved with Senior Citizens, the Salvation Army, occupational therapy, school or organized recreation, the positive aspects of the unit and its activities is the degree of common interests and mutual support provided by other prisoners. Such support, and the relative lack of alienated, suspicious subgroups and cliques, stands in marked contrast with mainline prisons.

A welcoming committee, composed of several members of the elderly population, typically receives new admissions, and "runs the facility down for them." Through such a "Welcome Wagon," all prisoners are met and the rules of the institution explained.

() E&H 4:

Well, first of all when I came in here, three inmates received me, not officers. They were under the supervision of officers, but they kept out of the situation where they explained the rules and regulations and the freedoms that I would have and the things that I would be expected to do . . . Yes, there was a tremendous feeling of relief because for the first time I became a person instead of a number. I had a number still, a new number, but I also had a new identity as a person . . . They always greet each other with two inmates, but in my case there happened to be another inmate coming by and they usually find out my physical condition before I saw a doctor or a nurse and they were permitted to assign me to a vacant room or bed.

* * * *

E&H 7:

Once I came here, and I was welcomed with open arms so to say, the experiences I have accumulated here in these few months . . . I mean the officers immediately came up and acted very nice to me. Inmates who interviewed me, or let's put it this way, asked me several questions which they needed for the records, have been very nice to me. Especially a guy by the name of _____, who is leaving us next month, has been very helpful for myself, to adjust myself. It's great being welcomed by people with whom you have something in common.

* * * *

Other studies have noted that when people are relatively homogeneous in age and class, racial differences are not significant. Elderly black prisoners are differentially found among unaffiliated black population in mainline prisons, and often find assimilation with prison as difficult as whites do. Additionally, elderly prisoners of all races are often suspected of collusion with staff, because (1) many are first offenders with little experience with prison and strong pro-social values,

and (2) many elderly or long term prisoners are concerned primarily with structure concerns and with avoiding trouble, a pattern that leads to cooperation. Whether or not elderly prisoners do act in concert with staff, or express excessive dependency needs, they are perceived this way by other prisoners, and prison life is often made proportionately more difficult.

E&H 15: In prison, there are all these 16 to 21 year olds all over. But see, kids and older people, their mind is not in the same place. They are always trying to get over on the officers, and they just make things hard for all of us. It's a generation gap, not only a generation gap, but a communication gap, and that's tension there, that lack of communication. You can't get through to them. And they don't seem to particularly like us for trying . . . they have their own ways.

* * * *

Homogeneity with respect to age permits the concentration of interests at least to the extent that interests are linked with age. While we can cite examples of heavily involved, active 80 year olds, aging often skews activities in particular low-key social directions. Prisoners are concerned with sitting and talking, an activity which requires some shared interests. Inmate controlled programs also include cards, and checkers, shared gardens, and self-education.

E&H 4: If you want a discussion on an intellectual level you can find some people here. If you want a discussion on a political level you can find people here. If you want to play any games, which are more or less entertaining, like chess or checkers or pinochle

or bridge, you find the people here. There are enough chess players here, not only one. There are enough pinochle players, or even bridge players. If we wanted to put a bridge game together, you could put it together. You can't find this in another institution, I mean at least I don't know any other institutions where you can find it.

* * * *

E&H 7: We all have interests that are kind of similar. Like right now I'm learning Spanish, and I'm teaching French to my friend in return . . . We have a nice little place here, everybody is nice. Some people work on the gardens, some people go to occupational therapy, some people don't do anything at all, but everybody is really nice to one another, at least in comparison to everywhere else I've been.

* * * *

Negative Characteristics of the Elderly and Handicapped Unit

Not all prisoners like the unit, and among prisoners who like the unit, prisoners do not like all things about. Negative valuations of the setting surface around characteristics that are flip sides of positive themes. Disengagement may mean a slipping into passivity and inactivity; convalescence may encourage further dependency which translates even quality care into perceived neglect. Homogeneity may result in stress for the few different prisoners, for whom the setting was not designed.

Table 12.6 lists prisoner mentions of setting characteristics disliked by E&H prisoners. While negative expressions are not as common as positive ones, they are more common than the self-anchoring scale scores might suggest. While E&H

Table 12.6
Perceived Negative Characteristics of the Elderly
 and Handicapped Unit

| <u>Features Mentioned</u> | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>Inactivity; no programs, no work, nothing here; no gym, no big yard</u> | 9 |
| (2) <u>Inadequate or poor medical care; neglect, insufficient diets, no specialized services</u> | 7 |
| (3) <u>No rules and regulations; no predictability, too disruptive</u> | 6 |
| (4) <u>Officers are corrupt; express favoritism, unfair; also often condescending</u> | 4 |
| (5) <u>Unsafe; too much freedom here, population insufficiently homogeneous, young people in here, strong and vigorous</u> | 4 |
| (6) <u>Prisoners are collaborative and conforming; no solidarity, too much passivity, dependency</u> | 3 |
| **** | **** |
| **** | **** |
| No negative features mentioned | 7 |

prisoners generally like their unit, and compared to mainline prisons, love it, they are aware of tradeoffs being made.

While the modal positive characteristic was the permissive and laissez-faire nursing home milieu, the modal negative characteristic is lack of programs, work, and consequent inactivity. While some expressions of dissatisfaction with inactivity come from the young and vigorous, others are voiced by the elderly.

Similarly, while 8 prisoners had described the quality of medical care in the unit in positive terms, 7 describe it as insufficient. Evaluations depend upon the demeanor of workers, the degree of dependency on treatment, and the effectiveness of the treatment itself.

Six prisoners see the lack of rules and regulations in the unit as stressful, and the relaxed, tolerant atmosphere of the unit is described as dangerous license by some. Four prisoners describe the setting as corrupt, perceiving in the setting a highly individualized mode of supervision relying upon the establishment of personal relations between prisoners and guards. Three prisoners found that such relationships resulted not only in official favoritism, but that inmates were themselves corrupted. Other prisoners are described by the dissatisfied as essentially conformist.

* * * *

* * * *

Like positive expressions of E&H, negative expressions combine to form several general themes. The themes are collaboration, inactivity, and neglect.

(1) Collaboration. Several prisoners, including two young prisoners who rated the Unit low on the self-anchoring scale, find the disengagement of older prisoners destructive to prisoner solidarity. Older prisoners and the handicapped are described as patronized by staff and the milieu is seen as characterized by staff condescension that the old and disabled inmates do not seem to recognize or to mind. The freedom within the Unit is described as a plum for cooperation, and as requiring a sacrifice of self-respect.

E&H 8: See like everybody in here, most everybody, is like a model inmate. How let me break that down in jailhouse terms. A model inmate is the type of individual that will go along with the officials on any given thing - he will do anything to get a favor from this man, even if it means getting another inmate executed . . . like what they used to call an administration man . . . But like me, you got a few like me, I am 45 years old, but they say I am a militant . . . Now I am in prison and I have principles. I am the one that has to live with my principles and I feel that cooperating with the officials is wrong. I am not trying to buck the establishment. All I am trying to do is to maintain my manhood and my principles so I become a militant in here you know, and this is where it's at.

* * * *

Particularistic relations with staff are translated into corruption and favoritism. The freedom and relative lack of rules in the Unit are viewed as minor cosmetic rewards for compliance. Casual supervisory attitudes and access to recreation, freedom of movement are perceived as designed to deceive the most gullible inmate.

E&H 9: They throw us a few crumbs, that's all. Now some people like the place. But really, they simply pacify people here, they aren't men anymore. It is everybody against everybody else . . . not fighting, but they don't have the heart to speak up anymore. The hell with their fellow prisoner, they don't care, this is the system in here. Now you will have some people who can do time that way . . . But you will find that they are the people who receive everything from the administration, like furloughs, and medical visits, and they spend half their time on the streets. It is very divisive here.

* * * *

E&H 8: Now this place as a whole was designed for those type of inmates that have the administration sort of leaned towards them . . . What they are doing here is dividing the inmates. They use one inmate against the other by providing some benefits to some and not to others . . . Years ago there used to be unity against the administration, now there is no unity at all . . . The benefits are not real benefits to being here.

* * * *

(2) Inactivity. The most common expression of dissatisfaction with the Elderly and Handicapped Unit relates to the lack of stimulation, and of meaningful activity in the Unit. As in many nursing homes, there are few programs for the vigorous, or for the elderly and invalid who retain activity interests. All people in the Unit are not sedentary, withdrawn, and solitary, happy in disengagement. The Unit has no vocational programs, except for a roundly ridiculed occupational therapy program, and no work assignments. One must resort to reasonably menial tasks to keep busy. Control over space by a largely docile population hinders active, expressive behaviors.

E&H 1: Well, actually there is nothing to do here, you can watch television. You have the senior citizens about three or four of them. And two or three guys go in to see them. And that is it. That's right, about three or four people come in. And they have bingo night. A few people go to that . . . But really there's nothing, no hobby shop, no education. It's just placating, that's all it is. They don't expect anything from us so they don't provide us with anything. But like a lot of us are not waiting to die, we want to work and study. And that's virtually impossible. And, I admit, most people don't care, they want to watch "I Love Lucy," but that hurts the rest of us. We want to improve ourselves.

* * * *

E&H 2: Some inmates just go in and lay down and do their bit on their back. They don't have any education to start with and they're not encouraged to get anything. And as far as rehabilitation, there is no rehabilitation and there is no education, there is no such thing per se as rehabilitation. The way that it is run. It's absolutely useless. You can't take a horse to water and make him drink. And you can't take a man and put him behind bars and make him work, it's impossible. We can't even get the officers to go around and wake these people up. We have to go around to each individual ward and wake the people up, there is no bells in here. And they say that you should get up at 8 o'clock and make the bed and go out, unless you're sick then you can stay in bed, but there is no rules. You can walk through this ward and see a man at 10 o'clock in bed and at 2 o'clock and nothing is being done. I have to get out of here, there's nothing here but old folks and I'm not old, yet.

* * * *

At first, the simplified environment proves appropriate to some inmates' handicaps. However, as they gain confidence in the essentially prosthetic setting, they discover boredom. And while they have adjusted well to the Unit, they soon perceive their physical and mental powers to be declining. Their adaptation to a

low level of stimulation, leads to a diminution of competence.

E&H 1: You get tired of doing that. You get tired of watching TV. For me my benefit here was the operation. Whereas anything else, there is nothing else. They don't have a yard to play in. They have a court. And these guys have taken it on themselves, shuffleboard and things. Well, it's not a lot - you can't play baseball out there. It's a little bit bigger than a baseball court, where the four bases are, but you can't play baseball then. They just put up horseshoes out there the other day. I would go back to prison tomorrow, before I become a zombie like everyone else here.

* * * *

E&H 14: These guys that just - all the will is just taken out of all the old men. The old men don't do nothing all day. They don't even watch TV. They lay in their bed, on their ass, you know. They don't have anything at all going like it should be you are old you know, but we will give you at least until 10:00 in the morning to get yourself dressed and your bed made and they got orderlies that do that. Now if you want to lay down you have got to lay down on top of the bed you know. But make them get out of the bed. See and another thing that they should do that they don't do - see all these old men, and in the chairs and everything - it should be a must that they got to go out in the yard. Either in the morning time or in the noon time - for at least two hours. I want to leave here, myself, because like there's nothing here, and there's not likely to be the way it's run and the population they have here.

* * * *

(3) Neglect. Neglect generally represents inmate dissatisfaction with medical services provided in the Unit. Biological changes leave prisoners more vulnerable, and may cause a loss of self-maintenance skills. Medical dependencies are stressed. The problem is that medical insulation often makes prisoners increasingly physically or emotionally dependent on services. Such vulnerability translates into compulsive atten-

tion to essential health care, and even quality care can be perceived as neglect.

E&H 16: I am afraid of death. And they don't seem to care or nothing here. It's scary, like sometimes they don't come when you need them, or they are giggling and dropping pills, and you need medical care and some attention. A lot of things I can't do for myself anymore, and I need private nursing and more medical care than I can get there. It's better than prison, but they are awful neglectful, even here.

* * * *

E&H 24: I had to call up my private doctor on the outside to have him check me so I could get you know my heart medicine. I mean I almost went two weeks before I could get my medicine and also the sugar diabetes and in other words the food that we eat - he put me on a diet and she says she sent it into the mess hall and I go in there and they say - well we ain't got it - you get your regular food so I go back in and see the doctor and he said the order was lost, and I said how in the world could it get lost and it was and should be taken care of. And I get disturbed if you are not going to do what you are supposed to do - just send me someplace else - do you understand what I mean. So I got a little disturbed.

* * * *

E&H 14: And the nurses just don't give a fuck. You don't get your medication - just don't get it - fuck it - you get it at 12:00 - if you don't get it at 12:00 fuck it. I did this. I did this just to see and I am an epileptic. A guy went morning, afternoon and I said I was scared to skip and I skipped 5:00 and took it at 9:00 and nobody said a damn thing to me. Now you know that is it right there. And I am an epileptic now. You mean to tell me that here you see dilantin in a cup and right away you know that the man is an epileptic and you mean to tell me that they are not going to call and find out what is wrong with this man. You see glycerin and

you mean to tell me that you are not going to call and see where this man is or what is wrong with him or what. He could be laying up there dead. This has been the problem. You see it has been a long time before we even got oxygen in here. Three people died because they didn't have no oxygen. They just got a respirator.

* * * *

Lack of facility structure, and an open prison setting provoke some complaints of lack of adequate control. A homogeneous elderly and invalid population requires, according to some patients, absolute homogeneity to provide predictability, and a lack of irritants from youth. While the program is described as a good idea, it is occasionally described as an idea gone wrong. The entry into the unit of strong, ambulatory, young diabetics and epileptics is perceived as an infusion of inappropriate prisoners into a vulnerable population.

E&H 17: It gets on your nerves. So anyhow the boys are playing the radio here at 3 o'clock in the morning. Most of them are young people see, talking about what they did in the streets. It gets annoying. Or like if you're going in the yard, like that. That's all right for young people. But now if you're sick and laying down, this annoys you . . . No rules and regulations. You tell the officer, "will you cut that noise down?" He'll cut it down. Then they make it louder. See, they've all got radios in their cells, see. But you can walk around, see things, like that. That's all right. But if you want to take it easy and try and do your time the best way you can, it's annoying. If you go out and tell an officer so and so, what happened, he says "I'll see about it."

* * * *

E&H 8: No, no. As a matter of fact, another thing that makes it bad for us. They bring guys in from Matteawan. Certified bugs. I mean, you see people walking around here talking to themselves, 2 o'clock in the morning, they got a mop in this hand, mopping the ceilings and all this. But nobody notices this. They got open rooms. A guy like him could come in and knock your brains out. So what is happening, they're helping to make this place a failure. By, as I told you earlier, and now, bringing all these different types of people in. The program was set up as they said, elderly and handicapped. They got people here under 25. Some of them there's nothing wrong with them. They're only aggravating the old men.

* * * *

Conclusion

The E&H program, a unit of approximately 120 inmates for whom medical or nursing care is essential on a continuing basis, is the System's most generous response to the needs of its physically weak inmates: the inmates who, pursuant to classification, cough, or wheeze or totter their way into the Fishkill program. Seldom does negotiation take place, or classification occur as a special dispensation or favor. The decision is a medical one, and the population reflects verifiable and serious medical disabilities.

The new inmates have seldom heard of the program, and often are reluctant to leave their institution, fearing the unknown and resenting arbitrary change. However, once admitted to the program, with few exceptions, the inmates perceive the environment as less stressful, more privileged,

less intrusive, than any previously experienced in prison.

The program is seen as an island of permissiveness, with inmates retiring to their rooms to read, or to the yard to stake out a garden or walk, and making their daily morning journey to the pharmacist or physician.

The Elderly and Handicapped Unit meets most prisoners' needs, but does seem to require certain disengagement for contentment. Disengagement may make adaptation difficult for some.

Inmates who express greatest dissatisfaction with the Unit are generally youthful inmates, who find themselves in a world of relative inactivity, and one in which cooperation with officers and staff is an integral dimension of the social environment. For the majority of the population, modal concerns and physical impairments are congruent, demanding a great deal of nurturance and privacy and a minimum of engagement and activity. For those mismatched with the setting, perceptions of the environment as dull and mind-destroying may result. As in every inescapable and socially heterogeneous setting, characteristics that are viewed as beneficial by one group often set up blocks, constraints, and adaptation problems for others.

Footnotes

1. M. Powell Lawton, "Social Ecology and the Health of Older People," American Journal of Public Health 64 (1974): 257-260. See also Carl Eisdorfer and M. Powell Lawton, eds., The Psychology of Adult Development and Aging (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1973).
2. Richard Schulz and David Aderman, "Effect of Residential Change on the Temporal Distance of Death of Terminal Cancer Patients," Omega, Journal of Death and Dying 4 (1973): 157-162.
3. Martin E.P. Seligman, Helplessness: On Depression, Development, and Death (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Co., 1975). Pp. 175-187.
4. S. Bergman and M. Amir, "Crime and Delinquency Among Aged in Israel," Israel Annals of Psychiatry and Related Disciplines 10 (1973): 33-48
5. Mark E. Adams and Clyde B. Vedder, "Age and Crime: Medical and Sociological Characteristics of Prisoners over 50," Geriatrics 16 (1961): 177-180.
6. George F. Baier, "The Aged Inmate," American Journal of Corrections 23 (1961): 4-34.
7. James H. Barrett, "Aging and Delinquency," in Gerontological Psychological by James H. Barrett (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1972). pp. 120-131.
8. New York State Department of Correctional Services, "Program Manual for the Correctional Center for Medical Services, Fishkill, New York," 1972 (mimeographed).
9. Ibid., p. 32.
10. Ibid.
11. New York State Department of Correctional Services, "Persons Under Custody 60 Years or Over as of June 30, 1975," 1976 (mimeographed).
12. Hans Toch, Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival (New York: The Free Press, 1977). Toch states with respect to Auburn Prison: ". . . Auburn ranks as the most popular New York State institution, with the 'pull' of a relaxed climate and diversified programs." p. 135.
13. Department of Correctional Services, "Persons Under Custody 60 Years or Over."

14. Kevin Krajick, "Growing Old in Prison," Corrections Magazine, March, 1979, p. 34. The author cites a number of state statistical reports (Michigan, North Carolina, Florida, New York) which indicate that elderly prisoners are disproportionately committed for crimes of violence, particularly homicide. Krajick states, "A great many of the murders are crimes of passion-killings of wives, neighbors or relatives who have never gotten more than a traffic ticket in their lives . . . Heavy alcohol use often contributes to these violent crimes. In fact, most elderly offenders have drinking problems - problems that may have developed late as a result of the pressures of old age."
15. The theory of elderly "disengagement" was first suggested by Elaine Cumming, Lois R. Dean, and David Newell, "Disengagement, A Tentative Theory of Aging," Sociometry 23 (1960): 23-35. The theory is further developed in Elaine Cumming and William Henry, Growing Old (New York: Basic Books, 1961); see also Elaine Cumming, "Further Thoughts on the Theory of Disengagement," International Social Science Journal 15 (1963): 377-393.
16. Department of Correctional Services, "Manual for Medical Services." P. 33.
17. Albert Cohen states in an article discussing the causes of prison violence, that age is a critical variable differentiating the violence prone from the docile. Cohen comments: ". . . they (young people) are less secure in their reputations for undoubted virility; they have spent less of their lives in prison and are less prepared to submit to discipline, to do their own time and avoid trouble in order to put the prison experience behind them. For all these reasons, they are less responsive to institutional controls." "Prison Violence: A Sociological Perspective," in Prison Violence, eds., Albert K. Cohen, George F. Cole, and Robert G. Bailey (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1976), pp. 10-11.
18. Elmer Johnson, "Pilot Study: Age, Race and Recidivism as Factors in Prison Infractions," Canadian Journal of Corrections 8 (1966): 268-283; Age has found to be the most significant correlate of in-prison behavior in other studies as well. Gary F. Jensen suggests that age differences in violence and rule breaking in prison appear to be due to age-related normative orientations and to investments rather than loss of energy, vigor, or machismo. "Age and Rule-Breaking in Prison: A Test of Siciocultural Interpretations," Criminology 14 (1977): 555-568.
19. Elaine Cumming, "Further Thoughts on the Theory of Disengagement." With disengagement from complex family and work roles older people ". . . move into a more equalitarian relationship with each other and the world - a relationship in which solidarity is based almost entirely on a consensus of values and a commonality of interest." p. 391.

20. Morton Deutsch and Mary Collins, Interracial Housing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1951). Also Eunice Greer and George Greer, Privately Developed Interracial Housing (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960).

21. John Irwin describes the disengagement of the old con as in part stimulated by the mistrust of other prisoners: "Often he [the old con] becomes less active in the prison social world. He retires and becomes relatively docile or apathetic. At times he grows petty and treacherous. There is some feeling that old cons can't be trusted because their 'head has grown soft,' or they have 'lost their guts,' and are potential 'stool pigeons' . . ." The Felon Spectrum Books (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 84. James Jacobs describes the difficulty unaffiliated (and typically older) blacks experience in a gang managed prison. "Those blacks, usually 'old cons' who are not in the nations, are victims of assault, theft, and extortion. Much depends upon the old con's ability to stand up for himself and to manipulate his environment." Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 158.

Chapter 13: "Weak Company" C-2 Company at Coxsackie

Social and spatial separation of blacks and whites in New York State prisons is de facto a common phenomenon. While the initial distribution of prisoners in prison may reflect cell openings and program availability, ethnicity becomes a factor in determining housing choices and program participation. In many prisons the races are so thoroughly separated spatially and culturally that there is little interaction between them even when they do come into contact in work places, on the tier, or in formal prison organizations.¹

The racial groups themselves make decisions that contribute to their separation. Blacks and whites elect to live within areas in which racial parity and racial purity are maintained. When a setting holds a racial mixture, it often does so briefly, particularly if a measure of choice is left to residents. Block-busting is common, with blacks, whites and Hispanics encouraging similar-race friends to enter a tier or to elect an assignment. Prisoners of other races are encouraged to leave. Ethnic groups express little interest in integration, and ethnic stereotypes, ethnic slurs, and racial aggression strengthen and legitimize concerns for separateness.

The relative power and solidarity of the resulting ethnic group varies, however. A large body of literature describes the relative success of black and Hispanic groups in resolving individual member's needs for protection, affiliation, and esteem.² White groupings are far less prevalent in prison, and far less likely to marshal sufficient power or unity to satisfy equivalent

needs for their members. In part because of their status as unaffiliated and non-grouped, white prisoners are also far more vulnerable to victimization in prison, particularly at the hands of black prisoners.³ White prisoners are a minority in prison, though they are a substantial minority, and have no cohesive cultural identity. They enter prison with no common values or common experiences that facilitate cultural identification, have little in common with other whites except skin color, and are not motivated to develop strong and protective groups.

Black prisoners typically encounter other prisoners from the same neighborhood ready to welcome and to receive them.⁴ The welcoming group offers safety, a share of amenities, and a supportive set of peers. Hispanic prisoners too, from urban settings and with a common background in street gangs, often find homies, friends, and relatives in prison. Even black and Hispanic prisoners without a welcoming group of friends find that a common language, heritage, and sense of shared oppression create kinship. One large California Hispanic group, the Nuestra Familia, originated as a protective inmate group for Hispanics ineligible for acceptance into the other large Hispanic groups because of rural background.⁵ Ideological and nationalistic groups increase the salience of ethnic identities, and widen the range available for ethnic membership, except for white prisoners.

While white prisoners form groups, the groups that develop do not share the racial identity and expressed union of other ethnic groups. The groups are small, individualistic, and with-

out interlocking roles with other white groups. The groups also do not typically share norms, such as those of violence. White prisoners are far less likely to find street partners in jail, having come less often from large urban settings, and having little experience with street gangs. White prisoners are more likely to have "jail-house friends," or prisoners they meet during pre-trial confinement in the county jail, or during reception confinement, or the first few weeks at the receiving institution. Their particularistic relations are less likely to extend beyond the bounds of the relationship itself. Middle class rural and counter-culture white drug offenders are not likely to share interest in or concern for each other, or for lower class white offenders.

The small size of white groups, the lack of a violent tradition among them, and the prevalence of unsupported, unaffiliated white isolates in prison, make white prisoners relatively unimpressive forces in prison life. Reactive efforts at developing racial ties usually take the form of such groupings as the Ku Klux Klan, the Aryan Brotherhood and other neo-Nazi organizations, provide tenuous supports at best to members, and merely increase prison related violence, and their own victimization. Additionally, such groupings are not much feared or respected by staff or by other ethnic groups, and provide little self-esteem for members.

Many white prisoners find themselves in an unpredictable, dangerous milieu, amidst a population which defines them at once as weak and as sources of oppression, and most disturbingly, as sexually attractive. In youth prisons, this scenario is

most clearly played out. Lockwood found that 64% of white residents of one youth facility were targets of sexual aggression, this proportion being far higher than was found in adult prisons. Bartollas et al describe a pattern of juvenile victimization in one youth facility virtually epidemic for white prisoners. White youths, particularly those from rural neighborhoods are perceived by ghetto youths to be physically weak, culturally non-violent, and socially abandoned. Militant rhetoric is used by ghetto youths to traumatize and to harass whites, and to serve as justification for aggression. This peer centered world, when combined with adolescent sexual doubts and anxieties (ethics that link status to exploitative success), exposes vulnerable prisoners to verbal abuse, physical checking, "grabassing," and occasionally to serious fights.

Not surprisingly, testing and games of emasculation and racial humiliation directed at whites in youth prisons creates stress for their targets. White prisoners exposed to such stresses seek sanctuary, and sometimes, affiliation. Ameliorative characteristics of settings for the traumatized highlight isolation, but sometimes feature a group defense. Fear, rather than cultural ties, is the reason for white groupings. Shared oppression creates a social group in protective ghettos.

One institution which contains an explosive mixture of young blacks and whites is Cocksackie. The formal niche described in this chapter is a white company that is designed for traumatized white prisoners.

Setting

Cocksackie Correctional Facility is a medium security (no free standing wall) prison for offenders between the ages of 16 and 21. The prison is located in a rural area. It was opened in 1935, and was designed to provide a disciplined but rich environment for the education and training of tractable prisoners. Those selected for placement at Cocksackie, according to program manuals of the Department of Correctional Services, should be

". . . physically capable of responding favorably to the program, but those relatively immature emotionally and socially are eligible. Evidence of being amenable to counseling and education should be demonstrated . . . Candidates with a history of prior institutionalization should have made a favorable response to the (earlier) institutional programs."⁹

The emphasis at Cocksackie is on education and vocational training. Classification analysts attempt to the extent possible, given their pool of candidates and the increasing problems of prison overcrowding, to select the weaker, less "hardened" young offender for the Cocksackie program.

Even with its comparatively "select population," Cocksackie has a long history of racial separation and youth violence. The court system at Cocksackie, which was formally abolished in the early 1970's, was a physical embodiment of racial separatism. In the central prison yard, racial subgroupings, based upon gang membership or city or origin, "owned" various "courts." The courts were demarcated portions of the prison yard. Entry to courts required permission from members, with trespass subject

to retaliation. Only "dinks," unaffiliated whites perceived as demonstrating cowardice, mental quirks, or embarrassing levels of immaturity, were not invited to join white courts, and had no place in the yard. The dinks were relegated to a no-man's land in the center of the yard, a public, vulnerable area that served as a thoroughfare to the rest of the courts. Trespass served as a constant reminder of the low esteem in which they were held, and of their own vulnerability. Aggressive racial violence was aimed at enforcing separation, or proving courage, not at demonstrating racial superiority or humiliating or victimizing racial groups. White groups were evident in the yard, and those groups with demonstrated fighting ability occupied the most valued courts.

Coxsackie still attempts to solicit the "cream" of the youthful offenders, but the pool of candidates for whom Coxsackie was designed has been severely depleted. From 1971 to 1975, New York City male commitments under 21 increased from 19.7% of total New York City male commitments to 23.6%. New York City male commitments increased 60% from 1971 to 1975, while upstate male commitments increased only 23%. Similarly, offenders with crimes of violence or with prior institutionalization made up a much higher percentage of the total adult commitment population. 10 While the eligibility requirements for Coxsackie placement still reflect a concern for young, non-violent first offenders who are presumed most likely to benefit from educational programs, the institution found itself increasingly forced to receive serious offenders, whose prison agendas do not include school or up-holstery training. This has not only created institutional un-

rest, staff cynicism and discontent, but has also altered the uneasy racial equilibrium and permeated the strict racial separatism. Whites found that their courts were being invaded, and that fighting meant a continual round of aggressive play and violence aimed at gaining self-esteem through black racial domination and emasculation of whites. White groupings were generally smaller and less cohesive than blacks, and they did not share urban, gang-nourished ethics of violence. White youths were relatively well matched with the purpose of Coxsackie, and pending the infusion of the "new breed" of prisoners, they shared staff values for involvement, growth, educational attainment. Self-esteem for the typical Coxsackie prisoner during the 60's derived from success in program. During the 70's, values began to shift, and predatory and emasculating play became major inmate emphases.

In 1975, Coxsackie held a population of 640 prisoners. Approximately 29% were white, 53% black, and 18% Hispanic prisoners. Nearly all inmates were serving youthful offender sentences, with indeterminate minimum terms of imprisonment, and maximum sentences of 3 or 4 years. The average length of sentence is relatively short. Almost all (94%) of prisoners had served less than 2 years at the time of our interviews.

In keeping with its largely disciplinary and educative mission, the facility combines a concern for education and vocational training with a concern for security and discipline. Levels of security and control within the prison are very high. Prisoners are marched to all locations in company formation, are locked in their cells except when at activities or programs,

and disciplinary infractions are dispensed freely, for their presumed self-discipline value, as well as punishments for specific rules. Life at Cossackie is relatively rigid and inflexible, providing little freedom of movement and choice, or escape from supervision. This control provides solace to many white prisoners, who are targeted for sexual assault or racial aggression. The lack of large industrial training programs (there is no industry at Cossackie), the relatively small and self-contained nature of the physical plant, the ubiquitous surveillance and staff control provides a measure of safety. Staff control reduces the likely consequences of aggression from actual rape to psychological victimization. It is racial taunts, aggressive play, sexual overtures, "bulldozing" and threatening acts of various kinds that are commonly received and felt by most whites.

Cossackie has seventeen vocational programs, ranging from auto shops to TV and Radio repair. An academic program, to which all prisoners without an eighth grade education are assigned at least half a day, includes basic literacy and high school equivalency training, and a high school regents program. Other special subjects at Cossackie include arts and crafts, music and physical education. A small work and education release program is operated at the facility. There is also a farm with a small dairy herd.

Cossackie attempts to enroll all prisoners in programs. A much smaller proportion of the population is engaged in facility maintenance than is found in adult facilities and full time maintenance assignments are very rare. A prisoner is provided a maintenance assignment only when he clearly indicates

the irrelevance of other programs (often through disruptive behavior in school), completes a program and is close to release, or requires a special assignment because of personal volatility or vulnerability to other prisoners. Self-isolation through the type of quiet, backwater porter or clerical position available in adult prisons is less possible at Cossackie. Only two prisoners are in the protection company at Cossackie. These prisoners were too traumatized to enter population, and understood their legal right to request segregation.

Cossackie C-2: Weak Company

While there is no real protection company at Cossackie, the equivalent is the C-2 Company. C-2 is known formally as "weak company" and carries an informal designation as "homo company." The niche has existed since 1935, as a response to the bulldozing and harassment of some prisoners by others, and is simply a single gallery within a section of the prison, physically no different from other galleries, nor separated in any way from the rest of the prison. Prisoners in C-2 are provided no special privileges, nor are any privileges extracted as price for residence. Staff are assigned to C-2 as to any other gallery. While officers are familiar with the company's reputation as weak, they are without special training with respect to inmate victimization, and do not perceive their role as one of "protector" or "counselor." They see themselves as guards concerned with security, though such a concern does translate into a higher level of surveillance over prisoners in the company than is provided in most companies. The only outstanding characteristics of C-2 Company is the population itself.

During our interviewing in Cocksackie in January, February and March of 1975, C-2 held from 35 to 40 prisoners. The proportion of white inmates in the company never fell below 85% during that period, and frequently rose above 90%. Approximately one-fifth to one-quarter of the Cocksackie white population lived in C-2 company. No Hispanic lives in C-2. Lockwood found that over two-thirds of the prisoners confined in C-2 company had been targets of sexual aggression during their confinement at Cocksackie.¹¹ Prisoners are in C-2 at their request, typically following some sort of traumatic encounter with black prisoners. Staff may or may not be aware of the specific encounter, but they recognize the legitimacy of prisoners' fears and problems in population, and usually accede to such requests. Less frequently, prisoners who have been identified in the Cocksackie or Elmira reception unit as a probable victim of aggression in prison are placed in C-2 as an initial housing assignment. Such decisions are made on the basis of the prisoner's size, his demeanor, a record of earlier victimization or severe emotional or social immaturity. Staff understand the labelling that C-2 prisoners are subject to, and are not enthusiastic about assigning prisoners to C-2 prior to their own decision that population is not for them. The typical sequence of C-2 placement is that prisoners are informed about the existence (and label) of C-2 company during their orientation to Cocksackie, experience serious problems in coping with blacks in population, talk with prisoners confined in C-2 company, and then demand entry. Five prisoners in C-2 were assigned to the unit because of a history as active homosexuals. They constitute a small mixed race subgroup of avowed, but non-aggressive, homosexuals.

Prisoners in C-2 are confined to their company during normal lock-in times only. While they are marched as a group, and attend various events and activities as a company (recreation, meals, movies), they are not assigned to programs as a group. In examining the work and program assignments of C-2 prisoners, we found a great deal of variety in programs, and little obvious linking of prisoner with setting. We found C-2 prisoners in 15 of 17 vocational programs, and in all school classes, though patterns suggesting avoidance of some assignments, and differential choice of others did emerge. No C-2 prisoner was assigned to the kitchen or to the messhall. The only culinary assignments in which C-2 prisoners are found are the storeroom (2 prisoners) and the butcher shop (2 prisoners). Both assignments are small, secluded, all-white assignments that are physically separated from other parts of the kitchen, and feature limited access. Concentrations of C-2 prisoners (5 prisoners) are found within the arts-crafts program. This program, a low pressure exploratory shop in which prisoners are individually supervised performing a variety of projects, is designated as a program for prisoners with marginal IQs or relatively poor manual dexterity and cognitive ability. C-2 prisoners are also found in some of the informal safety niches we described in Chapter 8, which are secluded, or heavily surveilled maintenance and clerical assignments. One C-2 prisoner is assigned to each of the following areas half days: law library clerk, officer's quarters janitor, dentist office clerk, school maintenance porter, learning laboratory clerk.

C-2 prisoners scrupulously avoid certain prison areas. The barber shop and laundry, which are traditionally black-dominated assignments at Coxsackie, contain no C-2 prisoners, and no C-2 prisoner is found on the farm or in outside gangs, which are known for low levels of supervision, large area, and the presence of bootie bandits.

Because of half-day and multiple work and program assignments, C-2 prisoners are remarkably scattered through the facility during program periods. Most spend the majority of time in integrated school and vocational programs with non-C-2 prisoners, and commonly express little fear of program areas. Classes are small (all vocational and educational programs contain from 10-15 prisoners during each AM-PM period), and supervision is constant and pervasive. The safety afforded through facility control, combined with the relative lack of large industry-type assignments and a formal facility policy which discourages isolated non-program placement, explains the viability of wide participation of C-2 prisoners in available placements, and permits prisoner interests to remain an important influence in the selection of assignments.

It is on the tier, and during recreation, that lack of supervision permit a widespread expression of racial hostility. And it is within housing areas, that prisoners express the greatest fear and irritation. At night, when prisoners are locked in their cells, catcalls, racial taunts, and verbal aggression is common. Also, within morning and evening tier periods, during showers, and while attending activities with the company, white prisoners feel isolated, and vulnerable to attack. Prisoners are concerned about ensuring a place to pro-

tect themselves and their property, a safe place to return to following program. C-2 meets those needs during non-program hours.

C-2 Prisoners

Demographics were collected for all prisoners we contacted and interviewed in C-2, and a comparison group of prisoners, randomly selected from the Coxsackie population was drawn in connection with the formal niche study. Comparisons for which significant differences were found are displayed in Table 13.0.

We have already noted that C-2 prisoners are disproportionately white. They are also more likely than randoms to come from a home town of less than 100,000 population (79% to 34%) and much more likely to come from a small town, or rural neighborhood (53% to 6.4%). With respect to institutional characteristics, C-2 prisoners are more likely than are randoms to have a history of mental commitment, and to have a recorded history of sexual offenses (excluding rape). There are no significant differences between the two samples on other personal history, criminal or institutional history variables. The relatively narrow age range, invariably short sentences, and little prior adult criminal or institutional experience accounts for similar statistical portraits across most variables.

We have suggested that white skin and rural origins are typically linked to "an everyman for himself" stance toward doing time. ¹² We find no Hispanic in C-2 and few blacks, and it is therefore clear that it is not the small population of whites itself that leads to victimization, since Hispanics constitute an even smaller minority. However, Hispanic prisoners

Table 13.0
Comparison of C-2 and Random Cocksackie Prisoners
By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-----------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| | Random (N=49) | C-2 (N=34) | |
| Ethnicity | | | |
| Black | 51.0 | 14.7 | $\chi^2 = 23.1$ |
| White | 32.7 | 85.3 | $C = .47$ |
| Hispanic | 16.3 | 0.0 | Signf. at .0001 level |
| | 100% | 100% | |

| Variable | Sample | | |
|---------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| | Random (N=47) | C-2 (N=34) | |
| Home Town | | | |
| Over 100,000 | 66.0 | 20.6 | $\chi^2 = 14.5$ |
| Under 100,000 | 34.0 | 79.4 | $\Phi = .45$ |
| | 100% | 100% | Signf. at .001 level |

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| | Random (N=47) | C-2 (N=34) | |
| Home Town | | | |
| Over 100,000 | 66.0 | 20.6 | |
| 50,000 to 100,000 | 10.6 | 11.8 | $\chi^2 = 25.2$ |
| 30,000 to 50,000 | 6.4 | 5.9 | $C = .48$ |
| 5,000 to 30,000 | 10.6 | 8.8 | Signf. at .0001 level |
| Under 5,000 | 6.4 | 52.9 | |
| | 100% | 100% | |

Table 13.0 (Continued)
Comparison of C-2 and Random Cocksackie Prisoners
By Selected Variables

| Variable | Sample | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | Random (N=49) | C-2 (N=34) | |
| History of Mental Commitment | | | |
| No History | 98.0 | 79.4 | $\chi^2 = 5.9$ |
| History | 2.0 | 20.6 | $\Phi = .31$ |
| | 100% | 100% | Signf. at .02 level |

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | Random (N=50) | C-2 (N=34) | |
| Prior Sexual Offense | | | |
| No History | 98.0 | 76.5 | $\chi^2 = 7.7$ |
| History | 2.0 | 23.5 | $\Phi = .34$ |
| | 100% | 100% | Signf. at .01 level |

do typically join a peer group that has its origins in the streets, and has a street type organization. Whites, and particularly rural whites, are less able to form groups, and the groups that they form are less able.

While we find that C-2 prisoners have a higher incidence of prior sexual offense than do randoms, this remains a small percentage and is attributable largely to the company's secondary purpose as a company for homosexuals. As we found with respect to residents in informal Safety niches, and with respect to the Elderly and Handicapped Unit, prisoners in C-2 are more likely to have a history of prior mental commitment than are randoms. Lockwood found analogously that youthful targets of sexual aggression were disproportionately assigned to Special Classes while in community schools.¹³ We found that over 20% of C-2 prisoners had a recorded history of residence in a mental health facility. In part, this may be a result of formal admission. Staff may be more likely to assign small, white prisoners to C-2 if they have evidenced serious breakdowns in the past. Several of the C-2 prisoners are also transfers from the Glenham program for the mentally retarded, who were placed in C-2 upon receipt at Cocksackie. In other cases, mental frailty may serve as a contributing factor in C-2 requests, as prisoners become withdrawn and terrorized.

Reasons for Placement in C-2

All prisoners living in C-2 who consented to interview were interviewed (N=34). Four prisoners refused interviews. As with all formal niche interviews, our primary concerns were in categorizing the reasons for placement, and in typing the

good and bad aspects of the setting. Accordingly, our analysis will focus on those concerns.

The prisoners were asked to explain the reasons for their residence in C-2, and Table 13.1 provides a listing of the reasons given by the prisoners. Of 9 prisoners involuntarily placed in C-2, five were placed there because of homosexuality, two because of their size, appearance, and past victimization, one because of epilepsy. One prisoner reports no knowledge concerning the reason for his placement in C-2.

Most prisoners requesting placement into C-2 list three reasons which reflect very similar concerns. Almost two-thirds of prisoners requesting placement in C-2 report sexual threats from black prisoners, and report a more general but linked theme of cultural incongruence with the black culture at Cocksackie. One C-2 prisoner in three reports extortion, or attempts at extortion, involving personal property, from black prisoners. Eight prisoners mentioned that friends had asked them to come to C-2, but only one of these prisoners reported no serious problem from blacks in population. The three most common themes differ only in degree, or in the type of victimization that was reportedly experienced by C-2 prisoners. As Bartollas found in his study of juvenile victimization, most victims often experience different kinds of approach and victimization in prison, and have a personal bottom line.¹⁴ While for most, sexual assault is the bottom line below which they cannot go without serious loss of self-esteem, many will tolerate property theft, or other sorts of exploitation. To live in population requires that white prisoners tolerate some degree of verbal harassment

Table 13.1
Reasons for C-2 Placement
(Self-Reported)

Placed in C-2 from Reception

| <u>Reason for Placement</u> | <u>Number Placed</u> ^a |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| (1) Homosexuality | 5 |
| (2) Small size, frail physical appearance | 1 |
| (3) Sexually assaulted in Reception Facility | 1 |
| (4) Epileptic | 1 |
| (5) Unknown | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 9 |

Placed in C-2 from Population
(Following Request)

| <u>Reason for Placement</u> | <u>Number of Mentions</u> ^b |
|---|--|
| (1) <u>Cultural incongruence</u> , inability to escape black dominant culture, threatened and intimidated for being white | 22 |
| (2) <u>Sexual threats</u> and intimidation from black prisoners | 20 |
| (3) <u>Extortion</u> , theft of property, theft or threatened theft of commissary allowances, cigarettes, usury with respect to gambling debts with threats of violence | 10 |
| (4) <u>Friends</u> in C-2 told to come to C-2 | <u>8</u> |
| | 60 |

a. Prisoners in this category were never in population. While they may share similar concerns with those situationally stressed, the reasons are recorded separately.

b. The reasons given for placement here are recorded as mentions. Prisoners typically gave more than one reason for their residence in C-2. The themes found here are often found in combination.

CONTINUED

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and exploitation, because blacks control the cultural tenor of the institution. Through numerical superiority, solidarity, casual use of violence, they control the music played, the clothing that is valued, kinds of food eaten without protest, style of language, and other modes of behavior. Whites must accept, often with great irritation and displeasure, the cultural control of the facility by blacks. It is other threats that tend to push them toward sanctuary. Thus, the great majority of C-2 prisoners report sexual threats, property extortion, or commonly, both as the reasons for C-2 placement.

We also checked institutional files to uncover staff notations concerning recorded reasons for admission to C-2. Staff notations include a cafeteria of syndromes, phobias, mental states, personal quirks and mental disturbances. (Table 13.2). In large part, staff describe C-2 prisoners as inadequate personalities, with passive-aggressive traits. Notations typically include such descriptions as "a hillbilly," a "lost soul," very small, frail, weak, a prisoner who is alternately depressed and enraged. Staff notes also indicate some awareness of the situational nature of the inadequacies, and include such situational cues as "approached for sexual favors," "can't handle the black population," weak, and afraid of attack, requires staff intervention. However, counseling staff in particular are prone to translate situational inadequacies into individual psychodynamic-historical categories and personal traits. While the facility understands that stress has both an experiential and objective

Table 13.2

Personal Factors Recorded in Institutional Files
as Contributing to C-2 Placement^a

| <u>Personal Factors Contributing to C-2 Placement</u> | <u>Frequency</u> ^b |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Inadequate personality | 16 |
| Social immaturity | 14 |
| Mental retardation, or slowness, learning disability | 10 |
| Physical weakness, small, effeminate | 7 |
| Passive-aggressive personality | 6 |
| Homosexuality | 5 |
| Neurotic depressive, withdrawn | 3 |
| Schizoid personality | 3 |
| Anxiety compulsive | 1 |
| Speech impediment | 1 |
| Hillbilly, ungainly, awkward | 1 |
| Hysterical neurotic | 1 |
| Anti-social personality | 1 |
| Emotional retardation | 1 |

^aTwo institutional files were unavailable. Of the thirty-two files surveyed, thirty files included at least one personal-historic factor recorded as contributing to placement.

^bPrisoners may have more than one recorded aggravating factor described by staff as leading to C-2 placement.

quality, staff are likely to focus on the fact that most prisoners and even most white prisoners survive in population. They attribute the inability of some to handle severe prison stresses to their personal inadequacy and character flaws. C-2 placement is perceived as the result of a failure of the prisoner to be manly and to defend himself, as a result of personality traits, neuroses, mental weakness.

Positive Features of C-2 Company

Among C-2 prisoners, fear and anxiety are dominant emotions, and safety is a compelling concern. In our portrait of informal Safety niches, transactions revolved about self-isolation, and group defense. These two environmental qualities are found within C-2 as well. Because of the ecology of the prison, total isolation is less essential, and less available than in adult prisons, and group defense is facilitated. We see in Table 13.3 that C-2 is chosen because it is an isolated all-white unit, contains friends who are from the same background and who possess the same kinds of concerns and fears. While the unit does provide isolation for white prisoners during non-program hours, its ameliorative qualities include group solidarity, shared values, cultural similarity, friendship. Isolation provides suitable safety, but once in the company, prisoners begin to resonate to qualities other than the escape it provides from blacks and from victimization.

Raising a White Flag

Most prisoners enter C-2 when it becomes clear that they cannot conform to the black culture's images of manliness. White

Table 13.3

Perceived Positive Features of C-2 Company

| <u>Features Mentioned</u> | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>All white company</u> (insulates from threats, sexual pressure intimidation from black prisoners) | 25 |
| (2) <u>Company exposes one to people with similar interests, from small towns, with similar fears</u> | 10 |
| (3) <u>Safe, well supervised, watch us more closely in unit, and because of living in unit</u> | 8 |
| (4) <u>People in company help one another, help control feelings, tolerate each other's problems</u> | 6 |
| (5) <u>Non-aggressive, non-violent people in C-2</u> | 4 |
| (6) <u>Homosexual friends there, people to talk to</u> | 3 |
| -----***-----***-----***----- | |
| No positive features mentioned | 2 |

prisoners are often described in black codes as "punks who don't fight . . ." If they approach staff for protection, they may confirm their image as "sissies." Staff, in face, may endorse prison values of fighting and self-assertion, seeing no other solution for the weak. White prisoners who cannot fight, find no other options open to them but to flee. They are concerned not with what C-2 may provide (except for isolation) but with escape from population.

19: I am perhaps a bit of a coward. If I can avoid the trouble and the hassle of being called a few names or being insulted and things, I would rather not even deal with the people that tend to insult me you know. I feel a forced association isn't really any good. If I were on the street I definitely wouldn't deal with people like that so I don't see any reason why I should have to deal with them in here because most of them are a lower class of society. The good points about C-2 are, well, it would most likely to be the opportunity to avoid fights -- I guess I am afraid of getting beat up if I try to fight so I figure that I will walk away from it and that way there aren't any punches that are going to be thrown. But if there were no C-2 then that wouldn't be possible. There would be punches involved and definitely I would lose every fight that I got into. So it would be pretty bad.

* * * *

Some prisoners know that "manliness" means violence. But they simply have no interest, or skills in that area.

38: I don't want to - I am not a killer - I don't want to be a killer and I don't boss people around. I don't know how to explain it and I don't know how to put it. If you looked at it in you know, my opinion, I feel that I am different in many, many ways . . . I can't handle the other prisoners, and I don't want to.

* * * *

Some prisoners have external characteristics (short, light frame, immature appearance) that make them particularly vulnerable to other prisoners. In other cases, prisoners perceive their own internal characteristics (slowness, meekness, emotional immaturity) as personality traits that aggravate prison stress, and make survival without aid difficult.

14: I was so small and they see it and just a little guy and they like picking on me. Down there like they like to pick on little guys, you know - like rip them off. Take their manhood away from them you know. With me, right, I don't take that - taking my manhood away from me. They try to - you know try to make a woman out of you . . . Like I am like a scary person. I am like my mother - she is scary and I am the same way. She is scary - I am scary, you know. The least little thing that happens I am scary.

* * * *

The prison psychologist at Coxsackie, discussing factors leading to C-2 residence for one prisoner, commented:

See, he really stutters. Not as badly as he used to. He has acne on his face and he's not exactly homely, but he - he has the image of being fucked up, and he has other fights with other inmates. They see him out in the gallery and they go and beat on him. They don't go too far with him, because they see the other inmates. But he stutters. It's not a terrific problem, but he stutters so easily, and he becomes pressured . . . C-2 was an essential escape for him. There's really not much there. But for these guys, some of them have given up, or so afraid that they need some special help.

* * * *

Another prisoner, with a history of residence in community facilities for the mentally retarded, states:

39: I'm in C-2 because I have to learn how to think. I have trouble thinking . . . It first began after I lost cigarettes and didn't pay the people the cigarettes that I owed and because I let people take advantage of me, I let them laugh at me and kick me in my legs and spit in my face and

call me names. I could not help myself and I could not talk to these inmates that were bothering me because I owed cigarettes to a lot of people and they heard about it and they thought that I was a bad person that I didn't pay people and that I couldn't be like them On the other divisions that I was in, I had trouble getting along with inmates because I had trouble thinking. I would talk to them and they would get mad because of that problem Inmates up there don't care about other people. They only care about themselves and about what they think of things. And they get their kicks off by laughing at people and talking about people every day. They don't care. And it doesn't help out other people that need help. It is more pressure on those people like myself

* * * *

For some such prisoners, flight is a strategy, not a tactic, and C-2 provides the most plausible available sanctuary.

14: Well, I had some trouble in B-3. Like guys that were trying to run over me and stuff and making me pay them stuff that I did not owe them, you know. And getting into fights and picking on me, you know. All I would do is try to pick up garbage cans and hit them over the head, you know. That is what I would do out in the streets anyways. So I decided to get off of B-3 anyways and go to C-2. The protection ward is what I call it. And I went there and everything was all right. Now before I came here I was down in Beacon for six months and I was in a protection ward down there, E-ward. I have been like on a protection ward all of my jail terms you know. When I get arrested I tell them that I want to go to a protection ward or protection block or somewhere you know where I won't be in the population. I have been in protection block ever since I first came to jail.

* * * *

10: Well - let's put it this way. If I went to another division, they would probably tear me apart because I would have no back. A back is people behind you in the division. I don't have any back in any of the divisions and the back that I do have are locked up most of the time I came right in here from reception. I'm not about to go in any other division.

* * * *

C-2 prisoners are provided with somewhat more security than are prisoners in other companies, but the modest difference translates into a much higher increment in safety for prisoners who carefully assay such levels.

26: They know we have problems with black prisoners. And the officers are more careful of us they watch our group in the yard more than the others, and that's good, because without it we would be ripped off a lot.

* * * *

2: They watch all the inmates in C-2 more closely than the others. They watch the inmates in C-2 more closely and the inmates - they know we have problems, sexual problems with other divisions, and that we need some careful security.

* * * *

Avoiding a Red Flag

A second commonly expressed theme, which is described as pushing prisoners out of population rather than pulling them into C-2, is that of a dangerous personal volatility. Many C-2 prisoners find self-defense not so much personally untenable, but unpredictable in its results. Such prisoners are at first willing to learn and to use violence and find themselves in continual conflict. Violence oftentimes does not reduce the incidence of personal attack and often has undesirable unanticipated effects such as hurting parole chances, or resulting in long-term segregation placement, or receiving personal injury. Many prisoners who are harassed and humiliated by others fly into poorly controlled, and episodic rages. Instead of presenting a protective image of manliness, such behavior confirms their reputation as unmanly. The inmates may be perceived by other prisoners as not having the personal strength to handle

stress with dignity, and their reactions may be seen as indices of fear. Withdrawal and self-isolation often follows poorly deployed and counterproductive violence.

- 15: Any time I would see them talking or something or laughing and I would walk by and they would be staring at me and I would think that they are talking about me or something so I would go up and tell them if they have got anything to say to say it to my face. You know, one day the division officer came up to me in the hall and he says we have to change you to another division or you are going to start a riot or something. So I said, well put me in a division that is all whites. He said there was not one that was all whites but I will put you in the one with the homos. I would rather be in a division with them and mostly whites than any other division because the next closest division is twelve whites and the rest are black . . . I had problems because my nerves come up on me and anything that anybody says to me or does, I want to break, I want to fight. And up in C-2, it's better because nobody looks for fights, nobody tells you nothing. It's all right.

* * * *

Prior to C-2 placement, prisoners often lived with a hair-trigger to self control. Their responses were not moderate and instrumental, but random and unpredictable to themselves and others. C-2 becomes a functional alternative to keeplock, or to continual fighting.

- 11: I don't get along too good with really anybody. If a person will tick me off the wrong way, I will go and try and kill him. Uh - most anything ticks me off. Someone constantly harping on me about something, it just builds up and then I go - I flip out and I go after somebody and sometimes I got to go after the wrong person. And sometimes I regret it . . . up here it helps me deal with it because I am away from blacks. No other reason. I can't stand them. Up here I am away from them, so I have no reason to go off.

* * * *

- 9: Me - I am living in C-2 because I have an emotional problem - I have a bad temper and it is very easy for someone to get me involved in a fight. Either an officer or just an inmate and I was sent to Fishkill the 19th of June for this problem and they said that the best thing I can do is try and think it out myself and see what problems are you know . . . Here it's all white, they don't upset you on purpose; I haven't had one fight up here. I had something like 23 before I was placed here.

* * * *

While the major ameliorative influence of C-2 is separation from the source of irritation, prisoners with bad tempers also report help with self-control from similarly oriented friends. Their sense of companionship and of shared problems permits group problem-solving. Invariably they counsel one another to "hold themselves," to remember that they are doing a short time, and not to jeopardize parole chances, or risk physical harm. They also receive support for justifications for non-violence, a stance that is perceived as unmanly by most prisoners.

- 3: So I was going to fight a couple of times on account of that, but then a couple of my friends told me hold your head, forget about this shit. Just try to stay away from it . . . It's not worth it. You shouldn't give them the pleasure . . . You're going home in 2 weeks.

* * * *

- 15: In C-2 like you will find a lot of diabetics and a lot of people that have got bad tempers and like there are four or five in there, including myself who has bad tempers and those guys are white. I have known them for two and one-half weeks but I feel like I just grew up with them. One guy his home town is forty miles from where I was and I used to go there but I would never see him. It is just that we are talking and we have things in common, because we all have bad tempers and we all hate niggers. When we have

trouble in the yard they tell me to relax, they ain't shit, and all of them will jump you anyway. I used to always fight, and mostly have my ass handed to me.

* * * *

Group Defense

In Chapter 8, we first noted the subtheme of "group defense" and the existence of territorial groupings of stressed prisoners in prison. A shared identity as weak reduces the chances of victimization by others because of physical segregation, and also because a social order is adopted which ensures peaceful relations within the group itself and to some extent modulates and makes formal the group's relations with outgroups. The closed nature of C-2, and the experience of shared threat, creates a bond of oppression when no other factor save ethnicity united inmates elsewhere. Oftentimes, prisoners do not share such an identity or attraction prior to entry (indeed the class differences among white prisoners, and cultural variety of whites is one reason for their vulnerability) but following entry to C-2 propinquity and similarity in fears leads to a groupness. Long periods of shared confinement permits the members to acquire an intimate knowledge of each other's character, skills, values, and interests. Such a knowledge, however, could still lead to short term opportunistic fragmenting. But when all the prisoners in C-2 share a superordinate attribute such as race, and that attribute becomes salient as one mediating survival, it can have mutually supportive impact. Prisoners perceive behavioral similarities in each other. They see themselves

as less aggressive, less concerned with playing and proving themselves. They describe themselves as quiet, peaceful, serious prisoners.

18: Well you don't have kids on the division who want to play all the time. They don't go around grabassing and all this kind of stuff. Every once in a while they'll play around. That's only maybe once in every two months, something like that. It don't happen, it's not an everyday thing and stuff . . . Everybody is pretty good in C-2, we like the same things. When lights are out, it's dead silent, not like the other divisions where people are screaming and hollering.

* * * *

7: I like to be alone . . . but all the people there are together. And there is mostly white people up there and they say that they don't like black people and stuff like this. If you feel like playing cards, or if you go to rec, everybody is together. You don't bother this guy or that guy. It sort of helps a little bit. Everybody enjoys themselves as much as they can.

* * * *

Closely linked with behavioral similarities are cultural similarities. Prisoners in C-2 describe the larger population as controlled by New York City types, slick and cool, with a dislike and animosity toward small town youths. The dominant group is also seen as given to producing physical noise, while C-2 inmates share an appreciation of peace and quiet.

12: We're all from the woods up here. In the other division they're all from the City.

* * * *

8: Like prison just didn't turn out the way I thought. Like on T.V. you see it and you just put on a uniform and lock in and everything and everything is all right. It's a quiet lock. And I was all prepared for a quiet lock and going to sleep or read. But there was noise constantly. There was kids screaming across a 40 foot distance . . . and there were these white streamers that they kept throwing across so that they could get cigarettes from the other side. It was crazy . . . I got into C-2 and everything was fine. All the people were quiet, and once you get to know them you find you have a lot in common. We all like peace and quiet.

* * * *

19: It is hard when you are sitting at a table and you are eating pork chops and everyone is saying to you that pork has 999 diseases in it and shit like that. The good points of it is that I can sit down and read and laugh and don't take no shit and all that.

* * * *

29: I can see it from anybody else that comes up from where I live - they just don't fit in with the rest of this population. The population is almost 50% - 75 - 80% from the city - we just don't fit in. Because we are not the hard rock criminals and we just don't fit in with them. I don't even want to fit in with them. I want to be to myself and I have feelings for other people and a lot of guys don't have no feelings but just for themselves and they are not going to make it out there - I can't see how they can make it out there. And it is so different - they don't act the same and they don't even think the same. It's what I do that is normal. Everyone of them that comes through down up north to here around has been called a "pussy" and they really have more put on them than guys that come from the city or Rochester or somewhere else. They have had more pressure put on them.

* * * *

Social relations within the group itself are often described as calm, egalitarian. Prisoners are described as tolerating one another's stigmata, in return for acceptance of their own. Prisoners do not harass, browbeat, humiliate other prisoners.

10: We don't bust balls up there for the simple reason that most of us up there are pretty smart. Most of them up there has been around 4 or 5 years in the institution so they know what is in and out. You take the guys that know what is coming and going and they are a little careful. They know what to do and when to do it. But you get some of these on the other divisions that just come in there and they think that they are Mr. Mean and all that, they try to pull their weight and they can't. Right. Oh - now and then a new jack will come in - that is what they call them - a new jack will come in and he might be the gangster type and he will start showing off in front of the division and the division so they don't like that - right there he has made enemies in the division. And then he will start with the CO's. And after that - the people on the division - will eliminate that fellow and force him to go to another division and it has been done twice since I have been here.

* * * *

19: I feel more comfortable there because the fellows in C-2 have I would say more class than the other ones because they are all the ones that tend to get picked on so they know what it is like to get hassled and they don't seem to hassle each other as much. Everyone is good to one another.

* * * *

Thus there are prisoners in C-2 with imported concerns for privacy and quiet, prisoners whose concern for safety derive from serious victimization experiences, and prisoners for whom cultural prescriptions concerning fighting are impossible or counter-productive. These concerns result in mutual tolerance based on superordinate concerns that are made possible through pacts of non-aggression and quietude. While C-2 inmates do not commonly stand up for one another in population (as a group they have limited solidarity and do not have the strength or values of a street gang), they provide each other comfort through shared values, and a shared fate.

A different form of group is found within the tiny homosexual community within C-2. These prisoners live alienated from the C-2 population, and describe less stress and fewer problems from the larger population than do other C-2 prisoners. In large part, this may derive from racial differences. Four of the five homosexual prisoners are black. They feel comfortable with their identity as gay. Their satisfaction with the unit derives from the ability to develop a homosexual group.

31: We like it here. We can be together and talk. In population there are too many distractions, too much to do, you are always dealing with people who want to get close to you. At first it was great, now it is getting to be too much.

* * * *

33: Well there is one little queen up here, and she is my best friend . . . I guess you would say all of them have look up to me. And up here it is somewhat more private, and we can be together more. And we respect one another, in other divisions they like to go around and pat people on the ass all the time. It gets on your nerves.

* * * *

14: I can speak for myself and for the others too, we would prefer to be together . . . if we had different problems throughout the day then we sit down and talk. We could have a group discussion. The other ones they haven't got any racial meetings or nothing. And I have this feeling, when I was in a foster home, there I was living with two lesbians. And they would take me to a gay liberation meeting when there was one and I didn't see where they were really accomplishing anything, but it was interesting . . . We talk about our problems up here, it's OK.

* * * *

Negative Features of C-2 Company

Table 13.4 provides a listing of the perceived negative features of C-2. Nine prisoners made no negative comment concerning C-2. Of those prisoners who did respond to questioning concerning negative attributes of the company, most focussed on labelling. Sixteen of thirty-four prisoners mentioned the stigma of being placed in a "homo" company as the major source of irritation. Smaller numbers of prisoners were upset at the incidence of homosexuality on the company, and a few prisoners were critical of the officers assigned them. Several prisoners asserted that the company was not safe or secure enough, several were irritated at their exposure to "unmanly" prisoners, and several black prisoners disliked the racial homogeneity of the company.

The overreaching issue is labelling. Since C-2 is the recipient of physically frail prisoners, and of prisoners with other stigmata as well (stuttering, nervousness, clumsiness), the company stands out as not only a white company, but a company of misfits. C-2 is also the receiving company for homosexuals, a fact that does not escape the population's notice and interest, and causes further stigmata for all C-2 prisoners.

C-2 prisoners spend much of their day in contact with non-C-2 prisoners. In the yard, in formations waiting for movement to program, and occasionally within programs themselves, there are numerous opportunities for other prisoners to demonstrate their contempt for C-2 residents.

Table 13.4

Perceived Negative Features of C-2 Company

| <u>Features Mentioned</u> ^a | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>Labelling</u> , the stigma of being in a "weak," or homo company | 16 |
| (2) <u>Homosexuality</u> in company found offensive | 7 |
| (3) <u>Officer harassment</u> (one officer assigned to the company described as mean, non-supportive) | 6 |
| (4) <u>Company not safe</u> enough, insufficient lock-in time | 3 |
| (5) <u>Too many disturbed</u> , mentally weak, cowardly prisoners | 2 |
| (6) <u>Racial homogeneity</u> (black prisoners irritated with housing in white company) | 2 |

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No negative features mentioned. 9

^aThemes (1) and (2) are often found in combination

5: See like if you are in C-2 they call you pussy and stuff like that . . . it is an everyday thing, you might be waiting around for anything, like to have an interview like this, and an inmate will come up and say "you squeeze" or "you sissy" or something. You learn to live with it.

* * * *

42: I was having trouble in Elmira so I spoke to my counselor and he said when you come to Coxsackie they will put you in a division where you can be watched. I was put in C-2. There are some problems with it. Like all the guys think that I am a homo and stuff. It bothers me a lot . . . It's the hardest part of my time.

* * * *

48: It is day in and day out, everybody is propositioned all the time. C-2 is ridiculous.

* * * *

6: I feel safer in here, but I don't like it. They, the staff and everybody calls it the homo squad. Even though a lot of people, well like there are only about five homos up there, most of them just don't like black prisoners, and got about 60 tickets a month so they're up there. But nobody pays attention to them. Everybody is supposed to be a homo.

* * * *

A few prisoners in C-2 not only resent the stigma resulting from sharing their company with avowed homosexuals, but feel that the homosexual behavior of such prisoners is repulsive. The homosexuality that does occur in the company confirms the public image as a homo company and makes it more difficult to support an image as a group that is simply situationally stressed and anti-black.

6: There are five homos up here and I've seen them in action and everything. They don't belong up here. They are boogying their ass around and stuff. I don't like it, and we take a lot of harassment from it.

* * * *

8: Well, there was one guy that was living in the division and he got transferred from there because someone got down on him. He was always kissing in the stairwell; this guy was kissing the queen and I don't know why he was even in C-2. He had a lot of friends in the population. I don't even know why he lived there. It made me sick the first time. I said damn, it was like, what am I doing up here? I thought it would be safer in the population. And then one time these same two people that I saw, he was a floor boy and her shower or her cell door or something was open and he went into her cell and went at it and came back out and the guard didn't see nothing. It's supposed to be a maximum security division.

* * * *

4: There is guys that are - it sound pretty sickening, and so forth, but there is men after other men. And I don't go for it. And that is going on and I don't dig it.

* * * *

9: It's a homo division, because that is the only place that they can stick them, they can stick the homosexuals in there. That is the only division that they can stick them in because that is the division that they have most of the black guys. And there is another one coming down in here or us. The homos get along well with the blacks, and the blacks flirt with them all the time, and then they feel they can do what they want to us.

* * * *

For most prisoners, the stigma deriving from their lack of cultural solutions to prison stress or from sexual deviance of cellmates is a minor tradeoff. While white rural inmates find the behavior of some of the more sophisticated and flagrant homosexuals in the unit bizarre, they do not find it threatening. They do not equate the behavior with that of "bootie bandits" or sexual aggressors. In fact, the homosexuals themselves express fears of bootie bandits. Seldom are C-2 prisoners pressured or threatened for sex while in the company. Homosexuality is open,

all residents know the participants, and voluntariness involved. A label as weak is perceived as an irritating but manageable stigma. Prisoners in C-2 are labelled, and to some extent, such a label reduces the possibility of their leaving C-2, but few prisoners describe stigmatization as increasing the risks of victimization.

15

12: It's not really a bad division. Some people think that it is, but it's not really a bad division. They call it the homo division. They're in there because that is one of the easiest divisions. Less people pick on you and you don't get into so much trouble. And you have people in there that are homos and they have epileptics and they don't have fights. There are people in there for protective custody. And then you just have people that want to be in there, cause it's a sweet bit. It's a sweet bit. It's not really like living in a division where you have 20 to one, 20 black guys to one white guy. It comes to a point like that. And this is where the guys would rather be. With their own color. You're better off staying with your own color, even though you may have other friends. But that is mostly what C-2 is about.

* * * *

26: And the word is out that C-2 is a homo division. But it is not. When I first came here there was only two up there. And maybe a few that were undercover. But, that was it. But that is what C-2 has the reputation for - homo. But most of the guys in that division will fight and will stand up like me and the only reason that they are there is because they get tired of the blacks preaching all the time.

* * * *

Conclusion

The themes expressed over and over by C-2 prisoners reflect self-perceived inadequacies and reactions to an alien culture. Prisoners talk about racial imbalances, militant rhetoric, New York City lifestyles, sexual confusion and

promiscuity, a criminal subculture dominated by inmate pimps and murderers, and overt aggressiveness as a pervasive threat. This inmate outgroup, with a culture incompatible with inmate norms, is forced to seek out a subsetting in which values are not as discrepant, and aggressiveness is de-emphasized.

The inmates' reactions to the larger environment are not calm, ordered, seeking-of-setting reactions. Very often, situational stress and emotional fragility interact to cause a blowup, with inmates lashing out indiscriminately at other inmates and staff, withdrawing into silence, or injuring themselves to draw attention to their psychological distress. Obviously the type of reaction depends on the characteristics of the inmates and the stresses they are subjected to. Some inmates lash out at black prisoners, with C-2 an alternative to an unwinnable war on segregation. Other prisoners respond to their situational inadequacy by signalling defeat, and summarily requesting protection.

When the division is recognized as an ameliorative setting, it is often not difficult to gain admission to it. The problem is making the decision, weighing the stresses to be traded. Although the "special" company has unambiguous attractiveness to some, to others it seems less attractive because of labelling and classified vulnerability. It is obvious, since most white prisoners are not in C-2, that many would rather endure the dangers of the large environment, than be placed in an environment that connotes submission, capitulation, withdrawal from the competitive nature of the milieu, and confinement within a stigmatized subpopulation that interacts only with each other.

Within C-2 company, a sizeable percentage of the popula-

tion are rural inmates, small groups of Oswego or Poughkeepsie inmates who congregate together, talking about familiar topics, with familiar values predominating. The division is viewed as a quiet, more private, more controlled world. For inmates whose own predictability is limited, who describe themselves as constantly losing their temper, always fighting others, the division may provide insulation from the exciting images of the larger milieu, and one's own disastrous behavior when excited. Even when, as often happens, the labelling becomes more intense, where description of inmates as "fags," "punks" or "rats" circulates widely, men still cling to the environment as a haven, would rather confirm their identity as a weak inmate, than have to constantly defend a less clear identity.

Prison philosophy typically has been opposed to territoriality, believing that residential control means control for prestige, or the illegitimate demonstration of power. Territoriality, meaning clear, unquestioned control over what happens in a setting, may indeed have such goals. But for the weak territoriality may ensure survival. Territoriality permits safety through the establishment of formal limitations on entry, and the easy recognition of intruders. Territoriality also permits the strengthening of personalistic relations and common bonds.

C-2 company offers a "situational grouping" in which people faced with similar life transitions, or subject to similar threats, are grouped to help with coping. They provide each other with evidence that coping is possible, and that they are not alone with their fears. C-2 also provides a place to go

off stage, and a place in which one's liabilities appear less idiosyncratic when in company with others. Socially inept and traumatized prisoners, the traditional protection isolates, are provided with a group, if not a particularly prestigious one. Generally, C-2 prisoners perceive the company to improve the quality of life within prison.

Footnotes

1. A number of authors have observed the phenomenon of voluntary ethnic segregation in prison. Leo Carrol describes it most minutely within the programs, living units, and organizations of a Rhode Island prison in his book Hacks, Blacks, and Cons: Race Relations in a Maximum Security Prison (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1974); see also John Irwin, "The Changing Social Structure of the Men's Prison," in Corrections & Punishment, ed. by David Greenberg (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1977). pp. 21-40; James Jacobs describes ethnic avoidance as well in Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977). "The whites and blacks organized themselves into separate social systems, mixing together only on the ball field, in infrequent work situations, or in black market deals." p. 69.

2. Robert Johnson, Culture and Crisis in Confinement (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1976). Johnson states with respect to the survival advantages of blacks in prison: ". . . the feeling that threat is endemic and unscheduled may more often leave a person feeling that safety can be found in numbers. [In the ghetto] though distrust toward strangers and police is rife, a strong (functional) peer orientation among many urban low income blacks results. There is a romantic "loyalty" to "street buddies" who can be called upon in times of crisis . . . peer support, in the final analysis, represents a highly valued resource in this turbulent world, where every man ultimately requires an audience responsive to ghetto definitions of manhood and personal worth. Ghetto survival is characterized by emphasis on self-protection in a cold, unpredictable, often hostile world, where the most reliable source of support can be found among similarly circumstanced peers. Incarceration is one of the hazards life has to offer and penal settings pose tests on which ghetto experiences may be brought to bear and for which they prove functional." p. 18. White prisoners in contrast are less likely to be peer and street oriented. Johnson states that "A sizeable number of low income whites may be classified as 'sheltered,' 'pampered,' or 'middle class,' by ghetto and prison standards . . . Imprisonment, and the roles that must be played to survive in prison, may prove unfamiliar to them." p. 16. See also R. Theodore Davidson, Chicano Prisoners: The Key to San Quentin (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974); James Jacobs, Stateville describes how the penetration of street gangs into prison life and organizations led to a partially ethnic imbalance in survival chances within prison. Both large Latin and black gangs became powerful influences within prison. Jacobs notes: "The situation at Stateville is by far the most precarious for white inmates . . . It is only the Spanish inmates, whether gang members or not, who seem not to be directly threatened by the gangs in the prison. Perhaps their security can be accounted for by the widely shared belief that 'Spanish stick together, if you fight one you fight them all,' and by the often repeated phrase, 'the Spanish don't cut, they kill.'" p. 159.

3. Clemens Bartollas, Stuart J. Miller, and Simon Dinitz, Juvenile Victimization: The Institutional Paradox (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976). "(our) results suggest that: . . . whites are victimized by blacks out of all proportion to the relative number of each" p. 266; Carroll, Hacks, Blacks and Cons, "Each of my 21 informants-black and white prisoners and staff members alike-estimated that 75 percent or more of the sexual assaults involve black aggressors and white victims," p. 182; see also Daniel Lockwood, "Sexual Aggression Among Male Prisoners" (unpublished Ph.D dissertation, State University of New York at Albany, 1977). p. 139; Alan Davis found a similar pattern in Philadelphia jails and in jail transport vehicles, as reported in his article "Sexual Assaults in the Philadelphia Prison System and Sheriff's Vans," Transaction 6 (1968): 8-16.
4. Bartollas et al., p. 52.
5. John P. Conrad, "The Survival of the Fearful," in In Fear of Each Other by John Conrad and Simon Dinitz (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath & Co., 1977), p. 125.
6. Lockwood, "Sexual Aggression," p. 131.
7. Bartollas et al., "Whites are clearly the most exploited inmates. Of sixteen sexually exploited boys for example, thirteen were white; and in every cottage, whites usually occupied the lowly positions in the pecking order." p. 60.
8. In adult prisons, racial rhetoric serves more as a source of nationalistic pride for black prisoners than attempts to intimidate whites. Keith Butler describes the mature ideological stance of New York State Muslim prisoners in Attica as contributing to racial harmony rather than dissension. "The Muslims are no longer an Unknown Quantity," Corrections Magazine, June 1978, pp. 55-59.
9. Department of Correctional Services, "Classification and Program Services Manual," July 1976 (mimeographed) n.p.
10. Department of Correctional Services, "Characteristics of New Commitments to the Facilities of the New York State Department of Correctional Services in 1975," (October 1976).
11. Lockwood, "Sexual Aggression," pp. 226-240.
12. Bartollas et al., found that in a juvenile institution without a niche for whites that the norm "Everybody for Himself" greatly limited coping options. "Especially vulnerable white youths, then, must either flee the institution, accept exploitation, withdraw from normal social interaction, or try to escape through suicide. Consequently, two out of every three runaways the past three years were white. Some exploited whites suffered significant weight loss and became withdrawn psychologically during their stay. Furthermore, not only were the two suicides

in the twelve-year history of the institution white, but another fifty to sixty suicide attempts by whites were thwarted by the quick intervention of staff." pp. 66-67.

13. Lockwood, p. 139.

14. Bartollas et al., describes this process within the juvenile institution studied. "Typically boys will give up only so much, but then fight if pushed any further. Thus boys make a conscious decision that some exploitation will be permitted, but beyond that they will do everything possible to prevent it. A youth may be willing to give up his institutional food and canteen 'treats' for example, but he will not give up his cigarettes. Another youth may be willing to yield all his material possessions, but fight viciously to prevent sexual exploitation." p. 59.

15. We do not know whether prisoners are more or less likely to be victimized following C-2 placement. Certainly prisoners and staff interviewed consider C-2 to reduce the risk of serious victimization. Bartollas et al., found that the incidence of victimization for weak prisoners declined markedly when they were placed in a single cottage.

16. Alvin Toffler, Future Shock, Bantam Books (New York: Random House, Inc., 1971) pp. 383-385. Toffler describes such groupings as classifications based upon similar situations in which people find themselves. Thus people are grouped because they are facing a divorce, a new job, are contemplating interracial marriage, etc. Membership in such groupings are temporary because situations change. Toffler suggests that such groupings may be therapeutic, as people faced with similar life transitions share problems and personal strategies to deal with stress.

Chapter 14: Protection Company at Attica

All maximum security prisons in New York State maintain protection units. While the type and size of such units may vary from several isolated cells to full companies, all such prisons contain formally designated special housing for prisoners who cannot live in population.

The statutory authority for the housing of prisoners in protective custody derives from general statements of State law:

The superintendent of a correctional facility shall keep any inmate confined in a cell or room, apart from the accommodations provided for inmates who are participating in programs of the facility, for such period as may be necessary for maintenance of order or discipline (Correction Law, Section 137, para 6)

While statutory requirements emphasize the discretion of the facility administrator in segregating prisoners in order to ensure facility safety and security, the legal right of prisoners to personal safety, and the accompanying legal obligation of facility staff to provide adequate safety, has been defined and clarified by numerous courts.¹ Facilities are said to discharge their legal responsibilities with respect to prisoner safety through the establishment of isolation cells and the transfer of prisoners to segregation, even if such a transfer also entails additional restrictions.²

In New York, protective custody is provided a prisoner if he is a potential victim of assault or intimidation; if he is a witness likely to be threatened; if he lacks the strength to live in the general institutional community; or if, for good

cause, a prisoner need be restricted from communication with the population.³ While placement in protection pursuant to any of these criteria may be either voluntary (at the prisoner's request and with his consent) or involuntary, for practical purposes most prisoners placed in protective custody request such custody. Involuntary protective custody is invoked only when there is substantial evidence that a prisoner may be in personal danger in population, but he does not wish to leave his current housing area.⁴ Since staff are reluctant to place prisoners in isolation without extraordinary reasons supporting such placement, and since most prisoners are aware of any significant dangers they face in population, almost all protection housing assignments are inmate-initiated. Staff often consider protection as "laying up" or as a means for prisoners to avoid work and to relax, and view it as a failure at the prison's primary mission of prisoner program involvement and socialization. Staff are therefore unlikely to encourage prisoners to elect protection. The heavy stigma attaching to protection prisoners makes their return to population problematic, and staff are unwilling to so stigmatize prisoners, particularly given the irrevocable nature of the assignment, in the absence of the prisoner's request and consent. Prisoners themselves are unlikely to take on a label, and enter a resource-poor setting without good cause.

Since prison systems take their responsibility to ensure prisoner safety very seriously, requests for protection made by prisoners are routinely granted. Seldom are specific reasons

required to document and justify protection requests, other than such general statements as "enemies in population," "received unidentified threats." The risk of liability following injury to a prisoner are too real for administrators to safely ignore. The stigma of placement, and the advertised rigors of isolation itself, are felt by staff to constitute an adequate screen to prevent most prisoners from electing the setting for reasons unrelated to safety.

It is clear to most administrators that protective custody, whatever the administrative burdens it presents and the concentrated problem population it contains, or the intimations of facility failure in rehabilitation it reflects, is essential in large prisons. Prisoners do have enemies in population, and while classification analysts commonly separate unfriendly codefendants at different institutions after reception, there are many categories of enemies unrecorded in facility files. Police informants may have dozens of enemies in various institutions; a former victim of an offender may be received by the prison system unknown to classification; relatives of victims may be waiting for a newly sentenced offender. Ethnic wars, personal vendettas, prisoners who have sold bad dope, threatened others in county jails, or seduced others' sisters combine to make prison classification for safety extremely difficult. Situational pressures such as sexual intimidation, racial animosity and violence, escalating obligations such as gambling debts, may create a consuming yet essentially unpredictable need for safety for some prisoners.

Transfers to other institutions may be difficult because of facility overcrowding, detailed criteria for transfer for

program purposes, insufficient time in the system to qualify for transfer, or implications of punitiveness. While staff may prefer to transfer the traumatized when they can, they additionally understand the inescapable nature of many fears, the probable need for protection placement elsewhere, and the real hazards of self-injury or injury to others if a prisoner remains in population. Few facility staff advocate the abolition of protection or suggest alternatives to it.

There is some evidence that prisoners are increasingly availing themselves of their legal right to safety. It is logical to assume that prisoners are not attracted to protection, but are repelled by population. Conrad, Dinitz, and Freeman, in a study of special housing units in 70 representative American prisons, talk about

a considerable increase in the use of protective custody . . . Many more inmates than ever before are asking for protective custody, and most of them are of the type who would in years gone by have scorned such shelter as unmanly . . .⁵

The authors attribute the growth of protective custody populations to the increasingly violent nature of the prison community, the increased racial polarization of prison and the advent of gang divisions and group aggression.

The Setting

In Conrad, Dinitz and Freeman's study, they found virtually no variation in alternatives or in settings provided for those in need of protection. Segregation of prisoners in private cells in an isolated area of the prison, with very few privileges or services, was found everywhere. They found that

protection companies differed only in size. Twenty-three prisons surveyed provided fewer than 25 prisoners in protection; forty-two prisons had daily counts under 100; with eight prisons daily counts reached over 100.⁶

The protection unit at Attica Correctional Facility, held 34 men at the time of our interview, and is a medium size protection unit using the figures of Conrad, et al. The prisoners are housed in single cells along one long corridor, and access to the unit is strictly regulated. An officer screens all admissions; visitors to the unit must sign in, and pass through several locked gates. Prisoners have no access to the gallery and company on the other side of the same block (virtually all prisoner companies are constructed with back to back cells separated by a plumbing or service corridor) or to any area other than the corridor fronting individual cells and a tiny contiguous outside yard.

Individual cells are 8 ft. by 6 ft., and like all prison cells, of steel construction, with a steel bunk with mattress and linen, steel toilet and sink, and barred front. Prisoners are confined to their cells for approximately 22 hours out of every 24. Prisoners leave their cells briefly to pick up meal trays from the cart on which they are transported to the company and carry the trays back to their cells. All meals are consumed within cells. Prisoners are permitted brief shower periods every other evening, under escort. The only relatively unsupervised period of some duration out of cells is recreation. Prisoners are provided recreation, either in the cell corridor, or in a small outdoor recreation yard, for one hour each morning

and afternoon. Recreation equipment is rudimentary, and most prisoners spend the time stretching their legs and talking. Less frequently, and irregularly, a small group therapy and discussion class is held during the Saturday recreation period. A few prisoners attend.

There are no other activities in the company, except for several porter and clerical jobs. Some prisoners work at sorting mail, cleaning the tier, and performing miscellaneous tasks within the company. The assignments are rotated periodically among those who volunteer.

Access to services that are routinely provided population residents is limited for protection prisoners. Prisoners may request law books, or leisure reading material on library call slips, or may select materials from a tiny collection within the company. Many prisoners, however, do not know what books to request, and are not familiar with the collection of legal materials, so that access is somewhat hindered. They receive no pay or allowance for staying in protection. While they may select commissary items from a list if they have money in their personal accounts, many are indigent and are without any means with which to purchase cigarettes or personal hygiene items. Prisoners may receive packages, publications and newspapers, and are provided earphones with which to listen to the radio. At one time (fondly remembered by most prisoners), a television was provided to the unit. It broke, however, was removed for repairs and never returned.

Contact with non-protection prisoners or staff is circumscribed. Mail and medicine is delivered to prisoners in their

cells. Doctors and counselors come to the unit. A prisoner leaves the unit rarely, to meet with legal or personal visitors in the main visiting room, to go to court, for parole clothing, etc. Whenever a prisoner leaves the unit, he is escorted by an officer. Many prisoners never leave their cells at all, except to gather their meal trays, and for infrequent showers. A number of prisoners have never gone to the yard, refuse to accept a work assignment on the gallery, and refuse participation in any of the scarce activities.

First amendment freedoms are more diluted for protection men than for population. Communications to prisoners are screened for unsolicited and illegal messages. Censorship procedures are intensified for protection prisoners. All entering printed material, whether from within the prison or received by mail or through the package room, are screened for threatening notes, messages, contraband of various sorts. No prisoner confined to protection is permitted to speak to a non-protection prisoner, or vice versa.

Security in the unit is heavy. Discretion is vested in the hands of the supervising officers, both formally because of the special population with its history of mental illness and self injury, and informally because of the closed, inaccessible nature of protection. Officers may limit prisoner possessions more easily in protection than in population. Clothing, bedding, books, and other items may be removed from a prisoner if, in the judgement of the officer, there is a danger that the prisoner will destroy it, or injure himself or others with any item. While there are regulatory procedures requiring

periodic reviews of actions taken by officers in protection, actions are often taken without such review.⁷

Prisoners are especially heavily supervised when they leave the unit under escort. Since general population prisoners are often out of their cells during much of the day, trips outside the unit present danger of unwelcome encounters and harassment. Such a danger persists on visits as well, during which protection prisoners and general population are intermingled. Because of the close surveillance of contact visitation areas, and the additional supervision of the escort officer, actual assaults and threats are rare.

Two officers are regularly assigned to the company, although escort officers provide supplemental supervision. One officer works from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.; the second from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. During the night, a single officer rotates between several companies. Since prisoners are locked in their cells during most of the day and because the company is a relatively small one, only one officer is assigned to the gallery at any one time. The officers that are assigned are older, more experienced men who have elected the assignment. No special training is provided these officers, and no formal inducements are offered as attractions for the assignment. However, the good shift rotation and regular hours, and the personal rewards of working with a fearful, but conforming, population are informal incentives. The officers generally perceive the lengthy lock in time as severe but as necessary to preserve order, to protect prisoners in danger, and to protect weak prisoners from other more volatile prisoners within the unit itself.

While protective custody is not (according to statutory rules, administrative regulations and judicial decrees) punishment, the conditions under which prisoners live do not differ from those of punitive segregation except in duration. Prisoners in protection may spend years in isolation, but prisoners live in disciplinary segregation typically only a matter of days. The limitations on services, rights, and privileges in protection have, however, been scrutinized by courts, and in the main, found permissible. ⁸ Administrative convenience, and a compelling state interest to guarantee prisoner safety, are said to necessitate and legitimize even sterile, and objectively "punitive" environmental conditions. ⁹ The state meets its responsibilities to a fearful prisoner by keeping him separate, whatever the costs of such separation. Prisoners in protection, if they are provided adequate light, heat, ventilation, sanitation, clothing, and diet, find that their confinement meets constitutional standards. Thus, prisoners isolated out of fear of violence are not only subject to conditions identical to those that punish the violent, but are subject to them for a very long time. In order to procure safety (a constitutionally mandated requirement of prison life), a prisoner must trade off recreation, education, all the amenities and many of the necessities (social commerce, work) of institutional existence.

Prisoners

Are prisoners in protection different from those in population? Demographics, criminal and institutional history data were collected for all prisoners housed in protection, but several files were not available, leaving an N of 30. Comparisons

were made between this protection sample and the Attica random sample. Tables 14.0 through 14.2 provide summary statistics for comparisons resulting in appreciable differences. We see that protection prisoners are likely to be white, to have a history of residence in a mental health facility, and to feature a (non-significant) over-representation of small city or rural home towns. On all other variables, including type of offense, length of sentence, or criminal history, no differences were recorded.

Almost 80% of the protection company consists of white prisoners, compared to slightly greater than half of the Attica population. The proportion of Hispanic prisoners is approximately the same as in population but because of the small N's involved (3 Hispanic protection prisoners), they are excluded from analysis. The racial imbalance is consistent with our findings elsewhere, which suggests that white skin is a liability in prison. Table 14.2 is included because of the consistency of the finding with respect to home town size found in other niches. Again it appears that small town, or small city origins may be linked to need for assistance in prison.

The final variable differentiating the two samples, and one which has surfaced in other formal and informal niche comparisons, is that of history of residence in a mental health facility (Table 14.1). Over half of protection prisoners (by far the largest proportion in any recorded setting to date) have been patients in a mental health facility. Mental health contacts are relatively frequent for the group while they are confined within the unit, and psychological and psychiatric workups are much more detailed and voluminous than for the

Tables 14.0 to 14.2

Comparison of Attica Protection and Attica
Random Prisoners by Selected Variables

Table 14.0

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Random (N=50) | Protection (N=24) | |
| Ethnicity | | | |
| Black | 46.0 | 20.8 | $\chi^2 = 3.75$ Sign. at .05 level |
| White | $\frac{54.0}{100}$ | $\frac{79.2}{100}$ | Phi = .27 |

Table 14.1

| Variable | Sample | | |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Random (N=51) | Protection (N=27) | |
| History of Residence in a Mental Facility | | | |
| No History | 83.9 | 51.9 | $\chi^2 = 8.0$ Sign. at .005 level |
| History | $\frac{16.1}{100}$ | $\frac{48.1}{100}$ | Phi = .34 |

Table 14.2

| Variable | Sample | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--|
| | Random (N=56) | Protection (N=26) | |
| Size of Home Town | | | |
| Over 100,000 | 66.7 | 44.4 | $\chi^2 = 3.1$ Not Sign. at .05 level |
| Under 100,000 | $\frac{33.3}{100}$ | $\frac{55.6}{100}$ | Phi = .22 |

average prisoner. Such a dramatic difference in mental health contact suggests that the population is a vulnerable one, consisting of individuals who have found survival to be difficult in the free world, as well as in prison. The intersection of personal vulnerabilities, and a public label as "bug" combines to create stress and a need for withdrawal. Elmer Johnson found, for instance, in his study of the prison "rat" (a term commonly used to describe protection residents) that there are characteristics of offenders that tend to make them "rat prone" that have little to do with the act of informing. Small town origins, an unfamiliarity with prison life, or with the norms or the prison culture, mental fragility to stress and testing, make assimilation difficult, and victimization or social isolation more common. Protection may be sought as prisoners find themselves labelled, ostracized and scapegoated.

Protection prisoners have a very high rate of self-injury both in prison and in other life settings. Forty-four percent of protection prisoners had a recorded history of self-injury. While only half of such injuries were inflicted during the prisoner's current term (others were made in the free world, in psychiatric institutions, in the county jail, on another sentence), the rate remains a relatively high one. Toch estimated, from a large sample of prisoners drawn from New York State prisons in 1972, a self-injury rate during confinement of 7.7 percent, which means that the protection population has a self-injury rate during confinement approximately three times the projected rate. Protection placement itself may play a role

in self-injury, however, since Toch found that isolated settings often precipitate feelings of panic.

A surprising percentage, 38% of protection residents, have served part of their sentence in sheltered settings other than Attica protection. While most prisoners have served their entire sentence in the protection unit only or in Attica population and in protection, over one-third spent a portion of their current sentence in protection units within other prisons, in the system's two mental hospitals, in system-wide units for the mentally retarded, in occupational-vocational rehabilitation units, or in specialized mental health units.

Transfer is perceived, by staff as well as by prisoners, to constitute the only viable alternative to protection placement, but without additional data, it is difficult to gauge the effectiveness of transfers as a solution. With vulnerable inmates, transfers tend to resemble human ping-pong games. Particularly with respect to transfer to diagnostic and evaluation units, and mental hospitals (which make up the bulk of protection transfers that are recorded), prisoners are typically returned to the sending institution. Conrad, Dinitz and Freeman found this type of pattern among the prisons they surveyed. They found that transfer, particularly to a mental hospital, represented the sole option (other than isolation) for most prison systems in dealing with disturbed or special offenders. They questioned the efficacy of this option, concluding that "the basis for transfer is codified and the disturbed offender can always be transferred back to the institution which sent him away."¹²

Table 14.3

Alternatives to Protection Placement
Reported by those Living in Protection

| <u>Alternative</u> | <u>Frequency Mentioned as Primary Alternative</u> |
|---|---|
| ACTEC Programs (Adirondack Treatment Programs) | 4 |
| Matteawan State Hospital , | 3 |
| Fishkill Diagnostic and Evaluation Unit | 2 |
| Protection Unit in any other Prison except Attica | 3 |
| Correction Camps | 2 |
| Medium or minimum security prison (Wallkill, Albion) | 2 |
| Other prison closer to home (Auburn, Green Haven) | 2 |
| Attica population, the farm or other suitable assignment only | 1 |
| -----***-----***-----***----- | |
| No alternative to protection placement, or an even more secure area within Attica | 11 |

We did question prisoners concerning the alternatives (available or not) to protection. Fifty-eight percent of prisoners saw transfer as an option. Only one prisoner mentioned a return to population, if he could be assigned to the farm. Of prisoners who thought transfers were feasible and manageable, four prisoners wanted to go to ACTEC to a specialized treatment unit (see Chapter 15), and the remainder mentioned a state mental hospital and diagnostic unit, other protection units, minimum security prisons and correction camps, and two traditional institutions closer to the offender's home (Auburn and Green Haven) (Table 14.3). Eleven prisoners saw no alternatives to continued placement at Attica, or wanted to remain there because they were happy with the unit, or with its location for visits.

Many of the options that may be acceptable to protection men are not acceptable to classifiers. Transfers require meeting highly specific requirements relating to age, time to release date, institutional behavior, motivation, demonstrated need for program and probable benefit. Since protection prisoners have elected segregation rather than program participation, they often have limited credibility when requesting programs elsewhere. Mental health settings require evidence of severe psychoses for admission, or have a long waiting list for a tiny program. In large part, prisoners in protection remain in protection, and a large proportion of those who are transferred out find their way eventually back to Attica protection. It is likely that some find their fate irreversible, because they carry the stigma of protection status, the social liabilities of white, rural prisoners, and the coping plasticity of mental illness, as flags

of defeat into a new environment.

Reasons for Placement in Protection

All prisoners were questioned concerning the reasons underlying their placement in, or request for, protective custody. Thirty-one of thirty-four prisoners consented to interviews. One interview was lost during transcription, leaving a completed sample of thirty. Only three prisoners reported being placed in protection by staff. In all other cases, prisoners report that they requested protection. Of the 27 prisoners requesting protection placement, most (87%) were in population prior to entering protection, for periods of time ranging from several days to several years. Only 13% of those requesting protection placement did so prior to entering the prison population. Such prisoners report either serious problems with particular prisoners in the county jail, problems in reception itself, knowledge of enemies in population, or anticipation of serious personal difficulties in population.

Daniel Lockwood, in an earlier review and discussion of the Attica protection unit, devised a typology of protection men based upon their reasons for requesting protection. The typology is similar to the reasons for admission codified in administrative rules and regulations. Lockwood divided protection residents into four categories:

- (1) targets of sexual aggression;
- (2) perceived informers;
- (3) avoiders of retaliation; and
- (4) men with generic fears or phobias.

The listing of reasons for placement provided in Table 14.4 uses Lockwood's categories. Approximately one of three protection requests originated from prisoners who had been targets of sexual aggression. Lockwood, in a study of such victims, found that they were typically white, rural youthful prisoners convicted of non-violent offenses. Protection was chosen by them after they had been approached by groups of urban black, violent offenders.¹⁴ While targets were found to typically evolve management strategies for victimization, they enter protection when their strategies are ignored or backfire.

Informers, according to Lockwood, are prisoners who are in extreme danger because they have served as state witnesses, have reported inmate rule violators, have acquired a reputation as untrustworthy, or believe themselves to have done something to acquire one of these labels. A proportion of such inmates might be, in Elmer Johnson's typology, "assimilated rats," those who otherwise might be acceptable to the prison population but who have been threatened or ostracized because of violations of inmate norms.¹⁵ Other inmates may have an incident in their past that is violative of prison codes of behavior, but have not been threatened for the incident. In fact, the incident may not be known to anyone, but the fear of being revealed as an informer, with no place to hide, prompts protection placement.

Avoiders of retaliation, like informers, fear violence at the hands of persons they have victimized. Lockwood notes

Table 14.4

Inmate-Generated Reasons for Protection Placement

| <u>Reasons</u> | <u>Frequency</u> |
|--|------------------|
| <u>Among Inmates Placed in Protection by Staff</u> | |
| Thought I would be raped | 1 |
| I have mental problems, have problems with people | 2 |
| ----- | |
| <u>Among Inmates Who have Requested Protection</u> | |
| Sexual approach and threat | 10 |
| Informer | 5 |
| Target of retaliation | 4 |
| General Fear or Phobia | 8 |
| ----- | |

that gang warfare, property crimes in the prison economy (gambling debts, selling bad dope, cell thefts), racial polarization, and various prison disputes and vendettas lead to the acquisition of enemies. A careful look at one's strengths, and at the time remaining until release, may leave protection as the most attractive option. Informers and avoiders of retaliation make up approximately one-third of the group that requested protection.

One-third of protection men express general fears and phobias. This group contains most of the prisoners who have not been in population, as well as those who have spent very little time in population prior to protection. Unlike the other groups, who typically have met enemies, or at least seen enemies from afar, or encountered tangible pressures that are unmanageable, this group typically cannot specify the stimuli that lead to protection placement. They are fearful of blacks, of noise, or crowds, and of the prison experience generally.

Elmer Johnson describes a Mentally Maladjusted rat subtype, with an unusual degree of persecutory ideation and suspiciousness.¹⁶ Since confinement is a breeding ground for suspicions, such prisoners do not lack raw material for their fears. Within Lockwood's phobic category are dependent, elastic, tempest-tossed prisoners, as well as those with very high levels of self-constructed fears, and feelings of persecution, seeing plots and dangers awaiting everywhere.

Lockwood comments that:

"In looking at the events leading to a request for protective segregation we often must determine if the fear felt by the convict is a reasonable reaction to the objectively dangerous situation, or an overreaction to a setting which may appear terrifying but is objectively safe. It is not easy to separate the real from the mythical."¹⁷

Many protection prisoners have had limited experiences of success elsewhere. They expect serious problems and flee at their earliest manifestation. Others help to create problems by transmitting fear to those with sensitive receptors. For others, the transactions involve social clumsiness, mistakes, inexperience, real enemies and threats made by credible aggressors.

Perceived Positive Features of Protection

Prisoners may leave protection at any time. While few prisoners do, the fact of continued voluntary residence does not imply a pleasant setting. Prisoners in protection are relatively satisfied with the unit because of one feature, its physical safety. As with C-2, and with other safety niches, isolation promises safety. Isolation facilitates staff supervision, permits the detection of outsiders, permits the control of the social climate by a fearful population. Removal from sources of irritants provides a measure of self-control and relaxation, and relief from the self-destructive or violent effects of lack of control.

In Table 14.5, the majority of inmate comments relate to control of two sources of violence, the direct violence from other prisoners, and the violence generated within oneself as one is forced to retaliate, or handle the effects of surrender.

Table 14.5

Perceived Positive Features of Protection

| <u>Features Mentioned</u> | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>Safety through physical isolation</u> solitude; small confined world; increased supervision and surveillance; lock-in is comfortable; privacy and tranquility found in isolation | 13 |
| (2) <u>Safety through self-control</u> need not fight, put up a front of strength, abide by prison standards of manliness; don't jeopardize parole, good time; avoid injuring self or others | 8 |
| (3) <u>Population is better in protection</u> people are friendly, non-violent, no sex aggressors, no playing, monkeying around; people are quiet, reserved | 4 |
| (4) <u>Officers are better here</u> Officers are nice, friendly, good to us, they seem to care more here | 3 |
| (5) <u>Activities are better</u> permit us to do what we want, stay in cell, read, don't push us, we can lay up, relax, enjoy the peace and quiet | 3 |
| -----***-----***-----***----- | |
| No positive features mentioned | 5 |

Over one-third of the prisoners mentioned the security of an isolated, carefully guarded physical plant as a major ameliorative characteristic of protection. Whereas in the free world, "good fences make good neighbors," in prison and for the population under confinement in protection, fences must be particularly secure, and not only of territorial definition, but strong and solid.

22: See like before I tried to stay away from people that are no good, and just do my time. But it's hard, you can't ignore them because they don't ignore you. You can't do a quiet bit over in population. You need something like this, some place where nobody else can come, unless they had problems in the prison too. Nobody can come in here unless they are supposed to be in here. Nobody can get past the gate, that's the main thing.

* * * *

Most prisoners like protection because they are no longer forced to face specific people, specific groups of people, or irritants such as noise, crowding, and the potential for violent confrontations. The inaccessibility of the unit, and its carefully supervised nature, is its major benefit.

10: I like protection because it's safe, that's all. If I was to go into population I wouldn't last a day. I'll stay here until I go home . . . It's not too good up here, it's just lock-in that's all, but it is isolated, and no one can come in here, and there's no chance of riot or anything.

* * * *

14: I prefer this to the hassle of the tiers. You are segregated from most of the aggressive inmates. There's nothing you can do about these aggressive inmates. What can you do, shoot them or something?

* * * *

- 2: If I was exposed, I know if I had to move out to the general population today, in A block or B block, I know I've got to go to the yard sooner or later and the mess hall and church and I've got to eat and I would be full of fear all the time. Eventually I wouldn't be able to eat. I would be looking over my shoulder all the time. I would be very fearful that somebody would hit me over the skull. And I don't think I would be physically or mentally able to cope with the situation at all because of the fear itself . . . This place is safe, it's separate and closed to everyone.

* * * *

Requests for aid and protection are more valid in protection itself than in population. Staff do not, as is often the case in population, urge their charges to fight when approached for favors or for harassment. In protection, the staff encourage fearful inmates to approach them when they have problems.

- 25: The officers are more careful in here, they watch more closely. Like the officer is there, he sees everything that happens, and he says like if anything is happening, just come down and tell me what's wrong and I'll see what I can do about it. Just don't get into a fight. In population they don't want to hear it, they would just as soon see you fight. This is really a place for protection, it's not a place for any violence, violence is out.

* * * *

As we found in C-2 company, prisoners who are pressed violently often find their own violence potential frightening. Protection provides a place where one need not prove one's manhood through fighting, and where one's own non-aggressiveness or dangerous volatility, can be hidden and controlled. In addition to the dangers of injury against oneself or others, violence can result (as we have noted) in loss of parole, an

additional sentence, loss of good time, or the acquisition of more enemies. More than one-quarter of protection prisoners interviewed raised such issues with respect to the good points of protection.

- 6: People are always selling tickets out there, threatening you and stuff. I said I wanted protection. I don't want to lose any more good time. I don't want to hurt anyone or have them hurt me . . . I'm a little guy, and I got to have a weapon to protect myself. I ain't going to let nobody beat the hell out of me for nothing, or cut me or something. Like all the time out there, they might call me a faggot, or a rat, or the man's man, you know . . . Like they think I'm weak and I'm not going to take this shit . . . I'm in jail 9 years, 9 years in January. I don't want to mess up now, and the only way I won't get a new charge for killing somebody is if I go to protection.

* * * *

- 1: Like out there if you stay out there and you continue to get bothered and stuff you're going to wind up killing somebody. So coming over here avoids it. The fear out there is bad . . . I don't like to fight, I'm scared all the time, I don't know whether I could handle a fight or not, but you have no choice, and can't win.

* * * *

- 20: It was like if you take a sheep and you build him into a lion. That's the way it has gotten me. I'm not a violent man, but if somebody tries to hurt me this is how I'm going to have to react. That means that they would call me violent. But I'm trying to protect my life. But to them, to the officers that are around here I'm violent. And I haven't been violent since I came here. I haven't bothered nobody. I mostly stay by myself.

* * * *

Four prisoners found the protection population to be different from the general population in positive ways. Protection men are described as sharing norms of non-violence, and as friendly and uninterested in sexual intimidation. They describe

themselves as quiet, reserved persons who help one another occasionally. Unlike C-2 prisoners, they do not identify with one another with respect to shared problems or cultural homogeneity. Most prisoners in protection have little or no contact with other residents, and express affinity simply for the mutual pacts of non-aggression, and for a shared desire for safety and privacy. It is what people do or don't do in the unit that is important to protection prisoners, not who they are, or what they are interested in, or their cultural or ethnic similarities or differences.

- 3: People in protection are different, like there is no fighting up here, people are very quiet, they keep to themselves, and everybody gets along, we share books and magazines . . . Nobody gets on other people's cases, you can be left alone and do a quiet bit. In population, that's impossible.

* * * *

Officers are praised by several prisoners for responding to their psychological needs. Officers are aware of the special problems of the population, and while they are neither trained nor formally encouraged to counsel prisoners, they remain accessible and accepting. They are not bound to standards of emotional neutrality found within the regular tiers, and do not face the skepticism of their peers when providing support for prisoners in need.

- 17: They know we have problems in here, and the confinement is tough for any man to handle, and they do what they can . . . they never harass us and we never harass them, and like, they're not counselors or anything but they help a bit, they bend the rules about things you can have, or time out of the cell once in a while, they're ok.

* * * *

- 8: Here, the officers treat us good. That's one thing I can say, they're darn good to us. And they help us in any way they can. This is known to be a true fact. We have group counseling over here which really means a lot to me because we can sit and we can express our feelings. And that's one thing that they started for us. If somebody gets upset, emotionally upset, they'll let us out and take us in the office and talk to us. We can express our problems, our feelings, and try to resolve them. The same thing with the night officers. They'll do anything in their power to help.

* * * *

Three prisoners praised the freedom of choice permitted in the unit, but paradoxically, two of the three prisoners reported never leaving their cell. Several other prisoners were consumed with privacy concerns and preferred to stay in their cell, read, listen to the radio, and watch the fish in their aquaria. Protection permitted them this luxury.

- 20: I'm comfortable here, I haven't been out with the other inmates yet. I stay in my cell, I don't talk to nobody. They leave me alone, I can do pretty much what I want to. Nobody ever makes you do anything here.

* * * *

Negative Features of Protection

While prisoners generally find protection to be the best available prison setting, they are often dissatisfied with the setting itself, and with the effects of placement there. Only four prisoners were relatively happy with the protection setting and reported no problems with it. The remaining prisoners found particular aspects of the setting, or all aspects of the setting, to be stressful. Table 14.6 lists their reservations.

Table 14.6

Perceived Negative Features of Protection

| <u>Features Mentioned</u> | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>Stigma of protection placement</u> considered to be a rat, or a pussy; both staff and other prisoners are contemptuous of us | 15 |
| (2) <u>Sensory deprivation</u> cell time is harsh, forbidding, nothing to do at all, creates tension, monotony, like punishment | 14 |
| (3) <u>Lack of specific activities</u> no recreation, mental health, education, church, movies, no Spanish books or activities | 12 |
| (4) <u>Protection is not safe enough</u> poor classification here, too accessible in case of riots, people sell tickets in here | 5 |
| (5) <u>Neglect, no support from staff</u> administration trying to get rid of us, don't care about our prob- lems, neglect and abuse us, every- thing is delayed up here, no responses to requests | 4 |
| -----***-----***-----***----- | |
| No negative features mentioned | 4 |

Half of those interviewed found the stigma of placement in protection to be a major irritant. While the prisoners were faced with threats or ridicule only during infrequent trips to population, the knowledge of their status, and the fact that their status retards their chances for parole and prevents them from returning to population, makes the stigma difficult to bear. They feel punished for needing safety.

Prisoners in protection note that they are called unflattering names by other prisoners, such as pediatric, bugouts, girls, punks, faggots, creeps, and most frequently, rats. Prisoners feel unfairly labelled. While some would admit to being informers, and others to being vulnerable, prisoners apply extreme labels to them indiscriminately.

10: Now they call us punks, and fags and stuff, whenever you go out. And you know, you hear in here what they think of you even if you don't go out. The guards, not in here so much, but out there, they think about the same. It's tough. I'm in here for not wanting to fight the entire bit. I can't fight very well . . . and you find yourself called all kinds of things. I just don't like population, I'm not like all of those people, but I'm not the things they say I am either.

* * * *

25: The guy that I testified against is no good at all. But it makes me feel bad because many people don't see him that way. You see, a guy like me, I cannot say I am so good or something like that. But you know, I been in the street all the time. When I was locked out I was working. Part of my life I've been working, you know. But you know I be hanging out on the street and you get to know a lot of people, right? So when you get busted for anything and you get a year, you get to know more people. So when something like this happens, I broke up something like this, these other people, they see that you have this kind of problem, like a material witness like I was, right? They saw this in some kind of other way. Like they said, you're

a rat, you're no fucking good. We got to get rid of you. The problem comes to you, you don't get involved in things like this. But they don't know nothing about this. And that makes you feel bad, because some people they don't know about things like this. No matter how well you explain it to them, they never going to see it the way you mean, no matter how much you explain. That makes you feel bad.

* * * *

Some prisoners, while subject to the same stigma and harassment from population, do not find it irritating because they see it as personally inapplicable.

31: I don't see any additional problems caused by my being here in protection . . . I'm up here because me and my crime partner, we have this personal thing. We aren't about to snitch on one another, but well we have this thing. And I say I don't want to do any more time. I don't want to kill anybody or be killed." So I accept protection. I don't have any stigma because of this. If a man comes to protection with a problem like this, there's no real stigma there. I mean you get it, but it doesn't matter, it's like from a narrow minded individual.

* * * *

Stigma is disproportionate for those who were the objects of sexual aggression in population. As part of an escalating cycle, prisoners report attributions of weakness, of femininity, and of homosexuality attaching to them in population. They may also have physical characteristics that lend themselves to victimization. They describe the labels as irradicable once they resort to protection, a decision that confirms their public image as a "faggot."

27: Wherever I go it seems like there is trouble. I don't pick no fight with nobody but nobody seems to leave me alone. I seem, everybody calls me a punk and a bug . . . I don't know, they are just not like me.

* * * *

Sensory Deprivation

Prisoners in protection remain in their cells 22 hours a day. We had expected, given the extraordinarily closed and confining nature of the company, that sensory deprivation would appear prominently among expressions of discontent. However, most prisoners did not mention the pressures of cell time. This lack may be due to memories of less than pleasant freedom of movement in population, rather than to the soothing nature of cell confinement. As we noted in Table 14.5, three prisoners found the low level of confinement and activities pleasurable. Four times as many prisoners express discontent with the degree of confinement. In addition to the twelve who found cell time depriving, eight prisoners mentioned the paucity of services as stressful.

Prisoners in protection trade off activity and program involvement for safety. Some prisoners find that needs for activity are not easily tabled:

9: I've always worked, and I like to work. What they've really got here is the metal shop. But what I've always done is carpentry and things like that, and that's what I like to do. But there's no work over here at all. And I haven't worked in two years. I would get tired when I was out in the streets, always work. I could sleep, things like that. Here, I have nothing.

* * * *

Several prisoners wait impatiently for an opportunity to work on the gallery and to thereby reduce the tension resulting from inactivity.

18: Like they might let 34 and 35 come out and you can be out all day walking the gallery and lock in twice and sweep it three times. But at least you know that you're out and you can walk back and forth and stop and talk to somebody. And at least you're out and you don't have that tension building up. And all you do is walk up and down and somebody calls you, you can be out until 9 or 10 o'clock. And somebody might call you for some toilet paper and somebody else might call you for something and the day goes fast. But they have us locked in all day for nothing. And you tell them that you want to go to yard and they say no.

* * * *

Prisoners quickly exhaust the few activities one can engage in the cell, and spend much time thinking. Routines that relax are strictly limited by the lack of social interaction.

25: I can do it. But it's hard . . . It's not like you being like when you're in the yard, you be playing checkers, dominoes, or watching television. Because before you know it, chow time or something, your time goes more easy. But when you're locked in, the only thing you can do is read, and I get so tired of reading every day. You're not able to do nothing else but lay down. And if you lay down it's really hard. That's the only way I see. But there's no trouble at all in here, no trouble in here, because that's one thing, it's safe. You got any kind of problem, you talk to the officer, whatever it is, he's all right. But the only thing is there's too much hours locked in, that's all.

* * * *

Two common and interrelated themes arise in the interviews with respect to the effects of prolonged solitary confinement. Prisoners describe either an increase in self-awareness, tension and anxiety, culminating in an eruption or "bugging out;" or a decrease in affect, activity and awareness, resulting in depression and boredom. Occasionally both reactions are described,

but at different times. Bugging out is described as the slow building of tension over time, with few resources or skills with which to defuse it, and some difficulty in gauging the degree to which one may be losing control. Isolation can lead to decreasing accuracy in one's self-evaluation; one begins to question one's sanity, or to seek others to evaluate it. Such search often requires behavior that reaches threshold level for mental health detection and evaluation.

21: See a man can stand just so much confinement. If a man doesn't have some kind of release, to keep off his frustrations, right, let's say that you put him out in the yard and he exhausts himself. Then when he comes in he can cope. But he has no way of throwing off his frustrations. And he can't drive himself to exercise in the cell. So he's in there. And there's nothing to do. And he has everything in the world and there's no way for him to release. He's just sitting there. Now the four walls are going like this. And he can't stand it no more so he breaks something. So he starts breaking up his cell.

* * * *

21: It was just like you wake up one morning and everything that is said and done irritates you to such a point where you want to lash out at something. It may be the result of the confinement, or what have you . . . So being a hostile man you turn hostilities out and break up the cell maybe . . . See a man can only stand so much confinement . . . and he can't stand it no more, so he breaks something. So he starts breaking up his cell . . . I've experienced all this.

* * * *

9: The first time I saw anybody bug out, I never saw anybody do it before. And I used to think that well, that would happen to me in the future, you know? It's like you've got to blow.

* * * *

While angry eruptions, self-injury, or "bugging out" are the most dramatic results of sensory deprivation, such reactions represent minority responses. A second common theme, more commonly expressed than that of "bugging out" is that of withdrawal and passivity. While a sequence may involve both withdrawal and eruption, many prisoners describe the major stressful effect of isolation to be the monotony of it. Studies of sensory deprivation have pointed to the lack of energy, lack of concern for intellectual pursuits, impaired memory and concentration, depression and low morale associated with long term confinement. 18

While prisoners in short term disciplinary segregation are often involved in self-improvement activities, education programs, self-help measures of all kinds, extended litigation, strenuous exercise and martial arts programs, prisoners in protection are involved in few such activities. Table 14.7 lists the routines and activities mentioned by prisoners in protection. The modal activity is listening to the radio, followed by reading (invariably leisure reading), sleeping and hobby activities. Only three prisoners mentioned activities that could be described as self-improvement. One prisoner was studying to become a pentecostal minister, a second was involved in a technical radio-TV correspondence course, a third was doing legal work. Most prisoners treat the company like a tier in the county jail, but without the social activities (TV watching, card playing, talking) that characterize county jails.

11: Well this company is dull really. I sit in my cell and I don't go out in the yard too much here either - I sit in my cell and I usually read a book a day - sometimes two books a day. And I walk around that cell 1,000 times a day. And you

Table 14.7
Routines and Daily Activities Engaged
in By Protection Prisoners

| <u>Type of Activity</u> | <u>Frequency Mentioned</u> |
|--|----------------------------|
| (1) Listen to the radio | 10 |
| (2) Reading (Magazines, science fiction, fantasy, westerns, other leisure) | 8 |
| (3) Sleeping (as recreation) | 6 |
| (4) Hobby activities (puzzles, play solitaire, painting, aquariums) | 5 |
| (5) Exercise | 4 |
| (5) Self-improvement activities (studying religion, high school and technical manuals, legal work) | 3 |

know about once a month you get to be a porter on the gallery. They take turns with every cell and you get to be a porter and run errands for the other guys. I like that you know after being locked in for so long you know. It keeps you busy for the day.

* * * *

- 6: I play a lot of solitaire and I listen to the ear-phones and I do a little exercising in my cell. And that way the time goes by.

* * * *

- 31: I got a big fish tank and I watch my fish to keep my mind occupied and I don't want to think too much about something that worries me a lot and I write letters to my family and study. Or I listen to radio - rock and roll - that is my kind of music and smoke a lot of cigarettes, drink a lot of coffee. They make you do that because I don't have anything to do but sit down and stare at the walls sometimes. I read magazines and newspapers sometimes. If you didn't have all this you would be climbing up the walls.

* * * *

While in population, many self-help groups are initiated by prisoners themselves, and many prisoners find that motivation with respect to ego-enhancing activities is spurred by the interest of others, prisoners in protection are without supporting peers, or an ideology urging self-improvement. Prisoners in protection are essentially conformists, with little of the innovator's rage for improvement. They are, as well, unlikely to push for administrative reforms, fearing to violate a contract that provides safety if little else.

Fear also plays a role in modulating their activities. Some prisoners are fearful of any attempt at resocialization, having experienced stressful social experiences. They resist efforts at encouraging them to leave their cells, and they cut themselves off from all sources of stimulation.

Unsafe

Five prisoners maintained that protection is not safe enough. They see threat as everpresent, and the prison community as awaiting an opportunity to riot and to victimize those who have collaborated. Even the guarded door, and close confinement, provides little sanctuary. (In part, the effects of the riot in Attica are still felt.)

- 23: I'll tell you one thing about it, I don't think that it's too secure the way that it is over here . . . because if this place ever blew up again, they could get right in here . . . well, I'm telling you, I'm being very truthful now, I'm really scared, I don't know whether I'm a coward or not, but I'm really scared . . . Well I've seen guys that got killed and beaten and I guess there was about 60 or so during the riots. And that was what shook me up you know what I mean . . . I think that they should have protection in another place . . . A couple of nights ago I heard two guys talking and they were saying that there isn't no one safe over on this side if this place blow up again, no one. Just being in here is enough to give you a severe beating or death.

* * * *

Some prisoners dislike the perceived heterogeneity of the company. They maintain that protection should be for the validated weak, not for those laying up, or fleeing enemies. Some fellow prisoners are described as strong, involved in selling tickets, or intimidating the weak on the gallery. Four of the prisoners expressing consuming fear stay in their cells for the entire time in protection.

- 6: See, they don't realize what's in the next guy's mind. See I might go over here in 18 cell, if somebody was in it, and sell him a ticket, but I don't know what's in that guy's mind. And he might come out of that cell and take my head off. They don't realize this. They don't realize that we're unfit for population. That's why we're in these places, and there ain't no telling what a

guy might do to another guy in here, you know? You don't know what's in his mind. And most of it's bitter anyhow. He's already mad because he's in his cell . . . in my cell I would have less trouble, you know?

* * * *

- 8: Sure, this is what they call protection, but it is not really protection. They open yard twice a day, you're out there all by yourself and there's no officer. If a fight breaks out you're in trouble. I believe that a protection company should be a protection company. Only for guys that need it, not for guys that just want to come over and lay up. And then take advantage of the weaker guys. I don't believe in that . . . There's just not enough security in protection. I believe that they should have one separate institution for just protection. And I feel that they should really check into a guy's background to see if he needs protection. And if he doesn't need it, send him back.

* * * *

Neglect

Four prisoners described the administration as unconcerned with protection prisoners, with providing amenities as encouragement to prisoners, or to relieve the pressures of doing time. It is not deprivation that is of concern, but the lack of interest and the lack of compassion from administration concerning one's plight. The lack of services and programs is viewed as a result of an underlying lack of concern for the fearful. From discussions with prison staff, these perceptions carry a kernel of truth. Staff do not like protection units. The company requires a great deal of time and effort in the shape of escorts, special meals, doctors' and nurses' time, duplicate services. Prisoners are also not involved in programs, a fact which earns facility staff little credit with the central administration. Staff accordingly do little to ease the problems of prisoners in

protection, and routinely decline requests for additional services.

Prisoners are faced with (1) an urging to return to population, and (2) the relative lack of privileges and services as disincentive for remaining in population. They are angered by the lack of sensitivity shown by staff concerning their safety concerns, and their needs.

- 31: You get harassed from the administration because they don't want you there. They feel that you should be in population. They don't feel that when you take a life in population or mess a man up bad in the population, they're going to say, hey, you're going to get more time; but you tell them, you say "hey, listen, there's threats and it's going to come to a physical violence thing. Take me out of the population." "Hey, you don't need to be in protection." . . . This is what they tell you. "Why do you feel you need to be in protection." And then when you get here, you get harassed. They don't want to give you nothing as far as sports equipment. Everything is difficult, living in the wing like this. Well, like some of them, they won't give us no punching bags over here. They won't give us adequate weights. They really don't want to give us the two hours a day yard that we get because they don't feel that this would be made comfortable for us. This is the way they feel, because they feel that if it's made too comfortable for us then they won't want to leave.

* * * *

- 29: From the warden on down, they're prejudiced against the people in protection. As you probably know by state law each institution has to have a protection. So where is their gripe. They're denying us all these kind of these things. They're denying me who it won't cost them a dime to buy all this football equipment. They're taking a TV from us that we've had for almost a year and we haven't had it now for almost three months. They took it out of the pretense that they were repairing it. What is their real gripe? These people in here. We only hear stories, but what is their gripe against the people that want to come back in here? They're required by law to have a unit like this anyway. Why do they deny us all these things?

* * * *

25: The way I figured it out is, if they put you in protection, you need it because you're in trouble. That's your trouble, you need protection. But these people don't seem to see this thing in this way. They put you in protection not like protection. They protect you all right because they keep you separated from everybody else. But it is like a punishment. Because like being 22 hours locked in, that's a punishment. We're not in here for punishment, we haven't done nothing wrong. We got our kind of trouble, yes, but this doesn't mean that you have to be punished for something that just came to you. It's not something that you went out and looking for this trouble. It's something that come to you, right? I always think of it that way. But you know, it's punishment. Being here is terrible. It's 22 hours every day.

* * * *

While prisoners seldom express hostility to staff, except when urged by staff to return to population, they do find the lack of services, the reduced level of privileges, and the lack of understanding concerning their problems disturbing.

Conclusion

Prisoners are, on the whole, relatively satisfied with protection because of the safety they find there. However, they need little prompting to point out the tradeoffs necessitated by isolation. Most are accepting of their place in prison, and of the social deprivation that place embodies. They have become "downwardly mobile" and accept the freedom from the fighting and aggressive competition that is associated with prison life. They have accepted protection, understanding the dishonor that attaches.

Protection serves as a final classification option for both staff and prisoners. It is a refuge for the traumatized (during periods of particular prison instability, riot, officer

strikes, requests for protection increase markedly).²⁰ It also serves as an ancillary mental health unit for some prisoners.

Protection placement does not invariably subject men to sensory deprivation. A few prisoners enjoy the solitude and freedom of choice that social isolation permits. And sensory deprivation, when described, does not lead to one general response substantially determined by one reduction of stimuli. A few men experience severe irritability and instability; most do not. However, many others describe themselves as inactive and listless, and the experience as distinctly unpleasant.

While one might have hoped that the meeting of safety needs would lead to a personal renaissance, it does not seem to do so. Even within the relatively sterile and closed protection company, opportunities for organization, community, self-involvement and improvement activities could be mustered. In large part, prisoners remain fearful and anxious, and many do not take advantage of out of cell time. Most are engaged in fantasizing, and with handling depression.

Protection staff and the administration itself expect little from their charges. Residence in protection is not expected to alter prisoners' behavior. There are no efforts at encouraging pro-social behavior. Prisoners are encouraged to return to population, but no incentives are provided for their return, and neither staff or prisoners take the encouragement seriously.

Prisoners in protection have no forum for the practice of new behaviors, no work or social activities that give expression to creativity or individuality, no basis for social comparison, or for personal growth. However, they do not leave. They have low expectations of themselves and of prison. They are concerned with avoiding unfortuitous events through self-isolation.

A great deal of energy goes into self-protection, and for the young, time lost in prison may be irreplaceable. A last opportunity for a high school diploma, or a trade, has been lost, and a self image as "born to lose" is confirmed again. Protection protects prisoners from unpredictable and traumatic effects, if not from the disquiet and despair of a psyche in stress. It also protects prisoners from the possibility of experienced efficacy and involvement.

Footnotes

1. The right of a prisoner to be free from assaults by other prisoners has been recognized under the cruel and unusual punishment clause of the Eighth Amendment. A pervasive risk of harm and lack of "reasonable care" by staff officers is generally held to be essential to a claim against the state. See particularly Woodhous v. Virginia, 487 F.2d 889 (4th Cir. 1973). Additional cases addressing prisoner rights to protection from assault include: Parker v. State, 282 S.2d 483 (La. 1972), cert. denied 414 U. S. 1093 (1973) ; Parker v. McKeithen, 488 F.2d 553 (5th Cir. 1974).
2. In Schyska v. Schifflet, 364 F.Supp. 116 (N.D. Ill. 1973), the prisoner alleged that the prison had a responsibility to keep him safe in population. The court held that, while a prison was responsible for guaranteeing the safety of its charges, the prisoner could have elected protective custody. Since he did not, the prison was not responsible for his subsequent victimization. Additional cases asserting that the reduction in privileges incident to protection placement does not violate Eighth Amendment prohibitions on cruel and unusual punishment include: Daughtery v. Carlson, 372 F.Supp. 1320 (E.D. Ill. 1972); Breeden v. Jackson, 457 F.2d 578 (4th Cir. 1972); Landman v. Royster, 354 F.Supp. 1292 (E.D. Va. 1973).
3. 7 New York Codes Rules and Regulations, Section 304.1(b).
4. Ibid.
5. Robert A. Freeman, Simon Dinitz, and John P. Conrad, "The Bottom is in the Hole: A Look at the Dangerous Offender and Society's Effort to Control Him," American Journal of Correction 39 (1977): 31.
6. Ibid., p.30.
7. 7 N.Y.C.R.R. Section 301.3(b)(c); Section 301.7.
8. Daughtery v. Carlson; Breeden v. Jackson.
9. Ibid.
10. Elmer H. Johnson, "Sociology of Confinement: Assimilation and the Prison 'Rat'," in Correctional Institutions, ed. by Robert M. Carter, Daniel Glaser, and Leslie T. Wilkens (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1972), pp. 193-202.
11. Hans Toch, Men in Crisis: Human Breakdowns in Prison (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1975), p. 127.
12. Freeman, Dinitz, and Conrad, p. 30.

13. Daniel Lockwood, "Living in Protection," in Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival, by Hans Toch (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp. 206-226.
14. Daniel Lockwood, "Sexual Aggression Among Male Prisoners" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Albany, 1977).
15. Elmer Johnson, "Assimilation and the Prison 'Rat'," p. 198.
16. Ibid.
17. Lockwood, "Living in Protection," p. 215.
18. John C. Lilly, "Mental Effects of Reduction of Ordinary Levels of Physical Stimulation on Intact, Health Persons," Psychiatric Research Reports 5 (1956): 1-9. Mark Kammerman, ed., Sensory Isolation and Personality Change (Springfield, Ill: Charles C. Thomas, 1977).
19. Stanton Wheeler, "Socialization in Correctional Communities," in Prison Within Society, ed. by Lawrence Hazelrigg, Anchor Books (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1968), pp. 156-157. Wheeler used an instrument designed to elicit allegiance to the inmate code among prisoners in a large maximum security prison. He found that the smallest percentage of high conforming responses (conformity to administration and staff values) resulted from his segregation sample (14%), and the highest percentage of high conformity responses came from his protection sample (83% gave high conforming responses).
20. Officials of the New York State Commission of Correction assigned as monitors during several recent prison guard strikes and prisoner riots report large increases in protective placement requests, and cell keeplocks, during such incidents (personal conversations).

Chapter 15: Beyond the Niche: A Therapeutic Community

In northern Clinton County, in the prison village of Dannemora (located near the Canadian border) a therapeutic community was organized and briefly operated during the early 1970's. This therapeutic community emerged from an earlier and more ambitious program with a similar structure and orientation, known as the Diagnostic and Evaluation Unit at Dannemora State Hospital. The Diagnostic and Evaluation Unit was established and managed by staff from McGill University of Montreal and operated during much of the earlier decade. The philosophy of the Unit and of its later smaller offshoot, while owing much to the work and philosophy of the McGill team and its director, Bruno Cormier, traces more distantly but directly to the work of Maxwell Jones and his psychological progenitors.

The Therapeutic Community

The concept of the therapeutic community evolved from various experiments using social learning and democratic management techniques within facilities for delinquents and mental patients. August Aichhorn was possibly the first therapist to systematically apply psychiatric knowledge to delinquents in an institutional environment. Aichhorn comments:

Specific educational methods are far less important than an attitude which brings the child into contact with reality. We must give the pupils experiences which fit them for life outside and not for the artificial life of an institution. The more the life of the institution conforms to an actual social community, the more certain is the social rehabilitation of the child. There is a great danger in an institution that the individuality of the child

does not develop along lines best suited to his needs but that rules are laid down in accordance with administrative requirements which reduce the child to a mere inmate with a number.²

The soviet educator, A.S. Makarenko, at the Gorky Colony and in collectives for delinquent orphans, operated institutions designed to provide meaningful roles for all residents. An inmate staff organization was established to neutralize or replace delinquent values with new values for community, responsibility, and mutual respect.³

Additional models of therapeutic settings, in which social learning, joint staff-inmate formulation of rules, role diffusion, and inmate-staff collaboration on behavior change form integral parts of the program are included in the accounts of Neill at Summerhill, the "junior republics," and the contemporaneous Niantic experiment at the Connecticut State Farm for Women.⁴ While these programs took various forms, some primarily psychiatric, others educational or reformatory, and contained different program elements, the principles of respect for the individual, group responsibility for the development of self awareness, and joint institutional management and decision-making remained similar.

Maxwell Jones is most commonly referred to as the originator of the therapeutic community.⁵ Working with inmates admitted to Army hospitals for battle fatigue, Jones found himself faced with large numbers of similar age patients, with similar disabilities, precipitated by similar stresses. It was a relatively homogeneous community, in which group relations seemed to

affect individual behavior. Jones saw in the ongoing life of the facility and its staff and resident patients a medium in which behaviors could be elicited, explained, expressed, examined in detail, and modified. An experiment in group living, designed around this patient group, was devised. Since Jones was a vehement advocate of client participation in therapy, the community deemphasized role and status differences between staff and prisoners. The therapeutic community sought a dedicated group of change agents who themselves were the targets of change.

The fundamental idea of the community is to enlist interactions, including conflicts, friendships, patterns of dominance, symptoms of neuroses, that arise between individuals in groups living closely together, as the medium for change. The goals of the community are (1) to produce a collective of patients in which uninhibited, spontaneous, and real relations can occur; (2) to establish a program for the exploration of interactions at an individual, group and community level; and (3) to provide a system of additional tasks, workshops and therapies which encourage the adoption of responsibility, the testing of new behaviors, and provide opportunity for new insights into behaviors.⁶ Prisoners are assisted as they face and attempt to resolve real life problems as these arise, including such issues as interpersonal disputes, work difficulties, problems of dependency and inadequacy. The community is decentralized and democratic, rather than hierarchial and bureaucratic. Immediacy and spontaneity are emphasized, and as few rules as possible are established (and communally developed). Authority is diffuse and egalitarian.

Fundamentally, the therapeutic community implies a change in the status of both patients and staff. Patients are not, in this model, passive recipients of care. In collaboration with all the staff (ward aides, therapists, cleaning staff), patients work out collaborative strategies for self-management, for the resolution of problems and disputes, and for increasing self-knowledge.

While there is no one model of a therapeutic community (it remains more a philosophy than a program), such programs typically include elements such as daily community meetings, sociodrama, group and individual therapy, the introduction of therapy into other aspects of ward life including sheltered workshops and recreation. In all areas, patients have responsibility for self-management, for enforcing rules, for managing committees, for attending to behavior for later discussion and analysis. Patients contribute to ward management not only by adopting responsibility for institutional management committees, but also assume responsibility for such acts as decisions about penalties for violation of rules, suggestions for therapy, for the establishment of new ward rules, transfers, and encouraging the participation of others. Daily and substantial participation in all aspects of community life sensitize staff and patients to the problems that affect behavior. Everyone learns from everyone else.

Staff, particularly ward aides and other traditionally non-therapeutic staff, are trained as a part of the program. They become targets of change as well, and are sensitized to

to the intended and unintended effects of their behavior on ward life. Distortions of communication among both patients and staff are thereby reduced. Concrete situations and problems communicated by those experiencing them, in immediate face to face confrontations with staff, emphasize the situational rather than personal-historical aspects to behavior. The community thus becomes a training laboratory for staff, a method for defusing problems before they escalate into crises, as well as a method for helping patients toward self-understanding.

In Prisons

Within prisons, therapeutic communities have increasingly become accepted as theoretically useful therapeutic programs. Wilson and Snodgrass examined the relationship between a small therapeutic community in a large traditional prison, and prisoner adherence to anti-staff values. They found a positive association between the therapeutic community and socialization. A negative relationship between residence in the community and allegiance to an "inmate code" surfaced.⁷

Therapeutic communities of various kinds have been lauded as accounting for reductions in the level of prison violence in some institutions, in improving the satisfaction levels of confined delinquents, and in assisting the resocialization of prisoners in adult hostels.⁸

Therapeutic communities are still new to prisons however. Bureaucratic protections, vested interests, hierarchical lines of authority are not easily abandoned. As our organizational portrait of a therapeutic community clearly illustrates, the

therapeutic community is the antithesis of the typical prison. In prisons, guards are custodians, correction counselors are clerks, and psychiatrists somewhat more specialized clerks, who are charged with making parole reports. Prisoners are told not to approach staff with unrealistic expectations such as emotional support or therapy. The cultural systems are segregated, with interfaces formalized in administrative processes such as superintendent's proceedings and inmate grievance councils. Events do not result in shared perceptions and interpretations, as the same situation is viewed and defined differently according to culturally determined agendas.

However therapeutic communities have been introduced in some facilities, usually as short term entrepreneurial efforts by progressive administrators. Studt and Messinger established a program known as C-Unit in California,⁹ Dennie Briggs worked with a therapeutic community at Chino, near Los Angeles.¹⁰ Some 18 therapeutic communities have been organized and operated in the Federal prison system, and small communities variously modeled upon Jones' work have been established in a number of county jails and work camps.¹¹ The models require considerable support from correctional authorities, since staff training is typically long term and expensive. Establishing communities can also require imaginative physical plant modifications to permit small living-learning groups. The involvement of shop supervisors, formal counseling staff, and other ancillary prison staff can require brokering, and the dissolution of long established bureaucratic devices.

The models appear promising, in that they permit a realization of joint interests of prisoners and staff, a sharing obscured by the calcification of a social order which includes a treatment staff, custodial staff, and prisoners.

The Setting

The therapeutic community described in this chapter, known as Diagnostic and Treatment Unit IV, was established on the grounds of the former Dannemora State Hospital in 1972. Dannemora itself is a small Adirondack village dominated by the large Clinton Correctional Facility, and the equally large State Hospital complex. The area, and the prison and hospital complex, are affectionately termed "Little Siberia" by residents. The local citizens take pride in the name, and in its inaccessibility and climate.

Diagnostic and Treatment Unit IV (hereafter to be referred to as D&T) was one of five special treatment units within a prison complex termed the Adirondack Correctional Treatment and Evaluation Center (ACTEC). Units within the complex, in addition to the therapeutic community in Unit IV, included a behavior modification program for violent offenders (Stress Assessment), a resocialization unit for the long term institutionalized prior to parole release (Community Preparation), a social learning treatment unit for chronic recidivists, and a large reception and orientation unit. The center was disbanded in 1975. Several of the programs, however, were transferred to, or have since re-emerged in, other facilities of the Department of Correctional Services.

D&T was located in buildings 6 and 7 of the old Dannemora State Hospital. Prisoners were housed either in individual rooms or within cells. The prisoners were divided approximately equally within the two housing units. Separate areas within the complex, most shared by the other units, provided a variety of programs, including workshops and vocational training programs, educational programs, arts and crafts activities, music, television rooms, and areas for community meetings and individual and group therapy.

D&T had a maximum population of fifty prisoners, and maintained, during most of its operation, a daily population approaching capacity. The target population of the Unit was "Male adult offenders with an offense of a nature such that psychiatric care has been recommended ...", or those prisoners with "Mental impairment," or with a more situational bent, "prisoners visibly or chronically unable to adjust to routine correctional programs." 12

The Unit was designed to provide a supportive, and therapy-rich milieu for prisoners who had experienced severe problems with other prisoners, and who evidenced some degree of personal vulnerability to typical prison stress. Prisoners of any age were eligible, and no other criteria (except that the prisoner should have sufficient time remaining on his sentence prior to conditional release to complete the program) were established. Prisoners were received from all maximum security prisons in the state, and typically from formal niches within them (protection companies, C-2 at Coxsackie, as well as from the system's mental hospitals and observation units).

The purpose of the unit was to assist prisoners to understand their behavior, and to provide a relaxed egalitarian milieu for the testing and learning of new behaviors. The purpose, as described in an inmate written program statement, was simply "to learn to be the "real" you, where other prisoners let you." A daily schedule was developed to permit the maximum possible out of cell time. Prisoners were involved in programs from 7:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. Prisoners typically were involved in three formal programs, including a daily work responsibility, school program, and evening education or committee assignments. Additionally, formal counseling was provided daily. Each prisoner was assigned a personal therapist with whom he met regularly (and frequently during the first months of residence), as well as a counseling group. The counseling group consisted of ten prisoners, two officers, and a therapist. Weekend programs typically included variants of counseling techniques, with plays and socio-drama frequently staged by prisoners.

The Unit was physically different from a correctional facility. Prisoners were encouraged to personalize their rooms and cells. Committees made special efforts to obtain such decorative items as small rugs, reading lamps, and shades. Meals were served communally with inmate supervision only. By design, several female employees functioned continually within the Unit. Outside groups of volunteers including those from regional colleges, were frequent visitors to the Unit and sponsored regular evening educational programs as well as weekend events. Vocational programs were small and closely supervised by spec-

ially trained corrections officers. Inmate shop committee representatives assisted in supervising vocational areas, recommending promotions and assisting with grievances.

Rules of the Unit were kept minimal and behavior-relevant. Prisoners were permitted to wear civilian clothing, to adopt any hair style, including facial hair. Nearly all Unit prisoners possessed ACTEC passes, and could walk without escort throughout the Unit itself, to special programs, recreation and TV areas, to hobby shops and commissary. Several free periods each day were provided for the exploration of the complex, and for encouraging freedom of movement. Inmate-designed programs included community preparation and self-help programs, Spanish language programs, black culture and nationalism study, and various arts and crafts activities.

The core of the Unit, as with Maxwell Jones' model, had little to do with either formal therapeutic counseling, or with amenities and personal freedom. The programmatic I-beam of the Unit was the community meeting. Daily community meetings (later decreased to four times per week to reduce redundancy) were held for 50 minutes with all Unit prisoners and shift officers and assigned therapists in attendance. The meetings were carefully scheduled so that both 7 to 3 shift and 3 to 11 shift officers could attend on successive days. Attendance was mandatory for all community residents, including staff.

All matters directly affecting the program or its residents were appropriate for discussion. The agenda typically included both personal and procedural matters. Oftentimes

problems on the Unit focussed on unhealthy relationships, racial prejudice, sexual promiscuity, or threats of violence. Issues could also, however, center on staff supervision, promotional or transfer, work attendance or performance, parole and family problems. A strong emphasis was placed on the individual, and problem solving was encouraged. Intellectualizing was strongly discouraged, with a confrontational focus on specificity, immediacy and honesty. Officers and staff participated in meetings as co-therapists and were themselves at times the target of change toward increased self understanding.

Community meetings were typically moderated by the Unit coordinator, a psychologist, with the assistance of several counselors who are also prisoners. Community administration was organized at meetings as well. While the Unit coordinator handled many administrative tasks, ordering supplies, establishing work schedules, doing relevant paper work, he was assisted in unit management by a number of specialized prisoner committees. Every unit member served on a committee, and membership was rotated periodically so that all members could participate in all activities. Committees existed for household duties, shop activities, sports, hobbies, commissary, library, entertainment, newspaper, and inmate orientation and reception. A unit staff person was assigned to and regularly met with each committee.

The activities of the inmate committees, the decisions and responsibilities they assumed, were not cosmetic. Prisoners resolved many unit disputes within committees and at the community meetings. Treatment conferences to measure the progress of prisoners were attended by the subject prisoner and other elected

prisoners. Evaluations concerning parole, transfer, continuance in the unit were subject to prisoner advisory reports. Prisoner evaluations, and the evaluations of unit officers, were particularly valued while a prisoner was on probation in the unit (the first six weeks of his residence). A prisoner's motivation, interest in therapy, appropriateness for confrontational techniques, propensity for violence, and personal honesty were gauged during this period.

The only inflexible rules in the Unit were established with respect to violence. While anger and hostility were expected, and often evoked at community meetings, such expressions were not permitted outside of therapy. Physical violence itself resulted in immediate discharge, unless explained by personal mitigating factors. Homosexual practices were treated tolerantly in the unit, with interference limited to those situations in which threat or intimidation was used, or when homosexuality threatened the social life of the unit.

A prisoner could request to leave the program at any time. Upon his request to leave, or upon his transfer prior to completion of the program, he was returned either to the sending facility, or to the neighboring maximum security prison, Clinton. Either option was an unattractive one to the typical D&T prisoner, and the voluntariness provided by the right to leave was conditioned by the unpleasant options.

Staff

A psychologist, two correction counselors, five sergeants, and twenty corrections officers were initially assigned to the

unit. The relatively enriched officer staffing was needed because officers duties included therapeutic tasks in addition to traditional custodial ones. Officers attended all group sessions and community meetings, served with committees, acted as therapy aides in recording behavioral data on prisoners, acted as crisis intervention agents, and provided daily support for prisoners. The relatively sprawling and open physical plant also required more officers for required security services. Officers assigned to the program received several weeks of training in the purpose and management of the community, as well as in communication and human relation skills necessary for full participation in community life. They received training with respect to the typical prison culture, the "we" and "they" subcultures of prisoners and guards that often impede mutual understanding and behavior change, and the ways in which formal organizational roles and traditional performance of custodial tasks contribute to prison polarization.

Three inmate counselors, volunteers drawn from the Clinton prison also served as aides in the Unit. These prisoners, screened by the Clinton prison program unit, were selected because of their motivation, interest in the program, credibility and communication skills. They lived and worked in the Unit, and maintained a core of continuity at community meetings and in work groups and group therapy. Two of the three prisoners were serving life prison terms, and were familiar with the problems faced by many of the D&T residents.

The Prisoners

Prisoners were referred to D&T from all maximum security facilities of the Department of Correctional Services. Clinton had a slight overrepresentation among sending institutions because of its proximity to ACTEC. All male adult prisoners were eligible for admission to the program. The criteria for admission were primarily behavioral. Any prisoner in any facility may, upon demonstration of his inability to manage mainline prison life, evidence of a desire for personal change, and documentation supporting prior psychiatric problems, be placed in the unit. Placement is made upon recommendation of the program staff at the sending institution.

Did D&T prisoners differ in systematic ways from the populations from which they come? Data was collected for all prisoners in the interview sample (N=27). Comparisons were made between the interview sample at D&T and the combined random sample derived of our five institutions. Tables 15.0 through 15.4 list those comparisons that revealed differences between the two samples at the .05 level of significance or better. The typical "niche type" differences are found. Prisoners in D&T are more likely to be white, to be from cities or towns of under 100,000 in population, and to have a recorded history of residence in a mental health facility. D&T prisoners are also more likely to have a history of a prior sex offense, and slightly but significantly less likely to have a prior history of a violent offense.

Our comparisons again reveal the importance of culture to prison survival. White prisoners, while no more likely to have

a history of mental illness than black prisoners, are much more frequently found in shelters for those with emotional and adjustment problems. In prison, white skin, particularly when combined as it often is with non-modal small city residence, may constitute imported liabilities when exposed to a black city bred, culturally distinct prison population. When a hazardous situation is faced by those with demonstrated situational incompetence in addition to cultural impediments to adjustment, flight or self-protective aggression may ensue. While there is considerable evidence for the differential vulnerability of white prisoners in prison, and equally strong evidence for differential rates of referral based upon staff awareness of cultural differences in coping success, there is less evidence of the differential assignment and referral of prisoners to sheltered settings based upon race alone.

Not surprising, given the emphasis on therapy in the unit and the admissions process emphasis on mental problems, almost three-fourths of D&T residents have histories of residence in mental health facilities. The history of prior arrests for sex related offenses (excluding rape) may be similarly, though less directly, related to criteria for admission. Prisoners with sex related offenses may be (1) more likely to be shunned by the prison community, or victimized by it; (2) more likely to have a past record of residence in a mental facility because of their deviance and (3) more likely to be referred by the sentencing court for psychiatric care upon reception. Sex related offenses for D&T prisoners include, most conspicuously, homosexuality and male prostitution, as well as statutory rape and

pedophilia. Though prisoners in D&T are less likely to have a prior arrest record for a violent offense than are randoms, no significant differences surfaced for other violence related variables (use of a weapon, present confinement for a violent offense).

D&T prisoners are more often white with non-New York City origins, typically with a past mental problem of some kind, and often with a past sexual offense. They accordingly do not cut particularly striking figures in a prison setting. In fact, 15 of the 27 prisoners interviewed had a recorded history of placement in a protective setting during the current sentence. This is even more startling in view of the additional fact that five prisoners spent no time at all in population prior to being received at ACTEC, and thus had no opportunity to be placed in a protective setting. Table 15.5 lists the settings in which D&T prisoners were housed either immediately preceding transfer to ACTEC or during some portions of their current sentence.

As another index of vulnerability, over half (14 of 27) of the prisoners interviewed in D&T have a recorded history of self-injury.

Reasons for Placement in D&T

Twenty-seven of thirty-two prisoners in D&T were interviewed during July of 1975, when the population of the unit was at an all time low. Four of the unit prisoners refused to be interviewed or were otherwise unavailable. One interview was lost upon transcription, resulting in a final sample of completed and transcribed interviews of 25.

Tables 15.0 to 15.4

Comparison of Diagnostic and Treatment Prisoners with the Random Sample

Table 15.0

| Variable | Sample | | |
|-----------|-------------------|---------------|---|
| | Random (N=233) | D&T (N=27) | |
| Ethnicity | | | |
| Black | 56.2 | 11.1 | $\chi^2 = 29.5$ Significant at .0001 level $C = .32$ |
| White | 34.8 | 88.9 | |
| Hispanic | 9.0 | 0.0 | |
| | 100 | 100 | |

Table 15.1

| Variable | Sample | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|--|
| | Random (N=220) | D&T (N=27) | |
| Community of origin | | | |
| Over 100,000 | 79.5 | 37.0 | $\chi^2 = 20.9$ Significant at .0001 level $\Phi = .30$ |
| Under 100,000 | 20.5 | 63.0 | |
| | 100 | 100 | |

Table 15.2

| Variable | Sample | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------|---|
| | Random (N=238) | D&T (N=27) | |
| History of Residence in Mental Facility | | | |
| No History | 89.5 | 25.9 | $\chi^2 = 65.0$ Significant at .00001 level $\Phi = .51$ |
| History | 10.5 | 74.1 | |
| | 100 | 100 | |

Tables 15.0 to 15.4 (Cont'd)

Table 15.3

| Variable | Sample | | |
|---|-------------------|---------------|---|
| | Random (N=238) | D&T (N=27) | |
| History of Arrest for Sexual Offense | | | |
| No sex offense history | 89.9 | 69.2 | $\chi^2 = 7.6$ Significant at .006 level Phi = .19 |
| Sex offense history | <u>10.1</u> | <u>30.8</u> | |
| | 100 | 100 | |

Table 15.4

| Variable | Sample | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------|---|
| | Random (N=238) | D&T (N=26) | |
| History of Arrest for Violent Offense | | | |
| No violent offense history | 62.6 | 84.6 | $\chi^2 = 4.0$ Significant at .05 level Phi = .14 |
| Violent offense history | <u>37.4</u> | <u>15.4</u> | |
| | 100 | 100 | |

Table 15.5

Protective Settings in which D&T Prisoners
Served a Portion of Their Current Sentence

| Type of Setting | Frequency ^a |
|--|------------------------|
| (1) Protection (or its equivalent, mental observation ward, closed reception cell) | 13 |
| (2) Matteawan State Hospital | 7 |
| (3) Diagnostic and Evaluation Unit at Fishkill Correctional Facility | 7 |
| (4) Coxsackie C-2 Company | 3 |
| (5) Dannemora State Hospital (prior to its closing and the establishment of ACTEC) | 2 |
| (6) Occupational Vocational Rehabilitation Unit at Attica Correctional Facility | 2 |
| (7) Glenham program for the mentally retarded | 1 |

-----***-----***-----***

^a Prisoners may have served a portion of their sentence
in more than one protective setting.

The process for admission to D&T differs from that described within other formal niches. Prisoners, unlike protection prisoners and to a lesser extent those in Coxsackie C-2, have no right to placement in the Unit, and cannot simply demand treatment and therapy. It is also rare that prisoners are transferred to D&T as a result of clear treatment or management needs as in the Elderly and Handicapped Unit, or prison mental hospitals. In large part, referrals to D&T are made by the program units of maximum security prisons, who are informed of the existence of the program, its purpose and general program, the type of prisoners it seeks as residents, and are asked to fill an initial quota of prisoners. However, since motivation and interest in change is a suggested criterion for admission, prisoners are typically approached and "sold" the program, rather than simply transferred to it. There are three types of paths to D&T reflecting different degrees of participation of prisoners in the placement decision.

Self-classification

Four prisoners we interviewed could be termed self-classifiers, in that placement was engineered through the inmates' own lobbying efforts. Many prisoners, some months after the opening of D&T, became aware of ACTEC, though they were somewhat less aware of the specific programs it contained and the differences among them. Impressions reaching inmates were that the program was a "milk and honey" unit, with many amenities and much freedom, as well as opportunities for therapy. For

prisoners in protection companies, or at Matteawan State Hospital, such a program may have sounded like a sweet bit, a better protected setting, and a source of assistance in self-understanding and behavior change. Two such prisoners used self-injury to dramatize their failure in adjustment and need for counseling; one prisoner claims to have orchestrated a "bug-out" in segregation in order to negotiate a transfer to ACTEC; and one prisoner brought suit against the prison administration to secure admission to ACTEC based upon the sentencing court's recommendation that he receive psychiatric treatment. All four prisoners had initially been refused ACTEC transfers by program staff.

These prisoners express a strong interest in self-understanding both as a need to address their underlying problems to prevent future parole violations and to reduce anxiety and enhance hopefulness. As one prisoner, who litigated his way into ACTEC as a means to correct his pedophilia, comments:

- 4: Unlike most of these fellows I was doing fine in prison. I was going to college and I was teaching a Sunday night worship service and I was getting along with the school program and the chaplain program . . . But still I wasn't doing anything for myself or about the problem that had brought me to prison. I could have one hundred degrees and that still isn't going to stop me from chasing little boys around on 42nd Street. And I knew this . . . So I requested to see the psychiatrist at Auburn and there was no real therapy the psychiatrist would come in and see me for an hour and for that hour he would be watching his watch to see if the hour was up . . . And most people just went there to get medicine to get high . . . So I decided to go to ACTEC and they refused to send me. And I had my lawyer write a letter, and the sentencing court had ordered that I get treatment so I got in finally.

* * * *

Two of the other prisoners were transferred from reception to a youth facility in which the cycle of testing and humiliation

directed at them proved excessive. They found other prisons unlikely transfer options because of insufficient time in program, or because the other youth facilities could have proved even more unendurable. They used self-injury to dramatize their resourcelessness, and suggested ACTEC to a now sensitized service unit.

21: Well for me it wasn't so much a decision to go to ACTEC, though this is where I wanted to go, it was to get out of Elmira. I wanted to come here, but at that point I would have accepted anyplace. It was mainly the population, the people, the racial things everyday. Like all the fighting, and I was fighting the population and the problems from the outside that were being put to me . . . It was just a merry-go-around and I wanted to get off, so I started using drugs to get by, and then I cut up. It was more of a cry for help than anything. I didn't have a razor blade or I wouldn't be here now. It was just a coffee pot and I could do too much damage because I was going through (drug) reactions at the same time . . . One way or another I was going to get out of the joint.

* * * *

17: Well in Coxsackie that is the only way you can get out is by cutting up . . . once you get in there it is like a trap, you don't go any other places, you just stay there . . . like in a boxed canyon . . . It is just like I got tired of coping with prison behind the wall and fighting all the time . . . I wanted to understand why I was doing all that stuff, and I said I wanted to come to ACTEC. I didn't know much about it, but it had to be better than there.

* * * *

Summary Classification

Six prisoners were transferred to D&T without any pre-knowledge of ACTEC or interest in the program. While several were received at D&T following incidents of severe fear, chronic violence, or personal collapse in prison, most were simply transferred to D&T from reception without evidencing serious problems in population.

1: Well, reception made that decision for me. Auburn made the decision. I didn't have any choice in the matter. I guess the criteria for the decision was that I was in the intensive care ward in Matteawan and I've been in mental hospitals, Manhattan State and Bellevue about 25 times and it's been a pattern for the last fifteen years and things that I'm trying to change, but every once in a while I get pulled down. I like it here . . . don't get me wrong. But I didn't know anything about it . . . for once I'm lucky in prison.

* * * *

Several prisoners in this group were transferred to the unit following a breakdown or crisis in prison. The D&T Unit served in such instances as an inpatient psychiatric unit, and transfer served in place of commitment.

8: When I got to reception, I'd been on thoroazine for almost four months and so I was just coming back into the world at that point. When I hit reception, I had a few physical reactions from the anxiety. I threw up without any reason, and I kind of had the shakes a little bit from that. I went along while I was at Attica. Then I was sent to Elmira, because I'm only 22. I was 21 at the time. And there it wasn't too bad. You had to make sure you didn't hassle the blacks in any way, but other than that there wasn't too much to worry about. I had a little apprehension because of the fact that my crime is rape. I had an apprehension at the back of my mind what would happen when I ran into people that didn't like that. And it got worse, and they sent me to Matteawan. Yeah, I thought more about hurting myself, at the time. But I spent the weekend in the sheet, and after that I said, never again. And the next thing I knew I was at ACTEC. I guess I'm not sick enough for Matteawan, and too sick for Elmira.

* * * *

Contractual Classification

The typical sequence of placement to D&T is neither prisoner or staff engineered, but contractual. Either a prisoner or a staff person initially approaches the other with an idea about

possible transfer to D&T. Often a prisoner has heard of the program, wants counseling for personal or pragmatic reasons, and suggests the option to staff. Staff check criteria and personal folders, the setting in which the prisoner resides, his motivation for the program and either recommends or denies the request. The contract may also be staff initiated. Staff see prisoners in trouble, or see them vegetating in a protective environment, and see no informal niches that may prove satisfactory, and approach prisoners with suggestions concerning ACTEC. A prisoner may not be aware of the program, or may have heard rumors of strip cells, behavior modification, and shock therapy. He may also be reluctant to give up the surety of self-segregation for the questionable benefits of therapy, and the clear dangers of even a small mobile population. However, a number of prisoners were referred to ACTEC following staff contacts and salesmanship.

18: Well I got quite a bit of trouble while I was in the yard in C-2 because there you ain't got a choice whether you want to go to the yard or not. They don't give you a choice - you go I got a lot of problems and pressures. I got shoved around quite a few times. I had one guy that while I was in C-2 - a colored guy that came out of Beacon when it was still open. When they closed it up they brought him in here and one time he hit me up against the wall and I started chasing him around the yard. They keep that up every now and then and as soon as I start after him he took off like a rabbit. And he would always do it just exactly when I was not expecting anything and when I have got my back turned, see. This happened continually. Then they finally - I don't know exactly where they put him but they got him back out of there again because there was other people complaining about the same guy . . . Well, I was very nervous and what

you might say nervous breakdown. They tried to pin it down to epilepsy and whatnot and they kept filling me up with dilantin and phenobarbital to the point of making me sleep more than anything else and that happened most of the time while I was in Cocksackie up until the time that I left there . . . Well I was offered to go to ACTEC in August of that year - '74 and they told me something about it and I said that sounds like paradise and I don't quite believe that. And I said everywhere I have been all I have met is trouble and I don't see why that place would be any different but the counselor kept talking about it and I said - well I will give it a try.

* * * *

3: It started I guess about two years ago. I was getting fed up with institutions and always having to try to stay out of trouble and stay away from this and stay away from that and it becomes a big hassle after a while because you have got to - run from this and run from that you know. Because if you have got a big bit like I have right you have got to try to then stay out of trouble to get back out there - no way you know. . . . You have got all kind of things. Number one if you are young, you are marked, right - for anybody. They will try to make a kid out of you if they can - a homosexual, right. That is mark number one. Then mark number two you have got your different groups. They look for weak spots and they will try to set you up, you know. These are all the kind of things you have to watch for and if you are young you are ignorant - you have never been in jail before so you don't know the ropes them right where it was at. I said listen you can think I am up or what have you, but if it comes that you are going to try and hurt me I am going to try and hurt you back. And you are going to be standing here and I am going to be hurting you in your eye and punching you in the nose and you punching me in mine and if you come at me I am going to hurt you So I stuck it out in population I guess for about 30 days and then I got sick and they put me in the hospital and they said I had a light kidney infection and they had to send me to an outside hospital for eight days for some tests and everything and I spent about three months in the hospital all total - in the institutional hospital. So, in this time period while I was in hospitals I had some static with an officer. So, it wound up they took me out of the hospital and they put me in the box. And I started to really break there a little bit so they said - we had better shoot him to D&E.

And that is how I got to D&E. I felt very hostile during this period . . . Very hostile. I was ready like a stick of dynamite. The fuse was getting smaller and smaller and I could feel it was coming, and the psychiatrist, he started talking about ACTEC, and well I heard that they were doing shock treatment and I guess you heard about the old program when they used to have real bad cases and they used to give them shock treatments and what have you and some of them I guess they were supposed to have operated on their brains or something, I don't know. This time he wasn't fooling around and they told me ACTEC and I said well, I will wait until I get there and make a judgement before I break.

* * * *

- 6: I was in Clinton for over 3 years, and from there you got to build up your defenses, be on the alert to inmates, officers. And I was getting pretty uptight with the officers, their petty shit, garbage and stuff. And I'd get fed up, swing at them, let them know what I felt. And I started thinking in my own mind, go out there and just build up a revolution Until the therapist there, her husband said you should go over to ACTEC, because you're not helping yourself, you're just ending up in the box. So I applied, and after a lot of hassles, I got over here. Without the therapist suggesting it, I would still be in Clinton.

* * * *

Precipitants of Placement

We coded prisoner responses to questions concerning the personal or situational precipitants to D&T requests or referrals. Table 15.6 lists the kinds of precipitants leading to D&T placement, as well as the frequency with which each was mentioned. Most of the situational precipitants are similar to those experienced by prisoners in other niches. However, in D&T the modal reason for seeking the setting is because of what is there, the programs themselves, and a desire to understand oneself better. While prisoners were pushed into ACTEC by prison pressures, they

were also pulled in by hope for change. Unlike with other niches, the setting itself served as an attraction. While in other programs, the setting is important insofar as it provides insulation from problems one dislikes, at ACTEC, the Unit also exposes prisoners to programs they feel are important, though the need to manage personal violence and avoid fights, to escape from sexual pressure, or from a black street culture, are analogous to those found elsewhere.

The population is decidedly more vulnerable than found elsewhere. Five prisoners reported mental breakdowns, severe depression, an inability to endure population as major reasons for entry. Four prisoners found that sexual deviance aggravated their difficulties in population.

Surprisingly, few prisoners sought the setting because of its physical benefits, or manipulated their way into the setting because of the rewards of a non-authoritarian, physically attractive setting.

Orientation at D&T

Prior to examining the characteristics of D&T that prisoners find to be either beneficial or noxious, it should be noted that prisoners described the welcoming procedure at the Unit to be a major relaxing experience, a dispeller of anxiety. Upon entry, all prisoners are received by an officer, and by a prisoner welcoming committee. The prisoner is met outside the unit by an officer, handcuffs are removed, and the officer introduces himself to the prisoner, with accompanying handshakes.

Table 15.6

Precipitants Leading to a Request for Placement
in or Referral to D&T

| <u>Precipitant</u> | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>A desire for change, counseling, a need to understand one's deviance, confusion, mental problem (several of these prisoners report mental breakdown, self-injury, severe depression)</u> | 15 |
| (2) <u>Sexual pressures in the sending institution (several prisoners report that their offenses - pedophilia, statutory rape, or background homosexuality aggravate the problem)</u> | 9 |
| (3) <u>Manage personal violence, to avoid fights with officers and inmates, to find relief from a need to test, and to defend</u> | 9 |
| (4) <u>Culture shock in the sending institution, an inability to get along with blacks, or tolerate New York City gangster culture</u> | 6 |
| (5) <u>Need counseling in order to receive parole</u> | 3 |
| (6) <u>A wish for a freer setting, with more amenities, non-authoritarian guards, better food, civilian clothes, longer visits</u> | 2 |

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CONTINUED

6 OF 7

The officer then introduces the prisoner to the welcoming committee who usher the prisoner through reception paperwork and processes, and assist him in settling into the ward. They arrange for linen, supplies, toilet articles, introduce the prisoner to others in the unit. Prisoners without commissary funds, or for whom fund transfers are late or delayed receive a gratis buy in the unit commissary (usually for \$5.00). New residents may run their personal accounts in the red until funds are received.

The program is explained in detail by the committee, including the relatively inflexible rules prohibiting violence, the accessibility and approachability of staff for assistance with any problem, the availability at all times of inmate counselors and of their own therapists. The procedure is markedly different from traditional reception and orientation. In prison, waiting in lines for various classification procedures, prisoners feel forgotten and insignificant. In D&T they are made to feel that they are there for a purpose, they have a role, they are given an acceptable image of themselves in the eyes of those who receive them. In addition to feeling wanted at the unit, prisoners find themselves safe. Unlike traditional prisons, in which ambiguity and confusion is used by those familiar with the setting to intimidate or take advantage of the prisoners, in D&T major efforts are directed at the explication of unit norms, at encouraging free and open communication, and at facilitating independence in relation to status, or necessary items such as cigarettes. In typical prisons, novices are tested and evaluated

using subcultural norms with threats of violence. Many D&T prisoners have failed these tests elsewhere, have been victimized, offered usurious rates on needed goods, humiliated. Staff in prisons are typically impersonal, particularly during reception when they know little about the offender's predilections or his propensity for violence, whether he is a "good guy" or a ball buster. Orientation procedures are bureaucratic, explaining rules and regulations, rights to visitation and correspondence, and including admonitions of various kinds.

In D&T, the procedures are designed to serve as initial disconfirming efforts to those suspicious of the unit and other prisoners, to assure that safety is a major concern of the unit.

11: I had just been admitted and I met an officer and he stuck out his hand and he said, I am so and so and nice to meet you and I nearly had heart failure. I just knew that there was a trick involved some place. For the first three days really I was watching everything and everybody and I said wow - I couldn't believe the place you know.

* * * *

10: The orientation speech at Attica was more like you're in prison and you're going to do a year and a day behind walls and if you have any apprehensions or enemies here let us know before you go out in the yard and that was it . . . Yeah, after having been through Attica and all that lock up thing it was suddenly - I was there for one day and I thought it was a country club. Not really a country club, but in a sense that the people don't come up and put pressure on you. It's really a very relaxed atmosphere. And in the general population right away you're put under tension and you're apprehensive. And at ACTEC they started relieving the tension and they said look there is no program here like there is in the other prisons. There is no racial tension here and it's not like you can't sit with blacks or whites. And it's not like the other prisons. You choose your own friends. If you choose

the wrong friend, okay you're responsible for that. If you don't want to be associated with the gays then that is your choice and you don't associate with them. Whatever your choice is. And they try to relax you. And they say you don't have to fight here and that is the worst thing that you can do here. And they relax all the apprehension that you built up in reception.

* * * *

Instead of prisoner attempts to diagnose exploitable weaknesses, prisoners and staff are concerned with helping the prisoner adjust.

- 5: When I came in they came over and started talking about the place and telling me about the place you know, and asked me if I need anything and offered me anything and in other institutions all you get is - I want to rip you off and take you off and they don't do that in ACTEC.

* * * *

Thus, part of the welcoming process focusses on the safety of ACTEC. Prisoners received on the unit, many of who have experienced serious problems with assault in other prisons, enter with some hope that it will not be worse than where they came from. D&T attitudes about violence and sexual and racial epithets are carefully explained, and carry credibility, given the shared imprimatur of population and staff on non-violence.

- 21: Well, when we came up here the bus the first day here we have a lot of bisexuals in the unit and a lot of gay people and they was all scared on the bus since they looked at the place - it was mainly that the majority of us were white and when they seen all the blacks out there in other units I think it was like sent back flashbacks of institutions that they was ripped off in or something like that and the people on the unit they just stuck together and told them that nothing was going to happen. And like you know they have calmed down since we have got to the unit seeing that we all stuck together and they haven't been ripped off or anything.

* * * *

Prisoners are escorted throughout the complex, and are encouraged to further explore areas of interest. The facility is compact enough to be readily understandable. Prisoners are led to understand the purpose of all the settings within it, they see no segregation unit, no strip cells, or areas for shock therapy, no intimidatingly magical change devices. Prisoners know what to expect, why one can be shipped out. The unit seeks to convince prisoners with openness and honesty of its basic humanity and its respect for its charges.

Positive Characteristics of D&T

Table 15.7 lists prisoner mentions of positive characteristics of D&T, and the frequency with which each positive characteristic is mentioned. Most expressions of liking for the unit focus on its therapeutic qualities. This finding is in marked contrast to expressions of safety that lead listings of good aspects of other formal niches. While isolation and safety may be necessary prerequisites to program involvement for D&T prisoners, the programs dominate their expressions of liking.

Almost two of three prisoners mentioned the staff (including prisoner counselors) as a positive force in the unit, and over half of the prisoners claimed self-knowledge due to the formal therapy as an asset. Slightly less than half the prisoners mentioned characteristics of the population as ameliorative, including characteristics that relate to safety (race, non-violent, non-gangsters) as well as to concerns for ego enhancement (mature inmates, friendly, honest, supportive).

One-third of the prisoners cited the unit's freedom as beneficial, most dramatically, the non-authoritarian atmosphere

provided by officers. Six prisoners found the amenities, such as events, phone calls, food, hobbies, better and more widely available than in traditional prisons. Five prisoners stated that safety, including physical isolation, small size, and large custodial staff were important. All prisoners had something good to say about D&T. The responses suggest that exposure to a varied and resource rich environment which assures safety soon results in an erosion of safety as a major concern. A new and essentially ego-enhancing environmental press becomes dominant.

Staff

J. Douglas Grant states that "subcultures of both inmates and correctional officers can be developed to be supportive forces in handling their shared problems of co-existence."¹³

The essence of the therapeutic community is the marshalling of staff and residents in joint problem-solving, in therapy and change, and in management and administration of the living unit.

Under such conditions, roles are blurred and officers and inmates become community members. Staff are encouraged to explore their own roles and their relationships with prisoners and with other staff. Rather than staff serving, in Toch's words, as "closet counselors" carefully and discriminately providing support to selected prisoners within a subculture that does not

¹⁴ respect such actions, officer support in D&E is part of a new role configuration. Officers not only come out of the closet, but they are given respect and reinforcement for their new roles. They also receive self-esteem rewards, by being credited with skills other than locking gates, they share social learning ex-

Table 15.7
Perceived Positive Aspects of Diagnostic
and Treatment

| | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>Staff are good, willing to listen; good counselors; officers participate in programs; inmate counselors are good</u> | 15 |
| (2) <u>Self-knowledge; encouraged to be honest; able to drop a "front;" learning to control behavior, succeed outside</u> | 13 |
| (3) <u>Characteristics of population are better than elsewhere; few hard core criminals, gangsters; more whites; people are friendly, honest, don't try to get over; non-violent</u> | 12 |
| (4) <u>Non-authoritarian setting; treated like a person, don't write you up, explain things to you, permitted freedom of movement, freedom of action, participate in decisions</u> | 8 |
| (5) <u>Safety because of isolation; small size here, removed from population; staffing levels are high</u> | 5 |
| (6) <u>Amenities, better food, long hair and beards, civilian clothes, better commissary, more phone calls; better activities</u> | 6 |
| -----***-----***-----***----- | |
| No positive comments about D&T | 0 |

periences with prisoners, and experience the rewards of participating in egalitarian relationships.

Because of role blending, situations are examined as problems that affect all community members, and the officer becomes a respected authority on human behavior.

- 6: At ACTEC, the way they're training these guys here, they are great, they know how to deal with problems . . . Not in the academy where they learn karate and stuff like that. If you come in as a human being, you don't have to know karate. If you come in to really do 8 hours to try and help somebody, you ain't going to need that. Because the guys are going to know - when these guys are here to help us to stay out. You're going to get a percentage of them that ain't going to want to help, but then it's up to these people that are working to see "well, this guy don't want no help, he's just using the program." Make your reports and move him out. If you see the guy's a phony, move him out and bring someone else in. They do all of this here, they are part of us, and they are able to make decisions like that.

* * * *

- 8: Yeah, it helps much more when you're seeing people who care you're alive than it is to see an officer standing there twiddling his thumbs for 8 ½ hours. Waiting for the clock to go by. The officer who came down to get me - compared to Elmira, every 2 out of 3 hacks in Elmira is carrying a billy club. This guy comes down and his shirt's unbuttoned, he looks like he wants to go home and get drunk right now instead of being fresh, bright and involved, like here. Much more relaxed. And that whole feeling just carried on for the first week. And finally, as I really got into the program, I began to really examine first what a guilt I had from my crime, and I started to resolve that. And I learned to look at parts of my personality that even though I haven't made an effort to change them, I know that there's things about me that I do have to change. It's pointed out to me by other inmates, inmate therapists, counselors. The guards too, everybody And it was kind of a total experience because everybody there cares. Whereas back in Elmira, . . . it's all guys just sitting there waiting. And at Elmira everybody's looking out for himself, for himself and his clique. At

ACTEC everybody cares. Even if a guy doesn't care about himself, somebody else cares that he's not caring. And there's a very good feeling. It felt like being wanted again. Which is something that I personally needed a great deal at the time. And the guards contribute to this.

* * * *

Officers are immediately available, and advertised as helpers. Neither long term therapy, nor "crisis intervention," requires submitting counseling slips, or otherwise soliciting distant and bureaucratically shrouded reaches of professionalism in order to get help, or waiting endlessly for a half-hour with a prison psychiatrist.

- 6: Well, number one, if you had a problem, you could go down and talk to your therapist. If your therapist wasn't around, there was one on 24 hours a day and they would be called in. Like just say if it was a letter from home and your father was sick or something like that, they could arrange immediately, it would be left onto them, instead of getting Dr. Marshall or the warden, whether it was an emergency call and you could call. Number two, the officers, I'd say 8 out of 10 were involved with the program. They were older officers but they dealt as a human being. A lot of guys would fly off of them, hey, take a walk, you know. And they would tell you the same thing. Or if you don't want to talk, you take the walk, come back when you're ready to it. And then you're able to deal with it. But the program itself is a lot more relaxed, because you were able when you were feeling stress or when you did . . . you had to have somebody to talk to; you had the staff and the other inmates and you could float around and you could relate to the staff. It's not like some obscure thing in the administration building. They have offices that you could go to and you don't have long waiting lists because of the size of the institution and you didn't have to wait three hours to wait to see somebody and in an emergency situation you would see someone in a few hours. So it was like you had people to help you deal with things if you need it.

* * * *

In D&T, the inmate counselors augment the therapy staff, and live and work with prisoners in the unit. They are trained in communication skills, but their strength and credibility comes from their knowledge of the typical stresses of life in confinement, and the kinds of problems that weak prisoners face. Inmate counselors have been found in other studies to be useful elements in therapeutic communities, and they are generally applauded by prisoners. ¹⁵ They are particularly liked by prisoners who find staff contacts embarrassing. Two of the three prisoner counselors were lifers who had served thirty-five years between them, and had received a number of "hits" or additional terms from the parole boards. They were, in the eyes of the other prisoners, real men concerned with change, and with no symbols of office to protect.

- 1: I like to be able to go to an inmate as well as a doctor, which I can do now, but it's always something about somebody being a professional. Or that you feel he's supposed to have the answers or something. And that is not always true. Most of the time experience speaks better than book knowledge.

* * * *

Living-learning

Maxwell Jones has characterized a living-learning situation as social learning, which "implies a two way communication along with the free expression of feeling and a willingness to become involved in an examination of one's own and other people's attitudes and behaviors with a view to bringing about change and the establishment of equilibrium" ¹⁶ In such a situation, one analyzes ongoing problems with immediate face-to-face con-

frontation of all the people involved. Each person acts as a problem solver for all others. In D&T, the close living-working situations and inevitable conflicts are aired in group counseling and community meetings..

- 2: If there is a person in the unit that you don't get along with then you can actually take that problem on the floor and ask the person why. You can actually resolve the problem. Whereas if you're in a regular state prison this pressure will keep building up and you're going to end up in a fight or being cut or cutting the person yourself. Because these pressures build up over time Some people the only solution they have is to fight. Now in here you can talk to people, you can resolve these problems. If you get into an argument with somebody you can take it to the floor and then sometimes you can find out why he's angry with you. And sometimes it's over a card game or over something that somebody thinks you said about them and you might never have said it. It's a rumor and then you can resolve this thing. And I would say in most cases, in my type of case, I would say that you can resolve it And you learn from this, you learn what causes problems in a crowded place like prison, and you learn how to deal with yourself. So it's not just that you solve problems but you learn more about the problems themselves.

* * * *

- 3: You didn't just deal with your problems inside. You dealt with the problems on the outside that got you in trouble. And like mine it was drinking and flying off the handle. Like they would help me deal with mine and when they was finished with me and I turned around and helped them deal with theirs.

* * * *

Living-learning involves other spheres of unit life as well. Prisoners work with peer supervision, are encouraged to accept responsibility for unit decisions, for performing work adequately, for demonstrating interest in change, and for helping others toward behavior change. Committees and counseling

sessions have mixed groups, so that the young and old, black and white, less mature and more mature, homosexual and heterosexual, work and solve problems together. People who would otherwise share few interests, and would avoid one another or deprecate one another, are forced to face such feelings, and to develop superordinate goals in small groups.

- 3: You had people coming in from the outside and socials - women, young girls and college students and guys come in and you learn to deal also with the outside - to get yourself back adjusted, you know. Right. Because everyone was learning to deal with themselves and when you have to deal with yourself you ain't got much time to be messing around and irritate other people. You deal with all kinds of people, you learn to work together without problems. It's very different than prison.

* * * *

- 14: We all work together. I might be on this committee, and I may not like who else is on it, but we manage, and we deal with the problems that come up.

* * * *

Participation in community life, with its attention to detail, its emphasis on specificity and honesty also leads to a confession of humanity. Such a confession usually takes the form of dropping a pretense of strength, machismo aggressiveness. In prison, many of the D&T prisoners describe themselves as having maintained a front or a false image of insularity, disrespect for officials, adoption of criminalistic values, strength and coolness. Such a front is perceived as necessary to survival, and as essential if one wishes acceptance by other prisoners. Within D&T, in a culture that emphasizes personal exposure, the mask is not as necessary, and is stripped away by other prisoners. Erving Goffman has used the term personal front, much as prisoners do. He comments:

Whatever an individual does and however he appears, he knowingly and unknowingly makes information available concerning the attributes that might be imputed to him and hence the categories in which he might be placed. The status symbolism in his "personal front" provides information about his group and aggregate affiliations . . . 17

In prisons, the personal front of D&T residents was often alien to his real self, consequently precariously maintained and transparent. The opportunity to drop such forced posturing is experienced as liberating by D&T residents.

- 9: It was like hiding under a clown, a funny face, being locked up for the first time. I had to put on a second image. On the street I was free and open. I was projecting someone else in the prison. I was like a hard guy, or tried to be . . . Here it was a lot more open and stuff, not actually freedom but guys related to one another, mixed and everything. We had one to one therapy, one to one rap sessions. I introduced myself right away, and I mentioned right off what I was in for, I didn't have to. And they didn't pester me, which was a pretty good thing. Although I wanted to deal with it, wanted to discuss it, wanted to bring out my problem, the reason why I committed it. And gradually I felt a lot more freer up to now about this, that I have been able to talk about it to people. Group therapy is even a good exercise. I have never been able to express everything that I would want to. I'm the type of person that holds everything in. All my feelings, my emotions and it bottles up and I feel lousy. So at ACTEC I'd been advised to bring it out in the open, spit it out, discuss anything I want. And it's made me feel more clear in my mind and myself. That when I got out on the streets I'll be a better man inside and I'll be able to project my feelings to people, family and people like this, that were afraid to get into anything, they didn't know me as a person. I feel that ACTEC has helped me and will continue to help.

* * * *

- 5: The role is like played - nothing bothers me or if something does bother me you will never know about it. This keeps people away from me. Because

you don't want nobody to know you because if they feel if they know you they find out something that you did wrong and they use it against you so it is the most comfortable role to get into . . . I met the officers and the staff and they treated you like you weren't behind the wall. They treated you like people and not a number or a thing. That is - like you were people and as soon as I got there I picked up the atmosphere. And there was nothing wrong and so I was like me myself, for the first time, and you had to drop the front because at the meetings they don't like your fake much . . . I had to be more myself and speak the way I feel and act the way I feel.

* * * *

- 3: We didn't have to do, you know, out and out 20 something hours a day, deal with other people - deal with the shit that they are going to be slinging at you because everybody was too wrapped up in trying to find themselves and dealing with themselves and stop all the bullshit and the liberality instead of keeping up that big front - that tough guy, gangster. The majority of the roles was dropped you know.

* * * *

The Prisoners Themselves

Twelve prisoners cited characteristics of the unit population as positive features. Prisoners describe each other as without serious prejudice, as "brothers under the skin," and as concerned with change. Even when interpersonal or clique disputes form, they are resolved communally, by being publicly exposed and discussed. Race and sexual relations are not always among status equals, but forced interaction in small groups charged with resolving disputes, contributes to a lessening of such problems.

Shared vulnerability also contributes to a feeling of "weness." While it has been demonstrated experimentally that subjects low in self esteem and high in anxiety tend to express

stronger affiliation needs than the high esteem-low anxieties, such needs are often preempted because such subjects are often not in demand as friends. ¹⁸ In D&T, friendships are described as much more common than in prison. A relatively high degree of homogeneity in experiences, interests, and needs combine with status equality and shared goals to facilitate friendships.

- 9: You can make friendships, you can make real friendships, and you can feel free to rap, to talk, to act as a group and do things . . . Yes, I would say this ACTEC group is a group where we help each other. If you're feeling low sometime, myself or someone else will approach you and want to be your buddy. And all the time . . . Well, the county and reception centers, prisons, we're all for ourself. I was for myself and it was just separated from other life. ACTEC acts as a community in itself, as a group.

* * * *

When permitted to be oneself, one is permitted to be a friend to others as well. Dropping a front as fearless and dangerous permits the building of bonds through expressions of shared humanity and oftentimes, inadequacy.

Authority and Democracy

In D&T, while the rules for expulsion from the program are clear, most rules are remarkably flexible, and are modified daily. Prisoners are expected to test rules, and to participate in the codification of new rules. Violations provide grist for community meetings, and serve as vehicles for meaningful decisions and to encourage individual responsibility for actions. Most problem behaviors are handled in meetings, with contracts and other suggested resolutions made by prisoners themselves. Disciplinary procedures are individualized and non-bureaucratic.

Ritualized authority is deemphasized. Prisoners supervise many of their own activities, including work and educational activities, in conjunction with staff. Prisoners have responsibility for supervising meals and assist with supervision of programs and work areas. Most prisoners walk freely about ACTEC with facility passes. There are few cell searches or personal body searches, few "out of place" infractions or "bullshit tickets," that make up the bulk of prison discipline courts.

16: If you and an officer have some type of confrontation, it can be discussed with you and the officer, and that's as far as it goes. Whereas in prison if you and an officer have a confrontation, he writes a ticket and you go to the adjustment committee. In ACTEC it's not designed like that. It's designed where you can have one on one with the officer. You can express you to him and he can express him to you.

* * * *

5: Behind the walls they carry the clubs and I am a tough guy - you keep your line and ACTEC is not like that. They give you rope. They give you plenty of rope. They actually let you be loose. You are still in jail but it don't bother you as much. We help to run the place, we work with the officers not against them.

* * * *

Work and program responsibilities are delegated to prisoners as well. Workers who come late, or who erupt, or who do not perform work adequately find help as well as censure from the prisoner work committee, and from supervisors and officers assigned to work settings. While any such action may be cause for disciplinary action in a prison setting, with options of reclassification, idle status, or segregation, in D&T the behavior is the focus of interest and study, rather than simply of punish-

ment. Prisoners who find work attendance difficult are assigned to other prisoners who are responsible for ensuring that they rise at 6:30. Prisoners who are frustrated in vocational programs are provided special assignments such as unit maintenance jobs until they evidence a reduction in their potential for violence.

6: If I was uptight when I came out, I would go down to see the work supervisor. "I'm not going to work this morning." Why? "I don't feel good." I don't have to worry about getting a write up. Little things that they don't have in the prisons yet that they have there to relax you. Like but you can't get over on them. They bring this up at a meeting and then they suggest maybe different jobs, or hours, or someone to help you out.

* * * *

21: I had authority problems in prison, a lot of problems that I wasn't aware of. And I used to cause trouble with officers myself. Here they don't let you, like I even try to upset them sometimes, and they sit down and say relax and let's look at this thing, this problem I have . . . Now maybe you can do this, or that, or maybe I have a suggestion about what I can do, or another inmate has, we work together to do all this.

* * * *

In D&T power is conferred on prisoners, and the theme of powerlessness, so commonly expressed in typical prisons, is therefore virtually absent.

7: We have real control here. We have help of course. But we see everything and it's not like we report things, like somebody stole someone's watch, but we bring up problems in the meetings, and we use like hypotheticals, and we discuss getting along, and getting over. We use hearings and keeplocks as a last resort, we do make a lot of decisions in here, it's unheard of in prison.

* * * *

Negative Aspects of the Diagnostic and Treatment Unit

Table 15.8 provides a listing of expressions of discontent with D&T. Negative comments are far less numerous than positive ones, although they take a greater variety of forms.

The modal negative theme, as with most other niches, is that of personal stigma. Unit prisoners are known as "bugs" within other units of ACTEC, and often run into problems in less supervised areas. Several prisoners have found work in the integrated vocational programs, or recreation in the shared yard, to be unmanageable, and seldom leave the unit. Most prisoners, however, find that the stigma of residence in the unit constitutes an irritant rather than a real danger.

23: We are supposed to be labeled as the bugs. The other units - they didn't know what they was missing. As far as I am concerned, I have seen other units and I have been on other units and not living there, but I have been over there and I have seen how they operate, Unit IV is the best damn unit that they have. We have the best program going.

* * * *

16: Other inmates, you know. "here comes a white kid from ACTEC. Maybe he's a queer," and stuff like that. And you have to always be alert. Somebody might look at you, or you might look at somebody, what is this?

* * * *

One prisoner resents the label of "mentally ill" and feels that it may also hurt his parole chances.

4: Well, the label and the feelings are that they're unjust and being sentenced all over again. The state is leaving off where the courts left off and the warden when we get here is picking up where

Table 15.8

Perceived Negative Aspects of Diagnostic and Treatment

| | <u>Frequency of Mention</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) <u>Stigma</u> ; difficult to mingle with other prisoners; called bugs; difficult to return to population elsewhere; parole chances hurt | 7 |
| (2) Encounter sessions <u>privacy-violating</u> ; self revelation painful, gratuitous; makes us too vulnerable | 5 |
| (3) <u>Unit is unsafe</u> ; too much freedom; too open, long lock-outs; open doors, not segregated enough | 3 |
| (4) <u>Too far for visits</u> ; it is Siberia | 2 |
| (5) <u>Brainwashing</u> here, trying to forcibly change our behavior | 2 |
| (6) <u>Racial prejudice</u> , no blacks or Puerto Ricans here; all white | 2 |
| (7) <u>Overt homosexuality</u> , playing; is irritating; offensive | 2 |
| (8) <u>Prisoners overly self-conscious</u> ; non-solidarity expressing; passive, too dependent, inadequate | 1 |
| -----***-----***-----***----- | |
| No negative comments with respect to D&T | 6 |

that left off. And everywhere we go the inmate picks up. And they know where we are and they get bad vibes just hearing about it. So therefore you're in the middle of the whole thing. We're getting sentenced by the judge and then by the people and then by the warden and then by the inmates. And we're being treated like that everywhere we go. And it's a hell of a struggle. And a guy can lose his sanity.

* * * *

A second problem, described by five prisoners in D&T, is the discomfort occasioned by the need to confess inadequacy, to relate personal problems, and to explore behavior in public confrontations during community meetings. The community is felt to exercise an improper invasion of privacy. While traditional prisons seldom require much self-disclosure, D&T emphasizes stripping away of the mask of insularity, which includes the credentials of respect. One is urged to explore one's past, as well as the causes of one's behavior in the unit. Prisoners sometimes find it difficult to conceal or rationalize humiliating past errors. The permissive atmosphere of the unit is perceived as less permissive when one's own "acting-out" or violations become valid topics for group discussion and dissection. Attendance at meetings is mandatory, with continued residence dependent upon proper demonstrations of interest and motivation. Accordingly, a prisoner cannot simply withdraw, establish distance between the community and himself, or walk away. He is forced to deal with exposure, and with the self defiled in therapy.

26: The first time I got the hot seat where everybody would start riding you, I just said the

hell with it, but that is hard to do, they don't stop, and you are not participating in the program and stuff . . . so you bullshit your way out of it, you pretend to go along. But I don't like it, you have no privacy, and they ask about everything. It doesn't seem to have much to do with therapy, they just like getting on you.

* * * *

20: I don't care for the way the group sessions are run . . . where everybody starts jumping on you and riding you to the point where you confess to stuff - okay like every man has got something in him that is buried. So he doesn't want to talk about it. Now what they are doing is playing and punching at your brain to find out what made you tick. Now for myself what has happened in my past before I got busted is my business, or even after I got busted I don't have to put up with this stuff.

* * * *

One sex offender describes the results of revelations concerning his offense:

2: This never happened in Clinton, because when I was in Clinton, you never told anybody what kind of a problem that you had. When I came over to ACTEC I had to put it over on the floor . . . And this made it very hard for me. And I tried to get around it and I did. But some people can't get around it. Because you might be out there talking to somebody and then somebody else might accuse you of something. And they make it worse than it is. And actually all I'm here for is abusing a 11 or 12 year old kid, and I didn't do nothing. All I did was ask him. And they had it down that I did - they actually accused me right on the floor. Not on the floor, but one kid accused me of being a baby fucker. And I said I'm not a baby fucker, that's not my stick. But the thing is they don't have your record and they don't know your record. And the first thing you know if you're not careful you're going to end off piping somebody or getting piped and there have been a couple of times even though I haven't. And the only thing that I thought about that kept me from doing this was that if you do it you blow the program and you don't get any help and they send the word back to your lawyer that you're not cooperating. And they don't realize the problem that you've got. This is a very serious problem.

* * * *

A variety of themes make up the remaining expressions of dissatisfaction. Two black prisoners expressed irritation at the white homogeneity of the unit, several prisoners expressed anger at the behavior modification emphasis of the unit which threatened their autonomy.

All told, six prisoners expressed no dissatisfaction with D&T

Conclusion

The approach taken in D&T with respect to both the study of and change of behavior is transactional. All elements of the prison environment, including people, space, resources, roles and memberships, are considered to be possibly useful implements of change, or possibly noxious influences. Monitoring of behavior focusses on action and process, not on "violent men" or organizational or physical features of environments. Behaviors are studied as minute scenarios taking place in small scale settings. Settings can be orchestrated to encourage some behaviors and discourage others.

Prisoners, staff, officers are seen as unique participants in community life. They are perceived, in this model, as creative, and active men who can solve problems of living. Setting characteristics and organizational rules are, in part, user-defined and flexible and permit some freedom of choice.

Traditional prison mental health care provides respite for inmates who are victimized. The environments are typically inflexible, providing simply segregation. Prisoners are treated as objects of change, with situational influences considered irremedial or irrelevant. Prisoners remain passive recipients

of control, custody, and change.

In D&T, authority is shared. The setting promotes a dependence of one man on his fellows where respect for individual rights translates into respect for one another. The setting is also "soft," permissive, and egalitarian; men do not erupt, manipulate, and take advantage of security dilution to commit acts of victimization or violence. Some prisoners do express dissatisfaction with D&T, because several prisoners are mismatched with the degree of openness required by the setting; several see a conspiracy in therapy and its "illusion of freedom;" several feel unsafe anywhere. However, for the majority, the program's objectives are congruent with their personal objectives, and the milieu is described as humanistic as well as therapeutic.

The setting is not without problems. Race relations, while improved in the unit, still reflect the problems of race relations outside prison. Black nationalism leads to charges of militancy, or staff discrimination. Some prisoners remain fearful of the few blacks in the unit, and pointedly ignore and avoid them. Some staff find the surrender of former roles as custodians difficult. Permissiveness does result in some "acting-out," as well as interpersonal disputes.

However, it clearly is possible for small groups of like minded prisoners to hammer out a social order that works. Small size and homogeneity may be ingredients in the formula of success. To build a therapeutic subculture requires that people know one another, and are placed in a space in which behavior can be

studied and understood. For the marginally endowed, a small setting also provides better opportunity for involvement in setting activities.¹⁹ Even less competent inmates find that their skills are necessary to man the setting, and they have fewer opportunities to withdraw. Vulnerable inmates can also share experiences and insights, are more easily provided safety from predators, and are less easily displaced from enriched corners of settings.

The setting shares elements of safety, freedom and communion niches, as well as elements of good time and ego enhancing settings. It is not simply a benign, protective setting, but a mechanism that promotes competence. The program seeks to protect prisoners from serious and gratuitous anxiety, but not from real life problems. It faces the need to distinguish threat from challenge, orchestrating the second while minimizing the first.

Therapy within the unit is intensive, and dominates perceptions of the setting. Prisoners are provided with continuous encouragement to solve problems, and the risks of failure are clear and manageable. Efforts at encouraging risk-taking are carefully modulated and orchestrated. D&T prisoners have typically experienced adaptative failure elsewhere. Their approach to environments is analogous to what Seligman describes as "helplessness," characterized by a failure to strive based on evidence of past failures.²⁰ And we do see, in D&T, a dramatic return of hope. Prisoners are no longer helpless, anxiety ridden, or violent-explosive. They see the situation as predictable, legible because of size and normative definitions,

and generally safe. The strong therapeutic milieu quickly convinces its charges of its humanity and safety, and is promotive of a group consensus for change.

In D&T, prisoners are in a qualified democracy, since privacy is reduced and membership depends on participation, or on a pretense at participation, in the program itself. It is a directed therapy with confrontational tactics and considerable peer pressure. Prisoners are furthermore assigned without options to work and educational programs, to individual and group therapists, to committees and decision making bodies, and are encouraged and prodded to accept responsibility, to make decisions, to explore behavior, and to engage in and experience situations that test competence.

Whether prisoners are completely stripped of vulnerability is questionable. Most expressed fear of return to a regular prison population. Most remain in the unit until they are paroled, or forcefully transferred. When it was first organized, the program intended to provide prisoners with skills, knowledge of their vulnerabilities, and social competence that would enable them to survive in other institutional milieus. It is not likely that such a goal was a reasonable one, because to mainstream prisoners, one must have a reasonably safe stream. The skills learned in D&T, such as honesty, acceptance of weakness, and the abandonment of prejudice, may be such that a prison setting presents a pathological and insoluble obstacle to further change.

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Chapter 16: Implications

The study of human behavior has, until recently, adopted theoretical perspectives that emphasize primarily either individual personality or environmental determinants. The polar positions are most apparent in contrasting psychoanalysis and behaviorism, introspection and S-R links, and controversies such as nature-nurture. It is only recently that psychologists have abandoned such incomplete and artificially polar positions and have become concerned with "interactionism" and "transactionalism."

As we have emphasized throughout, such a perspective implies a mosaic-like approach to the study of behavior, with the goal being an elaboration and description of the relationships between men and environments.

The study of human behavior in prison may be sidetracked by brief and artificial controversies about importation-indigenous origins of adjustment patterns, or ideological positions which blame the environment or the prisoner for asocial behavior. However, analogous to the increasing subtlety of the study of human behavior generally, we see prison theorists sculpting old theories to accommodate new perspectives. For instance, Irwin has recently termed his earlier importation theory "anachronistic" and has urged an "interchange" theory of behavior which includes the prison as an element within a larger environment consisting of free world institutions, class origins, gang ties.¹ Carroll has maintained that deprivation and importation are relative concepts, which may vary as prisons and prisoners do.² Thomas has been recently emphatic in his cry for an interactionist portrait of prison behavior:

Previous research on the consequences of confinement has demonstrated the importance of a variety of influences. Many of these are directly linked to the problems and pressures of confinement, particularly confinement in custodially-oriented institutions. Many more are not. Because of this, it is becoming increasingly obvious that further theoretical developments in this important area of criminology are premised on our ability to better understand and better integrate a broad spectrum of factors that determine the impact of confinement.³

However, while there has been movement toward interactionism, those concerned with interaction have centered on "objective" and measurable characteristics such as organizational variables, inmate characteristics (age, social class, race, marital status) and tangible environment features (size, maximum-medium security, treatment orientation, crowding, staffing levels, racial compositions). However, the problem, as transactionalists see it, is not only one of increasing the subtlety of one's theory to accommodate a variety of influences but also of being sensitive to the environment as it impacts on the individual and is construed by him.

In our study, behavior is contextual and involves diverse concerns and interests, responding to aspects of prison settings that are meaningful to inmates, i.e., benign or stressful. We have assumed that adaptation is mediated psychologically, and we have therefore translated environmental configurations into personal categories such as "niches," "ego-enhancing settings," "good-time" settings, environmental "mismatches." Such relational concepts as niche not only point out the variety and importance of the micro-environment in prison life (a level of environment typically ignored or discussed in stereotypic

fashion by prison theorists) but on a theoretical level permit the simultaneous consideration of a number of environmental characteristics and human concerns described by prisoners themselves to be important.

Theoretical Implications of our Research

1. Niches as units of study. The study of congruence in environmental psychology has been confined largely to laboratory exercises. It has focussed on phenomena that are rarely encountered naturally (instrumented fit between self and self-ideal, interpersonal fit in competitive task situations, fit between teaching methods and trait anxiety) or been featured in formal theoretical speculations proposing various models of congruence. Only a few scholars (Pervin, Stern) have explored congruence in real life environments among real life user-clients.

In this study, we have sought to operationalize the concept of congruence within a set of prison subenvironments. Congruence could have been examined at man-environment levels either more general or specific than that of niche. The concept of niche refers only to a special limited subset of congruent transactions, those within small scale subenvironments. The scale is thus an arbitrary but not illogical one. Niches as used here are particularly useful units when the object is studying adaptation in large institutions. Their confining nature, and their division into formally defined subenvironments, lend themselves to further environmental study and disaggregation. Within such environmental units men spend sufficient time for the proximate environment to gain significance.

Further, thinking of niches permits a way to conceptualize and to describe the environmental transactions distinctive to particular subgroups (niche inhabitants). Niche permits a way of typing congruence, using the fit-relevant referents of different populations of users.

This does not mean that transactions translate neatly into configurations of personal attributes that correspond to singular concerns and neat patterns of physical and social characteristics of settings. Transactions are too fluid, environmental variables are too complex, the determinants of concerns are too variable, to yield such neat findings. Identical concerns are expressed by prisoners of widely varying personal characteristics and equivalent settings are perceived differently, in terms of diverse aspirations. The officer's mess may provide high levels of supervision and staff control (Protective Niche), opportunities for contraband dealing (Good-Time Setting), a self valued and usable skill (Enhancing Setting) or may be translated as a demeaning service-oriented training job incongruent with a self image as free and skilled (Mismatch).

The implications of niche is that there is great variability in response to equivalent milieus. It further suggests that with a knowledge of the important concerns of men in an environment (which are in part conditioned by social and cultural strengths and liabilities, age, sentence length, aspirations and skills), it may be possible to predict the kind of setting a person will choose, or find congenial.

2. Niches and Costs. Rene Dubos has used the term niche to characterize man's active and creative adaptation to environments. But Dubos comments warningly, "The very fact that man readily achieves biological and socio-cultural adjustments to so many different kinds of stresses and undesirable conditions is dangerous for his welfare and for his future."⁴ Niches are often creative and imaginative, sometimes merely fortuitous, but not always adaptive. They may include settings that merely encourage or maintain disengagement, permit the expression of chronic resentment, provide insulation and passivity. Such adaptations sometimes maintain pathology, as for a schizophrenic who may feel satisfied only in a rage or in a closet. It is evident that in some cases men make intentional and unintentional tradeoffs to secure perceived stress reduction. Safety entails sacrificing Activity and Support; Freedom requires relying on one's self and involves a sacrifice of dependency benefits (Feedback). Safety may result in physical integrity but also in cultural parochialism, or sensory deprivation.

The point is that the measurement of congruence must include a weighing of tradeoffs and costs. Congruence typically has been explored as absolute, assuming that a transaction is congruent or incongruent, that one is satisfied or dissatisfied. A calculus of congruence involves not only perceived risks, but the calculated or inevitable tradeoffs made to enter a niche, including the sacrifice of higher value satisfactions.

3. Niches and Change. The concept of niche does not imply static transactions. Subenvironments may change as their

supervisors are transferred, security requirements change, new rules are established, or they become under or over populated.

It is obvious that the niche is subordinate to more powerful environmental units, the organization, the political climate, unions, civil service. Less obvious changes occur independent of environmental redefinition, refunding, or alteration. Niches are perceptual, and perceptual sets are fluid. Toch and McLean state:

. . . every human being is a product - a constantly changing product - of the situations through which he moves. Each encounter with life leaves its chink in the armor or depression in the hide; the person who arises in the morning is never the same one who returns to his pillow that evening. His successor may be broadened, chastised, wiser or warier;...more likely he may see things a little differently or feel somewhat different. Whatever the change, it represents a deposit of perceptions and will, in turn, affect future perceptions.⁵

A prisoner who is doing well and is satisfied in the mason shop may find that his satisfaction plummets following a threat with a brick by his classmates. His Safety concerns may escalate, and his Support concerns may decline. A prisoner who receives a parole denial may find that his Freedom concerns skyrocket and his Support concerns erode as he contemplates the use of his barber certification in five years. A prisoner whose self-esteem rises, may raise his sights in relation to the challenge of the prison world.

With longitudinal studies of congruence and niche, the dynamics of niche perception and change can be illustrated. We can illuminate the kinds of transactions that encourage prisoners to surface higher level goals (Maslow), the kinds of transactions that are particularly stable over time. We can

answer questions such as what things need we guarantee to people before they seek higher level goals; what strengths do people acquire that give them the competence to search for meaning?

4. Dissatisfaction and Chronicity. At its simplest, congruence assumes a best fit for everyone. With respect to vacations, "fit" means Disneyland for families with small children, Bermuda for honeymooners with tennis rackets. Of course, we may err because of imperfect diagnoses. Disneyland may be crowded and Bermuda racially tense. A more complex problem is that some dissonance and dissatisfaction may be person-initiated and maintained, and extend to otherwise congruent settings.

Prisoners differ in the degree to which prisons can accommodate them. Powerlessness, helplessness, uselessness, etc. are in some cases expressions of dissatisfaction which appear unrelated to subsettings. We saw with respect to powerlessness that prisoners with stressed Freedom concerns assign meanings consistent with powerlessness to many settings, including otherwise low security and "soft" ones. Similarly, prisoners who have experienced few opportunities, and who have suffered the effects of sporadic schooling and unemployment, may approach enriched settings as "useless."

The implication is that we cannot expect too much from efforts at facilitating matches or other environmental manipulations. While some incongruence may be reduced through man-environment match, other incongruence requires attending to qualities of the self as well as to situations.

5. Formal and Informal Niches. We have distinguished between spontaneous ameliorative transactions that are described by stressed prisoners in routine prison settings (informal niches) and staff-assisted transactions in designated special environments. This distinction has implications for adaptation in a variety of settings.

Among special stressed subpopulations we find alcoholics in drunk tanks, in alcoholic treatment units, as well as in skid rows, and boarding houses. Such distinctions are important because we can learn from them about the options of men under stress. The "least drastic alternative" criterion requires that we use the most normal possible environmental resources as survival aids. It means understanding the costs and tradeoffs of single room occupancy hotels, beach communities, half way houses. Niche includes a graduated range of settings, from carefully selected informal housing and jobs, to supportive and creative oases for those without the competence to survive in more informal settings.

6. Threat and Challenge. When dealing with stress, one cannot escape the distinction between threat and challenge, though such a distinction implies value judgements. The assumption we make is that a challenging environment is a better way to live, over the long term, than the self-maintenance-oriented niche. Congruence involves ameliorative and enhancing forms, and moves from fit to better fit to best fit. In university settings, for example, we have evidence that students express satisfaction with high student-teacher involvement, high feedback receptivity from teachers and friendliness, but classrooms in which students learn

appear to be quite different. Such classrooms often emphasize competition, clarity and order, control and rules. They may also result in ulcers and phobias and sickness.

Using a qualitative template on niches, we can explore settings that are nutritious in various ways, and those that are merely life sustaining. We can distinguish human qualities that sustain the enhancing qualities of settings, or that fertilize them.

Practical Implications

1. Environmental Sensitization. Staff prove to be oftentimes unaware of ameliorative environments, and of variegated prison stress. They have limited awareness of ways in which some settings are "better than others," and often view prison stress in personal psychodynamic terms.

Transactional approaches insist that we understand our own and other's perception of environments, to avoid parochialism, stereotyping, and error. If staff and prisoners discuss and disagree concerning the climates of settings, or about the values and purposes underlying the climates, some degree of strain could be expected. A study of perceptual blind spots may identify hidden or subliminal environmental effects, felt only by users or by special subpopulations of users. Feedback concerning the intended and actual effects of settings is a possible training strategy. Prisoners and staff can thus be taught the referents of stress and of stress reduction, support, growth.

Staff may be unaware of the ease with which they can create humane environments in tough places, and the prevalence

of life-saving supervisory styles among their peers. Prisoners may similarly be unaware of the range of opportunities of prison life, or of the existence of low pressure subsettings. In training, prisoners and staff can assist each other in mapping the prison and identifying niches.

More systematic evaluations of settings may also be useful. Evaluations of university sources has long been a feature of student life. Student course evaluations measure teachers on the quality of instruction, the objectivity of grading, course "demandingness," the accessibility of the instructor, among a wide range of criteria. We can do similar kinds of evaluations with prison programs, including measures of quality of supervision, restrictiveness, amount of activity permitted or required, work difficulty level.

If a particular subsetting results in chronic dissatisfaction for most residents, consideration should be given to closing or altering it. This is made difficult by the fact that prisons have purposes other than promoting fit of subenvironments. But we must include satisfaction, ego-enhancement and survival somewhere in our criteria for program development.

There is functional interdependentness of staff and prisoners, because both have a stake in providing a safe, humane, controlled prison environment. The joint identification of destructive relationships and other situational problems provides an avenue for building community and recognizing common goals, as well as improving the reliability of meanings assigned to environments.

2. Orientation. Prisoners classified to a correctional facility are unlikely to be familiar with it, and those needing information most are those least likely to have it. Clemmer observes that:

When men have served time before, entering the penitentiary they look the situation over and almost immediately express a desire for a certain kind of work. When strictly first offenders come to prison however they seldom express a desire for a particular kind of work, but are willing to do anything . . . Within a period of a few months however these same men who had no choice of work develop preferences and make their desires known.⁷

The problem is that orientation takes time, and a good deal of stress may have been felt in the interim. Late comers may be preempted from settings by the experienced, and the incompetent may find that their preferences make little difference to their choices. Prisoners are unlikely to risk much in their exploration for better matches, and will temper their choices accordingly.

It is illogical, and possibly irresponsible, that prisons know more about their clients than prisoners know about the environments to which they are sent. Prisoners enter prisons following claustrophobic confinement in classification centers. Information about prison may be based on horror stories heard in jail, and "most favorable light" portraits of classification analysts. No efforts are made to prepare prisoners for the settings which eventually house, employ, or train them. Introductory admissions lectures are generically phrased and non-informative.

One way to inform prisoners of the programs, activities, and settings available in the prison is through written program

descriptions. Moos has suggested some guidelines to be followed in drafting such descriptions. He suggests emphasis on (1) relevant ecological variables and environmental design features; (2) small scale behavior settings within the program, and schedules for their use (recreation, study, work, meals); (3) organizational structure, rules and regulations, staff-resident ratio, staff training information; (4) background characteristics of participants - age, length of imprisonment, race, origins; (5) the purpose of the program or setting.⁸ With formal programs, and integral living units, such written guidelines and program descriptions make more sense than when they are applied to routine prison maintenance and industry assignments. But even in such cases, prisoners should receive early briefings on the purpose of the setting, its activities, the types of inmates it contains, its inmate-perceived climate, and staff perceptions of the setting (its reputation).

Such descriptors can help prisoners predict and choose among settings and can help classifiers in understanding what settings are available. Since effort is now expended in measurement of prisoner attributes and interests and characteristics, at least some effort can be spent in finding out what settings are available for the inmate once he is assigned. The accumulation and presentation of relevant information about the prison can improve the correspondence between expectations and opportunities.

A second way of improving the orientation of prisoners is through the use of trained prisoner orientation aides. Introductory groups (welcome wagons with a classificatory agenda) can help provide environmental information to prisoners to

assist in rational decisions. In formal niches in which welcoming groups of inmates are a program element the process clearly helps to build community and reduce anxiety.

Novice prisoners, particularly those who clearly need special support, may be linked with prisoners who are formally trained and assigned the task of assisting them with settling in. More sophisticated linking using the implications of congruence could match a college program participant with a prisoner who has Support concerns, could link a subcultural leader to a prisoner concerned with Safety, and invoke a counselor or chaplain for a prisoner concerned with Feedback.

The physical environment can also be made to serve orientation functions. In Clinton Correctional Facility, the yard does not resemble any prison yard in New York State. Most of the yard, a large sloping hill leading to a more traditional recreation area, is divided into group territories or "courts." The area has been divided by prisoners, who use benches and paths and bits of metal and cardboard as boundary demarcations. It is generally described as resembling a hobo jungle, but the area is more an English garden than a jungle. The courts are relatively stable, and provide control to the yard. Prisoners are free to do what they want with people of their own ilk. Activities in the courts are sedentary, including game playing, eating, talking, and reading. The courts are surveilled by officers on tiny stands, much like lifeguards on a beach. Officers and prisoners are forbidden to enter courts without permission of court "owners." Nearly all Clinton prisoners belong to a court, although weaker prisoners may share less valued courts, and a few prisoners may not be solicited to join a court at all.

In Clinton there is little of the testing, confronting, violence-ordering that occurs in the prison yards of other prisons. The yard is an arena in which self-controlled private activity is emphasized. Mutual avoidance is the goal of the prisoners, and the courts provide a structured way to avoid uncongenial companions and to seek congenial ones.

3. Using Staff Effectively. In many of our informal niches, there was a considerable degree of officer collaboration in, or tacit acceptance of, ameliorative niche properties. We also found that some officers were sensitive to the stresses later described by prisoners, and others were relatively immune to such identification. Robert Johnson, in tracing the helping dimension of the prison guard role, estimated that approximately 20% of officers participated in special intervention on behalf of prisoners.⁹ Such officers could be concentrated at decision points, on classification and reclassification committees, in reception centers and orientation steps, could staff existing niches, and be provided the resources with which to create new ones.

The increased involvement of staff serves to realize officer capabilities and interests, and to institutionalize and establish niches. It could reduce the oftentimes ritualized and extreme solutions of segregation placement. Informal prison niches are least drastic, more varied, immediate, involve the imagination and resources of line staff. Staff concern is particularly important to Feedback prisoners, the softness and subtlety of supervision is a major concern of Freedom prisoners, and the protective and paternalistic stance an issue for Safety prisoners. Staff links, playing roles as diverse as friend-

protector, laissez-faire and respect-emphasizing work foreman, may be provided to inmates with corresponding concerns.

A focus on niche means varying staff modes of interaction with different prisoners. It means the careful identification of officers and other personnel who "fit" better with some inmates than with others.

4. Ameliorating formal niches. There is a clear need for programming in formal niches. Our chapter "Beyond the Niche" describes one program that has demonstrated effectiveness with a stressed prison population. The therapeutic community in ACTEC provides escape from the prison mainline, and offers its own sub-culture. It reduces anxiety and threat while providing a means to increase the competencies of prisoners by providing tasks and encouraging activity and freedom.

The dangers of making improved protection units attractive to large numbers of "malingerers" are overstated. Democratized prison communities are difficult and demanding places, and it is much easier to line up to go to the messhall, or to stay in one's cell and receive a meal, than to decide what the menu shall be. It is easier to watch fishes swim in one's aquarium than to schedule and monitor activities for others; it is easier to express autonomy demands through reactance than to deal with democratized staff as equals. Community means that one must subordinate one's wishes to community norms and one must include the wishes of others. Increasing program activities and participation makes a unit more demanding, though they also make it more ego-enhancing. It is illogical to sequester prisoners in fear that setting enrichment will induce others to seek to enrich themselves.

5. Breaking Up Prisons. Niche creation brings its own problems. The strongest, or quickest, can monopolize better settings. Special classifications may, on the other hand, acquire the stigma that is now a clear and significant tradeoff for traditional niche residents.

Such dangers are minimized if the implications of niche are extended to everyone. Matching to subenvironments can be based upon criteria related to prison concerns and stresses, to relative competence, as well as to more traditional criteria of interest, security level, behavioral indices. Special classification applying to everyone reduces the stigma of difference, and implies organizational acceptance of prison subsetting differentiation as a primary goal. This implies thinking of large scale prisons in terms of smaller units. Unitizing is not a new idea to corrections. In a recent international survey of prisons, the authors concluded:

The only discernible change seen . . . is the smaller overall size of the institution and the classification of inmates into smaller groups of about 20 (Kuenla, Sweden) or 12 (Wrabness, England) or even as low as 8 (Metropolitan Correctional Center, New York).¹⁰

The fullest flowering of prison unitizing is found within the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Following successful implementation of functional units at several prisons in the late 1960's, the Bureau of Prisons has committed itself to the subdivision of all its prisons. By mid-1976, 26 of 31 prisons had been subdivided into smaller functional units. While the program has taken different forms in different prisons because of population and physical plant differences, the concept generally includes:

- (1) A small (50-100) group of offenders housed together,
- (2) inmates who work in close intensive treatment and supervision with a multi-disciplinary team of staff with offices in the living unit, and
- (3) a match of offender with program.¹¹

Unitizing has been described by its advocates as resulting in a safe, controlled, humane institutional environment.

The primary goal of the matching effort, and of functional units themselves, is management. Except for units designed for a few readily defined problem populations such as drug addicts or alcoholics, inmates are not matched with program or living unit. Instead, inmates are grouped using a personality inventory, which is primarily designed to separate aggressive, violent inmates from the rest of the population.

The emphasis on security and management is not a misplaced one. Bettelheim states, with respect to the safety of an institution, that:

The physical setting of an institution acquires its greatest personal significance for the children only as it increasingly becomes the framework within which constructive living can proceed - the safe center of their lives . . . within whose walls they have the feeling that nothing really bad can happen.¹²

What is misplaced is the static nature of placements, the simplified behavioral dichotomy of prisoners into "lamb" and "wolves," the inflexibility and perpetuation of classification errors, the undeveloped environmental component of the resulting match, and the prioritizing of management as a preemptive goal rather than as a first step to social learning. It seems clear that to maximize the effectiveness of unitizing, as much thought

needs to be applied to the environment side of the match as to the human side. While the programming of many of the units is rich and diverse, and includes many community-building components (town meetings, unit orientation, prisoner counselors, shared responsibilities), differential treatment is not a systematic concern. Our findings suggest that programs and subsettings can be tailored to particular prisoners and groups of prisoners. A variety of settings can be established to provide a continuum from safety and prostheses to ego-enhancement.

Unitizing suggests the evolution of transitional and situational groupings. (The elderly and handicapped unit is one such grouping.) Units can be designed for prisoners ready to leave, for novices, for those with long sentences, for young prisoners, for prisoners from the same geographical area. Functional units provide a way to study and to make concrete some of the implications raised by our description of more ad hoc, short term, resource-poor informal niches. They make it possible to gauge the costs and tradeoffs of congruence. For instance, increasing age heterogeneity may reduce the level of violence in a formerly youth dominant prison. However, older prisoners may be less content with their role as control rods than is the administration.

In any event, unitizing is a necessary first step toward the exploration of congruence. It permits the careful design of specific environments, and the match of special sub-populations to such environments.

6. Classification. Once, in a tour of county jails, I asked the sheriff of one jail to describe the process by which

prisoners are classified and assigned to various tiers. The sheriff responded, "Well, we try to put the bums with the bums and the crooks with the crooks." In New York State prisons, the classification process is complex and sophisticated, but does not typically invoke the concern for congruence offered by the rural sheriff.

The most dramatic, and least significant, level of classification is the diagnostic and reception center. Prisoners are first received at one of several such centers, where they remain for several weeks undergoing a battery of tests and interviews. The period involves segregation, inactivity, lack of contact with family, considerable anxiety. The inmates are subjected to interest inventories, psychological write ups, medical histories, social histories. A folder is filled and the prisoner is transferred to one of few placements that his security status permits. His voluminous record sits in the service unit until it is resurrected at various decision points¹³ (parole, transfer to another facility).

When the prisoner arrives at his receiving institution, he appears before an assemblage of department heads making up a "classification committee" and is assigned to a "program" based upon security classification, room in program, the needs of the facility, and (tangentially) the interests of the prisoner himself. More subjective criteria also come into play. Classifiers ask themselves, as the sheriff did, whether the prisoner is "a good worker," a "troublemaker," "a bum."

Classification should have as its primary goal that of facilitating the match between individual and assignment. This goal must recognize that settings have unexpected and unintentional effects and that the effectiveness of match requires careful monitoring and routine revisions as errors are evident. Toch notes that,

"The business of matching people and opportunities cannot be diagnosis plus assignment but must ideally be a diagnosis-assignment transaction in which one always implies the other, and neither occurs separately.¹⁴

Prisoners can be introduced to programs, and may be required to familiarize themselves with them, with careful monitoring by security and training staff; a trial period for both. It is critical that classification be decentralized and that those familiar with the prisoner's progress, and with the situational determinants of congruence and incongruence, participate in reclassification decisions.

Work and program groups can have a role in socializing new members and in training and evaluating their performance in the group. Congruence depends on tasks, staff, and other prisoners. Since other prisoners are often a critical element of congruence, their wishes, concerns, interests in peers constitute a logical source of information about setting congeniality.

7. Environmental Flexibility. If we design a setting too preemptively, we create enclaves that do not permit the expression of needs other than those for which it was designed. The parallel danger is risking environmental nihilism. The multi-purpose room has been said to serve no purpose at all.

One solution is the creation of pluralistic environments, settings that provide high privacy and quiet at one time, high structure at others, and Safety or Freedom when needed. With sufficient freedom of choice and careful scheduling, settings can be chosen by prisoners as they desire and become ready for them.

Stern comments with respect to congruence with university settings:

The most effective schools offer places for students to withdraw in privacy and opportunity to utilize solitude constructively. Conversely however, there is also uncomplicated access to the faculty provided at times and places at which students and faculty may interact informally.¹⁵

Flexibility of environments extends to realistic choices. In a model facility designed by the Institute for the Study of Crime and Delinquency, planners proposed to leave spaces in buildings unassigned, with uses to be dictated by staff and residents as needs and programs develop.

Additionally, freedom of choice within units, based on clear and negotiable criteria for transfer, is one means of reducing the stigma of summary placement and imposed differences, and permits prisoners, with some degree of participation, to sort themselves out. There must be administrative control on assignments, and involvement in orchestrating congruence. When an institution cannot control its admissions, it will be difficult to define units specifically for special groups, or to permit free and unencumbered mobility. However, freedom cannot be an illusion. One reconciliation of prisoner choice and institutional requirements is to place prisoners in a program based on the best possible information related to congruence, with the

prisoner given a month or two to understand the program and its potential. Following this period, the inmate enters into a contract "volunteering" to remain a time sufficient to complete the program. Such a process meets facility requirements of convenience, and meets prisoner concerns for a process which respects his responsibility and autonomy.

Flexibility extends to the quality of settings. Support-oriented settings should be advertised and available subject to demonstrations of ability to handle them. Settings should match the prisoner's ability to handle increasingly complex tasks and responsibilities. Prisons can maintain the quality of Support environments by recruiting talented workers who have completed other programs successfully. Educational and vocational programs can be linked in logical fashion to high support programs. Such links provide incentives for continuing in the program as well as a developmental ordering of activities. To further encourage and sustain interest and commitment, prisoners can be delegated tasks of encouraging worker participation in the program. Worker grievance units, productivity goals, worker's committees can be established to replicate free world participatory management and to train in self-government.

8. Therapy. Our portrait of a therapeutic community in Chapter 15 outlines some parameters of a milieu in which traditional and informal treatment techniques are mixed. Neither traditional prison programs nor formal counseling is a sufficient source of "rehabilitative impact." To encourage social learning, we must insulate prisoners in some fashion from the larger culture

of the prison, or design the prison so that the larger culture is dispersed and softened. We must provide reference groups that are constructive, with tasks that build responsibility. We must use the power of relationships between prisoners and staff as a source of support and prosocial norms.

Personal relationships between staff and prisoners and between prisoners themselves can become "therapeutic" in the sense that they are vehicles of change. Cantril states in this regard:

We obtain our maximum understanding of another person and his purposes only if we can participate with him in creative enterprises that involve reciprocal value judgements. In such situations we can sense what things are important to him, what cues he unconsciously weighs, what range his value judgements have, to what extent these value judgements take into account our own purposes and the purposes of others who may be involved or affected by the situation, and what direction his emergent development is taking.¹⁶

In small scale settings, in which men participate together in solving problems of living, they shape their own culture. Prisoners and staff may find, as in ACTEC and elsewhere, a surprising degree of convergence in interests and purposes, and in the kind of culture they evolve. Normalized settings produce normal people, and normal encounters.

We do not know whether any of the therapeutic or environmental interventions recommended here will have any effect on recidivism. Our assumptions, which stress the situational aspects of behavior, seem to emphasize that behavior in strongly different situations may not take equivalent forms. Thus, behavior in the outside world will depend on transactions that may little resemble those of prison. Program outcome studies seem to support this assumption. There seems to be little

correlation between prison and free world behavior, but we hope that experiences with the frustrations and rewards of self-government may generalize. We hope that building communities in prison can reduce felt helplessness and alienation when parolees are faced with dealing with other institutions.

Conclusion

The problem we see is in going beyond amelioration to a community that is embracing and involving rather than merely protective. In our portrait of a therapeutic community, and in cues to congruence found in our analysis of environmental concerns, we have some suggestions for further establishing humane and community-oriented subsettings. Building a consensus society in prison is difficult given the variety of people and interests contained in prisons, but no more difficult than in the free world. Consensus and community evolve from the decisions small groups of people make daily in neighborhoods, work places, homes, churches. What we need to do is decentralize and segment prisons, so that the larger prison culture is disaggregated and dispersed. Small scale communities can then be designed for responsible and participatory self-management. While such communities may take a number of forms, they will have some commonalities. They will have congenial peers. They will provide a shared reality of events as prisoners and staff develop their identity as community residents. They will be democratic, or relatively so. They will emphasize face to face relationships. They will feature program flexibility, as special concerns of sub-populations are recognized and prostheses designed to meet such concerns. Stress reduction through guaranteed

safety will remain the short term and bottom line goal, with social learning becoming the long term goal.

Such an effort requires commitment to no other values than the ones we live with daily in the free world. We strive to temper individuality with community yet leave room for self-expression and idiosyncrasy. We try to respect cultural pluralism, but seek to avoid ghettos and gold coasts. The real meaning behind the arcane and oft quoted statement "We are all prisoners" is our struggle between self and society. As Bettelheim observes:

If no viable compromise is possible between environmental pressure and personal strivings, if either the person's idiosyncracies or the power of society reigns supreme, then both personal life and society, as we know them, cease to exist . . .

If a total state enforces its dominion so powerfully that not even a margin is left for compromising with the individual's basic needs, then the individual can only survive by destroying (or changing) his society.¹⁷

A static view of prisons maintains that they are "inherently stressful," or "naturally dehumanizing," with no compromise permitted or possible. Ideological poles are established that say that prisons are bad and should be torn down, or are bad and shall remain so because so are the acts of prisoners. Such views lose sight of the fact that prisons are environments in which men live, work, and change, and are thus human experiments.

In the words of Cantril,

In the broad perspective of time, the social and political systems people have worked out for themselves can be regarded as experiments - experiments in the organization of social relationships, communities, provisions for individual and public welfare, the training of the young, the exchange of goods and services, and the whole host of operations that contribute to social and political cohesion.¹⁸

With prisons, it is suggested that room for "experimenting" is evident, and that we have much to learn about the forms prisons can take.

Footnotes

1. See Leo Carroll, Hacks, Blacks, and Cons: Race Relations in a Maximum Security Prison (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 1974), pp. 2-7.
2. Leo Carroll, "Race and Three Forms of Prisoner Power: Confrontation, Censoriousness, and the Corruption of Authority," in Contemporary Corrections: Social Control and Conflict by C. Ronald Huff (Beverly Hills, Calif.; Sage, 1977), pp. 40-53.
3. Charles Thomas, "Theoretical Perspectives on Prisonization," Journal of Criminology and Criminal Law 68 (1977): 135-145 at p. 144.
4. Rene Dubos, So Human An Animal: How We Are Shaped by Our Surroundings and Events (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1968), p. 146.
5. Hans Toch and Malcolm MacLean, Jr., "Perception, Communication and Educational Research: A Transactional View," Audio-Visual Communication 10 (1962): 55-77 at p. 56-57.
6. Edison Trickett and Rudolf Moos, "Personal Correlates of Contrasting Environments: Student Satisfaction in High School Classrooms," American Journal of Community Psychology 2 (1974): 1-12.
7. Donald Clemmer, The Prison Community (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958), p. 300.
8. Rudolf Moos, Evaluating Correctional and Community Settings (New York: John Wiley, 1975), pp. 254-259.
9. Robert Johnson, "Informal Helping Networks in Prison: The Shape of Grass-Roots Correctional Intervention," Journal of Criminal Justice 7 (1979): 53-70 at p. 54.
10. United Nations Social Defense Research Institute, Prison Architecture; An International Survey of Representative Closed Institutes and Analysis of Current Trends in Prison Design (London: The Architecture Press, 1975), p. 39.
11. Robert Levinson and Roy Gerard, "Functional Units: A Different Correctional Approach," Federal Probation 37 (1973): 8-16.
12. Bruno Bettelheim, A Home for the Heart Bantam (New York: Knopf, 1974), see pages 127-130.
13. Hans Toch, Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival (New York: The Free Press, 1977). See Chapter 14, "Classification for Inmate Survival," at pp. 284-300.
14. Ibid, p. 287.
15. George Stern, People in Context: Measuring Person-Environment Congruence in Education and Industry (New York: John Wiley, 1970), p. 171.

16. Hadley Cantril, The Why of Man's Experience (New York: MacMillan 1950), p. 112.
17. Bruno Bettelheim, The Informed Heart: On Retaining the Self in a Dehumanizing Society (New York: Avon, 1960), p. 232.
18. Hadley Cantril, The Pattern of Social Concerns (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1965), p. 19.

Appendix A

Interview Coding InstructionsInstructions to Coder

This inquiry is concerned with the concept of "niche," which we have defined as stress-reducing transactions between men in prison and prison settings (work, program, and special living assignments). We are concerned generally with locating those transactions which are described by prisoners as ameliorative. We are also concerned with prisoner expressions of dissatisfaction with subsettings, and with those prisoners for whom prison settings are unrelated to stress entirely. Generally, we assume that settings vary in the salience they have for prisoners, and in the degree to which they are perceived as resolving or aggravating prison stress. We assume that prisoners vary too in the degree to which they require a stress-reducing setting. Our task is to separate from the set of interviews those interviews in which prisoners describe the setting most of importance to them as stress-reducing. Those interviews we shall call niches. The remainder of the interviews are coded as well, and as described below.

There are two separate coding decisions to be made, reflecting the two necessary and sufficient requirements for niche.

(1). The first decision requires a determination of stress or non-stress. We are concerned initially with whether the prisoner feels, or has felt, stress while in prison. While satisfaction with prison generally will be relatively scarce in interview content, we are concerned here with the existence of serious or chronic coping problems. Content related to stress will be found primarily in the first half of the interview, in prisoner

responses to initial questions concerning his perceptions of the prison he is in, and those things that make time easy or hard to do. Content with respect to stress will also be found at the end of the interview, when we explore any particularly serious coping problem experienced by a prisoner. Interview content expressing serious difficulties in prison adjustment, and emotional responses of fear, anger, acute tension, or self-assessed inadequacy in dealing with the prison world will be related to stress. The agents of stress (guards, other prisoners, physical features of the prison) may be seen as particularly noxious, powerful, or pervasive. Personal resources may be seen as scarce, and personal competence limited.

A prisoner concerned with doing easy time, concerned with what he describes as trivial and minor inconveniences of prison life, or prisoners who describe no serious adjustment problems, or single and relatively unimportant coping problems, or who know the ropes and see themselves as pretty competent people in the prison world will be coded as non-stress. There need not be a total lack of stress to be so coded, but the stress must have been manageable, or easily ignored.

Stress

Important interests are blocked, frustrated, threatened;
Expressions of anxiety, fear, tension, anger;
Environmental forces perceived as taxing endurance, coping;
Challenged self-competence, or inability to eliminate or reduce threat;
Threat perceived as pervasive or chronic;

(Cont'd.)

No Stress

No, or relatively few, problems in coping;
No frustrated interest or concern expressed;
Self-assessed ability to handle the time adequate;
Any stresses are non-threatening, to self esteem;
Relatively minor, infrequent threats;

(Cont'd.)

Stress

Present or future plans jeopardized;
Sequence of irritants which build up over time.
A need to escape, remove self from threat noted.

Comments such as:
It is difficult to do time here. A useless place, tight, heavy. Hard to stay out of trouble. Can't do what I need to do. Things press on my mind. Things mess up my bit. may, depending on the referent and the frequency and detail of such expressions, relate to stress.

No Stress

Threats relatively unimportant to future plans;

Comments such as:
Prisons are all the same, it's no big deal. I can always be cool. It's pretty easy time. I can do the time anywhere. It's not supposed to be fun. may reflect a lack of stress.

Code all interviews either stress or non-stressed. Record the code in space provided on the coding form next to the identification number.

(2). The second coding decision is concerned with content related to the subsetting. The second dichotomous coding task requires a separation of those prisoners who are satisfied with the setting from prisoners describing primarily dissatisfaction with the setting.

The second coding decision is based on different criteria for stress and non-stressed prisoners. For stressed prisoners, satisfaction must relate to resolving stress. That is for niche, the setting must be viewed by the prisoner as significant in reducing a negative affective state, or induce increased competence, or permit escape from the source of threat. The setting may be described uniquely as permitting the prisoner to do things of importance in mitigating threat. Thus, settings that provide a self-assessed improvement in the prison world, and favorable changes in perspective toward doing time will be coded as niche.

Stressed prisoners who do not report stress amelioration will be coded as mismatch. A setting will be coded satisfaction for stressed prisoners (niche) only if the setting resolves stress. Even if the setting is a good one, and chosen by the prisoner, it will not be coded as satisfaction unless it is ameliorative. Similarly, we are not concerned with stress reduction in the absence of an ameliorative subenvironment, that is, through environmental changes unrelated to settings. While such changes (a parole date, a furlough, a package, a good visit, an imminent transfer) are important, and can be stress-reducing, they are not a primary concern of this study. Transactions are coded as mismatches if the setting is irrelevant to stress, if the setting is a bad one from the prisoners perspective, or even if the setting is described as reasonably pleasant but not stress-reducing.

Interview content for the non-stressed will similarly be divided into satisfaction and dissatisfaction. However, for the non-stressed, satisfaction is, of course, unrelated to stress. Within this group are non-stressed prisoners for whom settings are salient and described as permitting easy time or personal growth (satisfied) as well as those non-stressed prisoners for whom settings are noxious, or of little importance in doing time. These transactions are coded respectively, Benign and Indifferent Transactions.

Satisfaction with Prison
Setting

Environmental choices or decisions made to get into setting;
Positive differences noted between this setting and others;
Negative affective states reduced in setting;

Dissatisfaction with Prison
Setting

Setting is OK, nothing special;
No environmental choices made;
Few differences (positive) between this setting and others;
Negative affective states remain;

Satisfaction

Setting helps the time;
Setting helps one to avoid problems or to do things of importance to self;
(Note: setting satisfaction relates to the level of concern. For stressed prisoners, the setting is ameliorative, for non-stressed, it is pleasant, contributes to easy time; or permits personal growth and development.)

Dissatisfaction

Setting does not help, or helps little toward doing time, avoiding problems and doing things of importance to oneself.
Setting is not ameliorative for stressed prisoners, although it may provide benefits or be otherwise described by such prisoners as a good setting. For non-stressed prisoners, the setting is irritating, among the worst available, does not provide tangible benefits, does not provide "easy time."

Accordingly, with respect to mismatches (stress and dissatisfaction), the prison setting itself can be a decent one, yet if not relevant to stress amelioration, it is coded dissatisfaction. With respect to non-stressed prisoners, all settings that are described as "good" with sufficient particularity to validate satisfaction with the setting are so coded.

See figure 1 for clarification

Figure 1

Categories of Subsetting - Prison Transaction

| <u>Stress</u> | <u>No Stress</u> |
|--|--|
| <p><u>NICHE</u></p> <p>Ameliorative subsetting; setting related to stress induced concerns; setting important.</p> | <p><u>BENIGN</u></p> <p>Good time, easy time job setting related to pragmatic concerns, to non-stressed concerns; political job, provides benefits; enhancing setting, provides growth, motivation, involvement.</p> |
| <p><u>MISMATCH</u></p> <p>Setting unrelated to concerns irrelevance of setting; relative unimportance of setting in face of problems or large scale prison or real world influences; setting OK, but unrelated to major concerns, or a relatively good setting but unimportant to self and not able to resolve problems.</p> | <p><u>INDIFFERENCE</u></p> <p>Irrelevance of setting or dissatisfaction with setting (non-stress).</p> |

Satisfaction with prison subsetting with respect to stressed concerns or non-stressed concerns

Dissatisfaction with or unimportance of prison subsetting, its irrelevance to major expressed concerns

Appendix B

Subenvironment Interview Schedule

Subenvironment Interview Schedule

The Subenvironment Interview Schedule is identical to the Random Interview Schedule found in Appendix C, with the following questions added.

- (a) What is your housing assignment? How long have you been assigned there? How does it compare with other prison housing (blocks) that you have been in? Is the time you spend there important to you? Why? Why not? Does it make any difference in the way you do time?
- (b) What is your program? What is it like? How long have you been assigned there? How does it compare with other prison assignments that you have had? Is the time that you spend there important to you? Why? Why not? Does the program make any difference in the way that you do time?
- (c) Would you like to stay with your program? Would you like to go elsewhere? Why?

Appendix C

Random Interview Schedule

Random Interview Schedule

1. Introduction. Begin with introductory remarks about the study and its purpose. Assure the anonymity of the information received, and project independence from the Department of Corrections. Assure prisoners that they were randomly selected from various sub-populations of the prison.
2. Past History of Imprisonment.
 - (a) How long have you been here at _____?
 - (b) Where were you before coming here?
 - (c) Did you request to come here, or were you transferred here without your knowledge?
 - (d) How was that prison(s) as a place(s) to do time? What was particularly good or bad about that prison?
 - (e) How does this prison compare to those. Describe the differences that were important to you?
3. Present Prison.
 - (a) Describe this prison to me? What is it like to you as a place to do time?
 - (b) What is good about it, and why? What does it offer that other prisons do not; what are its good points?
 - (c) What is bad about this prison, and why? What does it lack that would make it a better, easier place?
 - (d) What do you find here to help you do the time? Anything, (activities, programs, people, location, whatever that is important to you)?
4. Administer self-anchoring scale at this point.
 - (a) Everyone who serves time in prisons prefers some types of institutions to others. When you think about what really

matters to you when you have to serve time, what would the best possible prison be like, for you? In other words, if you have to be confined for a time, what would the institution have to look like - what would it have to offer, for you to be happy there? Take your time answering; such things aren't easy to put into words.

PERMISSIBLE PROBES: What would you need in an institution, to serve the easiest bit, or have the most profitable time? What is missing in some places you have been in (besides women) that could have made you happier?

OBLIGATORY QUOTE: Anything else?

(b) Now, taking the other side of the picture, what are the things you hate most about some prisons? If you imagine the worst possible institution, as far as you are concerned, what would it be like? What qualities would it have? What would it look like, and feel like?

OBLIGATORY PROBE: Anything else?

Here is a picture of a ladder. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder (POINTING) represents the best possible institution for you, and the bottom (POINTING) represents the worst possible institution for you.

(c) Where on the ladder (MOVING FINGER RAPIDLY UP AND DOWN LADDER) would you place (NAME OF PRISON) as far as you personally are concerned?

(d) Why wouldn't you place (NAME OF PRISON) lower than you have? In what ways is it better than the worst institutions?

(e) Why wouldn't you place (NAME OF PRISON) higher than you have? In what ways is it worse than the best institutions?

(f) One last question. When you first began to serve time, would you have ranked (NAME OF PRISON) higher or lower than you have now? (IF HIGHER OR LOWER) Where would you have ranked it? Why is that?

5. Exploration of any Serious Problem. (If not already mentioned and explored)

We understand that doing time can be pretty difficult for everyone, and that at some times, it can be even more difficult than normally. Have you ever had a problem you considered particularly tough to handle here? Something, or some time, that was more difficult than the usual. Could you describe what it was? How did you handle it?

Appendix D
Formal Niche Interview Schedule

1. Introduction. Begin with introductory remarks about the study and its purpose. Emphasize our concern with the problems faced by prisoners not in main-line prison settings, and with their view of their present setting. Assure the anonymity of respondents, and project independence from the Department of Corrections. Tell prisoners how their name was selected (either randomly, or as part of an attempt to interview all residents of a particular subsetting.)

2. Reasons for Placement

- (a) Did you request to come here, or were you transferred without a request?
- (b) How long have you been here?
- (c) Was there any problem you experienced that led to your placement here? Can you describe it?
- (d) Were there any alternatives to coming to this setting for you? Are you aware of any other setting that may be better for you, in this prison or elsewhere?

3. Present Setting

- (a) Can you describe this setting to me? What is it like as a place to do time? What kinds of things are important to you here?
- (b) How does this setting differ from the general population? What kinds of things does it have, or lack, that are important to you?
- (c) Could you list, or describe for me, the good points of _____. The advantages of being assigned here? The things that would be harder to find in a general prison population.

- (d) Could you list, or describe for me, the bad points of _____. What kinds of things do you give up when you come here? What kinds of things make the time harder?
- (e) Does this kind of place solve any prison problems for you? Why?

Appendix E
Missing Data
and
Variable Coding and Classification

Percentage of Missing Data, By Variable and Sample

| <u>Variable</u> | <u>Sample</u> | | <u>Total</u> |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|---|--------------|
| | <u>Random</u> (268) | <u>Staff Referred</u> <u>Subenvironment</u> (166) | |
| Ethnicity | 13.1 | 10.2 | 12.0 |
| Marital Status | 11.9 | 10.2 | 11.3 |
| Age | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Education | 14.6 | 14.5 | 14.5 |
| Weapon Use Instant Offense | 13.1 | 11.4 | 12.4 |
| Distance from Home | 14.2 | 12.7 | 13.6 |
| Home size | 17.9 | 18.1 | 18.0 |
| Drug Use | 12.3 | 10.8 | 11.8 |
| Alcohol Use | 20.9 | 13.9 | 18.2 |
| Offense | 11.2 | 9.6 | 10.6 |
| Minimum Sentence | 11.6 | 9.6 | 10.8 |
| Maximum Sentence | 10.1 | 9.6 | 9.9 |
| Time Served | 12.3 | 9.6 | 11.3 |
| Prior Prison | 11.2 | 9.6 | 10.6 |
| Prison Jail | 11.2 | 9.6 | 10.6 |
| Prior Violent Offense | 11.2 | 9.6 | 10.6 |
| Prior Property Offense | 11.2 | 9.6 | 10.6 |
| History Mental Commitment | 11.2 | 10.8 | 11.1 |
| Time to CR Date | 20.1 | 22.9 | 21.2 |
| Prior Offense Record | 11.2 | 9.6 | 10.6 |

Variables Used in Analysis with Initial
Codes and Classification for Analysis

Institutional History Variables

| <u>Variables</u> | <u>Code</u> | <u>Classification for Analysis</u> |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Distance from Home | 100 Miles 200 Miles More than 200 miles | Same |
| Minimum Sentence | Verbatim in years, months, days | Less than 5 years 5 years or more |
| Maximum Sentence | Verbatim in years, months, days | Less than 10 years More than 10 years |
| Time Served at Time of Interview | Verbatim (in years, months, days) | Less than 18 months More than 18 months |
| Time to Conditional Release Date | Verbatim (in years, months, days) | Less than 2 years More than 2 years |

¹Married includes married legal and married common law.

²Large city includes cities of over 100,000 population.

³Violent includes murder, manslaughter, assault, kidnapping, rape, and related offenses. Non-violent includes all other offenses.

Variables Used in Analysis with Initial
Codes and Classifications for Analysis

Demographic Variables

| <u>Variables</u> | <u>Code</u> | <u>Classification* for Analysis</u> |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Ethnicity | Black White Puerto Rican | Black White Puerto Rican |
| Marital Status | Married legal Single Never Married Married Common Law Divorced Separated Widowed | ¹ Married Unmarried |
| Age | Age in years | Under 21 21 or over |
| Population Size of home Town | 5000 or less 30,000 or less 50,000 or less 100,000 or less Over 100,000 | ² Large City No large city |
| Education | None Elementary High school (regular) High School (equiv.) College | Below high school atten- dance/all other categories |

Criminal History and Offense Related Variables

| | | |
|----------------|---|----------------|
| Arrest History | Verbatim (Number of arrests violent offense) | Present/Absent |
| | Verbatim (Number of arrests property offense) | Present/Absent |
| | Verbatim (Number of arrests drug offense) | Present/Absent |

*Variables are recorded variously as needed in analysis.
However, these are the major classification categories used.

Variables Used in Analysis with Initial
Codes and Classification for Analysis

| <u>Variables</u> | <u>Code</u> | <u>Classification for Analysis</u> |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Instant Offense | Verbatim, Coded using NYS Penal Code | 3 Violent/Non-violent |
| History of Jail Confinement | Verbatim (number of sentences) | Present/Absent |
| History of Prison Confinement | Verbatim (number of sentences) | Present/Absent |
| Use of Weapon Instant Offense | Present/Absent | Present/Absent |
| Arrest History | Verbatim (number of prior offense categorized) | Present/Absent |

Addiction Commitment History Variables

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------|
| History of Alcohol Addiction | Present/Absent | Present/Absent |
| History of Drug Addiction | Present/Absent | Present/Absent |
| Mental Commitment History | Verbatim (number of commitments to mental hospital) | Present/Absent |

END