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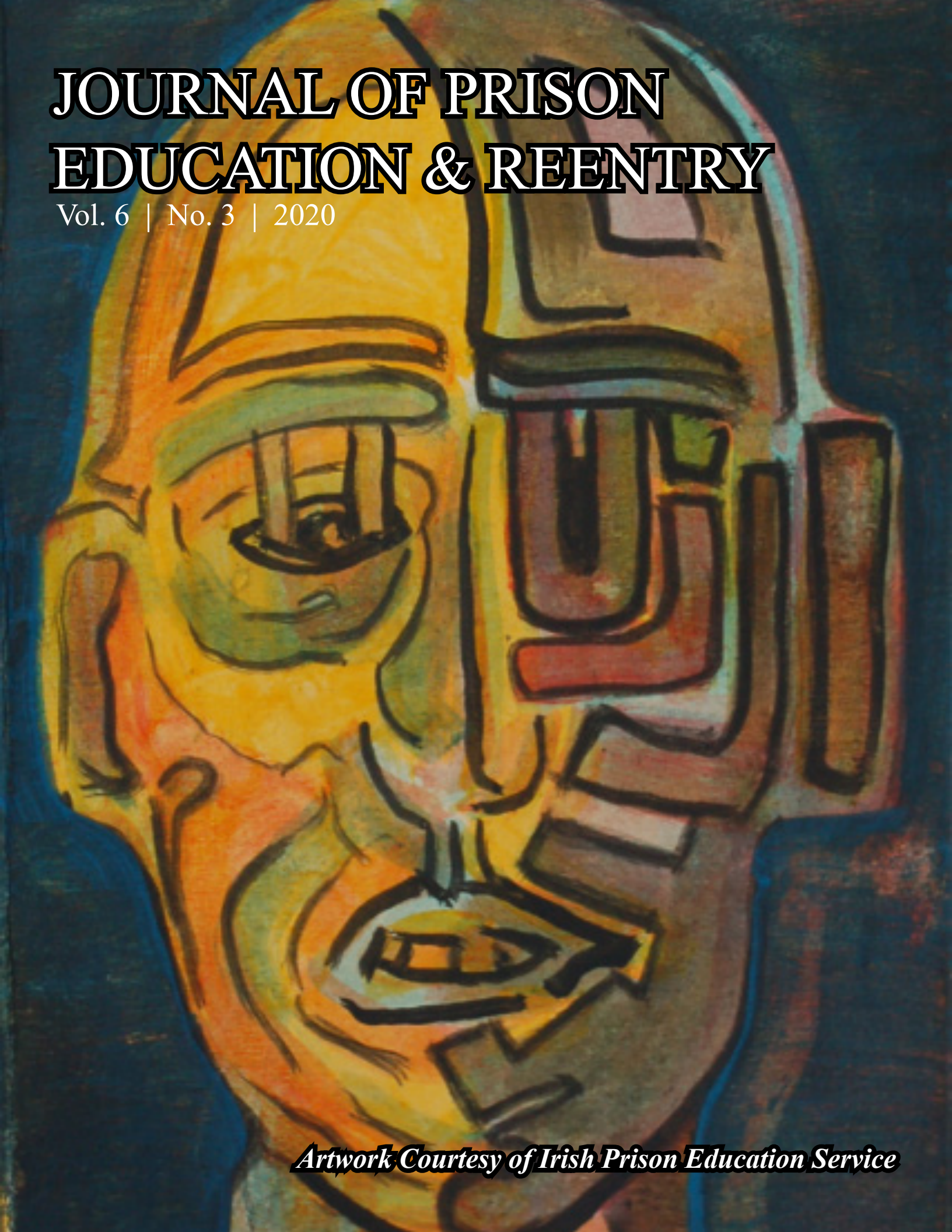

Artwork Courtesy of Irish Prison Education Service

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JOURNAL OF PRISON EDUCATION & REENTRY

FEATURE

A Note About the Cover Art

MYVIEWOFTHEWORLDISOBSCUREDBYSTEELBARSOFINCARCERATION

Artist: Anonymous

Acrylics on card

This artist's work is the product of a process he engaged in to develop a language to express himself as a means of coping with imprisonment. Aged in his mid-fifties and serving a sentence at the Midlands Prison, he engages with education and is determined that his first experience of prison will also be his last. He has adopted an approach regarding his sentence as an "art school" rather than a "prison" experience, and his development is supported by contact with teachers and participation in art classes and exhibitions. He works in his cell, often painting on the back of discarded cereal boxes, demonstrating a resourcefulness typical of prison artists; this approach might also be interpreted as acknowledging the environment in which he functions. He had little experience of making art prior to his imprisonment, now he intends to continue painting following his release.

Despite the bleak nature of the image, the painting contributes to an understanding of the role of education and the arts in prisons. The post-modern title supports an appreciation of the work as a cathartic expression of frustration and the artist's working methods are of interest. After completing a painting he experiments with the left-over paint, exploring effects and new approaches to image making, extending his reach and growing his confidence. The work reflects something of that learning process, also the value he places on the limited materials available to him and his concern not to waste either the materials or the opportunity they represent. The human figure, and by extension the human condition, are central to his work. A distorted head, with references to steel bars and doors illuminated by yellow artificial light, is contrasted against a dark blue night sky, evoking the loneliness, isolation and confinement of the prison experience. It is the image of an everyman, representative of prisoners as a type, and the narrative communicates an extreme physical and emotional experience with graphic impact.

This artist's development is a positive outcome of the structures for education within the Irish Prison Service. In each prison, a school staffed by qualified teachers delivers second-chance education tailored to meet individual needs. The service works on a partnership model informed by the recommendations of the Council of Europe on education in prisons and prisoners engage and attend by choice. A broad curriculum is offered and workshops, part-funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, are delivered by visiting artists and writers and a programme of exhibitions brings the creative work of prisoners to a wider audience in the community. The Irish Prison Education Service is adapting to meet the challenge of addressing the educational needs of people in custody within the restrictions imposed by Covid-19.

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Journal of Prison Education and Reentry

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FEATURE–HISTORICAL VIGNETTE

JOURNAL OF PRISON EDUCATION & REENTRY

Relationships Between Racial Slavery, Incarceration, and Policing, Part I

THOM GEHRING

The brutal death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, while in police custody in Minneapolis, Minnesota, focused attention in the U.S. on the problem of racism. Black Lives Matter and other organizations helped frame subsequent protests around the relationships between racial slavery, incarceration, and policing. Our task as prison educators is to stretch toward clarity.

There is a strong parallel between the dehumanization of slaves and the dehumanization of prisoners. One way this dehumanization has been enacted was by blaming individuals for their plight with no consideration for historical context. Genocide against Indigenous Americans, racial slavery, and penitentiaries all began during the British watch, before American independence. Just as slaves were perceived as lazy and incapable, prisoners were reported to be inclined toward "universal riot and debauchery" (Freedman, E. 1981. Their sister's keepers: Women's prison reform in America, 1830-1930. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, p. 47).

Prisons had a long history, but they were places where torture and executions took place, mostly for political prisoners. This is particularly evident in American prisons: "The penitentiary was seen as an American invention" (Hughes, R. 1987. The fatal shore. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p. 426). In 1773, Philadelphia's Walnut Street Jail was established for everyday criminals, by Quakers who advocated it as a holding facility, to replace harsh punishments such as mutilation, staggering fines, and public humiliation (Carney, L.P. 1973. Introduction to correctional science. New York: McGraw-Hill, pp. 79-82). Walnut Street Jail was new, a penitentiary where criminals could repent, a quiet place. By 1776, the folks who created the jail realized the implications of their design, and they organized The Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons. (Teeters, N.K. 1955. The cradle of the penitentiary: The Walnut Street Jail at Philadelphia, 1773-1835. Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Prison Society). In 1790 the Jail was converted into a State penitentiary. (Carney, 1973, pp. 79-82).

Again we see how the punitive penal model of the 21st century in the U.S. that tends to erase context from the consideration of the roots of crime, harkens the framework of slavery by blaming slaves as inferior—deficient in native ability, lazy, incapable. They were perceived as unable to plan or use time productively. Slaves were thought to need the structure of slavery—roofs over their heads, food in their bellies.

Despite differences between historic racial slavery and current incarceration in the U.S., there are also clear connections. The term penal servitude or indentured servitude (slavery, not based on race) was associated with penal colonies (Hughes, 1987). In 1751 Benjamin Franklin said America should send a bunch of rattlesnakes to England for every indentured servant they

Thom Gehring retired as the research director of the Center for the Study of Correctional Education at California State University, San Bernardino. His scholarly emphasis is on the history of correctional education and prison reform. He has been a correctional educator since 1972. Dr. Gehring completed his Ph.D. dissertation on the correctional school district pattern of organization. He serves as the historian for the Correctional Education Association. Earlier as a Professor of Education, he worked to direct the erstwhile EDCA correctional and alternative masters degree program.

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sent there. Then the American Revolution succeeded. But racial slavery did not end until after the American Civil War—when all the rules changed—but often only on paper.

> In the first years after the [American Civil] war there was a . . . vigorous effort to establish public schools, but these were for whites only. There had been no desire to provide education for blacks and no belief that they could benefit from it anyway. The feverish educational work among blacks carried on by the Freedmen's Bureau and a dozen religious and philanthropic agencies had convinced few white Southerners that blacks should be educated. [Yet it was] difficult to exaggerate the eagerness of blacks at the close of the war to secure an education. Their several conventions held in 1865 drew up resolutions requesting the states to provide educational facilities . . . . Most of the states turned a deaf ear.
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> When Florida in 1866 made special provisions for the education of blacks by imposing a tax of $1.00 on each black male between twenty-one and forty-five and 50 cents per month for each pupil, black parents seized the opportunity to send their children to school. Meanwhile . . . thousands of blacks were availing themselves of their only educational opportunity in the schools set up by the Freedmen's Bureau . . . (Franklin, J.H. 2013/1961. *Reconstruction after the Civil War*: *Third edition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 107-108).

"The paradox of a democracy founded on slavery had at last been done away with" after the Civil War (Du Bois, W.E.B. 1998/1935. *Black reconstruction in America, 1860-1880*. New York: The Free Press, p. 121). The cruelty of the slave time continues today. It resonated in the raw anger from Jim Crow through the Civil Rights period, and can be discerned in 21st century patterns of policing and incarceration. That continuity has been a central feature of American history to date. Confederate sentiments lost the Civil War but won the peace.

White supremacist views of blacks as unfit to be free, and later, as incapable of being fully contributing citizens, continues to inform oppressive, discriminatory educational and policing practices against Blacks today. In educational terms, slavery was an anti-education institution, and prisons in the U.S. have sometimes functioned that same way. Further, Foner used the term "halfway houses" to describe institutional transitions between slavery and freedom, such as the Freedmen's Bureau (2002/1988. *Reconstruction*: *America's unfinished business, 1863-1877*. New York: Perennial Classics, p. 56). Swint reported that there were 9,503 Freedmen's Bureau teachers in 1869 (1967. *The Northern teacher in the South*: *1862-1870*. New York: Octagon Books, Inc., p. 3). The road to equitable schooling for black communities is a history denied, despite the deep desire for education among black people since the time of slavery. This sustained racist view of blacks as inferior people to be feared and controlled, is evident in policing practices as well, as is increasingly evident through the video footage of the casual brutality of police resulting in untimely deaths of people such as George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Aarbery, Tamir Rice, Jacob Blake and too many others to mention here.

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FEATURE-EDITORIAL

JOURNAL OF PRISON EDUCATION & REENTRY

Lead Editor's Welcome

CORMAC BEHAN

Welcome to Volume 6, Number 3 of the *Journal of Prison Education and Reentry*.

Our cover art image, *MYVIEWOFTHEWORLDISOBSCUREDBYSTEELBARSOFINCARCERATION* was produced by a student at the Midlands Prison, Ireland. In the prison's education department, he participates in art classes and has had his work shown at exhibitions. He works in his cell, often painting on the back of discarded cereal boxes, demonstrating a resourcefulness typical of artists in prison. Prior to his imprisonment, this student had little experience of creating art; however, after his experience in the education department, he now intends to continue painting following his release.

As always, we begin with our historical vignette from Thom Gehring. Thom outlines how the death of George Floyd has focused attention in the U.S. on the issue of racism. Black Lives Matter and other organizations helped frame subsequent protests around the relationships between racial slavery, incarceration, and policing. He argues persuasively that educators in prison have an important task, which is "to stretch toward clarity". He contends that we need to locate recent developments in historical context, by examining racial slavery, the Genocide against Indigenous Americans, and the development of the penitentiaries.

In Samantha McAleese and Jennifer Kilty's paper '"Walls are put up when curiosity ends": Transformative Education in the Canadian Carceral Context', the authors conceptualize the prison classroom as a performative space. Using the Walls to Bridges program as a case study, they consider the dynamics of navigating institutional policies and practices when teaching inside carceral spaces, and the constraints that structure these classrooms. Significantly, they demonstrate ways in which learners and educators become more resourceful, and consider how prison classrooms can become critical public spheres.

Lovell et al. in their paper, 'Learning from the Outcomes of Existing Prison Parenting Education Programs for Women Experiencing Incarceration: A Scoping Review' believe that we can learn much from prison parenting education programs for women. This review offers insights to those who wish to develop a parenting program specifically for women. The authors conclude that prison can be an opportunity for parenting education and support.

Kariane Westrheim and Helene Marie Eide in their paper 'Norwegian Prison Officers Perspectives on Professionalism and Professional Development Opportunities in their Occupation' note the paucity of research into the education and training of prison officers. In particular, this article investigates how Norwegian prison officers understand their own professionalism and seek opportunities for professional development. The authors point out that education and training for prison officers in Norway is far more extensive than in other countries, and argue

Cormac Behan teaches criminology at the School of Languages, Law and Social Sciences, Technological University Dublin. His research interests include penal history, prisoners' rights, comparative penology and prison education. Prior to taking up this position, he taught criminology at the Centre for Criminological Research, University of Sheffield. From 1997 to 2011, he taught politics and history in Irish prisons. Cormac has served on the executive boards of the Correctional Education Association and the European Prison Education Association. He was the founding chairman of the Irish Prison Education Association.

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that prison officer education and training deserves more research studies.

Precious Skinner-Osei and Peter Claudius Osei in their paper, 'An Ecological Approach to Improving Re-entry Programs for Justice-Involved African American Men' posit that reentry programs need to utilize a different approach. They argue that reentry programs should not focus solely on the individual, but also consider environmental and societal factors. They put forward the CARE model, which proposes that re-entry programs implement four steps (i.e., collaboration, amend, reintegration, and empowerment) to successfully reunite former prisoners with their families, the labour market, and their communities.

In this edition's practitioner paper, Kevin Windhauser considers the challenges of adapting a humanities program in an environment which lacks digital and physical research resources. These challenges will no doubt resonate with many teachers working in coercive environments internationally. Despite the logistical obstacles, he argues that 'Inquiry-Based Learning,' helps students take on the role of an active researcher which can have long-term benefits: it promotes student confidence, independent learning and autonomy. Further, it prepares students interested in pursuing further higher education after release.

We hope you enjoyed and were challenged by some of the papers in this volume of the *Journal of Prison Education and Reentry*. As we look forward to our next issue of JPER in 2021, we invite prison and correctional educators to join the conversation as we endeavor to cultivate our research outputs and develop pedagogical approaches together. I invite all those involved in prison education and learning to consider writing a research paper, contributing examples of best practice, writing a book review or updating us on policies. I look forward to working with prison education researchers, prison educators and learners inside on our next edition of the Journal of Prison Education and Reentry.

Finally, we have extended our call for papers for our Special Issue "Critical Reflections on Philosophy, Education, and Prison Sociology" to 31 January 2021. This Special Issue of the *Journal of Prison Education and Reentry* will focus on the intersection of the practices and disciplines of philosophy, education, and prison sociology, with a particular focus on the tensions, difficulties, and challenges that arise from their interaction. Further details are available here: https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/jper/callforpapers.pdf

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RESEARCH PAPER

JOURNAL OF PRISON EDUCATION & REENTRY

"Walls are put up when curiosity ends": Transformative Education in the Canadian Carceral Context

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JENNIFER M. KILTY
University of Ottawa, Canada

Abstract: *Prison education is often cited as the only redeeming experience in an otherwise cruel environment. While educational programs are found in prisons across Canada, they are often guided by philosophies of punishment, risk, and security rather than more transformative frameworks. In addition to prison staff and management who struggle to find value in education for education's sake, the physical spaces in which learning takes place in prison also interfere with efforts at promoting agency and autonomy amongst incarcerated students. In this paper, we conceptualize the prison classroom as performative space and demonstrate ways in which prison classrooms can become critical public spheres. We review theoretical literature on performative space, specifically in relation to prison education classrooms. We then examine the dynamics of: (1) navigating institutional policies and practices when teaching inside carceral spaces; and (2) the constraints that structure the carceral classroom. Finally, we take up the program Walls to Bridges as a case study example to demonstrate these findings and the transformative power of prison education.*

Keywords: *prison education, performative space, transformative education, Walls to Bridges*

In this paper, we conceptualize the prison classroom as a performative space where students and volunteer educators engage collectively and collaboratively in transformative learning processes. We build upon Wright and Gehring's (2008a, 2008b) notion that some prison education initiatives facilitate the generation of a 'sphere of civility' – where students can discuss the ethics of human caging as well as other socio-politico-cultural issues – within an otherwise demonstrably oppressive environment. After introducing key contributions to the literature on prison education in North America, we summarize theoretical work on the notion of performative space, specifically in relation to prison education classrooms. Then, after outlining our multi-pronged methodological approach, we move to discuss the two main themes that structure our findings, which examine the dynamics of: (1) navigating institutional policies and practices when teaching inside carceral spaces; and (2) the constraints that structure the carceral classroom. Finally, based upon the second author's experiences teaching university courses in carceral settings, we take up the Canadian prison education program Walls to Bridges (W2B) as a case study example to further demonstrate these findings and the transformative power of prison educational opportunities in action.

Imprisoned people frequently cite "voluntary participation in education programs... as the only positive experience one may encounter while incarcerated" (Piché, 2008, p. 4). Notably, the *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons* has made a significant effort to document experiences of prison education and has dedicated four special issues to this discussion. Incarcerated contributors to these issues have described their educational opportunities inside as: "freedom

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inward bound" (Carter, 2008, p. 62); "my sanctuary" (Taylor, 2004, p. 128); "almost like being somewhere in the free world" (Terry, 2004, p. 23); and "very transformative; it gave me hope and it served as a great filler of idle time, which prison has in abundance" (Bonano, 2016, p. 13). That said, prison education is subject to the ever-changing socio-political climate and broader economy, which means that it is always at risk of either forfeiture or carceral appropriation (Duguid, 2000a). This appropriation, co-optation, or "absorption" (Baldry, Carlton, & Cunneen, 2015, p. 174) of education by the correctional powers that be has also occurred with Indigenous healing and restorative justice programs. In taking up these programs, prison officials can make claims to progressive practice as they proceed to dismantle and re-form the original programs (and their underlying philosophies) into something that fits with the "dominant structure" of security, management, and control (Pollack 2019, p. 3).

As Thomas (1995) claimed, "prison education cannot be fully implemented without a dramatic transformation of the philosophy of punishment in North America" (p. 39). When punishment is prioritized over transformative mechanisms that promote personal growth and development by way of addressing structural and institutional violence and inequality through radical social change (Daly, 2002; Evans, 2016), typically in the name of managing risk and ensuring security, it becomes obvious that carceral institutions do little by way of rehabilitation, restoration, or transformation. This also highlights the spectacular irony behind the name 'corrections.' Subsequently, it is crucial to remember that prison education programs not only provide prisoners with the "chance to learn to read, write, work with numbers, and converse with a reasonable degree of assurance" (Collins, 1995, p. 50), they "can provide a means for greater access to the levers of power and control in society and possibly acquiring a new language, a new set of skills, and thereby a new identity" (Duguid, 2000a, p. 54-55).

For incarcerated people, the opportunity to shed their identity as 'offender' or 'inmate' can aid in a transformation process that will help them to "remake their shattered lives" (Richards et al., 2008, p. 58) once they return to the community. We suggest that this occurs by way of the differential approach to teaching and learning that is often taken up in carceral classrooms. First, we must consider the physical space of the learning environment. To facilitate learning, classrooms should make students feel safe and at ease, which can be particularly difficult in prison. Knowles (1996) contends that this occurs by ensuring that the "psychological climate [is] one which causes adults to feel accepted, respected, and supported ... in which there is freedom of expression without fear of punishment or ridicule" (p. 86). For vulnerable students, such as those who are incarcerated, the transformative potential of collaborative teaching and learning works best in "informal, comfortable, flexible, nonthreatening settings" (Knowles, 1984, p. 52).

Second, the very notion of transformative education, especially that which is grounded in a collaborative teaching and learning pedagogical style, stands in stark contrast to the traditional western approach to education that creates a hierarchy between teachers and students and that relies on a 'banking deposit' method that is akin to a one-way transmission of information (hooks, 2014; Kilty et al., 2020; Freire, 2008). Truly transformative learning instead requires and relies upon a process whereby both students and teachers engage in critical self-reflection (Cranton & Wright, 2008; Fayter, 2016; Follett & Rodger, 2013; Pollack, 2014, 2016a, 2016b). In fact, when teachers act as facilitators (Pollack, 2014, 2016a, 2016b) or learning companions (Cranton & Wright, 2008), rather than as experts with all the answers, it results in a more open, inclusive, and trusting collaborative partnership that inevitably shifts the power dynamics that structure traditional classroom settings and works to foster a more engaged pedagogical practice conducive to transformative learning (Kilty & Lehalle, 2018; Kilty et al., 2020). The transformative aspect of this process increases the agency, autonomy, and independence of the students and thus may also contribute to a shifting sense of identity for incarcerated students (Taylor et al. 2007, p.8). As Nagelsen (2008) writes:

> Writing by prisoners becomes in large measure the only available vehicle to counter the stultifying existence they encounter daily. Education, and writing in particular, opens the doors to a closed world, by providing prisoners with voices that have previously been silenced. (p. 107)

Support for this kind of transformative process in prison requires educators who understand prisons as "racialized, classed, and gendered spaces, reinforced and amplified by correctional practices that individualize, pathologize, punish, and control" (Pollack, 2019, p. 2). This critical and comprehensive understanding of carceral institutions is unlikely to be supported by employees of the state (e.g. correctional offices, program officers, educational officers), although it is common amongst educators and volunteers who aim to facilitate a connection between the inside and the outside and who tend to think more critically about the power relations that structure the hierarchies of the prison environment (Freire, 2008; Kilty & Lehalle, 2018). The role and impact of prison volunteers is well documented in criminological literature (Celinska, 2008; Duwe & Johnson, 2016; Graves, 2004; Tomczak, 2017; Tomczak & Alberton, 2016) and emerging literature on the criminal justice voluntary sector further highlights the changes that non-state actors can bring to carceral systems (Tomczak & Buck, 2019). In Canada, for example, the John Howard Society of Canada (JHSC) and the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) collaborated on a successful court challenge to call for an end to indefinite solitary confinement in prisons across the country (BCCLA, 2018). Although the federal government continues to appeal the decision (Macnab, 2019), this case shed light on a problematic and harmful practice within Canadian prisons. So, while it is important to pay attention to the net-widening function of the voluntary sector (Cohen, 1985), a more nuanced conversation about volunteers in the criminal justice field points to important moments of advocacy, transformation, and other live-saving work within what are otherwise punitive and hopeless spaces (Tomczak & Thompson, 2017; McAleese, 2019).

In Canada, there are several volunteer-run education and literacy programs that operate in prisons and jails across the country. For example, *Book Clubs for Inmates* (BCFI) facilitates "book clubs for men and women incarcerated in minimum-, medium-, and maximum-security facilities" with the goal of "[encouraging] positive change through the power of literature" (BCFI, 2020). The founder of BCFI, Carol Finlay, describes prison as a place of "darkness" that cuts people off from their communities and offers very little in terms of "meaningful" programs or reintegration supports (CBC Radio, 2016). Reflecting upon the conditions of confinement in Canada's federal prisons, Finlay (2016) links Canada's ongoing reliance on punishment and incarceration to its history of colonization:

> Our prisons are a continuation of the harm done to indigenous peoples through residential schools… Incarcerating indigenous women, especially those who are far from their people and cut off from their culture, is a repetition of what happened in the schools… When you enter a women's prison, you can feel despair, hopelessness and depression. It's both palpable and horrifying. (paras. 3-6)

Volunteers like Finlay, and university students and educators who are similarly critical of carceral state power and who publicly identify the harms perpetuated by prisons, are an invaluable support for prisoners whose voices, stories, and experiences are often lost in mainstream narratives about crime and punishment. While this paper specifically examines the Canadian Walls to Bridges program, it is important to note that there are other noteworthy adult prison education initiatives operating around the world. For example, in the U.S. there are a variety of initiatives including the Inside-Out Prison Exchange program (Davis & Roswell, 2013), Boudin's (1993) account of Freirean participatory literacy education programs in Bedford Hills New York, and the Voices from American Prisons project (Stern, 2014); in Britain there are the Inside-Outside and Learning Together projects (Armstrong & Ludlow, 2016); and there are several different programs operating in Ireland (Behan, 2014; O'Donnell & Cum-

mins, 2014), including the Mothers Project (O'Malley & Devaney, 2014) – all of which serve to foster performative spaces behind prison walls.

The Performative Space of Prison Education Classrooms

While a classroom in the community is typically a space conducive to learning and engaging in dialogue and debate, a prison classroom is not necessarily comprised of the elements required to encourage active participation or sustained enthusiasm for learning. To foster that kind of excitement to learn, prison educators need to create a 'performative space.' As Wright and Gehring contend, "it is difficult to imagine an active citizenry if persons are imbued with a sense of worthlessness, despair and are hungry for identity" (2008b, p. 333). By creating a performative space inside prison, we suggest that this generalized sense of hopelessness can be transformed into an opportunity for positive engagement, collaboration, and transformation.

A performative space may be described as one that is built upon mutual expressions of respect, reciprocity, inclusivity, and trust (Deutsch, 2004). Only when these fundamental features are present, will the building blocks for social justice praxis emerge (Fayter, 2016). For prison education programs, this requires developing a meaningful space where prisoners are treated as human beings, not as dangerous 'Others' who must be managed and controlled by guards, and where their master identity becomes that of 'student' rather than 'offender' or 'inmate.' Critical scholars contend that this occurs by way of building connections and human relationships (Fayter, 2016; Kilty & Lehalle, 2018; Kilty et al., 2020; Pollack, 2014, 2016a, 2016b). Speaking to how educational opportunities create an opening for identity transformation in the oppressive carceral environment, Charles Huckelbury (2004) described his experience in the following way:

> I loved the books and lectures, but more than that, I looked forward to the dialogue with professors; real people who treated me like, well, like a real student. (p. 32)

There are three key elements that enable the creation of a performative educational space, namely: civility, ethical conversations, and democracy. Civility is described as "a manner of communicating with others that is respectful, empathetic, and reciprocal" (Wright & Gehring, 2008b, p. 322); notably, this understanding of civility is central to the W2B training and philosophy (Davis & Roswell, 2013; Fayter, 2016; Kilty & Lehalle, 2018; Kilty et al., 2020; Pollack, 2014, 2016a, 2016b). Relatedly, ethical conversations stress that "individuals are recognized as subjects who share a common humanity" (Wright & Gehring, 2008a, p. 250), which is demonstrably opposed to the carceral logic that maintains a hierarchical divide between correctional staff and prisoners (Ricciardelli, 2014). To reorient our understanding of prisoners as people, with whom we share a common humanity, challenges the culturally entrenched identity politics that constitute criminalized people as always-already 'offenders', an identity category that dehumanizes incarcerated people. In this sense, by engaging in difficult ethical conversations, volunteers and educators act as mediators between the performative space of the classroom and the carceral logic and day-to-day correctional practices that structure prison spaces.

Ethical conversations allow prisoners to, at least for the duration of the class, step outside of the controlling and manipulative prison environment and to participate in a "dialogic sphere of civility" (Wright & Gehring, 2008b, p. 323) that promotes inclusivity and acceptance. W2B in particular, is premised on the notion that participants – "inside" incarcerated students, "outside" university-based students, and professor-facilitators – learn from one another (Davis & Roswell, 2013; Kilty & Lehalle, 2018; Kilty et al., 2020; Pollack, 2014, 2016a, 2016b).

Finally, democracy is used as a model of educational intervention within the performative space of the carceral classroom. When mutual respect and trust are combined with dialogue and active listening "classrooms, schools and interactions between school personnel and prison staff can provide opportunities for nascent forms of democracy to appear" (Wright

& Gehring, 2008a, p. 250). Given that "with few notable exceptions, prison cultures are antithetical to democracy" (Wright & Gehring, 2008a, p. 249), actively participating in classroom discussion and embracing the responsibility that teaching and learning are a shared enterprise (Kilty & Lehalle, 2018) help to develop a democratic learning community (Davis & Roswell, 2013; Eggleston & Gehring, 2000).

> As civil spheres, schools can be restorative and transformative because they counter the stripping away of identities and distorted forms of interaction in prisons. When ethical conversations appear, the potential for critical thought and democratic participation is likely to follow, if not in prison, then perhaps on the outside. (Wright & Gehring, 2008b, p. 335)

The performative space of the carceral classroom, or school enclave within the prison, is a place where education can function according to its own philosophies and principles (e.g., respect, trust, and empowerment) rather than according to the predominant carceral logic of security and punishment that guides institutional policies and practices. Notably, the personal and intellectual safety of a performative educational space in prison is amplified when teachers are not employed by the institution and instead teach classes as a result of a partnership between the prison and either a community-based organization or a college or university. Having some distance in these institutional arrangements creates a degree of confidentiality that allows the classroom to remain autonomous and somewhat removed from the governing correctional regime. In addition to developing social capital through education, the sphere of civility that is created in the classroom by nurturing relationships of trust and fostering a stronger sense of autonomy amongst prisoners helps to prepare them for a meaningful life after prison (Davis & Roswell, 2013; Duguid, 2000b; Shantz et al., 2009; Strimelle & Frigon, 2011). This discussion of the benefits of creating performative spaces in punitive places is not meant to naively ignore "[t]he ever-widening net of racialized and colonial carceral spaces and neoliberal strategies of control of poor and marginalized communities" (Pollack, 2019, p. 1), but rather to encourage ongoing engagement with a deployment of feminist, anti-oppressive, and transformative practices both inside and outside of prison walls.

Method

This paper embraces a multi-pronged methodological approach that combines research conducted as part of the first author's graduate work and the second author's experiences teaching university courses inside a Canadian detention centre. We begin by mobilizing the findings generated from analyzing five semi-structured, in person qualitative interviews, four of which were conducted with community-based educators working with criminalized and formerly incarcerated students. The fifth interview was conducted with a prison official from the Correctional Service of Canada at National Headquarters in Ottawa. Our thematic analysis (Ezzy, 2002) of the interview transcripts involved a series of coding and meaning-making steps. We began by reading and discussing the transcripts to ensure we had a common understanding of the details. Second, we generated preliminary codes to describe the transcript content. Third, we worked to combine the codes that overlapped or were too similar and to cut any extraneous codes so as to identify the most prominent themes. Fourth, we reviewed the transcripts again to ensure the themes accurately reflected interview content and searched for discrepant examples for each theme, finding none. Fifth, we established the nature and scope of each theme and selected quotes that illustrated them.

To strengthen the credibility and believability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the findings generated from the interview data, we marshaled the second author's experiences teaching four Walls to Bridges courses over a two-year period inside a maximum-security provincial detention centre[2] in Canada. We mobilized her weekly after-class fieldnotes to provide concrete examples of the main findings as they occurred in real-time. By using complimentary qualitative research methods, we were able to layer the stories and experiences of our participants with

those shared through other sources, including Kilty's fieldnotes and those penned by incarcerated students as they are documented in the *Journal for Prisoners on Prisons*. This process enabled us "to see the same themes repeated time and again" (McAleese & Kilty, 2019, p. 836) and to build a "through" narrative (Crépault & Kilty, 2017; Feldman et al., 2004) that enhances our understanding of prison education experiences.

In bringing together the findings from the interview-based research and the experiential knowledge gleaned from teaching and learning in a carceral environment, we uncovered two main themes that speak to concerns surrounding prison education in Canada: (1) carceral logic structures educational programming for criminalized people and forces educators to find ways to navigate institutional policies and practices when teaching inside carceral spaces; and (2) the institutional barriers and constraints that commonly interfere with prison education programs and shape the carceral classroom experience for both students and instructors. While these findings importantly point to the struggles associated with fostering performative spaces behind prison walls, we also wanted this article to provide a message of hope for prison education scholars and practitioners who strive to break down these barriers and constraints. Therefore, after discussing the two main themes that were identified in the interview data, we take up the W2B program as a case study to exemplify how prison education can be conducive to fostering transformative change for both the inside and outside students.

Navigating Carceral Logics and Institutional Policies and Practices

> *Entry into the prison milieu transforms the fundamental character of education. Its basic premises and values are undermined by the coercive environment in which it operates.* (Jones, 1992, p. 17)

The ability to make good things happen in harmful spaces is a struggle for individuals tasked with offering programs and supports (educational or otherwise) in prisons. While "[p]rison services have...made various claims to rehabilitative ideals" (Duguid, 2000b, p. 80), punishment, discipline, security, management, and control remain top priorities for prison officials (Farabee, 2005; Vacca, 2004; Wilson, 2000). This tension between punishment and transformation becomes quite visible when we look at prison education programs, as there is a fundamental philosophical difference between education and incarceration. In fact, the practice of using education as a form of prison population management, rather than as an opportunity to help incarcerated individuals learn and flourish, is frequently noted in the literature (Bayliss, 2003; Brazzell, 2009; Collins, 1995; Eggleston and Gehring, 2000; Farabee, 2005; Owers, 2007). For example, mandatory GED programs are described by some as "intellectual pabulum" and "rudimentary" (Huckelbury, 2004, p. 39) meant only to keep prisoners busy. Researchers and prisoners emphasize that the focus on security and control detracts from the positive change that may be influenced by a well-tailored education program with stimulating curriculum. Essentially, "the goals of prison security and the ideal of academic freedom often conflict" (Thomas, 1995, p. 32); as a result, practitioners, volunteers, educators, students, and prisoners are constantly reminded that prisons are "first and foremost, institutions of control and security, not classrooms or schools" (Brazzell et al., 2009, p. 24). For example, Duguid (2000a, 2000b) found that Canadian prison education programs began to dwindle at the end of the 1990s when correctional administrators began to demand evidence that they reduce recidivism. Similarly, depending on the institution, some correctional administrators have tried to review and veto W2B course content, which threatens the integrity of the program.

The carceral logics and institutional policies and practices that impede educational programming are so potent that educators who work in the community are well-aware of their impact. One community-based teacher reported that her formerly incarcerated students claimed, "the prisons keep introducing the idea of adult education in prison and then they take it away, and then they put it back in and then they take it away." Other participants echoed this concern about educational opportunities being taken away as punishment. The inconsistent availability

of education in prison is a troublesome start, and, as others have noted, even when educational options are available to prisoners the quality of the programming is often quite low: "Even the clients that I work with now say that it was good to be able to do school inside but they couldn't get what they'd done inside transferred or recognized outside of the institutions." The lack of dedication to maintaining a consistent, successful, and credible adult education curriculum can be explained by the fact that it is difficult to offer education (of any kind and quality) in an environment that is resistant to its purpose – to help people learn, change, and be empowered. As incarcerated student Charles Huckelbury (2004) wrote:

> Educational opportunities [in prison] are therefore little more than another means to control behaviour, a management tool by which prison staff achieves results by threatening to remove the only redeeming program available. (p. 37)

If education is seen as "an opportunity to increase the surveillance of prisoners" (Jones, 1992, p. 6) then educational program policies and practices will stem from this logic. Our interview with the prison official revealed that opportunities for active and meaningful participation in a classroom space decrease as security levels increase. For instance, in a medium security facility you might see up to fifteen students together in a classroom, but in a maximum-security facility "you will not find fifteen guys sitting and learning in the same classroom, because the higher you go in security levels some other aspects are considered" that limit participation – such as participation in correctionally mandated programs that are meant to address the individual's criminogenic risks and needs (Bérard, Vacheret, & Lemire, 2013). Typically, this means that in higher security prisons students are relegated to participating in self-directed learning or correspondence programs. The situation is even more severe for prisoners held in solitary confinement. While the prison official mentioned that "[a] teacher will go from the school to segregation and meet face-to-face with the [prisoner]," it is likely that solitary confinement, and other disciplinary measures, only further inhibit the learning process (Steffler, 2008, p. 30). In these high security situations, there is no space for education – and certainly not the kind of education that allows for meaningful engagement, dialogue, inclusivity, and transformation (Collins, 2008; Deutsch, 2004; Salah-El, 1992).

It is hard to foster a performative space in a place that prioritizes punishment over all else. According to the prison official interviewed by the first author, education will often be secondary to institutional "correctional" programs that are supposed to address other risks and needs[3]:

> …an offender may have educational needs but at the same time have other needs like substance abuse programs to do or sex offender programs to do, so the case manager or the parole officer will have the task to see which one should come first, to prioritize. So, education may fall second.

This correctional official not only acknowledged that the prison environment devalues education as less transformative and rehabilitative in comparison to programs designed and run by corrections, but also that a governing logic that prioritizes punishment negatively impacts motivation amongst prisoners. Community-based teachers recognized this as well and highlighted this as a reason why many individuals wait until they are released before pursuing their educational goals:

> I don't know if every person in the institution, even though they [would] like to do education, if they would be able to or if they would be more inclined to, or if they want to because they are in prison. It's not the happiest place, so they might be in a better mindset when they are in the community.

In the community, teachers emphasized "[working] with the students to make sure that they are successful" and helping people remove the different barriers they faced to securing education. In prison, on the other hand, the barriers to education increase and become more difficult to overcome or tear down. Even when education is made available to prisoners, there are addi-

tional barriers and constraints within and around the classroom space that make learning very difficult.

Constraints in the Carceral Classroom

> *Education is an activity best pursued in an environment unconstrained by coercion, threats, and impositions on access to intellectual resources and ideas.* (Thomas, 1995, p. 26)

There are many environmental obstacles and constraints that impact access to and the quality of prison education. For example, Richards (2004) writes about the lack of access to textbooks inside prisons:

> In the penitentiary you do not have access to university or public libraries, so you have to beg friends to mail books in, or work through the shoddy paperback collection of worn out copies in the library. (p. 63)

Furthermore, Collins (2008) laments the lack of access to new technology, specifically computers and the Internet, that renders prisoners 'computer illiterate' and therefore entirely ill-prepared for the digital world that exists outside of prison walls and that awaits them upon their release:

> I have seen the introduction and then removal of computers from prisoners' allowable cell effects. It is reasonable to recognize that long-term prisoners' will be computer illiterate in society's computer age. (p. 75)

The dearth of educational resources inside the prison classroom is a result of risk-averse policies and operational budgets that prioritize security and management resources over programs and supports (Davidson, 1995; Deutsch, 2004; Graves, 2004). As a result of these material constraints, "educators are in constant danger of having their programs eliminated" (Davidson, 1995, p.10; Duguid, 2000b) and this exacerbates an already strained relationship between teachers and staff, who are often pitted against each other for resources (Jones, 1992; Richards, 2004; Steffler, 2008).

Even when classrooms and resources are acquired by educators, it remains challenging to create and maintain a performative and transformative learning space inside prison. As Wright and Gehring (2008a, p. 245) note: "the harsh reality of brittle interactions between keepers and kept echoes the stark, oppressive physical reality of steel and concrete." In other words, the darkness ingrained within the prison walls often seeps into the prison classroom, reminding everyone inside that this is a place for punishment, not for learning. The presence of guards in and around the classroom is a common example of this (Bayliss, 2003; Vacca, 2004). The prison official interviewed described the carceral classroom as follows:

> …there's the teacher, there's the students…and probably there are many cameras in the corridor, and there should be some officers somewhere near the area. The teacher has the panic device…so in terms of seconds if he just pushes his red button then [the guards are] going to be there.

While he justified the need for these security measures, he also acknowledged their impact on the learning environment and indicated the importance of trying to limit the visibility of guards from inside the classroom:

> But for it to be not really intimidating to the students, the guards should not be in the classroom or into the windows. So, they are nearby. The teacher has the system of communicating with them if there is an issue. When the security or discipline is compromised, the teachers still have the authority to send back the offender to his cell…the discipline, the security of the learning environment is very well respected in the classroom.

Aside from the hovering nature of prison security there is also the constant reminder that the

bodies inside the classroom are those of prisoners first, not students. As Collins (2008, p. 93) writes: "[The guards] call us "offenders" as if this is all we are and all we ever will be." In fact, the success of the W2B program is rooted in the ability to build trusting relationships between participants, who address one another on a first name basis.

The idea of what constitutes a safe learning space is interpreted very differently by those working on the inside than it is by those working on the outside. After speaking with community-based teachers who work with criminalized people, this distinction became even more obvious. Conflicts in community-based classrooms are more likely to be dealt with in a non-punitive manner. If there is a disagreement between students or between a student and the teacher, both parties are given the chance to express their concerns without fear of punishment because relationships are grounded in trust and respect (Terry, 2006). By challenging the hierarchical and punitive structure of carceral environments, the performative space of the prison classroom helps to ensure that students come to the space knowing that they will be supported in achieving their learning goals without judgment:

> There's just a non-judgmental atmosphere that makes students feel more comfortable here than they would feel somewhere else.
>
> ...we offer education in a supportive, safe environment.
>
> We get positive feedback all the time from students, which is amazing. They just feel very safe, they feel like they are in an environment where they can actually learn, they enjoy that there's people who are patient with them.

These participant quotes demonstrate that to foster a performative space there are certain elements of the prison environment that must be abandoned. Notably, learning and transformation can only occur in a space where prisoners are free to be students first.

Thus far, we have outlined some of the challenges that make transformative prison education exceptionally difficult to achieve. And while it is important to recount and confirm the harm caused by punishment and incarceration, there are also examples of moments of transformation that manage to manifest as a result of persistent efforts from community-based educators. The following section highlights one such effort, the Walls to Bridges program, which we use as a case study to further demonstrate the findings and the transformative power of prison educational opportunities in action.

Case Study: Walls to Bridges

> *Education acts as a buffer against the nihilistic threat [of incarceration].*
> (Wright & Gehring, 2008b, p. 335)

The Walls to Bridges (W2B) prison education program is a decidedly transformative initiative that aims to create pathways into post-secondary education for incarcerated men and women while sensitizing university-based students to the materiality of incarceration. In this sense, it can help to promote security, inclusion, and the creation of ties to and bonds between carceral institutions and the broader community (Kilty et al., 2020). In 2011, W2B was adapted for the Canadian prison environment and experience by Shoshana Pollack and Simone Weil Davis, who were trained as facilitators for the American Inside-Out (I-O) Prison Exchange program, which grew from a single course taught by Lori Pompa at Temple University in Philadelphia in 1997. Both programs see post-secondary educators teaching courses inside carceral institutions and engage experiential teaching and learning (Butin, 2013). Classes are made up of both "outside" university-enrolled students and "inside" incarcerated students, who learn from one another by examining social issues through the "prism of prison." As aforementioned, the approach is grounded in dialogue, reciprocity, and collaborative teaching and learning (Davis & Roswell, 2013).

The first W2B course was offered at the Grand Valley Institution for Women, a federal prison in Kitchener, Ontario. Given that Indigenous peoples in Canada are disproportionately

represented amongst carceral populations in Canada (Balfour & Comack, 2014) and in the spirit of reconciliation, one key difference between the I-O and W2B programs is that W2B invites Indigenous Elders to facilitate a session as part of the instructor certification training and incorporates Indigenous circle pedagogy into its general pedagogical practice (discussed in greater detail below). Another key difference is that W2B 'inside' students are granted university credits for successfully completing a course, where for I-O courses, credit-granting varies from site to site (Pollack, 2014). W2B courses are grounded by an anti-oppression and intersectional feminist lens and strive for connection, non-judgmental openness, and critical thinking; notably, the broader W2B initiative engages in advocacy and public education concerning issues of criminalization, education, and social justice (Pollack, 2016).

Accepting that education "enables [prisoner] students to make room for themselves" (Wright, 2001, p. 87) we can conceptualize W2B classrooms as generating a 'sphere of civility' inside oppressive carceral environments. For W2B courses this is largely facilitated by way of circle pedagogy, which is a decolonizing practice that emphasizes respectful and inclusive dialogue, experiential learning, and shared inquiry. Similar to Freirian pedagogical principles, Indigenous circle pedagogy destabilizes the traditional western approach to teaching that is based on a hierarchy and power imbalance between the teacher and students. As an alternative approach, circle pedagogy requires that all class participants, including the course facilitators, sit in a circle formation, speak their own truth, use personal testimony that does not affirm or negate other speakers, and practice respectful listening (Graveline, 1998; Palmer, 2004). Circle pedagogy involves deliberate and reflexive communication, with each participant taking a turn to speak and actively listen so as to contribute authentic responses to the dialogue when it is their turn. The circle symbolizes interconnectedness, equality amongst diverse participants, and joint responsibility for the conversation – which situates everyone, facilitators included, as student learners (Pollack, 2014). Not only does this reflect the civility, ethical conversations and democratic approach to teaching and learning that Wright and Gehring (2008a, 2008b) contend are required to effectively generate a performative classroom space in prison, circle pedagogy also recognizes and values voice and thus the subjugated knowledges of those who rarely have the opportunity to speak and be heard. Initially, the circle format can be quite destabilizing for those who have spent years teaching in traditional university lecture and seminar style classrooms.

> Each week I feel nervous that I am not prepared enough for class. How can a short one-page class agenda outline occupy nearly three hours? I'm used to taking in fifteen pages of lecture notes for a three-hour class. Yet, I consistently find myself rushing to try to attend to the items on my agenda because time seems to fly by in this class at a speed that I am unaccustomed to. I know I am supposed to "trust the process" but faith in a process that is foreign to my regular classroom habitus is somewhat overwhelming. (Kilty, Winter 2018 class fieldnotes)

As active participants in their educational development, rather than passive recipients of information, W2B students become more invested in the learning process (Turenne, 2013), which is especially important for overcoming structures of oppression, injustice, and inequality that can disempower marginalized students and prevent them from participating, as is common in traditional academic settings (Perry, 2013). The situatedness of the circle format encourages the group to understand diverse perspectives on the same issue; for marginalized people who are rarely 'heard', this promotes the development of a critical consciousness or "conscientization" by encouraging participants to examine perceived social and political contradictions and differences in their experiences and perspectives (Freire, 2008).

Finally, circle pedagogy encourages holistic learning where, in alignment with the Indigenous medicine wheel, participants incorporate their physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual "selves" into classroom dialogue (Graveline, 1998; Hart, 2002; Pollack, 2016). The

collaborative nature of knowledge production in this format not only shifts power imbalances between inside and outside students and the facilitator, it values, humanizes and respects the voices of all circle members – which is often life-affirming for incarcerated people (Fayter, 2016; Freitas et al., 2014; Pollack, 2016).

> Today's class was especially moving. One of the inside students who has otherwise remained quiet – always seeming to be assessing his whereabouts, the sincerity of the outside students and professor, and how he would be judged for expressing himself in the circle – finally spoke in a detailed and engaged way. He shared his deep concerns about his life inside and potential life beyond prison. He said that he finally believed that what he shared – including his deep fears of being deported, shunned by his family and harmed in his homeland for being gay – would be valued. He said that for the first time in a long time he felt safe to discuss these issues with others. It was the clearest example so far in this class as to how the circle format helps participants reclaim their voice. (Kilty, Winter 2019 class fieldnotes)

It is for this reason that W2B classes can be so transformative for participants. By caring about one another as 'whole people' the learning process involves not only sharing and receiving information, but contributing to one another's intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth (Graveline, 1998; Palmer, 2004). In this way, circle pedagogy aids in the creation of a sphere of civility in an otherwise oppressive environment that functions as a critical public sphere for discussing complex social issues (Wright & Gehring, 2008). For example, Kilty's inside students have referred to this transformative process as "humanity Tuesday's" (because the course was held on Tuesday afternoons) (Kilty & Lehalle, 2018), a "surreal departure from the dregs of life in prison" (Kilty, Winter 2019 class fieldnotes), "the first time I've really connected with anyone in here and it's been two years" (Kilty, Fall 2019 class fieldnotes), and as "the only time I feel human in here" (Kilty, Fall 2019 class fieldnotes).

Central to building W2B's transformative potential is the fact that the professor-facilitator is not an employee of the institution. As the following exchange exemplifies, this separation of power is one of the key reasons that W2B students feel safe to participate in this educational opportunity:

> Inside Student: I just want to know if what we say in here is going to be reported to the COs? Do you talk to them about us or what we say?
>
> Kilty: No, I don't work for corrections. This is a university class and I'm here to facilitate learning about the different issues we will be studying. I would only speak to an institutional authority if you told me you were going to hurt yourself or someone else.
>
> Inside Student: So, it's like the Vegas rule.
>
> Kilty: Yes, what is said in circle, stays in circle. (Kilty, Winter 2019 class fieldnotes)

Institutional staff do not sit in to observe or participate in W2B classes so there is a degree of autonomy in this educational initiative, which is important for developing the kind of trust that is needed to engage in open critical discussions about social issues. Especially for the inside students, there is safety in knowing that there is a degree of confidentiality regarding what is said in circle, again signaling how institutional hierarchies and power structures create feelings of a loss of democracy and civility amongst incarcerated people, which in turn reiterates the importance for community-based organizations, colleges, and universities to have access to engage in educational opportunities in carceral settings.

This is not to say that W2B is free from the difficulties noted above in terms of navigating correctional policies and practices or the constraints that typically structure the carceral

classroom. In fact, it took over two years of negotiation to reach a legal agreement between the second author's university and the carceral institution where she teaches, and the first course was treated as a pilot that there was no obligation to repeat. While the benefits of offering a program like W2B are obvious, it remains a difficult course to orchestrate inside an institution steeped in punishment and oppression.

Navigating institutional policies and protocols can also come to bear directly upon the class experience, such as when Kilty had to speak with a key staff member about their presence in the classroom. In this instance, the staff member entered the room before class had ended and witnessed the closing circle on two occasions, which completely altered the mood and inhibited the expressiveness of the students who became demonstrably quieter and less open in their dialogue (Kilty & Lehalle, 2018). Thankfully, this staff member was receptive to the concerns raised by the professor and was respectful enough to avoid entering the class in future weeks.

There are also ongoing weekly negotiations with correctional staff as you enter and pass through security and with the staff that manages the wing of the prison in which the inside students are housed. While administrative staff might approve of and support the initiative, frontline correctional staff are not always similarly supportive. Kilty has heard snide remarks from correctional officers regarding the "free education that the inmates are getting, when [they] still have student loan debt," (Winter 2018 class fieldnotes) and inside students have reported that guards sometimes refer to the course as "walls to bitches" (Winter 2019 class fieldnotes). Depending on what has occurred in the institution or who is working that day, classes can be seriously delayed – by 15, 30, and even 60 minutes. These examples speak to the psychological climate of incarceration. The loud disruptive sounds and lack of privacy in conjunction with the at times antagonistic relationship with staff members (including taunting from guards), cell searches, and destruction of course materials contribute to making the process of teaching and learning in prison exceptionally difficult – an ongoing negotiation in a problematic environment.

There are also the common concerns regarding the lack of resources for students in prison, including lack of access to computers, the Internet, books, and other library resources which prevents them from fully participating in the research aspect of post-secondary education. In more oppressive institutional environments, including where Kilty teaches – even pens, erasers, and binders for the students' loose-leaf papers are prohibited. These students are only permitted to use small golf pencils, which has led to the creative response of using the rubber soles of their sneakers as erasers. Moreover, the physical space of carceral settings is unmistakably constraining to educational advancement; prisons are loud, deny privacy to individuals, and face constant interruptions due to cell counts, rounds, mealtimes, cell searches, and lockdowns. Given the overcrowding that is common to the modern prison, it is a particularly difficult environment in which to try to do the readings and written assignments that are required for course success. For example, Kilty's students do not have desks to sit at to do their course work and must contend with the barest of conditions that structure their daily lives. Prison cells can be variably dark or over bright at odd hours, there is poor air circulation and there are routine temperature fluctuations that lead to feeling cold or hot that can make concentration difficult. Despite these difficulties and compared to the monotony, inhumanity, and agonism of prison life, W2B creates the opportunity to develop respectful, stimulating, and highly meaningful relationships that ground the teaching and learning process.

Conclusion

Incarcerated students have long reported that prison education programs provide light in a dark space (Finlay, 2016; Terry, 2004) and are "the only positives in an ocean of negativity" (Day, 2008, p. 38). It is unsurprising, then, that "the popularity of prison education amongst prisoners [is] a popularity which is unequalled when compared to other prison programs" (Da-

vidson, 1992, p.1). Where most correctional programs are often critiqued for failing to address prisoners' needs (Pollack, 2014; Shantz et al., 2009), educational opportunities are regularly described as breaking the monotony of prison life and as being "stimulating, nurturing, and life enhancing" (Terry, 2004, pp.22-23). Expressions like these indicate that the prison classroom is considered a safe space in an otherwise oppressive environment. The sphere of civility that is created in the classroom is a microcosm that is less threatening than the atmosphere of punishment and control that structures prison life, and serves to encourage positive – even transformative – change by helping to foster a student identity and passing time constructively (Collins, 2008).

To create a performative space in a carceral environment, there are certain characteristic elements of the prison that must be abandoned because learning only occurs in a space where respect is mutual and free of coercion or threat (Davidson, 1992; Palmer, 2004; Pollack, 2014, 2016a). As incarcerated students repeatedly attest, education programs in prison remind prisoners of their humanity and of their potential (Bonanfanti, 1992; Fayter, 2016; Kilty & Lehalle, 2018; Kilty et al., 2020). We must be careful, however, not to create a false sense of comfort that bolsters carceral power, which is antithetical to the central principles that enable the creation of a performative educational space in the prison context – namely, civility, ethical conversations, and democracy (Wright and Gehring, 2008a, 2008b). For while they may nurture "intellectual freedom in an otherwise coercive environment" (Davidson, 1992, p. 2), prison education programs remain hindered by the constraints of the carceral classroom and punitive surveillance, risk, and management logics that structure and govern prison life.

While it is perhaps easier to think of the lack of human and material resources that prison educators and incarcerated students regularly face (e.g., limited or no access to computers, the Internet, books, and other academic reading material; poor conditions in which to read and complete assignments; and limited contact with teachers), this collaborative research project also revealed how the carceral focus on security as the primary governance and management logic challenges the freedom that comes with learning initiatives inside. Despite the motivation that prisoners report regarding educational opportunities and teachers' efforts to guide them in the achievement of their goals, there is little time, space, or support for fostering the interpersonal trust and mutual respect (central formative aspects of adult education) required to thrive in carceral environments. It is not enough for a prisoner to experience civility, ethical conversations, and democracy in only one space for a limited amount of time each day or each week. The sphere of civility that the performative classroom space generates does not cancel out the dangers and degradations that characterize normative prison life. Instead, it can create a bifurcated carceral experience where one can never be completely free of the punitive fundamental nature of life in prison:

> So, to those of you who teach us, and to my brothers and sisters in cages, keep thinking, keep learning and growing, keep the fire burning for those following. And never forget to watch your back (Huckelbury, 2004, p. 44).

We suggest that performative spaces must extend beyond the confines of the carceral classroom for them to have a stronger transformative influence. The Walls to Bridges program reflects this sentiment with its central aims of building bridges between the carceral and broader social communities and learning about socio-political and cultural issues through the 'prism of the prison' (Pollack, 2014, 2016a). Given the negative relationships that often exist between prisoners and prison staff members that can make transformative learning a difficult task to undertake, educational (and we would argue all) programs would benefit from being run in the community and by teachers who do not work for corrections. Not only would this shift help prisoners to shed that identity as their master status in lieu of a positive and transformative identity as a student or learner, it would help them connect with and feel invested in the communities to which they will one day return.

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Footnotes

[1] The four special issues of *The Journal for Prisoners on Prisons* that focus specifically on prison education are: 1992 Volume 4 (1), 2004 Volume 13 (1), 2008 Volume 17(1), and 2016 Volume 25(2).

[2] As part of the memorandum of understanding between the provincial government and the university, we are legally prohibited from identifying the name or location of the detention centre.

[3] The CSC requires that federally sentenced prisoners in Canada "participate in an education program" with the goal of providing "basic literacy, academic and personal development skills" (Retrieved Mar. 5, 2020: https://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/correctional-process/002001-2002-eng.shtml). There are no mandated educational opportunities in provincial carceral institutions in Canada.

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PRACTITIONER PAPER

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Teaching Humanities Research in Under-Resourced Carceral Environments

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Abstract: *Humanities courses make up a large portion of higher education courses offered in United States carceral facilities. However, many of these facilities lack the academic resources necessary to support the research assignments traditionally assigned in a humanities course, from research papers common in introductory courses to the undergraduate theses completed by many humanities majors. This paper outlines a case study in adapting a humanities research assignment to function in a prison lacking digital and physical research resources, with particular attention to the assignment's potential to promote student confidence, independent learning, and autonomy. The author surveys the instructor's role in promoting "Inquiry-Based Learning," a pedagogy that emphasizes active learning, and the challenges that the prison environment presents in helping students take on the role of active researcher. Finally, the paper considers the long-term benefits of preserving research assignments despite the logistical obstacles, particularly for students pursuing further higher education after release.*

Keywords: *humanities research; educational resources; student autonomy; Taconic Correctional Facility*

Every aspect of a college course is altered by the material realities of the prison environment, but research-based learning is particularly affected. For instructors of introductory humanities courses, frequently tasked with teaching academic research and information literacy, adapting research assignments to the prison environment is central to a successful course. This is particularly urgent considering the prominent place humanities instruction retains within prison curricula in the United States, where courses requiring humanities and social science research skills continue to make up a significant segment of course offerings. In many US states, however, incarcerated students do not have access to resources necessary for conducting research. Asher (2006), Sorgert (2014), and DeLano Davis (2017) document myriad programs designed to increase academic resources in prison libraries, but note their limited reach; in Asher's words "many facilities are neither funded nor stocked to provide resources for academic research." This reality has multiple detrimental effects. In my own course, it created substantial obstacles to offering students transferable academic credit, a problem which, writ large, threatens to limit prison education programs. Even more deleteriously, material limitations to research can offer incarcerated students painful reminders of the resources denied by the prison system.

This essay offers a case-study of strategies for confronting two persistent barriers to teaching research skills in an under-resourced carceral environment. First, without sufficient research material at their disposal, instructors must find other avenues for teaching students how to seek out, evaluate, and select proper sources for a research-based assignment. Second, without these resources, incarcerated students risk being deprived of one of the most self-directed assignments offered in any humanities course, in which student-directed research replaces reading and responding to work chosen and assigned by an instructor. This independent

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work is central to any college education, but it is particularly important for incarcerated students faced with the loss of personal agency that the American carceral system creates. These strategies, drawn from my experience teaching at Taconic Correctional Facility in Bedford Hills, New York, can help prison instructors replicate many of the benefits of on-campus research, complementing the necessary political advocacy to provide incarcerated students with needed academic resources.

Inquiry-Based Learning in the Prison Classroom

This research assignment was offered as part of University Writing, Columbia University's required introductory course in academic writing, which was being taught for the first time in a prison facility. The ten enrolled students, ranging from students with extensive prison education experience to those who were taking their first ever college class, had ably navigated the first two units of the course-a textual analysis paper focusing on a single, assigned essay and a longer paper considering multiple essays in conversation with one another; from a material resources perspective, these assignments required only that I distribute a few assigned texts. The third unit, tasked with introducing students to both the principles of academic research and the resources available to them for conducting it, required substantially more intervention. For many university students, research-based assignments represent the first serious introduction to Inquiry-Based Learning, in which, as Blessinger and Carfora (2014, p. 5) put it, "the learner moves from a passive to an active participant in the learning process, [and] the instructor also moves from being an isolated subject matter expert to an instructional leader, learning architect, and learning guide and mentor." In the campus environment, students are enabled as active learners by finding research material in an academic library or online databases, and subsequently fashioning an argument from these materials, while an instructor teaches relevant research skills to help students complete these tasks. The first challenge in adapting the research assignment to the prison environment is replicating this experience of student discovery without having research resources at their disposal. In other words, simply assigning materials, as I had done in the first two units, would deprive students of the ability to do Inquiry-Based Learning. Independent source discovery must be incorporated.

Generating Research Questions

As the task of generating research questions is both an entirely new skill for many students, and of crucial importance for the success of the research assignment, I devoted an entire two-hour class to helping students move from broad topical interests to specific database search phrases. I began by introducing two relevant frameworks for student research. First, the well-known approach of Booth et al (2008), a methodology that exhorts student researchers to start from the position of "local expert," a practice that supports student autonomy by helping students imagine research as a self-driven activity emerging from personal expertise, rather than a sterilized process of combing through sources on whatever topic an instructor deems important (Booth et al 2008, p. 41). To further encourage student-researcher autonomy, I introduced excerpts of Crist and Miles's research on "narrative inquiry," a "genre that originates as personal inquiry into a significant issue for the student and imbues it with social and cultural analysis" (Crist and Miles, 2018, p. 225). Using these principles, students then started generating preliminary research questions they wanted to pursue over the course of a multi-week assignment. Often, students used the combined principles of local expertise and narrative inquiry to bring together their own personal experiences and themes from previously-assigned readings, to create unique research topics that they were personally invested in.

One student's experience highlights the challenges incarcerated learners may face in generating research questions, and ways that these pedagogical tools can help overcome them. This student, having written an earlier assignment that analyzed an assigned excerpt from Matthew Desmond's *Evicted,* a 2016 ethnographic study of evictions in several American cities, was interested in further studying eviction, but was daunted by the vast scope of the topic. To help the

student find a more manageable research question, I suggested using narrative inquiry to consider a space of particular personal interest as a starting-point. The student eventually decided to connect the issue of housing eviction to poverty rates in three New York City neighborhoods; this led to database search phrases such as "eviction and poverty rates in East Harlem" and "eviction rates and school attendance in New York City." As this example shows, encouraging students to generate research questions from personal investments, in addition to promoting student autonomy throughout the assignment, can help generate "right-sized" research questions that students can pursue within the limits of a single assignment; having an inquiry of manageable scope can in turn make research assignments feel significantly less intimidating to students.

Replicating the Database Search

At this juncture, the assignment requires substantial instructor adaptation to best replicate how a research paper would be taught with significant academic research resources available. Having worked with students to generate research topics and search keywords, an instructor may now enter those terms into both a primary source and secondary source database. Instructor flexibility when selecting databases plays an important role in generating useful research results for students, as students generating topics by considering their personal expertise will almost inevitably produce research questions ranging across humanities and social science fields. In my course, student research topics often crossed disciplinary boundaries. One student, for instance, undertook a research paper that studied historical shifts in public attitudes toward Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). This project, the student recognized, would benefit from both sociological research on public opinions about SIDS as well as humanities research in the fields of History of Medicine and Science to help understand why these shifts happened. An instructor limiting the student's searches to field-specific databases would limit the student's project, and instructors should bear this in mind when conducting searches on behalf of students. In my case, I settled on the widely-available ProQuest Central to search primary sources and either JSTOR or Web of Science for secondary sources; instructors may need to adapt these choices to suit other student research topics. Sorting under the heading "Relevance," I selected and printed the first ten results in both primary and secondary sources, compiled them in order of search return, and prepared a packet of research material for each student.

This sample, of course, was much smaller than the numerous resources a student could access on campus, but it enabled students to complete a series of relevant assignments on source evaluation (e.g. identifying distinguishing characteristics of primary and secondary sources) as well as function (e.g. considering different ways research sources can contribute to arguments). With research material in front of them, students could also learn citation practices and strategies for avoiding plagiarism. Crucially, it gave students control over choosing what research material to write about; since the assignment required they use four primary and four secondary sources, student researchers were in charge of selecting the most valuable sources for their argument from the larger sample. With database results distributed, I as instructor took on the role of supporting, rather than directing, student research. For instance, one student researching childhood narratives of homelessness asked for further information on historical rates of childhood eviction, and we worked together to create follow-up search terms that I could search on the student's behalf.

Outcomes

In total, the research assignment required five weeks: one for generating research questions; one for digesting and analyzing research material; two for composing a draft and conducting follow-up research; and, a final week for revisions. All ten students successfully completed research essays. Topics ranged widely, from an analysis of the influence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on "right to counsel" laws, to a study of the effects of gentri-

fication on racial segregation in the Northeastern United States. In one notable, unforeseen benefit, the essays revealed that students had "traded" sources among one another—the student researching the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for instance, shared sources on housing and human rights law with colleagues researching eviction and homelessness. The ability to share resources with one another added another element of student autonomy and camaraderie to the assignment. While the sample of ten students is small, this group has gone on to notable educational success; two students from this introductory class in 2018 have already completed entire undergraduate degrees at Taconic.

Potential Challenges

This assignment has the potential to help promote student empowerment, a learning experience of deep importance to incarcerated students. This will not happen automatically, however; instructors play a key role in ensuring that the assignment actually achieves this goal. From a student perspective, this assignment can seem similar to any other course assignment conducted in a carceral facility: an instructor brings in material for students to read, helps them digest and respond to it, and directs them to complete a writing assignment. The instructor therefore must make apparent the shift that Blessinger and Carfora describe from authority to "instructional leader, learning architect, and learning guide and mentor." Without this shift, the instructor will have difficulty allowing students to engage in what Behan (2014, p. 26) calls the "uncomfortable, ambiguous, tentative, uncertain and evolving" critical thinking that is necessary for helping students develop agency in the prison environment. In my course, I had become aware of this dynamic during earlier units focused on close reading and textual analysis; students frequently composed responses that departed significantly from the texts they had been assigned, implicitly signaling that they were eager to explore their own intellectual interests as part of the course, and my role in maintaining student focus on material that I had assigned could feel constraining.

While Gordon (2019, p. 164) has pointed out that alleviating this authoritative dynamic remains a problem even for prison instructors who attempt to "craft lessons that invite and encourage student inquiry and build activities around collaborative investigation and dialogue," humanities research offers one avenue forward through its emphasis on research as a conversational practice among scholar-peers. The framework of "research as conversation" has particular benefits in prison classrooms. The conversation model, where primary and secondary sources serve not only as experts or authorities but also as interlocutors whose positions a student-researcher can challenge, modify, or support, can decenter the authority of "expert" sources without the perceived risk of pushing back against writing assigned by an instructor, which students often feel may negatively impact their standing in the course. For students without access to research resources, any material assigned by an instructor, however compelling, carries the mark of authority, since it has been deemed "acceptable" material for incarcerated people to study by an outside figure. By giving students the ability to evaluate, critically respond to, and even disagree with research sources, a humanities research assignment can reframe student relationships to texts, even if an instructor cannot fully shed the authoritative position placed on them in the prison environment.

Conclusion

It bears repeating that a modified assignment cannot obviate the need for improved academic resources in United States prisons. Nonetheless, the benefits of adapting humanities research assignments greatly outweigh the difficulties. For many prison students, their educational goals include not only learning skills and content but also preparing for continued pursuit of higher education after release. In order to be successful in this transition, students must have been equipped with independent research skills, skills that they will frequently be assumed to have by their future university instructors. The costs of not teaching students these research skills go beyond the academic. Even under supportive circumstances, research assignments

often produce significant student anxieties. These feelings, when compounded by other stigmas faced by formerly incarcerated students, have the potential to derail educational success, especially if they give formerly-incarcerated students the impression that the education they received was substandard. Teaching humanities research, then, is crucial not only for promoting the academic independence and autonomy of incarcerated individuals, but also for creating space for them in educational settings beyond the prison walls.

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RESEARCH PAPER

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Learning from the Outcomes of Existing Prison Parenting Education Programs for Women Experiencing Incarceration: A Scoping Review

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Abstract: *This scoping review addresses the question, what are the outcomes of existing prison parenting education programs for women experiencing incarceration and what can we learn? The framework used was based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR). Significant positive changes were identified after attending prison parenting programs and women generally provided positive feedback about their experiences however, there were also insights into the distress caused. The content covered in the programs is also explored. In conclusion, prison can be an opportunity for parenting education and support although currently the best way to provide this support to women has not been established. This review gives insight to those wanting to develop a parenting program specifically for women.*

Keywords: *prison, incarceration, women prisoners, mothers, education, parenting programs*

This is the first scoping review that we are aware of which focuses on parenting education for women who are incarcerated, including quantitative and qualitative data. Thirteen studies are included in the review which evaluates parenting programs for women during incarceration, in the last decade across the globe. The inclusion of the frequency of topics in education programs are described and discussed. This review aims to explore the outcomes of prison parenting education programs and to provide key learning outcomes for improvement.

Context

There are more than 714,000 women and girls accommodated in corrective institutions globally, who make up 6.9% of the prison population worldwide (Walmsley, 2016). These figures have increased by 53% since the year 2000 and are increasing at a faster rate when compared to the male prison population, demonstrating a 20% rise. It is also estimated that millions of children worldwide have a parent who is incarcerated and tens of thousands live in prison with their mother (PRI, 2013). The majority of women experiencing incarceration have endured complex histories which often include child abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, domestic violence and drug and alcohol addiction (Seagrave & Carlton, 2010, Wilson et al., 2010, Thompson & Harm, 2000, Henderson, 1990, Harm & Thompson, 1997, Moore & Clement, 1998).

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Many women have also experienced children being removed by child protective services (Seagrave & Carlton, 2010) and are dealing with the prison environment associated with shame, powerlessness, and prison rules (Easteal, 2001). These life events can result in complex trauma often exhibited by low self-esteem, inability to display emotions, physical or psychological agitation, self-injury and suicide attempts (Baldwin, 2017). This trauma can impact the woman's ability to maintain employment, may create issues with parenting, alcohol and substance abuse, as well as affecting mental health conditions (Strathopoulos, 2012). These factors along with lack of nurturing and inappropriate parental role modelling in their own childhood, can make parenting their own children challenging (Thompson & Harm, 2000). Mothers who are incarcerated experience physical separation from their children as well as their role as mother, which incites a new identity of mothering (Easterling et al., 2019). Prison systems that do not pay attention to motherhood further damage and punish women which can result in missed opportunities for rehabilitation, relationship building, and positive intervention (Baldwin, 2017). The Bangkok Rules adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2010, were designed to protect the rights and needs of women and their children who are incarcerated. These rules were initiated in 193 countries due to the fact that the criminal justice system was historically designed for men, and it has been recognized that the needs of women differ considerably (PRI, 2013). Incarceration can provide an opportunity to offer women time to learn about parenting and strengthening relationships (Fowler et al., 2018, Miller et al., 2014). One of the most important elements to improve outcomes for women is to initiate and maintain relationships with family and children (Bartels & Gafney, 2011, Barrick et al., 2014). Despite the many challenges that women face, children are a strong motivator to avoid re-offense and substance abuse and promote the desire to re-gain custody (Prguda & Burke, 2020). It has been reported that many women do hope to resume the care of their children, however, the support they require is multifaceted and includes social, family, emotional and legal support to maintain mothering (Barnes & Stringer, 2014).

There have been five previously published reviews investigating the impact of parenting programs conducted in prisons throughout the world. These include two literature reviews (Loper & Tuerk, 2006, Newman et al., 2011) two systematic reviews (Tremblay & Sutherland, 2017, Troy et al., 2018) and one systematic review and meta-analysis (Armstrong et al., 2017). The searches in these reviews were undertaken prior to 2015 and published later. Another literature review by (Shlonsky et al., 2016) investigated the impact of prison nursery programs specifically. There was only one review involving incarcerated mothers which included only quantitative studies and programs in a community setting as well as a prison (Tremblay & Sutherland, 2017). There were some positive impacts reported following parenting programs initiated during incarceration which included parenting attitude (Tremblay & Sutherland, 2017), parenting skills (Newman et al ., 2011, Armstrong et al., 2017), parenting knowledge, parent-child relationships (Armstrong et al., 2017) and parenting behaviour (Tremblay & Sutherland, 2017).

Research Question:

What are the outcomes of existing prison parenting education programs for women experiencing incarceration and what can we learn?

Aims

The paper aims to explore:

1. the scope and structure/content of evaluated prison parenting programs for women in the last decade
2. the outcomes of parenting programs for women who have attended a program during incarceration
3. what we can learn for future research and program development

Methods

The scoping review follows the framework outlined in the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) extension for scoping review checklist. The PRISMA statement includes a 27-item checklist of essential steps for transparent reporting of a scoping review and a four-phase flow diagram. This process ensures transparency and reproducibility (Tricco et al., 2018). The current study utilised PIC (population, intervention and context) for search terms and inclusion criteria. The population (incarcerated females), intervention (parenting education) and context (international literature).

Inclusion Criteria

Population

Women were required to be over the age of 18 and incarcerated. They did not need to be a biological mother. Males were excluded and studies that evaluated a program comprising males and females were included if the results were analysed separately.

Intervention

The women were required to attend a parenting program or program that focused on parenting whilst they were incarcerated. Programs assessing a mother baby unit were excluded as well as programs that extended into the community.

Context

Searches were conducted to include all international published studies limited to English language and published in the last ten years, (from 2009 to 2019) to represent parent education literature relevant to current parenting needs for women in prison.

Sources of Evidence

The evidence included research studies that evaluated a parenting program within a prison.

Search Strategy and Selection of Studies

Eleven databases were searched: Medline; Embase; Emcare; PsycInfo, Cochrane Library, Australian Criminology Database, Criminal Justice Database; Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC); Scopus, Google, and Google Scholar. The initial search in Medline combined Boolean operators with the key words: Prisons; Prisoners; Criminals; Mothers; Women; Parenting and Childrearing. The terms were searched as key words, Medical Subject Headings and subject headings. The searches were conducted in November 2019 by an experienced academic librarian assisted with refining the database searches. See Table 1 below for the final search in Medline.

Table 1

Medline Search

1	PRISONS/
2	PRISONERS/
3	CRIMINALS/
4	((penitentiar* or penal or custodial or custody or corrections or correctional or corrective or detention or remand or borstal) adj5 (institution or facilit* or centre$1 or center$1 or system$1 or service$1)).ti,ab,kw.
5	(imprison* or inmate* or incarcerat* or jail* or gaol* or offender$1 or prison* or detain* or criminal* or convict* or felon$1).ti,ab,kw.
6	or/1-5
7	MOTHERS/
8	WOMEN/

9	(mother$1 or mum$1 or mom$1 or female$1 or women or woman).ti,ab,kw.
10	or/7-9
11	PARENTING/
12	CHILD REARING/
13	(parenting or child* rearing or child* upbringing or "rear* child*" or "bring* up child*" or parent* management or mothering).mp.
14	11 or 12 or 13
15	6 and 10 and 14
16	Limit to English
17	Limit to 2009 – current

The total number of documents found were transferred to an Endnote X9® Library and Covidence database (Covidence systematic review software, Veritas Health Innovation, Melbourne, Australia. Available at www.covidence.org). The duplicates were removed using Covidence. The search results were analysed using the title and abstract by the first author (BL) and these studies were included for review of the full text. The full text was reviewed by BL and AB and discussed for inclusion. Any conflicts were resolved in consultation with two other authors (AE). The Grey literature was searched on the 14th of November 2019 using the search string, 'Parenting education incarcerated mothers,' in Google, Google Scholar. The reference lists of all the included papers as well as previous reviews were hand searched for any further studies.

Data Extraction

The authors designed a table with headings to use as a guide to extract relevant data to inform the scoping review question. Data included: Parenting program name; author, year, country; type and content of program; facilitator details; program development; methodology; tools to evaluate; validation of tool; contact hours of program; number of participants; attrition rate; evaluated outcomes; long term follow up and further comments.

Data Synthesis/Presentation

Data is presented in tables as well as a summary and description of information in the results and discussion of this review. The data was synthesized to establish the outcomes of evaluations and determine what can be learnt from previous implementation of parenting programs in prisons.

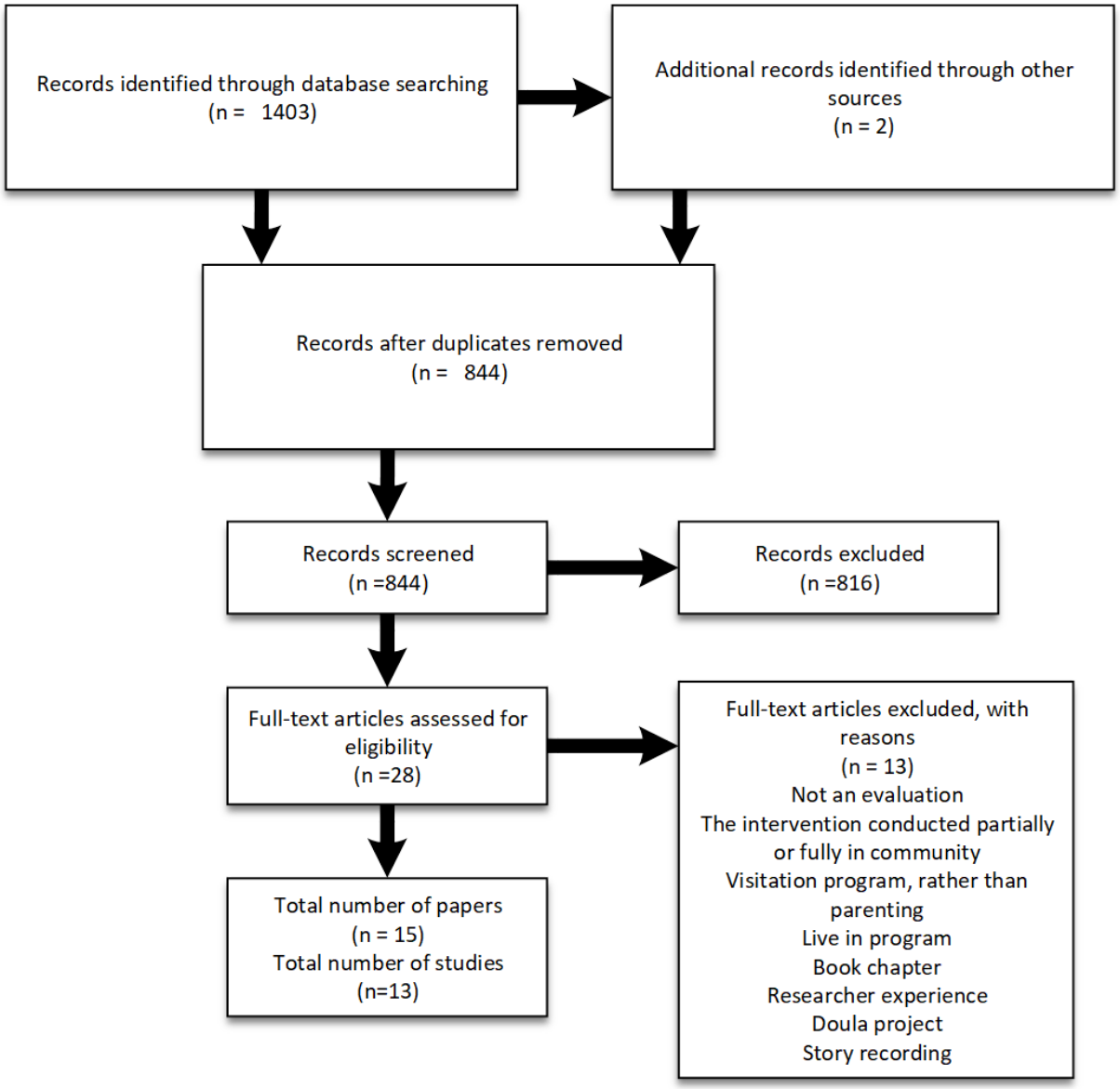
Results

Study Selection

Many of the papers screened focused on prison health, programming and studies about the impact upon the children of incarcerated mothers. These studies were identified and excluded by title and abstract. Figure 1 demonstrates the PRISMA diagram for the study selection which includes the number of full text reviewed records which were excluded based on eligibility criteria. A total of 13 studies were eligible for inclusion which comprised of 15 papers (This included two studies that had multiple papers reporting on the same study).

Figure 1

PRISMA Flow Chart



Included Studies

Aim 1: The scope and structure/content of evaluated prison parenting programs for women in the last decade.

Table 2 compiles characteristics of the included studies whilst Table 3 details the included topics in the programs and the number of programs that have included the same or similar topic.

Table 2

Data Extraction Table

Program name Author/year Country	Type of program Program facilitator	Program Development & Methodology Tool validation	Contact time [1] Participants Attrition	Outcomes	Comments Duration follow up
Program not named (Kennon et al., 2009) USA	Experiential discussion-based group class, peer support. Workbook to read after class and guest speakers invited. Communication with child and caregiver, legal issues, nurturing, self-esteem and self-efficacy, 0-18 years (children) Conducted in 2 prisons - 3 sessions (maximum and minimum security) Facilitated by two developmental psychologist (the authors)	Specifically designed by psychologists Pre and post-test follow up immediately and 8 weeks: Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, The Incarcerated Parent's Legal Questionnaire, Communication Questionnaire; Qualitative Satisfaction Questionnaire Two validated tools Three developed for the study	24 contact hours 18-26 per class 66 recruited (57 women included) 14% attrition	Improved parenting attitude (significant) Improved self-esteem (significant) Knowledge (legal questionnaire) (significant) Written responses demonstrated that women had an understanding of what children need, importance of communication and caregiver relationship	8 week follow up Parenting attitude (marginal increase) Increased self-esteem (significant) Legal questionnaire (decreased from post-test, higher than pre-test) Parents offered individual consults for problem solving There was no change in communication seen after the program No control group
Mothering at a Distance (MAAD) (Perry, 2009) (Perry et al., 2011) Australia	Focus on relationship between mother and child and general parenting (therapeutic group work) 0-5 years (children) Conducted in 6 locations/ 16 sessions (maximum and minimum security) Facilitated by custodial officers; psychologist; teachers; welfare and service and programs	Specifically designed Minor adjustments for Aboriginal women Piloted during development Pre and post program question interview and 8 weeks (satisfaction with mother's group, playgroup and suggestions for improvement) Interviewed pre-program to determine relationship with child, struggles with guilt and separation and learning goals Surveys and interviews developed for study Questioned about photo of child (leaving a visit, sick child etc) Staff post program interview	20 contact hours and 10 playgroup hours 6-10 per class (1 individual) 110 recruited (75 completed program, 73 completed survey) 31.8% attrition	Survey completion (n=73 97.3%) Increased confidence (90.4%) Understanding of child (91.8%) Felt closer to child (82%) Feel better about caring for child (89%) Found visit time more enjoyable (n=38 52%) Facilitators understood needs (89%) Useful (n= 73 100%) Enjoyed taking part (89%) Would recommend group to others (n=68 93.2%) Extremely/mostly satisfied (75.3%) Little change in empathetic response to pictures (i.e. child leaving prison visit) was identified after the program Staff reported (n=10) that the program was positive for women, positive interaction with children (n=8); more useful for mothers with child contact and children <5 years)	8 Week follow up 8 weeks completion (n=36 48%) Increased confidence (80.6%) Understanding of child (83.3%) Felt closer to child (83%) Feel better about caring for child (89%) Do not get as angry/listen more to child (n=28 77.8%) Useful (n=33 92%) Enjoyed taking part (91.7%) Listening more (n=31 86.1%) Facilitators understood needs (75%) Would recommend group to others (n=34 94.4%) Extremely/mostly satisfied (77.8%) React to child in a positive way (n=25 69.4%) Behaviour management learnt new things (n=29 80.6%) Find visiting more enjoyable (n=38 52%) Videotaping of mother-child interactions did not pass ethical approval 8 women participated in playgroups No control group

1 The contact time is reported in hours or in the number of sessions if the number of hours were not reported.

Parenting from Prison (PFP) Revised since 2007 (Wilson et al., 2010) USA	Skills based program, focusing on strengthening family relationships, reunification, behaviours, self-esteem, communication and increasing parenting knowledge 6 facilities/ 10 sessions Does not state who facilitated	Adapted from existing program (Partners in Parenting Curriculum) Pre and post- evaluation Demographic details, Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, Self-Mastery Scale; Parental Satisfaction Scale; Index of Parental Attitudes (IPA), Parental Confidence and Parenting from Prison Knowledge Test Tools reliable Knowledge test designed for study – reliability not reported	20 sessions 9-22 per class 102 (81) males 82 (69) females 16% attrition females	Parental Confidence [2] (significant) Self-esteem (significant) Self-mastery (significant) Parental satisfaction (significant) Parental attitude (significant) Knowledge (significant) Increase in type and frequency of communication (except for phone calls)	Knowledge was statistically significant although, on average participants scored 2 more questions correct on post-test Effect sizes small for some analyses No control group Intervention varied in length in different locations
Referred to as the 'Parenting Program' (Wulf-Ludden, 2010) USA	Skills, knowledge and motivation, parenting and relationships. Video based (16 hours) and group education. Extended visiting and overnight stays 0-18 years (children) One facility Facilitated by the Parenting Program coordinator	Adapted from existing program (Active Parenting Curriculum) All women surveyed Discipline Questionnaire (44% of women at prison participated in parenting program) Validated tool	16 hours of video 15 theory sessions 201 (104 completed survey; 144 corporal punishment; 133 contact and 104 General Strain Theory (number completed for each outcome measure) 69.3% of all inmates surveyed – 44% participated in a parenting program	Increased child contact (significant) Contact with children reduced strain (not significant)	Women included in analysis were part of parenting program but may not have completed or attended any classes as commencing child visits was included as participation without having attended the program No control group

2 These results are for the female participants

Parenting from Inside: Making the Mother-Child Connection (PFI) (Loper and Tuerk, 2011) USA	Cognitive behavioural therapy to reduce emotional reactivity to stressful situations. Relationships, communication. Group discussion, video vignettes Facilitated by Advanced Doctoral students in Clinical Psychology (with support of author post session) Co-facilitated by an inmate who had attended the pilot and trained in therapeutic group process 0-18 years (children) One facility/ 5 sessions	Specifically designed with input from women Pre and post evaluation: Parenting Stress Index-Modified; level of child contact; Parenting Alliance Measure (PAM); Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI); MomOK usage Child contact and MomOK usage – reliability not documented	18 contact hours 22-52 offered class 176 women (106 - 60 intervention and 46 control) 48.8% attrition	Visitation stress reduced (significant) Lower levels of parenting stress Improved alliance with caregiver Improved communication (letters) Global Index Symptom Score Metal illness – clinical to non-clinical range (Intervention n=13 vs control n=7) Non-clinical range to clinical (Intervention n=1 vs control n=6) Paired t-test Intervention group Parenting stress concerning competency and visitation (significant) Improved alliance with caregiver Reduced mental distress Increased phone calls Care giver consults Marginally increased letter writing	Uneven distress levels before the intervention (intervention group higher) Groups randomly assigned Study intended to measure the longer-term effects however there were not enough attendees in the follow up Small effect size No change in control group during wait period No difference in change patterns between intervention and control (except for visitation parenting stress)
The Friends Outside Positive Parenting for Incarcerated Parents Program (Simmons et al., 2013) USA	Cognitive behaviour principals. Parenting, relationships and legal responsibilities. Discussion groups, debates, simulations, case studies, role playing, brainstorming and self-evaluation One facility/ over a year Facilitators were trained (doesn't state who facilitated)	Adapted from existing program (Red Cross course and other parenting curricula) (iterative process) Pre and post evaluation: AAPI II Validated tool	30 contact hours 20 per class 318 women Attrition not recorded as retrospective data collection of pre and post evaluation forms	Inappropriate Expectations (significant) Empathy (significant) Family roles (significant) Power and independence (significant)	No control group Males included in this study
Parenting While Incarcerated (Miller et al., 2014) USA	Group education with specified topics. Parenting, addiction, communication, relationships, self-esteem, emotions and budgeting 0-18 years (children) One facility/ 3 sessions Facilitated by interns from University and community partner agency staff trained in original program – SFP	Adapted from existing program (The Strengthening Families Program - SFP) Iterative process during current study Pre and post evaluation: Satisfaction survey and AAPI II Validated tool Satisfaction survey (used previously for SFP)	12 – 15 contact hours 45 mothers (38 completed pre-test and 22 post) 42% attrition rate	Corporal punishment (significant) Overall high satisfaction	Compared intervention to existing program Women did not receive the same intervention due to iterative process and variable dose of program 71% (n=32) women released before program completion Small sample size Medium to large effect sizes No control group

Parent-Child-Interaction Therapy (PCIT) (Scudder et al., 2014) USA	Role plays and in-room coaching of parenting skills and discussion 2-18 years (children) One facility (maximum and minimum security) - two sessions Facilitated by instructor with master's degree in psychology and co-facilitator – undergraduate student	Adapted from existing program (PCIT) Pre and post evaluation: demographic details, AAPI II; Parenting Stress Index; Child Abuse Potential Inventory; Therapy Attitude Inventory and Dyadic Parent-Child Interaction Coding System lll (parent interacting with researcher pretending to be a child) Tools validated Demographic form used previously	10.5 contact hours 82 (71) women 12-15 per class 14% attrition	Positive attention (significant) Positive attending (significant) Decrease in negative attention (significant) Increase in effective commands (significant) Both programs: Decrease in parenting stress and Child abuse potential (significant) Treatment acceptability significantly higher for PCIT than existing Attitude towards child development increased in existing group (significant) Mother's in PCIT demonstrated more positive parenting skills and less negative attention than existing	Intervention compared to existing parenting course Rate of improvement was much lower than standard PCIT in the community No control group
Family Matters: Family Wellness Education (Bell and Cornwell, 2015) USA	Based on a theory of family systems and attachment. Family culture, ethnicity, relationships, communication, responding and attachment 2 sessions Facilitated by a variety of people (re-entry specialist, community relations administrator, family therapist, psychologist, corrections officer, inmate - with minimal training (1 hour) 2 facilitators (only 1 for half the course)	Specifically designed Pre and post evaluation: Systematic Therapy Inventory, Authentic Happiness Scale Tools validated	12 sessions 10-15 per class 26 women and 47 men Wait list control group Attrition not reported	Self-understanding (significant) Understanding of family (significant) Self-competence (significant) Improved self-esteem (significant) Competence and self-esteem improved When compared to control self-competence not significant. Self-esteem significant and women in class made more positive changes but overall not significant Positive comments from participants about relationships	3 month follow up results did not change from initial follow up – positive changes remained, self-esteem results did not reach significance Many participants reconnected a strained or estranged relationship especially with children Can be co-facilitated by an inmate 10 people omitted from analysis due to no room for improvement High score in pre-tests Males included in this study Small sample size
Mothering at a Distance (Rossiter et al., 2015) Australia	Focus on the relationship between mother and child and general parenting (therapeutic group work) Targets Aboriginal women but non-Aboriginal women can attend 0-5 years (children) 5 facilities/over 3 years Facilitated by Correctional Services Staff	Specifically designed Post program evaluation with mixed method survey Survey questions used in previous study	20 contact hours 157 completed program (134 completed questionnaire) 8 attended playgroup 85.4% response rate	Increased confidence (95%) Understand child behaviour (98%) Group leaders understanding (96.1%) Changed reaction to upset child (81.1%) New ways to manage difficult child behaviour (86.5%) High satisfaction overall (96.8%) All participants enjoyed playgroup and found useful (n=8) Women reported they developed supportive mothering, identifying as a mother, recognition of being needed, increased knowledge and skills, maintaining connection, hope for future, recognised difficulty of separation	Playgroup discontinued due to reluctance of child protection to allow children in out of home care No control group No data pre-program Slightly different questionnaire over 5 years of data collection

Turning Points Parenting Curriculum (TPPC) (Urban and Burton, 2015) USA	Intensive parenting education with supervised visits (4 hrs each) and three support group sessions 0-18 years (children) One facility/over 3 years Facilitator not reported	Adapted from existing program (Practical Parent Education) Pre and post evaluation of knowledge gained at beginning and end of each session (Four – five multiple choice questions), plus post-test after last session to test knowledge, attitude and skills Tool not validated	10 sessions 204 unduplicated 289 women (over 3 years) 261 completed (44 women completed at least two years of program) 10% Attrition rate over 3 years	Knowledge (significant, 42% growth) Confidence improved (57%) Learned a lot of useful information (75%) Learned several useful strategies (59%) Planned to use new strategies (72%)	1 year follow up (n=18) Knowledge loss over a year Retained knowledge of communication, dealing with anger, complex emotions, discipline (not significant) The women learned several things that they found useful No control group
Un-named Psychotherapeutic parent education course (Kamptner et al., 2017) USA	Attachment-Informed Psychotherapeutic Program for Incarcerated Parents. Focus on warmth, sensitively attuned, responsive caregiving, parenting and relationships One facility/2010-2016 Facilitated by second year Masters students in Clinical Counselling Psychology (trained by Clinical Psychologist and weekly supervision)	Specifically designed Pre and post evaluation: AAPI II; The Parenting Sense of Competence scale; Survey of Parenting Practices; The Brief Symptom Inventory and demographics Tools validated	48 contact hours 10-25 per class Participant numbers variable see significant outcome column Males and females (only females reported)	Significant decrease psychological distress on Brief Symptom Inventory (n=61) Survey of parenting practices (n=97) Parenting sense of competence scale (n=255) Parental expectations (n=63) Corporal punishment (n=64) Parent-child role reversal (n=64) Children's Power and Independence (n=64) Empathy improved (not significant)	No control group The program had a greater impact on females than males
Parenting Inside Out (PIO) (Collica-Cox, 2018) (Collica-Cox and Furst, 2019) USA	Cognitive behavioural and social learning theory. Communication, bonding, parenting, relationships and re-entry. Infant to 24 years One location/ 2 sessions Author and student co-facilitator (does not state the training)	Specifically designed Input from mother and fathers Pre and post evaluation interviews; Rosenburg Self-esteem Scale; DASS 21 Scale; level of child contact; Knowledge Validated tools	28 contact hours 13-14 per class Group 1 - 14 women (11 completed 10 interviewed) Group 2 - 13 (10 completed) 21-23% attrition	Decrease in depression (significant) Increase in self-esteem (significant) Decreased stress (not significant) Reported improved relationships, communication and confidence in parenting The second group had more complex problems Decrease in depression (significant) Decrease in anxiety Decrease in stress Increase in self-esteem (minimal) Increase in Knowledge (significant) Separation from child caused most stress Women reported improved confidence and communication. The course met or exceeded expectations	A pilot program before the introduction of dog-assisted therapy No control group Small sample size

Table 3

Topic and Frequency

Relationships with child/caregiver/family (11)
Communication/listening (10)
Responsibility for crimes/positive action (10)
Child discipline (8)
Emotional reactions/stress/anger parents (8)
Child development (7)
Effective parenting/parenting skills (7)
Re-uniting/post release period (6)
Self-esteem/self-efficacy (5)
Visits, letters, phone (5)
Problem solving/decision making (5)
Substance abuse/addiction/risks (5)
Grief and loss/distrust (4)
Limit setting (4)
Family rules, traditions, culture, ethnicity (4)
Problem behaviours/antisocial behaviours (4)
Safety/child abuse (3)
Money management/employment (3)
Family origins (3)
Legal issues (3)
Parenting from prison (3)
Warmth towards child (3)
Building support networks (3)
Growth/personal growth as parent (3)
Behaviour management child (3)
Play therapy (2)
Attachment (2)
Parental expectations (2)
First aid/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) (2)
Child's needs/perspective (2)
Guidance when children are in trouble (2)
Teach child new skill (2)
Self-care (2)
Rewards for child (2)
Understanding own parenting style (2)
Acknowledgment of children (1)
Early brain development (1)
Depression (1)
Parental role modelling (1)
Talking to child about offense (1)
Gratitude/forgiveness (1)
Temperament of child (1)
Yoga, meditation and stress management (1)
Negative messages (1)
Women's issues (1)
Resiliency (1)
Healthy child (1)

Special needs (1)
Sexuality (1)
Stranger danger (1)
Diversity and tolerance (1)
Bullying (1)

Thirteen included studies evaluated twelve different parenting programs, with female participants, in a prison setting. Eleven studies were conducted in the USA and the other two in Australia, which evaluated the same parenting program named, 'Mothering at a Distance' (MAAD) (Perry et al., 2009, Rossiter et al., 2015). Four studies included male and female participants; the results of the female participants have been reported in this review (Wilson et al., 2010, Simmons et al., 2013, Bell & Cornwell, 2015, Kamptner et al., 2017). A pilot study was included in the review, described as the control, prior to the introduction of therapy dogs to determine the effects of animal assisted therapy in conjunction with 'Parenting Inside Out' (Collica-Cox, 2018). It was hypothesized that the therapy dogs would assist in reducing stress; improving emotional wellbeing; communication; reading skills; loneliness and depression.

Program Structure/Content

The majority of the programs used a combination of discussion groups, with a teaching module of topics, role play, handouts and videos. The focus of the parenting programs included: parenting from prison (Kennon et al., 2009, Urban & Burton, 2015); parenting and the relationship with the child (Perry et al., 2009); parenting, relationships and reunification (Wilson et al., 2010); parenting skills, behaviour and relationships (Wulf-Ludden, 2010, Miller et al., 2014); parenting and relationships (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) (Loper & Tuerk, 2011, Simmons et al., 2013, Collica-Cox, 2018) and parenting and relationships (Attachment theory) (Bell & Cornwell, 2015, Kamptner et al., 2017). Some programs focused on children under five years of age, considering the first five years of life as important for attachment and bonding (Perry et al., 2009, Rossiter et al., 2015). Other programs covered an age range from infant to 18 years (Kennon et al., 2009, Wulf-Ludden, 2010, Loper & Tuerk, 2011, Miller et al., 2014, Urban & Burton, 2015); two to 18 years (Scudder et al., 2014) and infant to 24 years (Collica-Cox, 2018). All the parenting programs were taught in group sessions, however, the 'MAAD program' provided some flexibility around the number of participants and structure of the program; this allowed women not eligible for group classes to attend personal classes and some participants to attend the program in two full days (Perry et al., 2009). Six programs enabled mothers to have increased contact with their child (although not all women were allowed child contact) (Perry et al., 2009, Wulf-Ludden, 2010, Miller et al., 2014, Rossiter et al., 2015, Urban & Burton, 2015, Collica-Cox, 2018). Extended visits, overnight stays and supervised visits with feedback about parenting were offered to the women in the study by Wulf-Ludden (2010). 'The MAAD Program' attempted to run a weekly play group which was challenging due to difficulties accessing children which led to disappointment for the women and staff (Perry et al., 2009).

Table 3 demonstrates the different topics that were covered within the programs reviewed and the frequency that a topic was included. This is reported according to what was described in the studies, some studies included more detail than others. A component about relationships with the child, family and or caregiver was included in all but one study, however, they did include communication and building trust (Urban & Burton, 2015). Communication and taking responsibility or demonstrating positive action was also a focus of the majority of the programs. Over half of the programs also included child discipline (8 studies), emotional reactions (8), developmental milestones (7) and parenting skills (7).

Aim 2: The outcomes of parenting programs for women who have attended during incarceration. Table 2 includes a summary of the outcomes of the parenting education programs

as well as the tools and method used to measure the outcome.

Evaluation Methods

Twenty-five different evaluation tools were used to determine the impact of parenting programs, with studies using one to two and up to six tools. The most commonly used tool was the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory II (AAPI II) (Kamptner et al., 2017, Miller et al., 2014, Scudder et al., 2014, Simmons et al., 2013). This tool is designed to evaluate parenting attitude and screen for risk of child abuse. Parental attitude was assessed in a further four studies, using various tools to measure this outcome (Perry et al., 2009, Rossiter et al., 2015, Urban & Burton, 2015, Wilson et al., 2010). The majority of tools were validated tools that have been used in previous studies. Eleven of the studies used pre and post evaluation tools or surveys and interviews completed by the participant and the remaining studies used a survey or interview only after completion of the parenting program (Rossiter et al., 2015, Wulf-Ludden, 2010). All studies relied on the participants to complete the evaluations. One study utilized observation of the mother whilst parenting (as well as participant evaluation) which was coded by a researcher during a five-minute interaction, where the researcher acted as a child in a role play activity (Scudder et al., 2014). Evaluation of the 'MAAD program' involved pre and post interviews and surveys along with the observation of a picture of a child in different scenes i.e. a sick child, and a child leaving the prison visit. Participants were asked questions in relation to the picture to assess insightfulness and maternal sensitivity, however, it was not very useful in determining any significant outcomes (Perry et al., 2009). Four studies re-assessed participants at a third time point and the remaining studies evaluated the program immediately after completion. The third time point included eight weeks after program completion (Kennon et al., 2009, Perry et al., 2009); three months (Bell & Cornwell, 2015) and one year (Urban & Burton, 2015).

Evaluation Outcomes

Knowledge Gain

The studies that included assessment of participants' knowledge before and after attending the parenting program were able to demonstrate statistically significant knowledge gains (Kennon et al., 2009, Wilson et al., 2010, Urban & Burton, 2015). One year after 'The Turning Points Curriculum' it was found that participants had not retained most of the knowledge gained during the program, however, women had maintained some knowledge pertaining to communication; dealing with anger; complex emotions and discipline (Urban & Burton, 2015). Kennon et al. (2009) assessed knowledge of legal issues, after eight weeks and there was a demonstrated loss of legal knowledge, however, results were improved compared to knowledge prior to the program.

Change in Attitude

Seven studies were able to demonstrate a significant positive change in parental attitude assessed using the AAPI II, surveys, Index of Parenting Attitude or the Discipline Questionnaire (Perry et al., 2009, Wilson et al., 2010, Simmons et al., 2013, Kennon et al., 2009, Rossiter et al., 2015 Miller et al., 2014). Kennon et al. (2009) demonstrated further improvements in parenting attitude eight weeks after attending the parenting program. Various subthemes of the AAPI II were demonstrated to have a significant positive change which included: improving the woman's attitude towards **corporal punishment** (Miller et al., 2014); improving the woman's attitude towards **the role of the parent,** demonstrating that the participants have an understanding of the child's needs as different from their own needs and that the parent is responsible for meeting their own needs (Simmons et al., 2013, Kamptner et al., 2017); improving the woman's attitude towards the **expectations of a child** depending on their age (Kamptner et al., 2017, Simmons et al., 2013); encouraging the child's **independence,** giving a child choices, allowing the child to express their opinion, solve problems and not be controlled by parents' demands (Simmons et al., 2013, Kamptner et al., 2017); a positive change in **empathy** (Sim-

mons et al., 2013). Empathy was also seen to improve in the study by Kamptner et al. (2017) however, it did not reach statistical significance (p=.065).

Stress

Loper & Tuerk (2011) were able to demonstrate statistically significant decreases in stress during child visitation. However, the women in the program had fairly limited child contact so this could be a perceived reduction in stress. Perry et al., 2009) also established that over half of the women who attended the program found visits with their children more enjoyable.

Contact with Children

Wulf-Ludden (2010) found a statistically significant increase in child contact as well as Wilson et al. (2010) who demonstrated an increase in the type and frequency of communication including letters and visits.

Parental Behaviour

The 'Parent Child Interaction Therapy' program evaluated by Scudder et al. (2014) demonstrated a significant improvement in positive interactions during role plays and a significant reduction in negative attention towards the child (role-played by the researcher). This demonstrates moderate to large effects in positive behaviour change by the mother compared to an already existing parenting program in the prison.

The Women's Responses

Women appeared to be motivated after attending parenting programs and gained understanding of what children need, with feelings of hope for the future. Women began to understand the importance of writing to their children and building good relationships with the caregivers of their children. They reported that children need love, communication, and consistency, and for children not to feel responsible (Kennon et al., 2009). Women after attending the 'MAAD Program' reported increased confidence and knowledge about how to deal with problems with their children and guilt about not being able to support their children. Many positive comments were made, and the women were overwhelmingly thankful for participation in the 'MAAD Program'. These women described understanding their children more, identifying as a mother, and feeling empowered (Perry et al., 2009, Rossiter et al., 2015). Facilitators reported that women developed empathy, confidence, and self-worth and were more responsive and playful with their children (Perry et al., 2009). Women reported enjoying crafts and sending what they made as a gift to their child. Nevertheless, there were some insights into the fact that participation was sometimes painful and distressing for women, one woman reported feeling worse after the class because of the lack of control she was experiencing. Frustration and jealousy were also reported when women were not able to practice the skills with their children directly. Very few women recognized the impact of incarceration on their children even after attending the program. There were no comments from the women about culture or caregiver relationship problems, identified in the surveys (Rossiter et al., 2015). Participants in the study by Bell & Cornwell (2015) reported improved communication and relationships with their children, along with stories of estranged or strained relationships having significant improvements, reconnection, and forgiveness. Women who participated in 'Parenting Inside Out' reported improved relationships with other women and staff. They changed the way they felt about parenting and themselves as a mother, gained confidence, calmness, and increased their sharing and contributing in the group. They reported feeling less stressed even though this was not evident in the scale used to measure stress. Women also felt more composed when talking to family by utilizing emotion regulation exercises. Women conveyed they might change the way they discipline their children, and some wanted to complete the parenting program again after initially being quite reluctant to be involved (Collica-Cox & Furst, 2019).

Discussion

Methodological Limitations of Studies Reviewed

There were a number of studies that delivered different amounts of education time or content. Due to the iterative approach of 'Parenting While Incarcerated,' participants received different versions during the study (Miller et al., 2014). In the study by Kennon et al. (2009) parents were offered individual consultations for problem solving. However, because the program was under evaluation, this meant that some participants were receiving more education time than others. This was also evident in the study by Wulf-Ludden (2010) as it was noted, not all participants in the program had completed the same amount of education and some may not have completed any. The self-evaluations used in these studies have limitations, as women may report what they believe to be appropriate and potentially fear how their response impacts regaining custody of their children. They may also feel inspired after completing a program which may seem easy to apply, particularly if the women have not had contact with their children for a period of time and have forgotten the difficulties of parenting. Literacy challenges could also limit the extent of the responses women were able to give. Role play was utilized in the 'Parent-Child-Interaction Therapy' (PCIT) program as an alternative way to evaluate the program, hence not relying on self-report (Scudder et al., 2014) which has the potential to be useful in allowing women with limited child contact to practice parenting skills and gain feedback. However, this fabricated scenario where women are aware of the observation and without the stressors of life and managing children, creates a much less challenging situation and therefore, it may be easier for some participants to demonstrate positive parenting behaviours.

Aim 3: What Have we Learnt for Future Research?

It would be beneficial to follow-up with women in the long-term to determine if the knowledge and skills gained were transferrable into the women's lives and assess the impact on their children. There is limited evidence to demonstrate the long-term effects of parenting education on the impact of incarcerated women and their children; although a number of studies not included in this review have attempted this with some success. 'Project Home' achieved follow up of women six months after release via home visits, phone calls, and texting which involved monetary reward (Shortt et al., 2014). Only one study was found that assessed the impact the program had on the child, called 'The Incredible Years Program'. Women were offered 24 hours of group parenting education in prison or post release into the community and four, one-and-a-half-hour home visits, in the Netherlands. Results demonstrated significant positive changes in disruptive child and parenting behaviour reported by mothers immediately after the program. Teachers and childcare staff who were blinded to the study intervention reported a marginal reduction in disruptive behaviour (Menting et al., 2014). Frye & Dawe (2008) conducted 'Parenting Under Pressure' in the community after prison release and were able to follow up with the women three months after the intervention demonstrating significant improvement in maternal mental health, quality of the parent-child relationship, reductions in child abuse potential, and problem behaviours for the child. The programs that extend to women and children after release may be more time and resource intensive, however, it may be what is required to break intergenerational cycles.

Variation in the content of the programs was demonstrated in Table 3. The diversity demonstrated makes it difficult to isolate which aspects are most useful and beneficial for women. Interestingly, legal issues were included in only three of the programs although many women are involved with child protection and custody issues. Discussion of legal issues was a very popular aspect of the program evaluated by Kennon et al. (2009) as evidenced by the attention and questioning demonstrated by the women. There were also topics not directly related to parenting which could have an impact on parenting such as: self-esteem, depression, CPR and first aid, taking responsibility for crime, and changing parental behaviour. All but one program included a segment about maintaining relationships which has been demonstrated to be

an important factor in reducing recidivism (Barrick et al., 2014). Due to the fact that the women have been separated from their children, the importance of re-establishing the relationship and regaining trust may be a priority for women in these circumstances rather than general parenting education topics which was demonstrated in the frequency of the topics. Communication was also included in the majority of programs due to women having restricted opportunities for communication with their children and family, therefore, it is important to maximize these interactions.

What Have we Learnt for Future Program Development?

Many of the studies outlined problems encountered while working within the prison which could be utilized to guide research and programming in the future. The majority of women have complex histories and health problems that can impact their learning capacity and trigger emotional responses (Perry et al., 2009). It is necessary to have two facilitators in a class in order to support women if they become distressed and a referral plan needs to be in place (Kennon et al., 2009, Scudder et al., 2014, Loper & Tuerk, 2011, Collica-Cox, 2018). There is scope to include the women themselves in a facilitation role, and this could provide women the opportunity to develop new skills and have a sense of purpose (Loper & Tuerk, 2011, Bell & Cornwell, 2015). Adequate breaks enable women to concentrate for short periods, and classes need to be at a suitable time to ensure that other activities or responsibilities are not competing (Perry et al., 2009). Reading materials need to be written in simple to read language with the opportunity available for information to be read aloud for women with literacy difficulties (Wilson et al., 2010, Miller et al., 2014). Considerations need to be made concerning what women are allowed to have in their possession, which may or may not include handouts and stationery (Miller et al., 2014). Attrition was a major problem reported in the studies reviewed (Miller et al., 2014, Perry et al., 2009, Loper & Tuerk, 2011). This is difficult to negotiate as women are often transferred or released without substantial notice. Having flexibility around the format, as well as having modules that can be taught in isolation or a recap of previous classes, can enable more women to be exposed to at least some parenting education. Having education continue outside into the community may assist women to make contact on release and continue to gain the support required to make a positive change (Miller et al., 2014). Flexibility (one-on-one or full days) could be of importance in a prison setting considering many women are sentenced for short periods and often transferred at short notice.

Although it is difficult to assess which elements of the parenting programs have been most beneficial, it would appear that a program designed to meet the specific needs of women experiencing incarceration with their input would be an ideal starting point. The needs of men and women vary quite considerably, and there are limited programs evaluated that are specifically designed for women, with the input of the women themselves (Loper & Tuerk, 2011). A study that utilised a community-based theoretical model, a type of participatory action research, would be suited to understand various cultural populations that have been marginalized and allow the women to be part of the research process (Badiee et al., 2012, Nicolaidis & Raymaker, 2015, Chapter 16, p. 170). Small adjustments were made to some of the programs to accommodate for the cultural needs of women, however, it is not detailed how this was undertaken and if participants cultural needs were met. Cultural safety[3] is a consideration for future program development and evaluation. When assigning women to an education group it is important to identify the amount of child contact and age of their children, in order to group women with similar needs (Miller et al., 2014). Differences in child contact was seen to be a problem in the 'MAAD Program', as women with limited contact experienced feelings of jealousy when other women discussed their recent experiences with their children (Perry et al., 2009). If specific age groups are targeted, it would be beneficial to screen women before

[3] Cultural safety requires the professional, in this case the educators to examine the impact of their own culture during service delivery. They need to acknowledge and address their biases, attitudes, assumptions, stereotypes, prejudices, structures and characteristics that could affect their interactions. Ongoing reflection and self-awareness and accountability is necessary for providing a culturally safe environment (Curtis et al., 2019)

enrollment in a program (Rossiter et al., 2015).

Listening to what women have to say about the program can help determine what worked, what did not work, and the reasons why which can be overlooked when only quantitative data is collected (Collica-Cox, 2018). Women in prison are vulnerable, and it is quite possible that by discussing parenting, especially if women have limited child contact, it could create distress, frustration and may be irrelevant for women with limited or no child contact (Perry et al., 2009). It is important to determine what women aim to achieve by attending a parenting program and ensure psychological support is available. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data that measures the specific aims of the program in a timely manner, would be most beneficial (Collica-Cox, 2018).

Strengths and Limitations

This scoping review focuses on parenting education for women who are incarcerated, including quantitative and qualitative data. This review includes the frequency of various topics covered in the parenting programs which has not been incorporated in previous studies, where the main focus has been on evaluation outcomes. Incarcerated women have been overlooked in the past due to smaller representation in prisons compared to men.

There is potential that some studies have been missed despite thorough searching of databases and reference lists. An alert system was set up on the databases to capture new studies that may have been published after the searches were complete. The studies were not critiqued for quality, however, this is not compulsory for scoping reviews. One researcher extracted the data from the eligible studies, this was undertaken thoroughly checking and re-checking the data collected to ensure accuracy and this was discussed in detail with two other experienced researchers.

Conclusion

Throughout the world there is limited rigorous research to support the long-term benefits of prison parenting programs for women and their children. The type and content of education that is most beneficial has not been determined. There have been some short-term positive changes in parenting attitude, knowledge, behaviour, communication, confidence, visitation stress, increased child contact, and improved relationships that is evidenced by the studies reported in this scoping review. These findings are largely based on the self-reports of female participants. It is difficult to determine how transferrable the skills or knowledge will be when women are released and begin caring for their children in the community combined with the stress of reintegrating into society. The studies that collected qualitative data appeared to capture the real voices of the women demonstrating enthusiasm, what women learnt and their hopes for the future, as well as a real sense of empowerment and mothering identity. Women also identified some negative emotions that were a result of attending a parenting program, not identified in quantitative studies. What women believe and think about attending a parenting program is as important as the measure of program success, and by collecting this data the authors can ascertain the topics that are most useful to the women and reasons why. Despite short-term gains demonstrated in these studies, authors felt positively about the impact of parenting programs and, therefore, recommended continuation. It appears that parenting programs can have a positive impact on women at least in the short term. It may be that parenting education is best for women who have child contact and will be released shortly after completion of the program to ensure that the skills learnt can be put into practice. Those with longer sentences or limited contact could focus on the development and maintenance of their relationship with their child. Incarceration can provide some women opportunities to gain education, and then in turn, confidence to continue parenting after release which has the potential to impact many children affected by their mother's incarceration. Education and gaining confidence are important considerations as separation between mothers and their children can have serious emotional, physical, and psychological effects on both the mother and child. Effective parenting

programs can assist in the promotion of healthy relationships and could have the potential to reduce the intergenerational cycle of poor parenting and incarceration. Therefore, it is vitally important to identify the unique needs of women experiencing incarceration when developing a parenting program. For example, cultural safety needs to be considered, and asking women what their cultural needs and expectations around parenting are will assist to address these when developing and evaluating a program. There are only a few examples where preparatory work to develop a parenting education program in prisons have commenced with women being involved. It is essential that parenting education provided in prisons is developed to meet the bespoke needs of the women, and hearing women's voices and supporting their suggestions and ideas with evidence, will enable this to be achieved. It is important that this information is disseminated and translated into practice.

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RESEARCH PAPER

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Norwegian Prison Officers´ Perspectives on Professionalism and Professional Development Opportunities in their Occupation

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Abstract: *Despite increasing attention towards education as a quality measure for correctional services, little research attention has been paid to the qualification and training of prison officers. This article investigates how Norwegian prison officers understand their own professionalism and opportunities for professional development in their occupation. The analysis reveals that prison officers regard professionalism in line with a core value of loyalty, and guiding principles of humanity and equality for incarcerated persons. Further, the analysis shows that prison officers express pride and job satisfaction in their profession, and satisfaction with their education. Still, several of the officers highlight the need for continuing education in order to secure job mobility and further advancement within the correctional services. Knowing that the Norwegian education for prison officers is far more extensive than in other countries, significance of quality in prison officer education should be given more research attention.*

Keywords: *professionalism, professional development, professional discretion, prison officer, education*

One of the main tasks of criminal correctional services is to prevent new crimes from being committed after the sentence has been served (Storvik, 2006; Feierman, Levick & Mody, 2009; Hawkins, Lattimore, Dawe & Visher, 2009; Mathur & Clark, 2014). In the literature, an increasing attention towards education as a quality measure for correctional services has been put forward (Steurer & Smith, 2003; Davis et al., 2014; Manger, Eikeland & Asbjørnsen, 2019). In this line of research, focus has been on opportunities, motivation and needs of incarcerated persons (Brosens, de Donder, Dury, & Verte, 2015; Roth, Westrheim, Jones & Manger, 2017; Eikeland, Manger, & Asbjørnsen, 2009). Still, those who are closest to the incarcerated persons in their everyday lives, the prison officers, will have great impact and influence on the incarcerated persons' understanding of, and motivation for, education and training in prison (Westrheim & Eide, 2019). Increasing our understanding and knowledge about the qualification and education of prison officers are thus of crucial importance for quality development in correctional services and securing the educational rights of incarcerated persons. Addressing this gap in the literature, this article sets out to investigate how prison officers interpret professionalism in a Norwegian setting.

In an international context, the qualifications needed to become a prison officer vary across different nations, such as the United States, Belgium, England, and Norway (the Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service, 2017). In Norway today, prison officers are qualified through a two-year higher education programme, which can be expanded into a bachelor's

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degree. This article examines Norwegian prison officers' views on professionalism and career opportunities through the following question: *How do Norwegian prison officers understand their own professionalism and opportunities for professional development in their occupation?*

Existing research into the role as prison officer paints a picture of a risky, stressful professional role (Nylander, Lindberg & Bruhn, 2012; Finney, Stergiopoulos, Hensel, Bonato, & Dewa, 2013; Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail, & Baker, 2010; Kunst, 2011; Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000). Surveys of prison officers' psycho-social working conditions reveal possible explanations for experiences such as lacking a sense of accomplishment and work-related stress. Other studies, including Crawley and Crawley (2007), have further shown that the role of the prison officer is often negatively portrayed in the media and in society outside the prison, which contributes to the stigma and stress many prison officers experience (Crawley & Crawley, 2007; Tracy & Scott, 2006; Vickovic, Griffin, & Fradella, 2013).

Professionalism in the role as prison officer and in the relationship between prison officer and incarcerated person is only examined to a small extent (Evensen, 2006, p. 243). Tait (2011) is one exception, who, based on fieldwork in two prisons, presents a typology of prison officer's approach to care in their professional practice. According to this typology, there are five different approaches: *True carer, limited carer, old school, conflicted* and *damaged*. True carers are characterized by respecting incarcerated persons privacy and encourage them to help themselves with their support (p. 444), while limited carers have a more bureaucratic approach to their work in accordance with rules and regulations embodied in correctional services. Accordingly, they have a more pragmatic form of care and try to find practical solutions to the incarcerated persons' expressed problems (p. 445). Old school officers have the same bureaucratic approach to care as limited carers but makes a clearer distinction between "them" (incarcerated persons) and "us" (prison officers). For the conflicted carers, caring is about teaching incarcerated persons to be better people. In doing so they often conflate care and control. Many incarcerated persons thus experience them as "unpredictable" and "two-faced". The last typology is those who have a damaged approach to care. In this small group, Tait (2011) found that they had prior experiences of assaults and lack of support from mangers, leading to emotional and practical withdrawal from incarcerated persons in their work (pp. 448-449). Tait's study is the first systematic examination of prison officer's approach (operationalisation and conceptualisation) to care in their professional practice (Tait, 2011, p. 140). Prison officer's approach to care is a product of their experience in their work environment, as well as personal qualities (Tait, 2011, p. 451). In our study we found the first three typologies present amongst the prison officers.

Internationally, the question of prison officers' professionalism has been linked to the relations between the prison officers and the incarcerated persons. In their study of employee-incarcerated relations in prison, Liebling, Price, and Elliott (1999) came to the following three conclusions: First, the relationship between prison officer and an incarcerated person is a complex one. This means that the ways in which situations unfold, are mediated by the relations between the prison officer and the incarcerated (Liebling et al., 1999, p. 90). In carrying out their job, prison officers must negotiate use of force (Evensen, 2006; Liebling et al., 1999) which can serve as a possible explanation of a lacking sense of accomplishment and work-related stress. However, Liebling et al.'s findings show that prison officers are reticent in their use of force (Liebling et al., 1999, p. 72). The relation between an incarcerated person and employee is both rule-based and non-rule-based when making decisions (Liebling et al., 1999; Liebling, Price & Shefer, 2012, p. 123). In other words, prison officers use *discretion* in their encounters with the incarcerated persons.

Another one of Liebling et al.'s (1999) findings concerns consistency and applies to both prison officers and incarcerated persons. Whereas incarcerated persons had an absolute perception of continuity, the employees were aware that differences between individuals and context would make this difficult. (Liebling et al., 1999, pp. 85, 90). This type of flexibility in

their work led to uncertainty among the prison officers about what it meant to "cross the line" (Liebling et al., 1999; Nymo, 2019). As a consequence of this, there were different degrees of variation in the prison officers' execution of their work (Liebling et al., 1999, p. 85, Westrheim & Eide, 2019). As Nymo (2019) argues, a professional prison officer must always reflect on the situations she is facing and extract the knowledge necessary to understand the specifics of the individual situation (pp. 338-339). Only in this way can the prison officer increase his or her professional capacity for action. According to Liebling et al. (1999) the prison officers strove towards a balance between friendliness and professionalism in their work (p. 87). They wanted to be involved, and at the same time uphold safety precautions, and treat the incarcerated persons respectfully (Liebling et al., 1999, p. 87). In conclusion, the authors point out that the prison officers performed "peacekeeping work" in their interactions with the incarcerated persons. This was a skill that was taken for granted and was, in fact, considered "common sense" (Liebling et al., 1999, p. 82). "Peacekeeping" was often central to challenging conflict situations. Nevertheless, the prison officers described these situations as among "the best parts of the job," and "a good day at work," despite their problems and challenges (Liebling et al., 1999, p. 82).

In the above, we see that the research paints a picture of a complex prison officer role with a complicated and, at times, contradictory mandate. In connection with this role there are also several areas of tension, such as between using force on the one hand, and care and rehabilitation on the other. In carrying out this role, the individual prison officer's self-understanding and perception of this is crucial. How can we then educate prison officers for such a complex role? In the following we will consider how the complex need for competence in the prison officer education in Norway is safeguarded, and furthermore, the extent to which the prison officers feel that their education provides them with competence to fill a role in connection with education and training for the incarcerated persons.

Education for the Prison Officer Role: A Changing Education

The prison officer education in Norway has, historically, come a long way before now emerging as a good programme for people who want to work in prison (Langelid & Fridhov, 2019). We will not explore the historical development of the educational programme but will rather consider the education as it is today.

Even though we may often consider the Norwegian prison officer education as a professional study, it cannot be characterised in the same way (Molander & Terum, 2013), as educational programmes for social workers, nurses, social educators, or teachers. This is chiefly explained by two factors: the length of the education and the fact that the training is paid. The Norwegian prison officer education today is a two-year paid university college education at The University College of Norwegian Correctional Service (KRUS). Completing the education grants you the title *Høgskolekandidat i straffegjennomføring* ("University College Candidate in Correctional Studies"), and graduates have completed a course of study with a total of 120 ECTS credits. The education is considered to qualify as part of a bachelor's degree of 180 ECTS credits. There is currently a continuing education programme that gives prison officers the opportunity to complete a Bachelor in Correctional Studies.

The current framework plan for the prison officer training was established on 1 September 2017 by the Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service (*Kriminalomsorgsdirektoratet*, KDI, 2017). The framework sets the standard for the current education by setting goals for what the education should qualify students for, the extent and content of the education, and the methods and assessments to be used. The framework also serves as a guideline for the programme description as it has been developed KRUS.

The framework plan for the current prison officer education states that the education should reflect the goals and values of the correctional service as these are incorporated in the Execution of Sentences Act (*straffegjennomføringsloven)* and the Norwegian Correctional Ser-

vices' business strategy (KDI, 2017, p. 3). The purpose of the execution of sentences is set out in section 2 of the Execution of Sentences Act:

> A sentence shall be executed in a manner that takes into account the purpose of the sentence that serves to prevent the commission of new criminal acts, that reassures society, and that, within this framework, ensures satisfactory conditions for the incarcerated persons.
>
> There must be an offer to undergo a restorative process while the sentence is being served.
>
> In the case of persons remanded in custody, the Norwegian Correctional Service shall make suitable arrangements for remedying the negative effects of isolation[1].

The fact that the prison officer education should reflect the correctional service's goals and values, means that it should educate future prison officers to take on a complex task in which they contribute to the execution of the sentence in a way that is reassuring to society, while giving incarcerated persons opportunities to change their lives in ways that are conducive to preventing future crime. Furthermore, the education should foster a fundamental respect for "the autonomous human being", who is responsible for his or her actions. This means that prison officers should, upon completing their education, be able to contribute to incarcerated persons' efforts to change their own way of life, both during imprisonment and when serving a sentence outside of prison.

The professional content of the prison officer education is divided into six different subject areas of different weight and duration: Introduction to the Role of the prison officer and the Norwegian Correctional Service (10 + 10 ECTS credits), The Law of Execution of Sentences and Other Legal Topics (10 ECTS credits), Safety, Security and Risk Management (30 + 7.5 ECTS credits), Community Reintegration and Social Work II (20 + 15 ECTS credits) and Professional Knowledge and Ethics (7.5 ECTS credits). The framework and course structure (KRUS, 2019) shows how the subjects should be covered throughout the education (KDI, 2017). The four semesters of the programme are set up to develop the candidates' knowledge and competence, with a close connection between acquiring theoretical knowledge and practical experience through working in prison. This means, among other things, that the candidates have work placement in prisons in the second and third semester, in addition to six weeks of summer service in both years. During their work placement, local supervisors are responsible for the candidates' training in collaboration with the teachers at KRUS. Thus, the programme entails integration of both experience-based and theoretical perspectives in the courses in line with other educational programmes for professions such as social workers, nurses or teachers. The courses Safety, Security and Risk Management and Community Reintegration and Social Work are the most comprehensive courses in the education, at 37.5 and 35 ECTS credits respectively.

In spring 2018, the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)[2] accredited a supplementary course which gives the candidates the opportunity to complete a Bachelor in Correctional Studies. The supplementary module is organised as a session-based part-time study over two years (four semesters). The professional content of the supplementary course is organised as in-depth modules starting with two semesters of obligatory courses: the organisation of the Norwegian Correctional Service, and crime prevention in the service. The final year of study consists of further specialisation, in the form of one chosen optional course and a written bachelor's thesis.

1 Ref Lovdata: https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/2001-05-18-21

2 Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen*, NOKUT). An independent expert body under the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research responsible for accreditation and evaluation of Norwegian education and of approving education from abroad.

Perspectives on Professionalism and Competence

As an institution in society, the Norwegian Correctional Service relies on specialised knowledge to solve complex tasks. Professions often solve the institution's tasks by means of the specialised knowledge at their disposal. We have previously pointed out that the prison officer education is not considered a professional degree. However, since the term vocation or profession is not unambiguous, it may be understood in both a narrow and broad sense (Molander & Terum, 2013). We therefore rely on theory of professions in understanding prison officers' role and what they regard as professionalism in carrying it out.

According to Torgersen (1972), professions can be defined by a certain relationship between professional motivation and educational monopoly: "We say that we are speaking of a profession when 1) a certain long-term formal education is acquired by 2) people who are largely oriented towards attaining certain professions that, according to social norms, cannot be filled by persons other than those with the above education[3]" (p. 10). This definition makes it difficult to consider the role of prison officer as a profession. Although this occupational role has professional monopoly on executing sentences in Norway, the prison officer education is not required for carrying out this role. The way the job is defined today, any person above the age of 21 with an unblemished record and a general university and college admission certification may work as a prison officer (Johansen, 2007). Completion of prison officer training is, however, a prerequisite for permanent employment. Furthermore, even though the education is aimed at a specific occupation with a professional monopoly, it is not considered a long-term formal education with emphasis on theory and systematic scientific knowledge, which is one of the prerequisites for professions (Torgersen, 1972; Grimen 2008; Dale 2008). Today, however, the term 'profession' is more broadly defined and ambiguous (Molander & Terum, 2013) and it contains both descriptive and evaluative elements.

Thus, both organisational and performative aspects can be connected to the concept of a profession. The organisational aspects signify an occupational group's control of its tasks. This is partly achieved through external conditions, such as control of the access to their tasks and partly through internal conditions that control the performance of the tasks. The performative aspects denote what we often refer to as practice, where the profession's tasks are carried out. The prison officer role seems to fall within these boundaries of professionalism.

Research shows that the expectations that prison officers face in carrying out their work is complex and intricate (Tait, 2011; Storvik, 2006; Feierman, Levick & Mody, 2009; Hawkins, Lattimore, Dawe & Visher, 2009; Mathur & Clark, 2014). This requires a broad foundation of knowledge, where prison officers require knowledge within several and, to some extent, highly different, fields. All professions are characterised by a heterogenic knowledge base, according to Grimen (2013a), because professional knowledge is made up of many, and often very different, elements. The question is how strongly the various elements in the professions' knowledge are connected.

Here Grimen (2013a) argues that the most important connections in a profession's knowledge base are practical. First of all, this implies that there is not only one, but several types of relationship between theory and practice, where a professional practice of the occupation is characterised by complicated interactions between theoretical and practical applications of knowledge. Secondly, for the professions it means that there is no fundamental distinction between theoretical and practical knowledge, but that in their professional practice they relate to the various elements of their knowledge base as a continuum.

The concept of competence, which is often described as being able to act, is another way of approaching the connections in professions' knowledge bases (Eide & Tolo, 2016). Competent actions, then, are actions guided by different types of knowledge, which the in-

3 "Vi sier at vi vi har en profesjon hvor 1) en bestemt langvarig formell utdannelse erverves av 2) personer som stort sett er orientert mot oppnåelse av bestemte 3) yrker som ifølge sosiale normer ikke kan fylles av andre personer enn de med utdannelsen"

dividual performs in his or her profession. It can be experience-based knowledge, empirical knowledge and theoretical knowledge. In the professions, competence is expressed, not only in concrete practical actions, but also in the knowledge-based and ethical considerations that motivate the actions. In other words, the prison officers must have sufficient knowledge of criminology, execution of sentences, security and social work, as well as the goals and values of the correctional service in order to be able to act effectively and competently in their work.

The practical dimension here not only concerns the application of knowledge, but also the use of moral, political, and legal discretion. Grimen and Molander (2013) define discretion in this sense "as a form of practical reasoning, where the purpose is to reach conclusions about what should be done in specific individual cases, where the basis is weak" (Grimen & Molander, 2013, p. 179). Consequently, the term has two meanings. Firstly, discretion denotes a cognitive activity where things are separated, weighted, and lead to judgments and decisions in specific situations. Secondly, discretion describes a protected space for choices or decisions made based on such decisions. On this subject, Nymo (2019) emphasises that, although the occupation as prison officer is largely rule-based, prison officers may be expected to supplement the rules by exercising discretion in their daily work. Thus, discretion constitutes both normative and autonomous aspects of professional practice, also in the role of prison officer.

To understand the normative and autonomous aspects of professional practices, Grimen (2013b) points to the concept of *profesjonsmoral* ("professional morality"), which he explains as "norms and values that are specifically aimed at resolving moral problems in the interaction between professionals and between professionals and their clients" (Grimen, 2013b, p. 156). The primary task of professional morality, in this sense, is to establish conditions for collaboration between professionals and between professionals and their clients. It does not concern general moral norms and rules, but rather denotes the norms and rules related to the practice and interaction within the particular social responsibility given to the various professions. In this sense, one might say that professional morals can be understood in light of two perspectives. From the perspective of society, one may consider professional morality as a mechanism for professional self-justice to ensure that the profession acts in accordance with its mandate. From the professions' perspective, professional morality is norms and values that serve as guidelines in specific situations. Reflections on and the reasoning behind such professional moral norms and values are commonly referred to as professional ethics.

Professionalism is thus a complex expression of the knowledge, skills and common values that prison officers possess, and which they have acquired through education and experience from working in prison. Through their education they have gained vocational-specific theoretical knowledge in several sciences such as criminology, psychology, and law. Furthermore, professionalism is expressed and further developed in the prison officers' practice, through meetings with incarcerated persons and colleagues in the various prisons. Farkas and Manning (1997) explains this by using the term *occupational culture* which defines the "values, beliefs, material objects and taken- for- granted knowledge associated with a full- time occupational role" (1997, p. 57). However, this practice is based on the theoretical knowledge the prison officers bring with them from their education, but also on previous experiences from working in other institutions, or from life in general, and on the norms and values that have been established for the correctional service and the execution of sentences in Norway. This means that the concept of professionalism is not only related to a general competence or an occupational culture that all prison officers possess and are part of but also to a personal competence, such as life experience and personal characteristics (Skau, 2002).

Method: Qualitative Interviews

This article is based on data from qualitative semi-structured interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) with prison officers in four selected prisons in Norway. The conversations are semi-structured in the sense that a thematic structure has been established in advance,

however, it is also possible for both the interviewer(s) and the participants to ask follow-up questions in the interview situation (Silverman, 2011). The purpose has been to collect data that shows prison officers' experiences in their workplace (Hatch, 2002) and to provide in-depth knowledge of prison officers' perceptions of their own role and practice. Based on specific situational descriptions, the prison officers have reflected on the choice of actions, feelings, motives, and underlying intentions and goals that motivate the way they perform their work.

The selection of institutions can be characterised as "maximum variation sampling", chosen with the intention of highlighting as much variation as possible in the selection (Patton, 1990). This selection emphasises three variation criteria: gender, size, and level of security. In collaboration with the Norwegian Correctional Service, a strategic selection has been made that meets the three criteria. Thus, the four prisons represent both female and male penal institutions, high and low security levels, and variation in the number of incarcerated persons. We would also like to add that the sample has a good age distribution; from young and relatively recent graduates, to older prison officers who had served in this role for a long time, and who were educated at an early stage of the prison officer education. The sample in the survey consists of 16 prison officers, eight women and eight men. Six of the participants work in prisons for women, and ten work in prisons with male incarcerated persons. None of the prisons have incarcerated persons of both genders. Around half of the participants have also worked at other prisons after completing their education, while the other half has only worked at the institution where they work today. The persons in the latter group have, however, been employed in various prison wings with both high and low security. Overall, the sample represents variation in line with the variation criteria the study is based on.

The project is approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). All researchers are obliged to ensure that the participants in a given research project have given informed consent to participate in the study. We conducted interviews in four Norwegian prisons. To maintain anonymity, we have deliberately omitted the names of the prisons or the region where they are located. The conversations lasted from one to two hours depending on how much the participant wanted to share and talk.

In order for a qualitative study to be considered valid, reliable, and transferable, it must be *credible* (Thagaard, 2003; Drageset & Ellingsen, 2010). In this study, credibility and reliability were assured in that each of the researchers involved made a critical review of the collected data, the interview process and the analysis. We have also described the process of collecting and processing data in a stepwise, transparent and accurate manner.

The Prison Officers' Perspectives on Professionalism

The understanding of professionalism can be related to the prison officer education's portrayal of the professional prison officer as an ethically conscious practitioner of a profession (Grimen, 2013b). When it comes to teaching ethics and professionalism as part of the prison officer education, the Norwegian Correctional Service's website states the following:

> The aspirant must be aware that the occupation as prison officer and the system of contact prison officers create special challenges related to ethics and professionalism and the ability to work in the correctional service in accordance with its objectives, perspective on human life, values and principles. He/she should become aware of his / her own attitudes and values and act in a respectful way towards other people in performing his/her professional role. The candidate should develop reflexive ethical competence that will enable him/her to meet and solve the professional ethical challenges they will experience both in their work with incarcerated persons and in relationships with colleagues.[4]

4 The Norwegian Correctional Service *(Kriminalomsorgen,* http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/undervisning-i-etikk-og-profesjonalitet-ved-fengselsskolen.527177-237613.html)

Prison officers define their professionalism within the Norwegian Correctional Service's goals for the profession. Many have a genuine and articulate view of human life. "The humanistic view of human nature is at the centre here. We try to see the people here, and not all that surrounds them" (Participant 13). At the heart of this view of humanity is a fundamental belief in the good in human beings, in the incarcerated person. "You need to have compassion. You need to know the regulations so that you know what you have to relate to. Commitment and a willingness to achieve something good. Respect for other people" (participant 12). The prison officers clearly show loyalty towards rules at the workplace and believe in the Norwegian rule of law. "You need to be able to carry out the tasks no matter what they are, whether it is a body search, collecting a urine sample or a cell inspection. And these security tasks must be done without being shameful or embarrassed" (participant 14). Loyalty, for the participants, is also about taking care of colleagues and emphasising the importance of maintaining their own, and not least, their colleagues' safety.

> It is difficult to say what a professional prison officer is, because we are so different as human beings. You must follow the rules and routines when working in a prison. A dilemma that may arise is when you see an incarcerated person arguing with another employee. On the inside, you may know that the incarcerated person is right, but you will not go over there and take his side, because it is your colleague (…) you need to provide support in the situation. (participant 1)

The above quote concerns loyalty and principles that we, in this context, understand as the perceived ways of expressing loyalty, and in which situations one should be loyal, and towards whom. As such, the prison officers confirm Farkas and Manning's (1997) notion of secrecy as a feature of correctional work.

Another important principle is that the prison officers regard incarcerated persons as equal, without necessarily being able to treat them equally. "It's a little different from person to person, where they're at. So, I don't treat everyone the same way. There is something called equal treatment, but not identical treatment. It differs from incarcerated person to incarcerated person" (participant 9). The performance of the role seems to be based on respect for other people, and on equality and justice. "You are fair and treat the incarcerated persons with respect and in the same way. And at the same time, they are different. It goes without saying, but fairness should run as a thread through what you do" (participant 7). However, as described above, norms of secrecy and loyalty among incarcerated persons and officers creates tensions between the two groups (Farkas & Manning, 1997), as well as conflicts between the occupational values of loyalty and human justice within the profession.

It is mentioned that clear and clearly expressed values are the cornerstones of the system. Being aware of their own values and principles in carrying out the work is about showing, and being shown, trust and confidentiality in various collaborative relationships between incarcerated persons and employees. Among the central values are, as mentioned, the need to ensure one's own and one's colleagues' safety and security in the workplace.

> I believe that my primary role, both as a supervisor and as a duty prison officer, but also as a good colleague, is to ensure the safety of the prison officers. You do this by engaging in dialogue with the incarcerated persons and achieving that gut feeling that tells you: Who am I encountering here? (...) My primary role vis-à-vis incarcerated persons is above all that they do not harm my colleagues. (participant 2)

Values and principles often appear as two sides of the same story. In principle, treating everyone equally does not necessarily mean treating everyone the same way. The prison officer may be friendly, but is not a friend, he or she is listening, but cannot believe everything he or she hears. "You must know that even though we are good friends, you may be deceiving me.

You cannot get disappointed or upset. You cannot take it personally. You cannot forget where you are" (participant 10). According to the participants, a professional prison officer should look for the human being in the incarcerated person but must also be able to clearly distinguish between the case and the person.

> A professional prison officer is one who sees people and not just the case, one who can take care of the human being. I'm not that eager to constantly [get] people, do body searches, try to get something on the incarcerated person. I'm more interested in seeing people. Maybe it's because I have been here for as long as I have, and met so many different incarcerated persons, and therefore know that there are many decent people here who have made some stupid decisions. (participant 6)

The "case" is the reason why the incarcerated person is in prison, but once he or she is there, he or she should also be treated as a human being.

The participants claim that a significant part of their professionalism revolves around having a conscious attitude to *closeness* and *distance* to the incarcerated. Both positions are important but are also a daily dilemma. Prison officers often refer to this as the distinction between the personal and the private, where professionalism is to be able to separate the two spheres from each other: One example of this "(…) is someone who manages to talk to incarcerated persons about how he likes to go fishing, and maybe also about the kind of fishing gear he likes to use on his fishing trips, without telling them who he is with, or about his children…" (participant 14).

It is easy to cross the line, either by getting too close or becoming too distant. The boundaries are not universal, but personal, which can make it even more challenging for prison officers to avoid having their boundaries tested and crossed: "I tell the candidates: I can't tell you where your boundary is. It is something you must know and feel for yourself" (participant 1). When an individual prison officer experiences this type of dilemma, it is often discussed with more experienced colleagues. The development of the prison officer's ethical reflexive competence therefore seems to revolve around making experiences through their work as a prison officers and discussing them with colleagues in the same situation. At the same time, they also state that they lack formal forums where such topics can be discussed with other colleagues.

As mentioned, the participants in our study express a strong professional pride and joy in working as a prison officer – regardless of the type of prison and the number of years in the profession. "I care about my job and go to work and enjoy it. That's the most important thing to me. If I had not enjoyed it, I would have done the job badly, I guarantee it" (participant 8). This is despite the fact that many believe that the profession does not have a high status in society.

> I thought being a prison officer was a very good profession, long before I considered becoming one myself. But I have later realised that it is not a well-regarded profession. I don't think there's anything people consider a good profession, in general. (participant 10)

According to the prison officers, the education and occupation are not given the status and recognition they think it should have. They explain the devaluation of the profession, as a consequence of an "academisation" of society, where the status of professions is linked to formal higher education and the number of ECTS credits, rather than experience-based knowledge and actual skills. However, the prison officers maintain pride in their work. "We can't, like, thump our chests and brag about it, but we're good at everyday life. I think there is a strong professional pride among the prison officers" (participant 3). One of the participants describes his job motivation more humorously:

> There are people who have been here for 30 years. People ask me what it was like to work in the prison where I worked before. I was there for 18 years.

> Well, I wouldn't have stayed there if I didn't like it there. I usually say that I'm lucky to be born with a good mood, and that helps. And then I say that I don't have to be crazy to work here, but it helps. (participant 11)

As we have described above, the prison officers express pride and dedication to their profession, and humour is an important part, not only in carrying out the job, but also as a means to remain in the profession.

The Way into the Profession and the Road Onwards

The prison officers' path to permanent employment is the prison officer education. For many prison officers, however, their career does not begin with the education, but with work in prison. The fact that they have become prison officers is more often explained as something that happened by chance than as a conscious choice of profession. For many of them, a temporary job in a prison became a way into the profession[5]. Experience from working in prison is often highlighted among the participants as an important factor in their decision to start this education:

> My entrance into the profession was really just that I wanted to work with people with special needs. Prison seemed very exciting to me, but I didn't really know that much about it. I simply applied for the school, but before I started my education, I began working in prison to experience what it was like. (participant 4)

The prison officer education has changed significantly over time (Langelid & Fridhov, 2019). Prison officers in Norwegian prisons have different educational backgrounds and schooling, they also have very different work experience, and thus also different competencies. This also applies to the participants in our study. Some have limited amounts of schooling and extensive work experience, others have higher education, but may have little or no previous work experience. Regardless of when the prison officers completed the education, all state that they are satisfied with it. "I think it was a great year at school. (…), But some of the things we learned I might not use today" (participant 7). However, several point out that they would like to see a higher valuation of the prison officer education.

> If I am going to say what I am most disappointed in regarding the education, it is that I find that KRUS does not adequately acknowledge its own education. It is no longer enough to complete the prison officer training, and it is not a system where you can really rise in the ranks. It grows more and more restricted every year. And when they announce vacant positions, the prison officer education is no longer enough. We suffer from a belief that everyone needs a master's degree. Preferably, you should have a bachelor's degree in something else, or a master's degree. You don't even need to have a master's degree in anything related to prisons. You could have a master's degree in strawberry picking, and still be considered superior to someone with just prison officer training. (participant 2)

When the participants explain what they think is the aspect of the prison officer education that best promotes learning, they all highlight practice: "I have learned through the experiences I have made at the various institutions where I have worked. I am not a theorist, I often tend to push that aside a bit, but I still tell the candidates I supervise that they should try to use the theory as well" (participant 1). The participants explain the importance of practice, both based on their own learning preferences as well as the type of knowledge and competence the prison officers should acquire according to the curriculum and learning outcomes.

> I would probably say that it is practice, first and foremost, that has given me

5 In Norway, Norwegian citizens that can document a clean criminal record, and are over the age of 20 may attend temporary, substitute positions as prison officers. In order to qualify for permanent employment as prison officer, completion of the prison officer educational program at KRUS is required.

> competence. I remember that at school, I often thought 'why should we learn this?' But of course, I'm very happy that we learned a lot about The Law of Execution of Sentences at school. Because that was very useful. On the other hand, it is impossible to learn social work by reading a book. You can, of course, read up on some basic principles, but you need to try it out in practice if you really want to learn something about social work. (participant 10)

The fact that the practical part of the education is relatively large is emphasised as an important factor in developing the prison officer's skills. However, a large practical component may also be an obstacle to further academisation of the education. However, it is not certain that all prison officers wish or need to extend their education with that extra year that can lead to a bachelor's degree. Some participants, on the other hand, expressed a clear desire to supplement their education and get a bachelor's degree. For these participants, the opportunities for changing jobs in the future, as shown by the quote above, are an important motivation:

> The fact that the education does not lead to a bachelor's degree means that we will be at the back of the line if we want to change jobs. Most employers look for candidates with a bachelor's degree or more, these days. (participant 4)

The desire to attain a bachelor's degree does not apply to all participants, but most express a desire to be able to take continuing education, regardless of whether it leads to an academic degree or not:

> I would really like to take a conflict management course, and also something related to psychology. I don't know if KRUS offers this, but you can do it outside of work. I want to study something related to ADHD and intoxicating substances. I would also like to take law courses. There is a lot I want to try. (participant 10)

The quote above shows that the prison officers want to develop and to strengthen their competence in their work. The fact that many prison officers do not participate in continuing education cannot be explained by neither the desire nor the will of the prison officers. KRUS has a large portfolio of courses offered to employees. For these courses, the institutions do not need to pay a participation fee for their employees, but nevertheless, their economy influences the available continuing education. "We need to apply for the courses at KRUS, because they are free" (participant 6). Continuing and further education thus becomes a financial issue. So even if prison officers send in an application to management to take a course other than those offered by KRUS, they are often denied on the grounds of insufficient financial means.

Discussion: Prison Officers' Professionalism and Competence After Graduation and Opportunities for Further Professional Development

The main findings in our study show that prison officers express pride and job satisfaction in their profession. The latter is connected to collegial relationships and a meaningful job. Prison officials also express satisfaction with their education but highlight the need for continuing education. Some express a need for short-term, thematically oriented courses, for instance related to issues concerning substance abuse, conflict management or educational opportunities for the incarcerated persons. Others wish to supplement their existing education and obtain a bachelor's degree, which became possible in January 2019. Prison officers do, however, experience that their career opportunities and access to continuing education are limited due to financial circumstances. Under the current Norwegian government[6], cuts in funding for the correctional service have further aggravated the situation.

The current prison officer education is a two-year paid college education at The University College of Norwegian Correctional Service (KRUS), which grants students the title "University College Graduate in Correctional Studies." The content of the education is, as we

6 Solberg II Government (2017 -)

have described it, highly complex, and implies that the prison officers acquire knowledge in several scientific disciplines, such as law, social science, psychology and health-promoting work through their education. Grimen (2013a) points out that a complex knowledge base is a characteristic trait for most professions, and that in itself, must be regarded as a prerequisite for professionalism rather than a threat to it. We would nevertheless like to point out that the comprehensive and complex expectations associated with the role as prison officer and its functions require more in-depth knowledge. One might therefore question whether a two-year education is sufficient to ensure in-depth knowledge. The prison population has changed significantly (Brosens, Croux, Claes, Vandervede & De Donder, 2020; Brosens, De Donder, Smetcoren, & Dury, 2019; Gröning, 2019), and prison officers today face far greater challenges in their work than before, something that their education and its depth must reflect. The question is also raised as the prison officers themselves express the need for continuing education, and especially on conflict management, substance abuse issues and preventive work related to the incarcerated persons' mental health. When the prison officers call for further education within community reintegration and social work, this may indicate that these areas are not adequately covered in the courses in the education, as it is designed today. This is natural, since the various courses span several different disciplines, each of which are their own expansive subject areas, and this constitutes a significant part of the challenges related to the execution of sentences in Norway. These subject areas are therefore clearly emphasised in the supplementary module that leads to a Bachelor in Correctional Studies, both in the obligatory courses and in the optional specialisation units (KRUS, 2019).

Another explanation may lie in the structure of the education and, in particular, the alternation between training at KRUS and practical work in prison. Eraut (2009), among others, points out that learning in practice is contextualised, or as Farkas and Manning explains it, embedded in occupational cultures (1997). This means, among other things, that learning in practice is more strongly linked to specific situations where the learner experiences a need for knowledge development and learning. In other words, knowledge acquired through theory must be transferred to specific situations where this knowledge is considered relevant. Whether the prison officers work in prison wings with higher or lower security will highlight different areas of knowledge in the theoretical basis they bring with them from their education. This type of contextualisation means that prison officers will experience various aspects of social work and community reintegration as relevant, both during the course of their education and in their work experiences after graduation. Thus, if a prison officer starts working in a different wing, it may be likely that new values and areas of knowledge may become relevant, and consequently, that a need for professional development will arise.

The need for more knowledge can also be explained based on the prison officers' description of their own learning. They point out that prison practice is the most important learning arena. In this context, Young (2009), among others, highlights the distinction between context-dependent and context-independent knowledge. Context-independent knowledge is explained as universal and powerful, in the sense that it is appears independent of the context it is a part of. It is not immediately accessible to all but must be acquired through education. Context-dependent knowledge is embedded in occupational cultures and is characterised by being practical and often procedural. Both types of knowledge are represented in the prison officer education's descriptions of learning outcomes. The question is, then, which forms of knowledge are at the forefront of the various learning arenas the prison officers engage with. Is it possible that the training that takes place in practice is more dominated by contextual, procedural and practical knowledge, rather than theoretical knowledge of a more general and context-independent nature? The question is made even more relevant by the fact that several prison officers in our study also serve as supervisors for prison officer candidates. When they describe themselves as "a-theoretical" in the sense that they claim to make little use of theoretical knowledge in their work, they reinforce the importance of the context-dependent and

culturally based knowledge they gain access to by working in prison.

The need for more knowledge is also linked to the need for further career opportunities. Torgersen (1972) argues that "the professional is interested in ascending through a hierarchy of professions" (p. 50). In this study, prison officials point out that they feel that they are part of a system, but that one "cannot climb very high" within that system. Many of them therefore considered the opportunity to build upon their prison officer education and attain bachelor's degree as a part of their own skills development, and as a way of securing their own career opportunities. In the effort to strengthen the prison officers' competence and further career opportunities, an additional 60 ECTS credits can be a way of strengthening the knowledge areas that are vital to the role as contact prison officer, such as incarcerated persons' educational opportunities, preventive mental health work, addiction and career guidance.

At the same time, a Bachelor in Corrective Studies gives prison officers the opportunity to apply for master's programmes in other disciplines, thereby opening up new career opportunities. In the Norwegian Correctional Service today, these are areas and responsibilities that are also carried out by other groups that work in prison. The prison officers, for instance, appear to have little knowledge of the school's responsibilities and methods. Developing more knowledge about other professions' working methods and responsibilities thus seems to be a relevant area to include in an extended course of study. Our study suggests that such an expansion would be appreciated and create enthusiasm among the professional prison officers that are responsible for the execution of sentences in the Norwegian Correctional Service today.

Afterword

The education of prison officers must be characterised by high quality in order to meet the quality demands in correctional services. Given the fact that society and the composition of the population are rapidly changing, a two-year education program may fall short. Knowing that the Norwegian education for prison officers is far more extensive than the case being in United States, Belgium, and England, significance of quality in prison officer education should be given more research attention internationally (the Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service, 2017). The goal is a society with as little crime as possible. Therefore, we need prison officers who are qualified to work in a broad and complex field. One step in the right direction might be to extend the Norwegian prison officers' education to a bachelor's degree with a possibility of taking a master's degree if they wish to. However, this study shows that the correctional service still has a long way to go, both in a national and an international context.

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RESEARCH PAPER

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An Ecological Approach to Improving Reentry Programs for Justice-Involved African American Men

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Abstract: *This article is a re-analysis of a previous study (please see https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2017.1402724). Considering the previous findings, in addition to the recent discussions around criminal justice reform, race, policing, and mental health in the United States, the data were reanalyzed using an updated version of QSR NVivo. The new findings revealed that reintegrating justice-involved African American men back into society requires reentry programs to utilize a different approach. Reentry programs must be constructed under the notion that the process involves multiple interrelated components that interact with larger systems outside the individual or organization's immediate control or organization advocating for them. Thus reentry programs should embrace an ecological approach by focusing not solely on the individual but also considering the environmental factors that may facilitate or inhibit their behavior. The authors' CARE model proposes that reentry programs implement four steps (i.e., collaboration, amend, reintegration, and empowerment) to successfully reunite justice-involved African American men with their families, the labor market, and their communities.*

Keywords: *Justice-involved African American men, incarceration, trauma-informed care, recidivism, reentry programs, ecological approach*

In the United States, approximately 77 million (1 in 3) adults have an arrest or conviction record (Council of State Governments (CSG), 2019; Umez & Pirius, 2018). Recently there has been a push to confront and remedy the mass casualties that mass incarceration has birthed. The multilevel devastation that imprisonment has imposed on society financially and emotionally has caused mass incarceration to become a weapon of mass destruction (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). Over the last three decades, the United States prison population has exploded from 300,000 to more than 2 million (Alexander, 2012). The system's failure and spike in incarcerations result from stringent laws and harsh punishments (Alexander, 2012). Legislation such as mandatory minimums and three strikes were created to incarcerate more people under the illusion of enhancing public safety (Mauer, 2006; Alexander, 2012). Although recently there has been a consensus for systematic reform, there are still more than 2 million people incarcerated, and 1.1 million of them are African American men (Bondarenko, 2017; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 2016; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017; Statista Research, 2020; The Sentencing Project, 2018).

Over the last decade, the vast amount of African American men that have recidivated within 1 - 3 years of their release has led researchers to examine why reentry programs are not as effective for them when compared to others. Rehabilitative programming is considered one of the most effective methods to reduce recidivism (Petersilia, 2011). However, there is much debate about what constitutes an effective reentry program (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). Many assume that the services reentry programs offer, such as family reunification, em-

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ployment, mental health, substance use, housing, and education/training, are the solution. All those variables are necessary parts of any plan to reduce recidivism, but the data also illustrate that they have been insufficient when other factors are not considered. Therefore, the present paper outlines why reentry programs should redirect some of their efforts away from transforming the individual and their immediate circumstances and direct more attention to broader environmental factors.

Reintegrating into society is not solely dependent on the program's effort to transform the individual impacted by incarceration, but also requires numerous external constructs outside the boundaries of the organizational structure (Watson et al., 2018). Therefore, reentry programs would benefit from engaging and enhancing their relationships with political, professional, and local entities to advance policies and procedures that will allow justice-involved African American men to engage more closely with the communities they are returning to. Improving outcomes for African American men in reentry programs must be centered on easing their transition into the complex systems of the family, workforce, and society at large, while also considering their mental and emotional well-being.

Scope of the Problem

More than 650,000 justice-involved persons are released from prison every year in the United States, and approximately 429, 000 are likely to be rearrested within three years (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2005; Morenoff & Harding, 2014; National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC) 2015; Visher, Lattimore, Barrick, & Tueller, 2017). A culmination of research has shown that prison-based reentry programs positively impact recidivism and reunification (CJC, 2015; Eddy et al., 2008; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). African American men are more likely to participate in these programs, yet they continue to struggle with recidivism and reunification at higher rates (CJC, 2015; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). A potential explanation is that African American men frequently encounter caution, suspicion, and fear from their environment due to stigma (Austin, 2004). Also, African American men are more likely to be viewed as more aggressive and threatening (Thomas, 2007).

Many factors contribute to the high recidivism rates of African American men, but how their environment perceives them plays a significant role. Consequently, African American men respond differently to the environment compared to their non-African American counterparts (Thomas, 2007). Bandura (1989) described this as a bidirectional influence, which illustrates how behavior and the environment influence one another. Individuals are both producers and a product of their environment. This leads to a reciprocal condition in which the environment alters the individual's behavior in response to hostility, which in turn creates a more hostile environment (Bandura, 1989). Bandura (1989) also implied that the socially conferred roles and status shape the beliefs, self-perceptions, and intentions of individuals, ultimately forming part of their behavior.

As the theory of African American Offending illustrates, incarceration and confinement have impacted African American men so severely that it is ingrained in their mentality from childhood, thereby distorting their worldview (Unnever & Gabbidon, 2011; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). To address this problem, a more holistic approach is needed to account for the negative associations developed in the centuries of oppression and segregation that shape African American men's current interactions with society. Only when addressing the psychological and historical trauma in conjunction with the environmental factors that perpetuate the stigma experienced by African American men, can the chains of incarceration be broken.

Reentry is a complicated and often traumatic experience for individuals being released from prison. Maley (2014) compared incarcerated men's return to society to the likes of soldiers returning from war. Like soldiers, incarcerated men experience anxiety, panic attacks, paranoia, and cognitive dysfunction, which can hinder their reentry journey (CSG, 2015; Ma-

ley, 2014; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017).

Researchers, advocates, and policymakers agree that an influx of collaborative programs that strategically address criminogenic variables are needed. However, the problem is that the programs must extend their services to include cultural competency and emotional and psychological factors instead of just practical needs (e.g., housing, food, and employment). The previous study by Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson (2017) found that 50 percent of the men that participated in the program recidivated within one year even with housing, food, and employment assistance, which confirms that the needs are more complex. Additionally, Visher et al. (2017) conducted a multi-site evaluation (N=1697) of men from 12 prisoner reentry programs with similar results. The evaluation utilized a two-stage matching quasi-experimental design, and multivariate models were used to examine the relationships among service and program receipt and recidivism (Visher et al., 2017). They concluded that primary services that focused on practical skills (employment, housing) illustrated "modest or inconsistent" impacts on recidivism, but services that focused on behavior change were more beneficial (Visher et al., 2017, p. 1). Thus, securing practical needs is not sufficient in assisting individuals impacted by incarceration, particularly African American men. For programs to be more effective for African American men, there must be significant consideration of the environmental and psychological elements influencing their behavior.

Methods

A qualitative phenomenological research design was utilized to explore African American men's reentry experience, family reunification, and recidivism. Non- random sampling was used. The participants (N=10) were selected from a reentry program in Florida's southeastern region and had been in prison more than once and participated in at least three reentry programs. The participant's ages ranged from 23 to 56 years. Informed consent procedures met the standards set by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects. A two-part instrument constructed by the researcher was used to collect data. The first part was a 13-question demographic questionnaire, and the second part consisted of open-ended questions that were delivered verbally in a semi-structured interview format.

Data Analysis

In the previous study the data were analyzed with QSR NVivo 10 qualitative analysis software and were interpreted by identifying similarities, differences, themes, and relationships. The findings yielded the following themes and subthemes presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Original Themes and Subthemes

Trauma	Self-identification	Reentry	Reunification	Recidivism
Stress	Institutionalization	Resources	Relationship with the child's caregiver	Post-release environment
Generational abuse and abandonment	Criminalization	Accountability	Parenting before, during and after incarceration	Outlook on the criminal justice system
Family membership and belonging		Employment		
		Housing		

Considering the previous findings, the recent discussions around race, mental health, policing, and incarceration, the data were re-analyzed using an updated version of QSR NVivo qualitative analysis software. As a result, four new themes emerged, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2

New Themes and Subthemes

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE	COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR	EMOTIONS	ENVIRONMENT
Post-traumatic stress	Human behavior	Intent	Peer pressure
Emotional insecurity	Self-reliance	Behavioral response	Community influences
	Personal responsibility		Post-release rules

New Considerations for Model Development

As discussed below, the new themes and subthemes are significant regarding the success of reentry programs and recidivism reduction. The themes also further support what previous research has shown: the success of reentry programs relies heavily on the resources, programs, and environment. The new themes and subthemes contributed to considerations for a more effective reentry program model, which will be presented in a subsequent section.

Psychological Profile

Reentry programs often fail to address the emotional insecurity experienced by justice-involved African American men while they are incarcerated and post-release. As cited in Perry, Robinson, Alexander, & Moore (2011), research by Visher et al. (2004) showed that 20 percent of the respondents reported experiencing symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder 1–3 months after their release. The symptoms included repeated disturbing memories, thoughts, or images of prison. Twenty-five percent of respondents reported experiencing severe anxiety and depression (Perry et al., 2011). Additionally, a 56-year-old participant in this study who spent 25 years of his life in jail and prison stated:

> I was going out of my mind. I didn't know if I was going over or under the fence. My head was running games on me, and I was hearing voices. The doctor gave me some medication. She said it's a depression I'm going through from drinking and drugging and my mind still going through what I went through in my life and my brain can't keep up. I think I'll be locked up right now because without knowing my problem I'll be done -done something crazy. I thought I was crazy-I'm serious. She told me don't use that word (crazy) in her office. She said "unbalanced" Your mind is unbalanced. (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017)

Four of the other participants shared similar experiences, which illustrates the need for more psychological interventions such as cognitive-behavioral group therapy, which has been found to produce significant symptom reduction among individuals experiencing anxiety (Butler et al., 2018).

Cognitive Behavior

Traditional cognitive behavior change models have assumed that behavior can be entirely shaped and controlled by the individual, whereby decisions are consciously planned, and actions subsequently ensue (Buchan, Ollis, Thomas, & Baker, 2012; Masicampo & Baumeister, 2013). This is partly the result of the philosophical concept of Intentional Causalism, which proposes that an action is caused by an agent's conscious intentions (Lumer, 2019). The Intentional-Causalist conception is based on the criminal justice system and hence, the source of the standard Western conceptions of moral and legal responsibility (Lumer, 2019). Following this notion has resulted in most behavioral interventions being rooted in the philosophy of self-reliance and personal responsibility. Consequently, reentry programs following the traditional behavioral interventions model focus primarily on the conscious effort of the individual to guide

their actions. Although this conscious approach does present some benefits to participants, it does not encapsulate the entire causality of human behavior (Masicampo & Baumeister, 2013). In contrast with the cognitive psychology tradition, the current understanding suggests that much of human behavior is initiated by the interactions of the individual in coordination with their environment (Bargh & Morsella, 2008). Behavior is not exclusively controlled by the individual but is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon influenced by multiple factors that interact with one another (Buchan et al., 2012). For example, a participant sentenced as an adult at the age of 11 and spent 14 years in prison shared:

> When you're a young kid like that going into an adult prison facility, you will see guys that you looked up to as you was out in society hustling, and you would see those guys as well—a couple of your friends from around the neighborhood. I was pretty much in a safe haven. With me, it was kind of like, I'm right at home. I was kind of comfortable. You got some - they call it cutting time, that's when you always getting in trouble, don't listen to the officers because of your age you feel like nobody can't tell you nothing, and they put you in confinement. (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017)

In response to similar stories, researchers are now embracing the use of ecological models of behavior, focusing not solely on the individual but also considering the environmental factors that may facilitate or inhibit individual behavior (Buchan et al., 2012). Consequently, any intervention designed to modify behavior would benefit from adopting an ecological approach by allowing participants to engage and adapt their responses to the situation's context. However, conscious strategies promoted in many reentry programs are not equipped to manage the overwhelming magnitude and ever-changing nature of environmental inducements. Fortunately, the system needed to decipher the complex interactions between the environment and individuals already exist in the form of emotional processing.

Emotions

Barrett, Mesquita, Ochsner, and Gross (2007) suggest that emotions measure an individual's relationship with the environment. They affect their perception, shape their worldview, and indicate whether a situation is helpful or harmful, rewarding, or threatening, requiring approach or withdrawal (Barrett et al., 2007). Although the influence of the emotional state on behavior is not always accessible to the individual, emotions can engender behavior that is antithetical to the goals of the agent (Lewis & Jones, 2004). To adapt an individual's response to be congruent with their environment, they must properly attune to the multitude of stimuli experienced. This requires them to be immersed in the environment to experience the contextual inputs necessary for the various psychological processes to harmonize with their surroundings. Therefore, any reentry program attempting to mediate the behavior of its participants must employ interventions that allow justice-involved African American men to interact and be informed by the environment they are tasked to navigate upon release.

Environment

Successfully reintegrating justice-involved persons back into the environment of the family, workforce, and community is the fundamental purpose of any reentry program (CJC, 2015). Environmental factors play an essential role in the manifestation of the behavior exhibited by the individual. Heft (2018) suggested that to function and adapt as individuals in a community it is paramount to understand how to engage with that community. A participant stated that the multiple pre- and post-release reentry programs he participated in failed to teach him strategies on dealing with the criminogenic risks in his community; therefore, he continued to recidivate. He shared:

> Once I got out, you know in my neighborhood they glorify stuff like that. Yeah, like the first thing they will say is like yeah, my homeboy done got out. They come looking for you, not looking for you in a bad way but looking for

> you to hang out with you. If you have like loyal guys you grew up with, they gonna come and show you love - we call it breaking bread. They gonna come and give you $3-400 and some drugs to sell. When I got out, they came and got me. They showed me love, and I ain't never think about no job. (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017)

The environment justice-involved African American men are entering poses significant challenges, which negatively impact their chances of reintegrating into their families, workforce, and community (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). The political, economic, and social post-conviction penalties designed to prevent recidivism are inadvertently isolating individuals impacted by incarceration from the communities they are expected to reintegrate (Clear et al., 2001). Governed by these rules and restrictions, they remain in a virtual prison, leading them to recidivate at higher numbers (Alexander, 2012; Morenoff & Harding, 2014; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017).

The Care Model

The task of successfully reintegrating justice-involved African American men into society is a complex issue that involves multiple interrelated components. Based on the findings from the previous study and re-analysis, the CARE model was constructed. The model proposes that more reentry programs consider the indifferences African American men endure, particularly trauma, their environment, and the impact both have on their social and cognitive functions. Scutti (2014) stated that African American men experience traumatic childhood incidents 28 percent more than white men. The CARE model further proposes that a trauma-informed component be added to more men's reentry programs and that post-release resources include more access to trauma-informed care (TIC). The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], (2014) defines TIC as a framework of service delivery that utilizes a universal precautions approach to incorporate evidence about the prevalence and impact of early adversity on individuals the lifespan. TIC has four guiding principles: (1) realizing that trauma is extremely prevalent and can create lifelong implications in many facets of functioning; (2) recognizing that many presenting problems are best conceptualized as signs and symptoms of trauma; (3) incorporating knowledge about trauma into system-wide policies, procedures, and practices; and (4) avoiding the repetition of retraumatizing and disempowering dynamics in the service delivery setting (SAMSHA, 2014).

The CARE model has 4 components: Collaboration, Amend, Reintegration, and Empowerment.

1.) *Collaboration:* When constructing the CARE model, several other reentry models were considered, such as the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) and the Boston Initiative models. Like the CARE model, they have gone beyond focusing on practical needs and collaborated with other entities. The RNR has a heavy emphasis on cognitive-behavioral and social learning techniques (Petersilia, 2011). It focuses on high-risk justice-involved persons and integrates family and peers to reinforce positive messages (Petersilia, 2011). The data from 38 programs utilizing the model was analyzed and found that recidivism for high-risk justice-involved persons decreased by 20 percent for some programs (Petersilia, 2011). The Boston Reentry Initiative focused on high-risk justice-involved persons and offered various resources with a significant emphasis on treatment modalities. In 2011, the participant's recidivism rates decreased an estimated 30 percent compared to a matched group (Petersilia, 2011). Both models have shown significant results. However, the CARE model goes further by making cultural competency and communities part of the intervention. This is especially important to African American men who feel disenfranchised when returning to their communities. Another significant component of the CARE model is that it is not designed for just high-risk justice-involved persons like the other models, and it has an emphasis on African American men.

2.) *Amend:* Aside from entering problematic situations in their communities, individu-

als are also affected by post-release restrictions designed to surveil and control. Post-conviction penalties restrict their voting rights, housing, employment opportunities, and the ability to associate with other felons, which includes close relatives (Clear, Rose, & Ryder, 2001; Alexander, 2012). The penalties designed to prevent recidivism are inadvertently isolating individuals from the communities they are expected to reintegrate (Clear et al., 2001). Governed by these rules and restrictions, they remain in a virtual prison, causing them to recidivate at higher rates (Alexander, 2012; Morenoff & Harding, 2014; Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). Post-conviction policies not only burden individuals impacted by incarceration, but they also restrict organizational-level systems and processes.

Although the conversation around criminal justice reform has recently included modifying laws that directly and indirectly impose post-conviction penalties, many are still leaving out the need for more psychological services and mental health resources. The CARE model suggests that legislation and policies be amended to include more of these resources, particularly post-release and in the communities where these men are returning. Sawyer and Wagner also (2019) suggested that substantial investments be placed in social services and communities. Amending the current policies will not only benefit the individual impacted by incarceration but may also keep others from offending.

3.) *Reintegrate:* One of the main goals of reentry programs is to assist justice-involved individuals in reintegrating into their communities. Many reentry programs collaborate with local businesses, community organizations, and churches, which allow disenfranchised justice-involved men to engage in community matters. An example is Volunteers of America (VOA). VOA allows justice-involved persons to gain valuable exposure to potential future employers. More importantly, they also gain the ability to display job skills and reduce organizational concerns about their past infractions, which is a common issue voiced by potential employers conducting traditional job interviews with justice-involved persons. Although these programs are effective, the CARE model suggests that these organizations should also be aware of and informed on implementing TIC strategies when working with these men. Six study participants stated that insecurities from their trauma played a significant role in their success of reintegrating into home life and the workforce (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017).

4.) *Empowerment:* Reducing post-conviction penalties and giving individuals impacted by incarceration a stake in their communities' success will empower them to become productive citizens. Being perceived as a valuable member of society allows for reducing the stigma and emotional insecurity perpetuating the increased recidivism rates of African American men. The CARE model proposes that reentry programs become more inclusive of mentors and peer specialists from the communities these men are returning to. The study participants stated they would prefer more external support in addition to internal support (i.e., psychiatrists, social workers, and probation officers) (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). In addition to mentoring, the model is inclusive of volunteer and educational opportunities. Both will provide connections to potential employers and allow them to contribute to their communities and possibly shed the stigma attributed to them.

Discussion

Reentry programs provide participants with financial assistance, housing, employment, familial assistance, and numerous other services to counteract some of the difficulties experienced by justice-involved persons (Perry et al., 2011). Nevertheless, according to the World Prison Brief, America boasts the highest recidivism rates at 76 percent (Zoukis, 2017). Reentry programs must do a better job of addressing the trauma and emotional insecurity experienced by individuals impacted by incarceration.

Another confounding variable contributing to the demise of justice-involved African American men is the socially conferred roles placed on them by their environment. Society essentially regards their criminal history as a contagious disease that further isolates them from

the community they are supposed to reintegrate (Austin, 2004). For African American males, the consequences of low status due to incarceration are compounded by racial discrimination and stereotypes that perceives them as unintelligent, dishonest, and aggressive (Austin, 2004). Consequently, the portrait of African American males puts them under heightened scrutiny and increases the number of adverse encounters with police and society. African American men, especially those involved in the justice system, face many oppressive factors. Therefore, part of the solution to reducing recidivism lies outside the individual's immediate control and the organization advocating for them. Institutions involved in the criminal justice system must be part of the solution to alter the hostile environment experienced by African American men.

Implications for Policy, Practice, and Research

In addition to new themes, there are also more implications for policy, practice, and research related to reentry programs and justice-involved African American men.

Policy

There have been significant legislative changes and progress, such as The Second Chance Act, The First Step Act, bipartisan collaborations, and a newly formed Council on Criminal Justice. Even with the considerable amount of progress that has been made, there is still a need for more legislative change. For example, The First Step Act covers federal justice-involved persons; however, an estimated 90 percent of people are incarcerated in state prisons (Hall, 2018). Also, employment barriers such as "blanket bans" and "good moral character clauses" must be eradicated (Umez & Pirius, 2018). Alleviating economic restrictions would make it easier to participate in the labor market and fulfill financial obligations to parole and probation officers and support spouses and children.

Another policy issue that requires more attention concerns the various post-conviction restrictions designed to surveil and control these men's behavior. There is an opportunity to coordinate policies and services between law enforcement, judges, legislators, local businesses, and communities to facilitate a healthier relationship between these external constructs and the individual impacted by incarceration. Reevaluating the effectiveness and potentially amending some of the post-conviction restrictions placed on justice-involved men will alleviate some of their emotional insecurity that contributes to the increased recidivism rates of African American men.

Practice

In the United States an array of professionals work in the criminal justice system, such as social workers, psychologists, probation officers, and correction officers. In many instances, these professionals work with justice-involved persons before and during incarceration and post-release. One significant improvement they can implement in their practices is a change in the language they use. As explained by Bandura (1989), socially conferred roles and stereotypical views influence individuals' thoughts and emotional states, which ultimately form part of their behavior. Revising the language used to address justice-involved persons will allow them to gain a more positive self-image and shed some of the stigma associated with incarceration (Skinner-Osei & Stepteau-Watson, 2017). The San Francisco Board of Supervisors adopted person first language guidelines, which have excluded the terms felon, offender, convict, and juvenile delinquent (Matier, 2019). Now persons impacted by incarceration will be referred to as formerly incarcerated persons, justice-involved, returning residents, a person under supervision, or a young person with justice system involvement (Matier, 2019).

Also, practitioners in reentry programs could benefit from applying a more ecological approach by allowing individuals to engage and adapt their behavior to the environmental context as part of their program. There is an opportunity to use the transitional and heavily monitored parole and probation period to coach and prepare for the complexity of reintegrating back into society. This would require reentry programs to conduct much of their behavioral training post-release to allow justice-involved African American men to report their lived experiences

with society to trained professionals that can make situational assessments and help recalibrate and improve their interactions. To foster behavior change, individuals need to be informed by how the environment responds to their actions instead of conducting interventions in a sterile prison environment devoid of the contextual elements informing their behavioral responses.

Research

Over the last decade, numerous programs have been implemented to help people impacted by the justice system. To further improve program outcomes, the Council on Criminal Justice identified three key elements that will further enhance reform efforts, 1.) disseminate conclusive evidence between the jails, prisons, and courts; 2.) continue to support ideas across the entire reform spectrum; and, 3.) conduct additional research to determine effective methods (Head, 2019).

It is also imperative that researchers further explore how external factors outside the organization's boundaries affect the outcomes of reentry programs. External implementation contexts are beneficial for complex interventions that involve multiple interrelated components that extend and interact with larger systems and communities in which they are embedded (Watson et al., 2018). A systematic literature review by Watson et al. (2018) examined how the external implementation context constructs could serve as barriers or facilitators in program implementation. The constructs were (1) professional influences, (2) political support, (3) social climate, (4) local infrastructure, (5) policy and legal climate, (6) relational climate, (7) target population, and (8) funding and economic climate. All these constructs interact with each other and constrain the organizational implementation without being in their direct control. Therefore, to improve current reentry programs' effectiveness, organizations cannot rely on internal administrative manipulations alone to solve the complex problem of integrating individuals impacted by incarceration back into society (Watson et al., 2018).

An example of an organization that has benefited from an external implementation context approach is the Housing First model. The model is used with chronically homeless individuals with serious mental illness and substance use disorder (Watson et al., 2018). The significance of the model is the fostering of relationships and coordination with external entities. Reentry programs could benefit from adopting a similar approach, as many participants involved in the Housing First model have also been impacted by incarceration.

Conclusion

In 2019, 45,075 justice-involved persons were released from federal custody, and an estimated 3,100 were released per the First Step Act (Federal Bureau of Prisons, 2019). Despite the progress, there are still many issues that are not being addressed and will continue to foil all efforts to successfully reintegrate justice-involved African American men into society and their families. The common conception of assisting individuals impacted by incarceration is to provide practical needs such as housing, food, and employment, which are often insufficient when the core of their issues is related to psychological factors. In addition to providing practical needs and psychological assistance, reentry programs should serve as a mediator between the individual impacted by incarceration and the various environmental constructs they are encountering upon release.

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