

AN EXAMINATION OF
THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE WOMEN'S UNIT
OAKALLA PRISON FARM

by

DOROTHY MAE COUTTS
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Department of Anthropology and Sociology

The University of British Columbia,
Vancouver 8, Canada.

Date May 3, 1961

ABSTRACT

This is an examination of the social structure of a women's prison. The prison has five primary tasks: custody, internal order, self-maintenance, punishment and reformation. Verbal priority is given to reformation, but custody and internal order take precedence in actual practice.

Matrons prefer to play their roles in different ways. Those who subscribe to a habit-forming philosophy of reformation prefer working on the morning shift. Their views and practices are in harmony with the requirements of custody. Those who subscribe to a basic-change philosophy prefer the more relaxed and permissive atmosphere of the afternoon shift. Their views and practices are frequently in conflict with the requirements of custody. And structural pressure tends to force these matrons to become more custodial over time.

In exchange for obedience and conformity in some spheres the matrons agree not to tamper with the attitudes and values of the inmates. This bargain for compliance seems essential given the present social structure of the prison.

The inmates suffer from the deprivation of liberty, goods and services, heterosexual relationships, autonomy, security and, at the Women's Unit, privacy. The addicts and "rounders" adopt cohesive modes of response to these deprivations. "Squealers", "hack lovers" and "part players" adopt alienative modes of response.

The inmates differ by groups in their characteristic

responses to official oppression. The younger addict groups rebel habitually, the older groups conform overtly but do not change their basic values.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One could undertake a sociological examination of a women's prison with the express intention of finding some answers to the many administrative and rehabilitative problems confronted in this setting. The validity of any findings made given the present state of knowledge in the field of sociology and of corrections would, however, be highly suspect. On another level of concern, a women's prison could presumably provide a good case study for any one of a number of sociological issues currently being investigated. The prison could be studied as an example of formal organizations of a very special kind in which the consumer of the service provided by the organization is at the same time an unwilling member of the organization. An interest in social deviance might also prompt one to investigate the prison as a convenient showcase in which individual deviants become members of a society of deviants. The prison could provide an equally fruitful source of information concerning the development of social roles in institutions, or the many unresolved problems of socializations might bear illumination by an examination of the ways in which inmates learn to live within the prison, and the ways in which matrons learn to perform their roles.

Examinations and studies of this type require a certain amount of general background information concerning the social

system of the prison, however, and an investigation of the literature reveals that there is very little such information available. Several studies of male deviance and of prisons for men have been undertaken with considerable success, but extremely little has been written either about female delinquents or about institutions which are designed to house them. In recent years there has also been considerable written about mental hospitals, but the extent to which findings in either or both of these two fields can be unilaterally applied to the situation in a women's prison is questionable.

I undertook this study specifically to make sense out of a situation in which I found myself. As an employee of the Women's Unit I became intrigued by the dimly visible social structure of the prison, but was unable to find any descriptive or analytical studies which could provide a clear picture of the situation. At this point I abandoned my original plan to work in the setting only for the summer and began to make a more systematic examination of the social structure.

A study designed specifically to prove or disprove specific hypotheses, be they concerned with formal organization, deviance, role development or socialization, seemed rather premature, so I have attempted to provide a general portrait of the institution and of its inhabitants instead. Of necessity certain omissions have been made in this portrait, due in part to the limitations of this study and in part to the innate difficulties encountered when making an investigation in this setting.

There is a line between the captives and the captors across which communication is difficult. As a participant observer playing the role of a captor I was reminded of the significance of this line on many occasions. Information cannot often be obtained by simply asking questions in the Women's Unit, one must rather be patient and watch, sometimes for months or years before some indication of the answers can be gained.

THE MAJOR QUESTIONS OF THIS STUDY

Common Features of Imprisonment. Using Gresham Sykes' book The Society of Captives¹ both as a key to the social structure of the prison and as a point for comparison between prisons, the first concern of the study will be to examine the social order at the Women's Unit and to determine some of the common elements and attributes of prisons. Such an examination and comparison will imply an evaluation of the generality of the frame of reference derived by Sykes. The specific questions in this regard will be:

1. What are the common tasks assigned to prisons and is the priority of tasks similar from one prison to another?
2. What are some of the common elements of authority in the prison, and how does this authority affect the type of relationship existing between the inmates and the custodians?
3. What are some of the common pains of imprisonment? To

¹Gresham M. Sykes, The Society of Captives, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1958.

what extent does imprisonment as such result in characteristic frustrations or deprivations, regardless of the specific type of prison under consideration, or the specific type of population in the prison?

4. How do inmates adapt to the deprivations experienced in the prison? What are the characteristic patterns found regardless of the specific type of prison under consideration, or the specific type of population in the prison?

Unique Features of Imprisonment at the Women's Unit, Oakalla Prison Farm. The second major concern of this study will be to examine the unique aspects of the social structure of the Women's Unit. An attempt will also be made to discover some of the determinants of these unique features of the social structure;

1. To what extent does the type of population housed at the Women's Unit influence the nature of the social system of that Unit?
2. To what extent does the type of program conducted by the institution influence the nature of the social system at the Women's Unit?
3. To what extent does the fact that both the captives and the captors are women influence the nature of the social system of the Women's Unit?

It is hoped that as this study progresses some contributions to general sociological knowledge will be made, but as has been indicated above, the purpose of the study cannot be

to prove or disprove any specific hypotheses. The test of the present work will be the extent to which specific hypotheses can be derived for future examination of a more rigorous type.

CHAPTER II

A FRAME OF REFERENCE

Studies concerning female criminality and female correctional institutions are extremely few in number, particularly studies with a sociological orientation. Authors of textbooks concerning criminology usually content themselves with a brief chapter on the subject of female deviance, and confine their examination of institutions for female criminals to a description of the physical plant and formal program of such institutions. Concern with attitudes and values, or with the social interaction prevailing within the institutions has been, with only a few exceptions, cursory in the extreme. One such exception is Lowell S. Selling's description of the pseudo-family formations observed within a juvenile institution for girls.¹

Before explicit hypotheses concerning patterns of adaptation to the Women's Unit at Oakalla Prison Farm could be profitably derived and tested it was felt that a more general fund of information concerning the social structure of that institution would be essential, and to this end the present study was devised. The testing of more precise propositions will then have to be left to further studies within this general field.

¹Lowell S. Selling, "The Pseudo Family", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 37 (1931), pp.247-253.

One of the major difficulties encountered in attempting a sociological examination of the Women's Unit was the determination of a theoretical frame of reference which would be at once practical and fruitful. Because of the similarity in general objective, the frame of reference developed by Gresham M. Sykes for his study of a maximum security prison for men has been followed to a large extent in this examination of the social structure of the Women's Unit at Oakalla Prison Farm.² A brief precis of this study by Sykes will provide some indication of the general orientation and focus of interest of the present study.

I. THE PRISON AND ITS SETTING

The New Jersey State Maximum Security Prison houses approximately 1,200 adult male criminals held in confinement for periods of time ranging from one year to life.³ Approximately two-thirds of those serving sentences in this institution have been convicted of either felonious homicide, burglary or robbery. In many respects this prison has become the dumping ground for those offenders who are considered to be too difficult or too dangerous to be accommodated elsewhere. Three hundred custodial, clerical and professional staff members are charged with the responsibility of governing and administering this inmate population.⁴

²Gresham M. Sykes, The Society of Captives, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1958.

³Sykes, Society of Captives, p.xvi

⁴Loc. cit.

The most striking feature of the physical structure of the prison is its drabness. It lacks the amenities of life, but does not represent acute physical discomfort for the inhabitants. Some of the drabness of the institution can perhaps be attributed to the confusion existing as to the "raison d'etre" of prison as a means of coping with criminal deviance. Shall the prison be designed to punish the offender, to reform him, or to deter the prospective offender? Surely there is some contradiction between these objectives, and no one physical plant could be considered appropriate for the accomplishment of all three objectives. The New Jersey State Prison is typical of prisons as we know them to-day: They lack purpose, colour or personality because they have been designed to compromise between these diverse objectives. They are austere and dull, but not completely unsuitable for habitation; the outer walls remind the community of its presence, but prohibit a closer view. Reformation is a verbalized hope, but little is done with the specific purpose of ensuring reformation of the offender.

II. THE REGIME OF THE CUSTODIAN

The regime of the custodians represents a similar uneasy compromise between conflicting tasks assigned to the prison by society. These tasks are admittedly incongruous with one another, yet the prison administration must find a means of translating these incongruities into a concrete set of rules and regulations. A policy of action must somehow be derived by the administration and enforced by the guards.

The most prominent tasks which the prison and the custodians must perform are: custody of the inmate, the maintenance of internal order, self-maintenance of the institution, punishment of the offenders, and, hopefully, rehabilitation. Closer inspection of each illustrates the extent to which they have influenced the policy of the institution.

The task of custody. Sykes has indicated that the task of custody has pre-eminence in the New Jersey State Prison. The prevention of escapes cannot be insured by the use of armed guards and walls alone however, and the administration is very much aware of this fact. Time, energy and ingenuity must be employed in the prevention of escapes before they can be fully attempted, and rigid regulations concerning dress, grooming and activity within the prison are designed especially to discourage such attempts. Inmates must be counted, searched and supervised continuously, for although the prison staff is convinced that the majority of those within the institution are not interested in attempting to escape, they are equally convinced that there is an undetermined number who would, given the slightest opportunity, seek their freedom at any cost.

Custodial precautions are irksome to the inmates and burdensome to the guards, but the public outcry against escapes is sufficiently strong that the administration is not willing to be found wanting in this respect.

The task of internal control. Closely related to

custody, and second in the rank of precedence within the institution is concern with internal control. As the author has stated, in the New Jersey State Prison the dilemma between a permissive social atmosphere and internal order has been resolved in favour of the latter.⁵ The inmate population is such that one must concede that even under the best of circumstances the maintenance of order would present a formidable problem, and the conditions of prison life are far from optimal. The frustrations and deprivations encountered by the inmates because of their imprisonment create strong pressures toward disruptive behavior. The guard is caught up in a vicious circle in which he must suppress the very activity that he helps to create. The repressive measures which the guard feels he must employ heap further frustration upon the inmates, and the antagonism between the guard and his prisoners spirals upward.

Control of the inmates is not only concerned with the prevention of legal infractions, but with the maintenance of "quiet", "peaceful" and "orderly" living within the prison as well. Regulations not only prohibit deviance, but rigidly circumscribe any activity which could conceivably lead to deviance. The purchase price of this extensive control has been the inmates' autonomy through the enforcement of numerous rules which appear to the outsider to be, (and may in fact objectively be), unnecessarily petty in many respects.

⁵Sykes, Society of Captives, p.25

The Task of Self-Maintenance. The custodian is expected, for a variety of reasons, to make efficient use of the labour force available within the prison, and this expectation presents him with a knotty problem. Whether the rationale for penal labour reflects a desire to have the inmate assume some of the financial burden of his imprisonment, or a desire to punish the inmate for his offence, or perhaps even a desire to effect a cure for his deviance, the custodian can facilitate a work program only by sacrificing a certain degree of custodial control. If the inmates could remain locked in their cells all day long, custodial control would perhaps still be considerable, but would present much less complex problems than is the case when inmates are expected to work. If he is to work, an individual must be allowed a certain degree of freedom of movement and will require a variety of tools and materials if he is to get a job done. Freedom of movement and the availability of tools increase the hazards of escape and internal disorder, but the custodian is not free not to take this chance.

Although the custodian feels that he must have something to show for the potential man hours of work which exist within the prison if he is to remain employed, the inmates face no such requirement. They will be provided with the essentials of life whether they take part in a work program or not, and the custodian finds himself in the uncomfortable position of needing the labour of his captives far more than do the captives themselves. The custodian is not able to use extreme coercive measures such as brute force or starvation to extract high

levels of effort, and he finds the existing incentives of punishment and reward quite insufficient to ensure conscientious labour from the inmates. The inmates will (to avoid those punishments which can be meted out) work, but can retaliate by apathetically appearing to work, while actually doing very little of value. The custodians can push their prisoners into a semblance of work, but cannot do more than this.

If he is to obtain conscientious work from the inmates, the prison official must be able to manage men as well as guard them, and this requires taking into account their attitudes, desires and opinions. The contradictions which this type of consideration poses to the practices of stringent custody and control are considerable.

The task of punishment. It would not be unfair to observe that the majority of the officials of the New Jersey State Prison feel that the criminals are placed in prison not for punishment, but as punishment. Although the custodians rarely refer to the behavior of the captive prior to his entry into the institution as something for which atonement must be secured during his imprisonment, his prior deviance serves as a rationalization for the use of extreme measures designed to avoid "incidents" within the prison. Certainly in the day-to-day activities of the custodians there is little concern given to consciously inflicting punishment upon the inmates, but the very conditions of the prison are, in many respects, punitive.

The restrictions placed upon correspondence, the purchase of canteen supplies and visits from the outside world may

certainly be interpreted by the inmates as evidences of a punitive attitude, but the custodians insist that these restrictions are imposed merely because they are essential to the preservation of a sufficiently high degree of custody and internal order. Whether this is in fact the whole reason for such restrictions or not, the guard does not find that he is able to view the inmate as an individual who has been stripped of his humanity. The guard frequently comes to like those whom he must rule, and is concerned that he be liked in return. It is this fact which does much to temper the totalitarian power of the prison official.

The task of reform. Sykes believes that reformation is the most ambiguous of all the tasks assigned to the prison, for although few would quarrel with the merits of reformation as an objective, there is little consensus existing as to the means one must employ to attain this objective. Many students of the problem believe that reformation of the deviant requires a profound change in his personality.⁶ Two theoretical factions then express divergent opinions as to the means of attaining this profound change. Those devoted to a psychiatric view of criminal behavior support the need for individual or group therapy. Those devoted to a more sociological view of criminal behavior see self-government, meaningful work and educations as the minimal requirements of a rehabilitative program.

⁶Sykes, Society of Captives, p.12

Both factions usually believe that the punitive features of imprisonment must be reduced and the permissive, supportive features increased before their efforts at rehabilitation could be effective to any degree.

At the New Jersey State Prison reformation has, in practice, the least priority of all those tasks assigned to the prison. To a large extent, imprisonment is termed a success if the individual does not emerge from the experience in a worse state than that in which he entered. The administrator of the prison has developed a philosophy of reformation which states that the prevention of deviant behavior among the inmates while in the prison is the most potent device available for preparing the prisoner to follow the dictates of society when he is released. Control of the prisoner's behavior rather than his mind is stressed on the grounds that if an individual's actions are forced to match normative demands, the mind will follow after. An evaluation of the reformatory influence of the prison is therefore made in terms of how the prison officials are affecting the total social climate. Rehabilitation becomes a battle for compliance.

This philosophy contradicts the traditional beliefs concerning means of achieving rehabilitation or reformation as conceived by either the social scientist or the therapist, and has the effect of relegating rehabilitation to its customary low level of priority in this social setting. The need for strict custody and control of the inmate body is re-emphasized by the administration, this time in the name of rehabilitation.

III. THE DEFECTS OF TOTAL POWER

It is frequently argued that the inefficiency of the custodial regime is a reflection of the poor calibre of individuals normally recruited by the prison or that it is a resultant of the fact that these recruits lack sufficient experience, or have no career interest in their job. Sykes has countered with the argument that the structural defects in the prison's system of power are at least equally responsible for the apparent inefficiency of the prison system.

Although the power structure within the prison is theoretically such that the custodian is invested with total power, in actual fact the custodian's power is severely limited. One of the structural defects in the prison's system of power can be found in the lack of a sense of duty among those who are held captive to obey their captors. The inmates may agree that the custodian is legitimately entitled to hold his position of authority, but they do not feel that they must then automatically comply with his wishes and demands.

In the face of this lack of a sense of duty, the custodian could conceivably demand compliance by the use of coercion, but coercion is a grossly inefficient means of securing obedience, particularly if the task assigned to the inmate is of a complex nature. Additionally, if the custodian does use brute force to give authority to his command, the inmates may react in kind, and the custodian is painfully aware of how greatly outnumbered he is.

The collection of punishments and rewards which is available to the custodian as means of persuasion is extremely paltry and largely ineffective. Those rewards which are available in the prison are granted to the inmates upon arrival, and the inmates come to view these as their rights rather than as rewards or privileges which must be earned by good behavior. The inmate who is punished by the removal of these privileges may be considered to be a martyr his fellows.

Left with no effective reward or punishment incentives, the custodian must rely upon less straightforward techniques for securing compliance. The guard learns that to gain obedience in those issues which really matter, he must allow considerable latitude in those matters which are of less serious consequence to the institution. The most effective means of securing compliance thus involves a certain degree of corruption of the authority of the guard. At the same time, because he is in constant and close contact with the inmates on a day-to-day basis, the guard will probably form friendships with those he is supposed to rule. He may fail to carry out some of his duties or to enforce some rules simply because he wishes to remain a "good fellow" in the eyes of his associates, the inmates. As the custodian becomes more deeply enmeshed in patterns of reciprocity, the authority of his role gradually slips away into the hands of a few trusted inmates. Recapture of this lost authority may then be attempted only at his peril.

IV. THE PAINS OF IMPRISONMENT

Having examined the prison setting and the regime which the custodians try to impose upon the inmates, the author turns his attention to a consideration of life in the New Jersey State Prison from the point of view of the inmates.

There was a time when imprisonment involved extreme physical deprivations and punishment; housing conditions were deplorable, food was inadequate, and treatment by the staff often brutal. Penal reforms and increased public awareness of and concern for conditions within the prisons have resulted in the elimination of these more grossly punitive features of imprisonment, yet the inmates still find their plight extremely painful. Physically imprisonment has become much less devastating than it was formerly, but the psychological pains have not decreased accordingly.

Many of the inter-personal relationships, possessions and activities which normally contribute to an individual's self-esteem and provide points of reference for his self-image suddenly become inaccessible if he is sent to prison. Not only does the victim suffer a loss of prestige and status within the free community, but his self-conception and self-evaluation is greatly threatened by virtue of this newly acquired social position. The deprivations which most seriously affect the prisoner are, according to Gresham Sykes, the loss of freedom, the loss of heterosexual relationships, the loss of goods and services, the loss of autonomy, and the

loss of security. Each has a unique impact upon the individual and poses characteristic problems for him. To remain intact psychologically, the inmate must somehow learn to cope with and adapt himself to these deprivations.

The deprivations of liberty. The most obviously painful condition imposed upon the inmates of a penal institution is the deprivation of their liberty. The inmate must confine his activities to the immediate area of the prison, and contact with the outside world becomes increasingly tenuous until he must rely almost exclusively upon the institution for the satisfaction of his interests and for the satisfaction of his emotional needs. Cut off from his family and friends, he must rely upon his associates within the prison, whether he finds these associates particularly congenial or not.

Isolation within the prison is painful not only because of the loss of the outside world, but also because this isolation implies rejection by the outside world as well. The inmate is made aware that it is because he was found unsuitable that he was placed in the prison in the first place, and society believes that the inmate must be isolated from the free community so that the community may survive intact. He is not only placed in the prison for his own good (as the hospital inmate may interpret his isolation) but is placed in the prison primarily for the good of the community. The community can function more adequately without the deviant, and is willing to reject the deviant to ensure self-preservation. The inmate's importance as an individual is dramatically refuted: Not only will the world continue to go around

without him, but, in the estimation of the majority, it will go around more efficiently without him. To endure psychologically, the prison inmate must find a means of rejecting his rejectors - a way of warding off his rejection by means of counter-attack.

The deprivation of goods and services. It is true that the inmates of the New Jersey Maximum Security Prison are adequately housed and fed, and that they receive adequate medical attention, yet they find their existence materially ascetic, and resent this asceticism. Because they cannot claim that their asceticism is self-willed, or that it was deliberately adopted for the sake of some future goal, be it spiritual or materialistic, the inmates are left with only the negative interpretations of their deprivation, and suffer accordingly.

In our society, great symbolic importance is attached to possessions, and in no small measure a man can evaluate his own worth, and will be appraised by others in terms of the kind, number and quality of his possessions. To be stripped of these symbolic possessions, and of possessions which are one's own, can result in deep seated doubts concerning one's identity, status and personal worth. Poor to the extent that he cannot even lay claims to a common chair or a suit of clothing, the inmate of the maximum security prison sees himself as a failure in terms of the prevailing social definitions which equate material deprivation with personal inadequacy.

The deprivation of heterosexual relationships. Although some writers have claimed that there is a reduction of sexual drive and a consequent reduction of sexual frustration for the inmate of a prison, conversation and attention given to the topic of sexuality within the New Jersey State Prison tends to belie this claim. Inmates in North America, unlike those in some Latin American countries, do not have the opportunity of having conjugal visits with their wives or mistresses. They are forced to become celibates during their imprisonment. This lack of heterosexual relationships can create problems greater than those of sexual frustration however, for once again psychological problems brought on by this deprivation are significant enough as to warrant our attention.

In a society which is without women, anxiety concerning one's masculinity tends to be generated. Homosexuality develops, and even for those who do not take part in such activities on a voluntary basis or as the result of persuasion or coercion, strong guilt feelings may result from the activation of latent homosexual tendencies. Seduction or near seduction into a pattern which is severely censured outside the institution may (regardless of the extenuating circumstances of life in the institution) result in acute feelings of guilt and doubts concerning one's sexual normality. Physiological gratification in homosexual relationships can be attained only at a great psychological cost for most inmates.

The problem of masculinity may be called into question outside the strictly sexual sphere simply because of the loss

of the feminine audience. Because there are no women to represent the polar extreme of masculinity, the inmate's self-identification becomes more difficult. How is he to know if he is really a man when he is surrounded only by others who also call themselves men? Which of his characteristics will most convincingly portray his manhood in the absence of women who represent the antithesis of his sexual status? Secondary standards of masculinity become distorted and accentuated in the face of this loss, and inmates find that they must continually prove their masculinity in this environment. Their masculinity cannot be taken for granted, nor can it be verified simply by pointing to that which is not masculine, for no such index is readily available.

The deprivation of autonomy. It may be argued that men are far from free agents even in the "free" community for their activities are rigidly circumscribed by law, norm and custom. Still, their activities are controlled by custom rather than by directive, and there are many areas in which personal decisions are not only allowed, but are essential before action can be taken by the individual. Such is not the case within the prison. The inmate is dependent upon the decisions and orders of his superiors with regard to all phases of his life. And he is frequently expected to follow orders or accept rulings without benefit of an explanation or justification. Some of the ignorance among the inmates as to the rationale behind rulings and policies is deliberately fostered, for there is a sense in which rules which have been justified are then open

to criticism and rejection. If the rationale remains inscrutable, the inmate is not so capable of questioning (or more important challenging) the ruling which has been passed down to him.

The deprivation of autonomy is frustrating not only because of the inscrutability of the rulings delivered, it is also frustrating because of the personal degradation which rigorous and methodical control involves. The inmate is made to appear incapable of making a proper decision for himself either because he cannot be trusted, or because he simply does not know what is best or what should be done in a given instance. The inmate becomes weak and helpless, confronted with a superior force against which he has no adequate defense or weapon. Adult status is threatened because of this drastic loss of personal autonomy, and the inmate finds himself returned to the helpless state of his childhood once more.

The deprivation of security. The population of the New Jersey State Prison includes murderers, thieves, rapists and others with long histories of violent, aggressive behavior. Prolonged association with men of this nature is far from reassuring for anyone, regardless of his own reputation for aggressiveness. Although the inmates normally develop extensive patterns of support and mutual aid, there remain sufficient numbers of outlaws in their midst for exploitation to be apparent daily. Awareness of this exploitation deprives the prison inmate of that sense of personal security which he normally could be expected to feel in relation to his fellows outside the prison setting.

Each inmate is uncomfortably aware of the fact that sooner or later he will be "tested" by another inmate who is anxious to seek some advantage. The individual being tested is faced with a double problem. If he should fail his test, he may become the target of many who wish to deprive him of his integrity or his possessions. If he should pass his test, he may become the target of all those who wish to establish reputations for bravery and toughness. Incidents of inter-personal aggression and attempts at exploitation become public tests of adequacy and manliness, and the individual being challenged is acutely aware that his manhood will be publicly evaluated according to how he fares in any contest.

Patterns of adaptation. In the face of the enormous pressures which these pains of imprisonment exert upon the individual, particularly on the psychological level, rather distinctive patterns of adaptation to these pressures could be expected to evolve in the nature of social roles. Sykes believes that there are two general paths of adaptation open: The inmate can bind himself to his fellows with ties of mutual aid, loyalty and affection, standing firmly in opposition to the officials, or he may seek his own advantage in a battle of all against all. His basic orientation may be either "collectivistic" or "individualistic". In actual practice, of course, individual behavior cannot be neatly categorized into one or another of these polar extremes, but extends across the full range of possibility between these two.

V. ARGOT ROLES

Prison argot, like the argot of any group, reflects crucial axes of life which to that group are sufficiently important as to warrant naming and defining. The argot of the New Jersey State Prison is obviously related to many external argot influences; the argot of particular criminal groups, the current slang of the day, jazz addicts and the like. But those aspects of prison life which are peculiar to the prison setting result in the generation of a special prison vocabulary.

The social roles which develop in relation to the crucial axes of life within the prison setting also enjoy the distinction of special names and definitions. An examination of these Argot Roles and the ways in which they are related to the pains of imprisonment reveals much concerning the nature of the prison as a society.

Social cohesiveness against the custodian. The most obvious social boundary in the custodial institution is that which exists between the prison officials and the prison inmates. In order that they may mitigate some of the more painful aspects of being subjected to the rules of the custodian, the inmates feel that any and all information concerning their activities must be kept strictly within the inmate group. Those who fail to guard the secrets of the inmates and who do not in other ways stand directly in opposition to the prison officials as a group deviate from the expectations of the rest of the inmate body, and are singled out and labelled as deviants.

Special names are applied which reflect the uniqueness of the prison situation.

Although the concern is primarily with the flow of important information, the game of cat and mouse which typifies staff-inmate relationships results in the feeling that any information may be of some slight value to the custodians. "Squealers" and "rats" disregard the felt need of the inmates to prevent the flow of information from their group to the custodians, and in so doing disregard the solidarity of prisoners as a dominant value. They usually conduct their activities of "squealing" and "ratting" to attain their own ends, and are regarded contemptuously because of this selfish motivation. These names are anything but flattering, and are never taken lightly.

"Center men" do not necessarily disclose inmate secrets, but threaten inmate solidarity by identifying with the custodians. A "center man" poses a special threat to the cohesively oriented inmates because he actually shares the officials' point of view. In spite of his actual group membership, the "center man" would prefer membership in the opposing group.

Social cohesion in relation to scarce goods. "Gorillas" take what they want from other inmates by using force. They find coercion, or the threat of coercion an effective weapon to achieve their own ends. In this case, the goal is to secure scarce goods from others within the prison as an attempt at softening the hurt which they personally suffer because of material deprivation.

"Merchants" or "pedlars" sell scarce goods to their fellow inmates when they should (to preserve inmate solidarity and to conform with the inmate code) give them. They do not share the goods in short supply, but exploit the needs of others. Their impersonal dealings are a denial of the unity of the imprisoned criminals; they are destructive to the solidarity of the rejected.

Masculinity as an index of self-identification. The inmates of the New Jersey State Prison are cut off from the most important criterion of "maleness", heterosexual activity. In the absence of heterosexual activity, toughness and inward stamina become the major indices by which manhood is evaluated.

Those who take part in homosexual activities within the prison are generally felt to be less masculine than are those who display a greater facility for self-control through sexual restraint. But homosexuality is practised nonetheless. Social status is then allotted to the participants in accordance with the type of role habitually played in the homosexual relationship. The primary distinction made at New Jersey differentiates between the "aggressive" and the "passive" partners, and the former is regarded most tolerantly.

The "wolf" or aggressive, active homosexual almost escapes the stigma of his perversion within the prison walls, for he does still exhibit some of the masculine characteristics of toughness and aggressiveness. He is frequently viewed by the other inmates as merely seeking physical release; he is unmoved by love and is indifferent to the emotions of the

partner he has coerced, bribed or seduced into a liaison.

"Punks" are passive homosexuals who, in the estimation of the inmates, are "made, not born". Because they act from fear or for the sake of quick advantage in the form of payment made for sexual favours granted, they are thought to be weak and soft, physically as well as morally.

"Fags" are passive homosexuals who doubly forfeit their claim to masculinity. They not only become the passive partner in the sexual relationship, but also take on the outward guise of femininity. They may adopt exaggerated feminine mannerisms of speech and carriage, will "feminize" their clothing and grooming as far as possible, and may even use make-up or dye their underclothing. They are subjected to all the scorn and derision to which the homosexual is usually subjected in society. They are believed to be "true" homosexuals who actually prefer homosexual to heterosexual relationships.

Reactions to official oppression. "Ball busters" blatantly disobey the prison officials by means of physical and verbal assault, and continually cause disturbances within the prison. They are often regarded by others as fools, for their actions frequently result only in an increased number of controls being imposed by the guards. "Ball busters" sacrifice the well-being of the entire inmate body for the sake of a childish, emotional outburst.

The "Real man" is admired because he can "take it",

whatever "it" may at the moment be. Aloof and without complaint he is the inmates' version of decorum. His demeanor denies the custodian's power to strip him of his ability to control himself.

Inter-inmate conflict. The "Tough" is quick to quarrel with his fellow prisoners, his assaults flowing from the fact that he feels he has been insulted, rather than from a desire to exploit others. He is characterized by his "touchiness", but is admired to some extent in spite of the disruptive nature of his actions simply because he will not tolerate either real or imagined impositions. He exhibits the masculine characteristics of bravery and aggressiveness, his raw courage compensating for his instability in the eyes of the prison community.

The "Hipster" is also prone to aggressiveness against other inmates, but his toughness is thought to be a facade. He is a bully, but his tendency to erect a false front also extends beyond his simulated bravery. He assumes attitudes, mannerisms and professes interests which are not with him natural. All is done in an effort to be accepted into cliques to which he does not rightfully belong. Although he hopes to gain favour by his simulated interests and capabilities, he is regarded as a phoney and suffers accordingly from a loss of social status.

Cohesive and individualistic adjustments. Aside from the "Real man", the argot roles outlined above depict "individualistic" adjustments to the pains of imprisonment. They

are dysfunctional to the reduction of friction between the inmates. The "cohesive" responses, on the other hand, include social roles which involve loyalty, generosity, sexual restraint, endurance with dignity, and the minimizing of friction between the inmates. The name of "Real man" tends to be employed to cover all of these characteristics.

Sykes has postulated that the greater the extent of "cohesiveness" in the prison the greater the degree to which the society of captives will move in the direction of inmate solidarity and the greater the likelihood that the pains of imprisonment will be rendered less severe for the inmate population as a whole.⁷ A cohesive inmate society provides the prisoners with a meaningful social group which will lend them support in their battles against their condemners.

VI. CRISIS AND EQUILIBRIUM

The focal point of social change within the prison is the transfer of power from the custodians to the inmates. As was previously indicated, the structural weaknesses of power within the prison tend to generate a system of compromise and corruption so that, over a period of time, larger and larger amounts of the custodian's control are whittled away. But sooner or later the custodian will be faced with the necessity of regaining control from the inmates if he is to

⁷Sykes, The Society of Captives, p.107

retain his job. He must either "tighten up" the institution or be subjected to a storm of protests if knowledge of the corruption of his authority becomes public.

It is the cohesively-oriented inmate who receives most of the benefits of any system of corruption, for he is seen by the guards as one who "co-operates", who can be "respected", and who does not cause trouble by exploiting other inmates. He can be counted on to point out the wisdom of "getting along" to the other inmates, reducing much of the difficulty of the guard's job. And it is precisely because the "cohesively-oriented" inmate is then able to distribute these benefits among the other inmates that he is able to maintain much of his influence within the prison.

The cohesively-oriented prisoner, committed to the values of inmate loyalty, generosity, endurance and the curbing of friction does much to maintain the prison's equilibrium. He stands for the value of keeping things quiet. When the custodian feels that he is forced to strip the cohesively-oriented prisoner of his power (by destroying the system of illicit privileges, of preferential treatment, and laxity which increase his influence) the unstable elements in the prison population have an opportunity to capitalize on the tensions of prison life, and rise into dominance. The stage is then set for insurrection and riot.

VII SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS.

The Tasks of the Prison. In summary one could say that Sykes conceives of the prison as a society which is divided into two opposing camps, the captors and the captives. The prison officials are expected to perform several tasks in the course of their duties, some of which require contradictory policies and activities. The tasks of custody and internal control tend, however, to dominate all the others. The remaining tasks of the prison are pursued only to the extent that they can be adapted to the requirements of custody and control.

The Pains of Imprisonment. There are five characteristic pains of imprisonment and these are related to deprivation of liberty, of heterosexual relationships, of goods and services, of autonomy and of security. These deprivations represent attacks on the psychological level and the inmate must find some means of warding them off or rendering them harmless if he is to survive psychologically.

The Argot Roles. Because the pains of imprisonment represent crucial axes of life for the inmates, the social roles which develop as adaptations to these pains are given special argot names. The names graphically define specific patterns of behavior to the inmate society.

In general the inmates can seek to nullify the pains of imprisonment either by developing a solidary, co-operative inmate society, or by seeking their own advantage at the expense of their fellows. The former pattern of adaptation

is that of the "real man". The latter pattern is that of the "rat", the "merchant", the "hipster", the "ball buster" or the "wolf".

The Defects of Total Power. The guards find that their power and authority is very imperfect simply because the inmates do not feel morally obliged to conform to administrative orders. Because the "real man" stands for the value of keeping things quiet and of getting along in the prison, the guard learns to use the "real man" to secure compliance from the inmates. The "real man" becomes a bargaining agent between the custodian and the inmates by lending support to the guard in some areas in exchange for consideration in others. The guard's authority is corrupted for the sake of obtaining inmate compliance.

Crisis and Equilibrium. Social change within the institution is directly related to the flux of power between the inmates and their guards. If the guards strip the cohesively-oriented inmates of their power, the more disruptive elements may take advantage of the social disorganization resulting, and, in the face of increasing mass discontent, surge into power. In the highly charged atmosphere of the prison this change to disruptive, individualistic inmate leadership frequently precipitates a riot. Social change within the prison becomes a fluctuation between crisis and equilibrium in a very dramatic sense.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS AND EXPERIENCES

To afford the reader some perspective it is perhaps important that some comments be made concerning the methods used in gathering the data which will appear on the subsequent pages of this study. Many of the generalized observations made in the study are the result of participant observation. For three years I have been employed at the Women's Unit in the capacity of a matron; during that three year period the actual nature of the duties performed varied considerably. During the first four months of employment much time was spent moving about the institution from one department to another in an attempt to gain an overall picture of its functioning, and to gain some explicit knowledge of procedures and custodial requirements. During this time I worked primarily on the morning shift (7:00a.m. to 3:00p.m.), alternately acting as a substitute school teacher, supervising garbage disposal, floor scrubbing, gardening and the whitewashing of fences, and even became involved in the building of an access road to the lakeside summer camp.

At the end of this first summer I was placed on the afternoon shift (3:00p.m. to 11:00p.m.) to act as a group matron. The first assignment was to a group of Native Indian offenders, each sentenced for a very short period of time. This group was housed in an outside unit, and the relaxed,

free atmosphere was very enjoyable. After approximately six weeks I was assigned to a group of fairly experienced narcotic addicts housed in the upper storey of the main building of the Women's Unit. Initially I was greeted rather skeptically by the group, their first comment being, "What does that front office think it's doing sending a baby like this to Group Three?" They had the reputation of being a rather difficult group, and were somewhat insulted that someone so obviously inexperienced should be assigned as their "steady" group matron. They rose to the occasion by "adopting" their new matron, however, and became almost protective. It was with a real feeling of regret that I left this group to become the relief matron for two groups of younger first offenders.

Approximately sixteen months after coming into this setting I was transferred into the Classification Department, and I have remained in that department until the present time, barring two leaves of absence granted for educational purposes. As part of the duties connected with the Classification Department a matron must interview the new admissions for the dual purpose of obtaining a fairly accurate social history, and of helping to resolve any major problems of the inmate which may require immediate attention. This assignment afforded an opportunity to become familiar with the personal files of each of the inmates held at the Women's Unit during the past eighteen months. Formal

interviews and countless casual conversations have been held during the entire three years, and it is from these encounters that much of the information concerning the social structure of the prison inmates has been gleaned.

All of the institutional records and documents were made readily available, and it is from these sources that the statistical data has been derived. In addition, The Manual¹ (which has been written by the Chief Matron for the use of all staff) has proved to be a valuable source of information, particularly when an expression of the official point of view was needed. Excerpts from this source have been used in the body of the study and also appear in an appendix.

Information concerning matrons as an occupational group was gathered through informal conversations and discussions with various staff members over the three year period of employment, and from a series of ten individual interviews. The matrons chosen to be interviewed were purposefully selected from the total population of sixty-five. This sample included so far as was possible, a representative cross section of personal backgrounds of the matrons according to age, length of service, previous training, and education. All matrons consented to be interviewed before definite arrangements

¹Information found in The Manual is neither dated nor are the pages numbered. It is a looseleaf folder to which frequent additions and deletions are made as policies and routines change. The excerpts quoted in this study comprise the more stable entries. Since information is not dated nor pages of the entries numbered no footnote references will be made in future when The Manual is mentioned.

were made, and were given to understand that their participation in the project was to be strictly voluntary. I am deeply indebted to these women for their co-operation and for so generously contributing of their free time.

The interviews were of a semi-structured nature, lasting an average of one and a quarter hours each. Eight of the ten interviews were held during off-duty hours, either in the home of the subject or in my own home. The remaining two interviews were conducted in the Women's Unit premises, but during off-duty hours and were conducted uninterrupted and in privacy. The interviews were tape recorded with the full knowledge and consent of the subjects and were later transcribed. Excerpts from these interviews have been used throughout the chapter dealing with the role of the matron.

One of the more obvious limitations of this study is related to the very fact that I was both an observer and a worker at the Women's Unit. No doubt some of the data obtained in the course of interviews with the matrons was coloured by the fact that the matrons being interviewed were not entirely oblivious to the personal prejudices and pet theories held by myself. And some of the kind remarks made concerning the usefulness and suitability of a university education were probably specifically designed to please and comfort me. Some scientific consolation can perhaps also be taken from the fact that a few very uncomplimentary

remarks were also made, so that in the final analysis the distortion may not have been too great after all.

Most of the data dealing with the ways in which the inmates experience and adjust to imprisonment was gathered during the first leave of absence which I took during the period November 1959 to May 1960. I worked in the Classification Department one day each week throughout this leave of absence so that contact with the general situation at the Women's Unit could be maintained. During this time arrangements were made for me to spend one evening with each of three separate inmate groups and to conduct with each a group discussion. While these arrangements were being made each group was asked if they would have objections to a tape recorder being used. They were told the general purpose of the discussions; that they were being conducted as an attempt at finding out what being in prison was really like, from their point of view. Additionally they were assured that if, following the discussions, there were any parts of these discussions which they would like to have erased from the tapes, this would be done.

Three addict groups were chosen for the group discussions, and all three agreed to take part. The reasons for choosing three addict groups are primarily two: First, the addict groups seem to be the major "culture bearers" in this prison, and secondly, the problems of communication involved with the Native Indian groups are such that group discussion

would not be too fruitful. Many of the Native Indian women do not speak English with any facility, and tend to become silent and defensive when the conversation extends beyond their grasp of the language. Groups Three, Four and Eight were ultimately chosen because they represented the full age range of the addict groups, Group Eight being the youngest, Group Four the eldest.

Group discussions were thought to be advisable rather than a series of extensive individual interviews or questionnaires, primarily because of the many problems encountered if one inmate is suspected of "informing" on another or on a group in this setting. By discussing the interview questions as a group no such claim could later be laid against any one individual. Any suspicions entertained concerning the type of information to be obtained, or the possible detrimental use to which it could be put could be dispelled within the group as a whole. It was felt that this procedure would actually leave each individual more free to talk about the specific issues raised than would otherwise have been the case.

The interview schedule was of a semi-structured type in which general questions were asked of the group, the ordering of these questions depending to some extent upon the natural flow of the group discussion. Inmate participation within the groups was good and fairly general in each of the three groups, and at times the tape recorder was quite forgotten. Approximately five minutes of lively conversation

was missed in one session because no one, inmate or interviewer, had noticed that the tape had been filled.

Although the inmates were intrigued by the tape-recording process, and were anxious to have their complaints registered for posterity (in the absence of their group matrons), it cannot be forgotten that the interviewer was a member of the staff. As has been stated earlier I was on leave of absence from the institution when the inmate group discussions were held, but was at the same time working in the Women's Unit for one day each week. Although civilian clothes were worn when the group discussions were being held, the official role could not be entirely forgotten by the group members. At one point in the discussion the question asked of one group quite obviously posed too great a threat to the security of the group against the administration, for the reply came from one inmate, "That's all right, you're in civvies tonight, but next Saturday you'll be back in white (uniform) again.

During another of the group discussions the subject of lesbianism was raised, then abruptly dropped by the inmates. After the discussion was completed and the tape recorder had been turned off, one member of the group mentioned that she had wanted to discuss this issue, but that she had been concerned that I might not want such embarrassing information recorded with the remainder of the discussion. When the group was persuaded that such was not the case, the tape recorder was again turned on, and the discussion continued

on this topic for another quarter of an hour.

Each group insisted upon having the entire session played back over the recorder at the completion of the discussion, and seemed well pleased with the content. The three discussions ranged in length from one hour to one hour and a half. The groups all but demanded that these tapes of their discussions remain intact, with neither deletions nor additions being permitted. The recordings were later transcribed in full, and such inmate quotations as have been used in the body of this study have been taken verbatim from these transcriptions of the original tape recordings.

The co-operation, interest and support shown by both the inmates and the staff throughout the gathering of this information could not have been more generous, and the methodological limitations of this study cannot claim excuse in this regard.

A glossary of the argot used in this study appears in an appendix. It was felt that this practice would prove more satisfactory to the reader than would the insertion of footnotes or contextual explanations, particularly since some of the argot expressions are used repeatedly. The accuracy of the definitions given has been verified, so far as possible, by both staff and inmates of the Women's Unit.

CHAPTER IV

THE WOMEN'S UNIT AND ITS SETTING

Geographically Oakalla Prison Farm is located on what could probably have been one of the most choice pieces of real estate in the Greater Vancouver area. Situated on the side of a long hill, it commands a panoramic view of Deer Lake (on which the prison property borders), of the municipality of Burnaby and much of Vancouver, and the mountains of the coast range beyond. Much of the effect of this view is negated for the Women's Unit, however, by the presence of the older, sprawling quarters of the men in the immediate foreground. The Main Gaol of the Men's Unit is the most imposing and also one of the oldest buildings on the prison grounds. Constructed of dull brown brick and frankly displaying steel bars on each cell window it affords a depressing reminder of the traditional functions of the prison - strict custody of those whom society has found it necessary to eject.

Presenting some considerable contrast to the austerity of the Main Gaol, the main building of the Women's Unit boasts a camouflage of pink and beige paint over a solid concrete and steel structure. Surrounding this building are six smaller wood-frame buildings variously referred to as a Panabode, Huts and Cottages depending upon the details of their architecture. Some attempt has been made to screen the Women's Unit from the rest of the prison by the use of wooden fences and strategically located trees and foliage.

This has been done for the dual purpose of making the grounds as aesthetically pleasing as possible, and of discouraging communication between the men and the women by means of "window writing".

To enter the main building of the Women's Unit a visitor or employee must pass through the gatehouse at the entrance to the prison grounds, walk past the Main Gaol of the men's section on the left, turn up a short driveway to the right, ring the doorbell of the main building, then wait until someone from within unlocks the heavy wooden door. During the hot summer months these doors are usually left open, but ornamental wrought iron outer doors are locked in their stead. The administrative offices and visiting rooms are directly inside this entrance in a short wing which is generally referred to collectively as the "front office". Inmates either entering or leaving the institution use the basement entrance of this same wing. The records and admitting departments are directly inside the basement entrance to the Main Building.

At right angles to the "front office" is a long two storey wing. The ground level houses a long corridor on either side of which open the kitchen and main dining area, the clinic, a dayroom area and thirteen cells. The small Classification office is located half way down this corridor, next door to the dayroom. One cell at the end of the corridor has been converted into a lecture room for the Home Nursing Class, and contains some equipment for demonstration and instruction.

The cells are small rooms which have been painted in various pastel colours. Two of the rooms in this section can accommodate as many as six inmates at one time, but the majority are used as either single or double rooms. Each room has a large security-type window which consists of numerous small, steel-framed window panes. Two rooms on this lower corridor have bars outside of the windows as well, and are reserved for those inmates who are awaiting transfer to the Women's Penitentiary at Kingston, Ontario. The extra security measures are considered to be necessary for these inmates as their sentences are longer than those of the remainder of the inmate population. There is a bunk bed, one or two chairs, a bedside table, sink, toilet and mirror in each room, with the additional touches of a bright bedspread, curtains on the windows, doilies, pictures and other nicknacks. A wooden door with a small glass porthole separates each room from the corridor. The Doors must either be kept locked or open, as there are no latches which can be operated from the inside of the cells. The light switch for each room is located outside the room in a small locked switch box.

The upper storey to this wing has a small beauty parlour, a sewing and occupational therapy room, a factory sewing room, and two dayrooms. There are fourteen cells on this level which are identical to those on the main floor.

The security cells, laundry, gymnasium and two living units are located in a three storey block at the end of this long wing of the main building. The ten security cells are

in the basement of this wing, and while they are similar in size and general design to those described above, they are much more austere. The concrete walls are painted a non-descript buff colour, there are no curtains, pictures, mirrors or nicknacks, and the bedspreads are plain, hospital issue white. The sink and toilet are of special steel construction so they cannot be damaged, and the door to each cell is reinforced with a sheet of steel on the inside.

The laundry is also in the basement of this wing, and has recently been fully equipped with modern appliances which are capable of handling all the laundry needs of the Women's Unit. The gymnasium, which is directly above the laundry, doubles as a chapel on Sundays, serving those of the Catholic faith in the morning and those of the Protestant faith in the afternoon.

The two living units in this area are on the second and third storey above the security cells, and are identical in design to one another. There is a small kitchen area at one end of each unit from which meals are served but not prepared. The dayroom is large, with a dining table next to the kitchen and serving counter and a livingroom area at the other end. The windows at the end of the livingroom area are again security style, but are attractively curtained with full length drapes which can be drawn at will. Surrounding the dining and living area are six rooms; three single and three dormitory style. Each of these units can house as many as fourteen women, but an attempt is made to restrict the number to ten

if possible.

While the inmates are in these living units, the door leading into each is kept locked. Within the units, however, the individual room doors are left unlocked. After "lockup" at night the individual room doors are all locked, but the unit door is left open so that the matrons will be able to hear if anyone calls or knocks for attention during the night.

Forming a semi-circle around the front of the main building are four wood-frame buildings known as huts. Three of these huts have a kitchen and bathroom plus a combination dayroom-dormitory area with bunk beds lining the walls. The maximum capacity for each hut is ten. The inmates make their own breakfast and supper in these huts, but are provided with their dinner from the main kitchen. Security in these units is minimal in that the outside door is locked only at night, allowing the occupants freedom to either stay inside the hut or move outside on to the lawn as they please. The fourth hut is similar in general design to the other three, but is used as a school for the Women's Unit, desks and typewriters being substituted for bunk beds and tables.

The two cottages adjoin a central office area from which the activities in either dormitory may be observed. This, too, is a wood-frame building, but is of a medium security type. The doors are kept locked most of the time, and the windows are similar to those in the main building. Each of the two cottages contains a large, very modern kitchen

where all meals can be prepared, and a large day-dormitory area similar to but larger than that found in the huts. They are spacious and bright, and could be operated quite autonomously from the main building if there were sufficient staff members to permit this. Each cottage can accommodate twelve inmates if necessary.

The Panabode is also a wood-frame, medium security unit. It was designed to segregate the more reformable addicts from the rest of the population so that they might take advantage of a concentrated rehabilitation program. The Panabode contains a kitchen in which all meals are prepared, a livingroom and dining area, an activity room, and a dormitory in which each girl has a separate cubicle. These cubicles afford more privacy than do the dormitory arrangements in the huts and the cottages, but less privacy than the rooms of the main building. The outside door is normally kept locked to this unit, although the panabode members may use the lawn in front of their building under the supervision of their matron. The maximum capacity of this unit is ten.

I. POPULATION OF THE WOMEN'S UNIT

Because the Women's Unit at Oakalla Prison Farm is the only institution in British Columbia for adult female offenders, the population of the institution is extremely varied in nature. Ages range from sixteen to seventy years, sentences range in length from three days to two years less one day. All women receiving sentences of two years or more automatically come

under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government and are transferred to the Women's Penitentiary in Kingston, Ontario. But these women, like those who are awaiting trial, are held in custody at the Women's Unit at Oakalla until proper disposition of their cases is completed. Inmates are drawn from every type of social setting existing within the province: small towns, ranches, farms, Indian reservations, cities, and fishing villages. Charges include drug possession, intoxication, theft, forgery, prostitution, abortion and child abandonment, to mention but a few.

The daily population at the Women's Unit fluctuates between 130 and 90, the long range average count being 120. A closer examination of the population on a sample day indicated the following distributions: Of a total count of 104, some 61 women (or 58.65 per cent of the population) classed themselves as narcotic addicts, and 34 (32.73 per cent of the population) considered themselves to be excessive users of alcohol. Seven of these 104 women were eighteen years of age or younger; twenty three were twenty-one years of age or younger. Forty-two women were convicted on charges involving the illegal possession of narcotics, eighteen were convicted on charges involving the illegal use or possession of liquor. Some twenty-seven were of Native Indian extraction. Twenty-five of those in the Women's Unit were there for the first time, while one Native Indian women had accrued a total of 145 previous convictions to Oakalla Prison Farm. The average

length of sentence being served was 7.69 months, both the median and modal sentence lengths were six months. Some twenty individuals were serving sentences of six months on this day.

At any one time, from fifteen to twenty per cent of the population may be expected to be in the Orientation Group because they are waiting trial, waiting transfer to Kingston Penitentiary, are ill, are mentally disturbed, or are being segregated from the rest of the inmate population for disciplinary purposes.

II. BECOMING AN INMATE

On admission each inmate is required to give to the Records Department information concerning her age, address, racial origin, educational level, occupation, marital status, dependents, height, weight, and any identifying marks, tattoos or scars which she may have. She must at the same time relinquish any money, jewelery, legal documents or other items of value which she may have in her possession. These articles are locked in the strong room until the owner is to be released.

The new arrival then proceeds to the Admitting Department where she must strip, bathe and wash her hair under the watchful eye of the Admitting Matron. At this time narcotic addicts are given a choice of either spending ten days in isolation, or taking the "drug routine". The drug routine (or the "treatment" as it is alternately known) is designed to uncover any narcotics

which the addict may have on her person at the time of her admission. It consists of a thorough physical examination, an enema and an emetic. If an addict does "take the treatment" while being admitted she is required to stay in the security cells for a three day period. This additional precautionary measure is considered to be essential since the drug routine is by no means an infallible procedure for discovering concealed narcotics. Narcotics can be swallowed in a rubber container some time prior to admission to Oakalla and may be inaccessible in the digestive tract at the particular time of arrival at the Women's Unit.

All inmates are issued nightgowns, towels and shoes in exchange for their own clothing. Those who are not going to the security cells are also given a green dress, blue jeans and a polo shirt, and are allowed to have combs, toothbrushes and other items from their personal belongings. Tobacco and cigarette papers are also allowed, but tailormade cigarettes are not. All items are thoroughly inspected by the Admitting Matron before the inmate is allowed to take them with her to ensure that nothing is smuggled into the institution which is considered to be contraband. The remainder of the inmate's personal belongings are placed in her "effects" in the admitting room, and locked away until she is ready for release.

If she is to be placed in isolation in the security cells, the inmate will be allowed only night clothing, towels, cigarettes and possibly (but not always) a comb. She is not

allowed to have either matches or a lighter, and although she may smoke as much as she wants, she must wait until a matron is available to "have a light". She must then either chain smoke or await the pleasure of the prison staff. For reasons of security, only staff members are allowed into this area of the institution. No one is specifically stationed in this section, but matrons do make frequent checks, particularly if there is someone undergoing withdrawal from narcotics. The result is that any inmate in the security cells, whether she be there for punishment or because she is a newly admitted addict, must knock on the door of her cell if she wishes to attract the attention of a matron.

Inmates who need not go to the security cells are placed in Group Six, the orientation group which is located on the main floor of the building. Group Six does not have any recreational program and all members are locked in their rooms from 6:30p.m. until breakfast time in the morning. Inmates awaiting trial or transfer to the Kingston Penitentiary for Women may, at the discretion of the Matron in Charge, take part in the work program if they so desire, but they are not required to do this nor do they receive any remuneration for their labours.

Shortly after her admission, usually later in the same day, the new inmate is interviewed and examined by the doctor. In addition to this, her social history is taken and recorded by someone working in the Classification Department. At the

same time the inmate is given a brief description of the rules and regulations of the institution and, in general terms, a description of what will be expected of her while she is in the institution. The interview material is later used by the Classification Team to help determine the group and work placement to which the inmate will be assigned. An attempt is also made during this initial interview to determine any special problems which may require immediate attention, such as informing family of the whereabouts of an individual, finding someone to care for her children, contacting legal counsel and so forth.

Once an inmate has been interviewed, sentenced by the court and declared fit by the physician, she is eligible for "grouping" or classification. Classification refers to both work or team placement and group or living unit placement. In theory these placements are always made by the Classification Team, which includes the Matron in Charge, the Custody Matron, and the Classification Officer, as a minimum. Other matrons should be included if they have special knowledge of the inmate or have a special interest in the case for any reason. In practice these placements are sometimes made by one of the Classification Team members as the result of some pressing need in the institution; either to make room in Group Six for incoming inmates or to fill a group or team which requires additional members. Neither group nor team placements are considered to be sacred or irreversible however, and if a decision has obviously been a poor one, changes can be effected relatively easily. Inmates can also request a

change in group or team placements and if their reasons for requesting a change are considered to be legitimate, such changes can also be made.

111. GROUP PLACEMENTS

Group placement refers to the segregated living units into which the inmates are placed. These living units are physically separated from one another, and are designed to duplicate as nearly as possible the physical conditions and atmosphere of a normal home. A further rationale for the existence of the "Group System" (as this policy of dividing the inmate population up into small living groups has come to be known at the Women's Unit) is that it will facilitate both protection and rehabilitation of the inmates. Because the inmates represent such an heterogeneity of ages, social backgrounds, criminal sophistication and personality disorders, "clustering" of inmates around a few dimensions which the administration feels are significant is felt to be a practical way of alleviating this problem. One of the primary concerns of the institution is with preventing "contamination" of the less criminally disposed by the more criminally oriented while in the institution. There is a disturbing tendency for first offenders, particularly the very young, to begin experimenting with narcotics following release from the Women's Unit. By segregating the population into small groups in which narcotic users and non-narcotic users are rather

rigidly isolated from one another, the administration hopes to curb this tendency to some extent.

Further to this, inmates are segregated roughly according to age and "type" as will be discussed more fully below. The groups roughly represent progressive stages of socialization into the delinquent culture and progressive adoption of the delinquent code. Within the Women's Unit the habitual narcotic offender is considered to represent the ultimate stage in this process of socialization.

There are ten alternative groups into which an inmate may be placed following classification, the actual placement of an individual being dependent upon the length of her sentence, her age, criminal sophistication and the custodial risk which it is felt she may present. Each unit is able to accommodate approximately twelve inmates, but usually contains from eight to ten. The inmates sleep and eat in these units, planning and preparing their own meals in some. From these living units they go out during the day to take part in their work program, returning for lunch and for the afternoon and evening program when the work day is through at 2:30p.m. Most of the afternoon and evening program is designed so that the members of any one living group must function as a group in that program as well, with many activities taking place in their own home units. Members of one group are not allowed to associate with or converse with members of another group during their leisure hours and this aspect of the "Group System"

(or "Grouping and trouping" as the inmates call it) is the object of much derisive comment and the source of much inmate dissatisfaction.

Groups Three and Seven. Groups Three and Seven are housed on the top floor of the main building. The members of Group Three live in the rooms at one end of the long corridor, Group Seven at the other. Each group has its own dayroom which contains a chesterfield and several soft chairs. If the members of either group wish to congregate they must do so in the dayroom where they can be easily observed by the staff. No girl is allowed to go into another girl's room. The members of any group are supposed to stay within their own group, and are not allowed to mix with or talk to members of any other group. The difficulty of enforcing a rule such as this in an area such as the "top hall" where the groups are not physically separated from one another can be readily appreciated.

Group Three contains young addicts, usually in their early twenties, who are considered to be reformable, but who have served a considerable amount of time in various institutions. This group has a reputation of being difficult to "handle", particularly for inexperienced staff. The members enjoy a certain notoriety for being stubborn and bumptious as a group, but will usually concede to the right of the institution to exert control over their activities in the long run. They are considered to be an active group in that they like to take part in sports and recreational programs

and activities more than do some other groups. Group Three has some aspirant inmate leaders and lesbians, and it is not uncommon for this group to undergo extended periods in which a thinly veiled battle for power and leadership prevails between its members.

Group Seven is made up of many old addicts, but addicts who are not influential inmate leaders and who are considered, from the institution's point of view, to be relatively harmless. Some chronic alcoholics with long institutional histories are also placed in Group Seven. Because of the age or poor physical condition of many members, this group is considered to be quite inactive. They prefer quiet, individual activities such as knitting, crocheting or playing cards to sports, dancing, going for walks or other such activities.

Groups Four and Eight. Groups Four and Eight are situated in the living units at the end of the main wing of this building. Group Four has many older addicts who have been in and out of prisons for many years. They are "con wise" in that they know how to conform to institutional rules and regulations and generally "do easy time". Also included in this group are a number of very aggressive lesbians. They are in this unit primarily as a protection for the institution against potentially influential inmate leaders and for the protection of less criminally sophisticated inmates who could quite likely be greatly influenced by these women.

The members of Group Four take an active interest in producing a home-like atmosphere in their quarters, and spend much of their time making doilies, ceramic pieces, copper plaques and small furniture pieces. House plants, goldfish and budgerigar birds also abound. Most inmates in Group Four serve sentences of nine months or more, so the intensity of their attempts to "settle in" comfortably can be sympathetically understood. Still, they are rather contemptuously criticized by both staff and inmates for their apparent contentment with their lives within the institution. They are accused of being "institutionalized", and their group is felt to be very reminiscent of a group of old maids who, in the absence of either husbands or children, seek to justify their existence by their devotion to their homes, plants and pets, perhaps to perpetuate themselves in these articles and things.

Group Eight is made up of young addicts, approximately eighteen to twenty-one years of age who have been convicted on their second or third charge. This is quite an unstable group which experiences many ambivalences and consequently produces many emotional outbursts of one kind or another. These young women have been assigned to this unit both to prevent their further contamination by association with older addicts and to attempt to control their difficult behavior. They are often thought of by the other inmates and by the staff as the "brats" of the institution because of their consistent reaction of rebelliousness in the face of any representations of authority. They rebel on principle, whether it

is to their ultimate strategical advantage to rebel or not.

The Huts. There is little to differentiate one hut from another in so far as the nature of their population is concerned, except, perhaps, the length of sentence being served by the members. The huts are usually populated by Native Indian women who have been charged either with intoxication under the Indian Act, or under the Government Liquor Act itself. These offenders come to gaol repeatedly but seldom receive sentences of more than three months on any one conviction, the most usual sentence being ten days. Many of these women come from rural and outlying districts and do not become involved in the more seriously delinquent activities. They are considered to be a good custodial risk because their sentences are so short, and because of the comparative naivete.

Normally the Native Indian offenders remain aloof from the other inmates within the institution, but those who come from the Vancouver area, and the very young from any district, seem impressed with the addict group, and sometimes become enmeshed in their activities both within and outside the institution. Although they are also placed in the huts, they are scrutinized rather more closely by the institution and are considered to be more easily influenced by the addicts, and more in danger of succumbing to the attractions of narcotic usage.

The Cottages. Cottage D members are usually first offenders. They are usually the lone-wolf type of casual

offenders; cheque writers, abortionists, bootleggers and so forth as a rule. They are usually not acquainted with any other inmates in Oakalla prior to being incarcerated, and serve sentences of from three to six months because of the nature of their charges. Because they have been fairly well socialized to meet the expectations of society, members of this group are more co-operative and manageable than most as a rule. Some Cottage D offenders return on narcotic charges, but normally they are just "one time losers" and are considered to be "Square Johns" in comparison to the rest of the women within the institution.

Cottage E houses young first offenders to Oakalla, but first offenders who have long records of delinquency, usually as juveniles. Many have spent considerable time in the Girls Industrial School, and some are still of juvenile status, but have been transferred to adult court because they are no longer considered to be suitable candidates for a juvenile institution. Typically they have escaped from the juvenile institution innumerable times, and are considered by that institution to be incorrigible. In the course of their many escapes they have become well acquainted with drug addicts in Vancouver, and may have been charged with narcotic possession. They have usually been sentenced to serve six months or more at the Women's Unit either on charge of Escaping Lawful Custody or Possessing Narcotics.

This group is usually volatile and unpredictable in the extreme. They pose a serious threat to custody and

internal control, and are greatly enamoured of the exciting, glamorous life of the narcotic addict. They frequently aspire to membership in the addict group, although many will deny such aspirations and genuinely be fearful of their future. Again, ambivalence and rebellion becomes the keynote of daily activity.

The Panabode. The Panabode contains addicts of mixed ages and with varying lengths of criminal records who are considered to be motivated to change their delinquent way of life and, specifically, to stop using narcotics. They are selected for this placement by a psychiatrist following a self-initiated request for consideration for this placement. Applicants must have a minimum sentence length of six months before they will be considered to be eligible for this placement.

Having requested assistance in avoiding narcotic usage in the future, Panabode members are expected to be co-operative with any program planned by the institution. This group is (in the estimation of the staff) among the best in the institution, but is certainly not above reproach nor wanting in difficulties nonetheless. To avoid scorn and derision from other inmates in the institution these girls find that they must maintain their inmate loyalty, yet somehow reconcile this loyalty with their desire for assistance from the staff. Members of this group are in a normative dilemma because they wish to move out of the delinquent factions of society and into the legitimate factions. This is the obverse of the

dilemma encountered by first offenders and aspirant narcotic addicts.

The above description of inmate "types" in each of the ten groups represents the ideal allocation of inmates. It is difficult, of course, to sort out individuals into pre-conceived categories, and frequently the decision to place a particular inmate in one group rather than another is quite arbitrary, for she may not conform to any one particular stereotype more than another. The inmates are sometimes deliberately placed in an unlikely group if the administration feels an individual should be "cooled down", or if a group needs to be given the benefit of a more stable inmate to counteract the effect of the majority of its members. Very troublesome, active inmates may then be deliberately placed in a much older, settled addict group or in one of the huts where their influence on the other group members will be negligible, and where they may be forced (by the sheer inertia of the rest of the group) to abandon their reckless pace in favour of a more subdued demeanor in relation to arising situations. Similarly, a fairly mature "square john" offender may find to her dismay that she is a member of a very young, rebellious group where (it is hoped) her relative maturity may have an edifying effect upon the rest of the group members.

IV. WORK TEAMS

There are nine teams or work placements possible at the Women's Unit, and the members of any one work team could conceivably be drawn from any or all of the ten living groups. The inmates are placed on a specific team after their interests and aptitudes have been considered along with their length of sentence, physical health, attitude and ability to fit into a given team and the custodial risk which they are believed to present.

Maintenance. The Maintenance team takes care of all cleaning and scrubbing within the main building. Hall floors are scrubbed and polished twice daily, and are waxed twice a week. Windows are cleaned, brass door knobs are polished and walls are washed down at regular intervals. All new inmates who are physically able to do this type of work are placed "on maintenance" (pronounced locally as "Maintainance") for a few days until they can be more closely assessed by the institution with regard to their work habits, their attitude, their ability to follow instructions and their general aptitude. Addicts spend one or two weeks on maintenance as soon as they are able to work, as it is felt that this type of hard physical activity helps to build up their bodies most quickly following the rigours of drug usage and withdrawal. Inmates with sentences of one month or less frequently remain on the maintenance team throughout their sentence. In this way, some habitual short term offenders spend most of their time

in prison working on maintenance.

Sewing and Mending. The Sewing and Mending team does all the mending from the Men's Gaol. Many of the older women are placed on this team as the work is not strenuous. Some instruction is given by the staff on the usage of sewing machines, but most of the work consists of darning socks and is considered to be useful primarily as a productive rather than an instructive department.

Physically incapacitated inmates or inmates waiting to be transferred to the Penitentiary, or who are going through a long waiting trial period are frequently placed in the Occupational Therapy department because it affords a maximum degree of custodial supervision and is also more interesting for the inmate. Instruction is given in knitting, weaving, crocheting, leathercraft, copperwork and embroidery. The products are sold by the institution to visitors or members of the staff. Any profits earned are used to buy more materials for the department. An emphasis is placed upon the quality of work done rather than the amount produced.

Carpentry. The only team run by a male staff member is the Carpentry Crew. This work team constructs everything from furniture to shops and cabins. Team members are instructed in the use of power tools, but their primary function is as a construction crew. There are usually eight or less on this team, all of whom have voiced a preference for this placement and who are known to be willing and hard

workers. As they are outdoors a good deal of the time, have something concrete to show for their efforts and are able to work with the only male member of the staff there is keen competition between the inmates to be given this work placement. Recently there has been an added attraction for work placement as the Carpentry crew has been working on a farm project near Haney, B.C., which is known as Twin Maples. The entire crew stays at Twin Maples Farm for a week at a time tearing down the old farm buildings and constructing dormitories in their stead.

These crew members enjoy considerably more personal freedom than any other of the work teams, partly because they are removed from the main institution most of the time and are, therefore, more easily supervised, and partly also as a form of reward for their hard and conscientious work performance. The inmates are expected to assume more responsibility for their own good behavior on the understanding that any serious infractions may jeopardize the whole Twin Maples project, and also on the understanding that they personally would most certainly be dropped from this work placement. The physical attractiveness of the Twin Maples location and the promise of a greatly reduced "institutional" atmosphere are usually sufficient to motivate conformity to the high work and behavioral expectation surrounding this work placement.

The Kitchen. In the kitchen the emphasis is of necessity placed upon production, inmates being selected for

this placement either because of their general high level of productivity or because they are thought to be lazy and in need of a placement which makes great demands upon them. There is some opportunity to earn promotions within the kitchen, and some instruction is given concerning diet and nutritional food preparation, but as was mentioned previously, the primary emphasis is upon production.

The Laundry. Since the laundry is in the basement of the new wing of the main building at the Women's Unit, it is completely isolated from the rest of the building. As a consequence many group four members are placed in the laundry to work as an additional means of segregating them from the general inmate population. The laundry is equipped with modern laundry equipment so that there is an opportunity to gain useful experience which could be used for future employment ventures. All of the laundry of the Women's Unit is done in this department.

The Beauty Parlour. The beauty parlour operates as a vocational training school in which the students are trained by a qualified instructrice and take their examinations quite anonymously along with other hairdressing candidates in the community. To complete the course inmates must be serving sentences of six months or more, although some students are placed in this department with the understanding that they will try to complete their courses in a regular hairdressing school following release from the Women's Unit. The students

practise the various processes and techniques of their trade on one another and on inmates from other work departments according to a weekly schedule. Each work department is given a specific day of the week on which one inmate from that department can receive free hairdressing services including a shampoo, haircut, set and a manicure. Matrons who are off duty frequently avail themselves of the services of the hairdressing department, paying for any materials used and a nominal fee for the work done by the inmates. Money thus earned by the department is used to buy up-to-date equipment and materials and to equip students who are writing examinations.

High standards of excellence are demanded and achieved by the students in this department. Students usually do well in their examinations and are considered to be a credit to the institution when they are taken out to special hairdressing conventions and demonstrations from time to time.

Power Sewing. The power sewing or factory sewing department requires students with some manipulative skills and with at least a limited ability to follow instructions. The students are taught factory cutting and sewing techniques, making institution dresses, blue jeans and pyjamas in the process. Quality rather than production is again emphasized by the instructrice. There are no examinations given for the power sewing course, but students are credited with their hours of training when they leave, and are usually able to find employment with garment manufacturers in the Greater

Vancouver area. This department can accommodate six students at any one time.

Home Nursing. A course in home nursing is given to a group of five or more students at a time. At the conclusion of the course examinations are written and certificates are issued to the successful candidates. As part of their duties the members of this team assist in looking after sick inmates, and generally provide assistance to the clinic staff. It has been the practice of this department to take a certain number of instalment students - students who come to gaol repeatedly for short periods of time. On re-entering the institution they carry on with their home nursing course where they left off at the expiration of their previous sentence.

The School. The school, which is located in the fourth hut outside the Main Building, provides an opportunity for inmates to improve their academic standing by taking correspondence courses. Inmates enrol in typing, shorthand and other commercial subjects, as well as the traditional academic courses such as mathematics and English. The school can accommodate approximately ten students at any one time, and many inmates are anxious to take advantage of both the academic and more practical training offered. Some students attend school on a full time basis but many go to school for only half a day, working in some other department for the remainder of the day.

There is a great deal of controversy within the Women's

Unit as to the advisability of having work teams whose members are selected from many different living groups. Many feel that to allow mixing during the working hours completely negates any of the positive features of the "Group System" after the working day is finished. Others feel that supervision is sufficiently stringent during working hours to prevent "contamination" of any type taking place between the inmates. The fact remains, however, that this rather contradictory policy does make necessary the expenditure of considerable time and effort justifying these apparent anomalies in the policy of the institution both to the inmates and the staff.

CHAPTER V

THE ROLE OF THE MATRON

Following the frame of reference derived by Gresham Sykes, the formal requirements (or tasks) of the Women's Unit bear some investigation, for it is within this framework that the matron must play her role and the inmates must live.¹ As it is the matron who must actually perform the many tasks allotted to the prison, and it is she who must enforce the custodial regime of the institution, an attempt will be made to examine the role of the matron more closely to see how matrons actually function and prefer to function within the limitations and demands of these formal requirements. It is hoped that an investigation of the unique characteristics of this occupational role will afford some increased understanding of the general nature of the social order of the Women's Unit.

I. THE REGIME OF THE MATRONS

Initially the Women's Unit is expected to retain in custody those individuals who have been committed to its care, and this responsibility is quite definitely given precedence in the structure and functioning of the institution. The maxim "custody comes first, but treatment is most important" has been coined by the Warden, and it is evident that custody does come first. The possibility of simultaneously

¹Gresham M. Sykes, The Society of Captives, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1958, pp.18-38.

satisfying both these wishes will be discussed at greater length below. Logically this philosophy is perhaps impossibly ambiguous and contradictory, but it has provided a much needed unifying dogma for the diverse activities and interests existing within the institution.

Custody and Control. Within the Women's Unit there are no firearms or other instruments which could be used to coerce the inmates into remaining in the gaol, but there is an abundance of locks, keys and regulations, and armed male guards are very much in evidence as they maintain their posts on the perimeter of the gaol grounds. These guards are charged with the responsibility of preventing escapes of both the men and the women of the institution, and have presumably been given orders to shoot if they observe anyone making an escape attempt. The question of whether they would actually shoot at a woman attempting to escape remains an open one to date and is discussed at some length by the women from time to time. But the possibility of such action has never been completely refuted in these debates. All of the attempted and accomplished escapes of women prisoners within the past two and a half years have failed to stir the guards to fire any shots, but this could quite easily be because they actually did not observe the attempts.

Although the presence of armed guards may serve as a slight deterrent to any women who may be contemplating escape from the institution the staff of the Women's Unit

do not feel they can be completely dependent upon such measures. The custodial requirements of the Women's Unit are further ensured by vigilant enforcement of rules and regulations concerning inmate behavior, routine movements, and general security measures. These requirements are imparted to each new staff member, both verbally and by means of a manual. As has been explained above The Manual is a typewritten loose-leaf document which remains in the main office of the Women's Unit. It has been prepared by the Chief Matron and is subject to periodic additions and revisions. It is known as The Manual at the Women's Unit and will be referred to as such in this study. Among the custodial prescriptions which it contains are directives to the effect that doors and cupboards must never be left unlocked; a careful check must be kept on all tools. Materials which could be dangerous to either matrons or other inmates if malevolently employed must always be kept under lock and key, to be dispensed only at the matron's discretion.

The inmates are counted at several specified times during each eight hour shift, and staff members are required to take their turn in performing this duty, regardless of their specific job within the institution. Matrons "take the count" at 6:30a.m. (just before the shift is changed), at 11:30a.m. (noon count), at 2:30p.m. (shift change), 4:45p.m. (dinner count), 8:30p.m. and 10:30p.m. for shift change again. When taking the count, not only must each inmate be accounted

for, but locks and doors must be checked throughout the unit.

Once the count has been checked it becomes the responsibility of each matron on duty to know at all times where all the members of her inmate group are, what they are doing and, ideally, the topic of any conversations which they may be having. The justification for this latter expectation is that it is felt to be important to keep strict control of and have an awareness of inmate plots, intrigues and gossip as far as is possible so that appropriate precautions can be taken by the staff to keep inmate discontent and internal stress to a minimum. Censorship of conversation presumably limits the amount of inmate unrest by discouraging "street talk" as well. Conversations concerning the procurement and usage of narcotics are thought to be particularly harmful, for they tend to make the addicts "feel yenny". Concern for contamination or corruption of the criminally less sophisticated also prompts censorship of even casual conversation between the inmates. The manual also cautions that care must be taken to prevent the writing or passing of messages between the female inmates or between the male and female inmates, for such messages could contain pertinent custodial information. Messages can be transmitted either in written form as notes or "kites", or can be transmitted by window writing - the flashing of signals from one area to another by the use of a lighter or a flashlight.

Overt attempts at escape are not the only threats

to good custody. Equally rigorous attention is paid to maintaining law and order within the gaol. Multitudinous rules and regulations exist which are designed to prevent the inmates from "getting out of hand" by one means or another, and contraband is thought to play a significant role in this respect. Contraband is listed as such because it may be helpful in completing an escape plan, or because it's existence in small quantities is seen as a source of potential conflict and competition among the inmates. Money, tailor-made cigarettes, chewing gum, writing paper and, most important, narcotic drugs of any description, are all strictly forbidden. When there is any reason to suspect that such a commodity has penetrated into the institution extensive searches and inmate "frisks" will be the order of the day.

Because it is felt that staff members might be easily fooled by the inmates or persuaded to bring questionable commodities into the Women's Unit, strict rules are applied which make it necessary to obtain permission to bring any items into the inmates. It is similarly directly against the rules and regulations for any staff member to make a phone call for a girl or otherwise make a contact in the outside world for her without first having obtained permission to do this from the Chief Matron. The degree of concern felt in this regard is evident in the following excerpt from The Manual:

Never mail a letter or a card for a girl. No matter how innocent it may seem, this is a very foolish thing to do and it could very easily cost you your job ... It is also against the rules for you to pass anything to or receive anything from the men. This includes passing to and from a guard. If a guard is foolish enough to accept something from one of the men and pass it to you, refuse to accept it ... Never meet a girl on the outside and bring anything into the building for her. They can make up plausible stories, but never do this.

This regulation is considered to be of particular importance at the Oakalla Women's Unit because of the large proportion of narcotic addicts in the inmate population. The control of contraband becomes especially important, resulting in the distinct feeling that there is a continuous battle of wits between inmates and staff concerning the concealment and discovery of narcotics.

According to The Manual there should be a difference between the morning shift and the afternoon shift, such that the afternoon shift be not as rigid as the training (morning) shift, and that the atmosphere should be more relaxed and friendly during the afternoon program. There are, however, certain rules and regulations which the matron is told the girls must follow, and the matron is assured that she is not doing the girls any favour by not enforcing these regulations consistently. According to The Manual, if the rules are not enforced consistently the inmates will feel unsure of their ground and tension will be created. The following excerpt from The Manual outlines those aspects of the prison policy

which must be adhered to at all times and on all shifts:

Kites and the kite-line are absolutely illegal (as is any form of communication between the women and the men). A group leader should never condone kiting and should refrain from talking about kites or joking about the kite-line or the girls' kite-line romances because this tends to make the girls believe that you do condone it or at least do not think it is a serious thing. Kites are illegal and must be taken away from any girl caught writing one. This is a must at all times. Kiting is in some cases nothing more than an idle passtime carried on for want of something better to do and also because it is illegal. However, in some cases it is a very bad thing for a girl to get mixed up with some "character" down below because she may meet him on the outside and consequently get into further trouble. One situation of this sort is serious enough to warrant a constant lookout for kites and picking them up at every opportunity. If a girl will not give up a kite, order her to do so and if she still refuses she is disobeying a matron's orders and this must be reported to the Matron in Charge of the shift. Never wrestle with a girl over a kite or kites.

All girls must be kept away from the windows at all times. You can order any girl away from any window. Nothing looks worse than all the girls lined up at the outside windows smiling and signing to the men on the field. The girls are supposed to be kept busy and are not supposed to have time for such idle passtimes. It does not matter whether they are actually signing to the men or not - they are not supposed to be at the windows. If a girl has nothing better to do find her something to do - have her sweep the hall or even scrub it, and so on.² Any girl who is actually caught window-writing is to be reported to the matron in charge of the shift.

Any communication between the women and the men is strictly against regulations. The girls cannot talk to the men, sign to the men, or

²This statement is in contradiction to another in these directives to the effect that, "No job should be just an excuse to keep someone busy".

even stand or sit and watch while a man signs to her. She is outside for a reason (watching a game, etc.) and should be doing this. If you have a group outside and one of them breaks this rule, don't even check her more than once - but bring the whole group in. If you do this for a while, the group will know you mean what you say and will behave better for it.

A girl is not allowed to swear in this institution. Always reprimand a girl for swearing even if it's just a "damn". If a girl actually curses at you, she can be crimed for doing so. However, you must remember that this institution, its rules and regulations are very frustrating to the inmates. If this frustration reaches a certain point, the girl will "blow her top". If you happen to be the authority who is enforcing the rules, she will naturally "blow" at you. She is not cursing you as a person, but rather the authority you represent. You must keep this in mind in such a situation. This is not necessarily the case. A girl may deliberately curse you knowing full well she shouldn't. It is up to you to judge the situation for yourself. If a girl "blows her top" at you in front of other girls, it is usually a wise thing to report it merely as a preventative measure - a girl must be taught not to blow up at every little frustration.

This is a serious thing in this setting and should never be considered a game. A girl who hides must be severely reprimanded and the seriousness of the situation should be fully explained to her.

Even given these instructions the onus for interpretation of a situation is still placed primarily on the matron's shoulders.

The Matron in Charge of Custody. Responsibility for the deportment and safekeeping of the inmates in her charge becomes a significant part of each matron's duties in spite of the fact that for each shift one matron is

assigned to be in charge of custody.

Although custody is ultimately her responsibility, the entire staff is also expected to be concerned with custody and to handle difficulties on their own level so far as possible. The Custody Matron does operate as a "trouble-shooter" in the institution if the matron immediately involved cannot cope with a situation or if punishment or restrictions must be imposed upon an inmate, but her duties are primarily to supervise the entire program on her shift. She becomes the co-ordinator of movement and activities, arranges for escorts for those inmates who must leave the grounds for any reason, oversees the distribution of inmates to the various work departments or of the inmate groups to the various recreational facilities available on the afternoon program. As an experienced member of the staff her duties also include planning for the individual rehabilitation programs of the inmates and she is very much involved in the classification process. She is expected to have an understanding of the dynamics of interpersonal relationships within the institution and to assist in determining the most "healthy" group placement and work placement for each inmate.

The Task of Self-Maintenance. It is now quite generally accepted that penal institutions should be as self-sufficient and self-supporting as possible providing they do not compete economically with commercial products or

services produced on the open market. Increasingly each prison is expected to become a self-contained community within a community with differentiated departments which will provide all the necessities of life for its members. The Women's Building is no exception in this regard and in an attempt to meet this expectation the inmates are utilized as a self-sustaining labour force, preparing and serving their own meals, sewing, laundering and mending their own clothing, and keeping their own living quarters clean and tidy. There does not seem to be any expectation that the Women's Unit make a profit in any of its work projects but there is this expectation in the Men's Unit. For each work assignment there must be at least one staff member to supervise the inmates actually doing the work. They must see that the work gets done, and also that the work is distributed fairly between the members of the work crew.

It could be argued that this arrangement is economically quite unsound, for there is a duplication of functions which could just as adequately be provided for from the Men's Unit - one kitchen could serve the entire population of Oakalla, as could one laundry and one tailor shop. Thus the work force available at the Women's Unit could be free to produce some specialized commodity for use in all government institutions. This, however, would fail to recognize the many peculiar problems faced by the juxtaposition of male and female prisons within a few hundred

yards of one another and would additionally fail to reconcile the problems of the peculiar population composition of the Oakalla Women's Unit. Many inmates are serving extremely short sentences, or are merely in the gaol while awaiting trial. These women must be given some work to keep them from becoming bored and dissatisfied, yet they could not be readily absorbed into a production department because of the necessity of giving them some training in such a situation. The maintenance or housekeeping duties of the institution are usually taken care of by the new arrivals to the institution, both sentenced and unsentenced, as the work does not require any particular skill or specialized staff supervision. Many inmates choose to work rather than to remain in their cells during working hours, although working is defined as a "privilege" for those who are not sentenced to serve their term at Oakalla Prison Farm. Until very recently such inmates were given no financial reimbursement for their labour unless sentenced to Oakalla.

From the point of view of custody and internal control it makes good sense to keep the Women's Unit as autonomous from the Men's Unit as possible. The more frequently food, laundry or clothing must be handled by both male and female inmates, the more opportunities arise for "kites" to be "planted" and "kite-lines" to operate efficiently, and additionally the more frequently opportunities will arise for the circulation of contraband. By reducing the necessity

for contact between the two units the possibility of regular lines of communication developing is greatly reduced.

Although the Women's Unit is becoming increasingly autonomous in its operation there are still several ways in which it remains dependent upon the facilities of the Main Gaol. The women must still go "down the hill" to have x-rays taken, to be photographed and fingerprinted, and to attend dental and optometric clinics. Electricians and plumbers are frequently called to the Women's Unit, kitchen supplies must be delivered to the women's kitchen from the main kitchen, and garbage is collected and disposed of by the men. The inmates undoubtedly utilize these few opportunities for making contact, but whereas now it is not unusual to find one or two "kites" in one week, kites were formerly found by the bagfull every few days. Pillowcases were stuffed with kites and forwarded between the two units along with the daily laundry which was taken to the Men's Unit for laundering.

The difficulties of preventing contact and the communication of messages is recognized by both officers and matrons, and frequently the officers are reluctant to bring a crew of male inmates to the Women's Unit because they feel their men get into trouble while around the women. If the male inmates do not initiate communication with the women the women will frequently take matters into their own hands and make overtures to the men. It is not unusual to hear

personnel from the Men's Unit at all levels of authority refer to the Women's Unit as being "good only for its nuisance value".

The work program at the Women's Unit is divided into two main sections; those departments which are concerned with the self-maintenance of the institution and those which are primarily concerned with vocational or academic training of the inmates. The inmate pay scale for both types of work placement is the same; from ten to thirty cents (in ten cent gradations), the actual rate of pay depending upon the individual's general conduct in the department and performance on the job.

Whether a matron is in charge of a vocational training department or a production department, she is expected to utilize the work program in a "therapeutic" manner. It is the belief of the administration that constructive employment within the institution will teach the inmate useful trades and habits of industry. Many inmates have long histories of unsatisfactory employment in which they were unable or unwilling to stay with any one job for more than a few weeks or months. It is generally agreed that if the inmate continues in such an erratic pattern after she is released from the prison she will return to criminal activity almost inevitably. If the institution is able to assign the inmate to a type of work which she finds enjoyable and at which she can become reasonably proficient it is believed that she

will not only prove useful to the institution in that placement but will gain useful knowledge and profit from a meaningful work experience as well.

If the individual inmate does not particularly wish to learn a skill or trade within the institution or if the length of her sentence or the resources of the institution are insufficient for these purposes, it is believed that she can at least develop new attitudes toward work if the institution's work program is skilfully planned and skilfully executed by each matron. Work must, therefore, be "meaningful" so that the inmate can derive some sense of satisfaction and achievement, and can appreciate the rewards which work can have in itself. The Manual describes the matron's responsibilities with regard to the work program of the institution as follows:

During working hours:

1. Keep constant supervision of your team, they are not to leave their departments.
2. You are responsible for the custody and conduct of your team without too obvious policing.
3. Study your team duties, give each job a name, make up clear and concise rules for each job. Make a time schedule for each job.
4. See that your department teaches good working habits and when possible give the inmate a vocational training.
5. You teach team members to work in such a way that their services would be acceptable in business and industry.
6. No job should be just an excuse to keep someone busy.
7. Jobs should be realistic, creative and give each worker a sense of achievement.

8. Your best method of teaching is by example. Morals, habits, principles, are not taught by logic - they are absorbed from the environment. The care you take in dress and grooming out of respect to your profession, the interest and initiative you show on the job, the conscientiousness you display, and the pride you take in a job well done are all important lessons. You can be sure that you are under close scrutiny by the inmates and your every action and attitude are weighed and judged by them.
9. Do NOT over-staff to supply extra jobs.
10. The product of your department should meet with standards of the "outside".
11. You will keep all equipment in your department in good repair.
12. You will acquaint yourself with the latest method of operating your type of department.

The matron is required to demand high standards of work performance from the inmates under her supervision, not only so that the institution may run smoothly, but to provide the inmates with a feeling of self-worth through recognition of the fact that they are able to do a good job. Some credence is also given to the belief that for an inmate to compete successfully with other applicants for employment following release she must have higher than average work standards to compensate for the fact that she has a gaol record.

Even within the vocational training program there is considerable emphasis upon the value of learning and hard work per se, whether the particular vocation under study will be utilized for employment by the individual later or not. Emphasis is again placed upon good work habits and the development of self-respect. This emphasis may be

essential to counteract staff disillusionment in the usefulness of a vocational program within the Women's Unit. The number of women who have actually utilized their training following release has been found to be rather meagre in relation to the numbers who have been exposed to the program. Although the reasons for this lack of utilization of institutional training may be quite unrelated to the adequacy of the training received, there must still apparently be some justification made for persistence with the program.

It has frequently been noted by visitors to the institution that there is an exceptionally high level of work performance among the women inmates at Oakalla Prison Farm. One explanation for this phenomenon in a setting which is historically notorious for slovenly work habits and low levels of achievement is the rapport which exists between the inmates and the staff. Inmates do live up to the expectations of the staff, and do take a personal pride in their work frequently. The favourable staff-inmate ratio probably has some bearing upon this factor, for the matron is able to know and understand each member of her crew, and to form a personal relationship of some sort with each. The inmates maintain some sense of identity in this situation and find the opinion of the staff member supervising them does make a difference. It is difficult to remain indifferent toward one member of a small group consistently, even if that one member is arbitrarily defined as being in many respects

different from the majority of the group members. Inmates frequently work hard because they like their matrons and want to please them.

The Task of Punishment. It is the general philosophy of the institution that those who are sentenced to a term within its confines should not be punished in addition to the punishment which a loss of freedom entails. The matron is enjoined to be accepting in relation to the inmates, and to refrain from lecturing them or otherwise showing repugnance for the particular behavior which has resulted in their incarceration. The inmates are perceived as having "problems" and it is presumably up to the matron to in some way assist the inmate in resolving or coming to grips with these problems.

The actual disciplinary measures available to a matron include everything from reprimands to a loss of "days". Inmates can be locked in their own rooms for one evening or for a few hours, or they can be removed to the security cells until such time as the disciplining matron and the chief matron think a change in the inmate's attitude warrants a return to her group and work team. As one would expect, the more stubborn, proud inmates spend the longest times in the security cells because they are unwilling to appear contrite for their misdemeanors.

Since the group system was established there has also been an attempt at insuring group conformity by punishing the entire group if one member steps out of line. In actual

practice, however, there is little consistency in the application of this policy. In some instances an individual will be punished, in others the group as a whole will lose some privilege such as going to a concert or listening to the radio. Group punishment is most frequently inflicted when members of the group are discovered "kiting" either to the men or to others within the Women's Unit.

Misbehavior which is felt to be more serious, such as insubordination, concealing contraband, being under the influence of narcotics or whatever can result in an inmate being "crimed". When her name has been placed "on the crime sheet" an inmate thus charged must appear in Warden's Court where the probability is that, if found guilty, (she usually is), she will lose some of her remission time. The Warden or his representative may feel that a warning is sufficient in some cases, but usually a loss of days is the outcome. Remission time or "good time" is earned at the rate of one day per week for good behavior, and is automatically calculated at the time the inmate is given her probable date of discharge. If an inmate serving a long sentence "blows some days" or "loses some copper" she may have months added to her probable date of discharge. Remission days which have been lost can be earned back, but the inmate must submit a special request to the Warden to receive this consideration and is seldom able to redeem more than half of her lost remission.

The Task of Reform. The afternoon program is supposedly primarily oriented toward the rehabilitation of the inmates, and is in fact known as the "socialization" as opposed to "work" program of the daytime. During this shift all matrons are still expected to be responsible for the custody of those inmates under their supervision, the actual number normally ranging from seven to twelve inmates per matron.

The small living groups become the focal point of activity for the afternoon shift. These groups have been formed as a substitute family unit. It is hoped that these small groups will foster the personal growth and development which did not, for one reason or another, occur within the family unit. Group work and group therapy principles are referred to, and the matron is encouraged to familiarize herself with the aims and principles of these disciplines. The multiplicity of expectations concerning the operation of the group and the role of the group matron can perhaps best be illustrated by quoting once again from The Manual:

Your group is your responsibility. It is up to you to see that they behave themselves within the limits of the institution. It is up to you to see that they have group activity planned for the time you are to be with them. It is up to you to make this activity as interesting and as varied as possible. If a girl does something you do not approve of, use your own judgement but try to handle it on your own level. Talk to the girl, take away some privilege, have a group discussion about it, and so on. However, if you feel it is too serious to handle on the group level, report the situation to the matron in charge.

The group system and group activity has several advantages. The girls can be kept under supervision almost constantly, thus keeping them from some less desirable activity; the girls learn to live with each other and get along with each other. Since the population in a place like this is made up of people who are anti-social, that is, they cannot get along in society, this point is very important. Individual members of the groups are forced, through encouragement and pressure, to participate in games and sports. This is good in that they learn sportsmanship and fair play as well as certain skills which may add to their self-esteem. With this in mind it is your job as a group leader to see that the one who needs encouragement gets it, that praise is given to the one who needs it and not necessarily to the best player all the time, and so on. Because of these things and because supervision is so important, it is necessary for you to have the whole group under your supervision at all times. Therefore, if the majority of the girls want to go out, the whole group must go. Legitimately sick girls are exempt from this, of course. You must remember that the girl who never wants to go with the group - the one who wants to be by herself all the time is the one who is going to benefit the most from having to learn to get along with others. Eventually she may even like to go out and play ball and so on, especially if she becomes a fair ball player. Therefore, she has gained much more than the girl who wanted to be out and found it easy to get along with others in the first place. Therefore you must work the hardest with the most unco-operative members of your group.

It is a good policy to talk to the girls individually when they first come into the group. In this way you can learn what kind of girl you are getting, what her needs will be and, therefore, how you will treat her. You can also inform her what is expected of her. Make it friendly and casual. It is also a good idea to have a quiet chat with each girl occasionally while they are in the group. After they have retired is usually a good time for a chat, but if the girl is in

with others, and this time is not suitable, there are usually other opportunities as long as you are not sacrificing the rest of your group for one person. If a girl wants to talk about her troubles it is your job to enable her to do this after the group has broken up. It usually helps a girl to tell someone about her worries and troubles - it releases a certain amount of anxiety and tension. These discussions and anything you learn about the girl should be put down in your recordings.

As a group matron you must be able to work with a group in respect to all the things listed above. You must be able to keep your group together, plan things for your group to do, keep discipline in your group, keep harmony in your group, and so on. You must also be a matron of this institution in that you must enforce the rules on all inmates, not just your own group.

A number of themes run through these prescribed goals and means of achieving rehabilitation, but is abundantly clear that just as no matron is allowed the luxury of being solely concerned with matters of custody or control, so also no matron is allowed the luxury of being solely concerned with matters of therapy or rehabilitation.

II. CONFIGURATION OF TASKS

The matron's occupation cannot be fully understood merely by examining the formal requirements of the role. It is important also to be aware of the ways in which the matrons themselves actually view their role; the priority given to the many tasks they are expected to perform, the standards of excellence utilized in evaluating their performance, the patterns of deviance from these standards and the rewards

and strains of the work.³

To determine how the matrons themselves conceive of their role; how they "make sense" out of the conflicting demands made upon them, ten interviews with staff members of the Women's Unit were tape recorded. The content of these interviews has been used extensively in the following:

Custody and Control. Without exception those matrons who were interviewed for this study felt custody to be their primary responsibility, with the insurance of the inmates' welfare and safe-keeping ranking a close second:

First and foremost a matron's duty is to see that the inmates who are put into gaol stay there until their release time, so custody is first.

... without custody you have nothing else, so we must always put custody first ... and the welfare of the girls is next.

You are really responsible for that person's life. She has been deprived of her liberty, and you really become responsible for her safety.

Maintaining good custody within the institution is apparently felt to be prerequisite to the performance of any further duties or the achievement of any further goals.

³This conceptualization of the more discriminating features of an occupational role is taken from Kaspar D. Naegele and Elaine Culley Stolar, "The Librarian of the Northwest" in Morton Kroll, ed., Libraries and Librarians of the Pacific Northwest, Pacific Northwest Library Association Library Development Project Reports, vol. 4, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1960, pp.51-137. This publication is an abridged version of an earlier unpublished report.

Whether this consensus is due to prevailing public conceptions of the functions of a prison, or whether it is due to socialization within the institution, (or a subtle combination of the two) is not too clear. But at least one matron had what she believed to be an accurate pre-conception of her responsibilities:

My ideas haven't changed because my impressions of a gaol before coming to work there was of a place for custody. When somebody is sent to gaol the main thing is to keep them in gaol. That is the main purpose of a jail, to keep people away from society. I still think that custody is our main responsibility.

But the image of a "custodian" is somewhat embarrassing to many who are concerned with being considered "progressive" and with being associated with a "progressive" institution.

You must be on your toes, and you can't be careless, but there is no place in a modern institution for people who are strictly custodial.

There is, nevertheless, every expectation that each matron should be at least a custodian.

Other responsibilities included the maintenance of internal order and the imposition of limits upon the population of the institution. The degree of latitude permissible in enforcement of the rules and regulations of the institution was felt to vary from one situation to another, so that the matron becomes a mediator between the administration and the inmate. She must interpret and enforce restrictions explicitly demanded by the administration and set additional limits herself if she believes them to be appropriate to the situation:

Impose controls, set limits and so on. The limits are set for us (the matrons) to some extent, but our own interpretation is possible in some areas. Strict interpretation of the controls is necessary in some areas.

Some matrons felt that the inmate's behavior should be very rigidly controlled even to the extent that topics of conversation and personal demeanor should meet with the requirements of polite society:

To her group her responsibilities are teaching etiquette and good manners. Improve their way of talking, cut out street talk and filthy talk. Provide them with worthwhile topics. Good manners and no street talk.

In rather sharp contrast to this view, other respondents were greatly concerned with reducing the pains of imprisonment by minimizing the number of rules and restrictions imposed upon the inmates. The feeling being that it is difficult enough to be deprived of one's freedom without having to be further badgered by staff anxieties and stringent expectations concerning one's behavior:

A girl's time in gaol should be made as pleasant as possible for her. It's a hard life and we shouldn't make it too obvious that we are worried about her running away or doing something wrong.

Punishment. Punishment of the inmates was not discussed as a responsibility by any of the matrons interviewed probably because of the very negative connotations which this concept has in modern day criminology. Exercising control over the inmates was legitimized on several counts, but punishment, and even discipline were avoided as considera-

tions in the performance of the matron's role.

There is a sense in which the deviance of the inmate does not directly touch the matron, making it relatively easy for her to disregard this aspect of the inmate's character and behavior. The deviance for which the inmate has been convicted has occurred both outside the institution and outside the matron's social sphere, and has probably not had any direct affect whatever upon either the matron's life style or her system of values. It is then not too difficult for the matron to be forgiving and perhaps even forgetful of the act resulting in arrest and incarceration. Under these circumstances, concern for punishment of the offender while she is in the Women's Unit will understandably be quite negligible. However, deviance which occurs within the institution is not viewed so lightly by the staff. Nor is deviance within the institution apt to be much less punitively handled by the staff than by the members of the legal profession when deviance occurs in the community.

By way of example, drug usage is considered by most matrons to be unfortunate and pitiable, but somewhat understandable in the addict who is in free society. If this same addict procures narcotics while in the institution however, she will be subjected to severe sanctions. She will not only be removed to the security cells, but will probably also be required to appear in Warden's Court, where she will likely lose some of her remission time. The matrons

excuse punishment within the prison for they believe it to be an effective means of deterring others from engaging in similar deviant activities and because punishment presumably re-establishes the authority of the administration. Yet these same justifications for a punitive attitude and reaction on the part of society are considered (by the staff) to be unrealistic. Within the community, addiction can be interpreted by the matron as an indication of personal weakness which is antagonized by the harshness of the social milieu within which the addict lives. Within the prison, narcotic usage is interpreted as an indication of ungratefulness and deceitfulness and, perhaps most significantly, it represents in a rather dramatic manner the failure of the staff to "rehabilitate" the drug user. These anomalous attitudes toward drug usage within and outside the prison have been recognized by many staff members, but to date little progress has been made in attempting to evolve a means of coping with deviance within the institution which would be acceptable from a more therapeutic point of view, yet effective in maintaining internal order and control at a sufficiently high level.

III. REHABILITATION

The task of reform, or rehabilitation as it is more frequently known at the Women's Unit, is at least theoretically most important. But one might well be dubious

about the various means which are utilized and rationalized both in the name of, and quite honestly with the intention of, reforming the inmates. Many of the processes which take place in the institution are justified, at least in part, because of their potential value as a rehabilitative tool. For example, custody is justifiable simply because it is the legal responsibility of the institution, but custody is also supported by both the administration and by individual matrons as a good rehabilitative tool. The feeling is that you must hold the patient in order to treat him, and additionally, that it is somehow damaging from a therapeutic point of view to be a fugitive. Most matrons appear to be resigned to their pre-occupation with custodial procedures, in spite of the doubts which many authorities feel concerning the usefulness of mixing custodial and therapeutic functions in one social milieu.

Within the Women's Unit, where rehabilitation is at least verbally one of the primary objectives of the organization, all activities must apparently bear some perceived relationship to this goal to have meaning and significance. Because everyone is quite frankly grasping for answers in the prison setting, there is an opportunity for any activity or program to be justified as some kind of "answer". Because no matron is free to disregard the task of rehabilitation, she is pressured into giving lip service to this goal regardless of whether the specific task at hand is the main-

tenance of custody or internal control, or the meting out of punishment.

Group and Team Matrons. The question of how the matrons actually played and preferred to play their roles was clarified by their responses to the question, "Can a good matron work all shifts equally well?". Many observations were made concerning differences in "atmosphere" from one shift to another, especially between the morning and afternoon shifts. The third shift (nights) was not discussed at much length, for it was felt to involve nothing more than custodial activities such as checking doors and locks, counting inmates and censoring the incoming mail.

There was general consensus among the matrons that the day shift is (and should be) relatively strict and rigid. The afternoon shift is more flexible and relaxed. As one matron has described it:

You need some imagination to work on afternoons. On days you just need to be able to follow through on orders, maybe be able to do one thing well and teach it, but on afternoons you must know a bit about cooking, cleaning, recreation and so on.

There is definitely a more relaxed atmosphere on evenings (afternoons). It's not so much a matter of lax custody, you have the same custody because you have the same number of girls to look after, but there is just a difference in atmosphere.

This difference in "atmosphere" was seen to demand a different type of matron, a different "style" of playing the role.

For days you have to be a real disciplinarian because work means discipline. If teaching,

especially those kids, you must be strong, or they just don't learn. Discipline is good for these kids when they are learning. ... For afternoons you have to be patient, not scream when they don't know how to dust a corner, but go and show them what to do. ... Things are more easygoing on afternoons, therefore you must be more patient. When you are a disciplinarian you can just say, "You do it", ... (but) they are learning to relax in the afternoons.

Some (matrons) tend to be better group than team people. For teams you need some degree of organization in the work area and organization in the person; know what they want to do and how to get it done, for example distributing various duties among the girls, showing and teaching them. ... Group matrons must be able to talk, to bring to light as many of the problems as they can. If you can deal with them adequately, fine, or make referrals or something. This you must do on days, too, but within a teaching program you don't have as much time to spend individually with each person talking out their problems as you would on afternoons where it's more informal, you have more time to sit around and chat - have tea, get involved in activities which might suggest to them by your conversation so they may want to relate more.

Value judgements as to which approach was better were not necessarily implicit in most answers, but there was rather a matter-of-fact statement that different "types" of matrons were necessary to fulfil the different needs of the two shifts.

It's nice to work beside matrons ... who take care of manners, cleanliness, etc., but you couldn't have sixty matrons like that. Take your young university girls for example, (matrons), obviously the girls' table manners are allowed to go, but the university girls create a happy, pleasant atmosphere, and that's fine, but they don't think to look under the sink and check to see if the garbage has been looked after and so on. They are afraid to get firm with the girls. You have to have both kinds of matron, you could never have just the strict type.

The two types of approach were characterized by one matron as follows:

The experts feel that a person's relationships with the girls is more important than the job or whatever they happen to be doing .. (but) ... it would be very difficult to get expert hairdressing done if you must pussyfoot around because of people's feelings. If you have one, you are going to have to sacrifice the other ... Instructrices should know whether people working with them have anything very upsetting happen, such as a death or something, or should be aware of other things which may be troubling them so they don't unnecessarily pile it on. Be tactful enough to take it easy on one or two people in your team in the morning, then if time warrants it, be more demanding of them another time.

The general consensus appears to be that benevolent despotism is the most effective way to handle the task requirements of the institution during the morning shift, with a more kindly, permissive approach being reserved for the afternoon shift. This conceptualization of the prison world is fostered by the Warden of the institution, for he has on more than one occasion stated similar views when addressing a staff meeting. The morning shift must "get things done", but this in turn produces many strains and feelings of tension in the inmates because of the pressures which are brought to bear upon them. The afternoon shift must then smooth the ruffled feathers, and generally perform the integrative functions of this society. According to the Warden, the afternoon staff must be kind and accepting, willing to provide the necessary reassurance of love for the inmates, realizing that expressions of hostility and resentment

will probably be made by the inmates as a necessary way of overcoming the frustrations produced on the morning program. This duality of approach supposedly duplicates the situation prevailing in free society where people must leave the relaxed atmosphere of their own homes to participate in the demanding, achievement-oriented business world. From this harsh milieu they return again to the sanctity and tranquility of their homes at the end of the day.

The actual work placement which a matron will have was felt to be primarily the result of her own personal choice in the matter:

Whether they are intentionally divided up this way or not they do divide this way. The stricter people prefer mornings because it is cut and dried, a rule is a rule, interpreted as it is written. You can't do this on afternoons. I break a lot of rules myself because it just wouldn't work to follow the rules all the time. You wouldn't have much program. Somebody has to stick her neck out.

Matrons apparently feel more comfortable on either morning shift or afternoon shift, and tend, over time, to settle rather permanently on one.

Night shift tends to be the ultimate place of banishment if a staff member is found to create gross difficulties on either afternoons or mornings, but some matrons do work nights by choice, either because it fits in better with their family life or because they are taking some course of study while working. Working night shift quite definitely isolates a matron from any extensive contact with the inmates so that

anyone working in the gaol primarily because of an interest in the field of corrections would find it most unsatisfactory. Matrons who work nights for any extended period of time certainly do not enjoy the same degree of prestige either among the other staff members or among the inmates as do matrons working day or afternoon shift. The prevailing opinion seems to be that almost anyone could work on nights in the capacity of a custodian, but that it requires at least a limited amount of skill to be a team or group matron.

Two general philosophies of correction exist at the Women's Unit, and there seems to be a correlation between the particular philosophy of corrections to which a matron subscribes and the shift which she prefers to work. Those working on the morning shift tend to feel that it is the primary responsibility of the prison to teach the inmates to conform to authority and to live within the confines of rather stringent rules and regulations. If the prison can control the behavior of the inmate while she is in prison, the inmate will presumably be able to live within the limits set down by society when she is released. This is essentially a physiological (non-cognitive) habit-forming approach to human behavior. Actually changing attitudes, values and motivations is not so much the goal as is insuring that the outward behavior of the individual comes to be more socially acceptable:

They should have etiquette books around there and we should have the girls reading and

practising it among themselves ... they should enact different situations, then they would know how to act when they get out ... If a girl knows how to conduct herself in society and is given a trade at Oakalla and the necessary after-care .. it should enable her to get a job, and to make the necessary social contacts.

This view of rehabilitation legitimizes the existing pre-occupation with matters of internal control - the enforcement of multitudinous rules and regulations, for the objective is to formulate habits of behavior while in the institution which will presumably persist following release from the prison. "Good habits" should be fostered in all spheres of endeavor: work, recreation and social participation:

We should give them longer work hours and not so many breaks nor so much food during working hours. They should learn to do a full day's work, otherwise they will be exhausted when they first start to work and they aren't going to be able to stick it out. We should find work for them on the outside ... Some of them have deep psychological problems, but most just don't have any roots.

Another matron carried this view one step farther, seeing the primary value of release on parole in terms of post-release habit formation:

If they were given a job for six months they would think twice before giving it up, they would sort of set a pattern, they wouldn't mind it so much. If it is years since they have worked the very thought of it would scare them. ... Really we should lead them by the hand ... They should be supervised, placed in a job, and a place found for them to live.

Having learned good work habits, etiquette and conformity to the expectations of the institution, the probability

apparently is that given a period of supervised adjustment within the community, most inmates could continue to live the "good life" first introduced to them by the institution.

By contrast, those working on the afternoon shift tend in the main to support the view that successful rehabilitation revolves around the necessity of bringing about a fundamental change in the inmate. According to this philosophy inmates are either individually "sick" or are perhaps committed to an anti-social set of values and standards. Rehabilitation then becomes a matter of convincing the inmates of the worthiness, or perhaps more accurately, of the enjoyability of another style of life. There is a recognition among the staff members that the life of the inmates, especially those involved in narcotic offences is:

A real live game of cops and robbers,
an exciting life, and how tame everything
else must be in comparison!

They feel square people are really stuffy. They love to have their fun; childish pleasures, not adult pleasures. They don't think it's fun to listen to some kinds of music or to have a good conversation. They don't want their minds to work, they just want to drift along, like teenagers with no responsibility ... We should show them that being good can be lots of fun, then they don't have to go around feeling guilty all the time ... No wonder some of them drink and use drugs with a conscience like that!

It then becomes the task of the matron to provide an example of a good and full life, to be an individual with whom the inmates could identify and to aspire to be like. The matron must not only sell herself, but sell her style of

life as well. She must provide not only the means for change or growth, but provide the motivation for changing and growing as well:

With the methods here it goes so much more beyond the custody and safekeeping of the inmates, which is as it should be. You are responsible for that person's way of thinking and her outlook.

You must try to make them think, and to change their way of thinking, which is pretty hard to do. This is what got them into trouble in the first place. If you change their way of thinking then it changes their personalities and ways of behaving.

The matrons subscribing to the "basic change" view of rehabilitation are committed to a belief in the necessity for providing the inmates with a permissive, supportive atmosphere in which they will be able to grow and to make these basic changes in their attitude structure. To this extent their philosophy is in harmony with the general objective of the afternoon shift, but are not in harmony with the usual concepts of custody and control within a prison. One would suspect that frustrations and misunderstandings would result from these rather incongruous orientations to the work.

There is a certain amount of inter-shift rivalry evidenced which sometimes borders on outright antagonism. This is particularly true between those members of the day and afternoon shift who have not been rotated between the two shifts for months or in some cases years. Communication between the two tends to break down, and each claims that the other is unco-operative or unsympathetic toward the specific goals of

their shift:

One half of the staff doesn't know what the other half is trying to do. The afternoon staff has a better idea of what the morning staff is doing because it is better within their scope. It's easier to understand what you are trying to do when you are teaching hairdressing, etc. But who could ever figure out what group work was their own? Most people feel that working on afternoons is just a matter of playing bridge ... this ignorance is (now) perhaps my fault. I should say I am going to have a lecture and tell everybody what group work is. Somebody should be telling them.

One way of overcoming provincialism of view would be to encourage staff to rotate between all three shifts regularly. Another recommendation was expressed as follows:

Have more organizational conferences where all staff of an area, group, staff or team staff come together .. (for) ... integration between the two shifts. Sometimes this really seems to be lacking. Should stress more of a constant goal, not "well this should have been done on the morning shift", etc. An open attitude, this is what we are aiming for; for the girls, for the activity, for the institution ... we shouldn't let minor things detract and bother.

This can only be done through constant conferences, short organized meetings, general staff knowing what is going on.

At present there is little provision for this type of communication, although staff are supposed to pass along any pertinent information to their relieving matron. A daily report book is read by all and contains a record of movements within the institution and of any major incidents, but only a few of the units keep a record of the activities of the individual groups and teams.

Corruption of Authority. Although the matrons justify

many of their activities to themselves and to one another in terms of rehabilitation, they apparently do not present this same justification to the inmates. Traditionally inmates believe that the prison is intended to punish convicted offenders by retaining them in custody. They are resigned to the fact that "if you are going to play, you have to pay". They pay their debt by remaining in the institution, but they are not obliged to change their ways before they are released. Release comes automatically at the expiration of the sentence imposed by the courts, not as the result of good behavior or a professed desire to become a conforming member of society.

At the Women's Unit the inmates seem to make a bargain with the matron to the effect that they (the inmates) will comply with the wishes of the administration providing the matrons do not try to tamper with the inmates' system of rationalization. There may be some transfer of power from the staff to the inmates as a means of securing compliance, but the usual pattern seems to be the above. The matrons are either forced or find it more convenient to legitimize their function to the inmates in terms of custody and control rather than of rehabilitation. It is perhaps because of the very close nature of the contact between staff and inmates at the Women's Unit that the inmates seek this kind of a bargain with the matrons, for matrons are in continuous contact with the inmates, and could presumably provide a very real threat to their basic attitudes and motivations.

Evidence of the apparent seduction of the matrons to adoption of the inmates' view of imprisonment can be seen in the matrons' expressed reactions to conviction and sentencing of the inmates. The matrons sympathize with the inmates if a sentence imposed for an offence committed seems to be particularly severe, or if the police have been something less than sportsmanlike in securing an arrest. With regard to drug usage, for example, the staff may be fully aware that an inmate has been guilty of using narcotics illegally, but if the circumstances of the inmate's arrest are such that it would be difficult to actually find her guilty of possessing narcotics matrons will frequently wish the individual "luck" in her court case.

By wishing the inmates luck the matrons imply that they really feel the inmates would be just as well off returning to the community as they would be remaining in the prison. The validity of imprisonment as a means of effecting reformation of the inmates is thereby refuted. When sentences are imposed the matrons and inmates discuss the fairness of the sentence rather than its practicability as a period of time in which the inmate can be persuaded or coerced into changing her pattern of life.

The matrons may find it necessary to appear to be seduced by the inmates' view and justification of incarceration in order to form a workable relationship with the inmates and to secure compliance in some important matters. But the

failure of the staff to openly justify and legitimize their roles in terms of an intention to change the inmates certainly places some grave limitations on their ability to achieve this goal.

IV. RELATIONS TO OTHERS

In the performance of her role the matron must form a peculiar type of alliance with the "consumer" of her special kind of service. But she is ultimately responsible to a non-participating public which, by a process of systematic and formalized rejection, has provided the matron with her "client". In a sense the client belongs more completely to the institution than does the employee, for as a member of a total institution the inmate stays within its confines for twenty-four hours of the day, and remains throughout that time, and for the duration of her sentence, an "inmate". The matron, on the other hand, is free to leave the institution at the completion of her eight hour shift, and is able (and expected) to drop her role as a matron when she leaves the institution. Many of the inmates have "belonged" to the institution for a much longer period of time than have most matrons too, and can nostalgically refer to the "good old days" of a previous sentence, usually before the advent of "the group system".

As a voluntary member of an otherwise involuntary social group, the matron must define herself to the satisfaction of both those on the "inside" and those on the "outside". Because

of this complicating relationship, in which the matron must offer some type of "service" to a consumer which has been defined by her employer (the public) as at least legally an "enemy", the matron has to somehow satisfy two quite different demands, and must somehow reconcile the two.⁴ To some extent she can be left free to perform her role as she sees fit by insulating her activities from observability. This may in fact be one of the reasons why prisons as such have persisted in the face of increasing awareness of their limited usefulness as deterrents or rehabilitative tools. Perhaps prison workers feel the necessity of being both insulated and isolated from society when playing their role, either because of their self-consciousness about their ability to "rehabilitate", or because the public is not as yet prepared to condone a therapeutic approach to penology. Whatever the "real" reason may be, the Women's Unit is quite successfully isolated from the rest of the community, but social workers from any recognized social work agency have no difficulty in penetrating the barrier if they wish to either continue or establish a relationship with any inmate.

The Matron's Relationship to Society. Many staff members reported that when engaged in casual conversation or when at a social gathering, if the question of occupation arose they frequently demurred, or described themselves in

⁴Talcott Parsons, Structure and Process in Modern Societies, Illinois, The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960, pp.47-56.

half-truths, saying that they worked for the Attorney General's Department or something similar. The rationale given for this reluctance was that they felt the public would not "understand", necessitating an overly long explanation of their duties and responsibilities while in an inappropriate social setting. Others mentioned that when they did explain where they worked people usually registered great shock, and frequently would remark incredulously, "But how could someone like you work in a place like that?" They would rather circumvent the whole issue than find themselves on the defensive concerning their work.

In many respects the matron is a member of a fringe occupational role, one which is not quite acceptable in polite society because of the distasteful connotations elicited by mention of prisons, prisoners and guards. Negative stereotypes do exist in relation to prisoners in which they are depicted as rather savage, corrupt individuals who have about them a general aura of decadence. Equally negative stereotypes of the prison guard are prevalent; he is depicted as a rather dull-witted, usually sadistic and frequently corrupt opportunist, who makes his living by making others miserable. Additionally, there seems to be a general expectation that prolonged and rather intimate association with the misfits of society will inevitably result in a certain amount of "taking on" of the attributes of the other. Lawyers and psychiatrists are probably the most visible occupational roles which are

viewed somewhat ambivalently by society for similar reasons.

The Matron's Relationship to the Inmates. It is interesting to note that much the same feeling of defensiveness was evidenced in the responses given by the matrons to the general question: "How would you describe the inmates?" Most matrons had two distinct opinions to express: a "public opinion" which they would use to answer such a question posed by someone outside the institution, and a "private opinion" which they felt free to discuss only with someone on the "inside". For the benefit of the general public the matrons again expressed reluctance in discussing the topic at all, and stated in fact that:

It is best not to describe them at all,
because it is difficult for most people to
realize what it is all about.

If pressed to discussion, the tendency was then apparently to make the inmates appear in as favourable a light as possible. They would be described in terms denoting their predominant normality rather than their abnormality or deviance, and would be excused of their maladaptive behavior on grounds which tended to place the onus for their behavior on society rather than on the offender herself. They would be characterized as being the innocent victims of under-privileged homes and unfavourable environments in which they would have no opportunity to develop into more normal, contributing members of society. Their "real" opinions were, by contrast, considerably less flattering to the inmates, and frequently charged

them with considerably more responsibility for their own actions:

My pat answer is that they are people who have never had a chance. My real feelings are that they are weak people and we add to this.

I never do (describe the inmates) because most people think they have two horns - so I tell them they only have one horn. I don't usually talk about them unless it's to another matron or to someone else in the field. .. For my own satisfaction, I like most of them, I think they are just mixed up and sick .. I tell them they are nice people, but they don't understand that you can like a person even though they have done every rotten thing in the book ..

If I were talking to a total stranger it would be a hard thing to do because I have such a block about discussing these people with anyone outside the business. Without a bit of experience in these lines nobody has any conception of what these people are like. If I were describing them for my own satisfaction, they give you the impression of being little children in lots of ways, and yet underneath ... something wrong is there.

Others dissociate the deviant behavior which originally placed the girl in the institution from the individual with whom they must cope, and find the inmates to be quite normal people within the institutional setting. They describe them in these terms both for the public and for their own satisfaction:

I just say that once you have them in there, away from their old way of life they don't seem to be much different from the average run of people. But of course that's probably closing your eyes to a lot ... I never really think too much about some of the awful things they do, you just take them as you find them.

By describing the inmates to the general public as nice, but under-privileged victims of society the matrons influence their self and public image in two ways. First, by emphasizing the normal qualities of the inmate, some of the "dirtiness" of her work will be reduced and, possibly, she will enjoy an increase in occupational prestige as a consequence. Secondly, by placing the onus for social deviance upon the public, the matron is somewhat absolved of her responsibility of "curing" the phenomenon in one omniscient gesture. Her private opinions also have consequences for her self-image. Either she can view the inmates as being so greatly disturbed that she cannot possibly do much to effect a change, or she can view them as normal people while in the institution who must be assisted primarily on the "outside" if they are to avoid recidivism. She probably cannot completely absolve herself of responsibility for rehabilitating the inmates, but she can lighten the burden of her responsibility in these ways.

The general feeling which exists within the institution is, at least on the surface, surprisingly relaxed and pleasant. One matron recalled her initial surprise as follows:

Just to look at the place I think it is quite amazing; the physical appearance, girls talking to the matrons in an offhand manner as they would to anyone ... I thought it was amazing when I first saw them. I always feel like defending the place in a way, because it isn't that bad.

There is considerable warmth in the relationships between the inmates and the matrons, and on the whole the

staff feels that the inmates are likeable, friendly and almost childlike in their enthusiasm, noise and mischievousness. The amount of laughing and joking which is evident in the institution was commented upon by several matrons, and they ascribed this phenomenon variously to an absence of care and responsibility brought on by removal from the community, and as a mechanism for release of the many strains produced by microcosmic living:

They are all quite likeable and all seem quite young ... but Olive for instance is probably not quite as young in her own home as she is in jail. Their giggling, etc., may be a means of tension release, or it may be they act young because they have a mother figure here in the matron.

Certainly many inmates have commented that they are "treated like children", which would lend some support to the notion of dependency within the institution. It would be difficult to say which came first, inmate dependency or matron over-protectiveness, but the resultant patterns of behavior are a matter of concern for both the inmates and the staff.

Undoubtedly for some inmates life has never been so good materially as they experience it in prison, and for many who find themselves unable to cope with life in the free society for one reason or another, a sojourn to the Women's Unit is a welcome respite from their responsibilities and problems. It is a fact that inmates seek arrest from time to time, that some ask to stay in the prison over Christmas and that some frankly

admit that they get better nursing-home care in Oakalla than they could hope for elsewhere. These facts are frequently pointed to as the reason for the high rate of recidivism among the inmates, particularly among the native Indian women who usually come from grossly under-privileged social areas, and among the alcoholics who in no small measure owe their longevity to the periodic physical reconstruction which they undergo while in the institution.

On the other hand, it cannot be forgotten that life in the Women's Unit at Oakalla is extremely insular and concentrated in nature. From seven o'clock in the morning until eight-thirty at night, (and in some units nine-thirty), the inmates are thrown into constant contact with one another and with the staff. They work together in teams throughout the institution during the day, and must "group and troupe" together with their living group until bedtime at night. Eating, working, and playing continuously in the same physical surrounding, and predominately with the same eight or nine arbitrarily assigned associates will inevitably produce tensions. Life is so compact and constricted that to remain tolerable, inter-personal grievances must be kept to a minimum. The prevalence of kidding and joking which obtains between inmates and between inmates and the staff, serves as one mechanism to release tensions, and additionally allays at least temporarily the necessity of taking it all too seriously. Laughing at oneself and one's predicament may effectively insulate the tragedy of

the situation at least temporarily. The quiet despair occasionally witnessed by the staff after "lockup" gives some indications of the shallowness of the facade which is being maintained. It is not uncommon for a matron to find one of her group members in tears for no apparent reason when making the final check of her unit, or for someone to beg the matron to stay and talk for a while - to bend a sympathetic ear. The inmates have a solidarity which belies disloyalty to one another, but a matron is frequently employed as a sounding board, for the girls feel their companions have enough "troubles of their own" and should not be further burdened by the troubles of their friends.

The tendency for the inmates to be constantly "on the point for something" was noted, but the matrons differed in the extent to which they interpreted these actions of the inmates as being primarily indicative of immaturity or of malevolence:

They put up a front. They have an almost childlike approach to everything. The way they lose themselves in a ball game etc., and yet even though they are kibitzing around on the ballfield their eyes are always wandering, noticing everything. They are always thinking and their thinking is devious. We have to accept that on the surface behavior, yet have to be aware of the undercurrent all the time, and it's such a conflict ... They have an alertness, almost an animal alertness ... an awareness, a keenness.

The addicts in particular were interpreted by the staff as being constantly on the watch for some unspecified "opportunity".

On the whole they are very friendly. The Indian girls are rather shy and withdrawn at first. The addicts are very sly. They are always thinking of how best to get the best of anyone in the building. You always have to be just one jump ahead of them ... If they are going to want anything from you they are so nice to you, then about an hour later they are down to the clinic asking you for some medication.

This perceived tendency toward "slyness" (especially on the part of the addicts) is considered by many matrons to be an occupational disease suffered by those who must live by their wits. The consequence of this general feeling of untrustworthiness in the inmate population is a justification for a predisposition of suspiciousness on the part of the matrons. The very game of cat and mouse which presumably is the genesis of the disorder is fostered within the institution because of the disorder. A vicious circle of action and reaction is established and perpetuated, making the establishment of any other pattern of relationships between the representatives of authority and the deviant extremely difficult. Playing this game does not necessarily preclude friendly feelings between staff and inmates, but there is rather an unwritten agreement that attitudes of loyalty and mutual obligation are only operative within certain prescribed spheres, and outside these rigidly delimited areas each must fend for herself.

As an illustration of the above, the operation of the institution's school provides a pertinent example. Within the school inmates are enrolled in various correspondence courses

which are provided by the Provincial Department of Education. Cheating on these courses is, of course, possible, but is not condoned by the inmates, partly we would suspect, because the staff are unable to exercise effective external control and must, therefore, charge the inmates with assuming this responsibility themselves. Within the same department, however, inmates will be unashamedly dishonest to the extent that they will, whenever the opportunity presents itself, steal paper to be used at a later date for writing "kites". By making periodic checks of the inmates to determine the presence of illegal paper the staff is in effect demonstrating to the inmates their expectation that paper will be stolen. In this case, as in most, individual performance usually conforms with the expectations of the other. In those areas of behavior and activity in which the matron does extend her trust she is seldom disappointed, but where rule enforcement is a relatively automatic process and is the object of constant reminder on the part of staff, the inmates apparently do not feel morally obligated to exert any self-discipline, for they suspect (and rightly so) that discipline will be forthcoming externally. If the matron is remiss in the performance of her duties of rule enforcement or is not diligent enough to intercept kites and messages, the inmates are "one up" on her. If the inmate is detected and punished for such a misdemeanor, then she has been caught out, and by the rules of good sportsmanship will probably not hold any personal grudge against

the matron who has caught her. Just how far responsibility for conformity could be transferred to the individual or to the inmate groups from the matron is, of course, a moot point.

Some awareness of the implications of latent expectation of staff regarding inmate performance was evidenced by the matron who discussed the difference between the "inside" behavior of the inmates from that "outside":

Once they are in the gaol setting they react quite normally. I guess they feel a bit of security or something in gaol, or whether they just do what we expect them to do in gaol. We expect them to act this way. If they can get up and do a job in gaol every morning, why couldn't they do that when they were out? ... I guess nobody cares what they do on the outside.

Similarly, problems with lesbianism within the institution were seen to be at least partially the fault of the prevailing attitude of the staff which, the observer felt, tended to be overly suspicious of any friendships between the girls.

I think we make too much of it in a way. You know these great friendships are not always lesbian, but we jump on them and stir them up. Then the young kids become curious about it, there's so much intrigue surrounding it.

Some matrons are highly suspicious of any inmate activity which might be even vaguely related to lesbianism and are very strict in their enforcement of rules pertaining to intimacy between the girls. Inmates are not allowed to sit on one another's lap or even to share the same chair. There is considerable difference in the extent to which matrons

enforce these rules, however, some feeling that rigid enforcement is essential to prevent "episodes", others feeling that rigid enforcement produces artificiality and almost forces the inmates into at least "playing" at being lesbians just to defy the staff.

We are too lax in many ways ... That episode of Lorna necking in the halls, etc., would never have gone to those lengths if we had more matrons like _____ on the staff. I saw Miss _____ let (both girls) out (of their rooms) and watched while they walked down the hall with their arms around each other. This sort of thing was going on all the time. They should never have been allowed to reach that point where the girl is so frustrated and worked up sexually to be in a state to (create an incident). I know that wasn't premeditated.

Some matrons feel that demonstrations of affection between the girls are quite normal, especially since they are separated from their husbands and children and have little other outlet for their emotions. Others feel that any demonstrations between women are abnormal and abhorrent, and feel it their duty to severely sanction any evidences of such behavior. The resultant unevenness of rule enforcement leads to a rather confusing situation in which neither the inmates nor the staff are too sure just what the existing policy is. The inmates are able to place the matrons in a rather awkward position by accusing those who enforce the rules rigidly of having "dirty minds", or can give the more lenient matron the distinct impression they feel she is rather naive and that they (the inmates) have really outsmarted her in some small way.

Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Encounters. Preference for specific categories of inmates was not universal by any means. Some staff preferred working with the native girls (who normally serve very short sentences) because they found them quiet and co-operative, and fairly open and demonstrative. Their straightforward response, either positive or negative, to supervision was seen as being in refreshing contrast to the "con" approach of the more "institutionalized" addict offenders, most of whom have spent many years in many gaols across the country. Others preferred working with the more gaol-wise inmates because they did not have to be reminded constantly of the routine of the institution, although they did require considerably more surveillance because of their continuous attempts to "beat the institution" in one way or another. Still others favoured the young, hostile inmates who presented many problems to the staff, but who could also provide the greatest challenge for their talents. On the whole those matrons who subscribed to the "habit-forming" orientation toward corrections did not like to be assigned to inmates who were exceptionally hostile or disturbed. One such matron frankly stated she did not like having to deal with the more disturbed inmates because she felt she only antagonized them. Matrons who were primarily interested in delving more deeply into personality and attitude structures of the inmates found the very disturbed girls the most interesting:

I would like the GIS girls (Girls Industrial School) because they are young and there is more hope of doing something with them ... it is because they are so mixed up, they feel "what has anyone ever done for me", they have been in this rat race ever since they can remember, with cruel fathers, being abandoned and so on. I guess I prefer them because they are more like children and need help ... they are more damaged personalities.

Presumably this type of inmate provides the matron concerned with effecting a basic change in attitudes with a rather graphic justification for her philosophy of corrections.

IV. MATRONS AS AN OCCUPATIONAL GROUP

Recruitment and Choice. Matrons are recruited from a wide variety of previous occupational, education and vocational backgrounds. No specific pre-employment training is considered to be mandatory at the present time. Matrons are selected by means of a personal interview in which attention is paid to the applicant's general personality and the "suitability" of her previous experience and interests. Because it has not been the general policy of the Women's Unit to advertise publicly for applicants when a vacancy occurs, or to conduct formal examinations and competitions among those who do apply for a position, matrons employed have usually first heard of the work through a personal friend or acquaintance who is already employed at the institution.

This factor, in conjunction with the prevailing acceptance of psychiatric nursing training as a "suitable"

orientation to prison work, probably accounts for the heavy bias in favour of this occupational group in the total population of matrons. It is presumed that the psychiatric nurse's familiarity with the custodial and security measures necessary in the mental hospital, as well as her experience with and training concerning the mentally disturbed patients themselves will serve as a good basic orientation to prison work, with the result that some twenty-one per cent of the matrons currently employed are psychiatric nurses. Practical and registered nurses make up another sixteen per cent of the staff, so that in all thirty-seven per cent of the staff of sixty-five matrons have had some nursing training and institutional experience.

A small proportion of the staff consists of specialists such as caseworkers, occupational therapists, and instructors in beauty parlour operation, dressmaking and power (factory) sewing. The remaining matrons form a heterogeneous group with experience in recreation, education and juvenile club leadership. A few have had university training in the social sciences. All of these matrons had been hired by the institution initially as summer relief staff, but remained in the work at the end of the holiday season.

It would appear that no one currently employed by the Women's Unit embarked upon her occupational career with the intention of becoming a matron in a correctional institution. Decisions and actions resulting in employment in this capacity

appeared to those matrons interviewed to have been quite haphazard and accidental in nature, but these patterns do present some similarity with one another.

Typical of the responses given to the question, "Why did you chose Oakalla Prison Farm as a place to work" is the following given by a practical nurse:

I knew Mrs. L., and our hospital was closing. We were all being transferred some place, so I applied at Oakalla. I knew a little about the place as I had met some of the staff from the old days.

Another matron, with a university background in Home Economics, described her introduction to the work thus:

I came to work at Oakalla as somewhat of a fluke. I had no job after third year (at university), a friend was working at Oakalla and knew of an opening, so suggested I apply. I went on leave of absence to complete my fourth year at U.B.C. I decided to stay on because ... the idea of opening a power sewing department (was suggested) and I was interested, so decided to stay.

A few with previous experience in psychiatric and social rehabilitation centres of various kinds were attracted to the position because they felt it offered an opportunity to do work similar to that which they had found enjoyable elsewhere;

I had heard about (the Warden) and his emphasis upon rehabilitation. I had done considerable recreational therapy in (a mental hospital) - I was interested, came to see him, and was hired.

I had to leave my job in the United States because I didn't have a working visa. I was doing similar work with children there. I liked working with the children better than

with adults, however, as you could really see your results ... I thought I was going to set the world on fire the same way here.

Training and Qualifications. There is very little formal training of new staff members aside from an opportunity to peruse The Manual sometime during the first few days of employment. The Manual contains a broad outline of the limits within which the matron must perform her duties, but is of little assistance to the novice seeking some indication of the more subtle dynamics of her new role. Matrons do not go through a formalized socialization process; they are not apprentice or student matrons before becoming full-fledged matrons, and they must assume heavy responsibilities almost immediately upon entering their new work situation. Anticipatory socialization into the prison community, and specifically into the role of a supervisor in that community is usually minimal due to the high degree of insulation from public view enjoyed by both the prison and the prison worker. Actual socialization into the role is most frequently ex post factum in nature, for the new matron finds that she is a matron before she has had an opportunity to discover how matrons actually behave.

Because no one on staff has been formally designated to instruct the new matron concerning how she should "behave", "tips" from the more experienced matrons which could save the novice considerable hardship are not necessarily passed along to her. Experienced matrons may unconsciously neglect to pass

along or consciously withhold pertinent information concerning the peculiar social structure of the prison community and the pattern of relationships which normally exist between inmates and their supervisors. If new staff members are thought to pose a significant threat to the occupational security of employees of long standing, this danger may become even more acute. Although the pattern is becoming somewhat modified, it has not been uncommon over the past years for a new staff member to be handed a set of keys, to be assigned to an inmate group, and be requested to "be a matron" the first morning she reports for duty. One matron described her initiation to the work as follows:

Everything was wrong with me. No one so much as gave me a five minute chat on what was expected of me. I had to ask the inmates what to do. There was none of this business of going with another matron for lunch in the hut to learn about it ... until we get extra staff for summer relief.

Another reported her experience thus;

I was too confused when I first started working here to be aware of what I expected. Adapting and learning here is all done by feel. You test your limits. You only find out what you can't do, not what you should or can do.

Orientation to the work and socialization into the role has been accomplished in these instances primarily by means of trial and error. Often the inmates have been primarily responsible for schooling the matron in the norms and daily routines of the institution. There is once again a very obvious opportunity for either neglecting to pass along

certain pertinent information to the new matron, or for deliberately misinforming her.

Learning the proper "manner" as well as the formal requirements of her role may be a difficult task for the new matron, and in outlining what she considered to be a desirable means of orienting new staff, one matron pointed to the desirability of deliberate instruction:

I think teaching (the new matrons) an attitude is a very good thing - and showing them, without being a show-off as you are doing it, just the answers and how to give them without offending either the staff involved or the program involved. This is one of the important things, because you just don't know how to talk to these people when you first get here.

The matron who has not been fortunate enough to receive this type of orientation to her new job may find it extremely difficult to form a satisfactory relationship with the inmates.

With these difficulties in mind, several matrons mentioned the advantage of previous institutional experience, for such experience apparently greatly facilitates adaptation to the demands of the work in the Women's Unit:

When anybody comes into this setting, if they have an institutional background they fit in quite easily because all institutions are run practically the same - the same inter-departmental problems exist, etc.

Nurses who have had experience with patients have an advantage in coming to work, as they are used to working with people. They have more of an idea of how to go about it.

They stated that they would definitely look for institutional experience in new staff if they were in a position

to do the recruiting for the institution. Qualifications in terms of institutional experience were considered to be more important than academic qualifications by many (all of whom had institutional backgrounds rather than academic training themselves):

I would like to find people with similar background to mine - the psychiatric training. Not just the three years, but experience in more than one institution. You are working in the same kind of area, it's the same as adapting nursing procedures from broken legs to those for broken arms. It is the same sort of thing, you are dealing with damaged social personalities both in prisons and in mental hospitals.

It is a good idea to have them on probationary staff at first, as it is hard to know who is going to fit in. The university students seem to be the ones suffering from tension, that's why they should have some experience in an institution before coming to work here. Oakalla is among the harder institutions to work in - when they (the inmates) are all at you in the evening with different problems it's pretty hard to cope with them.

These observations tend to reflect a concern for the new matron's immediate usefulness and the immediate success of her adaptation to the institution. Matrons who had considerable institutional experience before coming to work at the prison look for others who would, because of their similar experience, be able to assume the role of a matron with a similar minimum of initial strain and anxiety. Such new matrons could become adequate custodians readily, and at least maintain the status quo of the institution in so far as daily routines and activities were concerned. The folk-lore of the

institution is, on the other hand, rich with tales of the "enlightened" university students who have made custodial errors, or have been inadequate in the performance of the role of a maintenance or sewing roommatron because of their lack of experience in these spheres.

A more compromising view was held by a few matrons who felt their opinions had changed with regard to the "best" or most desirable training and background among prospective matrons:

I used to think that nurses worked out the best here, but I don't think so any more. I think now that teachers do ... they have a good relationship with the girls -- especially high school teachers work out well with the younger girls.

There were some concessions given to the university educated matrons in terms of their ultimate or eventual usefulness, as distinct from their immediate contribution to the institution:

You can't substitute practical experience for book learning, but practical experience will only take you so far unless you have the other to go on with from there ... As far as the university kids are concerned, give them a little bit of time and they've got it all over the others. It just stands to reason. The ones who aren't (successful) ... it's just a personality matter, and it wouldn't matter where they worked, they still wouldn't fit in.

In-Service Training. Only one or two matrons mentioned a need for a full scale course for matrons to complete before actually becoming matrons. Most seem to feel that in-service training would be more useful. Specific problems existing

in the institution could be discussed, and general staff awareness increased:

We should go every day to learn, for an hour or so to talk about things that happen, etc. We should have sort of clinic discussions on people. When things happen you should discuss those things. Find out what the girls' different stories are from the other matrons, etc. That way you could find out really what is going on.

When the question of becoming better matrons was posed to the staff, there was a general consensus that experience would only bring about improvement in performance up to a certain point, then one must, for the sake of refreshment of interest and of increasing capability, take some additional training or attend some courses dealing with the general field of corrections.

Speaking for myself, I would be better now because of some of the lectures I've had and the interest stimulated from this which led to my reading more about it etc. I wasn't concerned about who the leader of the group was, or in analyzing the group at all. We were all just having a wonderful time ... We'd take a walk, and they would be dropping kites all along the road ... I never thought about analyzing the fringe members of the group and so on. I just went full pelt ahead and if anybody wasn't playing I saw to it that they did without knowing why they were out of it. Your work would be more effective with a background or some idea of what you were supposed to be doing. It's like building a house without a plan.

Some of the lectures we've had give a very clear idea of what group work is all about ... After taking those lectures you get a better look at yourself too, you see where you fall down in a lot of things.

There is apparently a tendency for staff to lose their enthusiasm for the work, to become "stale" or less sympathetic over time. Evening courses sponsored by the Provincial Government and intended primarily for staff of the various institutions were thought valuable not only because of the increased awareness which these courses gave the staff, but because they re-vitalized lagging interest in the work:

I think I had more concern for things before. That's why I think you should have a good brush-up once in a while. I had more time then. I probably was better to the inmates - more understanding. You should have a change or something on the job. Even the classes we take in the winter make me feel different toward the inmates. They make me think what a heel I've been. I get to feel like I should spend more time with the poor little things ... There should be something, maybe just switching around a bit, but I suppose that wouldn't be good for the girl. But it might do wonders for the staff!

Personal Attributes of Good Matrons. On the whole, the staff interviewed were much happier to discuss the personal qualifications they felt were most important in staff members rather than the specific training they considered to be the most effective. This is probably the result of a general feeling that qualifications which can be listed on paper are not necessarily indicative of usefulness in an actual work situation:

I don't know about qualifications. Many people who have the qualifications on paper just can't give out their knowledge.

You can't attract all the people we would like to have with what you can offer them now in the system. You have to go on individual

qualities to a good extent. Hopefully with as much educational background as possible, then you go on from there to see whether they are suitable or not ... I think there have been some terrific staff members there who have had very little education formally, but had a terrific interest and insight, and enough experience on their own to be pretty understanding people. Sometimes they are far superior to some university people we have had.

Personal qualities of happiness, patience and "understanding" were stressed most consistently by the staff.

I would ask, "Are you happy yourself, are you leading a normal, happy social life; fairly active, fairly well-balanced" ... First of all you yourself must be able to handle your own life well, you must have the capacity of making a good life for yourself.

A matron should have a great understanding of people. If you don't understand how a person feels or even thinks, you are a lost cause. You will never change them or their way of thinking.

Qualities of character and personality which would suit a matron for employment at the Women's Unit should also include those which will make her own adjustment to the institution easier according to one respondent:

Someone with a good sense of humour, a pleasant personality, not quick tempered. Someone with much patience ... They really should be patient, and calm, cool and collected - not someone who is going to be suffering from tension in about a week.

Standards of Excellence. The institution has set certain standards of custody and control to which a matron must adhere and against which her performance can be evaluated, but there are no definite standards set by the institution to evaluate a matron's rehabilitative performance.

Admittedly, this failure to set a standard may be deliberate on the part of the institution, for they may wish to leave the matron free to find her own best means of performing her rehabilitative duties. Many matrons appreciate the fact that they are allowed to find their own way of relating to the inmates - a manner which is in keeping with their general personality. But others feel that such a degree of latitude is not essential before a matron can feel comfortable in her role, and would welcome some standard against which they could evaluate themselves.

It may also be that the administration is not sure itself just what the most efficient means of pursuing rehabilitation are, and many matrons feel that this is the real reason why they are not given specific criteria against which they could appraise their work. The matrons would, on the whole, appreciate such a criteria however, for they do become anxious about the adequacy of their work. They know that periodic reports are made concerning themselves which are later used for promotions and salary increases, but they are not even sure of the basis upon which these evaluations are made.

One of the consequences for the failure to set a standard of performance with regard to rehabilitative functions seems to be a gradual increase of custodial concern of the matron. Matrons are able to evaluate their custodial performance, and are evaluated by others in this regard continually.

They come to feel that they should at least become proficient in these aspects of their role, since they are not too sure just how they are succeeding in other tasks.

This increased concern with custodialism does not present too much of a dilemma to those matrons who entered the work with a philosophy of rehabilitation which supports the need for rigorous control of the inmates' outward behavior. For those who feel that rehabilitation necessitates a basic change in ideas and attitudes, increased custodial concern carries with it an abandonment or compromise of former beliefs. As the matron becomes increasingly custodial, she must abandon practices of permissiveness and support which the "basic change" orientation to rehabilitation seems to view as essential practice. Unable to find specific or formal support for rehabilitative practices of permissiveness and support the matron may feel pressured into at least conforming to the custodial demands of the institution, but for some this change in orientation may involve real feelings of guilt and anxiety.

Patterns of Deviance. Because of the lack of standardization of the matron's role (outside the custodial realm) it is difficult to positively identify deviance of role performance. Broadly speaking, both matrons and inmates can identify some staff members who are either "too strict" or "too lenient", but the greatest public censure falls upon those who are inconsistent as to leniency or strictness. The inmates

and other staff members like to know "where they stand" and a matron who is inconsistent in rule enforcement or in temperament creates considerable strain.

Matrons feel uneasy about others whom they feel tell too much, or get too involved with the inmates. There is a general feeling that it is essential to maintain a certain degree of social distance, and that violation of this general rule of practice may have some rather unfortunate results:

They should know very little about your personal life. Your problems et c. should be kept away. If you tell them anything they build it up much more. It's okay to tell them you have been to a show, but not who you went with.

One matron I know of has told too much. She has been telling her problems to the inmates. Discussing experiences, part of your personal life is okay, but it should be nothing they can get hold of or make anything of. Telling your problems is going too far. I don't know why, but I just feel that it is.

I think you should be friendly, but you should maintain their respect ... keep your distance. If they get too close they can take advantage of you. I agree with not being friendly with them on the outside. They will use you very quickly if they think they can.

I heard a girl talking about seeing a matron she didn't like down on skid road, looking very slovenly. The girl said, "The matron said she was looking for someone, but do you think I believed her? I think she was just going to get a beer."

There seem to be two general currents of concern running through these observations. First, there is a recognition of the fact that if staff place themselves in a vulnerable position, either by "telling too much" or behaving indiscreetly

on the "outside" they may place themselves in the position of being ripe for blackmail. This blackmail may take the form of requiring a matron to carry messages for the inmates, both within the institution and to the outside, or requiring a matron to secure or transport contraband of various descriptions. That this type of coercion must occur is evidenced by the occasional reference to staff who "can be trusted to deliver a message" which appears in the context of some of the "kites" which are found from time to time. A matron who is being thus exploited will probably be pitied by other staff members, but if definite proof of her "illegal" activities exist, she is usually required to terminate her employment.

The second concern seems to be with corruption of authority through a loss of legitimation of the role. If a matron is found to behave in some significant respect similar to those whom she is expected to direct and guide within the institution, the result will probably be that the inmates begin to question her "right" to assume the authoritative role. Because the matron must rely so heavily upon her moral uprightness as justification for her right to be a matron (rather than her specialized training or skills in some capacity), any indication that she may be morally suspect may have devastating repercussions. A matron who has been seduced either by an individual inmate's portrayal of what she considers to be the good life, or by the general "rounder" orientation to life poses a very great threat to the legitimacy

of the prison as a whole. If a staff member (presumably the epitome of conformity and sobriety) can be persuaded to pursue the deviant life, who is to say that it is not in fact the better way of life? A matron who does tend to identify with a particular inmate or with the inmate group as a whole must also be brought about rather sharply if she is to remain on the staff.

The institution cannot tolerate deviance which actually results in custodial violations of a more significant type, and such a deviant would quite definitely be forced to leave her job. Therapeutic incompetence is not so easily evaluated, however, nor is it as strictly sanctioned. No one is ever dismissed simply because of inadequacy of this type. The institution tends to cope with the situation by seeking a suitable placement for an ineffectual reformer, one which requires little other than custodial enforcement.

Occupational Identity. Staff members at the Oakalla Women's Unit have no occupational identity aside from the organization within which they work. The title of "matron" is singularly lacking in descriptive connotations and the role does not in any way make sense if divorced in association from the institution. Staff members cannot describe themselves solely as "matrons" and expect to have identified themselves occupationally. They must elucidate by explaining where they are matrons as a minimum to establishing any kind of public image of their work. This dependence upon the

institution employing them is not merely in relation to their public identification but is also operative in relation to their very performance of the role, for their services have no market outside the prison. No one hires a matron for private purposes (at least not since the last of the privately owned and operated prisons were disbanded in England during the last century) resulting in complete dependence upon one source of employment.

The matron is stripped of occupational identity, at least in part, because she has no one specific standard of previous training and is not given any specialized training following employment. Matrons form a pseudo-profession group in that recruits are drawn from a variety of occupational groups which represent diverse training programs. Because there is a lack of standardization of "matronhood" and of training before assuming the role, there is little mobility of staff between the Oakalla Women's Unit and other prisons, either in this country or further afield. Only two members currently on staff have had previous experience in correctional institutions, and both of these came from England where they underwent a special period of training and orientation before becoming matrons in that setting.

VI OCCUPATIONAL STRAINS AND REWARDS.

Occupational Strains. There is little doubt that matrons find being a matron is hard work, and additionally

there is a belief prevalent that unless you do find your work difficult, you are not doing a good job. In reply to the general question "Do you think that being a matron is a hard job?" the following comments were made:

Yes! If you are going to be a good staff member it is a very difficult job. It's harder to be a group matron than to be working on custody as I am now, and harder to be a team matron too .. Group work is very demanding.

There is a lot of leg work, walking up and down those halls. Also if the kids are tense, you get tired.

Sometimes I think you have done your best job of work when you come off duty feeling you have achieved absolutely nothing. In other words it shouldn't be easy. As soon as you find it easier, you are not doing anything, not getting anywhere. You should really be meeting difficulties.

Some of the expressed "difficulties" revolve around the physical demands of the work, and others around the number of skills and kinds of knowledge the staff felt they should have in order to perform adequately. Other "difficulties" seem to revolve around rather characteristic strains experienced by the staff because of the nature of the work itself.

General and Special Norms. Within the total institution the supervisory role itself implies certain value conflicts, conflicts which become more acute when the supervisor is neither defined by himself nor by those being supervised as having professional training or qualifications which could lend authority to or legitimize the performance of this role.

In western society some very definite ideas and ideals

are in existence concerning the nature of the relationship which must exist between any two individuals before one can legitimately violate the privacy of or claim access to the possessions of another. Outside the familial type of interpersonal relationships with its incumbent high degree of mutual obligations and expectations of loyalty, only a very few of the professionally employed such as doctors and lawyers are given the privilege of infringing upon the privacy of another's body or personal affairs and activities. And even they cannot violate the prevailing norms of privacy at random, but only under very specific conditions which will presumably be in the best interest of their client ultimately.

In the interests of custody, however, the matron must infringe upon the physical privacy of others, and for purposes of treatment have access to a great deal of knowledge concerning the personal history of the individual inmates, closely scrutinizing their daily activities and observing the formation of attachments with other inmates in the institution. The matron may enter any room at any time, must read all letters written and all letters received by those inmates in her care, and has the authority to censor or withhold delivery of any of these letters. The matron may similarly censor all conversations between any two inmates, or refuse to allow certain inmates to associate with one another, thus forcing her value judgements and standards upon others who have no similar right to be concerned with the activities and private affairs of the

matron.

Differential accessibility which has its only foundation in legal definitions of superiority and inferiority, or worthiness and lack of worthiness, is difficult to accept in our society, both as an inmate and as a matron. As a consequence, the matron will probably experience quite strong guilt feelings when she performs these acts, as she is unable to immediately de-socialize or forget the usual patterns operative in society. In addition, these breaches of accepted social etiquette will probably have to be performed without the consolation of proving to be particularly beneficial either to the maintenance of security within the institution or to the welfare and rehabilitation of the inmates.

One matron expressed her feelings of distaste at having to read mail sent to the inmates under her supervision:

The only thing I don't like about the job is having to read their mail...(I)...sort of had a guilty feeling about infringing upon their privacy at first.

She went on to say that she managed to "get over" this feeling of guilt concerning their privacy in some spheres after "having the wool pulled over my eyes a few times", but she still felt uneasy about reading their correspondence.

Another source of strain revolves around the normal patterns of deference and demeanor whereby the young in the community usually address the elderly members of the community fairly respectfully, and refer to them as "Mr." or "Mrs."

rather than by their first names. Within the Women's Unit, however, all inmates are referred to by their Christian names. Young matrons especially find it difficult to adopt this rather "levelling" system of nomenclature. Age differences usually determine the freedom enjoyed between individuals too; older people are given the privilege of being more concerned with the private matters of the young than are the young expected or allowed to be concerned with the private matters of the old. Matrons, by contrast, are expected to counsel and guide inmates regardless of differences in age, because of their difference in legal status. This refutes the general norm that the "older" a person becomes the "wiser" he also becomes. The incongruous situation arises in which a very young matron not only advises an older woman as to what she should do, but also actually places limits on the behavior of the older woman (the inmate) and requires certain standards of behavior from the older woman while she is in the institution.

Because she felt the incongruity of her youth in the role of a matron, one matron mentioned that, "I feel I have my age against me. I don't inspire confidence." She expected that the inmates would feel she was too naive and inexperienced to be useful to them in effecting rehabilitation, regardless of how much formal training and study she had to her credit, which was, in this case, considerable.

Matrons apparently find it difficult to unlearn certain

general norms and replace them by special norms which apply to the prison situation. Once again, because there is little formal socialization into the role, the matrons do not have much assistance in making this transition. They seem to become reconciled to the special norms only when the general norms of behavior are somehow proven to be inappropriate.

Custody and Therapy. Ideological conflicts may be operative additionally because of the conflicting demands of custodial and therapeutic techniques which were discussed above. Frequently the matron must solve the dilemma of whether she will chose good custodial or good treatment means of dealing with the inmates. For example, from a treatment point of view it may be considered imperative for a matron to show confidence in and trust of an individual or a particular group. To do this, the individual or group would have to be given a considerable degree of autonomy in arranging and executing their own affairs with little or no interference from the matron forthcoming (according to prevailing views of "therapy"). Autonomy and privacy are detrimental to good custody, however, for long periods of unsupervised activity could conceivably provide just the opportunity necessary to secure contraband material, write illegal notes, or in extreme cases, actually make good an escape plan. Other problems will arise as to whether the matron should impose strict and consistent discipline for misbehavior or whether she should attempt to "understand" each inmate,

giving a more individualized type of attention. Performance dilemmas such as these are manifold, and for the treatment-oriented matron they will have particularly significant repercussions since at the present time good custodial measures are defined as mandatory, while good treatment measures are defined as being desirable rather than mandatory.

Because there is not a definite process of socialization into the role of the matron, it is probable that the matron will feel that her success or lack of success in role performance is due to some personality attribute rather than some more de-personalized "skill". The skills which the matron uses are those of persuasion and suggestion, which necessitates a certain degree of acceptance by those who are being persuaded. Rejection of the matron by the inmates frequently occurs in which case she may feel, and may in fact be rejected as both that which she as a matron represents, and as a person. Self-doubts and feelings of inadequacy which involve the whole personality rather than a specific skill will probably result, and the extreme physical and mental fatigue which the new matron normally experiences are probably a good index of the intense nature of the strain which she feels.

Rewards of the Occupation. Rewards from the institution for good service are seldom concrete or overt in nature, taking more frequently than not the form of an absence of sanctions. These latter can be in the form of verbal

reprimands from the senior staff or of a more subtle nature such as being assigned to poor shifts, poor inmate groups or poor work areas. No direct correlation can be drawn between work performance and work assignments, however, for all shifts, groups and work areas must have a matron assigned to them at all times, and the undesirable assignments will not always be made for the purpose of negatively sanctioning the poor performance of a particular matron.

Rewards experienced from the nature of the work itself were discussed by the matrons. One frankly admitted that a primary motivating consideration in her work was the financial independence which it gave her. She felt that she earned better wages at Oakalla than she could, with her particular training earn elsewhere. Others mentioned the specific events which made them feel that they had "done a good day's work" or felt pleased with their day's work.

I used to think on maintenance that I had done a good day's work when the kids were all eager and happy to work for me. When they had cleaned up well and there had been no hard feelings or no grumbling - when everybody went home happy. ... If you have a group of girls and are working with them it is easier to have a good day. When the work gets done, you can see something has been accomplished, the kids are all happy. It's hard to have a real good day (when you don't have a group).

Both matrons who had assumed more administrative duties than actual duties which involved them directly with the inmates indicated that they found their work less satisfying now. Apparently a warm, friendly social-emotional climate

satisfies most staff members, especially if they feel that they have somehow been responsible for the production of this feeling.

One matron mentioned her pleasure at "forming a relationship", either with an individual or with a group:

When I have reacted with the whole group, either in a positive or a negative sense. When I really get through to a girl. When working with Gail I felt really good when I finally got through to her ... the girl discovers where she stands, who and what I am.

Matrons involved in vocational training can glean their satisfactions from both the realm of achievement, and from the social-emotional realm thus:

When I have co-operative students who do well. I don't really fit in with the really disturbed people, I just seem to antagonize them.

When I can walk down the hall and every sick room is neat and clean, (when) the whole area is quiet and under control, etc. ... Sometimes like when a matron (from the Juvenile home) said Margaret was incapable of learning, she came to this conclusion after working with her for five years, and I was able to hand her an exam paper on which Margaret proved herself very capable of learning.

Rewards and satisfactions were also felt to be forthcoming from reports of former inmates who had apparently managed to avoid continuing in their delinquent career patterns.

When a girl can come to me and say she is going to make a change for the better, that she is going to make an effort. .. But when they really try, especially someone we have thought was hopeless. Or if you hear they are doing fine on the outside.

When a girl writes in and says she is still out, still behaving, and I usually know if they are lying. Or when I get a phone call from them.

Many inmates write to staff members at the institution following their release, and report on their whereabouts and their activities, frequently relaying their difficulties and mistakes as well as their triumphs. Matrons are always pleased to receive letters and calls, probably because this is an indication that they have really become a "significant other" to the inmate involved.

VII COMMITMENT TO THE OCCUPATION

Matrons view their attachment or commitment to their work at the Women's Unit differently. Some feel the work is similar to a calling, although the "calling" is rather generally to help people, not necessarily in this particular setting:

I feel my work is a calling, a desire to help people. It's a career too, of course, but it is more of a calling. This feeling is toward people in general. I don't mind where it is, or with whom I deal so long as I am doing something to help people.

One matron viewed her work as a combination of job, vocation and calling, depending upon the nature of the specific task at hand, the particular strains implicit in the task and the nature of the rewards gained from performance of the task.

There are days I feel like a Jack-of-all-trades, and master of none. I unplug sinks, fix electric plugs, etc., but if I were paid ten times as much, and if I weren't happy in this, I couldn't do it. The demands, the things it does to me emotionally are terrific. ... But then I realize that maybe I do a little more sometimes than is called for, and I know the government certainly didn't write a lot of things into the contract I signed with them. So is it a job, a calling, a vocation? It's just a combination. I really can't imagine being happy any other place. In my other jobs I have always dreamed of some other type of work; a dream job. It's a little bit of everything, and I see it as such.

Those who consider their work to have at least some features of a calling seem to feel that they are able to make some tangible contribution to the general goal of "helping people" because of their specific training, and because of their life and/or institutional experience before becoming matrons. Their goals are high, but they feel they had at least some of the prerequisites necessary to achieve their goals, and to gain satisfactions from a job well done.

Others were less inspired by the work, but found it interesting and challenging, and would not be willing to exchange it for another:

Do you mean how committed am I? I enjoy it, and would miss it if and when I do leave. At times I get tired of it because it gets very frustrating, but I don't exactly feel dedicated to the point where I feel we are really reforming people, or making great strides. I look forward to coming to work, and very seldom if ever come and am bored by what goes on around me.

I would rather work there than at a hospital which is what I was trained for. I like nursing

but I think I would work for much less pay at Oakalla. I wouldn't change Oakalla for more money. I can't see where I could go and be as happy and as interested as I am there, where it wouldn't be just a job after a while. I look forward to going to work.

I feel like a dedicated old mother. I wouldn't say it was a calling, but I like it. I'm more interested in this than in any other job I've had ... I read up on my job here, books on psychology and criminology.

All had some training and previous institution experience, but found being a matron more to their liking than the previous roles they had played. In a sense they were adding to their former occupational role rather than abandoning it. There were able to be as much as they had been trained for, and more.

All of the above seem well satisfied with their work and with their own contribution to the prison. Others are less satisfied, however, and feel frustrated to the point that they are disillusioned and plan eventually to leave the work:

At first I had the feeling that eventually I would find myself in the job. Well I found myself all right, and found I had nothing. I just can't contribute enough to stay in the field. I'm so much of a babysitter and so little of anything else. It was a worthwhile experience, however.... I'm disillusioned now, so at present it is just a job ... if you could really learn group work and develop yourself into some sort of a scientific tool, it would be worthwhile. There are so many stone walls, you are just bucking all the time ... I feel completely incompetent as a rehabilitative person in a more scientific sense.

The above comment is typical of those matrons who have come into the work convinced of the validity of permissiveness

and supportiveness as practices which are essential to reformation of inmates. Typically these matrons have had considerable education and have specialized in the social sciences, but have not had any actual training as therapists. They lack the specific training essential to pursue their rehabilitative goals, and have not found the necessary guidance and support to experiment with such practices at the Women's Unit.

Because they find they have become little other than custodians, these matrons (and others who will not compromise their philosophy of reformation) feel compelled to abandon this occupational role.

VIII SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

Relations to Society. In general it was found that the matron is in a rather unique position, for she is employed by a public from which her daily activities are systematically insulated. Prisons are isolated from the community both physically and figuratively, and the matron does not wish to dispel the protective shield of public ignorance concerning her work. She may wish greater freedom to experiment and, therefore, desire greater public support and understanding of her work, but she is not willing to work under the public gaze. Presumably she would like greater freedom to act as she sees fit, but is not willing to have any greater responsibility to the general public for her actions. The matron feels that she and her work are misunderstood by society, but she does little

to rectify the situation. She does not like to talk about her work to casual acquaintances, and when she is engaged in conversation she stresses the normality of her work and her clients rather than their more abnormal features. In private she is much more prone to stress the abnormal features of her work and of her clients, possibly as a way of justifying to herself (and to her peers) her lack of success in actually reforming prisoners.

Relations to the Inmates. The matron's relationship to the inmates is also rather complex. Because she expects the inmates to do more than merely comply with the custodial demands of their social status, she must somehow justify this expectation. The inmates could, presumably, merely sit in their cells from the date of their arrival until the completion of their sentences. There is a belief prevalent to-day that it is somehow "good for" inmates to work and to take part in active recreational programs, either as punishment or repayment for past deviance, or to somehow effect rehabilitation. The inmates are not entirely adverse to working and playing strenuously, partially because activity as such helps to fill the many hours before they will again be free. The very close contact which they must have with the matrons (because of the high ratio of matrons to inmates in the institution), carries with it an expectation that the matrons may actually permeate the protective shell of the inmate group. To meet this threat the inmates corrupt the

authority of the matrons by making a bargain with them. The inmates and staff seem to arrive at an unwritten agreement whereby the inmates agree to work and to take part in recreational activities (which saves the matrons from embarrassment at such atimes as the institution does come under public scrutiny), but this is done with the understanding that the matrons will not further disrupt the inmates by tampering with their attitudes or values. The matron is seduced into at least an outward agreement that imprisonment is perhaps just punishment for those who are caught, but that there can be little justification for imprisonment if the objective is solely to cure the deviant.

The Tasks of the Matron. Examination of the actual tasks of the matron at the Women's Unit indicated the priority of two; custody and internal control of the inmates and reformation. The custodial requirements, (and by extension, the requirements of internal order and control) must at all times be the first consideration, and further objectives of the staff or the administration can be pursued only to the extent that they are commensurate with good custodial procedures.

Along with these custodial requirements one finds an expectation that matrons should at all times attempt to reform inmates, and this consideration is at least verbally, ultimately the most important task of the institution. For this purpose the inmates are divided into small, homogeneous groups within which the matron can presumably perform the

requisite therapeutic functions.

Two Orientations to the Role. There seem to be two primary orientations to the role of the matron. These may be seen as two styles of playing the role which are related to two primary views of rehabilitation. The first philosophy of rehabilitation or reform seems to be based on a belief that inmates must learn to live within the limitations imposed by society, and that the most efficient means of teaching this lesson is to demand adherence to rather strict rules and regulations within the prison. The concern of the matron becomes one of perpetuating the system - supporting the administrative requirements and demanding obedience and high standards of work as object lessons in the achievement of reformation. This type of social control deals with overt behavior, and is not concerned with the subtler underlying motivational aspects of deviant behavior.⁵

The second philosophy of reformation is founded on a belief that inmates must undergo a fundamental change in attitudes and beliefs before any change in overt behavior can be achieved. Understanding, permissiveness and support of the individual are seen to be more important than perpetuation of the administrative system. This concern with understanding of the underlying motivational aspects of the

⁵Talcott Parsons, The Social System, Glencoe, The Free Press, 1951, p.299.

deviant's behavior is, according to Parsons, more effective as a means of breaking through the vicious-circle pattern of deviance.⁶ And presumably the convicted criminal has normally been involved in a pattern of activity characterized by the fact that attempts at controlling his overt behavior have succeeded only in driving the deviant further away from the norm.

It is not the intention of this study to categorize matrons according to dimensions of authoritarianism or custodialism as against permissiveness or therapy, for these concepts seem to have acquired connotations of implicit "goodness" and "badness" in recent years. The objective is merely to point to the fact that in this setting in which the matron is permitted (and perhaps expected) to have her own philosophy of corrections and to devise her own modus operandi, the above general patterns were found. One group seems to favour the usefulness of imposing control on overt behavior, the other favours bringing about a basic change in the attitudes and motivations of the inmates.

The matron is given little training in achieving these rehabilitative goals, and has difficulty in evaluating her own performance in this regard. There is no close supervision which is intended to foster the rehabilitative goals of the institution, and the administration has not set out in detail any standards of excellence against which performance could be rated. Although the absence of these standards of excellence

⁶Parsons, The Social System, p. 299.

(with regard to rehabilitation) may have been purposefully designed to permit individual freedom, the matrons interpret the absence of such standards as failure on the part of the administration. They assume that the administration does not really know how best to attain the goal of reformation either.

Given this lack of standardization one might presume that the matrons would be left free to act as they saw fit, but in actual practice this does not seem to be the case. The matron feels considerable pressure to do something with her inmate group; to have something to show for her time and energy spent, particularly since she cannot attribute any failure to produce results to limitations imposed by having to contend with massive numbers of inmates. She must fulfil the custodial requirements of the institution, and is subject to criticism and evaluation from both her peers and her superiors if she fails in this respect. Unable to support the merits of permissiveness either by appealing to administrative policies or by pointing to successes gained by use of this technique, the matron seems doomed to become more and more custodial in her approach. She can then at least justify her existence by exacting greater and greater degrees of compliance from her charges.

At the moment the structure of the prison is such that those with a concern for controlling overt behavior feel most comfortable on the morning (work) shift, and those with a concern for basic changes in attitudes feel most comfortable

working on the afternoon (socialization) shift. Given this migration and attraction of the staff to the two main shifts in accordance with their basic orientation to the role, it would appear that at the moment there is, even on the afternoon shift, greater pressure toward demanding compliance from the inmates than there is toward allowing for permissiveness. One would then be led to predict that over time the permissive components of the matron's work (even on the afternoon shift) would gradually be abandoned, and that although matrons working on the afternoon shift may remain relatively more permissive than those working on the morning shift, they would tend actually to become more concerned with securing control and overt compliance.

Under these circumstances one would also expect (and there is some evidence to support the fact) that those matrons who were unable to compromise their belief in the merits of permissiveness would be forced to abandon the role of the matron entirely. Powelson and Bendix have reported a similar finding in their study of prison psychiatrists.⁷ Only those psychiatrists as were able to accept the custodial regime and custodial philosophy of the prison could remain happily in that setting. As soon as the non-authoritarian

⁷ Harvey Powelson and Reinhard Bendix, "Psychiatry in Prison," in Arnold M. Rose, ed., Mental Health and Mental Disorders, New York, W. W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1955, pp.459-481.

psychiatrists "become aware of the irreconcilable conflict between Custody and Psychiatry"⁸ they leave the prison to practise elsewhere.

⁸ Powelson and Bendix, "Psychiatry in Prison", p. 473.

CHAPTER VI

WOMEN AS CAPTIVES

One of the more obvious reasons for the dearth of information concerning female deviance in the legal sphere has been the apparent low rate of crimes committed by women as compared with the incidence of crimes committed by men. Academic and public attention has, for practical reasons, been focused almost exclusively upon the nature of the male offender, the nature of the offences habitually committed by men and the nature of the institutions to which male offenders are banished. It has recently become apparent, however, that the actual incidence of female deviance is considerably greater than the official records indicate. Pollak and others have pointed out that the types of crimes most frequently committed by women are usually less easily detected than crimes committed by men, and that women frequently instigate crimes which are then carried out by men.¹

Further to this, there is very good reason to believe that the traditional chivalrous attitude toward women prevails within law enforcement agencies and law courts to the extent that at every stage leading to incarceration there is a greater tendency to be lenient with women. Police will frequently be content to warn a female offender rather than press formal charges against her. If a woman does appear in court she is seldom convicted on her first appearance

¹ Otto Pollak, The Criminality of Women, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950, p.151.

before a magistrate. Fines and suspended sentences rather than prison terms are more frequently given to convicted women than men, and prison sentences, when they are levied, are usually less severe than those given for men convicted of similar offences. It might well be argued then that women are usually more firmly established in deviant habits than are men when they receive their first prison sentence.

On the other hand the loss of prestige and social status which accompanies imprisonment is probably greater for women than for men. In this respect, deviance among women is viewed much more harshly than is deviance among men, for women are somehow expected to represent, more closely than men, the moral ideals toward which society aspires. Reactions to female delinquency are characterized less by fear than by disgust and rejection, and are expressed overtly by less punitive legal procedures, but a greater reluctance to forgive. Society is willing to provide more elaborate facilities for imprisoned women on humanitarian grounds, but is, at the same time, less willing to permit social reintegration of the female offender than of the male offender following release from prison. In spite of the probable positive features of more pleasing physical surroundings the prognosis for rehabilitation of the first offender would then, presumably, be less favourable for women than for men.

The primary concern of this study is, however, with the nature of the social milieu within which female prisoners live rather than with speculations concerning their social

prognosis. The writer has relied heavily upon the frame of reference derived by Gresham Sykes in his book The Society of Captives to determine the ways in which women experience and adapt to the pains of imprisonment.²

I. THE DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY

The most painful aspect of imprisonment for the inmates of the Oakalla Women's Unit, as for the inmates of the maximum security prison at Trenton, New Jersey, is the deprivation of personal liberty. Regardless of the nature of the institution members of a prison society become members by default rather than achievement, and do not willingly become inmates. The sacrifices which must be made in terms of severed social relationships and patterns of activity are, therefore, deeply resented. It is true that occasionally individuals will ask to be admitted to the Women's Unit for a period of time, but this occurs only when their life situation outside the institution has become intolerable to the point that a period of institutional living would provide a brief respite from the demands of life on the "outside". A few requests for temporary admission have come from addicts who wish to withdraw from narcotics, but who do not have the facilities or the will-power necessary to do so on their own. In such instances, if permission is granted by the Warden,

²Gresham Sykes, The Society of Captives, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1958, pp.63-108.

the individual becomes a guest of the institution, and can leave again at will. Such cases can scarcely be compared with those in which the inmate must remain in the institution for a period of time which has been arbitrarily designated by the courts.

The inmates can maintain contact with the outside world only through letters and visits, both of which are subject to the approval and censorship of the institution. The institution recognizes the difficulty of maintaining relationships of worth under these circumstances and is anxious to encourage "good" relationships so far as is possible, but it also reserves the right to discourage and prohibit the continuation of relationships which are felt to be "bad" or detrimental to the best interests of the inmate involved. The general policy is to allow all sentenced inmates to write four letters each month, one every Sunday afternoon. Unless there is a very good reason for making an exception to the ruling no more than four letters are allowed to any one inmate, and the letters may not be written at any time other than Sunday afternoon. This ruling was presumably designed to facilitate recording and control of writing materials and letters sent from the institution. Those inmates who are waiting trial in the Women's Unit are allowed to write two letters a week, as it is felt this may be necessary to allow the inmate to prepare her defence in the courtroom. All outgoing letters must be censored by the afternoon Group Matron, then by the censor

in the Main Gaol. Providing no other inmate is mentioned by name, nothing derogatory is mentioned concerning the institution and no information which might be detrimental to the custody of the institution is divulged, the women may, ironically enough, write to whomever they please. Such is not the case with incoming mail.

While incoming mail is unrestricted as to quantity there are certain restrictions and stipulations which are designed to discourage undesirable correspondents from writing. Letters which do not pass either the censor in the Main Gaol or the matron censoring the mail at the Women's Unit, and mail from those correspondents who are considerable to be unsuitable, is all placed with the inmate's "effects" where it will remain until the day she is released from the prison. The inmate has no way of knowing if she has received mail which has been diverted into her "effects". Mail which has been sent from another penal institution will not be delivered nor will mail which has been written by a recently discharged inmate. Friends, either male or female must be "on the street" for at least three months before their correspondence will be allowed into the institution. And for those inmates who have lost contact with relatives and friends outside the institution this limitation severely limits the number of contacts which they are able to maintain with the outside world. This regulation is the source of considerable grievance and the inmates rather bitterly wonder what harm a card or letter from a friend can do, particularly if they have associated

with one another continuously for a period of months prior to the friend's release from the gaol.

Men and women who are legally married or who are blood relatives are allowed to correspond and visit with one another if both are in prison at the same time, but many of the marital relationships of those currently in the Women's Unit are of common-law rather than legal status. Unless there are children resulting from such a common-law union, the relationship as a matter of policy is not recognized by the administration. Neither letters nor visits are allowed between such a couple, regardless of the duration of their relationship. Although the policy was designed to discourage the development of "gaol-house romances" during incarceration, the inmates feel this is an unfair ruling resulting in unnecessary worry and anxiety between some couples. One inmate has observed, in the process of a group discussion, that the institution should not make a categorical ruling, but should consider the merits of each case more closely.

There have been girls in here that have common-law husbands down below that have been with them over a period of years, not months - not a romance of any kind. Still, they are not allowed to visit them because they haven't a marriage licence to produce. But something should be done to look into things like that and allow them to visit, to make sure if it's on the level or otherwise. Because that girl is going to worry her whole time in here.

Visits between inmates at Oakalla take place once monthly on Sunday mornings in the Main Gaol, for those who have been approved for writing and visiting privileges. The

visitors are separated from the inmates by a glass wall and speak to one another by telephones. These visits are limited to twenty minutes, as are those in which outsiders come to the institution.

There are three main types of visits at the Women's Unit: screen visits, table visits and family visits. The most frequent of these, screen visits, are conducted in the Visiting Room of the main building. The first few visits of any inmate are "screen visits" during which the inmate sits behind a wire screen while talking with her guest. The visitor's room can accommodate only four or five visitors at one time, and a matron is always present to supervise the visits. If the administration feels that there is no cause for custodial concern, inmates may graduate to "table visits" which eliminate the necessity of the screen barrier. Still no physical contact is allowed between the inmate and her visitor, and a matron will also be present throughout the visit. For either screen or table visits, visitors may come only once a month for each inmate, and may visit for only twenty minutes. Visitors may come any day of the week except Sunday, providing they phone first for an appointment. There is an average of two or three visits scheduled every day.

Family visits are much less formal than screen or table visits but are, as the name implies, restricted to the immediate family, including children. On special

occasions such as Easter and Christmas the inmates send out carefully screened invitations to their families requesting their presence at these two-hour visits. As the invitations have been screened by the staff before they are sent, supervision of the visits is minimal. Inmates and their guests are allowed to mix freely, refreshments are served, and favours are sometimes provided for the children. Children under eighteen years of age are not allowed into the Women's Unit as visitors except for family visits of this kind.

Most inmates express grave concern for the welfare of their children while they themselves are in prison. Many observers, however, point out that these same individuals will often fail to visit their children or observe their birthdays or other anniversaries when they are in the community. It is quite true that many habitual offenders are incapable of giving their children the care which they require and frequently welfare authorities have to interfere and provide foster home care for these children. The time spent in prison provides time for reflection, however, and many mothers spend their time busily writing letters demanding reports and photographs of and attention for their children. Habitual offenders often remark that while in the institution they endeavour to compensate for their negligence in relation to religious duties while in the community; they may have similar motives for zealously concerning themselves with their children during their imprisonment. Although more responsible

members of society may doubt the sincerity of concern expressed by women who are not consistently conscious of their maternal obligations, the anguish experienced by some is quite genuine. Although they may not make adequate provisions for their children themselves, the thought of losing custody of or claim to their own children is indeed tragic to most.

Women who are pregnant and expect to be delivered of their babies during their incarceration face an additional dilemma. If the child is illegitimate, welfare authorities must be assured a proper home will be provided for the child before they will allow the mother to keep and care for the child herself. In any event, mothers are separated from their babies within four five days following delivery, at which time the mother is returned to the Women's Unit from the Vancouver General Hospital and her baby placed in a foster home. Mothers are frequently required to pass a three month trial period in which they must prove themselves fit to care for the child before care of the child will be entrusted to them by the welfare. For many , it is highly unlikely that such a trial period will be successful, and many are never allowed to keep their own children. Although they may admit this policy is in the best interest of their children, most mothers find the relinquishing of all rights to them difficult in the extreme and resentfully refer to welfare workers as "baby snatchers".

Isolation from the community places an additional

hardship on those who are addicted to the use of alcohol or narcotics, for these commodities become inaccessible abruptly. Aside from the psychological implications of their loss, narcotic addicts have severe physiological reactions to this loss. Imprisonment is doubly fearful to the addict, for she must endure a prolonged period of withdrawal.

The loss of liberty does not only mean the loss of contact with friends and family, or the loss of goods and commodities which give meaning to daily living, it also implies rejection by and removal from society. As Sykes has observed, the inmate is not only isolated from society, but is rejected by society as well, and she is not insensitive to this rejection.³

First offenders in particular suffer from the loss of prestige and the adverse publicity concomitant with imprisonment, and are acutely self-conscious of their new social status. They are often apprehensive about tours of the institutions or trips which they may have to make outside the institution during which they may be easily identified by the public as inmates. The first offender is fraught with ambivalence, for she is resentful of the society responsible for her new group membership and identification, yet is at the same time unwilling to accept identification with and membership in the new group. It may take some time for the first offender to learn to reject her rejectors as have the more experienced,

³Sykes, The Society of Captives, p. 67

and to rely upon the acceptance and support available with a positive predisposition toward membership in the inmate group. Adoption of the inmate role is presumably less painful if the new self-image enjoys the support of others with whom one can identify, and identification with the inmate group necessitates rejection of society in general, and the custodians in particular.

It is probably easier for addicts to accept imprisonment from the point of view of self-definition because of the strong reference group upon which they are able to rely for support and acceptance. In view of the heavy concentration of narcotic addicts in the Women's Unit and the fact that the addicts form the most consistent element of the population, examination of the addict group may prove fruitful before further analysis of the inmate social structure is attempted. The addicts see themselves, and are seen by others as an identifiable group within the institution and within the community at large.

The Addict Group. Without attempting to present any hypotheses concerning the reasons why one might become a drug addict, or what particular social or personal needs are satisfied by the use of narcotics, some fairly concrete statements can be made about the nature of the drug addict sub-culture itself, that is, about the structure of this particular group which is defined by society as being deviant. Then, having examined the structure of this group, some

assumptions can be made about the functions which the group will perform for the individual members, regardless of the reason why that individual first joined the group.

The most significant norm shared by the members of the drug addict group is that an individual need not always be confronted by or contend with reality. While the habitual rejection of reality is not necessarily defined as the most desirable adaptation to the situation, it is similarly not defined as a particularly undesirable means of adaptation either. The specific method which this group employs to reject reality is that of becoming "high" or "coasting" as the result of an injection of heroin. Heroin is, however, a habit-forming narcotic, so that one must eventually either continue to have injections at regular intervals or face the prospect of having withdrawal symptoms develop rapidly. Developing a "habit" or dependency upon the drug is, therefore, interpreted as something of an occupational hazard; it is not desirable to have a habit because of the drastic repercussions which addiction has upon the shaping of the whole life pattern, but the enjoyment of being "high" apparently sufficiently compensates for the negative corollaries of addiction.

Addicts who voluntarily withdraw from drug usage are admired because of the intense physical discomfort to which they are subjecting themselves, regardless of whether the withdrawal is accomplished with medical assistance or not.

Similarly, any addict who succeeds in refraining from drug usage for a period of years, months or even weeks is considered by fellow addicts to have a great deal of will-power, but there is no particular stigma attached to the individual who begins using narcotics again after a period of abstinence. A parallel can be drawn between the attitude which drug addicts sustain toward their habit, and that which smokers sustain toward smoking. An habitual smoker may find his habit annoying and cumbersome and, in spite of the difficulties involved, break himself of this habit. Other smokers may voice their approval of this act at the time and may even express a wish to do the same themselves, but if the habit is resumed it will not necessarily be viewed as a grave personal failure.

Drug addicts, in Vancouver at least, form a very distinct and relatively solidary group. There is always within the group a solid core of readily identifiable "users" who define themselves, and are defined by others both within and outside the group, as drug addicts. In addition to these members can be found former addicts or, as they are defined, those who have temporarily disposed of their habit, and potential addicts, or those who "play" or "chippy fix", but have not as yet formed a habit or experienced withdrawal symptoms between injections. All addicts in Vancouver assimilate their narcotics by means of injection, and most rapidly graduate to the point where they "mainline" habitually. A "mainliner" will inject the narcotics directly into a vein, as the reaction

to the injection is then more positive and more rapidly achieved. Those who sell the drugs, the "pushers", almost invariably use narcotics themselves and are, therefore, considered to be members of the addict group as well. The addicts have a special argot which is peculiar to their form of deviance, and which covers all the stages of drug procurement and usage.

Part of the solidarity of the addict group stems from the fact that those within the group find themselves directly opposed to many of the norms and values of the larger society. They are defined as a deviant portion of the society, and society feels that their deviance should be at least severely restricted and discouraged if not eliminated. To protect themselves and permit some degree of persistence in the preferred activities, the addicts must react to these suppressive measures by presenting a united front to society, and must demand that their members maintain absolute loyalty to the group. It is not surprising that within this context the renegade or "informer" meets with sanctions which not infrequently take the form of physical violence.

Because of the nature of the drug habit, and also because it is subject to so much enforced condemnation, addicts must interact with one another frequently but secretly on most occasions. Few addicts can afford to amass a stockpile of drugs, as each capsule costs approximately three dollars, and an average habit requires about four capsules

of heroin each day. They must keep in contact with one another, then, to find out who does and who does not have drugs for sale, where contacts can be made, and which locations are currently under the scrutiny of the police. Daily activities revolve around the fact that heroin must be purchased at regular intervals, and to attain this goal the addicts must become involved in intrigues, plots and counter-plots throughout their waking hours. As one addict has observed:

We are used to leading such exciting, active lives that if you don't use (narcotics) there just doesn't seem to be anything else to do.

The average addict must have at least twelve dollars each day to spend "supporting the habit" above and beyond what may be required for food, clothing and lodging, and the latter needs are frequently only haphazardly met. Even if steadily employed, the addict finds it necessary to use illegal means of obtaining sufficient funds, and so shoplifting, picking pockets, con rackets, gambling, and invariably for the women, prostitution become the order of the day. Many addicts also sell narcotics so that they can support their own habits, but the dangers of arrest are such, and the penalty for conviction so much more severe for "pushing" than for just "possessing" narcotics, that only the very astute find "pushing" worth their while. A woman who can successfully support herself by "pushing" rather than prostituting enjoys more prestige than the woman who is "on the street",

but for the average female addict prostitution is considered to be a more practical means of earning the requisite amount of money. It is not uncommon for a woman to support not only her own habit but her husband or boyfriend's habit as well, although the "old man" who is able and willing to support himself and does not expect his wife to "work" for him is highly prized.

Addicts will frequently claim they are not really criminals at heart; they would not resort to theft or prostitution if they could obtain narcotics on the legal market at a reasonable cost. They argue that addiction itself should not be considered a crime, for the only person injured by drug usage is the addict herself and even this injury is not inevitable. A comprehensive set of rationalizations exist as part of the addict folklore which tends to place the onus for her deviance upon society, and sublimate anxieties and conflicts which such a social definition may otherwise elicit. Addicts at the Women's Unit frequently state that although it may be unpleasant and undesirable to prostitute, for example, they feel it is a necessary evil which must be tolerated when you become an addict.

I am an addict, so I must prostitute (steal, shoplift, etc.) whether I like it or not.

If, on the other hand, the moralizing public challenges the justification for using drugs in the first instance, the addict can again place the onus for her behavior on the public by presenting herself as an utterly resourceless and unwilling

product of the evils of the social system.

When I get out of gaol I have no money and no place to go if I want to go straight and stay off drugs. The only way I know of in which I can make the money I need to get a start in life is to prostitute. I hate prostituting, so I take a "chippy fix" to keep from hating myself too badly, and then I'm off on drugs again.

Addicts who have spent a period of time in prison no longer require narcotics physiologically, but generally begin using narcotics again within twenty-four hours after their release. Justifications for this re-embarkation habitually revolve around the fact that the only people they know are drug addicts and drug pushers, or that they are unable to find a niche in legitimate society because of their previous drug record. Again the addict sees herself as the victim of circumstances rather than as an individual lacking in self will or moral fibre as the public most frequently characterizes them:

On my year, when I left, I got a cab. I went into a hotel, checked in, and I didn't have that much money really, you know how much (you have) when you leave here. And all that day I just wandered around and I was really miserable. You're just lost, and then I thought, "Well, to heck with it, I'm going where the rest of them are." So I went down and scored and had a fix, just after doing ... (a year).

Loneliness was also mentioned by another as a strong motivating factor in a return to association with drug users.

You'd be surprised how lonely it is on the outside. You can know a million people and still be lonely when you're looking for the right kind of people.

It is generally conceded that a former addict cannot long associate with current drug users without again beginning to use drugs herself.

The difficulty of losing the reputation gained by once using narcotics is frequently commented upon, and there is a tendency to resign oneself to the idea that once you are an addict the public considers you always will be an addict, and "if you are going to have the name, you may as well play the game". The vigilance of the police force is thus frequently blamed for a return to narcotics usage, either because they inform new employers and associates of the previous history of drug usage, or because they will not leave the former addict alone.

When I went out (after my eighteen months) I went out with the intention of leaving drugs alone. I didn't want to use junk. I was determined. I wasn't using and I never touched it for three weeks. And I got picked up (for investigation) just the same, so I thought, "The heck with it" ... and started using again.

Every city you get into, as soon as the local police find out you're there, the first thing they do is jump you and choke you because you are a known addict. They don't give you a chance to see if you want to stop. They take it for granted that you're still using before finding out if you are or not. They're the worst of all.

The "choking" mentioned above is part of the regular tactics used by police in Canada who are attempting to make an arrest and have sufficient evidence of drug possession to warrant a conviction. Addicts normally carry any narcotics in their possession in rubber containers in their mouths so

they can "swallow" and thus get rid of any evidence in the event of an arrest. The police "choke" their suspects to prevent their swallowing the narcotics. Under Canadian law the only grounds for conviction of a drug addict is actual possession of narcotics. In some other areas, fresh "needle marks" are sufficient grounds for conviction, but not in Canada.

Those who try to find new associates, or try to avail themselves of assistance profered by the "right kind of people" indicate that they are always suspected of using narcotics anyway, and they resent the fact that they are not shown more trust.

I went to see this woman and all she said was, "Well, I'm glad you came", but I could see her watching me all the time to see that I wasn't going to sneak into the bathroom and take a fix or something.

And another thing - we're not accepted by society. Like for being a hairdresser, you can't own your own shop because you are or have been a drug addict. You can't leave the country. ... if you wanted to leave the country, you couldn't go to the States because you're a drug addict. So what chance really do you have to get away from your environment, to meet new people when you're restricted because you have been a drug addict?

Again, the reaction seems to be one of rather hopeless resignation to the fact that acceptance into legitimate society is almost impossible and the feeling that one may as well find what consolation one can in the satisfactions and pleasures of "having a fix".

Addicts are acutely aware that non-addicts view them with a mixture of fear and fascination, and are probably

somewhat proud of this reputation in spite of their protestations to the contrary. There is an aura of mystery around addiction and the addict so far as the ordinary citizen is concerned, and addicts are not too anxious to have this mystery dispelled. As long as drug usage and drug addiction remains inexplicable, some legitimation can be claimed for its overpowering seductiveness which again absolves the addict of some of the responsibility for her actions. Addicts are willing to have others believe that they are the victims of a compulsion to use narcotics, but they are not willing to have others believe they become less worthy as human beings because of their addiction:

If you're an addict you're ostracized completely from society. They (people, citizens, square johns) think that you're wild. Like my father, for instance, he won't turn his back on me in the house 'cause he thinks I'm going to kill him for an aspirin or something ... people think of a drug addict as not looking like any other human beings ... They think you're green or something. They think you're animals.

Even among other criminals, and within the prison the addicts claim they are discriminated against, and resent the inference that they are worse than people who forge cheques or perform abortions:

They come in (to the prison) and they think we're some kind of thing, something with leprosy or something. They look at us like we were something else. In the meantime they've done something ten times worse than we have. We haven't harmed anybody but ourselves.

Prison matrons are also accused of discriminating against the addicts by their general attitude, and by the

fact that addicts are subjected to the drug treatment, and must spend their first days of imprisonment in isolation:

In the meantime, what's worse, drug addicts or somebody that's given people abortions? That's murder ... The (matrons) treat them as if they're human beings. They don't treat us like that.

Addicts feel that they are blamed for many crimes and activities of which they are not really guilty, and again refute the negative picture held by members of legitimate society concerning drug addicts and the nature of their behavior. The following discussion between four young drug addicts within the Women's Unit is an attempt at vindicating addicts as a group:

- A. ... people that don't come from Vancouver or don't hang around the corner, they don't know no drug addicts till they come here. ... They read the papers and that's all they know about drug addicts, just what they read in the papers.
- B. They don't trust you or nothing. They think you'd beat them for everything.
- A. They're scared to turn their back. They think you'll stick a knife into them or something, just like you read in the papers. You read the papers; somebody gets attacked, it must have been a drug addict, it must have been a drug addict! In the meantime, half the time the person that did it isn't even a drug addict.
- C. I think it's common knowledge that drug addicts don't usually commit crimes of violence.
- D. And especially when there's been some real gruesome murder or eazape (slang for rape), they always think, "Oh, an addict!" Meanwhile, an addict hasn't got the energy!

Rejected, persecuted and misunderstood by society, addicts rely upon one another for acceptance and support, and come to think of their group as an assemblage of martyrs.

Within the Women's Unit, as has been previously mentioned, the addicts are probably the backbone of the inmate body, for they receive the longest sentences and are, aside from the alcoholics, the most habitual offenders. The addict ideology is the most obviously discernable ideology within the institution. Although the alcoholic offenders undoubtedly have some influence upon the social structure of the Women's Unit, the addicts probably represent the hard core of the institution and certainly have the most prestige and the most influence within the institution. The alcoholic offenders serve such short sentences that they are scarcely able to partake of institutional politics, and generally prefer to remain aloof from them. The following opinions, expressed by inmates of the Women's Unit are mainly those of the addict segments of the population.

Squealers, Pigeon Birds and Hack Lovers. To face the oppression of the custodians, inmates demand and maintain a fierce loyalty toward one another in their relationships with the prison staff. The first and most important lesson which a new arrival to the Women's Unit must learn is, according to the inmates, "to keep your mouth shut", and that:

Your matron is an enemy from the minute
you come in that (institution) door.

Those who do not keep the enemy out by keeping inmate activities and information in the group are known as "rats", "squealers", "pigeon birds" or "squeak birds". The incidence of "squealing" is, as far as the staff can ascertain, extremely

low, which could be attributed to the fact that there really is not much to tell or that there is not much that the staff does not already know about the inmates and their activities within the institution. A more realistic appraisal would probably reveal, however, that the sanctions against the "squealer" are sufficiently stringent that few are tempted to indulge in it. The addicts presume that any squealing which does occur is originated by non-addicts who do not really belong, and who have not adopted the "Rounder" code of ethics prohibiting such action. The "Rounder" code of ethics prohibits the divulgence of any information whatsoever which could lead to the arrest or conviction of another "Rounder", and as one inmate has observed:

When you're living on the wrong side of the fence you have your own set of rules - everyone, no matter who it is - that you live by, regardless of whether you're in or out, you live by them. You're on the other side of the side of the fence, you see.

Regardless of the personal animosity which may exist between two individual members of a group, against the staff the situation can only be handled by the presentation of a solid front according to the "Rounder" (and in this instance, the inmate) code.

Even if everyone in the whole group never raps (talks) to each other, if there's a beef with the matron ... they usually stick together even if they hate each other ... I don't think there's any (tattling). Maybe in some (groups) ... there isn't any in this group, I know that ... Rounders aren't made that way. If you'd do that, you'd be a stool pigeon.

The seriousness with which squealing or tattling is viewed is reflected in the following observation:

My God, that (tattling) is just like taking the stand against somebody else. If you're a stool pigeon in here you're going to be one on the street too.

It is interesting to note in passing that the recent installation of a two-way intercommunication system throughout the institution was greeted with fear, hostility and outrage by the inmates. They feared that their conversations could be overheard regardless of where they were being held or what precautions were made. The loudspeakers were, quite significantly, immediately given the name "squeak boxes". The inmates eventually devised a means of retaliation which they felt would meet the challenge of the intercommunication system at least half way. Wherever possible, unit radios were placed directly beneath the loudspeakers so that, with the radio volume turned to full capacity, the "squeak boxes" would be able to receive only the noise of the radio. Confidential conversations could then be completed in other parts of the unit without fear of being overheard.

Sanctions against anyone suspected of squealing to the staff vary from ostracism by the rest of the group to the threat of physical violence if the situation is felt to present a serious enough threat to the inmate body. There have been instances in which inmates who are known stool pigeons, both within and outside the institution, have had to be transferred to other provincial institutions for their own

protection. This drastic action has only had to be taken when the information divulged has had some effect upon the drug market or the addict group.

The "hack lover" as distinct from a "squealer" actually prefers to associate with and talk to the matrons rather than the other members of the inmate group. She rejects other inmates by deliberately identifying herself with the staff. She may or may not pass on secret inmate information to the staff, but if she does, it is generally agreed that her actions are not motivated by any malicious intent or desire to obtain favours from the staff. The hack lover simply does not consider herself to be a member of the inmate group. The group eight members contemptuously describe a hack lover in the following terms:

(She is) someone who "fawns" over the hacks; agrees with everything the hack says ... Maybe a matron will sit in a chair or somewhere and she'll sit right beside her and talk away. Some of them will tell her things, some of them won't, but they're always on the matron's side and they're always doing little things for the matron - combing her hair, complimenting her, giving her the juice all the time.

... She'd rather talk to the matron than to the rest of the inmates ... but the rest of the kids don't like it.

The inmates resent a hack lover's obvious preference for the staff, for this preference involves a negative reflection upon themselves. The hack lover is eligible for membership in the inmate group but she apparently does not care to assume this membership, scorning it in favour of the matrons.

Her behavior represents a slight to the inmates and refutes the legitimacy of the traditional animosity between inmates and the prison staff. Although the hack lover has been rejected by society by being committed to the prison, she has not adopted the usual pattern of rejecting the rejectors by joining the group.

II. DEPRIVATION OF GOODS AND SERVICES

Life in the Women's Unit could not be considered to be austere from the point of view of either physical surroundings, the clothing provided or the food which is served. The rooms are attractively painted and have tile floors which are kept highly polished. There are curtains, bedspreads and mirrors in each room, and inmates may, at their own discretion, also have ornaments, plants and even goldfish in their rooms as well. The institution can provide all the clothing needed including dresses, blue jeans, polo shirts, pyjamas, etc., and supplies are sufficiently large that these items may be laundered and re-issued at least once, and usually twice, each week.

The food situation is also more than adequate, and because the Women's Unit is broken down into small living groups, the food is generally prepared in small quantities in these individual units. There is an opportunity for experimentation and innovation in food preparation, and there is considerable competition between the women to see who can

prepare the best meals. In the main building, where food is prepared in larger quantity, there is less opportunity for innovation, but there can nonetheless be little complaint about the calibre of food served. Some commodities such as coffee and butter are rationed, but there is little opportunity for an individual to steal or take more than her share, for these supplies are closely guarded by the staff. Such supplies as are "stolen" by the inmates are usually of the variety which would form the basic ingredients for a "brew". Aside from such occasional clandestine undertakings, there is little reason for conflict or competition between the inmates for possession of the goods and supplies provided by the institution.

Supplies which inmates may provide for themselves include cardigan sweaters, flat shoes, make-up and earrings. There is considerable swapping and borrowing of these accessories, especially if a girl is to have a visit or is going on an excursion outside the institution for any reason. Inmates may also make purchases of canteen supplies from their own funds. Each inmate is limited to a weekly maximum of six packages of tobacco, six packages of cigarette papers, and six chocolate bars or packages of lifesavers. Magazines may be purchased in unlimited quantity from a selection of twenty-five which are approved by the institution. Soap, toothpaste and other toiletries are also available from the canteen, but there is no strict limitation upon the quantity

which can be purchased, although an order may be refused at the discretion of the staff if it appears that one inmate is obviously providing for several others as well.

The accessories and supplies which the inmates must provide for themselves are highly prized, but there is little theft of these items. When something is stolen, the culprit is frequently assumed to be "someone in group six". A typical observation is the following:

Most kids in gaol realize that they've got something and they need it. They realize that in gaol things are hard to come by. It happens. (stealing). It has happened ... but mostly in group six though.

One of the factors in the apparent low incidence of theft in a situation in which "things are hard to come by" is the small group formations within the institution. It would be difficult to steal from another member of the same group without others in the group being aware of the situation and theft outside your own living group is difficult, because of the rigid policies of segregation enforced by the staff. The sanctions against a known thief within a living group could be sufficiently severe as to effectively curb this type of deviance. Within group six, however, the group formation is extremely loose and there is little group tradition, for many members of the group are there for very short periods of time while awaiting trial or while serving five day sentences. Consequently there is little opportunity for other members of the group to be able to effectively pressure a deviant into

conformity.

Group Six members also have a reputation for stinginess in relation to their belongings, at least those in Group Six who are not drug addicts. A young addict made the following observations based on her experiences while in Group Six:

But you know in group six - like I came in on a theft charge and all my money was left at the police station - ... I couldn't go among the girls in there that are mostly in there for drunk charges and that are kept in group six - for cigarettes. But the kids in for drugs ... they haven't got much more than me, but they all gave me cigarettes and made sure I had stuff. But people that are up on drunk charges and that, they're stingy.

Again, there is a distinct tendency to attribute categorically the more positive characteristics to the addicts in the institution, the more negative characteristics to the non-addicts, and especially to those who have been charged with liquor offences.

It seems a drug addict will help anybody. An addict will be in for a long time so they have so much money to last them a long time and they can't get anymore. You'd think they'd be hanging on to their things since they think, "Gee, this has got to last me." Where drunks are in ten days - what's the difference to them? In ten days they're going to be out anyhow, so what do they care? You'd think they'd be generous with it.

The non-addict offenders in for very short sentences are usually at a financial disadvantage within the institution, for they are not in prison long enough to solicit funds from someone on the "outside", whereas the addicts, with their longer sentences, do have time to solicit funds, contrary

to the above comments.

Cigarettes are the main form of barter in the Women's Unit, and can be used by those who are well provided to buy favours from the not so well endowed. As was mentioned above, the financial resources of the institution are spread unevenly among the inmates, and tend generally to reflect the social stratification of the institution. Those who are serving short sentences of three months or less are chronically without funds, and seldom have funds sent to them from the "outside". Characteristically the "short timer" is a Native Indian woman who has been charged with some liquor offence. Even if her friends or associates did have money which they could send to her during her period of imprisonment, she is not out long enough to cultivate a reliable provider and is not in long enough to write for money from her family.

The addicts, on the other hand, usually have a well cultivated "mark" to whom they write when in need of cash or clothing. The "mark" is regarded contemptuously by the inmates, but nevertheless is guarded jealously because of his great utility. When writing to their "marks" the inmates frequently say little other than "I love you, please send more money", but the desired effect is achieved. They will probably have a husband or boyfriend to whom they also write, but the "mark" is relied upon for financial assistance.

Because of this discrepancy in financial position, the addicts can often buy favours from the "short timers"

in exchange for cigarettes. These favours often involve delivery of a message to someone outside the institution or the promise of some desired news of the "outside" the next time the individual comes to the institution. The addicts often view the "short timers" in much the same way as they view their "marks", they are useful, but easily "had".

Freeloaders and Butt-snatchers. There are few well developed argot roles reflecting a concern for the distribution of scarce commodities within the Women's Unit, but there is a recognition that status within the institution does depend to some extent upon the possession of these goods. "Freeloaders" are those who parasitically live off the generosity of others. They will borrow cigarettes then neglect to return them, or if they honestly do not have any cigarettes of their own, will place others in a position where they can scarcely avoid offering a cigarette without losing face themselves. A "free loader's" career is usually short-lived, however, for once they are on to the game, the inmates will retaliate by brazening out any situations and forcing the "freeloader's" hand. Intimidation and physical coercion are almost unknown as means of obtaining scarce goods at the Women's Unit.

The "butt-snatcher" makes a habit of collecting old cigarette butts which are left in ashtrays around the Unit. She then re-rolls the tobacco accumulated from these butts using papers which she has either borrowed or "found". The

"butt-snatcher" is considered to be completely lacking in pride, for most women claim they would rather go without cigarettes than be seen thus collecting and smoking old butts. If the "butt-snatcher's" plight is considered to be a legitimate one (if she has an exceptionally long sentence to serve, or is known to be extremely dependent upon her smoking habit) she may gain the sympathy of her group members. The group will then try to help her save face either by pretending not to notice her activities, or by quietly providing her with extra long butts themselves. Group members will often try to support a less fortunate member of a group, but since all normally smoke heavily it is difficult to manage on only six packages of tobacco each week. Some groups also have a joint sports fund which can occasionally be delved into to buy cigarettes for those who have no money whatsoever.

The "Going Out" Outfit. There is considerable covert competition among the girls in outfitting themselves for their release date, particularly among those who have served fairly long sentences. Understandably they would, after months of incarceration anxiously look forward to wearing civilian clothing again for the first time. The tremendous emphasis placed upon the purchase of a completely new "going out" outfit suggest that it has more implications than the pure satisfaction of feminine vanity. Although they may have perfectly adequate and suitable clothing in their "effects", most inmates insist that their "marks" provide them with a completely new ensemble

including a dress, coat, shoes, handbag and accessories. It is obvious that the quality of the "going out" clothing becomes an important symbol of financial status within the institution. The outfit is selected with as much care as would be warranted in the selection of a gown by a debutante at her "coming out" ball, although the function of the costume is rather different in these two instances. The debutante presumably seeks to impress those she is "coming out" to meet; the inmate seeks to impress those she is leaving behind. Certainly the reception given to the released inmate is seldom as grandiose as the send-off she is given by the institution. This discrepancy probably accounts for some of the post-release depression traditionally experienced by those who have served fairly long sentences.

III. THE DEPRIVATION OF HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Much attention has been paid in criminological literature to the problems which the deprivation of heterosexual relationships pose for men in correctional institutions. This deprivation poses rather different, but nonetheless equally grave, problems for women in a correctional institution. It is true that at Oakalla the women are not completely isolated from men, for there is one male member of the staff, male doctors make daily visits to the Women's Unit, and male inmates and guards are fairly visible to the women, but the women are nonetheless unable to form relationships with these

men, or even to have prolonged association with them.

Relationships with male inmates. Those women who have boyfriends or common-law husbands "down the hill" in the men's section of the institution frequently try to correspond with them by means of illegal "kites". Window writing is another form of communication between the two units, but is less efficient and more easily detected by staff than are kites, so is seldom used. Much ingenuity is required to devise a suitable "kite line" (route) which will ensure delivery of the "kites" to the proper personnel without staff intervention at either unit. Inmates who are regularly "on the kite line" or who actually run the kite line will sometimes make arrangements to find correspondents for their friends so they may also get on the kite line. A kite line romance may also develop after one inmate sees, and is attracted to another, makes inquiries to establish identity and probable reactions to advances, then sends a "kite" requesting return correspondence.

After the initial formalities have been dispensed with, notes between the correspondents rapidly flourish to include extravagant promises of undying love and plans for a future life together. They are rich in pornography and references to erotic daydreams which they have entertained of one another.

Information of strictly custodial significance is rarely included in the "kites", at least not in those which

are successfully intercepted and confiscated by the staff. The rationale for the preoccupation of staff with preventing the writing and delivery of these "kites" can only then be a concern for the moral welfare of the inmates. Some members of the staff feel there is undue stress laid upon the negative functions of "kiting" between the men and women, and feel that as long as the women are "kiting" to men their interest remains heterosexual which is, in this setting, no small achievement.

Relationships between female inmates. Lesbianism among the women prisoners is fairly extensive, particularly among those who are serving long sentences or have spent the major portion of their lives in institutions of one kind or another. Many of the lesbian attachments are purely "gaolhouse romances" and do not either originate in or carry over to the "outside", but this does not detract from their fervor within the gaol.

There is little differentiation terminology used by either the inmates or the staff when lesbianism is discussed in the institution. Those involved refer to their partner indiscriminately as "my girl" regardless of whether "my girl" denotes the active or the passive partner. One of the two will quite definitely assume the masculine and the other the feminine role in the relationship, the masculine partner being identified by the very short ("butch") haircut adopted, the lack of makeup, and the fact that she

wears blue jeans at every conceivable opportunity, with the cuffs turned down. The romances are frequently very transitory (in spite of the protestations made to the contrary), partly because of the constant changes in the population of the institution. One partner may be released, at which time the remaining partner will seek out, or be sought out by another. It is not uncommon for the girls to change their sex roles as they change partners, thus a "little boy" may drop the accoutrements of her former role and become transformed into a "little girl" in her new relationship as is evidenced by the curled hair and the resumed use of makeup. There are, of course, those who never change from the masculine to the feminine role, and there seems to be more stability in the masculine lesbian role than in its feminine counterpart. Those few individuals who are considered to be "real" lesbians (they continue and prefer homosexual relationships even when heterosexual relationships are possible following release) are almost invariably "little boys" and never forego this preferred role.⁴ They alone are considered by the staff to

⁴Some of the tragi-comedy of life at the Women's Unit was illustrated by reactions generated when one of the drug addicts who is considered to be a "real" lesbian, became pregnant. This particular woman is very masculine in appearance and consciously fosters her masculine image wherever possible. Around the institution she specializes in being a handyman and doing the heaviest tasks on any work team assignment. Although she is greatly sought after as a partner in the institution, both because of her very mannish demeanor and because of her pleasing personality and prestige within the institution, she, like most drug addicts, prostitutes to support her habit when released.

When it became apparent at the beginning of one of

have a legitimate problem, and are treated considerably more tolerantly providing they do not become a menace by molesting or seducing the very young, the uninitiated or the unwilling.

Although a few inmates are quite frankly horrified and shocked by any evidences of lesbianism, inmates claim there is a tendency to become more tolerant, then perhaps become intrigued as time goes by and one sees more evidences of the phenomenon. In a discussion with a group of young addicts, the following rather astute observations were made concerning involvement in lesbianism:

- A. If you could write or visit the guy you're going with, you wouldn't have the desire to go with another girl.
- B. If you could write to ... (boyfriends) and everything, you could tell them everything you felt. But you can't even see them, you don't know what they're thinking about. Maybe they don't even want nothing to do with you ... you don't even know. You start thinking about it and then you think, "To heck with it". Next thing the girl is going with some (other) girl because she has no other outlet for her emotions.
- C. And as "A" says, when the girls first come in they see it and they laugh at it, and you keep on seeing it and you think, "Well, maybe there is something to it." And so you find a girl you like and the girl likes you and you start going with her and that. And like, there's nothing really that goes on in here ..

her sentences that this woman was pregnant, all attachments and lesbian activities were immediately suspended. After the child was delivered she quickly re-established her former status and resumed her former role. Both she and her prospective partners felt that some deference must be given to the appearances of the situation, and the incongruity of a pregnant "little boy" could not be overlooked.

A. There's no physical part in here, it's purely emotional.

There is actually little opportunity for relationships to be much more than emotional attachments for one another, as much attention is given to preventing just this. Those who are known to have "crushes" on one another are carefully placed in separate groups as far as possible, and staff surveillance is extremely vigilant. Matrons do not like to appear overly anxious about "the lesbian problem" as it is known, for they can then easily be placed on the defensive. The inmates can convincingly accuse a matron of "having a dirty mind" to which there can be no adequate reply. If the inmates feel that a specific matron is particularly anxious about lesbianism, they may also feign an interest in one another (or even in the matron) with the specific intention of upsetting her.

Lesbian partners usually make every effort possible to see and speak with one another. They will gaze longingly into one another's eyes, perhaps hold hands, then part reluctantly as the staff endeavours to move them apart. Occasionally girls will be found kissing or petting one another, at which time they will be severely reprimanded by some matrons, and ignored by others.

As tokens of their involvement with one another wedding bands or gold crosses are sometimes exchanged and "wished on" one another. Cigarette cases, lighter cases and sometimes clothing boast the initials of the partners, and for the

extremely devoted, home-made tattoos may also be attempted. Tattooing is punishable by a loss of remission time, however, so few are sufficiently brave as to carry their devotion to these lengths. Partners become extremely possessive of and and protective toward one another, insuring the other has sufficient tobacco, or rolling cigarettes for one another and so forth. Love messages are also sent through mutual friends, and "kites" similar to those written between the men and women are exchanged at every opportunity. There is little attempt to hide the relationship either from other inmates who are not involved or who do not approve of these activities, or from the matrons unless it is deemed advantageous to keep the matrons uninformed. The only circumstances in which this would be the case are those in which partners in a lesbian relationship are in the same living group and wish to remain together. Then to prevent staff from making a change in the group composition, secrecy will be attempted.

The emphasis placed upon the emotional rather than the physical aspects of the relationship possibly explains in part why these relationships are not more strongly censored by the non-participants. If we accept the "emotional" explanation given by the inmates, these relationships may be viewed primarily as an opportunity to be close to another individual, to maintain some sense of self-identification and importance, as distinct from institutional anonymity, by becoming significant and important to at least one other in the institution.

The implication is that if other opportunities for expressions of intimacy and emotional involvement were available, women would not be the preferred object of their affection.

On the other hand, in a continuation of the above discussion, inmate "C" indicated that she thought that a lesbian relationship could be more gratifying than a heterosexual relationship. The degree of understanding which one woman may have for another is, in her opinion, what makes the difference:

...you can talk to this girl and she understands you and she agrees with you and you can tell all your troubles to her. You get on the street and you want the same girl around and you find another girl and it just builds up to that and there's nothing but that and you don't even see men anymore. You don't want your husband. You've had a husband and he's been in gaol. You don't want him anymore and he doesn't want you, so you keep going with girls

Do you think that a man understands? I think a woman understands a woman better than a man does. You can say things to a woman you can't say to a man. You can tell her your troubles and she'll understand, whereas a man, to them it's just nothing.

She feels that men do not really "understand" as well as do other women, and there is a definite tendency to want to maintain a close "understanding" relationship with a woman once it has been found. She has not, by her own admission, had this type of relationship with a man herself, and feels that it is impossible to attain. For this inmate a lesbian relationship is not only a situational development but something which she might consider carrying over into her life on the

"outside" as well.

There is a possibility that many of the women at Oakalla Prison Farm are in sympathy with inmate "C's" comments, for it must be remembered that the majority of those incarcerated in the Women's Unit prostitute habitually, regardless of the particular offence for which they have been arrested and convicted. The prostitute's "mark" is viewed with a mixture of greed and contempt, for he pays for the sexual favours extended by the prostitute, but emotional attachment or involvement is neither expected nor desired by either the prostitute or the "mark". The double exploitative nature of prostitution might lead to a general disillusionment with men because they apparently are not interested in or are not capable of committing themselves emotionally to another. Habitually dealing in sexual favours given without emotional gratification, the prostitute seems willing, (if the opportunity should arise) to satisfy her needs for emotional attachment by having love without physical expression.

Lowell S. Selling has reported that in an institution for juvenile female offenders the girls developed violent "crushes" on one another.⁵ They found emotional expression by fondling, occasional kissing and the exchange of presents and obscene notes, but there was no actual physical homo-

⁵Lowell S. Selling, "The Pseudo Family", American Journal of Sociology, Vol.37, (1931) pp.247-253.

sexuality. These young girls could apparently find compensation for sexual frustration in these intimate pseudohomosexual relationships. These relationships seem to be very similar to those which develop at the Women's Unit.

There is a fairly tolerant attitude toward lesbianism at the Women's Unit, at least on the part of the non-participating inmates. Women who are involved will try to insulate their activities from the men, however, particularly if they have a husband or a boyfriend either in the Men's Unit at Oakalla or waiting for them in the free community. Although the women tolerate lesbianism among themselves, men who have any kind of vested interest become greatly disturbed at the prospect of having their girlfriend participate in a "gaolhouse romance". Their grave concern probably reflects both a fear of having the affection of the other alienated, and a fear of being thought less of a man by his peers. The inference may be made that he was unable to hold his girlfriend's interest, possibly because of sexual inadequacy.

It is, of course, difficult to establish reliable statistics on the incidence of either homosexuality or lesbianism, but it is unlikely that more than twenty-five per cent of those in the Women's Unit become involved in any type of a lesbian relationship during their imprisonment. In discussing the general question of homosexuality in his book, My Six Convicts, Wilson has stated that lesbianism is more prevalent in prisons than is homosexuality.⁶ Wilson has

⁶Donald Powell Wilson, My Six Convicts, New York,

postulated that part of the reason for this claimed higher incidence is related to the fact that the female is regarded as more natively bisexual than the male, both socially and scientifically. For these same reasons he suggests that there is less concern over this more extensive participation in lesbian relationships. One cannot at this time state with any certainty whether there is more or less lesbianism existent in prisons for women than there is homosexuality in prisons for men. But it does seem apparent that there is less concern for such lesbianism as is apparent in prisons for women.

The feminine role is more bisexual in our society, encompassing characteristics and attitudes which are considered to be admirable masculine traits. In general a higher value is placed upon "masculine" attributes of rationality, strength and courage than upon the feminine attributes of emotionality, dependency and timidity. From a practical point of view, however, women can only be permitted to enjoy the luxury of their purely "feminine" attributes when men are available to serve as a foil and to get things done. Therefore, a mother is expected to be protective and competent in relation to her children when her husband is not around, and an unmarried career woman is expected to be self-reliant and aggressive in the absence of a masculine social partner.

Whereas men are scorned and ridiculed when they display "feminine" characteristics of emotionality and dependency, women are admired if they display, within limits, "masculine"

traits of rationality and self-reliance. It is less important for the preservation of self-image and prestige to be a woman among women than it is to be a man among men.

The masculine lesbian role does not carry with it the same stigma as does the feminine role in a homosexual relationship. Characteristics of protectiveness which the masculine lesbian displays toward her feminine partner are not too alien to the expectations of society in the mother role. So long as the "mothering" traits of protectiveness and affection are more predominant than the erotic components of the relationship, the "masculine" role player does not too blatantly refute the broader concepts of the feminine role.

As has been mentioned earlier, the most stable role in the lesbian relationship is the masculine (aggressive) one, and the masculine role players usually enjoy considerable prestige, particularly if they are able to play a "handyman" role concurrently. Women who are able to display competence in the masculine spheres are very useful in an all female society. Both inmates and matrons tend to let the masculine lesbian play the role of the man around the institution, although in the realm of sexuality the staff may systematically thwart their endeavors. The general passive role of the female not only allows the aggressive "masculine" lesbian to play a generalized masculine role but also encourages the emergence of the masculine role player.

The unconscious support given to the masculine role

player probably accounts for the stability of the masculine lesbian role and ultimate assumption of this role for those involved in lesbian activities over a period of years.

The woman assuming the passive role in such relationships is subject to more censure than is her aggressive counterpart. Although she does not reject her feminine role entirely by assuming this new pattern of behavior, she may be accused of being rather opportunistic, and interested in the relationship for less noble reasons than is the protective "male" partner. Whereas the masculine lesbian may be viewed as being altruistically motivated (this may not in fact be the case, of course) by considerations of protectiveness toward another (not unlike mothering), the feminine counterpart may be accused of making a "mark" out of a fellow inmate; exploiting the affection of the other.

IV. THE DEPRIVATION OF AUTONOMY

One of the primary complaints of the inmates at the Women's Unit is not so much the number of rules and regulations existing, but the number of interpretations of the regulations given by different staff members. Although regulations cover most aspects of behavior within the institution, the inmates feel that the objective of the regulations is unclear both to themselves and to the matrons. One Group Four member has commented:

I don't mind routine and discipline if it applies to everyone in the same way because I can adjust myself to any routine. I like the rules to apply to everyone. I like each individual to be treated equally 'cause we're all prisoners.

Oakalla apparently compares unfavourably with other institutions in this regard. Other prisons (according to the inmates) have one set policy which applies to all inmates under all circumstances. At Oakalla, on the contrary, the claim is made that the rules are not always made known to the inmates, that the staff play favourites and that different matrons expect different standards of behaviour from the girls:

As far as getting along with the kids, I think I get along pretty good, but hitting it off with the matrons is pretty hard for me 'cause they don't tell me what I'm supposed to do, what is expected of me, what is my duty. And then they jump on me because it's not done and I don't know I'm supposed to do it ... I think they should give (a girl) ... a list in her room of what .. (is expected of her).

The matrons kind of think that you just automatically know it all even if it's your first time in, because most of the kids - they've all been here quite a few times and they do know the routines. So, when a new girl comes they probably figure that she knows the gaol.

It may well be that the inmates desire the establishment of a highly predictable framework of regulations so that they will be able to adjust themselves as comfortably as possible within this framework and "do easy time". Similarly, predictability would afford a better opportunity

for the development of systematic patterns of evading the institutional requirements.

Inconsistency of enforcement as well as lack of standardization of rules was felt by one inmate to result in considerable tension within the institution:

I think they should have standard rules for all the matrons on all shifts to have the same rules for all the girls ... not different girls have different rules. We're all doing time. We should all be treated alike ... If I ask to do something and they say "no" and then someone else asks to do it and they could turn right around and let them do it, I'm going to feel bad about it, aren't I? And I'm going to talk to her about it and next thing you know there's going to be that tension.

Although the matrons may justify these circumstances in terms of individualized treatment, the inmates do not feel this is a valid justification for such behavior. They interpret differences in latitude allowed to signify favouritism for one inmate over another. Day to day inconsistencies also produce anxiety, for the inmates feel that they are never sure whether they will "get away with" something or not. Group Eight members commented on this dilemma in the following terms:

One day ... I can really tell you off, and the next day I'll say exactly the same thing to you ... and bang - you're crimed or something. Most of the matrons are real inconsistent.

Yes, one day they'll let you get away with something and the next day they won't.

Not knowing what is expected of them (or perhaps more accurately, not knowing how far they can go in reaction to the

system or the rules), the inmates are caught in a dilemma. There is agreement that in many respects the inmates "get away with" considerably more than would be tolerated in other penal institutions, but that some other actions which they feel are insignificant to the institution meet with severe sanctions.

You get away with so much here that you wouldn't get away with in another gaol, and some things you can get away with in another gaol ... what seems quite natural to you here, bang, you're in trouble.

... You tell them (the matrons) to get out of your room or something 'cause talking is so free, I know most gaols are a lot stricter in a lot of ways than this one, you got to admit that, but yet they're so petty about little things.

At _____ you know what your privileges are, "epis", so you don't expect anything. Not like here ... You know you can't tell a matron to shut up and get away with it and maybe the next matron you tell them to shut up and you're blowing time. There you can't do nothing so you don't do nothing.

The Group System. Many of the "petty" rules referred to above concern restrictions demanded by the "group system". The group system was devised by the administration to facilitate the achievement of some therapeutic goals by breaking the population of the institution into small more manageable groups. These small groups not only permit greater custodial supervision, but provide a living situation similar to that found in the family as well. By having a small number of inmates interact with one another over a long

period of time, (and with one or two "steady" matrons), re-socialization to more positive societal values could presumably be more readily accomplished. Theoretically the inmates would learn how to get along with one another (the assumption being that they have not learned this, else they would have learned how to get along in society), by first learning to respect the rights and needs of one another in the living group. It is assumed that ultimately this respect for others would become generalized to the extent that the inmate would come to respect the limitations and demands made by society as a whole.

The "Socialization" program of the institution (as the afternoon shift is known) is based entirely upon these small living groups. All activities must be undertaken on a group basis so that either all members go for a walk, play badminton, etc., or all must remain in the living unit. Only if an inmate is ill, or must spend time studying for a vocational training course will she be excused from the group's scheduled activities. The inmates disparagingly refer to this all or nothing policy as "grouping and trouping". The practice results in considerably increased activity for some inmates who would much prefer to be left alone to "do my own time". The inmates resent having to schedule their activities entirely according to the wishes of the majority at all times. One Group Four member has interpreted the objective of the group system as being a desire for universal

conformity among the inmates:

They not only want us to dress alike, to look alike, they also want us to think alike and act alike. We're supposed to stop thinking and let them do our thinking.

Restrictions upon personal autonomy are very far reaching, and the inmates feel that there is also a drastic loss of individuality.

To perpetuate the group system, such rewards and punishments as are available to the matron and to the institution are geared to the group level rather than to the individual. For example, if a group member is caught "kiting", the entire group is punished in some way for this offence. It is hoped that this practice will mean that the groups themselves will assume greater responsibility for the behavior of the individual members, exerting greater pressure for conformity for the general good of the group. Such internal pressure is thought to be more effective than external pressure or coercion from the staff. Rewards must also be earned by the group as a whole. If the whole group performs well all may attend a desirable program event (usually a concert performed by semi-professionals from the community). If one member of the group misbehaves, all must stay home from the event. Achievement of rewards is not dependent solely upon individual performance, but upon group performance.

The inmates object to this policy of collective

treatment because they feel it is unfair to the individuals, and because application of the principle is not completely consistent. Group Eight members aired their views on the topic as follows:

- A. And another thing, getting slashed because somebody in your group does something .. they give themselves a tattoo or they write a kite, so your slashed from a concert or something. In the meantime, somebody's behind their own door locked in and you're locked in your room, how (would you) stop them from writing a kite, even if you were going to? You can't!
- B. It shouldn't be up to us to stop them anyway. It's not up to (one) inmate to tell another inmate, "don't do that", you know.
- A. You know what they think. It's like (the warden's) idea of the group system because if somebody misbehaves in that group, then the whole group can be punished for it. So the whole group is going to give that girl a rough time and she's never going to do it again. But it doesn't work that way 'cause we're not made that way ... If --- writes a kite 'cause she's got an old man down the hill, maybe she's really wired for the guy, we aren't going to say, "Look, we don't care if you are wired for the guy or not, you're not going to write to him. We want to go to the concert" ... We know how she feels and we're certainly not going to give her a rough time for it ... so where does the group system work? That was the idea of it and it doesn't work, so why have one?

This claim to monolithic "togetherness" is not as flawless as it may appear at first sight, however, at least not throughout the entire institution. Other groups do not enjoy this same level of cohesiveness, and do not unequivocally support the actions of their fellow members. The effectiveness of the group system for insuring group con-

formity seems to decrease as institutional experience of the group members increases. The Cottage groups (made up primarily of first offenders), frequently have arguments and differences of opinion because the behavior of one member has resulted in a hardship being imposed upon all. In these groups the strong anti-staff norms of the addict groups have not been so highly developed.

Group Eight also objected to the form of bribery which exists in the Women's Unit whereby the staff give and withhold privileges in accordance with the behavior of the group. They felt this method of gaining compliance place them (the inmates) in the category of children who could be persuaded to "eat your supper and then you can have your cake":

I don't like the way they bribe you ...
"Now you guys be good kids or you can't go to the concert" ... Here you got privileges but then you've always got to do something like -- you know -- you always got to do something for them. You're always bribed. You've got to be good, and good for a week or you don't go to a concert.

They've got a lot of strings, and they're going to pull them if you say something (wrong).

The second rationale for the development of the group system revolves around the extremely varied nature of the population in the Women's Unit. Although fifty-nine per cent of the population is made up of narcotic users, and another thirty-three per cent are problem drinkers, these offenders range in age from sixteen to sixty years, and reflect, even

across these age differences, marked differences in criminal sophistication. There is a definite need to protect the relatively naive from the influence of the more criminally sophisticated inmates, and an additional felt need to separate the narcotic users from the non-users. The group system is, then, also an attempt at dividing the institution into homogeneous groups which will simultaneously protect the innocent and insulate the knowledgeable.

Group members are expected to remain strictly within their own groups except during the work program, at which time they are expected to remain strictly within their work placement. This means that the inmates are not only physically separated from one another, but in those instances which afford physical proximity they are not allowed to talk to one another. Group Four observed that:

We haven't even got the privilege of talking to other groups. We go to the library we go up to the top floor and the first thing our matron says as she opens the door is "Sssh, don't stop, don't visit, girls." You're supposed to walk right down that hall, look neither to the right or left, and go through the door into the library. Naturally you're going to want to say "Hi".

The women feel that in many cases placement in a particular inmate group is very arbitrary, and can see no reasonable explanation for insistence that suddenly associates and friends of long standing no longer speak to one another. Group Three, which is situated with Group Seven on the top story of the main building observed that:

... the way it is on the top floor here .. somebody you work with all day, or have known for fifteen years - suddenly you can't talk to them because they are in another group.

Aside from the annoying proliferation of rules and regulations which the inmates feel are extras brought on by the group system, it is annoying and frustrating to them not to be able to choose their own personal friends and associates, even within the restrictive sphere of choice available in the prison. Although the institution explains that certain group associations are forbidden because they are not good for the group members involved, the inmates would like to be able to choose for themselves those relationships which are and those which are not good for them.

Division of the inmates is such that the Native Indian liquor offenders are normally kept together in the huts. Non-Indians charged with liquor offences are occasionally placed in the huts as well, for they too receive very short sentences. The minimal security provisions of the huts are considered to be adequate for this group of inmates, leaving the medium and maximum security units for those elements of the population which are considered to be greater security risks.

Most inmates feel that first offenders, especially those who have no previous experience with narcotics, should also be segregated, particularly in view of the tendency for non-addict first offenders to begin using narcotics almost immediately following their first release from Oakalla.

Addicts in the Women's Unit attribute the tendency for young first offenders to begin experimenting with narcotics to curiosity which has been engendered as a result of the conversations which have been overheard between addicts:

They hear us talking, get curious, wonder what it's like and try it. Curiosity is the main thing. Usually no amount of talking you do can discourage them. Also, non-users who are arrested for narcotics feel that they will have the name for the rest of their lives, so they might as well be using. Most of us started out of curiosity, although we were probably warned.

The addicts claim that they dislike seeing a non-user begin to use narcotics, and are adamant in their belief that an addict will rarely knowingly "give a non-user her first fix". They do not, however, extend this feeling of responsibility to the point where they would avoid talking about narcotics in the presence of a non-user. To prevent contamination of the non-users, the addicts feel that non-users and narcotic addicts should be rigidly segregated from one another, and to this extent they approve of the group system. They feel this segregation is grossly inadequate at present, however, in view of the fact that the work teams allow for intermingling of the two broad groups in question.

Some of the attraction felt by the non-addict in relation to narcotic usage can probably be explained by the strong group feeling existing among the addicts. The first offender considers herself to be an outcast of society, and unless she feels strong ties to some non-addict group

outside the institution, either her family or a group of friends who continue to be supportive toward her in spite of her imprisonment, she may wish to join the addicts so that she will be acceptable to and feel she belongs to this group at least. As a non-addict offender (particularly if she is not of Native Indian parentage) she suffers the pains of imprisonment without benefit of the compensations of having group support for her actions and attitudes. The first offender who does not aspire to join the addict group has a good chance of never returning to the prison. The first offender who admires and is attracted to individual addict or addicts as a collectivity probably has a very poor rehabilitative prognosis.

There are a few inmates who are first offenders, but have been charged with being in Possession of Narcotics. The staff is usually quite anxious to try to deflect such individuals away from further narcotic usage, particularly if they are very young. The reasoning behind this grave concern and concentration of staff effort is that it would be easier for addicts of short standing to move away from drug usage than would be the case for the more deeply emeshed older addicts. Older addict offenders refute this theory, however, claiming that the new addict is not interested in abandoning her habit as she is still too intrigued by the life associated with addiction. The new addict has not seen many of the more negative features of addiction,

so will probably continue using and wanting to use narcotics for some time to come. Empirical facts tend to bear out the more pessimistic predictions of the inmates in this regard:

... the kids that first come, I don't care what anybody says, they think they're big wheels. They like it (using narcotics) so they're going to come back whether they go over to the Panabode (Narcotics Rehabilitation Unit) or where they go, they're going to be back two or three more times before they get fed up, and then they might not get fed up. But there's lots of kids .. maybe in group three, that have still got a chance ... they're fed up with coming to gaol ... some of them would really like the chance but they won't get the chance (to go to the Panabode). They put the first offenders in and those kids will all be back.

The inmates feel that rehabilitation can only be accomplished if the subject is sincerely motivated to be rehabilitated herself, and that it is pointless to try to rehabilitate someone who is not so motivated. There are definite overtones of resentment in the following commentary upon the means of selecting the Panabode group members which they feel is employed:

Most of them go against their will. They're told, "You go!" People don't get rehabilitated here of their own free will. It's up to you if you're going to be rehabilitated, not the front office. The front office picks a likely looking suspect that's all.

Annoyance and perhaps fear at the possibility of being forced to change a life style and system of values is evident in the above. If the girls decide of their own volition that

they want to be rehabilitated they resent the meagre resources of the institution. Otherwise they want to be left alone to pay their debt by "doing time", then return unmolested to their former way of life.

These inmates, like most deviants, we would suspect, like to feel that they are not really different from other people, except by choice. If they are alcoholics, cheque forgers or drug addicts they like to think that their behavior is a reflection of a conscious, rational choice which they made at some time, not a symptom of deep social or psychological maladjustment. As one group three member stated:

Most of us like to think we don't need a psychiatrist. There is really nothing to be gained from telling a person why they do it. That's not going to stop you from liking it, and that's the main thing. You like it (in this instance, using narcotics) and you don't want to quit.

Inmates exhibit a mixture of apprehension and contempt for the rehabilitative ability of the institution or any part of the institution's program when discussing this general topic. When specifically asked what they felt they would require before they could be rehabilitated, most inmates stated that all that was needed was assistance following release from the prison. This assistance would include employment, a place to live, clothing and sufficient money to tide them over until they could support themselves:

We need a different kind of help - backing, money, etc., when we are on the street, and non-addict friends ... When all your friends are addicts you get bored all by yourself. You go to see what your friends are doing, and boom, that's it.

They, like the matrons, are not too sure what rehabilitation is or should be, and it is not uncommon to hear an inmate remark that, "I was sentenced to rehabilitation and I never got it". They are torn between a feeling that one can somehow be given rehabilitation (like an injection or a pill) whether it is wanted or not, and a contradictory feeling that unless the individual wants to be rehabilitated, unless she has made up her own mind and has enough will power of her own, there is nothing which anyone else can do which would be of any use.

Conformity and Rebellion. The group system not only represents a classification of the inmates according to the type of offence committed and duration of the sentence given, but also represents fairly distinct types of reaction to the deprivation of autonomy. The groups may be seen as representing stages of socialization into deviance, but they also represent stages of socialization into the prison society. Clemmer⁷ has described socialization and adaptation within the prison as a process of "prisonization",

⁷Donald Clemmer, The Prison Community, Boston, The Christopher Publishing House, 1940.

and this concept may be of some value to us in consideration of the Women's Unit. Reactions to the loss of autonomy become rather characteristic of each group, and among the addict groups, Group Eight and Group Four represent polar extremes. Group Eight, the least "prisonized" group reacts to oppression by the staff by overt rebellion. Group Four, the most "prisonized" group in the Women's Unit, reacts to oppression by apparent overt conformity but covert resistance. Group Four complies with the staff on important matters of policy but has learned the subtleties of nonconformity in the smaller matters. They appear to be co-operative, and are seldom disobedient to the point where they could actually be sanctioned or punished, but their attitudes and values remain untouched, and deviance is consistent in the "safe" spheres. Defiance is carried out on a small scale in this group, but it is nonetheless satisfying as the following discussion concerning the rule against smoking in the hallways indicates:

Now this is very small and petty, but I'll walk down that hall every morning with a cigarette in my hand and just wait for someone to say something to me. And if they don't I'll take a puff as soon as I go in the door- (of the dayroom). That's just how small and sneaky I get ... I don't know if it's to antagonize them or defy them or something, but in the morning, it satisfies you.

I know somebody who walks down with one not lit and she does it pretty near every day.

It is rather interesting to note the discrepancy of interpretation given to inmate behavior by members of Group Eight and members of Group Four. Group Eight, as has been

mentioned above, is composed of rather rebellious, ambivalent narcotic offenders, typically in their late teens and early twenties, known as the "brats" of the institution. To this group, a directive from the staff is almost considered to be a challenge to the inmates, and must be, if not initially rejected, at least questioned. In speaking of themselves they rather proudly note:

Nobody gets along in here really. You can't because ... you notice all Group Eight make frequent visits downstairs (to the Isolation unit).

In the opinion of Group Eight members the inmates in Group Four were considered to be "institutionalized, my dear!", and in comparing the two groups, they made the following pointed observations:

- A. They never go to the hole. They never do nothing wrong.
- B. They make me laugh 'cause they sit and talk about the old days and the things they did ... how they are really bigshots. Then you go and do time with them in their group and they're so meek and mild, the matron says (snap) ... and they jump, just like that.

When they go out on the street ... they don't even want to go out there. They don't know what to do with themselves. They're used to having someone there to say, "Get up ... have breakfast. All right, it's lunch time ... come on and eat. All right now, get your work done." They're so used to that. They get out there and they don't know what to do. They look around and they think, "Gee, this is awful", so they take a couple of fixes and they think, "Gee, I wish I could go back to gaol ... I don't know what I'm going to do with myself", and boom, they're pinched. And then they come back. They beef at first and

then they settle down and they're quite happy in their little rut. Then they do a couple of years and then they get out and they look around again and they do the same thing over again. Because they never fight back or ... I think once a person loses their will to fight back, ... they might as well give up because they ... like us kids, ... I think there's a chance for any of these kids here ... Maybe they'll never straighten up but all of the kids here ... don't just sit back and let things happen and say nothing ... whereas Group Four does. The matron tells them to do something and they do it, and that's it. There's no question about it. They do everything they're told.

- A. The matron tells them to jump, and they say, "How high?"
- B. But us, most things we do as we're told, but some things, if we don't figure we should, or can't see a reason why ... We want to know why and we argue about it and that. But they don't. They don't talk about the outside at all. All they talk about is gaol, the pen, all these gaols they've been in ... how much time they've done ... We talk about the outside still. Those people, they hardly ever talk about the outside.

The Group Eight members feel that Group Four is hopelessly "institutionalized", because they apparently conform unquestionably to the demands of the staff and the institution, and cannot function adequately any more without being told explicitly what to do. To the Group Eight members, it is essential that you show some fight, that you openly and consistently reject both the staff and the institution. Their uncertainty and ambivalence concerning their roles as deviants from societal norms probably accounts for some of this compulsive rejection, a pattern which obtains even

when it is obvious that such behavior can only lead to punishment. They have accepted the inmate code of ethics demanding rejection of the rejectors perhaps too literally and too extensively. They have not learned the merits of the more subtle tactics employed by Group Four.

Group Four, on the other hand, views the behavior of the Group Eight members as being brash and pointless. They feel that there is "something wrong" with anyone who cannot adapt themselves at least to the more gross demands of the environment, as they have done. They have learned to function with a minimum of stress and strain within the demands of the prison administration, but are not affected to any significant extent by the ideology which the institutions try to inculcate in all inmates. Group Eight feels that they must forcibly reject all aspects of the program to guard against the possibility of being seduced by the ideology presented by the prison staff.

Group Four stated that they viewed an inability to "adjust" as an indication of personal pathology, and singled out the young girls recently from the Girls' Industrial School (school for juvenile offenders) as such unfortunate individuals:

That's why the kids from G.I.S. are here, because they couldn't handle them in G.I.S. They couldn't adjust themselves. That's the kind of kid they should take an interest in. Set apart, find out what's wrong with them ... I think it's bad that they can't (adjust) because there is some mental disturbance there

that's holding them back, isn't there? Even you, if you haven't been in gaol before, if you were to come to gaol for the first time, You'd naturally get into a rut too, wouldn't you? - with the rest of them? If you were to rebel right from the start, there would be something wrong with your make up. You'd need some kind of help.

Trust and Mistrust. The deprivation of autonomy affects one's self-image in another manner also, for it provides a constant reminder that you are not considered to be trustworthy. Constant supervision and skepticism concerning the ultimate intention behind inmate requests and behavior provokes hostility in the inmates. They feel that if they were shown more trust, they would react in a manner which would justify such action on the part of the staff. Group Four remarked that:

That's one thing they should do here.
Show more trust in the girls.

When a person knows they're trusted, they're going to bend over backwards to keep that trust. But when they know someone is watching them every minute of every hour of the day, that makes you mad. That makes you want to do something. 'Cause I don't care, every individual, no matter where or who they are have the finer instincts in them. They just need to be brought out.

There is a strong tendency for matrons to be very skeptical concerning any requests for medications which come from the addict segments of the population, for they have a stereotype of these individuals as being "pill happy". Requests for aspirin or night sedation are suspect, as are requests to see the doctor. The matrons feel that most of

the visiting medical staff are very gullible, so heavily screen any requests for medical attention. Similarly, while an inmate is being interviewed, the Women's Unit clinic staff will remain close by to give the doctor their evaluation of the request. The matrons feel this is essential to prevent exploitation of the doctors' sympathy; the inmates feel this is an unjustifiable infringement upon their rights to medical attention. Because many matrons are psychiatric nurses, the inmates feel that they (the matrons) automatically interpret any claims to physical discomfort as being psychosomatic in nature:

- A. Another thing that's rotten in this institution is their medical set up. You pretty near have to have a request slip from Ottawa to get in to see a doctor. Then when you see the doctor, what good does it do you?
- B. I think they should have a registered nurse in the clinic all the time... How can a (psychiatric nurse), for instance, locate ... someone says something's wrong with them. She'll look at you and say, "Oh, I don't think there's anything wrong with you. You don't have to see a doctor." ... Who is she to tell whether you should see a doctor or not?
- C. Every time I ask to see one of the doctors, they laugh and say there's nothing wrong.

Again, other gaols in Canada were felt to provide better service to the inmates, and to indicate a greater acceptance of the inmate's ability to conduct her own affairs, even to deciding whether she needed medical attention or not. The difference in "atmosphere" resulting from a greater degree

of trust was felt by the inmates to be very great. The Twin Maples Farm which is associated with the Oakalla Women's Unit was felt to approximate this freedom and trust most closely:

I think it (Twin Maples) is a wonderful thing because you've got freedom. You haven't got half a dozen doors and locks to go through. It's an ordinary house. You haven't got two or three people (matrons) on your back all the time ... you don't forever hear keys jingling ... the atmosphere is entirely different. No bells ringing, lots of fresh air.

V. THE DEPRIVATION OF SECURITY

To the inmate who is a novice, the popular stereotype of a violent, unpredictable prison population is ominous, and initial reactions of apprehension for their physical safety during their imprisonment are not uncommon among newcomers. Actual incidents of violence or threats of violence which are directed toward another person are, however, rare in the Women's Unit. Incidents in which windows are smashed or wounds are self-inflicted are more common, but do not involve threats to the safety of others. Actual physical attacks upon one another or upon staff members are considered to be so abnormal that the attacker is usually suspected of being psychotic. If procedures are not started to remove the individual to a mental hospital, she will at least be given some type of sedation to control her behavior pharmacutically. Knowledge of this can, of course, be used as a weapon by those inmates who feel they would rather be in a

mental hospital, or who want to be given regular medications for some reason. Although this absence of violence is characteristic of the whole Women's Unit, the addicts again feel that their personal characteristics (at least the characteristics which they attribute to addicts as a group) provide the determining factors:

The addict ... cuts her little capers and has her jokes, but (she doesn't) deliberately go out to hurt anyone because violence isn't in an addict's make-up. At least I haven't seen an addict yet that would actually resort to violence. A quick fired temper and a few nasty words and it's generally all right again.

One explanation for the low incidence of inter-personal aggression in the Women's Unit (as compared to the high incidence of aggression mentioned in institutions for men⁸) could be related to the fact that demonstrations of physical prowess are symbolically of little importance among women. Women are obviously aware of the personal advantages implicit in being able to coerce their fellows, but rely upon more indirect means of coercion which are in keeping with the public image of femininity and the female role. The arts of persuasion and wheedling are well developed and relied upon almost exclusively, so that the threat to personal security is not so much a threat of physical aggression, but rather of psychological aggression. The inmates must guard against the conniving of other inmates who seek advantages. The argot

⁸Sykes, Society of Captives, p.77

roles distinguished at the Women's Unit are, therefore, reflective of this predominant concern with psychological rather than physiological vulnerability.

There are several ways in which an inmate may be "marked-in" by her associates within the prison, and although the consequences of being duped by another may entail a loss of personal possessions or a sacrifice of time and physical energy, this is not the loss most keenly felt by the victim. The loss of prestige at having been duped by another is the more serious consequence. The contempt which the prostitute feels for her own "mark" is reflected in the loss of prestige suffered by anyone dull or unwary enough to be "marked-in" within the institution. She has been beaten at her own game.

Part Players and Cry Babies. A "part player" is easily but ambivalently identified as a phoney. If she is "playing the part" to fool the staff, her performance is considered to be legitimate, but if her performance is designed to fool her peers, she is regarded with anxiety and resentment. A definition and observation on inmate reactions to a "part player" follow:

(A part player is) something I'd like to be. Someone who runs around as if they're killing themselves with work, and don't do anything.

... But if another inmate is going to suffer like on maintenance, everybody has their own job. If you don't do it, nobody else is going to have to do it. It's your job ... you finish (those jobs) in ten minutes then you pretend you're doing something ... But on a job, like in the

kitchen (at) night or something like that, where there's maybe six kids in the group, everybody's got to pitch in or the work doesn't get done. So if somebody plays the part, the rest of the work is falling on the other kids ... and that girl doesn't do anything.

Typically, the part player is trying to avoid work:

Take this girl in the kitchen one night. She washed nine teapots and it took her over an hour. She ran back and forth, quite fast, waving her dish rag. Meanwhile, _____ and I were washing dishes. We wiped about fifty million dishes. Finally we realized, "Hey, we're really suckers, she isn't doing anything", so we accused her of it quite bluntly, and so she started crying and ran to the matron and said we were picking on her, and so the matron went and washed and dried her teapots ... the matron took her side and she was a part player! She wasn't doing anything.

Insult was apparently added to injury by having the matron side with the "part player". Although the matron did some of the work, the "part player" made a double victory, for now she was not even washing the teapots.

"Cry babies" gain attention and favours by appealing to the sympathy of others. They receive special privileges from both staff and inmates because they make others feel sorry for them. They are apparently hypersensitive to the reactions of others, and are badly dealt with by the world. This act will be taken at face value for a while, but the inmates deeply resent anyone taking advantage of their finer sensitivities. Crying and sulking are again weapons which are commonly used by women in their dealings with men, but they do not like to think they have been hoodwinked by these

tactics when they are used by another women. Again, what really rankles is the knowledge that they have been out-smarted, in which case the redemption of prestige and self-esteem are difficult.

Other forms of bribery and influence obviously must exist, but are not given the importance of the above by enjoying special argot names. Bribery implies a certain degree of cognizance and co-operation on the part of the individual being bribed, so can be defended better as a matter of rational choice on the part of the individual being bribed. "Part players" and "Cry babies" threaten inmate solidarity by taking advantage of one another. The necessity for internal co-operativeness in the face of the external oppression is refuted, and the "part player" or "cry baby" plots her own course to gain individual advantages at the expense of the group.

VI. THE DEPRIVATION OF PRIVACY

The deprivation of privacy which accompanies life en masse and constant surveillancy by staff members weighs heavily on the inmates of the Women's Unit. Walter C. Reckless has observed that women seem to require considerably more privacy than do men; although men thrive in open dormitories and barracks, women apparently need an opportunity do things out of the public gaze.⁹ Certainly the women at

⁹Walter C. Reckless, "How to Treat Women Prisoners", Survey Midmonthly, Vol. 82 (October, 1946), pp.259-261.

Oakalla have stated quite definitely that they find the lack of privacy embarrassing and detrimental to a sense of personal dignity, particularly when it involves interference with and manipulation of the body.

The admission procedures in particular are painful, because of the total lack of regard accorded to the traditional rights of privacy concerning the body and body functions. Inmates are normally admitted to the Women's Unit in groups of two or three at a time, and must undress, bathe and wash their hair in the presence of one another and at least one matron. There is very little provision for privacy during this process as the Admitting Matron is expected to insure that there is no opportunity for the new admissions to smuggle contraband articles into the institution. Drug addicts must undergo the additional humiliation of being given an emetic and an enema under these public circumstances. The inmates find this procedure intensely distasteful, not only because they feel it antagonizes their withdrawal symptoms, but also rather succinctly observe that, "It ruins your dignity completely!"

The loss of physical privacy prevails even following the admitting procedures, for, as has been previously mentioned, the rooms are designed so that the occupants are observable at all times and, presumably in the interests of good custody, matrons can and do enter the rooms whenever they please. The lack of privacy, and apparent disregard

given to the inmates' sensitivities by the matrons is a source of great annoyance:

You got no chance. You can't even go to the bathroom. They stand there ... Gee, that's awful. They won't leave.

Although some observers may feel that the inmates' indignant reactions to a lack of physical privacy is unwarranted in view of their status, and perhaps ironical when one considers that many are habitual prostitutes, the fact remains that they do experience the deprivation of privacy as one of the more painful aspects of their imprisonment. They are again reminded that they do not enjoy the same rights which normal adults automatically enjoy, and can see no justification for the removal of rights such as these. They will concur that to pay a debt they perhaps deserve to lose their freedom in the community, but they do not agree that this loss of freedom should also involve a loss of personal dignity and worth within the institution.

On another level, the constant surveillance of the staff annoys the Group Eight members who feel the matrons are persistent in their attempts at controlling the inmates to the point that the staff try to invade upon their private thoughts. Discussion in the group gives an indication of the extent to which they feel this infringement prevails:

- A. I used to lay on the floor all the time and dream ... just look at the ceiling, and the matron kept saying, "Tell me what you're thinking about, tell me what you're thinking about".

I couldn't even think to myself. She kept saying, "What are you thinking about?"

- B. In the meantime, if you ever told them what you were thinking about they'd probably be so shocked they'd put you in the hole.
- C. If you're talking to one another they want to know what you're talking about.
- A. If you go into your room alone and shut the door, they make you come out and lock the door 'cause they think you're going to go back in your room and lay down (and daydream).

In addition to this lack of privacy resulting from staff surveillance, the women all complained that there is no opportunity to get away from one another. There are only a few single rooms in the main building of the Women's Unit, most being double or dormitory rooms which will accommodate as many as four inmates. The huts, cottages and the panabode are all dormitory style in which all members of the group share a communal bed-living room. The constant presence of others is painful, for it demands constant compromise and patience with one another. Group Four observed:

- A. You ask them how they classify here, how they picked your groups, it's none of your business, which it is your business 'cause we have to live together. We get into an argument, then they figure we're hard to get along with. They forget there are twelve personalities here ... thrown together ... not living together.
- B. The majority doing a year and over. Put that many people together for that length of time, you're together all the time, naturally some personalities are going to clash, particularly if you're completely opposites.

A. Everybody in this group is more or less set in their ways, and it's darn hard to have to bend, yet it's done every day.

The strain of living as a group is intensified because there is no opportunity to escape from the group; no chance to have a few minutes to yourself.

There are times when everyone has to be alone. You just have to! Like these girls three in a room, where can they go? They can't even be alone when they're taking a bath. It stands to reason it's going to work on their nerves.

At the Twin Maples Farm on the other hand there is an opportunity to have some privacy; to get away from one another from time to time. A Group Four member who had been working at the Twin Maples Farm project for a time explained the difference which she felt this opportunity for privacy made to daily living:

If you're feeling blue or you get a letter or something that upsets you and you want to go sit on the back porch you can do so, and sit alone. Someone doesn't come and say, "Hey, this way." You can't go far, no, but still you have the feeling of being able to go by yourself. You might go pick a few flowers, you might go draw two or three pails of water. It's a wonderful thing.

This is not a sphere in which argot roles are likely to be generated as a means of adapting to a painful situation, yet resentment caused by the institution's apparent disregard for the needs of privacy represents one of the more important axes of life at the Women's Unit. The concern with privacy may be, as Reckless suggests, greater among women than among

men. But it is also probable that very extensive deprivation of autonomy which accompanies the "group system" may place the whole problem in sharper perspective at the Oakalla Prison Farm than is the case elsewhere where more personal latitude is allowed.

VII. SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

Gresham Sykes has distinguished five major problems which confront the male inmates at the New Jersey State Prison in Trenton.¹⁰ These five problems involve deprivation or frustration in the areas of social acceptance, material possessions, heterosexual relationships, personal autonomy and personal security. From the viewpoint of particular inmates some of these deprivations or frustrations have deeper significance than have others, but in general all inmates must somehow cope with all of these problems. The argot roles which Sykes has described refer, in general, to the "alienative" (self-oriented) modes of adapting to these pains of imprisonment. The "cohesive" (group-oriented) modes of adapting to the pains of imprisonment are all subsumed under the label of "real man" in this environment. The development of special argot names for the various alienative patterns of adaptation to the pains of imprisonment gives some indication of the very great importance which these roles have for the prison society. These are the disruptive patterns of social interaction, and they

¹⁰ Sykes, Society of Captives, p.106

tend to make life for the inmate group as a whole more difficult, although the individual playing the role may enjoy some personal gains from his behavior.

In comparing the pains of imprisonment and patterns of adaptation existing at the Women's Unit with those existing at the New Jersey State Prison, some of the more fundamental differences between these two prisons must be taken into account. Physically and materially life at the Women's Unit is not as austere as is life in the New Jersey State Prison. The women have curtains on their windows, bedspreads, ornaments and doilies in their rooms. The food provided is both adequate and appetizing; the clothing is standardized, but attractive and plentiful nonetheless.

The structure of the inmate population is rather unique at the Women's Unit. No inmates are kept in this unit longer than two years, the majority remaining less than six months at any one time. There is consequently a great deal of movement into and out of the Women's Unit. The most mobile members of the inmate group are the Native Indian offenders, who are normally sentenced to periods of less than one month for liquor infractions of one kind or another. Although these women do have a group identity which is distinct from the rest of the inmate population, they are not as obsessed with foiling the administration as are the more sophisticated addict offenders. The Native Indian women are considered to be good security risks, (because of their

short, though repeated, sentences), and are consequently allowed greater personal freedom within the institution than are the addict offenders. This very relaxation of administrative pressure may account at least in part for the more tractable nature of the Native Indian inmate groups.

The largest, most stable and certainly most influential segment of the inmate population is the narcotic addict group. The narcotic addicts receive the longest sentences at the Women's Unit, and therefore remain in the Women's Unit longer than any other inmate group. Even before coming to prison for the first time, however, the narcotic addicts have been well schooled in the merits of group solidarity as a means of resisting official oppression. The strong group loyalty which they develop of necessity in the community is carried over into the prison situation, as is their group code. The addicts see themselves as "rounders" who are oppressed by the world of "square johns". "Square johns" are not only police and other representatives of authority, but all individuals who are not committed to their set of shared rationalizations. The "rounder" sub-culture supports a code of behavior which seems to be common among groups of deviants who find they are systematically oppressed by authority figures.

The feeling that "we" (the addicts, or the "rounders") must stand together against "they" (the "square johns") carries over into the prison. The addicts feel they must stand together against the staff of the prison, and that they cannot trust

non-addict inmates much farther than they can trust the staff. They attribute disruptive inmate behavior to the "square johns" within the prison population, and attribute the more altruistic patterns of inmate behavior to the narcotic addicts. Their subjective evaluation of addicts and non-addicts is not entirely borne out by objective fact, but certainly the staff have found that as a general rule the addict groups tend to enjoy a greater degree of group solidarity than do the non-addict groups.

The group system also has some implications for the specific nature of the social structure existing at the Women's Unit. Originally intended to facilitate the achievement of therapeutic goals, the group system also carries with it the possibility of greatly increased custodial control because of the closer contact between the custodian and the captives. The inmates feel that the group system is responsible for the very great loss of personal autonomy which they experience in the Women's Unit. Those inmates who have served terms of imprisonment in other institutions are adamant in their claims that they have less personal autonomy at the Women's Unit than at any other prison within their experience.

The group system has resulted in the segregation of the inmate population into various living groups. The inmate population is first divided into two main sections separating those who are narcotic addicts from the non-addicts. Further to this, group classification tends roughly to reflect the

stage of socialization into the prison community achieved by the individual inmate. The cottages and the huts contain the least sophisticated inmates, the main building containing those which are the most sophisticated.

The roles emerging as adaptations to the pains of imprisonment are not always given argot names at the Women's Unit, possibly because of the transitory nature of the inmate population. Such argot as is employed is based almost exclusively upon the argot used by the addicts, both within and outside the prison. There does not seem to be any argot existing at the Women's Unit which is unique to that unit and which cannot be found either in the addict sub-culture, the Men's Unit at Oakalla Prison Farm, or in prisons in general throughout North America.

The failure for some pains of imprisonment to develop argot roles in the Women's Unit may indicate that these pains are of less significance in this setting than they are in the New Jersey State Prison. "Squealers", "pigeon birds" and "hack lovers" could be quite readily differentiated as means of coping with the deprivation of freedom, indicating that rejection of the rejector is important in the Women's Unit, particularly among the addict groups. The deprivation of goods and services is not too drastic in this prison, and theft or exploitation of another's possession is not too common. The women tend to compete for prestige associated with possessions rather than for the possessions themselves,

as is evidenced by the heavy emphasis placed upon procurement of an impressive "going out" outfit.

Although lesbianism develops at the Women's Unit in response to the deprivation of heterosexual relationships, there is little differentiation of roles within these relationships. This failure for argot names to be applied and differentiate between lesbian roles seems to be reflective of the general blurring of the definition and expectations surrounding the female role in our society. There is much more tolerance toward these relationships within the Women's Unit than exists in most institutions for men.

The deprivation of autonomy is a significant source of frustration to the women at Oakalla Prison Farm, but the inmates see patterns of adaptation to this frustration as being associated with the various groups, rather than with individuals. The Group Eight "type" and Group Four "type" represent the polar extremes in this case. Group Eight members rebel openly, Group Four is apparently "institutionalized" so that at least overtly they conform to the demands of the custodians.

The deprivation of security does not cause much concern at the Women's Unit if one thinks in terms of physical safety or integrity. There is little violence or physical coercion evident, but exploitation does occur. "Cry babies" and "part players" pose a threat to the inmates for they gain advantage by duping their fellows: They seek to find suckers

as their male counterparts seek cowards.

One pain of imprisonment apparently not experienced by the men at the New Jersey State Prison is the deprivation of privacy. Perhaps privacy becomes more important with increasingly comfortable standards of living, or it could be, alternatively, that women actually are more concerned with securing privacy than are men. This will have to remain an open question at the present time.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Using the frame of reference used by Gresham Sykes in his study of a maximum security prison for men, I examined the social structure at the Women's Unit, Oakalla Prison Farm.¹ The Women's Unit houses all those female offenders sentenced in British Columbia to less than two years. The population is small in size, fluctuating between one hundred and one hundred and thirty inmates at any one time, but the nature of this population is extremely varied. Narcotic addicts, alcoholics, cheque writers, abortionists and arsonists of all ages and degrees of criminal sophistication are found. Sentences range from five days to two years less one day. On the other hand, the New Jersey State Prison is much larger, and holds in custody those inmates which are thought to be most dangerous or to present the greatest custodial risk.

The Tasks of the Prison. Sykes has outlined the five tasks of a prison as those of custody, internal order, self-maintenance, punishment and reform. At the New Jersey State Prison the tasks of custody and internal order are given first priority. Reformation comes last. The administration has indicated that the best way a guard can go about reforming inmates is to see that a high level of discipline and control

¹Gresham M. Sykes, The Society of Captives, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1958.

is maintained within the prison.

At the Women's Unit, the tasks of the institution are similar to those of the New Jersey State Prison, and custody and the maintenance of internal order take precedence in this setting as well. Rehabilitation is thought desirable by all, and the matrons justify most of their activities to themselves and to their peers as being therapeutic or otherwise "good for" the inmates in a rehabilitative sense. In actual fact, however, any activities carried on at the Women's Unit are acceptable only to the extent that they are commensurate with the requirements of custody.

Power and Authority. On examining the role of the guard, Sykes found that he does not have total power within the prison, for the inmates do not feel morally obliged to conform to administrative demands. Inmates can be led, but they cannot be forced, especially if the task to be performed is of a complex nature. The custodian finds that, to retain his job, he requires work from those inmates assigned to his care. He (the custodian) needs the work of the captives more than do the captives themselves. In addition, the custodian finds that he does not think of his charges as being stripped of their humanity simply because they are inmates. He comes to like the inmates, and wants to be liked by them in return - to be thought of as a good fellow. These two factors are instrumental in leading to the corruption of the guard's authority. The inmates and the guards develop a system whereby

the guards will overlook certain minor rule infractions and may even give some of their power to selected inmates in return for compliance from the inmates in some more important spheres. The inmates agree to work, to behave, and to take part in certain institutional activities with a minimum of resistance in return for favours granted.

The corruption of authority within the prison has within it the seeds of its own destruction, however, for sooner or later the administration and the guard are faced with the task of regaining their lost authority. They must tighten up the institution or face public and official censure. This tightening up of the regime of the custodian divests the cohesively-oriented inmates of their power in the inmate group, and leaves the way open for the more unstable elements of the inmate population to rise into leadership. The custodians' struggle to regain lost power not infrequently results in crisis and riot, for in this microcosmic society any social change is likely to take on rather gross outward form.

The ratio of staff to inmates at the Women's Unit is such that it is relatively easy for the matron to maintain a close check on the activities of her group members, to the extent that there is a danger of becoming oppressively custodial. In this setting as at the New Jersey State Prison inmates cannot be forced to comply however, and in securing co-operation with both the work program and the socialization program of the institution the matron seems to make a bargain.

She agrees not to demand any change in attitude or value system from her inmate group in return for an agreement on their part to go along with her demands in other matters. Although she stresses the rehabilitative aspects of her work when talking with others, she minimizes these aspects when talking with the inmates.

At the inception of the Group System (the practice of dividing the inmates up into small, homogeneous groups) the Women's Unit suffered a riot, but there has not been another riot for ten years. The inmates did not like losing the power they had gained from the staff over the years, and reacted in the traditional manner. At present one might expect that equilibrium could be maintained at the Women's Unit so long as the present custodial level was maintained and thus did not have to be regained, and providing no drastic attempts at changing inmate values is evidenced.

The Pains of Imprisonment. Shifting his consideration to the inmate, Sykes has found that imprisonment at the New Jersey State Prison entails deprivations or frustrations in five major areas. The inmates are deprived of their personal freedom, of heterosexual relationships, of goods and services, of autonomy, and of security. Although imprisonment to-day is not as brutal or physically depriving as once was the case, the inmate still faces a tremendous onslaught on the psychological level. They can meet this onslaught by consolidating their position as a group, providing compensatory outlets for

these deprivations in the nature of their interpersonal relationships. Or by indulging in a private war against both the prison and their fellows, they can seek to further their own advantage at the expense of others. The former mode of adaptation is described by Sykes as cohesively-oriented, the second as individualistic or alienatively-oriented.

The women at Oakalla Prison Farm experience the same pains of imprisonment as do the men at New Jersey, but are also greatly disturbed by the loss of privacy which imprisonment entails. It would seem that women are more keenly sensitive to a loss of privacy than are men, demanding time to be alone as well as physical privacy.

Argot Roles at the New Nersey State Prison. Specific patterns of adaptation to the pains of imprisonment are defined by the inmates and given special argot names, indicating their significance to the inmate population. Cohesively-oriented patterns of adaptation are the most favoured, and involve characteristics of generosity, sexual restraint and loyalty. The name of "real man" is applied to this collection of attributes. Faced with a deprivation of liberty, which the inmate interprets as rejection by society, the prison society reacts by rejecting their rejectors, including both society at large and specifically the custodians. As a part of this rejection, loyalty to the inmate group is deemed to be of primary importance to the extent that any and all inmate information is expected to be kept strictly within the inmate

group. The individual who refutes the necessity of inmate solidarity by violating inmate secrecy is known as a "rat" or a "squealer". A "center man" does not necessarily inform on other inmates, but he agrees with the validity of administrative opinions and decisions, refuting the legitimacy of the inmate orientation. "Gorillas" and "merchants" violate the norm of generosity in a situation in which goods are chronically scarce either by taking the belongings of another by force, or by selling their own possessions when they should, to meet the demands of inmate solidarity, give them.

Homosexuality frequently emerges as a means of meeting the deprivation of heterosexual relationships, but because attributes of masculinity are of such great importance in this setting, the inmates become greatly concerned with the particular role played by a homosexual. "Wolves" typically play the aggressive role, seeking out by coercion or persuasion partners for whom they show no emotional attachment. They suffer the least social stigmatization from their perversion. "Punks" are passive homosexual partners who have been weak enough to be permitted or persuaded by the "wolf" to take part in a homosexual relationship. They lose a great deal of prestige in the prison community, for they are felt to be innately weak. "Fags" are believed to be true homosexuals, and frequently take on the outward guise of femininity as well. Their loss of masculinity is twofold, and their loss of prestige in the community is considerable.

In the face of official oppression, the result of which is a loss of personal autonomy, inmates can react either by rather stoical acceptance without real submission, or can rebel. The former pattern of adaptation is characteristic of the "real man". The "ball buster" has not come to terms with his helplessness, and rebels against it at every opportunity. Personal security of the inmate is also in jeopardy, for there are, in this society, many who seek to test their fellows. The "tough" is characterized by his "touchiness"; he is quick to take offence, and equally quick to seek physical revenge for this felt slight. He is a source of fear for many, but because he represents in rather graphic form the desirable attributes of aggressive masculinity, he has considerable prestige in this community. The "hipster", on the other hand, blusters and threatens, but is felt to be a phoney. He assumes a facade with the intention of impressing a group to which he cannot rightfully claim membership.

Argot Roles at the Women's Unit. An examination of the reactions to the pains of imprisonment at the Women's Unit indicated an equal concern with maintaining inmate loyalty against the staff of the institution. The addict members of the population tend to feel that addicts as a group are more loyal than are other inmates in the institution, and attribute this loyalty to an indoctrination of the "rounder" code. This group code is developed in the community as the result of authoritative pressure against narcotic addicts

and other habitual delinquents, and carries over into and adapts well to the situation prevailing in the prison. At the Women's Unit those who violate the need for inmate secrecy are known as "squealers", "pigeon-birds" and "squeak-birds". Inmates who exhibit a preference for the administrative view point are known as "hack lovers". "Hack lovers" cause the inmate group considerable anxiety, for they are eligible for membership in that group but prefer to remain outside it.

There is little theft of personal belongings at the Women's Unit, possibly because life is not too austere in this prison. Those who take advantage of their fellows are recognized as "freeloaders", but force is seldom used as a means of securing possessions. The very deprived, particularly with regard to cigarettes are known as "butt snatchers" as they develop the habit of saving cigarette butts left by others.

There is considerable competition for prestige based upon material possessions, as is evidenced by the emphasis placed upon the "going out" outfit. Inmates compete with one another to see who will be provided with the best "going out" outfit, normally provided by a well cultivated "mark".

Lesbianism is fairly prevalent at the Women's Unit, but there is little differentiation between types of roles played in these relationships. Inmates frequently change from the aggressive to the passive role as they change

partners in these relationships. Over time, however, the masculine role seems to be the most stable. Indications are that there is more public support for the masculine role, particularly if the role player simultaneously adopts a "handyman" role in the institution. The convenience of playing the masculine role (in pursuing new partners) and the unconscious support lent to this role by the staff of the institution contributes to its relative stability.

It has been suggested that because the female social role is in many ways bi-sexual, lesbianism does not violate social expectations to the same extent as does homosexuality among men. It seems to be less important to be a woman among women than it is to be a man among men.

At the Women's Unit there does not seem to be too much cause for concern for one's personal security if we consider it on the physical level. Violence is not common in this unit, and tends to be interpreted as an indication of mental illness rather than of bravery when it does occur. The women must guard themselves against being duped or fooled by their fellows, however, and to this extent they differentiate others who cause them some anxiety. "Part players" are phonies who pretend they are working hard, but who in fact are doing very little. If their performance does not harm another inmate it is sanctioned by the group, but if another inmate will suffer as a result of the performance, the "part player" will lose favour. A "cry baby" seeks sympathy and special treatment

by resorting to tears or by telling a convincing story, and she also causes considerable concern in the inmate group. As a group of women, the inmates of the Women's Unit seem to be concerned about being beaten by their own methods of attaining privileges and advantage, persuasion and sympathy, as the men are concerned about being beaten by the more masculine types of persuasion, aggression and physical threats.

To face the extreme oppression of the custodial regime, especially that which has resulted from the adoption of the Group System, two patterns are recognized by the inmates. These patterns tend to become associated with particular inmate groups, so that Group Eight is seen by others as the rebels who refuse to conform to most administrative requests on principle. Group Four represents the opposite extreme: they have adjusted to the institution to the extent that others feel they have become institutionalized. Their reactions are much more subtle, taking on the outward guise of conformity while maintaining the inward set of values and attitudes intact.

Some Unique Features of Imprisonment at the Women's Unit.

1. The population of the Women's Unit is very diversified in so far as age and criminal sophistication is concerned. There are, nonetheless, two main categories of inmates, the drug addicts and the non-addicts. The addicts have a strong group feeling and a well developed code which carries over

easily into the prison setting. Although the average length of sentence is so short one would not expect a traditional prison social order to evolve, the presence of the addict group fosters and supports this type of social order. There seem to be some common features to the social order of groups which are oppressed and rejected by society.

2. The program of the Women's Unit, especially the Group System also produces some strains for the inmates.

Although the physical plant of this prison is fairly pleasant, inmates do find that it is more difficult to "serve time" at the Women's Unit than at any other institution in Canada.

Having to remain in arbitrarily assigned groups and having to take part in activities and events as a group rather than as individuals deprives them of their personal autonomy to the extent that they feel they are treated like children.

3. Because this prison society is made up entirely of women, certain features of daily life normally found in a prison are less visible, while other features become more apparent. There is little violence at the Women's Unit, either directed against the staff or against other inmates. The inmates are concerned about being made to look like fools rather than with being threatened physically. Lesbian activity is not censured so strongly as is homosexuality in a men's prison, and the structure of the prison society is such that an aggressive, "masculine", lesbian finds considerable support.

The Role of the Matron. There seem to be two general orientations to performance of the matron's role at the Women's Unit. Those matrons who subscribe to the first orientation believe in the usefulness of imposing strict controls upon the behavior of the inmates. This philosophy contends that if the inmates learn a habit of conformity while in the prison, they will be able to carry this habit over into the community and be, in effect, rehabilitated. This orientation is compatible with the custodial requirements of the institution. The matron subscribing to this view can find satisfaction in her work providing she can see that the inmates do conform to the demands of the institution, and do meet certain formal expectations both in their work and their recreation.

Those matrons who subscribe to the second orientation believe that inmates must undergo a basic change in their attitudes and values, and that to attain this goal the institution (and the matron) must provide a permissive, supportive atmosphere in which this re-socialization can take place. This orientation is not compatible with some of the more stringent requirements of good custody and internal control. Because the matron does not undergo an extensive training period and does not gain specific administrative support for such performance in the prison, she tends to become anxious and abandon her permissive practices. She will then either have to content herself with adequacy in performance of her

custodial duties and abandon completely her previous notions of rehabilitation or if unable to make this compromise, will have to leave the work entirely.

A Recommendation. Although one might feel that participant-observation is not a sufficiently reliable or scientific means of gathering data for a sociological study, I feel sure that in this setting one would have to be extremely careful about the use of more rigorous techniques. One must recognize that the inmates do live in a society of the rejected, and they are understandably wary about anyone who tries to penetrate their society. Questionnaires and structured interviews could only be used after the investigator had gained the complete confidence of the inmates, and this could well take years.

Suggestions for Further Study. With the above limitations in mind, and to some extent in spite of them, I would suggest that there are two major questions which should be investigated in this general field. The first problem would be to examine the ways in which an individual sentenced to a period of imprisonment actually learns to become an inmate. In conjunction with this, patterns of adaptation should be examined to see to what extent the inmate is forced into one pattern or another because of the group placement she is given, or because of the type of prison she is sent to in larger departments of correction. In addition it would be interesting to determine the relationship between the specific way in

which an inmate adapts to the prison situation and the way in which she later adapts to the free community.

The second problem would be to examine the ways in which individual employees learn to become matrons. Patterns of adjustment to the role of the matron could be examined to find the determinants of specific modes of adaptation. A study of the effectiveness of certain orientations to the role with regard to either fulfilment of the custodial requirements of the institution or fulfilment of the reformative requirements or both would also be very informative.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EXCERPTS FROM THE MANUAL

DAILY ROUTINE

You will meet the term "Group" or "Team" frequently in this discussion. A team is the inmate crew assigned to work or study in the different departments, while a group is a number of people assigned to live together in a section of rooms or a Hut. The members of one Team could be drawn from all ten Groups. Teams are the essential part of the morning program; while the Group living and recreational activities are planned for the afternoon program.

MORNING SHIFT - 7:00a.m. to 3:00p.m.

7:00a.m. You will be assigned to unlock one of the ten groups. You should have arrived on duty at a quarter to the hour and completed all preliminaries before taking your place on the floor.

1. Sign in.
2. Read report - acquaint yourself with any changes.
3. Take the count if your Security Matron has assigned this duty to you.
4. Collect your key and see that your card is in place.
5. Make a note of the inmates assigned to your group or team from distribution board in the General Office.
6. Take your place on the floor.
7. Unlock your section of rooms and rouse your group.

7:15a.m. See that your group makes themselves presentable and escort them to the Dining Room. Stay with them during breakfast. Supervise general deportment during the meal and by your example improve your group's consideration for one another.

7:45a.m. Return with your group to their rooms. Supervise the cleaning of the rooms.

1. Basin or toilets must be spotless.
2. Floors to be dusted each morning or if necessary scrubbed.
3. Radiators must be dusted each morning.
4. Watch window sills and baseboards and have them scrubbed when necessary.

5. Beds to be made properly - hospital corners, blankets folded in the designated manner, spreads tight, pillows near, top bunk tucked in all around.
NOTHING TO BE LEFT ON THE BEDS.
6. Extra clothing to be folded and put in box under the bed. Hangers may be hung in the alcove. In double dorms, all clothing must be hung up in the closets. You may judge for yourself if the room is too cluttered. A girl may have extra "frills" but, if they are not clean and tidy take them down. When room inspection is done, you will be held responsible for the condition of the rooms you open in the morning.

DRESS.

1. See that your group is properly dressed to go to meals.
2. Girls must wear their shoes (not slippers) during working hours, and they must wear socks with their issue shoes.
3. There are certain regulations regarding their dress during working hours. It is your responsibility to see that they leave their rooms properly clad at 8:00a.m.
4. Slacks can be worn only with blue shirts or polo shirts. Slacks should not be shorter than 15" from the floor. Shirts should be neat and not too long.
5. Cardigans may be worn over a shirt, but not as a pullover with slacks.
6. Dresses should have at least one set of buttons.
7. Inspect each room of your group to see that there is no excess clothing.
8. Each girl is entitled to have at one time the following:

- 1 Blue dress
- 1 Polo shirt
- 1 Cotton nightgown
- 1 Pair cotton shoes
- 1 Pair slippers from her effects
- 1 or 2 Cardigans from effects
- 1 Pair Denim slacks
- 2 or 3 pairs issue socks or from effects
- 1 Pair of own leather shoes
- 1 or 2 kerchiefs from effects.

All issue clothing must be marked with the inmate's name or number. These name tapes are to be issued by the Sewing room or laundry roommatron and are to be sewn on each garment by the women using same. Admitting matron will look after the issue of shoes, socks and polo shirts.

8:00a.m. Bell. Your group will leave to go to their different teams. Anyone who is ill is locked in her room. You will inspect each room and light switch box, noting at the same time if the windows are intact, the light fixtures and locks untampered with and the absence of contraband. You will report to the Security Matron of your shift if any member of your group is ill.

Go to the department to which you are assigned. See that all the members of your team are accounted for or present. Discuss the days work with your team and give them their assignments.

DURING WORKING HOURS.

1. Keep constant supervision of your team; they are not to leave their departments.
2. You are responsible for the custody and conduct of your team without too obvious policing.
3. Study your team's duties, give each job a name, make up clear and concise rules for each job. Make a time schedule for each job.
4. See that your department teaches good work habits and when possible give the inmates a vocational training.
5. You teach team members to work in such a way that their services would be acceptable in business and industry.
6. No job should be just an excuse to keep someone busy.
7. Jobs should be realistic, creative and give each worker a sense of achievement.
8. Your best method of teaching is by example. Morals, habits, principles, are not taught by logic - they are absorbed from the environment. The care you take in dress and grooming out of respect for your profession, the interest and initiative you show on the job, the conscientiousness you display and the pride you take in a job well done are all important lessons. You can be sure that you are under close scrutiny by the inmates and your every action and attitude are weighed and judged by them.

9. DO NOT over-staff to supply extra jobs.
10. The product of your department should meet with standards on the "outside".
11. You will keep all equipment in your department in good repair.
12. You will acquaint yourself with the latest method of operating your type of department.

9:30a.m. Fifteen minute break for tea.

11:30a.m. Noon hour.

1. Check all your tools.
2. Shut off all power.
3. Dismiss your team and lock your department.
4. Go back to your Group Unit and unlock their rooms
5. See that all group members are accounted for.

11:45a.m. Dinner Bell.

1. Collect your group and escort them to dinner.
2. Supervise Grace and dinner at your group's table.
3. When your group has finished eating, return them to their unit. Do not leave your group or linger at the table after they have gone. A proper distribution of staff is most essential. Neglect this, and you are inviting incidents which always happen when you least expect them. Alertness and vigilance are the key notes to custody. You will realize why this is important if you ever find an inmate severely beaten or a similar situation. Be sure that it is not due to your negligence or indifference. You are here for eight hours a day and you owe that time to the institution and the needs of the inmates assigned to you. Your attitude to your work is very noticeable and how you apply instructions given you is a certain sign of your worth.
4. If your group wish it they may go to the exercise yard during the noon hour or the dayroom. If you open either one you must stay and supervise.

12:30p.m. Bell. Repeat the morning procedure.

1. Inspect your unit, dismiss your group and return to your own department.
2. Keep a report book for your department. It should contain:

- a. Inventory.
 - b. Job specifications.
 - c. A daily list of the work done.
 - d. Material used and received.
 - e. Discards.
 - f. A monthly summary, a copy of which goes to the General Office.
3. You should attempt to make reports on team members. As little time is allotted for this purpose, a progress report form may be used.

2:45p.m. Bell. Teams dismissed.

1. Check your tools and close your department.
2. Return to your unit and lock each inmate in her own room for the 3:00p.m. count.
3. Report to the General Office - turn in your key, make any necessary reports of incidents which should be noted by all staff.

3:00p.m. Turn your group over to their Group Leader.

SUMMARY OF SCHEDULE

- 6:40a.m. Lights. (Also see that outside lights are off).
 7:00a.m. Breakfast and clean rooms.
 8:00a.m. Go to teams.
 11:30a.m. From teams to meal in Groups.
 12:30p.m. Go to teams.
 2:45p.m. Each inmate in her own room for the 3:00p.m. count.

AFTERNOON SHIFT - 3:00p.m. to 11:00p.m.

- 2:45p.m.
 1. Sign in.
 2. Read report.
 3. Make a note of any changes in your group.
 4. Collect your group.
- 3:00p.m.
 1. Take over your Group. You will personally check to see that all members of group are accounted for. Keep your whole group under supervision at all times.
 2. No member is excused from group activity unless they are legitimately ill. If the majority of the group vote to play baseball, all members must play, providing they have been given the right to choose in the first place.
 3. Dress during the morning program must meet the

demands of a working world. During the evening regulations are much more relaxed; however it should conform to acceptable practices in family and community living. You would not go to meet with the padre in jeans, nor play baseball in a dress.

Dress and grooming should be a group project. It is natural that fashions and hair styling absorb part of a women's time. The Matron has the opportunity of promoting a charm course, including physical culture.

4. Keep your group busy and interested. It is up to you to use your own initiative in making the most of library and occupational therapy, basketball, radio and kitchen night.

4:45-5:15p.m.

1. Supervise your group at the Supper table.
2. If it is your group's turn to prepare supper, see that it is prepared and served as you would do it to guests in your own home.
3. When you take your group to the kitchen, have them scrub their hands, tie back their hair, and put on clean aprons.
4. See that your group leave the kitchen and dining room in the same condition as you found it.

6:00-8:00p.m.

1. Group activity.
2. Study the aims of group therapy and apply the principles in all activity.
3. Teach group members self-control and reasonable conduct by demonstrating that, as surely as they act their environment will react. They will think before they draw scorn and disapproval a second time. It is normal to want approval and praise.

8:00p.m. Evening tea. This is a social custom and should not be allowed to degenerate and become sloppy. This is an opportunity for the leader to take her place as the head of the group. She should pour the tea and channel the conversation. Prepare schedule for baths.

8:30p.m. Each inmate is locked in her own room.

9:00p.m. Lights out.

9:30p.m. Radio off. Check your group frequently. This is

the time to do your recordings. Keep a running commentary on each member of your group. You should describe her behavior, personality and her troubles. Record any of her life's history that she has given you, providing that it has not already been obtained from some other source. Record any improvement or regression you notice.

11:00p.m. Take the count with the incoming staff and turn in your key.

SUMMARY OF SCHEDULE.

3:00-4:45p.m. Group activity. Keep your whole group under supervision at all times. Plan activity for the evening.

4:45-5:15p.m. Supper; leave the table when your group does and supervise them in their rooms.

6:30p.m. Group Six locked.

8:30p.m. General lock-up.

9:00p.m. Lights out.

9:30p.m. Radio off.

9:30-11:00p.m. Group checking, records.

NIGHT SHIFT - 11:00p.m. to 7:00a.m.

1. Be on time for duty.
2. Sign in.
3. Read report.
4. Take count - check all doors.
5. Check all keys.

11:00p.m.-7:00a.m.

1. Night duty is essentially custodial and as such must be systematic and thorough.
2. Search and examine all parts of the building not occupied by inmates.
3. There must be a matron in each Hut at all times. As it is not practical for her to walk about, she should be relieved every two hours.
4. Halls must be patrolled every two hours.
5. Sounds carry easily in this building. Investigate any sound you hear. Keep noise down to a minimum.
6. If an inmate should call or knock, investigate at once, but, DO NOT open her door until you are sure that another member of the staff is standing by and observing. Turn on her room

- light and look in before you open the door.
7. Watch that lights have not been tampered with. White lights are frequently switched with blue dimmers. They will be turned off at your approach, however, all windows can be seen from the General Office, kitchen or the dayrooms. All frames must be in place on the light fixtures
 8. Dial 23 every hour at a quarter to the hour. Allow to ring. This is "all is well" to the Deputy's Office.
 9. Report any unusual noise or lights to the Deputy.
 10. Sunday night censor all outgoing mail.
 11. Censor all incoming mail.
 12. The yearly journal must be posted from day to day from the daily report. These reports are kept from year to year. Please be accurate.
 13. Doors on stairways and dayrooms should be left open during the night. Lock them at 5:30a.m.
 14. Keep the Pharmacy clean. Refill bottles and keep a supply of dressings made up.
 15. Leave the clinic and general office in good order.

5:30a.m. Turn on large urn.

- 6:00a.m.
1. Call members of kitchen staff who have been appointed to prepare breakfast.
 2. Turn on top of stove.
 3. Put two pounds of butter in the fridge.
 4. Put out supply of sugar.
 5. Mix the cream into the milk to make sure that no inmate can skim it. Gaols are notorious for poor coffee served with blue milk. Be assured that coffee will be stolen if the matron does not put it in the pot herself. It is a continual battle of wits to see that coffee with whole milk and sugar are actually served on the table for all. If anyone wishes to ascertain who is in control, the staff or a well-chosen inmate, they need only to taste the coffee served in the dining room.

PRINCIPLES OF THE GROUP SYSTEM.

Every girl is placed in one of ten groups for custodial and treatment purposes. A matron is in charge of each group. As regards custody, it has been demonstrated that generally one matron can more adequately supervise a small group than can two matrons supervise a large one.

From the treatment side, the group system has been adopted because of several underlying principles of group therapy. The inmate population is made up of people who have had difficulty getting along in society, at least to the extent that they have broken the law. Many of the inmates have personal difficulties in adjusting to authority, in getting along with others, in understanding the meaning of privilege and responsibility, in respecting the rights of others. We understand these characteristics as being found in the mature person. Normally a person develops and matures within the family group. If an individual comes from a broken or disturbed family group that person may never fully mature. It is believed that some of the personality development that takes place within the family may also occur within other groups. With this principle in mind, the group system was evolved.

Either by counselling, encouragement or pressure, the group members learn to get along with each other, if only at a superficial level. In regard to the activities and program, it is the policy of the institution that the groups take part as a whole. Thus, a group must reach some sort of agreement among themselves, if only to refuse to participate. In practice, we find that the groups' ability to co-operate among themselves, and to reach decisions on a group basis has greatly improved since the introduction of the group system three years ago. Certain individuals who have difficulty in adjusting to group situations receive assistance from their matron.

One of the characteristics that develops from the group formation is a feeling of belonging. Individuals become proud of their group, and of being a member, and resent their group as having a bad name, etc. It is believed that this sense of belonging, even though it may begin in an institutional setting, is very important in the fostering of personality development.

RULES OF A GAOL.

There are certain rules that apply to all persons working in a gaol. Many of these rules are more important here as the majority of our inmates are drug addicts. When you signed into the Gaol Service you swore a statement that you would not discuss outside happenings in the gaol. Please be reminded that this is a serious matter or you would not have been required to swear on oath concerning it.

It is against regulations to bring anything into this building without permission. This includes even the smallest of things such as a candy bar or a package of gum. (By the way, gum is contraband and must NOT be given to anyone in the building under any circumstances - including ball-players). If a girl requests you to bring her in a ball of wool, and so on, there is a proper channel through which this can be done. Check with the matron in charge of the shift and only with her permission may you bring it in. When bringing it in you must first check with Miss Maybee before giving it to the girl.

It is contrary to the rules for you to have anything to do with an ex-inmate on the outside - even a telephone conversation. Never take a girl into your home except under the most extraordinary circumstances and then you must consult the Warden. Never meet a girl on the outside and bring anything into the building for her. They can make up plausible stories but never do thi.

It is also against the rules for you to pass anything to or receive anything from the men. This includes passing to and from a guard. If a guard is foolish enough to accept something from one of the men and pass it to you, refuse to accept it.

If a girl asks you to make a phone call for her (even to her mother) do not do this. Refer her to the matron in charge of the shift. NEVER mail a letter or a card for a girl. No matter how innocent it may seem, this is a very foolish thing to do as it could very easily cost you your job.

It is against the rules of the institution to bring any form of liquor on to the grounds or to appear at work under the influence of alcohol or even after having partaken of any. This rule is sometimes broken but remember that it means you are not a suitable person for this work and if you are found out, you will be replaced with someone who can obey rules and regulations.

This may seem like a long list of don'ts, but it seems that these rules have been broken in the past and they must not be. All these rules are rules for a reason and do not break them because you cannot see the reason. Anyone found breaking any one of these rules will be asked to explain to the Warden.

ETHICS.

There is a certain set of ethics that goes with working in this setting. The above rules are all part of this. There are others, many of which are common sense. However, some of them are as follows:

You must NEVER discuss another matron with the inmates or in front of them. You should always "stick up for" another matron with the inmates even if you yourself feel that she is in the wrong.

You must NEVER tell an inmate what some other inmate or what some other matron has said about her or what has been written on her files or in the report book. This can cause more trouble than you can imagine, and is certainly against all ethics.

You must NEVER tell an inmate what the doctor has ordered for her or how often. The inmates begin to demand their rights and in some cases the doctor will change an order and the inmate will not believe this because some matron told her what she was supposed to be getting and how often.

You must always keep a friendly attitude towards all other staff on the floor with you.

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

Beat the gate	To be released from prison one or more days early because the actual date of release falls on a Sunday or a statutory holiday.
Beef	An argument or a disagreement. A legal charge.
Boost	To shoplift.
Booster	A shoplifter.
Bum beef	A false legal charge, or a false accusation.
Bulls	The police.
Busted	To be arrested.
Cap	A capsule of heroin.
Chippy	A prostitute, or to prostitute.
Chippy fix	A fix taken by someone who is not addicted. Derived from instances in which a prostitute receives a "fix" in return for sexual favours.
Chopped	To have some privilege taken away, to have a concert chopped.
Coast	(To be coasting). To be in a state of semi-consciousness after using narcotics. A stuporous condition.
Connection	A wholesaler who sells drugs to the pusher. Seldom a narcotic user himself, he is regarded as an opportunist who takes advantage of the narcotic addicts.
Cook up	To prepare narcotics for injection. Melting the powder so that it may be injected with a syringe.
Cop out	To confess or to admit to something.
Copper	Remission or "good" time which can be granted or withheld by the institution depending upon the behavior of the inmates. Inmates may earn one day of remission for every seven days served at the Women's Unit. This time is automatically deducted when computing an inmate's probable date of discharge.

Crimed	To have some or all of your remission time taken away in Warden's Court as the result of a serious rule infraction.
Dope	Narcotics, usually heroin.
Down the hill	The Men's Unit at Oakalla Prison Farm, referring to its geographical location with regard to the Women's Unit.
Fall	To be convicted on a legal charge.
Fall guy	Someone who takes the blame, either for a legal offence, or in some other situation.
Fix	An injection of heroin.
Goof balls	Pills taken so that the user will feel giddy. Usually barbituates sold on the black market and taken either with alcohol or narcotics to give a more extreme reaction. This combination of chemicals usually makes the user feel very giddy.
Hack	A prison matron.
Harness bulls	The Royal Canadian Mounted Police. "Harness" makes reference to their traditional use of horses.
Heat	Pressure from or scrutiny by the police.
Hole	The security cells. Also known as the "black hole" or the "dark cells".
Hooked	To be addicted to narcotics. When the user begins experiencing withdrawal symptoms if he does not continue to take narcotics he has been hooked. This same expression is used with a similar meaning as general slang, e.g. to be hooked for somebody or something.
Hustle	To prostitute.
Hustling broad	A prostitute.
Junk	Narcotics, usually heroin.
Kip	Bed
Kite	An illegal note written in prison. To write a kite. To kite to someone.

Kite line	The route devised for delivery of kites between inmates.
Knocked-off	To be caught doing something or prevented from doing something wrong. To be knocked-off with a kite.
Lop	Someone who is rather dull or odd.
Mark	A prostitute's customer. In the prison this expression usually refers to a former customer willing to provide them with funds while they are in the prison.
Needle marks	Scars left from injections of narcotics.
Outfit	Equipment necessary to fix. An eyedropper, needle and spoon.
Overdose	Too many narcotics or goof balls taken at one time which results in unconsciousness. An overdose is sometimes fatal if medical attention is not secured quickly enough.
On the street	To be out of gaol, back in free society. Also means to be streetwalking.
Panic	A shortage of narcotics.
Pony boys	The Royal Canadian Mounted Police.
Push	To sell narcotics.
Pusher	A narcotics vendor.
Rap	To speak to someone. Also used to mean a legal charge.
Rounder	A habitual delinquent. Someone who subscribes to the delinquent code.
Roundup	A rash of arrests. Periodic attempts by the police to arrest all known delinquents, particularly all known drug addicts.
Scoff	To eat or to drink. Also means food in general.
Score	To make a purchase of narcotics from a pusher. Also used as general slang meaning to get a special privilege.
Screw	A male guard in a prison.

Sloughed	(Pronounced as in ploughed). To be locked in your cell.
Spinney	To be confused, baffled or upset. Usually as a result of using goof balls.
Spring	To be released from prison.
Square john	Anyone who is not a habitual delinquent. Someone who normally conforms to the legal and moral requirements of society.
Stuff	Narcotics, usually heroin.
Swing	To make off with something, to steal something.
Treatment	The routine given to newly arrived drug addicts.
Turn a trick	To prostitute.
Window writing	Flashing signals from one area to another. Spelling out words with a flashlight or lighter.
Wired	To be addicted or devoted either to something or someone.
Yenny	Addicts feel yenny when they are preoccupied with a desire to obtain some drugs. The slang expression "yen" is derived from the Chinese word meaning opium.