DRUG USE IN PRISON:

A Study of Young Offenders

By

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CONTENTS

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for examination to another university.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the motivations, patterns and dynamics of young offenders' illicit drug use in prison. Based on qualitative research with thirty inmates and ten prison officers in a Young Offenders Institution, the thesis describes the nature of inmates' drug use; the impact of the prison context on inmates' motivations to use; and the relationship between time and drug use. Drug markets, the nature of drug supply and their relationship with the dominant inmate culture is also discussed. The theory of legitimacy is related to staff and inmates' attitudes towards drug control and mandatory drug testing in prison.

The conclusion identifies four main factors that influenced inmates' drug use in prison: *individual, structural, relational* and *societal*. Individual factors relate to the inmates' drug use before custody, stressing the need to understand the connection between inmates' drug using lifestyles outside and inside prison. Structural factors relate to the structures and regimes in prison. The organisation of prison life influenced when drugs were used and the motivation for using. The relational factors highlight the extent to which staff-prisoner relationships influence trafficking and drug use in prison. Understanding inmates' relationships also provides an insight into drug markets, supply and distribution in custody. As neither the staff nor the inmates are immune to changing attitudes towards drugs, the societal factor highlights the broader structural context of drug use and considers the importance of understanding the complexity and continuity of inmates' drug use and offending, in order to effectively tackle their behaviour in prison.

ABBREVIATIONS

CCTV   -   Closed Circuit Television

KPI   -   Key Performance Indicator

MDT   -   Mandatory drug testing

PO   -   Principal Officer

RSP   -   Red Stripe Posse (a gang in the institution)

SHO   -   Senior Healthcare Officer

SO   -   Senior Officer

YOI   -   Young Offenders' Institution

LIST OF TABLES AND DIAGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

Little is known about the problem of drug use in prison. However,
the link between drug use and crime (cf. Parker et al 1988;
Hammersley et al 1989; Chaiken and Chaiken 1990), the extent of
drug use amongst arrestees (Bennett 1998) and quantitative research
on male and female prisoners (Maden et al 1990; 1991), suggests that
inmates are likely to experience a range of drug problems both prior
to and following custody. Qualitative research conducted in prison,
and on inmates recently released from custody, also confirms high
levels of drug use amongst prisoners (Turnbull et al 1994; Keene
1997a; Edgar and O'Donnell 1998a).

No research has explored the dynamics of young offenders drug use
in custody, perhaps because of the difficulties associated with
researching a sensitive area both for inmates and the prison service.
This thesis explores inmates' perspectives of drug use in prison, their
motivations for using and how drugs relate to their overall experience
of custody. The research draws on a number of qualitative methods.
Unstructured interviews were conducted three times with thirty
inmates incarcerated in a young offenders' institution called Haverton
(a pseudonym). Semi-structured interviews were also carried out

with ten prison officers. Observations and information from official sources, including the inmates' prison records, were also used to verify and provide a broader context for the interview data.

Research outside prisons suggests young offenders are 'super consumers' of drugs and alcohol (Collison 1994; 1996; Parker 1996). Furthermore, certain types of drug use amongst young people, not just those involved in crime, is tolerated and becoming more widespread (cf. Coffield and Gofton 1994; Measham et al 1994; Parker et al 1995; 1998; South 1999). However, while recreational drug use is increasing, problematic drug use remains fairly rare amongst young people (Shiner and Newburn 1997).

Problem drug use is associated with problem lifestyles (cf. Aldridge 1999) and a range of background risk factors including family instability, exclusion from school, limited experience of employment and peer group influences (West 1982; Sampson and Laub 1993; Graham and Bowling 1995; Farrington 1996; Rutter et al 1998). As young offenders tend to experience such risk factors, they represent a high-risk category for developing problematic patterns of drug use (Newburn 1998).

Despite the risk of problem drug use amongst the young inmates I interviewed, normalisation was important and explained inmates' attitudes to drugs and their rationalisations of drug taking. Therefore, although the inmates' patterns of drug use were more extreme than discussed in the theory of normalisation (cf. Parker et al 1998*a*), their approach to drug taking was broadly similar. Alcohol was the only drug not discussed in detail by the inmates. This may have been influenced by the context of the research or the emphasis in the interviews on illicit drug use. As a consequence, even though Parker et al (1998) discuss the importance of alcohol in young people's drug journeys, there is little discussion of alcohol throughout this thesis.

The research discussed here focuses on one institution and is based on an opportunistic sample of inmates and a snowball sample of prison officers. The generalisability of the research needs to be considered, as does the extent to which my sample can be said to represent the views of the other inmates or officers in the Institution. The nature of ethnographic research means generalisability is often sacrificed as data seeks to offer an in-depth understanding of a problem. Considering the lack of knowledge in this area, exploring a small group of inmates' experiences in itself provides an invaluable insight into the nature of prison drug problems. In this sense, my

research could be aligned with early studies in prison sociology, where the characteristics of a particular prison and its impact on inmates' behaviour was explored in detail (cf. Sykes 1958; Morris and Morris 1963; Mathieson 1965; Jacobs 1977).

The vulnerability of the inmates and the sensitivity of the subject area lent themselves to ethnographic enquiry. However, the structured prison environment is not necessarily conducive to ethnography because the regime can limit observation, the time available for interviews and when they can be conducted. Furthermore, the need for detailed description, as ethnography is usually conducted in settings that a reader is unfamiliar with (Hammersley 1992), can significantly undermine confidentiality and the anonymity of research settings and participants. Throughout this thesis I have aimed to balance description with confidentiality. Real names have been replaced with pseudonyms and where appropriate, minor details have been changed to protect the anonymity of inmates, staff and the institution.

Hammersley (1992) noted that a lack of theory constitutes a weakness of ethnography, and questions whether ethnographers'

claims for theory based on 'insightful descriptions', descriptions of social microcosms, the application of theories and the development of theory through crucial cases' is convincing. Furthermore, as the 'values, purposes and relevances' are rarely explained in ethnography, the validity and value of ethnographic research is limited (ibid: p.27).

I share Hammersley's concerns that the impact of the researcher on the research process should be reflexively explored (see chapter 2). I have sought to gain a balance in this thesis between the descriptive and the analytic. Given the lack of research, some description of the drug problem in Haverton is required and is outlined in chapters 3 and 4. However, using the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967), my thesis develops analysis and theory in the later substantive chapters 5-7. Hammersley (1992) critiques the grounded theory approach, noting how the aim to present the minutiae of situations and create abstract theory is based on conflicting requirements. Nevertheless, grounded theory encourages openness on the part of the researcher to a range of possible explanations for phenomenon. This was crucial in my research as I never considered some factors prior to the research which the inmates associated with their drug use (see chapter 4 and discussion of time). It remains for

other researchers to explore drugs in different prison contexts and consider the applicability of the theoretical ideas and analysis developed in this thesis.

Prisons are complex places and drug use in prison reflects the extent of their complexity. No single explanation can account for inmates drug use. The chapters in my thesis are structured around four of the most important influences on drug use in prison highlighted by my research: *societal*, relating to drug use, attitudes to drugs and punishment outside prison; *individual*, referring to inmates drug choices, preferences and patterns of use; *structural*, stressing the context of inmates behaviour and the impact of the regime, security, location and their sentence on drug use; and *relational* focussing on the influence of staff-prisoner relationships and networks between inmates.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the literature to explore the broader societal issues connected with drug use and its association with youth, crime and prison. The nature of drug problems in Britain from 1960 to the present day is discussed, as well as the relationship between drugs and youth and the link with

crime. The chapter critiques the theory of normalisation, which is important in relation to the inmates' drug use in Haverton and introduces research on drug use in prisons.

Chapter 2 focuses on my methodology. The first section discusses the research design, the second reflexively explores my experience of conducting research with young offenders in prison, highlighting the impact of my gender on the fieldwork process.

Chapter 3 describes inmates' drug use in Haverton and introduces the influence of *individual* and *structural* factors. Three main explanations of drug use are explored: 1) the inmates' drug preferences and levels of use before custody; 2) the inmates' perceptions of the risk of getting caught by staff for using drugs; 3) the inmates' drug choices and the need to seek an appropriate drug sensation (namely sedation) in prison.

Chapter 4 further explores the context of inmates' drug use and the impact *structural* factors have on behaviour in prison. Focussing on the relationship between time and drug use, the chapter explores how inmates' unstructured lifestyles before custody created an abundance

of time that was structured around drug use and crime. Similarly, the abundance of time in the highly structured prison setting influenced inmates' drug use. As discussed in chapter 3, drug choices were based on seeking sedation, and while not the primary motivation for using, drugs became an important resource that helped the inmates to pass prison time.

Chapter 5 focuses on *structural* and *relational* factors through a discussion of the mechanisms of drug supply into Haverton. The chapter distinguishes between external routes of supply, via visits with family and friends, and internal routes of supply. Internal supply routes were influenced by the organisation of the inmate culture. The inmates I interviewed suggested the Red Stripe Posse (RSP) dominated the inmate culture in Haverton. The RSP (as they were known) facilitated drug distribution by sharing supplies. The inmate culture also minimised other risks, such as victimisation, which are associated with incarceration.

Chapter 6 discusses the nature of power and control in prison and also explores *relational* factors, focussing on staff-inmate relationships in Haverton. The chapter argues that the legitimacy of

MDT (mandatory drug testing) as a drug control strategy was low in Haverton because: staff were uncomfortable with the emphasis of drug testing on control; the deterrent impact of MDT was limited; inmates thought testing potentially undermined staff fairness, which was important for good staff-prisoner relations; and the disproportionate focus of MDT on cannabis was contrary to the tolerant attitudes expressed by inmates and staff towards the drug.

Chapter 7 concludes by drawing together the *individual, structural, relational* and *societal* influences on drug use in prison and considers how their application to other custodial settings might offer an insight into the variety of prison drug problems. The chapter ends with a discussion of *societal* factors, focussing on the limitations and potential for prison to tackle inmates' drug use.

CHAPTER 1

REVIEWING THE 'SCENE'
Drugs, control, youth and prison

This chapter reviews the literature associated with drugs, youth and prison and their relevance to the empirical research in this thesis. Discussing societal issues provides a contextual background to understanding drug use in prison. The first section discusses the nature of drug problems and the various ways drug use has been tackled. I then go on to discuss the relationship between drug use and young people, exploring current trends in drug taking and the theory of normalisation. Crime is often associated with drug use and this chapter highlights the importance of the lifestyle approach in understanding the complex relationship between offending and drug use. Despite the problem of drug use in prison and the association with drugs, young people and crime, little research has focused on young offenders' drug use. This chapter explores current research on drug use in prison to assess the extent of the problem before discussing prison drug strategies that aim to control use inside.

Drugs: what's the problem?

The 'objective perspective' (Jensen and Gerber 1998:2) defines illicit drug use as a social problem because of the harm it causes to individuals and society. However, drug use has not always been defined as a social problem and implicit in the objective approach are assumptions about the uniformity of the harm that drugs cause, despite the fact that the impact of drugs on a given individual is by no means clear. Gossop (1993) notes that the effects of drugs are influenced by the personality of the user and their emotional state. The circumstances and surroundings also influence the type of sensation users experience, as highlighted by the 'socio-pharmacological' approach (Young 1971). Further research on the experience of heroin users by Pearson (1987*a*) also revealed that the pattern of use and nature of dependency differs between users, illustrating that the pharmacological affects of drugs on the body may be difficult to predict.

By condemning drug use as harmful, the objective stance overlooks the context of drug use as highlighted by labelling theories (cf. Becker 1963) and when drug use might be more acceptable. We live in a 'pill-when-ill' society and while complementary medicines divert

us from traditional pharmaceutical solutions, seeking out drug treatments of various kinds is widespread and commonplace (cf. Gossop 1993). As a consequence, the boundary between 'good' (legal) and 'bad' (illegal) drugs is often difficult to sustain. The use of drugs in sport demonstrates the difficulty of maintaining the legal-safe/illegal-harmful distinction. Coomber (1999), for example, describes how 'good' drugs can cause harm and enhance performance (such as when an injured runner uses painkillers to ensure their good performance) while the effects of 'bad' drugs (such as anabolic steroids) are often exaggerated.

The legal-safe/illegal-harmful distinction is also undermined when society is tolerant of a drug and as a consequence there is no consensus on the harm it causes. For example multiple sclerosis patients argue that their use of cannabis, despite being an illegal drug, is legitimate and not harmful because it eases the pain caused by their illness. Current evidence is anecdotal, although the government has commissioned research into the pain relieving qualities of cannabis which, if positive, might mean the illegal status of the drug is difficult to justify. The experience of patients using cannabis as self-medication highlights how defining drug use as a social problem not only depends on the drug but on the perception of users. Social

constructionism rejects the moral absolutism associated with the objective approach and "proposes that a social condition becomes a social problem only when groups or collectivities bring attention to it and influence people to think of it as problematic" (Jensen and Gerber 1998:3).

In reality we need to seek a middle ground between the condemnation of all drugs or the idea that drug use is problematic when used by particular groups in society. Klieman (1999:3) identified three potential drug harms: the toxicity of a drug (or what they are mixed with); the effects of intoxication; and for the minority, the risk of addiction. The nature of harm identified by Klieman is not based on which drugs are controlled and so avoids the debate surrounding 'good' and 'bad' drugs without undermining or exaggerating the seriousness of the problem. As Klieman (1999:3) notes: "Drugs are a problem, or more precisely drugs misuse is a problem, because voluntary drug-taking sometimes – not always, not even usually, but sometimes – damages users and causes them to damage others."

This chapter explores drug use in Britain, youth drug taking and the problem of drugs in prison from the middle ground, which

acknowledges that for some, drugs cause considerable problems while others are able to manage their drug use.

Controlling drugs and criminalising users

British drug policy has been influenced by various definitions of the 'drug problem' (MacGregor 1999). Berridge (1994) identified four stages in the development of British drug policy; the first related to the increasing professional controls over drug use from the nineteenth century through to the 1920s, followed by the emergence of the 'British system' based on a medical model that viewed addiction as a disease to be controlled and treated through prescribing (Bean 1974; Pearson 1990). The British approach dominated drug policy until the 1960s, and was successful at treating the 'problem' mainly because, as South (1998:89) notes, "there was little problem to treat".

The 1960s heralded a new approach to drug control. Prior to the 1960s the medical profession were mainly prescribing to middle class drug users (Bean 1974). However, the ethos of individual harm minimisation on which the medical approach was based went against new research that highlighted the social nature of drug use (cf. Becker 1963; Young 1971). It also became necessary to limit over

prescribing by the medical profession. In 1965 the Brain Committee restricted prescribing to authorised doctors through drug treatment clinics (Berridge 1994). Arguably, the Brain report marked a shift in emphasis for the medical profession away from care to control, although as South notes (1998:90) the 'British approach' was more about controlling drug users through prescribing than treating them and generally doctors regarded their role as primarily to contain, rather than treat, the drug problem (Stimson and Oppenheimer 1994).

The ongoing tension between prescribing and policing drugs in the 'British system' affected attitudes towards drug addicts. Collison (1993) noted that addicts who sought treatment were viewed as victims, while 'undeserving' addicts who used drugs outside the prescribing system were treated more punitively. Arguably, a similar bifurcated approach towards drug users is currently reinforced by drug treatment and testing orders, where drug users are diverted from the criminal justice system into treatment with the threat of punishment if they are unsuccessful on treatment programmes.

Significant changes in the pattern and profile of drug users in the 1980s initiated the fourth phase of drug policy (Berridge 1994; MacGregor 1999). Concern extended around the proliferated use of

heroin in socially deprived areas amongst new user groups, including women and young people (Dorn and South 1987; Pearson 1987*a*; Parker et al 1988; South 1998).

Drugs became a political concern supported by the consensus that existed on the harm they caused to individuals and communities. It was hoped that fear generated by anti-drug messages such as *'just-say-no'* popular in the United States and Britain and the imagery of users as needy and sick in the 1990 campaign *'Heroin Screws You Up'*, would deter potential drug users. The deterrent effect of 'fear' campaigns is limited because people often do not regard themselves as being at risk and the messages take no account of individual motivations for risk-taking behaviour (Plant and Plant 1992).

Heroin conjures many myths. For example the inmates in my research suggested addiction to heroin was inevitable and heroin users were out of control (see further discussion in chapter 3). However, research reveals that heroin addiction is not immediate, nor inevitable and heroin users take time to become accustomed to the drug. Like five of the eight heroin users in my research, users often take heroin occasionally in the early stages of their drug career (see chapter 3; Pearson 1987*a*). Furthermore, heroin users often make

rational decisions about their drug consumption (Bennett 1986) according to their resources (Cromwell et al 1991) or the need to re-establish legitimate lifestyles and relationships (Faupel 1991). The image of a 'retreatist' drug user was at odds with users' experiences of life on heroin, where they lived by their wits, constantly seeking money and a good supply of the drug (cf. Pearson 1990 for overview; Preble, Casey 1969). This does not suggest all users lived perfectly organised lives on heroin. Certainly some users had more dangerous lifestyles, for example those with irregular supply networks who did not know the purity of the drug risked overdose; and users who injected heroin potentially exposing themselves to AIDS and/or hepatitis. As discussed in chapter 4, the experiences of heavy drug users in my research indicated that heroin (and the use of other drugs) could exacerbate unstructured lifestyles and existing problems with health, unemployment and crime (Faupel and Klockars 1987; Parker et al 1988; Faupel 1991).

In the news!

Increasing public concern around drug use in the 1980s coincided with intense media reporting of drug issues. The role of the media generating drug panics is not a new phenomenon. Young (1971;

1974) noted how media reporting of myths associated with cannabis use evoked a reaction towards users of the drug. Reoccurring 'moral panics' have justified the ongoing 'war on drugs' in Britain (and the United States) (Goode and Ben-Yuhuda 1994). However, Levine and Reinarman (1988:255, quoted in Goode and Ben-Yuhuda 1994:212) suggest drug scares fulfil other agendas and simply represent another form of scapegoating as "the issue of illicit drug use... focuses attention away from structural ills like economic inequality, injustice and the lack of meaningful roles for young people." This may have been the case in the 1980s where media campaigns portrayed the individual addict whilst overlooking why so many lived in socially deprived areas. However, the focus on social exclusion and the multiple causes of drug use in the current drug policy is an attempt to readdress the balance (*Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain 1998*; Social Exclusion Unit 1998).

The power of the media in communicating (or manipulating) drug panics is undeniable. For example, in the mid 1980s concern heightened about the levels of crack use in the United States. The link between crack and predominantly poor, urban, African-American neighbourhoods and high levels of violence fuelled the media panic and in the early 1990s there was speculation that a crack-

cocaine epidemic would affect Britain. However, Bean (1993) notes that the assumption that drug problems in the United States would always be exported to the United Kingdom was unfounded as the social structure in Britain was not sufficiently similar to the States to allow the epidemic to be replicated. While the crack epidemic never really materialised, the social reaction towards crack in Britain was racialised and the drug became synonymous in the media with representations of black users and violence from 'yardie' cultures (Murji 1998).

There is no conclusive evidence to suggest crack use is more significant amongst African-Caribbean communities, although different drug preferences between white and black drug users are acknowledged in the literature (also discussed in my research in chapters 3 and 5). Pearson et al (1993) note that patterns of drug use reported to drug agencies reveal white drug users as more likely to use only heroin than black users, who inject less and more commonly use cocaine and crack (although black users are also less likely to report their drug use to drug agencies). Murji (1999:52) notes that the low use of heroin amongst black people is rarely explained, although it may partly be based on the perception of heroin as a 'dirty white man's drug'. Despite the lack of evidence, the association of

crack, a drug linked with violence and loss of control, with mainly African-Caribbean men in the media reinforced pervasive stereotypes of black men as being 'excitable, naturally aggressive and giving trouble' (Bowling 1999:297). The link between crack and black served to reinforce each other's dangerousness.

The death of the 18 year old Leah Betts in 1995 after using ecstasy provides another example of selective reporting by the media with regard to drugs. Murji (1998:124) noted that the media response to Leah's death was characterised by 'dramatisation, exaggeration and a general sense of excitability'. However, the reporting and subsequent 'sorted' campaign, that involved pictures of Leah being placed on billboards to deter young users from the drug, produced an interesting counter-reaction from the liberal left who sought to 'debunk' what they regarded to be misleading and simplistic reporting of the event (Murji 1998). The campaign was limited like the *'Just-Say-No'* and *'Heroin Screws You Up'* campaigns before it, because it overlooked the context of young people's drug taking and their personal sense of invulnerability that enabled them to rationalise the risk of using (Plant and Plant 1992).

While the media used the association between crack and race to fuel the fear of drugs, gender communicated the danger of drugs. Henderson (1999) notes that until recently the discussion of gender and drugs has been relatively absent, although the death of Leah Betts thrust gender and class into the forefront. Young (1990) analysed media reports of the Greenham Common Protest and noted how news stories described social phenomena through dichotomies, such as criminal/law-abiding, mad/sane and good/evil, and these were used to construct the deviance of the Greenham women. In the case of Leah Betts the dichotomy was adopted to reinforce her innocence. The refusal to accept she had taken the drug voluntarily and the campaign to seek out the predatory drug dealer who coerced her highlighted the reluctance to accept that a young, educated woman with so many opportunities would undertake such a deviant act. The case went against convention (someone good did something bad) upsetting the traditional media focus on reinforcing the status-quo, as Caputi (1987:159) notes in her feminist analysis of sex crime in the media:

> "The mass media provides those repetitious pictures and stories which ritually demonstrate the basic order of culture. In doing so... they socially construct reality, ingraining appropriate values and beliefs which simultaneously cultivate resistance to social change, a surrender to "things as they are".

By reinforcing traditional expectations associated with gender and class, the media reports of the Leah Betts case (the counter-reaction of the liberal left aside) fundamentally overlooked the context of young people's drug use.

Building enforcement

In 1985 the Government produced the enforcement led strategy, *Tackling Drug Misuse* (Berridge 1994; South 1998). As the profile of drug users changed from the 1960s to the 1980s, the means of maintaining drug supply by trafficking had become an organised and profitable criminal industry (Dorn et al 1992). Three of the five actions in the strategy: reducing supply from overseas; maintaining effective enforcement; deterrent; and tight domestic controls, related to macro enforcement, or high level enforcement strategies, which aimed to prevent drugs entering the country. The outcome of high-level enforcement is difficult to measure because statistics on drug seizures only show what has been taken out of the drug market, while the full extent of the illicit drug market remains unknown. However, there has been growing disillusionment with high-level enforcement and resignation to the idea that drugs markets can only be managed

and not eradicated, which could signify that the 'drug wars' may be over (Dorn and Lee 1999).

In light of disappointing high-level enforcement, low-level policing strategies that target local drug using networks have become increasingly important (Murji 1998). The aim of low-level strategies is to reduce the number of drug buyers so the market cannot be sustained (Edmunds et al 1996). Evidence supporting the success of such approaches varies. Edmunds et al (1996), based on six case studies of local drug markets in London, found users did adapt their behaviour in response to police tactics, although they did not necessarily stop using but ensured they were less likely to get caught. Maher and Dixon (1999) refer to similar 'unintended consequences' of police 'crackdowns' on drugs, highlighting the difficulty of reconciling enforcement and harm minimisation. Based on ethnographic research in an Australian heroin market, Maher and Dixon note how enforcement encourages 'geographical, social, substance and temporal displacement'; often further isolating drug users and making it harder to offer health education or harm minimisation. Faupel (1991) takes the debate on enforcement versus harm minimisation a stage further to discuss the merits of legalisation. Faupel notes, based on research with career heroin

users, that controlling the drug creates problems for users where they are forced underground into dangerous, erratic and disorganised patterns of use. These problems are further reinforced by social exclusion, where limited opportunities perpetuate unstructured lifestyles and associated drug problems (Social Exclusion Unit 1998). However radical, Faupel acknowledges that legalisation is unlikely to solve all drug related problems, but suggests that it is important to consider whether enforcement might be more effective if targeted towards controlling the boundaries of legal drug use, rather than managing the impact of illegal drug use.

Drugs and disease

A significant impact on the development of drug control, especially around heroin use, from the mid 1980s onwards was the growing threat of AIDS and its spread amongst injecting drug users (Berridge 1994). The AIDS threat shifted the emphasis of drug control onto risk reduction and harm minimisation. The scope of harm minimisation was broad, intending to cover users, deterring potential using and protecting public health. Pearson (1992:17) identified four main principles of harm minimisation: containing the number of new users; encouraging existing users to stop using; minimisation of

counter-productive aims of enforcement strategies; and the minimisation of harm to the wider community. To achieve these ends various strategies, such as needle exchange programmes, were introduced and treatment goals were prioritised as a means of diverting or encouraging heavy users to stop using.

However, the principles of harm minimisation, growing out of a socio-medical model, appeared to contradict the aims of enforcement that emphasised abstinence and eradication of drugs (I discuss this in chapter 6 with specific reference to mandatory drug testing in prison). Without an adequate balance the potential benefit of harm minimisation would be considerably undermined, although the 'British system', with its previous bias towards medical control, was more able to accommodate the changes than the United States where prohibition was emphasised (cf. Drucker 1992; Pearson 1992). Indeed the prohibitionist approach in the United States saw the proportion of offenders imprisoned for drug offences grow from 8 percent to 26 percent in the early 1990s (Melossi and Lettiere 1998:43). While countries that relied on less punitive controls, such as the Netherlands, kept prison populations fairly low in an atmosphere of increasing incarceration, largely because of their tolerance towards drug use (Weiss 1998:451). However, Downes

(1988, 1998) suggests that the 'limits of tolerance' have almost been reached, as drug problems continue to escalate and surrounding countries exert pressure on the Dutch to 'crack down' on drugs.

The strategy document *Tackling Drugs Together* (1995) continued to recognise the value of harm reduction although it was de-emphasised, and the message reverted back to encouraging abstinence and enforcement (South 1998). The strategy focussed on three main areas: crime; young people; and public health. It also laid the foundations for the current partnership approach through the introduction of drug action teams, comprising representatives from local authorities, health authorities, police, prisons and probation, and drug reference teams, whose function was to deliver the national strategy locally.

The current strategy, *Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain* (1998) has four main foci; young people, communities, treatment and availability. The strategy builds on the previous partnership foundations, as MacGregor (1999:82) notes:

> "As drug misuse has become endemic and more widespread, the dominance of the medical-scientific paradigm in explaining drug dependence has waned, allowing more room for multi-disciplinary, multi-agency approaches, drawing in a wide array

of professions and institutions, who are encouraged to work together in 'partnership'".

Bottoms and Wiles (1996) note that preference for an integrated policy approach comes from social trends towards managerialism in late modern societies. The partnership approach recognises that drug use is symptomatic of a range of broader structural problems such as poverty, social exclusion and unemployment (cf. Bourgois 1995; Pearson 1987*b*). However, creating solid partnerships between agencies that metaphorically speak very different 'languages' in relation to drugs (especially around treatment and enforcement) is not without difficulty. Newburn (1999), while admiring the sentiment of 'joined up problems' requiring 'joined up solutions', points to five tensions in multi-agency working in relation to youth justice: communication (sharing information and issues of confidentiality); leadership and who has responsibility for management; resources; locality and what area to cover; and an 'absence of system integration' between youth and adult schemes. However, good partnerships are not unachievable. Edmunds et al (1999) note in their study of four arrest referral schemes, that partnership working can be fragile but to ensure their effectiveness some account needs to be taken of different working cultures and the potential for conflict.

Certainly an integrated approach when tackling drug problems makes sense as criminological literature suggests individual and background risk factors are the same for drug use and offending behaviour (see further discussion in chapter 4). The highly influential Cambridge longitudinal study (West and Farrington 1973; 1977; West 1982) highlighted five principal factors (four associated with the family) common in the backgrounds of young delinquent males: a low income family; a large sized family with four or more children being born to the mother; unsatisfactory child rearing (such as inconsistent parenting, poor attitudes towards infants); parents with a criminal record and offenders with below average intelligence. However, the Cambridge sample was comprised primarily of white working class men drawn from a reasonably poor working class neighbourhood that had a fairly high delinquency rate. Therefore a number of the risk factors, such as low income and poor housing might be expected. Other research highlights the importance of weak attachments to social institutions such as the family and schools (Hirschi 1969), combined with poor social circumstances, delinquent peers and a lack of opportunity as being critical risk factors for offending and drug use (cf. Elliot et al 1985; Sampson and Laub 1993; Graham and Bowling 1995; Farrington 1996; Rutter et al 1998)

Assessing the causal relationship between risk factors and delinquency is complex as they tend to 'cluster' in the lives of young offenders and some factors have a more direct impact on the onset of crime, while others may be related to persistence (Utting et al 1993). Nevertheless crime prevention needs to take account of the influence family and school factors have on delinquency and drug use (Graham and Utting 1996). Although if not approached correctly, interventions based on risk factors can pathologise and stigmatise sections of society, fuelling panics around the moral threat they may pose (for example the war waged on single mothers throughout the 1980s, and general anxiety around increased divorce rates and the decline of the traditional family model).

The close relationship between delinquency and drug use and the fact that illicit drug use is predominantly a youthful activity has fuelled concern about the role of drugs in youth culture (cf. Young 1971; Bean 1974). Indeed the shift in drug policy away from the socio-medical perspective to exercising more direct penal control coincided with the post-war emergence of youth as a distinct category (Clarke et al 1976). The following section reviews explanations for youth culture from the United States and Britain and their relationship with

illicit drugs, to offer a broader context before exploring young offenders' drug use.

Young people and drugs

Youth subcultures were associated with initial and persistent use of drugs and the growth of a 'drug scene' (Plant and Plant 1992). However, while particular youth styles had a preference for certain drugs, such as hippies and cannabis (Young 1971), drug use was often exaggerated by the media and official sources to reinforce public concern around youth lawlessness, as in the case of amphetamine use amongst Mods and Rockers in the 1960s (Cohen 1987). Explanations for youth subcultures varied, although they were generally founded on the sensitivity of youth to broader structural economic changes that were experienced through class and generation (Brake 1985:21). Consequently, subcultural theory saw youth culture as a means of overcoming structural problems. For example, Cohen's (1955) theory of 'status frustration' based in the United States suggested working class youth internalised middle class values but were unable to achieve them and therefore sought status through deviant lifestyles; a process called reaction formation. However, research by Miller (1958) suggested rather than

internalising middle class values, working class youth possessed their own distinct cultural values. Furthermore, Sykes and Matza's (1959) research on the 'techniques of neutralisation' adopted by offenders to explain or excuse their delinquent behaviour showed how conventional and illegitimate value systems co-existed.

Drawing on Sutherland's theory of differential association (cf. Sutherland 1949), Cloward and Ohlin (1960) suggested that working class youth in America were committed to conventional norms of success but limited opportunities to achieve them meant they turned to illegitimate means and delinquency. Cloward and Ohlin noted that the deviant world operated on similar opportunity structures as the non-criminal and the theory identified three subcultures that offered different offending opportunities: criminal; conflict; and retreatist identified as drug using culture within the typology. The type of subculture available to young people depended on the organisation of criminal networks in their local neighbourhoods. Membership of a particular criminal subculture suggested offending behaviour was intense and specialised; however research by Matza (1964) showed offenders drifted in and out of delinquency depending on various circumstances. This is supported by research on rational choice and offending behaviour that suggests offenders make choices about

whether to commit an offence based on a range of 'proximal' factors

such a presence of a good target and 'distal' factors, such as

individual risk factors that predispose individuals to crime (Ekblom

1996; Felson and Clarke 1998).

Differences in class structure and the organisation of youth gangs

meant explanations for youth subcultures in Britain differed from

those in the United States (Downes 1966; Parker 1974). British

explanations of subcultures were heavily influenced by the work of

Hall et al (1976) who drew on the theory of hegemony and

highlighted class struggle and youth expression through style (cf.

Hebdige 1979). Clarke et al (1976) criticised the deconstruction of

class in theories from the United States that conceived subcultures

around the American dream. In Britain working class subcultures

"take shape on the level of the social, cultural class-relations of the

subordinate classes" (Clarke et al, 1976:45) and were focussed on

'winning cultural space' for youthful leisure pursuits. However, the

subcultural solution was imaginary as the marginalised position of

youth in society remained unchanged. As Clarke et al (1976:47-8)

noted:

> "There is no 'subcultural solution' to working-class youth
> unemployment, educational disadvantage, compulsory

miseducation, dead-end jobs, the routinisation and specialisation of labour, low pay and loss of skills. Sub-cultural strategies cannot match, meet or answer the structuring dimensions emerging in this period for the class as a whole. So, when post-war sub-cultures address the problematics of their class experience, they often do so in ways which reproduce the gaps and discrepancies between real negotiations and symbolically replaced 'resolutions'. They 'solve', but in an imaginary way, problems which at the concrete material level remain unresolved."

The chronic irony was that working class youth subcultures, rather than resolving their position in society, were more likely to reinforce their marginalisation further. For example the lads in Willis' (1977) study *Learning to Labour*, in their attempt to reject their inevitable employment prospects, rejected the very means of progression, education (cf. Young 1998).

Drug preferences, like various expressions of youth subcultures, also appeared to be influenced by socio-economic background. Although the links are complex, heroin has been associated with deprived areas and unemployment in Britain (Pearson 1987*b*; Parker et al 1988). Similarly in the United States, selling illicit drugs is seen to provide significant economic opportunities in poor neighbourhoods (cf. Bourgois 1995; Jacobs 1999*a*). Current research suggests class is becoming a less important predictor of recreational drug use (cf. Parker et al 1995, 1998*a*) and heroin use, although heroin continues

to be associated with economically deprived areas (Parker et al 1998*b*; Egginton and Parker 2000).

The problem of youth never disappears but how the problem is conceived changes (cf. Pearson 1983) as new 'folk devils', for example eco-warriors, GM protesters, teenage fathers, and different 'moral panics' (cf. Cohen 1987), such as ecstasy use, teenage sex and pregnancy have emerged. Debates have advanced considerably and offer further understanding of the position of youth in society today. For example, theories of masculinity provide a useful insight into the behaviour of young men (masculinity theory is discussed further in chapter 5). When considering youth today, structural changes within global economies that have influenced modes of production and patterns of employment (cf. Bottoms and Wiles 1996) need to be taken into account. Youth is highly sensitive to such structural changes and consequently certain groups of young people have found themselves increasingly marginalised from mainstream society with little prospect of integration and employment (MacDonald 1997; Young 1998). Changing family structures, either due to divorce, different attitudes to marriage or teenage parenthood, also influences the position of youth in today's society (Taylor 1999). Without employment, young people lack the financial means to be

independent and changing attitudes to family commitments often means children will live at home for longer, thereby extending the period recognised as adolescence (cf. Parker et al 1998a).

Structural changes in employment and the family have affected the lives of delinquent youth. Desistence from crime and drug use is often viewed as something that just happens and often onset and desistence from youth crime occurs near the same age (Shover 1996), with crime decelerating with maturation at approximately 17 to 18 years old (Farrington 1996). The approximate age for desistence from drug use varies according to how drug use is measured (lifetime, drug use during the last year or during the last month). Generally drug use peaks in the late teens at 16-19 years old and declines around 20-24 years old (Graham and Bowling 1995; Shiner and Newburn 1999). However, research by Graham and Bowling (1995) suggests desistence amongst young men is taking longer because the transition to adulthood and the ability to form quality conventional bonds, such as a supportive family life and job stability, that constitute 'turning points' in criminal careers (Sampson and Laub 1993) is becoming harder. The generalisability of Graham and Bowling's (1995) findings are limited as the research was based on semi-structured interviews with 21 young people (10 males and 11

females). However, the research highlights that desistence is a complex process as structural factors and agents' decision-making needs to be considered to fully understand why offenders stop offending (Farrall and Bowling 1999).

In the 1990s, Redhead (1995) suggests that rather than being an expression of revolt or discontent, youth culture has been commodified and is manufactured; 'an industry in itself... merely a marketing device and advertisers' fiction' (ibid:1). We have as a society become more individualistic; Redhead (1997) referred to the 1980-90s as a period of 'hedonistic individualism'. Like youth culture, drug use has been influenced by changing fashions, for example the acid house culture in the 1980s and growth of Ecstasy (Es). Furthermore, as young people's leisure activities change to reflect consumption, the decision to take drugs needs to be located within the broader market culture (Taylor 1999:78) and as a consequence drug use appears less rebellious and is simply part of growing up (Coffield and Gofton 1994). Therefore, as Parker et al (1998*a*:157) summarise:

> "British youth culture has accommodated and perhaps facilitated recreational drug use both in terms of what is acceptable for young people to do and in absorbing and accommodating the language and imagery of drugs via the

fashion, media, music and drink industries that thrive on youth markets"

Late modernity, 'hedonistic individualism' and the market society offers a broad frame of reference in which to locate changing patterns in young people's drug use. The following section introduces current research on the normalisation of drug use and considers its contribution to understanding youth drug taking.

Nice 'n' easy: recreation, normalisation and the 'problem' of drugs

Over the past ten years drug use amongst young people aged between 16 and 24 years old has increased, while rates of drug use outside this age range have remained fairly static (Ramsay and Partridge 1999). Research suggests young people are starting to use drugs between 12 and 14 years old and, by 20 years old, between 25 and 50 percent of young people have tried some illicit drug (Parker et al 1998a:15). Furthermore, their drug use is less discriminating and the traditional differences in the level of use between social classes and gender have become increasingly subtle (Measham et al 1994; Parker et al 1995, 1998a; Ramsey and Partridge 1999). The relationship between ethnicity and drug use remains complex. Research based on self-report surveys distributed to pupils in schools in the North West shows the rates of drug use are broadly similar for white and African-

Caribbean youth however both are more likely to use drugs than Asian youth (Parker et al 1995; 1998*a*; Aldridge et al 1999). Further research based on self-report data by Graham and Bowling (1995) showed generally lower levels of drug trying, particularly of cannabis, cocaine and Ecstasy amongst Asians and African-Caribbean youth compared to white youth.

Cannabis is the most popular illicit drug of choice amongst young people (Coffield and Gofton 1994; Release 1998; also supported by my research with young offenders, as discussed in chapter 3). However, Parker et al (1998*a*:50) also note the importance of alcohol "because alcohol is usually the first and the most widely consumed psycho-active drug by young people in the UK... drinking is already normalised: it is the most widely practised form of recreational drug use." The growth of the club leisure industry and the marketing of drinks targeted towards young people have increased the opportunity and availability of alcohol and young people start drinking in their early teens consuming considerable amounts of alcohol into their mid-teens. While research suggests smoking, drinking and drug use originates from an adolescent willingness to take risks (Plant and Plant 1992), Parker et al (1998*a*) suggest young people today overlook the illegality of drug use, viewing it as no different to

smoking or drinking. Ethnographic research amongst heavy drug users, such as Jacobs (1999a) work with crack users, shows a similar apathy towards the illegal status of cannabis, where use of the drug was not considered deviant or illegal (the inmates' attitudes to cannabis and how it relates to drug control in prison is discussed further in chapters 3 and 6).

Research suggests young people's patterns of use are changing and they indulge in a 'pick and mix' approach to drugs selecting legal or illegal substances according to their mood and purpose (Parker et al 1995; 1998a; Coffield and Gofton 1994). Young people are mainly poly-drug users who express preferences towards various substances rather than opting to use one drug. Research by Hammersley et al (1999) based on interviews with 229 ecstasy users aged between 15 and 44 years old (69 percent of the sample were below 25 years of age) found that all the sample were poly drug users. The research suggested significant variations between the extent of ecstasy use ranging from occasional (once a week) to 'binges' that involved using multiple tablets. My research on young offenders found a similar preference for poly drug use and drug binges. However, the trend towards erratic 'binging' on drugs is worrying as it is often

related to dangerous lifestyles and offending behaviour (see chapter 4; Faupel and Klockars 1987; Cromwell et al 1991; Faupel 1991).

Understanding why the changes in adolescent drug taking have occurred is complex, as Parker et al (1998*a*) note, explanations need to relate to broader societal and structural changes in adolescence which have become more challenging. Young people are more skilled at coping with uncertainty and more willing to take risks to achieve their goals. Griffiths and Waterson (1996:124) also highlight the importance of understanding risk as part of the experience of drug use:

> "Risk whether belonging to a dangerous group, pursuing a dangerous activity or simply flaunting authority can be attractive... whether it is the ultimate risk of death or simply being found out, it heightens the drug experience. Risk taking, and pushing the boundaries of behaviour is inextricably bound up with the process of adolescence."

However, Parker et al (1998*a*) distinguish between rebellious risk taking and risks taken as part of everyday life to achieve particular ends, so that: "[young people] take risks not as an expression of youthful rebelliousness but as a tactic to achieving conventional goals. Clearly, taking calculated risks is very different from being 'at risk'" (ibid 1998*a*:30).

The theory of normalisation aims to understand the subjective experience of youth drug taking from a non-pathological perspective. It rejects the automatic association between youth, drugs and danger that often occurs in the media or drug policy. Parker et al (1998*a*:153) list the key features of normalisation as: high drug availability; the normative nature of drug trying; the impact of adolescence decision making on future drug pathways; awareness of drugs and being 'drugwise'; open mindedness about future drug use after trying drugs; drug use as recreational and closely associated with leisure lifestyles and the routinisation and cultural acceptance of risk taking. Therefore, the theory highlights how drug taking is a lifestyle choice made by young people as part of growing up (also see Coffield and Gofton 1994). The theory of normalisation does not suggest illicit drug use is normal, rather it aims to communicate how far drug use is acceptable amongst young people, so that: "while drug use has not itself become a *true* norm, it has moved some way from the term 'exception to the norm': from 'exceptionality' to being part of everyday life"(South 1999:7).

The future of control

Changes in drug preferences place a pressure on drug strategy to be flexible and able to tackle diversity. A strategy that focuses on drugs, harm and crime, overlooking the growth of recreational drug use will misunderstand the problem (cf. Parker 1995; 1998*a*). A recent inquiry into the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 reviewed the illegality of all drugs and recommended to reduce Ecstasy from a category A substance (the most dangerous) to category B and Cannabis from category B to category C, making possession a non-arrestable offence (Drugs and the Law: Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971: 2000). The report adds to the debate on legalisation and/or decriminalisation of cannabis in particular, as other drugs continue to be acknowledged as harmful. To rationalise legislation, supporters highlight the rights of the individual to use drugs (cf. Ruggiero 1999 for overview) or the economic inefficiency of drug control (Stevenson 1994). Alternatively, proponents of criminalisation reinforce the harm of drugs and the responsibility of the state to protect its citizens (Wilson 1990).

Current drug debates need to pay attention to research by Tyler (1990) that suggests people comply with the law when they believe it is legitimate and fair. Based on this premise we can expect the future debate around drug control to be influenced by the number of users who do not regard their use as problematic and therefore reject the law as illegitimate (see further discussion of drug control in prison in chapter 6). The new drug users will create new challenges for enforcement, as South notes (1998:99), "'drug use futures' should clearly be accompanied by consideration of appropriate 'control futures'. In other words, if drug use is no longer regarded as deviant, what is the argument for its criminalization; if it remains criminalized, how can drug use be *appropriately* regulated, policed and controlled?"

Surely not that many?

While normalisation has had a significant impact on current drug debates, its analysis is limited to particular forms of drug use (cannabis, ecstasy and LSD). The discussion below focuses the critique of normalisation on the suggested prevalence of drug use and explores the distinction Parker et al (1998*a*) make between 'taking

calculated risks' (or recreational drug use) and being 'at risk' (or 'problem' use).

In their critique of normalisation, Shiner and Newburn (1997; 1999) argue that the theory confuses frequency with normality and overestimates the extent of young people's drug taking. The authors accept there has been an increase in drug use, although some argue that using lifetime measures (asking whether young people have ever used drugs) exaggerates the extent of use and important nuances and choices young people make about the type of drug and frequency of use are overlooked. Consequently, traditional fears around young people and drug use are not avoided but reinforced, as Shiner and Newburn (1999:156) note:

> "Claims for normalisation which pay insufficient attention to the distinctions young people make between different illicit substances and which take insufficient account of the recency or normative context of behaviour run the risk of feeding 'respectable fears'. Much of what is currently being said about young people and drugs, including a great deal of academic discourse, has simply reinforced adult concerns about the problematic nature of youth. Though significant changes are occurring, there remain considerable continuities with the past."

While research aims to capture the extent of drug use, quantifying levels of drug taking have produced various results. Longitudinal

research by Denham-Wright and Pearl (1995) based on self-report questionnaires distributed between 1969 and 1994 to varying samples of 400 to 500 young people in their fourth year at three secondary schools, suggests the proportion of young people aged between 14 and 15 who knew someone who had used drugs has increased nine times. Furthermore those who have been offered drugs has quadrupled over the past twenty-five years. Denham-Wright and Pearl's research offers some support for normalisation with regard to increased access and availability of drugs. Further research exploring self-reported offending amongst 14 and 15 years olds by Graham and Bowling (1995) revealed that 45 percent of young men and 26 percent of young women used controlled drugs, the most popular drug was cannabis (used by 41 percent of young men and 25 percent of young women). While self-report surveys are one way to gauge the extent of offending, which are often underestimated in criminal statistics, they are open to criticism, as the validity of responses cannot be checked (Fielding 1993).

The 1998 British Crime Survey (BCS) revealed different levels of drug use again; 49 percent of young people aged between 16 and 29 years had used illicit drugs, although less had used them recently (16 percent had used them in the last month) (Ramsey and Partridge

1999). However, the BCS may underestimate the extent of drug use because the sample size limits analysis of patterns of drug use amongst 16-24 year olds (Gore 1999) currently targeted by the national drug strategy. Furthermore, the drugs questions in the survey are limited and do not offer an insight into nature, intensity or duration of drug careers (MacDonald 1999).

Shiner and Newburn's (1999) overview of four surveys: the 1994 BCS; the 1992 Youth Lifestyle Survey; The 1995 National Household Survey and the 1995 Monitoring the Future Study showed youth drug taking had increased, although significant proportions of young people did not use drugs and expressed negative attitudes about them. Research on a small group of London teenagers also confirmed that drug use was not a priority in their lives (although they reported trying a range of drugs) (Power et al 1996). Therefore normalisation may not relate to youth generally but may be limited to sections of youth closely associated with club cultures and leisure lifestyles or lifestyles where drugs form part of complex social problems. Recent research by Release (1998) suggests drug use is more significant amongst club-goers. The research based on interviews with 520 club-goers showed that 16-29 year olds at dance events were three times more likely to have tried cannabis in 1998,

compared to levels of drug use reported in the 1994 BCS (91 per cent compared to 34 percent in the BCS) and fourteen times more likely to have tried ecstasy (81 percent compared to 6 percent). This not only highlights the relationship between particular youth cultures and drugs but also suggests in certain contexts there is better access and a greater willingness to use illicit drugs.

Research has tended to focus on quantifying how many young people are using drugs and while surveys offer an insight into changing patterns of drug use, to understand drug use amongst particular sections of youth, such as young offenders, more sensitive and targeted measures are needed. However, as Measham et al (1994) note, large scale survey research has tended to substitute the smaller scale qualitative or specialised research. As a result, research loses touch with young people's decision-making processes, their rationality, their sense of invulnerability and how they understand the context of their drug taking.

The ethnographic research conducted on drugs makes an important contribution to understanding the context of drug use. For example Bourgois' (1995) research undertaken over five years in New York offers an invaluable insight into the lives of drug users, the economic

opportunities that arise from selling drugs and how users struggle to maintain legitimate lifestyles. Jacobs' (1999*a*) research on crack users offers a similar insight into the economics of drugs. While ethnographic research can be fraught with ethical dilemmas and problems of access (Pearson 1999), it is invaluable for advancing our understanding of statistics of drug use and therefore makes an important contribution to developing drug policy.

So is this just having fun?

Parker et al (1998*a*:152) acknowledge the difficulties with defining 'recreational' drug use and limit the theory of normalisation to certain drugs, including cannabis, nitrates, amphetamines, LSD and ecstasy. Normalisation excludes heroin, cocaine and the 'chaotic combination of drug use and dependent 'daily' use'. While the aim of the normalisation theory is to understand the subjective experience of youth drug taking and the meaning of drugs in their everyday lives, it uses long standing distinctions between 'hard' and 'soft' drugs to frame the discussion. As a consequence the theory may disregard the subjective experiences of young people who may define their use of heroin, cocaine, crack or regular and daily use of cannabis as recreational.

Definitions of recreational drug use focus on the pattern of use being controlled and discriminating (Redhead 1995; Griffiths and Waterson 1996). For example, Redhead (1995:7) defines recreational drug use as that which "can be used and usually do not affect the person's ability to work the next, or the following day. It is associated with the politics of pleasure, a hedonism (in hard times) – a pleasure for its own sake in times when moral regulation of youth is pervasive and deep economic recession is rife." Dependent use refers to more regular patterns of consumption, where there is the potential for individual use to become more isolated and chaotic. While defining addiction is complicated, two schools of thought emerge, the disease model and social construction. Booth Davies (1997:11) notes both models are based on the same underlying premise, that addictive behaviour is compelled and addicted individuals are unable to exercise free will. Problematic 'addicted' drug use is also associated with the extent drug use shifts from being a peripheral activity to becoming the central focus of users lives (Duncan and Petosa 1995) and related to the recognition and fear of drug withdrawal symptoms (Lindesmith 1938, 1968).

The boundaries between recreational and addicted patterns of drug use are not necessarily clear. Research by Pearson (1987a) showed that while some heroin users continued down the road to addiction, the path was not predictable, inevitable or experienced in the same way by all users. Drug users can also regain control over their more chaotic use and revert to recreational use (Griffiths and Waterson 1996). Therefore, research suggests not all 'dependent' users necessarily have chaotic lives (although some certainly do), but many continue to live ordered lives and control their drugs use. Faupel and Klockars (1987) suggest that heroin users who live a chaotic lifestyle, with no employment, stability or security are more likely to experience the problems usually associated with the drug. While users who have stable lifestyles use the drug with little problem.

This suggests that a combination of drug use with other difficult life factors contributes to its problematic nature and Aldridge et al (1999:42) acknowledge that drug trying can lead to problematic use for individuals leaving care, the socially excluded and those tied into criminal lifestyles. However, there is less research on young problem drug users or young offenders to suggest conclusively their motivations for using drugs differs from recreational users. The prevalence of drug use amongst young offenders is high (Collison

1996; Newburn 1998), although this is unsurprising considering the manifestation of their risk taking is likely to be more extreme than non-offending youth. Young offenders' attitudes towards risk may also affect their views and attitudes towards drugs.

The implication that 'problem' lifestyles equate to 'problem' use does not take the drug debate forward. If users of 'hard' drugs seek pleasure from their use, control their drug use and go through periods when they reduce their intake, then the distinction between dependent and recreational drug use is less clear and almost certainly more dynamic. However, the theory of normalisation excludes categories of drug use, which does little to enhance our understanding of the relationship between 'drugs for fun' and drugs that dominate users lives; it offers no understanding of how life factors interact or how problem drug use and recreational drug use co-exist. By not challenging the traditional drug boundaries, normalisation offers a non-pathological understanding of some forms of drug use, and yet reinforces the pathology of others.

'Let's get heavy': heroin, cocaine and crack

The focus of research on young people's recreational drugs use has resulted in hard drug use being generally neglected. While the debates in the 1980s were focused on the threat of AIDS, concern around drug related crime, and the potential crack epidemic, in the 1990s the emphasis shifted and the population of heroin users appeared to stabilise in treatment programmes around the country (Parker 1997). However, emerging research is indicating that shifts in the patterns and profile of drug use at the hard end are underway.

Evidence for hard drug use varies. The 1998 BCS suggests rates of heroin use remain low; lifetime use of cocaine amongst 16-24 year olds was 7 percent, compared to 44 percent for cannabis (Ramsey and Partridge 1999). Conversely, research amongst clubbers found 18 percent of young people who had ever used a drug at a dance event used heroin compared to 95 percent cannabis, 85 percent ecstasy, 62 percent cocaine and 18 percent crack (Release 1998). The high consumption of cocaine in the recreational context is less unexpected as the drug is more closely associated with recreational lifestyles and young people generally tolerate cocaine, distinguishing it from

heroin, which is less acceptable (see discussion of inmates' drug use in chapter 3; Denham-Wright, Pearl 1995; Power et al 1996).

Despite the supposed stigma towards heroin, research by Parker et al (1998*b*) shows that new heroin outbreaks are emerging in rural areas, compared to the predominantly urban outbreaks of the 1980s. As in the recreational drug scene, class and gender have become less crucial inhibitors of heroin use and while heroin use continues to be related to socio-economic status and traditional background risk factors that loom large in the biographies of many users, the new heroin users include a range of young people with more conventional and stable backgrounds (Egginton and Parker, 2000). Increasingly more women are using heroin (Dorn and South 1987) and are shaking off the traditional, stereotypical image that their position in the drug scene is marginal to men (as many were introduced to the drug via male partners, cf. Adler 1985). Ethnographic research, for example, reveals how women are very active in drug markets, often independently selling drugs (Denton and O'Malley 1999; also see Bourgois 1995).

Research by Egginton and Parker (2000) indicates that a number of young heroin users are poly drug users and three quarters of the total

sample (86) used crack. In the United States the increase in heroin use has coincided with the decline in popularity of crack-cocaine (Jacobs 1999*b*). However, crack, made by 'cooking' cocaine with baking soda to produce small potent 'rocks', can encourage a 'rock repertoire' where heroin or cannabis is used in conjunction with crack to control the powerful high and intense cravings associated with the drug (also discussed by the inmates in my research, see chapter 3; Parker and Bottomley 1996).

While current evidence is limited, patterns of hard drug use are emerging: as crack use declines heroin is coming back into vogue. Contemporary heroin use is less inhibited by social class and gender although there appears to be some difference between race and drug preferences. Heroin, crack and cocaine may also have a role within the recreational drug scene, as my research with young offenders suggested (see further discussion in chapters 3 and 4). Further research is needed to inform the drugs debate about changing patterns of use at the 'hard end' and its relationship with recreational drug use.

The drug crime link

The current national drugs strategy aims to protect local communities from the harm of drugs and drug related crime, such as drug trafficking, drug supply and acquisitive crime (*Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain* 1998). While the strategy declares that there is "a growing clarity between drugs and crime", the relationship is in fact far from clear.

The association between drug use and crime is understood to be more than simply the offence of using an illegal drug. The drug crime link is conceived in various ways in the literature:

1. Drug dealing either by supplying local markets or developing organised global links to facilitate trafficking (cf. Dorn et al 1992);
2. The cost of a habit forces a user to commit consensual crime[1] or acquisitive crime;
3. A user commits crimes after ingesting the drug, while intoxicated.

Considerable evidence supports a statistical association between drug use and offending (Hammersley et al 1989; Chaiken and Chaiken 1990; Bennett 1998). Bennett (1998) for example found that 46 percent of the 839 arrestees interviewed reported using drugs in the

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[1] Support has been found for the link between consensual crimes, such as prostitution and drug dealing, and drug use (cf. Hunt 1990).

last twelve months and 30 percent said they were currently dependent on a drug. Urinalysis (the process of analysing urine for traces of illicit substances) of 662 arrestees revealed cannabis to be the most common drug used (46 percent tested positive), while 18 percent tested positive for opiates, 10 percent for cocaine and 8 percent for methadone. Parker et al (1988) suggested there was a causal link between the increase in crime and heroin use in the Wirral. A conclusion based not only on the statistical association, but also on the profile of offenders, many of whom were young drug takers, who regarded their crime to be a direct consequence of their drug use (Jarvis and Parker 1989). Further evidence suggests the controlled distribution of drugs, such as methadone, corresponds with a decrease in crime (Parker and Kirby 1996).

If the relationship between drugs and crime were based on the cost of drugs then substantial funds from crime would be spent on drugs. However, offenders use their money to support their lifestyles, of which drug taking is a part (Parker and Kirby 1996). I found this was common amongst the inmates I interviewed. Indeed the model of 'drug-driven offending', where dependent drug users drive up crime rates, does not accommodate the range of drug and offending lifestyles experienced by the inmates in my research.

Therefore, the link between drugs and crime is complex and the extent to which correlations establish causality needs to be approached with caution. A range of factors have been found to influence offending when combined with drug use including social class (Plant 1975), previous criminality and poly drug use (Hammersley et al 1989), the personality of the user and the social setting of drug use (Wilson 1990). Edmunds et al (1999) note that the causal links between drug-crime careers are more dynamic and interactive and often develop in parallel, although unfortunately the authors do not explore how the dynamism of the drug crime link plays out in the lives of addicts. The conclusion that heroin use in particular causes acquisitive crime, suggests that one behaviour predates the other. Nevertheless, drug use may not initiate crime but may increase the frequency of offending, as Chaiken and Chaiken (1990:235) note:

> "There is strong evidence that predatory offenders who persistently and frequently use large amounts of multiple types of drugs commit crimes at significantly higher rates over longer periods of time than do less drug involved offenders, and predatory offenders commit fewer crimes during periods in which they use no heroin."

Therefore, some account needs to be taken of the type of drug used as some habits are more expensive than others. Research has shown that the relationship between drug use and crime is more significant amongst poly-drug users (Hammersley et al 1989; Parker and Bottomley 1996).

In summary, research on drug use and crime suggests "drug use and crime emerge from the same etiological variables and become an integral part of street-drug-using lifestyle and subculture" (McBride and McCoy 1993:257). Although this does not amount to a causal link it acknowledges drugs and crime are closely interconnected and an integrated approach to tackling the problem is more appropriate than tackling either in isolation (cf. Hammersley et al 1989).

Exploring drug use and crime as part of a deviant lifestyle is useful in shifting the focus away from the 'which comes first debate', drug use or offending? Furthermore, it broadens how the relationship is conceived to include drugs other than heroin and crime other than that undertaken to support a drug habit. Walters (1994) attempted to investigate the relationship between drugs and crime from what he called a lifestyle perspective, using the variables condition, choice and cognition. Condition relates to those conditions of the person

and the situation they find themselves in. Choices refers to the opportunities open to them and cognition, to the individuals own thinking patterns. Walters' analysis extended beyond causal relationships to investigate elements of reciprocity between drugs and crime and the potential influence of a third factor. He concluded that the causal relationship was very difficult to establish because the associated lifestyles of drug use and offending were very closely related and highly interconnected:

> "Even though surface differences exist between the drug and criminal lifestyles, the supporting themes, rituals and thinking patterns are clearly related. Hence although initial risk factors, as represented by research on historical-developmental conditions, may differ for drug abuse and crime, the drug-crime connection grows as a persons commitment to one or the other lifestyles grows."
>
> (Walters 1994:101)

This chapter has explored changing patterns of drug use, particularly amongst young people, and considered the problems associated with drugs, such as crime. This general discussion has offered a broad frame of reference by way of a context for considering the problem of drug use in the prison context, which is directly relevant to my thesis. The next section explores the limited research on drug use in prison, highlighting the gaps in knowledge that exist around young offenders

who are the subject of my research. Finally the chapter considers the strategies that aim to tackle drug use in custody.

The inside story: drugs in prison

The relatively recent acknowledgment of the prison drug problem in the 1990s does not suggest drugs were unavailable in custody prior to this time (the practice of brewing 'hooch', a 'homemade' alcoholic beverage was and still is a recognised practice in prisons). Early prison studies by Sykes (1958), Morris and Morris (1963) and Irwin (1970) recognised that an informal prison economy based on various contraband usually existed and formed part of the inmates' adaption to prison life. King and Elliot (1977) in their study of Albany noted that certain inmates had established routes of supply for various illicit goods, often luxury items, which were sold and exchanged on the wings. It is likely the nature of the informal prison economy will have changed as prison rules evolved and inmates were allowed to purchase more through the canteen system. However, the limitations of this weekly system and the amount that can be spent means some informal economy is maintained and is difficult to eradicate (the internal economy in Haverton is discussed in chapter 5)

In the early 1990s it became apparent that previously notional references to inmates' drug use in prison were indicative of a pervasive problem that was linked to incidents of disorder by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons (Edgar and O'Donnell 1998a). Concern about inmates' drug use in prison increased (Joyce 1997) and it was recognised that prisons had to cope with a broad range of problems from cannabis use to heroin addiction (Morgan 1997). Drugs also caused problems inside. They created cultures of dealing, and caused debt, bullying and violence (Seddon 1996). While it was difficult to assess the extent of drug use in prison, much of the available research supported the contention that inmates used drugs regularly throughout their custodial sentences (for example King and McDermott 1995:182-4). Furthermore, the general environment of the prison was not supportive of inmates who wished to abstain and a lack of drug services in some institutions encouraged drug taking (Swann and James 1998). It was evident that the issue of prisoners' drug use needed to be openly acknowledged and tackled.

The problem of drug use in prison is an international one and not unique to England and Wales. A review of prison systems found drugs figured highly in a number of countries penal systems (cf. Weiss and South 1998). For example Gaucher and Lowman

(1998:82-3) found illegal and prescription drugs had an important social control function in Canadian prisons, where prison officers, fearing the consequences on order, were unlikely to intervene and sometimes even facilitated drug distribution. Research highlights similar drug problems across Europe. It is estimated that one-third of the inmates in prison in Italy are habitual drugs users, and 10 percent are HIV positive (Ruggiero 1998:221). However, the specifics of drug problems do vary from country to country. Scandinavian countries have a higher incidence of amphetamine use in prison, and both Denmark and Sweden have prisons reserved for drug users (Penal Affairs Consortium 1996). A study of routine urinalysis in 83 Swedish Prisons (a sample of 879 inmates) found 84.1 percent were negative, leading to the conclusion drug use was generally overestimated in the Swedish system (Gustavsson and Krantz 1994). However, as monitoring of drug testing was confined to one day, the study was likely to miss erratic drug use and more likely to detect drugs that are identifiable in the body longer.

Recent research in Britain indicated the potential scale of the drug problem prisons had to confront. Maden et al's (1990; 1991) study revealed high levels of drug dependency before custody (11 percent of men and 23 per cent of women reported being dependent on drugs

six months prior to custodial sentence).   A survey of 344 male

prisoners found 57 percent reported cannabis use during their current

sentence, 16 percent had used heroin, 15 percent cocaine and 11

percent amphetamines (Penal Affairs Consortium 1996).   Keene's

(1997*a*) research on male inmates and ex-prisoners on probation

found that 68 per cent of the 134 male inmates interviewed in a local

prison reported using cannabis in custody, 25 per cent amphetamines

and 10 per cent heroin. Other studies have found a similar popularity

for cannabis.   For example, research by Inciardi et al (1993)

conducted in the United States, found that twenty of the twenty-six

men in the sample used drugs at least once a week in prison and all

reported being able to access their preferred drugs of choice, cannabis

and cocaine.   Edgar and O'Donnell's (1998*a*) evaluation of

mandatory drug testing (MDT) undertaken in five prisons, found that

76 per cent of the 148 inmates who participated in the research

reported having misused a drug in prison and 53 per cent said they

were currently misusing a drug inside. In Turnbull et al's (1994)

study, all of the 49 inmates interviewed had misused drugs during

their last prison sentence, often opportunistically mixing substances

that were accessible.

While studies offer some insight into the extent of drug use, little is known about the frequency, pattern and meaning of drug use in prison. The perceived sensitivity of inmates' drug use (in terms of their willingness to admit to use and the institutions willingness to have their drug 'problem' scrutinised), partly explains the relative lack of research. Turnbull et al (1994) and Keene (1997*a*) overcame this difficulty by interviewing drug users about the extent of their use in custody after their release. Both studies provide an insight into the prevalence and pattern of drug use, however, less is known about how drug use fits into offenders' daily experiences of custody. Furthermore conducting interviews with ex-inmates may have affected their responses as offenders often engage in a process of rational reconstruction to reconcile the erratic opportunism of their offending and drug use with their more systematic, planned self-image (Cromwell et al 1991). Although imprisonment may also exaggerate this process of rationalisation, as incarcerated offenders are more aware of punishment tariffs and more sensitive to analysing the risks and benefits of their offending (Shover 1996).

As the studies outlined above did not focus on young offenders, some caution needs to be exercised before generalising their findings to young offenders' institutions. Generally young offenders do differ

from adult populations; there is a high incidence of violence and intimidation amongst young inmates (Bottoms 1999) and young inmates are considered to be very vulnerable (Liebling 1992; Liebling and Krarup 1993). Young offenders are also likely to commit less serious crimes and serve less time in custody (although my research focussed on long-term young offenders and the inmates had committed serious crimes, see chapter 2). There is no comprehensive research on drug use in prison that allows comparisons to be drawn between various types of establishments, age of inmates, gender, motivations for use and patterns of use outside and inside, although the research that is available suggests some variations exist.

Research outside prison indicates that drug use and age are closely related, however, despite the focus of the national drug strategy on young people and reducing the harm of drugs, little research has focused specifically on young offenders' drug use (cf. Newburn 1998; 1999). The research that is available suggests young offenders are heavy consumers of alcohol (Baldwin 1990; Parker 1996) and drugs (Howard and Zibert 1990; Collison 1994; 1996; Newburn 1999) outside prison. Evidence from prison studies that include young offenders confirms high levels of drug use outside (Keene

1997*a*).   Research conducted by Collison (1996) in a male young offenders' institution revealed that drugs were central to the lives of 59 percent of the sample (80 young men were interviewed) however; the study did not focus on their consumption of drugs in the prison. Theories of prison behaviour suggest inmates' behaviour patterns will change in custody because behaviour is 'imported' and then adapted to the prison environment or the inmates need to adapt behaviour to suit the 'indigenous' prison culture. My research suggests inmates' drug use does change in prison, therefore it is difficult to transfer data on young offenders' drug use outside, into the prison context (see chapter 3 for further discussion).

Despite the high prevalence of drug use amongst young offenders outside prison (Collison 1996; Newburn 1998), Edgar and O'Donnell's (1998*a*) study reveals that young offenders admit to less drug use in prison than their adult counterparts (67 per cent admitted to ever having abused any drug and 33 per cent admitted to currently abusing any drug in prison, compared to 89 percent and 79 percent respectively for a category C training prison and 83 percent and 50 percent respectively for a dispersal prison). This may have been associated with the prison where the research was conducted (a short term young offender establishment) or may reflect the extent to

which younger inmates have not developed habitual patterns of drug use, as established patterns of drug use amongst older inmates continues in prison (cf. Turnbull et al 1994). The perception that young offenders' drug use is less problematic and mainly concentrated around cannabis, may explain why it is under-researched, and limited drug resources are available to help young offenders (Newburn 1999). However, my research suggests young inmates do experience difficulties coming to terms with drug use in custody (see chapter 4) and dealing with the drug culture in prison (discussed further in chapter 5). Therefore the problem of young offenders' drug use needs to be taken seriously.

Dealing with drugs: developing a national drug strategy

Tackling Drugs Together (1995) and the Prison Service Business Plan (*Drug Misuse in Prison, Policy and Strategy* 1996) aimed to deal with the growing problem of drugs in prisons by reducing supply and demand. One of the principal strategies introduced was the programme of mandatory drug testing (MDT) phased into all prison establishments by 1996. Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT) involves taking a urine sample from an inmate and testing it against seven groups of drugs: cannabis; opiates; cocaine; benzodiazepines;

methadone; amphetamines; and barbiturates. A test for LSD can be requested if an officer suspects it has been used by an inmate. MDT is authorised in four areas:

- Random testing: The aim is that that 10% of the prison population is randomly tested every month. The random figures are used to monitor drug taking in the prison and in 1998-99 the rate was 18.3 percent (Prison Service Annual Report 1999);
- Testing on reception into a prison is authorised although positive tests are exempt from disciplinary procedures because the inmate might have ingested the drug when outside the prison;
- Suspicion testing: Any officer who suspects an inmate of using drugs can request a MDT;
- Finally, persistent offenders who continually used drugs can be tested.

Voluntary drug tests can also be conducted. Disciplinary procedures such as additional days added on a sentence, loss of association, closed visits, deducted pay and fines can arise from a positive test, a refusal to be tested or a contaminated sample. Adjudications are administered at the discretion of the governor.

Drug testing in prisons was a nationally coordinated strategy, although the responsibility for the development of demand reduction programmes, such as those that focus on treatment and education, lay locally with individual governors. The division in responsibility for the drug strategy generated concern that limited budgets would mean

the latter was relinquished, whereas because MDT was a key performance indicator (KPI) used to measure prison performance, their status was guaranteed. It was a stark contrast to previous strategies that focused on the welfare of drug users with through-care and treatment (Howard League 1999).

The introduction of MDT post Woodcock and Learmont (the reports following escapes from Whitemoor and Parkhurst), like other policies introduced in this period, for example, incentives and earned privileges and curtailed home leave, further reinforced the security and control emphasis of the strategy (Liebling 2000; Liebling et al 1997). Feeley and Simon (1994) noted that the move towards security marked a new penology that was less concerned with developing treatment and intervention and more with assessing risk. The role of drug testing in the new penology was to provide a 'flow of information for assessing risk. To the extent that drug use... is an indicator of social dangerousness." (ibid: 179).

The MDT programme has met a varied response. Testing raised concern about switching where inmates moved from using cannabis to heroin to avoid detection, however studies, including my own

research, offer no conclusive support for this phenomenon (see chapter 3; Player and Martin 1995; Edgar and O'Donnell 1996a).

In their evaluation of MDT Edgar and O'Donnell (1998a) found that many inmates felt that testing was unfair and staff felt it disproportionately punished cannabis use (similar attitudes were expressed in my research and are discussed in relation to the legitimacy of MDT in chapter 6). However, as cannabis can remain detectable in the body for a matter of weeks compared to a couple of days for opiates it is inevitable that cannabis will be detected more than any other drug. If the national strategy aims to target drugs that cause the most harm (i.e. not cannabis) the merit of identifying primarily cannabis users has to be questioned. To that end the Howard League (1999) recommends that random drug testing be abolished and the differentiated approach towards cannabis use in prison be enhanced so that use of the drug is punished in the same way as alcohol to reflect tolerance of the drug amongst staff and inmates.

The costs of MDT are significant. A review by Gore and Bird (1996) suggested that the cost for a testing programme in a prison with five hundred inmates which had a positive test rate of 35 percent (one

tenth of which was for class A drugs) would be in the region of £16,000 if the establishment had no inmates who refused to be tested. Edgar and O'Donnell (1996*a*) note that the cost of added days as a result of positive MDTs could add a further £7 million onto the running costs of the prison service. This is without the additional cost of further security measures introduced by establishments such as dedicated search teams, trained drug dogs, X-ray machines and CCTV. It is not clear whether this is an effective use of resources to reduce the drug problem.

The current prison drug strategy, developed as part of the national strategy *Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain* (1998), reflects the shift towards partnerships working. The function of the new drug policy unit based at prison service headquarters is to coordinate *Tackling Drugs in Prison* (1998). While the emphasis on supply reduction remains, the strategy also aims to focus on treatment in order to increase support for drug users and reduce recidivism amongst drug using offenders. The CARAT (Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare) schemes aim to tackle the weaknesses of earlier strategies by identifying drug users in the prison system as soon as possible and offering them the appropriate support throughout the prison service. If CARAT

schemes reflect a new commitment to treatment it is recognition that prison does change patterns and frequency of drug use (see chapter 3; Swann and James 1998) and is a legitimate site for drug intervention (Newburn 1999). However, the success of a treatment strategy relies on it becoming a key performance indicator in prison and while there is a commitment to measuring outcomes, indicators tend to focus on outputs i.e. the number of inmates referred to treatment and the number of who have completed treatment programmes, rather than exploring individual experiences and why there are successes and failures.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed drugs policy, youth and drugs and the problem of drugs in prison. Drug control in Britain can be characterised by four phases: increasing professional control; the British system based on the medical model; an increasingly punitive approach that saw the introduction of controlled prescribing; and macro level enforcement and harm minimisation. More recently the importance of working in partnership with key agencies reflects the multiple causes of drug problems. The emphasis on controlling the drug problem emerged alongside growing concern around young

people's leisure activities. There is a close relationship between various youth cultures and drugs, although there is a potential for the media to overestimate this, thereby fuelling the moral panic around drug use. The theory of normalisation articulates the close relationship between youth and drugs, suggesting drug use is widespread and tolerance towards illegal drugs is high amongst young people. While the theory aims to understand young people's subjective experiences of using drugs, this is limited by a lack of qualitative research in this field. The theory of normalisation also confines itself to explaining recreational drug use, although the dynamics between infrequent drug use and use at the heavy end is not explored. Finally, the chapter discusses drugs in prison that has only recently been openly acknowledged by governments and the Prison Service. The introduction of mandatory drug testing aimed to deter and control drug use amongst inmates. Research on inmates' drug use in prison is scant and little focuses on young offenders, despite being high consumers of drugs outside prison. The sensitivity of drug use in prison means that to fulfil the commitment to evaluation, the service must open its doors to both quantitative and qualitative researchers. Understanding the nature of drug use in prison and how drugs can be managed are important if the Prison Service are to meet the needs of drugs users and offer them support and advice while

maintaining security and control. My research explores young offenders' experiences of drug use in prison. The next chapter describes my research design and discusses the methodological issues associated with my fieldwork.

CHAPTER 2

A 'BIRD' ON THE INSIDE:
Reflections on research in prison.

This chapter outlines my research design and the methodological issues associated with research on young offenders' drug use in prison. I first confronted the problem of drug use in prison working on a research project in an adult category C establishment where I talked to staff and inmates about drug use. My interest in young offenders began a little earlier after completing an undergraduate dissertation based on young offender experiences of community and custodial sentences. I was interested in why increasing numbers of people used drugs. My own attitude towards drugs could be described as broadly ambivalent; I was never really interested in experimenting with drugs but I recognised the problems that drugs could cause and how these problems might be exacerbated by the way drugs are controlled. As little research exists on young offenders' drug use and no research explores their drug use in prison, this area seemed worthy of further investigation. Therefore, the aim of my research was to explore a group of long-term young offenders' experiences of drug use in custody.

Research design

I conducted my fieldwork in Haverton (a pseudonym) Young Offenders' Institution. Relatively small in prison terms, it housed around 350 inmates in single cell accommodation across five wings. I interviewed thirty male inmates in total (see table 1 below for summary), five 16, five 17, five 18, six 19, three 20 and six 21 year olds. At the time of the research approximately forty percent of Haverton's inmate population were black and my sample was broadly representative of this population as I interviewed twelve white inmates, thirteen black, three Asian and two inmates who described themselves as mixed race. All the inmates were convicted and serving sentences of three years to life (fifteen inmates had 3-4 year sentences, six 5-6 years, four 7-9 years and five inmates were lifers).

Table 1: Summary of age, ethnicity, offence and sentence length for inmates who participated in the research

Age		Ethnicity		Offence		Sentence	
Age of inmates	No. of inmates	Ethnicity	No. of inmates	Type of offence	No. of inmates	Sentence length	No. of inmates
16 yrs	5	White	12	Arson	1	3-4 yrs	15
17 yrs	5	Black	13	Burglary/theft	2	5-6 yrs	6
18 yrs	5	Asian	3	Drug Offences	1	7-9 yrs	4
19 yrs	6	'Mixed'*-race	2	Murder	2	Life	5
20 yrs	3			Rape	4		
21 yrs	6			Robbery	18		
				Wounding	2		
Total	30		30		30		30

*Self-defined by the inmates.

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The interviewees had committed serious crimes including robbery (18), rape (4), murder (2), burglary and theft (2), wounding (2), drug trafficking (1) and arson (1). The research focussed on an extreme group of offenders, as the gravity of their offences and length of their sentences meant the inmates were located at the heavy end of youth offending. Research also highlights the close relationship between serious youth offending and high levels of drug use (cf. Collison 1994, 1996; Aldridge 1999) and my research supported this relationship. Most of the inmates were prolific drug users, frequently consuming a range of substances (see table 2 outlining self-reported drug use amongst the inmates and further discussion in chapter 3). The focus of the research on an extreme group of offenders may limit the generalisability of the study to the youth custody sector, where short-term sentences are more common.

Table 2: Inmates self-reported drug use outside and inside prison

Level of Use* & location of use	Type of Drug used by sample of thirty inmates**								
	Cannabis	Ecstasy	Amphet-amines	Acid/ LSD	Solvents & Gas	Heroin	Crack	Cocaine	Prescription (ie. Methadone)
Regular use -outside prison	28	12	8	7	5	3	10	4	2
Occasional use - outside prison	-	7	3	2	-	5	7	3	-
Regular use -on remand	24	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
Occasional use - on remand	-	2	-	1	-	5	-	-	-
Regular use -convicted	19	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Occasional use - convicted	7	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-

* Regular drug use includes daily drug use; occasional drug use includes drug trying and sporadic use.
** Self reported figures include poly drug users who used a number of different drugs simultaneously.

I was in the field for a total of nine months, initially for two days a week due to university teaching and later four days a week. I chose to interview inmates on three separate occasions as I wanted to trace their experiences of custody and drugs over the nine month period as they settled into the regime of a new establishment and understand how drugs fitted into their lives while they were outside, on remand and sentenced. Long sentences limited the numbers of inmates transferred or released, but there was some attrition and I conducted 26 second and 18 third interviews. One inmate declined to be interviewed again after our first meeting.

My research was based on an opportunistic sample. During the initial four weeks of my fieldwork, twenty-eight inmates were invited to participate when they were first inducted into the prison. I also interviewed two inmates who had served some time (a year and four years) in the Institution after talking to them on the wings because during my first week of fieldwork two inmates were transferred and inducted from other establishments. Both these inmates offered an invaluable insight into the culture of Haverton and how it had changed during their sentences.

When I invited inmates to participate in the research I aimed to be open (cf. Homan 1992), explaining that I was a student conducting research on drug use in prison. I explained the research methodology and assured the inmates about the confidentiality of the data. The inmates were also given a written outline of the research. After explaining the research I asked the inmates if they had any experience of drugs, as initially my aim was to interview both drug users and non-drug users to explore whether their experiences of custody differed. However, this proved difficult in practice because while inmates were willing to talk to me, they did not discuss their experiences of drug use until our interview or said they did not use drugs in our introduction but admitted later to using in our interviews. In the end, all but one inmate said they had used drugs outside, on remand and when convicted (see table 2 and further discussion in chapter 3).

I aimed to interview the inmates within two weeks of our initial contact. Most of the interviews took place in the healthcare centre, although it was necessary to interview some inmates on the wing because their security categorisation made movement around the prison more complicated as they needed to be accompanied by two

prison officers. During the first interview I reminded the inmates about the subject of the research and reassured them again about the confidentiality of the data. All the inmates' names have been changed and where necessary personal details have been altered to preserve their anonymity. I asked the inmates if the interview could be tape-recorded. Only one inmate was wary of being tape-recorded saying it felt like being with the police. I reassured him that our interview would feel very different and if at any time he felt uncomfortable we could turn the recorder off. Another inmate did turn the tape recorder off during an interview while he was discussing heroin on the prison wings. While he did not object to me using the information, he did not want it recorded on tape, suggesting it might be sensitive for both of us. Every inmate was asked to sign a consent form at the start of the interview, which I retained and at the start of the second and third interviews I confirmed the inmate was happy to continue with the research.

During the interviews I asked the inmates about general demographic information for example, their school history, offending backgrounds and previous custodial sentences. However, because of the unstructured nature of our interviews I was often unclear about family details, exact previous experiences of custody or sentence

length. Therefore, I sought access to the inmates' prison files at the end of the research to gather this information and verify details of offences. As some inmates had already been transferred or released I read a total of twenty-three inmate records.

The prison files often lacked basic information about family background or drug history but they did provide information on sentence length, adjudications history and drug tests. Inmates do not have access to their own records and they did not know, and none asked, if I had access to their files. On reflection I would seek to take a different approach by either asking the inmates a more structured list of questions about their backgrounds or seek their consent to look at their records. While I do not know if it would have been an issue for them, it would have made me feel less like I had rummaged through their personal things without them knowing.

So, I'm going in...

Access, as Hammersley and Atkinson (1995:55) argue, is more than a 'matter of physical presence or absence' and involves the researcher in a process of ongoing negotiation. I sought access into Haverton through the prison psychologist, partly because they often

have responsibility for research and a psychologist had offered support and encouragement for my undergraduate thesis. Given that I was interested in researching drug use, the psychologist recommended I contact the Senior Healthcare Officer (SHO) in Haverton. The SHO was enthusiastic and negotiated my access with the Governor.

To conduct research in prison I also needed the approval of the Prison Service Ethics Committee. I submitted an application detailing the aims of my research, my proposed methodology and any ethical considerations that might arise during the course of my fieldwork, along with the safeguards in place for the potential participants. Such formal procedures can benefit a researcher by offering them methodological and practical advice (Liebling 1992). Although, Homan (1992) notes some care needs to be taken when fulfilling procedures, that ethical research values are not lost in the process. I found the Ethics Committee process forced me to consider a number of potential ethical issues before starting my fieldwork.

The considerable potential ramifications for the inmates of revealing their drug use meant my research subject was sensitive (Lee 1993) and one of the primary ethical difficulties stemmed from the fact I

would be asking inmates about an illegal activity. Furthermore, drug use in prison is not only illegal, but is related to other behaviours that are against the prison rules such as bullying and violence. Drug use might also be connected with vulnerability as inmates sometimes take drugs to help them cope. While I undertook to maintain the confidentiality of the interviews, I decided I would inform the institution about harm to others, e.g. planned violence, or inmates harm to themselves if such incidents were discussed during an interview. I did not state this at the start of my interviews, but decided I would manage the process if the issues arose. In the event, I only discussed my concern about one inmate after an interview. The inmate was extremely afraid in the prison and was reluctant to leave his cell, even to collect his food. He said in the interview he would be interested in talking to an officer in the Healthcare Centre whom he had spoken to while on induction. I did not reveal the specifics of my conversation with the inmate or any details of the interview, but mentioned to the officer in question that the inmate might appreciate talking to her again. Given the inmate's situation, I felt a responsibility to ensure support was available for him if he required it.

The Ethics Committee approved my research with two principal recommendations. The first was protecting inmates from stress caused by the interview and wherever it was 'reasonably practical' I was asked to gain parental consent for those under 18. I did not want to cause the inmates any distress, as being in prison is stressful enough. However, parental consent was difficult as many inmates were not in contact with their parents or they strongly disagreed with 'bothering' their parents with their lives inside. I did not want to undermine their trust and respected their feelings. I interviewed a total of ten inmates who were under 18 years old, I sent out five parental consent forms where inmates agreed to give me their home address and one was signed and returned.

Before starting my fieldwork the Senior Healthcare Officer left Haverton. This caused me some initial concern as she had arranged my access. I found a new gatekeeper in the Principal Officer (PO) in the healthcare centre who was interested in my work and we shared a respect for research. Indeed the commitment of the Principal Officer to my research meant he was happy to chat about the process but did not want to interfere or direct me in any way (cf. Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:66).

The method of access can define initial reactions towards a researcher. For example, those working in institutions have felt suspicion towards researchers, believing they are being investigated for purposes other than sociology (Morris and Morris 1963) or 'under siege' as academics come in to study their world (Genders and Player 1995). My entry into Haverton was not officially announced, although my gatekeeper introduced me to key personnel on the wings where I spent a week doing observation before starting my interviews. This offered me some insight into life on the wings, highlighting the benefit of using multiple qualitative methods in research.

I did not meet the Governor until well into my fieldwork, who casually remarked, 'Oh *you're* the researcher, I thought you might be the new prison dentist!' Even though I was conducting research in a secure environment, few people knew who I was and few people asked. A lack of knowledge about who researchers are and what they are doing may affect officers' and inmates' reactions towards research and the individual researcher, particularly if they feel in a minority because they were not informed. However, the lack of awareness about my research did afford some advantages as it allowed me to assert my independence from the prison and the Prison

Service and it meant I could explain the aims of my research directly, thus reducing the likelihood of misinterpretation.

I decided not to carry keys in Haverton to reinforce my status as an 'outsider' (cf. Morris and Morris 1963:323). With keys I would have had to lock inmates in a communal holding area after our interview in the healthcare centre until an officer could take them back to their wing. I was uncomfortable with this and felt it might be perceived as undermining my independence. Without keys I had some insight into the psychological power of control. I relied on officers to 'let me through' or 'let me out'. I had to ask to go to the toilet and to leave the establishment at the end of the day. Not having keys also provided time for informal discussion with the inmates while we were waiting for an officer to take them back to their cell. We sometimes chatted about life in general until an officer came along and they bellowed *'Gov! We're finished'* and were taken back to the wings.

The methodology: conversations about drugs

> "It is a distinctive feature of social research that the 'objects' studied are in fact 'subjects', and themselves produce accounts of their world"
> (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:124).

Qualitative research is not only my preferred approach but was more able to meet my research aims, to understand inmates' experiences of drug use in prison. Strauss and Corbin (1990:19) suggest the choice of qualitative research, relates to the researcher's experience, the nature of the research problem, the ability of qualitative methods to provide different perspectives on problems and highlight the 'intricate details of a phenomena'. Creswell (1994:145) neatly summarises the underlying assumptions of qualitative research as: mainly descriptive; concerned with processes and interested in meanings; the researcher is the primary means of data collection through fieldwork that involves observing and interviewing people in their natural settings; and the process is inductive, where theory evolves from the research process.

Qualitative research includes a number of different approaches such as ethnography, understanding life histories and grounded theory. It also includes various means of data collection such as participant observation, interviewing and exploring records or archives. As Creswell notes (1998:13) "metaphorically... qualitative research [is] an intricate fabric composed of minute threads, many colours, different textures and various blends of material." I drew on many of the various blends of the qualitative fabric to gather my data,

including interviews, observation and checking the inmates' prison records. The richness of the method allowed me to get close to the inmates' experiences and feelings.

As my research aimed to understand the inmates' interpretations of their drug using behaviour, it can be located within the broader traditions of symbolic interactionism. Interactionists invariably adopt observational methods to explore the behaviour of those they are researching. For example, Becker's (1963) participant observation of marihuana users explored the processes of becoming a drug user in the musical jazz scene. Becker's observation of the 'natural setting' offered some insight into how marihuana users learned to smoke and gradually recognised the effects and sensations associated with the drug. Furthermore, in order to become a regular user, the negative views towards the drug amongst 'outsiders' had to be replaced with the "inside view...acquired through his [*sic*] experience with the drug in the company of other users" (Becker 1963:78).

In order to understand the inmates' experiences of drug use in prison, I had to understand how drug use interacted with the prison context. The structure of the regime limited the amount of time I could spend

observing inmates' behaviour on the wings, although I did spend the first week of fieldwork and various times subsequently on the wings in the main prison. I wanted my interviews to be able to access the inmates' subjective experiences of drugs. The unstructured approach and interviewing the inmates more than once meant I could discuss their life histories (cf. Plummer 1983) and it gave them the opportunity to raise general issues they wanted to discuss. Each interview took approximately one hour, although some lasted longer. The length of the interviews was partly dictated by the regime and sometimes officers would interrupt to take an inmate back to the wing for lunch or supper. I aimed to conduct 'conversations with a purpose' (Burgess 1982), starting each interview with an open question facilitating the discussion by asking questions for clarification. Some inmates referred to their invitation to participate in the research and launched straight into a discussion about drugs. Other inmates were more wary. In one interview we did not discuss drugs at all as the inmate talked about his difficult experiences in prison. As my aim was to be sensitive in the interviews to the inmates' situation, I felt that letting him discuss these issues was crucial.

The rationale for interviewing the inmates on three occasions was to build rapport and gain some longitudinal perspective of inmates' drug use as they settled into serving their sentence in Haverton. I aimed to conduct the second and third interviews at approximately three monthly intervals, although pressures during the fieldwork meant the times between interviews varied. There were a number of advantages to interviewing the inmates on more than one occasion. While the first interview tended to focus on a general discussion about prison life (drug use and life outside Haverton was not usually discussed in detail), the inmates were more relaxed in our second and third meetings. I often showed inmates a transcript of our first interview (many could never believe they actually spoke for 30 odd pages) and used the interview as an opportunity to clarify our earlier discussions. For example, in a second interview with Dan, a regular user of drugs outside prison, I revisited the area of drug use in the prison:

> Nina: "So were you smoking [cannabis] when I spoke to you last time?"
> Dan: "Well what did I say when I first saw you?"
> Nina: "Well you said no...."
> Dan: "Well I was lying, it was a small lie and it was the only lie I told. Well, I smoke draw when I have got it."

The second and third interviews also helped to develop areas that came to my attention over the course of the fieldwork. For example the structure of the RSP gang (see discussion in chapter 5) was developed during later interviews after the inmates had established themselves in the prison and had a better understanding of friendship networks and hierarchies on the wings. Adopting a longitudinal type approach also enabled me to understand the changing patterns of the inmates' drug use during their sentence. Patterns of use and attitudes towards drugs were influenced by the length of time inmates had left to serve (see discussion in chapter 4). The inmates who were nearing parole or release at the time of the third interview discussed how they had modified their drug use to reduce the likelihood of punishment in the final phase of their sentence.

As the aim of the research was to understand the inmates' experiences, I did not set out to prove or disprove a theoretical perspective but adopted the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967) where my theory about drug use in prison emerged from the data. While I went into the prison expecting inmates to be using drugs, generally I wanted to be as open and flexible as possible, although there were areas I wanted to investigate. I was interested in understanding how the inmates' patterns of drug use

changed when they were convicted, compared to outside prison and when they were on remand. I also wanted to explore their motivations for drug use in prison and how this might have been affected by their sentences. Given the restricted prison environment, I wanted to explore how drug supply was maintained, how the prison controlled drugs and the inmates' attitudes towards drug control.

Ah, but how do you know they are telling the truth?

Whenever I talk about my research I am usually asked 'how did you know inmates were telling the truth?' I am unsure whether the question reflects how researchers would react to an interview themselves; a latent mistrust of all people or is peculiar to prison research or research with offenders, because of course, they are bound to lie! There is no evidence inmates are likely to lie, indeed Becker (1970) suggests the opposite may be true as superordinates are inclined to lie to uphold the official view of institutions:

> "Officials must lie because things are seldom as they ought to be... institutions are refractory. They do not perform as society would like them to. Hospitals do not cure people; prisons do not rehabilitate prisoners; schools do not educate students. Since they are supposed to officials develop ways of both denying the failure of the institution to perform as it should and explaining those behaviours that cannot be hidden"
> (Becker 1970:105).

Given the logic of Becker's argument, there was no guarantee the official version of events was fact. Prison records for example might be described as the official version of an inmate's crime. However, such formal narratives are constructed and susceptible to interpretation. For example, an inmate I interviewed recalled his crimes and a meeting he had with a psychiatrist. In our interview he said he found the psychiatrist's questions 'weird' and did not reveal all the details of his offence but 'played along' so he could get out of the office as quickly as possible. The psychiatrist's report in his prison record offered a completely different assessment of the inmate's motivation for his crime. The inmate was not aware I had read his record and other information in the file did not appear to contradict our interviews. The inmate and the psychiatrist interpreted the crime differently; however, assessing the extent to which either interpretation was the 'truth' was difficult as both reflected the different perspectives of the individuals involved.

The role of some research is to give a voice to those not normally heard. In the case of my research this was the young prison inmates. My fieldwork offered a number of stories and conflicting 'truths' from different parties involved in the research: the prison staff; nursing staff; inmates and the prison records all had their own unique

interpretation of events. Even my own account of the young offenders' lives and drug use in prison becomes another story. As Atkinson (1990) notes, ethnography is a construction where through writing devices the author persuades the reader of the validity of their interpretation of the data. Nevertheless, the reader will interpret the stories based on their background, experiences and assumptions. Recognising different stories exist does not undermine a commitment to seeking out 'truth', as Game and Metcalf note (1996:95): "Sociologists who recognise their storytelling are more likely to understand that narratives limit production of meaning even as they enable it. This recognition is not a failure but a more accurate, full and open account." Therefore different stories contribute to our overall understanding of events and highlight the extent to which knowledge, action and individual interpretations are constructed (Hammersley 1992; Stanley and Wise 1993).

Acknowledging that people construct their social worlds undermines the quest for objective knowledge and prevents the representation of an independent reality. For Hammersley (1992), a rejection of realism for the alternative relativism introduces inconsistency and a lack of reliability into research. To overcome conflicting epistemologies Hammersley suggests 'subtle' realism which draws

on *realism*, in accepting that "research investigates independent knowable phenomena...[while] denying that we have direct access to those phenomena". Subtle realism also draws on *relativism* through the "recognition that all knowledge is based on assumptions and purposes and is a human construction, but [subtle realism] rejects these positions' abandonment of the regulative idea of independent and knowable phenomena" (Hammersley 1992:52). The impact of subtle realism is to accept belief and actions as constructions, but not to assume they are 'true' and rational in their own terms. In my research it was possible to validate some of the 'stories', for example what offences the inmates committed that had been processed through the criminal justice system because it could be cross checked with the information on their records. However, it was difficult to judge whether feelings or motivations for crimes (as discussed above) were 'true' or otherwise. I wanted my research to reflect the inmates' experiences and what I was told in the interviews, therefore ensuring I had interpreted their feelings as they intended was more important than judging the truth of those feelings.

Getting prison staff to talk about drugs...

While I had not intended to interview staff at the start of my research, I quickly realised their insight into the drug situation in the prison would be beneficial. Officers were often happy to discuss issues informally but I initially experienced some difficulty encouraging staff to be formally interviewed. The main reason for the officers' reluctance to go 'on the record' was the lack of trust towards management, which had encouraged a defensive working culture. At the time of the research, changes to the regime at Haverton were being introduced. The national programme of incentives and earned privileges, introduced into prisons to enhance control through a scheme of punishments and rewards, resulted in the main prison being separated into three levels: basic regime; the main prison wings; and an enhanced regime wing that rewarded good behaviour by offering inmates privileges such as extra visits. However, the introduction of the incentives and privileges structure into Haverton affected the provision of a vulnerable prisoner unit and a bullying unit that caused some of the officers I interviewed concern, especially in the absence of evidence that the changes would benefit officers and the regime in the longer term.

During my research an internal review of staff attitudes conducted by the chaplaincy (because of their perceived impartiality in the prison) indicated high levels of dissatisfaction amongst officers. The review pointed to a breakdown in communication with the management as the primary cause of staff discontent. Those who worked on the wings felt marginalised and frustrated by a series of management decisions and structural changes that had been implemented without consultation and had directly affected their work. One officer interviewed commented: "I don't trust the confidentiality in the prison at all, it's deeply ingrained… it's just a lack of trust between officers and middle management."

Many prison studies have explored the difficulty of negotiating relations with prison staff while conducting research with inmates (cf. Sykes 1958; Morris and Morris 1963; Cohen and Taylor 1972; Genders and Player 1995; Liebling 1992, 1996). By the time I arranged to interview prison staff I was not a new face in the prison and there was no indication that the officers perceived my research to be inmate focused. My relationship with the prison staff throughout the fieldwork forced me to question the assumption that research

must favour inmates *or* staff because their priorities are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Becker (1970) suggests it is inevitable that research will be seen as partisan as it is influenced by the researcher's own personal and political sympathies. For Becker the organisation of social systems is based on a hierarchy of credibility. The superordinate group defines what is 'truth' and research that focuses on the experience of subordinate groups (in this case inmates) challenges the hierarchy. Accepting that research will be partisan leaves a more complex question: 'whose side are you on?' Taking a side need not be fixed as personal and political sympathies shift, and at one level the hierarchy in the prison was more complex than simply defining superordinate and subordinate groups. While there was an official - superordinate view, usually promulgated by the governor, inmates and staff could both be regarded as relatively subordinate groups in different ways. The inmates' frustrations, for example at being taunted for their dependency and prison officers' frustrations towards a system that limited the impact of their job meant a hierarchy restricted them both, albeit of different constitution. The pressure to be partisan in my research was also diffused by the general tolerance between the two 'sides', therefore to develop a relationship of trust

with the inmates and the staff; I was not expected to denounce the other side to demonstrate my loyalty.

To overcome the officers' reluctance to 'go on the record' I used snowball sampling, asking the member of staff at the end of an interview to recommend me to a colleague. I asked officers to recommend those with different career experiences and rank to try and avoid a sample which consisted of like-minded officers with an interest in drug issues (Arber 1993). I interviewed ten members of prison staff, three male senior officers and seven basic grade officers including two women. The staff worked across all the wings in the prison. I also interviewed the Governor of Haverton at the time of the research. Two officers did not wish their interviews to be recorded and detailed notes were taken instead.

Another approach to my interviews with the prison staff might have been appreciative inquiry, developed by Liebling et al (1999) in the prison context. Appreciative inquiry recognises that valuable data can be gained by focusing on best practice rather than adopting a 'problem orientated' approach when researching organisations that are regularly criticised such as the police or prisons. My approach was aligned with the underlying ethos of appreciative inquiry. My

interviews focussed on the officers' views about drugs, what approach they felt tackled the problem of drugs in prison effectively and what recommendations or improvements they would make to the current drug strategy.

Analysing the data

I transcribed my inmate interviews while I was conducting my fieldwork as I found it useful to consider what had been discussed in the last interview, before starting the next. In accordance with the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967) I engaged in a process of ongoing analysis and data verification. Although laborious, there were advantages to transcribing my own tapes. I knew the inmates and therefore was familiar with their terminology and accents, which made understanding the tapes a little easier. It also provided an excellent opportunity for me to get to know my data before the final stages of analysis when I used the computer data analysis package NUD*IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorising).

The potential for computers to increase the rigour and systematise the approach to qualitative data analysis is acknowledged (cf. Fielding

and Lee 1991), however computer programmes need to be approached with some caution and selected with care. NUD*IST is ideally suited to the grounded theory approach, as various kinds of data can be inputted or referenced in the coding system and the tree like structure on which the programme is based facilitates theory building. NUD*IST is an effective sorting tool and the programme also has a number of search functions that makes it easier to explore relationships between different factors. Another strength of NUD*IST is that it does allow for individuality in the analytical process and researchers may use the programme in different ways depending on their data and their preferred approach.

I did confront some difficulties, however, using NUD*IST for highly unstructured data especially as my interviews contained the accounts of young people whose ability to articulate their feelings and ideas sometimes varied. Often when I read the data, inmates were making an explicit point but were also *implicitly* expressing important feelings. When they got excited (for example when describing their crimes), they would provide long narrative accounts that were difficult to code without losing the overall 'feel' for the conversation and its context. My approach to dealing with these problems was to code my data using broad categories, such as time, and then reading

the coded data to think further about the emerging issues, such as the relationship between time and drug use in prison and inmates' perception of passing time and ageing during their sentence (for discussion of these issues see chapter 4).

What's my part in all of this?

This section explores my interactions, interpretations and experiences in the field as they were an integral part of the research process and contributed to my understanding and theorising about drug use in prison. The reflexive process recognises that researchers cannot detach themselves from the social world they are researching (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). As Stanley and Wise (1993) note, theories and explanations develop from a researcher's experiences which in turn affects their consciousness: "the research experience itself, like all other experiences, is necessarily subject to on-going 'theorising', on-going attempts to understand, explain and re-explain what is going on" (Stanley and Wise 1993:160). There is a potential therefore for many different versions of the same events. Ball (1993) noted how research by two female researchers amongst the Nyiha people from Tanzania produced different interpretations of their friendliness. One described the people as "hostile, withdrawn,

apathetic, suspicious and as exhibiting little individuality" while another described them as "friendly, vital, warm and welcoming." Ball notes, "the significant thing [about the differences] is that part of the explanations of the difference between the accounts is found in the nature of the interactions between researchers and the researched and the researched's perceptions of the researchers" (Ball 1993:44). Therefore researcher reflexivity is important to explain various interpretations of the research data.

Prison studies offer guidance for prospective researchers on some of the dos and don'ts, (cf. Sykes 1958; Morris and Morris 1963; Cohen and Taylor 1972; Genders and Player 1995; Liebling 1992; 1999; King 2000). Indeed Liebling (1992:118) notes:

> "The most difficult aspect of the researcher's role are the don'ts: don't get involved, don't take sides, express opinion, breach confidences or react to very much at all; don't be mistaken for a probation officer, social worker, psychologist, volunteer or governor grade - or 'someone from the parole board'... or overlook them; don't get in the way, but don't neglect to explain yourself, sometimes apologetically to each individually when they ask: "Who did you say you were, exactly?"

I breached a couple of the "don'ts" above; I was mistaken for a psychologist and sometimes felt a little in the way. However, my breaching the 'rules' is probably a reflection of the challenge of

qualitative research and that there is no definitive way to conduct fieldwork because the research experience is an individual journey. As Genders and Player note:

> "At its most basic level the reality is that researchers involve themselves in a human situation, in which demands are made upon their personal resources, to such an extent that it is their own social skills which are in large part central to the success of the whole venture"
> (Genders and Player 1995:18).

The account that follows is an exploration of my interactions, interpretations, perceptions and experiences in the field to offer some insight into reflections on the process and the data that came from it.

The experience of researching in prison

King (2000:302) suggests prison researchers will always be regarded as 'slightly odd' for their choice of research setting, but prisons can afford some advantages to researchers. Agar (1977:152) comparing street ethnography with institutional research suggests the latter facilitated a more ordered research process since: "in the institution the ethnographer has literally a captive audience. Furthermore he [she] represents something of a novelty to break the tedium of institutional life." While the very routinised environment of the prison should in theory lend some order to fieldwork, the pressures of

the regime often resulted in my interviews being missed and I quickly learnt that the interviews came second to the P.E. course and catering class, where the inmates could eat the food they cooked. When I did represent a break from the routine, where the inmates were either unemployed or locked up for twenty-three hours a day on basic regime, the early part of the interview often focused on the intensity of inmates' depression or boredom.

My experience of researching in prison suggests that it is useful to draw a distinction between a captive and captivated audience. While I had a captive audience, as suggested by Agar, the interviewees were all in one place and prevented from leaving which is clearly advantageous compared to 'street ethnography' where a sample needs to be sought. Presence in body does not suggest presence in soul. The inmates I encountered were frequently dejected with every aspect of the prison regime and remembering their lives outside was sometimes emotionally difficult. This raised ethical issues for me as my research was, in part, asking them to reveal their painful experiences. To try and overcome this I sought to create an unthreatening research environment where the inmates felt they could influence what was discussed in the interviews.

Interviewing in a prison environment is perhaps a unique experience. At the start of my research the prison symbolised something foreboding and at the end it offered a sense of protection. To a certain extent the prison removed the threat of the unknown. For example, Lee (1997:558), highlighting what she regards to be the inherent threat when interviewing men in public places, comments that 'rapists don't usually wear T- shirts marked rapist'. In prison they do, albeit metaphorically, although it is questionable how useful this information is to assess the potential risk of harm. At the end of my research my consciousness about the safety of the institutional setting was raised when one of my interviewees was due to be released. He casually mentioned, "it's a small world, maybe we will bump into each other". I realised I was uncomfortable with the thought of 'unprotected' contact with him and others who I had interviewed. I was accustomed to the 'safety' of the prison environment and if I was almost institutionalised and wary of my own release, I realised how difficult it must be for the inmates as they came to the end of their sentences.

'One of them understanding types!'

Throughout my research the inmates made assumptions about who I was. As I took the time to listen to them on a range of subjects, I was characterised as a liberal and described by one inmate as 'one of them understanding types'. He continued:

> Round my area they're a lot of laid back people, and like, I'm not taking the piss or nothing, but there are a lot of people like you, really laid back, I mean like my neighbours they are proper... my mum's a bit like it, she'll have joss sticks burning and that (Dan).

Dan was right, I did want to understand and felt this was best achieved by developing rapport and a relationship based on reciprocity, where the inmates had an opportunity to discuss a range of issues that interested or concerned them aside from the research subject. Feminist methodologies offered an approach that was compatible with the aims of my research and served to overcome my own discomfort of treating the interviewees as research 'objects' and recognising the importance of the shared experiences between interviewer and interviewee for rapport and understanding (Stanley and Wise 1993). Gelsthorpe (1990) explored the application of feminist approaches to research on men in prison, addressing the imbalance of power between herself and the interviewees by not

restricting herself to research questions and exploring wider issues relating to experiences of custody (Gelsthorpe 1990:98). In my research the inmates talked about their families, girlfriends and fears of infidelity, the fear of their parents dying while they were 'inside' or worries about their own health and whether they had cancer or AIDS. They sometimes wanted to talk about current prison issues such as a suicide on the wing or the general election result. The death of the Princess of Wales profoundly affected one inmate, Kevin, who said at the end of an interview "Do you know what I want to talk about, that Princess of Wales thing, did you cry?" I explained my feelings and that no, I had not cried. He then said with some incredulity: "My mum cried to me on the phone about it." Kevin's comments revealed the struggle many inmates had when trying to understand what was happening outside prison while they were locked away, such as the open expression of grief after the death of a public figure.

The inmates' problems were often intense and stayed with me for some time after the interviews. Jo, for example, at sixteen, was nearing release at the time of our third interview. He talked about the future with his girlfriend and the flat where he would live alone and I was struck by how young and lonely he was. I was also worried that

despite his prison record noting the difficulties of living an unstructured life (as he had done since he was twelve) and how he was easily led (he offended with someone in their mid 20s), he was going back to the same life, only this time, he knew what it was like inside and was desperate not to come back.

Conducting qualitative research can take its toll on the researcher, however, as Coffey notes (1999:3-5) while the research experience is acknowledged to be emotional and highly charged, it is often discussed in relatively unemotional ways. It is not common for researchers to discuss their feelings of discomfort, fear and frustration, those we really liked (where critical distance was harder to maintain) or those we did not like (where rapport was difficult to develop). However, because research is a personal process, these likes and dislikes, alongside a range of other emotions are inevitable. As Liebling (1999a) notes "...our emotions do not need to be reconciled with our so-called data. They constitute data. They require critical reflection, triangulation, and faithful representation, but not selective inattention." Confronting emotions throughout the research process can contribute to understanding. For example Wilkins (1993:97) suggests rather than overlooking painful fieldwork experiences, such as rejections or interviews that do not go well,

researchers should be 'taking them personally', because this "requires us to become articulate about our social and emotional resources and their utility or otherwise in the context of research."

Perhaps one reason why researchers do not frequently and openly discuss their emotions about the research process is because by so doing they seem to feel it questions their competence and compromises their ability to maintain analytical distance. At times in my research I went through periods of closeness and detachment with various inmates. I thought (and still think) about the inmates and their probable return to crime. Nevertheless, I believe I maintained a critical distance from the data. Although, because fieldwork is a personal process it should also be acknowledged that researchers may understand 'being too involved' or 'too detached' very differently. Coffey (1999:31) notes that any suggestion that once crossed, the boundaries between closeness and distance can never be redrawn overlooks how researchers can resituate themselves in the field. When dealing with very vulnerable and emotional subjects, not to become involved at times would be extremely difficult and rather than focussing on maintaining distance, researchers might focus on *regaining* distance, through acknowledging their emotions throughout the research process and how they relate to their data.

But when do you say what you feel?

Despite acknowledging emotions exist throughout the research process, it is not clear when, or whether they should be expressed during interviews, after all, as Tony Parker notes (1999:237), the first basic principal of interviewing is that the research is about the other person and not about the interviewer. Throughout the methodological literature, the role of the researcher is usually perceived to be placatory. However, as the unstructured and reciprocal nature of my research encouraged some exchange of views, to stimulate the conversation I often asked probing questions and would sometimes challenge the inmates in an unthreatening way. Occasionally my views differed radically from the inmates and I did have strong opinions about what I was told in the interviews which, considering the differences in lifestyle and education that existed between us, was not surprising. I found it difficult when inmates used overtly racist and sexist language and described their crimes with total disregard for the victims or the consequences of their behaviour. I was concerned, especially because I was interviewing young, impressionable individuals, that my lack of condemnation could be interpreted as approval. O'Connell-Davidson while

conducting research on prostitution confronted a similar dilemma of deciding how to respond in a way that did not imply agreement but did not affect rapport with the participant. She remained silent while a 'punter' described his use of prostitutes (O'Connell-Davidson and Layder 1994). I recognised the importance of silence too but sometimes felt able to challenge the inmates, for example, when Phil was discussing an armed robbery of a shop and the impact it had on the shop owner:

> Phil: "Well, if there is gonna be a criminal, someone has gotta be a victim
> Nina: "Well I'm sorry I'd still be seriously annoyed if someone did that to me, even if someone has got to be the victim."
> Phil: "Well yeah and if someone did it to me well I'd be fuming, but the way I see it what goes around comes around."

Phil recognised he would be angry if it had happened to him but moved on quickly because like many of the inmates in my research he was not comfortable thinking about the consequences of his behaviour.

I felt more comfortable drawing attention to the inmates' sexist behaviour or language and they seemed to readily accept this from me. Perhaps being seen as a 'student' and a 'liberal' led to my preoccupation with 'that feminist stuff' being easily explained and

understood. I cannot say I changed the inmates' attitudes, but they would sometimes comment that what they were about to say was probably sexist. However, I recognised the importance of understanding the source of our differences. For example, when I asked one inmate why he called me a 'bird' and not Nina, I had no answer when he said: "because that's what you are, a bird... like me mum is me old gal...it's just the way I speak".

However successful the research relationship appeared, the inmates and I were restricted by our respective roles and while the inmates talked openly about their drug use and other sensitive issues, our roles did sometimes inhibit our discussion. The boundaries of the relationship were normatively based on assumptions about our obligations and responsibilities to people outside the interviews. Some inmates admitted that while they trusted me, they also protected me by not talking about weapons or planned fights, fearing that it would put me in a position where I would have to inform the authorities, as one interviewee said:

> To a certain extent I do trust you but I wouldn't come over here and start sniffing cocaine off the table, I understand that would put you in a position and you'd have to do something about it, so there are some things I wouldn't tell you...I do trust you but I don't if you know what I mean?.. I haven't lied to you, you've been honest with me and I'm honest with you...I

don't feel threatened by you so there is no need to lie to you (Ian).

While the inmates had no behavioural boundaries, they could swear, tell their stories and make sexually expletive comments with their friends, the inmates expected me to act within certain behavioural boundaries. During one interview that was interrupted by alarm bells, ringing phones and an officer popping in and out, I swore mildly in frustration but was quickly reprimanded by my interviewee who said he did not expect language like that from me, even though our interview had been littered with expletives on his part. Another inmate felt he needed to warn me that the information he had would shock me. It did not as I had heard it before but it occurred to me that I was perceived as a 'lady' who might be easily shocked and perhaps I was 'too prim' to discuss their lives with. The inmates' various reactions towards me also suggested something interesting about the way female researchers might be categorised, as understanding, unthreatening, tolerant and proper, based on stereotypical assumptions about gender and constructions of femininity (cf. Easterday et al 1982; Foster 1994).

Prior to the fieldwork I had thought about how much knowledge I needed to conduct the research, as researchers need to be at least

marginally aware of the lives of those they are researching. Agar (1980:46) noted: "To be accepted on the street is to be hip; to be hip is to be knowledgeable; to be knowledgeable is to be capable of understanding what is going on the basis of minimal cues." However, my knowledge was limited by my experiences. I had book knowledge of drug and crime issues and being able to make connections between these and the inmates' emotions sometimes made me appear very wise! Nevertheless I had a very naive insight into street life and the inmates' argot was sometimes a barrier to understanding their interactions. I was not self-conscious about being 'unhip' and frequently asked fundamental questions about their lives and accepted their offers of clarification and translation. One inmate, who had just conversed with another through a window turned to me and said 'Did you understand that?' I admitted that the exchange had confused me. He said plainly, 'Well we have just done a [drug] deal and I am talking about getting it to his wing'. I understood how officers might miss such deals as one had occurred before me and I did not understand a word of it. Liebling (1992:119) notes how 'an ignorant spy who is eager to be educated... receives a great deal of support' and my keenness to understand meant my lack of knowledge did not undermine the interview. After all we both had different experiences and answers to questions about my lifestyle,

such as how long I had been studying and how much I was paid to do my job, often produced equal amazement.

'Not when I'm with the lady!'

While there were several female prison officers, governor grades, a wealth of civilian staff and a large number of women working in the healthcare centre where I conducted many of my interviews, my previous experience of researching in male prisons led me to anticipate some reaction to being a new female face. Female researchers are generally perceived to be more innocuous than their male counterparts (Easterday et al 1982; Foster 1994; Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). However this overgeneralises and does not explain why women are perceived to be less threatening or how it may depend on what is protected by the researched. While my status as a PhD student might have been unthreatening to the institution, an individual officer might have interpreted my role as more invasive, resenting my research becoming part of their job description. I hoped the perception of me as unthreatening stemmed from my relaxed approach to the research, but I suspected if it is female researchers who are generally less threatening, then it is probably

founded on patriarchal perceptions of women as less powerful, as well as a particular research style.

My fieldwork experience highlights the complexity of relationships in research. To explain the reactions towards me in the prison based only on my gender is reductionist because it oversimplifies the extent to which relationships developed and the first impressions of the inmates and staff changed as our interactions became more substantial. It also overlooks the various perceptions of gender that exist and how this will influence interactions in the field.

When accompanied by a petite female prison officer an inmate I had interviewed tried to attract our attention by whistling. I was surprised when she shouted: *"Oy, not when I'm with the lady"*. It became increasingly obvious that being a woman was not the defining factor in predicting reactions towards me in the prison. More importantly, it was the sort of woman I was perceived to be. I was a young, civilian, student who was relatively well spoken and my interactions in the prison often highlighted a sense of 'femaleness'.

I could not escape being a woman conducting research in a principally male world and certainly my gender influenced the reactions towards the research and what was discussed in the interviews. There is an assumption that women are better able to deal with emotional experiences (for example Morris and Morris 1963) which means interviews with a male researcher may focus on different areas or produce different responses (cf. Liebling 1999*a*). The inmates did set me aside from other women within the staff hierarchy and when they came to the interviews they would sometimes mention how they were pleased they had showered. On one occasion an inmate said he would have dressed up if he had known he was coming to see me (although I wondered what variation he was considering only having access to prison regulation clothes). The gesture reflected how self-conscious inmates were of their appearance and how, at times, the interview was seen as an occasion to look forward to.

However, I did not think my gender defined my ability to understand the inmates' experiences. For example, while Gelsthorpe (1990:98) thought her vulnerability as a women enabled her to share, to some extent, the men's vulnerability as prisoners, because vulnerability is crucial for equating the inevitable power relationship in research

(Stanley and Wise 1993), my ability to share inmates' experiences relied more on a willingness to empathise than any real similarity in our circumstances. I did not feel that simply being a woman meant I shared or completely understood an inmate's fear of rape in the prison. Vulnerability can be contextual, highly subjective and I had no previous experience of such an assault. As the research progressed I was more confident that my gender was no longer the defining factor in the inmates' reactions towards me. While at first I was the female researcher, latterly I was the researcher, who happened to be female.

The 'gendered' reactions of prison staff

While waiting around between interviews in the healthcare centre I was sometimes asked to pick up the phone or take a message by officers and I found myself fulfilling the roles of *'go-fer'* or being a *'mascot'*, described by Easterday et al (1982:65) as typical roles for young female researchers. Initially, male officers assumed I required protection and responded more proactively to the research, which at times was an advantage as their willingness to assist me meant less time was spent waiting so fieldwork days were very constructive. Male officers were very conscious of my gender, they teased that 'I

would have inmates taking drugs just to get to talk to me', implying my gender dictated the inmate's decision to participate in the research and I was frequently confronted with questions about my private life. I fell prey to the old adage 'what is a nice girl like you, doing in a place like this', which I felt undermined my legitimacy as a researcher. At times the male officers, who did not appear to take the research or me too seriously, tested me. On one occasion an officer had asked if he could accompany me while I invited an inmate to participate in the research. While I was trying to explain the research he joked with the inmate that I was 'CID'. He almost sabotaged my introduction to the research which I always took very seriously as I wanted to ensure the inmate felt comfortable and able to ask any questions. In other setting researchers have met similar deliberate disruptions, for example Easterday et al (1982:64) explained how the hostile reactions and constant interruptions from an undertaker's wife eventually led them to leave the fieldwork site. In my research the officer's intention appeared good humoured, rather than hostile. Nevertheless his joke considerably undermined me and reflected his light-hearted attitude towards the research. While the inmate was clearly unnerved by the suggestion that I was anything other than a student, after some persuasion that the officer was joking, he did consent to be interviewed.

Female officers tended to assume my competence and that I was able to conduct the research without their assistance. Initially, they appeared indifferent to the research. Foster (1994:94) noted the potential for intra-gender conflict, describing the hostile reactions she received from some female officers while conducting research on the police. While I never felt resented, being ignored was equally difficult to overcome and only as the fieldwork was nearing the end did I feel I had been accepted into their company.

Generally, aside from the earlier example where a female officer told an inmate not to call out to me, the female staff did not feel they needed to act protectively and their expectations of me as a researcher differed from their male colleagues. On hearing some abuse called out from the cellblocks, a female officer advised me to complain, explaining that 'we' did not have to put up with it. I did not complain as I felt this would not be in the best interests of my research, not least because the inmates had strong negative feelings towards those who 'grassed' and my aim was to encourage rapport and develop comfortable research relationships. However, I did not want my inaction to be interpreted as not taking the incident seriously or to imply tolerance of the abuse. When a similar incident happened

later in the research a male officer told me he had reprimanded the inmates responsible. One disadvantage of this protective attitude was of course some incidents were taken out of my control.

Is it safe for a 'bird' in there?

Women are considered to pose greater threats to prison security (Genders and Player 1995), although assaults on male staff in prison show that it is not just women who are vulnerable. However, for some researchers gender adds to the anxiety of the interview context. Lee (1997) for example, discusses her anxiety about interviewing unknown men in private and suggests that while it is not impossible for women to interview men, female interviewers should recognise their vulnerability and the potential for harm. Lee undertook many of her interviews with men in a public place.

Throughout my fieldwork there was a continual balance between what was in the best interests of the research, without undermining the rules and procedures that were in place to protect me, the inmates, staff and other prison personnel. For example, I arranged comfortable chairs around a small coffee table in the interview room to encourage a more relaxed interview setting. However, one officer

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suggested I should conduct interviews where I could easily access the alarm button in the room and be able to obstruct an inmate with a chair or table and leave the room before them should an incident arise. While I certainly did not want to compromise my safety, our different approaches were a reflection of how our roles, either researcher or officer, defined our interactions with the inmates and the levels of trust we experienced.

On one occasion during my research I did feel uncomfortable in an interview when an interviewee began to re-enact his experience of an assault. His animated description resulted in him wandering around the room attempting to demonstrate the manoeuvres, kicks and punches he had made. I sat on the chair with thoughts running through my mind: will he break something and get us both into trouble? How animated will this re-enactment get? Will someone get hurt? How can I persuade him to sit down? Eventually I made an excuse about the tape recorder not being able to pick up what he said. Reflecting on this event subsequently my anxiety and discomfort had less to do with gender and more to do with a loss of control. In an interview environment, usually characterised by its calmness, it would be more than a little disconcerting for any interviewer, male or

female, to have a six-foot, well built, nineteen year old demonstrating kicks and punches around a room.

While I never felt unsafe during my research it was difficult not to be aware of the potential danger researching in prison posed. Most of the inmates were considered dangerous and the security served as a constant reminder that the danger must not escape. However, a number of factors (not just the presence of a female researcher) increased tension in Haverton. In the interviews some inmates released their frustration and anger at being locked up all day, sacked from a job, having an appeal refused, being let down by a visitor or caught smoking drugs. The atmosphere in an interview could change radically if I asked questions that appeared to be probing for information or if my motive for a question or information was misunderstood. Williams et al (1992) explored 'safety zones' which they described as style, demeanour, humour, common sense and intuition that researchers develop to manage interactions in the field and ensure their own psychological safety. Being able to just listen and having a sense of humour were crucial and diffused any difficult moments. In one interview when discussing nicknames with an inmate as he was drawing his friendship networks, I commented on the number of 'peanuts', in the prison, the inmate replied proudly:

"That's me, I'm peanut, the original gangster nut". My lame retort, while he was showing me the profile of his skull, was 'Well your head isn't peanut shaped, is it?' It served as a reminder of how fragile interview rapport can be; it takes a long time to develop but can very easily be lost. More fundamentally it reminded me of the importance of nicknames in the prison culture and I made a concerted effort to ensure I was aware of and understood the pseudonyms of the other inmates I interviewed.

'It's people's impressions innit?'

Age, alongside my gender, shaped the way I was perceived. As my age was frequently underestimated, my work tended to be aligned with a 'college project' rather than a more serious piece of academic research, which further reinforced my status as unthreatening. In the interviews inmates would refer to their sisters being the same age as me (about 20) and were surprised when I told them I was 25. Reactions were mixed when I revealed my true age. It was dismissed because really I did not look *that old*. Others were concerned that I should be directing my energies to fulfilling my maternal instincts - 'What about getting married and children?' an officer asked. I explained that I felt my spinsterhood was not confirmed. Perceptions

shifted depending on whom I was talking to but it was a frustrating experience being considered too 'young' to do research or 'too old' to fulfil my domestic responsibilities in one afternoon.

Identity within the prison environment is also defined through dress. The officers' uniform, the inmates' clothes, the suits of the governors and the eclectic style of the civilian staff. There was a normative dress code and I opted for the androgyny of jeans, favouring their neutrality. My dress served to define me from the prison hierarchy and succeeded as inmates frequently remarked that 'I looked like a student', as one inmate commented:

> It's people's impressions innit. Like I always make impressions, it's like when I look at you now, you look like a student...see if you were wearing a uniform, it'd be different, innit. I couldn't talk to you if you were in a uniform.

On one occasion when I was not thinking about my dress I paired my jeans with a neutral grey sweatshirt. I walked through the prison grounds that day as a number of inmates were being moved from their wing to education when it occurred to me that our attire was not too dissimilar. I had become so neutral I was almost wearing prison regulation clothing!

The importance of dressing correctly was highlighted during informal discussions with a small group of female staff who criticised a colleague for wearing her skirts too short. The inmates also discussed the female staff with me, referring to their dress, voices and behaviour that they interpreted as flirtatious. One inmate pointed out a young woman that both they and staff had complained about for dressing provocatively. However, interpreting the impact of dress is highly subjective and dependent on a range of issues, including the perceived attractiveness and the behaviour of the individual. Genders and Player (1995:43) during research in Grendon prison interpreted criticisms of their attire as an inherent confusion between women's appearance being construed as 'attractive' and 'provocative,' and the sexism of the institution. They opted not to inhibit their own freedom of expression by altering their dress. I suspect what is most important is the researcher's confidence in what they wear. For my part I appeared to attract enough attention and did not want to make a fashion statement at the same time. I was conscious that the inmates never joked or commented on what they perceived as flirtatious behaviour or provocative dress in any way other than implying it was unfair and unacceptable because of their confined status. I interpreted their ability to communicate their thoughts with me as a sign my dress was

acceptable, but acknowledged that, like all female staff, I was equally susceptible to being discussed by the inmates while I was not around.

Conclusion – is it all about who you are?

The fieldwork experience is all consuming (Wolcott 1995) and most researchers would probably agree, it is a stressful experience. Being seen to conduct the fieldwork the right way contributes to researcher stress, as Gans (1982:58) noted "one source of anxiety is the constant worry about the flow of research activities: is one doing the right thing at the right time?" Maintaining my access, building rapport, keeping to the interview timetable meant at the end of the research my tiredness was beginning to show. There is perhaps a right time for the researcher to leave the field; they might have enough data, conducted research for a long time, or as in the case of Hobbs (1989) at the end of his research on detectives in the East End of London, fieldwork was causing hallucinations and the interviewees responses appeared more ludicrous. In my research there were emotional pressures, not just associated with the research but beyond, as a researcher's private life does not usually remain respectfully 'event free' for the duration of the interviews. As my fieldwork came to an end I found myself leaving prison having achieved the rapport I so

desperately wanted and despite the work ahead, I could not avoid feeling as though I was finished and on holiday.

The methodological literature separates thinking about research from the practice of doing fieldwork, as researchers reflect on the process. There is a danger that by considering methodology retrospectively we lose the very essence of the lived research experience, offering a more purist version. It is quickly forgotten that while in the field we have to get on with it and we might make decisions we later regret. During the process we can become too preoccupied with answering the questions: who am I to do this (cf. Agar 1980)? Was it right to do that? Is my data the truth? Whose side am I on? On reflection I have found my answers to such questions riddled with contradiction. As a middle class female who am I to conduct research on young men in prison? Was my decision to use an opportunistic sample and snowball sample right? Do I have a side when my sympathies are with both the staff and inmates? When such doubts are expressed they could be seen to challenge my credibility as a prison researcher. However, I did fulfil my research aims – to explore young inmates' illicit drug use in prison and this chapter has explained both 'who I am' and importantly 'how I did this'.

Every researcher's experience is a personal one and an important aspect of research that is often neglected is the researcher's personality, as Ball (1993:45) notes: "Data are a product of the skills and imagination of the researcher." Contingent advice for those entering similar settings might be inappropriate because these cannot take individual idiosyncrasies into account. As research is an individual process it is especially important to explain the approach so the reader can understand why we explore the data we do and how we have prioritised what is important. One can simplify many complex research issues by drawing an analogy between researchers and salespeople; it is frequently the case that if a salesperson is liked and accepted, their product tends to be tolerated well by the recipients. The next chapter begins to explore the data focussing on describing the nature of inmates' drug use in Haverton YOI.

CHAPTER 3

DRUG USE IN PRISON
Describing drug use in Haverton

Little is known about drugs in prison and, as explained in chapter 2, this motivated my choice of research. This chapter describes inmates' patterns of illicit drug use in Haverton Young Offenders' Institution. Three principal explanations for inmates' drug use are explored. The first explanation draws on the theory of importation that explains prison behaviour as a consequence of pre-prison experiences. The drug continuum refers to the influence levels of drug use outside had on drug use in prison. The second and third explanations highlight the influence of the prison context on inmates' drug use and explores the strategic decisions inmates made about the suitability of drug sensations to the prison context and risk of getting caught.

Understanding the problem

Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis describe the inmates' drug use and aim to build a picture of their patterns of use and motivations for using drugs both outside and inside prison. Hammersley (1992), exploring the relationship between theory and ethnography, identified three reasons why description was emphasised in ethnography: that theory

often emerged from descriptions of ethnographic data; that ethnography often describes settings with which a reader may not be familiar; and that ethnography emphasises the importance of understanding the context of behaviour. As, outlined in chapter 2, my aim using grounded theory was to build my theoretical analysis of the inmates' drug use in prison in chapters 5-7. It is important to describe the inmates' patterns of drug use as little is known about young offenders' drug use in prison (see chapter 1). Finally, as context is important, describing the nature of drug use in Haverton is significant, as some variation between drug cultures in other institutions would be anticipated.

'It's all inside and out': the drug continuum

Prison behaviour is traditionally explained by drawing on two conceptual models: importation that accepts a relationship between behaviour before incarceration; and the indigenous model where prison behaviour is a consequence of incarceration. The notion of importation is important in my research because drug use in prison was related to drug use outside. However, inmates also adapted their behaviour to the prison environment thereby facilitating their 'assimilation' into the prison world (cf. Irwin and Cressey 1963; Irwin

1970; Jacobs 1974; 1977). The continuity between drug use in the community and in the prison is also reflected in the research literature (Keene 1997a; Edgar and O'Donnell 1998a). As Thomas and Cage note (1977:205): "...drug use among prison inmates is not initiated purely as an adaptation to the problems of confinement... this type of behaviour flows more directly from pre-prison experiences."

Tolerating cannabis cultures

As reported in other studies of drug use, cannabis was the preferred drug amongst the inmates I interviewed both inside and outside prison (see chapter 2, table 2; Inciardi et al 1993; King and McDermott 1995; Edgar and O'Donnell 1998a). Twenty-eight of the thirty offenders in the sample used cannabis regularly (defined as daily use or every other day use) outside prison. Alongside solvents and alcohol, cannabis was the first drug inmates used from as young as eight years old (also see chapter 4, table 3).

In line with the theory of normalisation (cf. Coffield and Gofton 1994; Measham et al 1994; Parker et al 1995; 1998a) where recreational drug use by young people has become part of everyday life (South 1999), inmates were highly tolerant of cannabis. The drug enjoyed a protected status amongst the inmates and they smoked cannabis 'like

cigarettes' outside. As Martin, a regular cannabis user and occasional user of ecstasy and crack summarised: "[cannabis], well that's just an everyday thing for me, it'd be like smoking cigarettes." Cannabis was not defined as a 'real' drug and its use was not considered deviant or illegal.

In my research the inmates' peer group was often the vehicle for introducing drugs and facilitating further experimentation (for further discussion on the impact of inmates' peer groups on the prison context see chapter 5). For example, the park where Jo, one of the inmates, socialised offered him access to a range of potential co-defendants as he explained:

> We just used to go to the park and that where all the older lads were and just stay in the park all night till about six in the morning and go and crash out in someone's shed. There were two groups [in the park] and one was like into burglaries and that and they used to stand around and get pissed. But the other lot, they were all men and they used to sit around and smoke puff all day. That is all they used to do, play football and smoke puff. So when I was in the park that is what I used to do. That is where it all started off with the drugs and then I started doin the burglaries and crime... just hanging out in the park and we used to start skinning up spliffs and that together, then I started buying a little draw from them... [Eventually] we'd go down to Meadwater (an estate), all the time, just go down there and cruise about, we'd be driving a proper nice car... after a while I'd get to know people down there so I could ask other people to go and get [crack] for me.

Drug use was often communal and friends offered drug samples free of charge until a dealer could be found or people could afford their own supply (Speck 1972; Glassner and Loughlin 1987). Older friends were particularly important as their experiences offered a broad repertoire of offending opportunities. As delinquency was always 'on the move' (Parker 1974), the age differences between offenders did not have to be significant before advice and offending experience could be passed on. Tony explained how two boys, only a year older than him at the time, introduced him to basic offending techniques

> I never went to school. Most of my friends used to live on the estates so I used to go to the estates, but they used to be at school, so I used to meet them from school... then I started to meet these people who used to do crime, you know what I mean? I used to see them around the estate quite a lot and then I started talking to them... it was through the youth club. These times, I was about 14 and I wasn't really into the crime scene you know what I mean? I was stealing and that from a shop and from school, nothing too serious, you know what I mean? Anyway, I met these two guys and started chatting to them and they said 'do you want to come with us?' They was older than me but they was the same size and that, they didn't seem older... they was about 15, 16. From there it was them two guys really, we stole a couple of car stereos and stuff like that. I didn't really take part in the scene, I used to stand out and watch cos I hadn't done it before, do you get me. I thought, yeah that is easy, they come running back with a nice little stereo and they said, 'we'll give you your cut now if you keep watch out'... so we went back and sold it, got a little change and bought a lump of draw, some cigarettes and that and had a smoke... after a few times I was taking part in it as well, the same things, till I got on to do other things.

Inmates' families, especially parents who used drugs themselves, were also important facilitators of drug use (cf. Dunlap 1992) perhaps because their use suggested tolerance, but also because they increased the opportunities to access drugs, a crucial factor for starting to use (Glassner and Loughlin 1987; see chapter 4 for further discussion of the inmates' family backgrounds). Similar to a range of acquisitive crimes, the opportunities to access and use drugs presented themselves as part of everyday routines in the inmates' lives outside (Felson 1994; Collison 1996). Marc's parents both used cannabis and like a number of the inmates he first experimented with a small amount of the drug he stole from his father

> I started smoking when I was eight, well my Dad used to smoke it and I used to take some of his and smoke it. I used to sneak into the bathroom like late at night. I used to smoke it and go to sleep and when they [mother and father] went to work I used some more. It was cannabis straight away. I mean I'm not into E's (ecstasy) or nothing like that. I had a half a one once it was horrible. Like it's not good like speed, I used to sell that. Weed made me feel in the mood that I'd want to be in, it just relaxes me.

The inmates estimated that they spent an average of £30.00 a day on cannabis outside prison. Although compared to other drugs such as crack, where inmates could spend as much as £1000 over a weekend, the drug was comparatively cheap. Cannabis was nearly always

purchased from the proceeds from offending and the ritualistic use of the drug after offending was common. As Martin explained:

> Well say I got the money at 5, then I'd go to an estate near my house and buy a little weed or hash or something like that. Meet up with my friends and that. Then we'd go to one of our houses, to whoevers house parents were out. Then we'd just go to the bedroom and listen to some music and smoke.

The social use of cannabis after offending was considered a good way to relax. As Craig, (21) also described: "It's like my friends, like we used to go there after we did a robbery. We'd go there every day just to chill out there, like at night time, just listening to music, we'd sit down and smoke and joke or whatever... we never used to do anything else."

For those who had served time on remand in a local prison, daily visits provided opportunities for drug supply. Twenty-four of the thirty inmates continued with regular cannabis use. Only when inmates were sentenced was there a significant modification in patterns of use. Nevertheless, nineteen of the thirty inmates said they continued to use cannabis regularly. Regular use of cannabis when convicted was not the same as regular use on remand or outside. While some inmates still used the drug on a daily basis, it was usually smoked in much smaller quantities, allowing them to stretch their supply between visits.

However, confinement enhanced the effect of the drug as the overall reduced intake meant the inmates' tolerance to the drug decreased and consequently, the experience of the 'high' increased. As Derek, a regular user of the drug outside, said: "[Cannabis] affects you worse in prison, cos you go through periods without smoking it then you smoke it again and it affects you a bit. But on the out, you smoke it everyday, it don't affect you at all."

Seven inmates used cannabis more occasionally (once or twice a week) and three inmates said they refrained from using cannabis when convicted. Their reasons for abstinence varied. Billy (18) had never used cannabis outside and was not interested in the drug throughout his sentence. Two other inmates, Trevor (16) and John (21) both had life sentences and had served long periods in custody (of four years and five years respectively). Trevor was nearing parole and John was seeking a lower security category status which may have affected their behaviour. The inmates often temporarily modified their drug use, sometimes stopping altogether, if they wanted to reduce the risk of punishments and to stay out of trouble. In one interview the inmate did not discuss drug use (see chapter 2).

The widespread tolerance and use of cannabis outside prison partly explained the dominance of the drug in prison. Indeed locating young offenders' drug use in prison within the broader context of normalisation indicates the scale of the problem the prison service needs to overcome if it is to prevent drug use inside. With considerable experience of buying and using cannabis and often broad experiences of other drugs with which to compare the sensation, the inmates did not see cannabis as harmful.

A principal officer and probation officer had in the past organised an educational drugs programme for the inmates in Haverton, although it did not run during the nine months I was conducting my fieldwork because of staffing problems. An officer involved with the programme discussed the difficulty of educating inmates about the harm of cannabis, as there was little they felt they did not know about it (staff attitudes and the impact tolerance of cannabis had on drug control is discussed in chapter 6). Cannabis was not susceptible to health scare stories because of the inmates' good health, despite the level of their use. Health scare stories were also harder to sustain in the light of debates around the potential use of cannabinoids by the medical profession to relieve pain. The staff were left with little ammunition against the drug, as Colin, a senior officer on the main prison said:

"the way they look at it, their attitude is they don't look upon the effects, [or] whether [cannabis] is dangerous or not, a lot of them view it the same as rolling a cigarette." .

Class A cultures: where did all the 'smack' go?

The inmates rarely discussed using drugs, other than cannabis, in Haverton and compared to the extent and level of poly drug use before incarceration, prison was a 'dry time' for the inmates. Asking questions about class A drug use, particularly heroin use, had to be approached with caution as discretion was vital for the inmates who used. The condemnation and stigmatisation of heroin made users and ex-users wary of admitting their habit or any history of injecting, for fear of being labelled a 'skaghead' or someone with AIDS. Research suggests that these perceptions of heroin users are not uncommon amongst young people generally (cf. Power et al 1996). At times the inmates' wariness was evident in the interviews. For example, while admitting to drug use generally, one inmate did not tell me about his heroin use until our second meeting. John (21) mentioned that he did not normally admit he was an injector of heroin in the past and other inmates did not directly refer to the drug. One inmate preferred to indicate an 'H' in the air and others just referred to it as 'that' rather than by name. The tape recorder may have inhibited the discussion

about heroin, although the inmates did talk freely on a range of other issues and only once did an inmate insist on turning the tape recorder off when discussing the prevalence of heroin on the wing (see chapter 2 for discussion).

The stigma of heroin was reinforced by the general perception that heroin was a 'physical drug', while crack for example was considered to be more of a 'mind drug'. As Kevin, a user of crack outside prison explained:

> Crack... just relaxes your brain. But it's not like brown (heroin), I'd never touch brown and I never will. Brown is like a physical thing and crack is like a mental thing... Crack is bad enough but, crack for me seemed like a better drug than skag [heroin]... it's everything, just the name of it, skag, and when you see those skagheads now and they've got those white things by their mouths, skagheads, oh no, I couldn't touch heroin.

Weakness and unattractiveness was only associated with heroin use and this was important in an environment where appearances of strength, size and stature were vital (this is discussed in more detail in chapter 5 in relation to masculinities in prison). The stereotype of a heroin addict, physically dependant on the drug was not compatible with the inmates' view of themselves being able to exert control over their drug use (Glassner and Loughlin 1987). Andy, while not a heroin user himself, echoed many inmates' views that heroin use was

likely to escalate rapidly, so that a user's life was no longer their own but the drug controlled them:

> Not heroin, that's a smack head's drug. That's a dirty drug, it's your life, that takes away your life. I mean like pills and that, that won't take away your life. I mean it could kill you but not if you take it the right way. Heroin, I mean once you take it you want more and more and the next thing y'know you're stealing off your parents.

The consequences of being 'outed' as users may have made the inmates more guarded about discussing their heroin use with me. Discussions with both prison staff and inmates about the nature of the drug culture in Haverton suggested class A drugs were not generally popular. While false positives and the length of time drugs remain detectable in the body made MDT a less reliable indicator of drug use (Edgar and O'Donnell 1998a), early testing figures revealed that of the 60 positive tests in 1995, only one inmate was tested positive for heroin compared to fifty-three for cannabis. In my research I was aware of only one inmate receiving a positive test for a drug other than cannabis.

Only a small minority of the inmates had some experience of heroin both on remand and when convicted. Inmates who had used heroin outside prison were at an increased risk of using the drug in prison.

Of the eight heroin users in the research, three used the drug regularly and described themselves as addicted outside prison; all of them said they had used the drug on remand. However, Dan was the only inmate who discussed his use of heroin while in Haverton. Dan had used a range of drugs and described the progression of his drug-crime career from smoking cannabis, stealing cars and ram raiding at fourteen, to using acid and ecstasy and burglaries at fifteen, and robberies at sixteen:

> I started smoking pot when I was about 15, 14, something like that. I started taking acid and from acid, ecstasy to drugs like that. I was going around clubs and that, partying a lot. Then someone introduced me to heroin and I was takin' that now and again and then crack came along and that was it, it all went haywire... it's addictive, it's really, really addictive, big time... you get a rush, you blow the smoke out, but it's only for a couple of seconds, then it's gone... then you feel stressed out and paranoid... it was a nice feeling at the time but when it's gone, you're all right for a couple of minutes then you're stressed out, you've got no more money and then it leads to committing crimes. [I mean] I weren't no angel when I was out, when I was little I used to get up to all sorts of stuff ... fooling around in school and that. [But] when it was crack and heroin 24-7 (twenty-four hours a day, 7 days a week). I'd wake up in the mornings and when I was smoking crack and needing heroin, takin' heroin to sort of take the bad one away, level your head a bit. I was waking up stressed out from rocks (crack) and cold turkeying from heroin at the same time, it was double trouble, and um, it was costing me a lot of money a day... between 500 and 600 quid a day.

Like other inmates who used heroin and crack, as Dan's drug career accelerated his offending behaviour escalated (cf. Chaiken and

Chaiken 1990; also see chapter 4, table 4). It appeared that as Dan's drug use developed, his crimes became more high risk (cf. Cromwell et al 1991) and often through necessity, he committed crimes while using heroin:

> I was committing robberies, burglaries, you do anything to get your hands on money... If I was cold turkeying, it might sound stupid, but you can't run properly or nothin' and it sounds stupid cos you've gotta have the drug and obviously the drug ain't doing you no good and somebody who don't understand would think, how can you run and your body function like when you are on heroin, but when you take heroin and you're cold turkeying, you're immune to it... I did need heroin to actually go out and commit an offence to get crack. I was paranoid about getting caught because I couldn't run properly and that... Heroin would make you feel confident. It's like the ready brek man sort of feeling, then I'd go and get money for crack because I was stressed out for that.

In our interviews Dan discussed his fear and anxiety about being released before he was able to come to terms with his crack and heroin problem. As a regular user he found it difficult to resist the urge of his latent addiction. He had received no treatment or support for his drug problem and early in his seven year sentence came into contact with a dealer operating on his wing. He started using heroin again. After getting into debt he approached the prison staff and was subsequently transferred to another prison before we could discuss the difficulties he had on the wing. He later wrote to me: "I was stupid enough to dabble in some [heroin] in Haverton and ended up owing

some guy money so I thought it'd be best to go on my Gulliver's travels. I haven't looked back since then, I don't even smoke pot anymore."

Abstinence from heroin by other users in my research occurred because regular access to drugs was limited rather than because the inmates rejected use or had overcome their dependency. Haverton YOI was a national prison and being transferred there severed the supply networks which helped to maintain drug supplies while on remand. Visits were reduced from daily to fortnightly in Haverton and there was single cell accommodation which dramatically reduced the opportunities to access or share drugs with other inmates. With no alternative way to access heroin (except through a dealer that was expensive) and as a regular supply could not be guaranteed, inmates often stopped using (see chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of drug supply and the drug market in Haverton). For example, when Ian was on remand he continued to use heroin, but ceased when he started serving a six-year sentence. Like the other two inmates who had used heroin persistently prior to being transferred into Haverton, he was not identified as a heroin addict and received no medical intervention or counselling to help with his problem:

> My mates were still there in the jail but cos the visits weren't so regular, you were getting every two weeks instead of every day. Like if I'm gonna go from one weekend to the next weekend without having none (heroin) and then through the next week you're not so dependent on it, y'know what I mean? After that it wasn't such a big thing, it was a treat once in a while. On remand I was taking it for granted, y'know what I mean?

A sporadic supply made it impossible for Ian to balance the pleasure of using the drug with the symptoms of withdrawal. Lindesmith (1938:593) explained that 'addiction is generated in the process of using the drug consciously to alleviate withdrawal distress' and as irregular use does not control these symptoms but only offers temporary relief, dependency is gradually reduced. Spontaneous cessation might appear at odds with stereotypical images of heroin addicts. However, challenges to this image are long-standing. Preble and Casey (1969) for example, presented the addict as a more rational actor, actively 'hustling' to maintain their habit. Evidence shows that far from heroin users embarking on an inevitable road to destruction, many are able to control their habit and manage their consumption to ride out shortages, or changes in their life circumstances with little physical or psychological effect (Bennett 1986; Faupel and Klockars 1987; Pearson 1987a; Cromwell et al 1991). The task for prisons is to harness this period of abstinence and encourage users to think of it more as a long-term change than a short-term adaptation in behaviour.

Changing behaviour in the longer term is especially difficult when regimes are increasingly focussed on security because they do not take account of individuals, their needs, or potential to change (see chapter 6 and 7 for further discussion on controlling drug use in prison).

To manage the transition from remand to conviction, the inmates in my research frequently adapted to the deprivation of one substance by increasing their intake of another more readily available to them. This enabled inmates involved in the heavier end of drug use before prison to overcome the symptoms of withdrawal by increasing their cannabis consumption (a pattern contrary to anecdotal evidence that suggests inmates switch consumption from cannabis to heroin to avoid positive mandatory drug tests, see later discussion and chapter 6). Tom described his withdrawal from crack while on remand: "I found it quite easy to come off [crack] really but I was smoking a lot of cannabis. It was calming me down." Turnbull et al (1994) found a similar pattern of drug use in prison, where cannabis was used regularly as a substitute for opiates. My interviewees also suggested a similar practice existed outside prison, where sedative drugs, such as cannabis and heroin, were combined to control the urges associated with stimulant drugs, such as crack.

Supply and demand

There was a tacit acceptance amongst most of the inmates that heroin was available and being dealt on the wings. As Josh said: "there is a lad over on the wing selling heroin... I know it's going around and I know it's getting sold and I know who's doin it as well." The inmates also suggested heroin use was particularly associated with the Asian inmates both inside and outside the prison. Josh said:

> There are a lot of people who say they wouldn't do it [heroin] but if they can get hold of it in jail they'll do it, anyone will do anything for a buzz in jail. In here, it's mostly the Indian lads that take it.

There was little evidence to support this association. On the contrary, from inmates' accounts it seemed that an African-Caribbean inmate was the main heroin dealer on one of the wings in Haverton. The Asian inmates I interviewed did not deny that some Asian inmates were involved with heroin, but they did not perceive heroin to be an exclusively Asian problem. Hardeep and Rajiv both admitted to using heroin in the past but said they were not using the drug in Haverton:

> Well the two dealers on B wing, they're co-ds and one is selling hash and weed and one's selling like 'that' [heroin]. I mean, I'd say on the out it's associated with Asians, me personally I've only taken it once, I took it in jail, the first time I took it was in

jail. I was double banged up with someone and I thought I'd try it. (Hardeep)

See on the outside, amongst the Asians, that's what the main business is, selling heroin, even on the outside when they sell it they often take it as well... say in here like boys who don't know what to do with heroin, they'll come to an Asian and ask about how to do it. I mean it's not just an Asian problem, in prison everyone will take it cos they think that heroin is going to solve their problems. (Rajiv)

In my research the five occasional users of heroin, those who had tried the drug or used it now and again, did not seek out the drug in prison and preferred to satisfy themselves with the cheaper, less risky and more available cannabis. There is no way to know whether more inmates would have experimented or used heroin for the first time if it were more available in the prison, or whether its low availability was influenced by a low demand for the drug amongst the inmates because few had used the drug outside.

There is clearly a relationship between demand and supply. Sutton, for example, notes (1995; 1998) that demand for stolen goods increases the incidence of theft and burglary. The available market provides offenders with easy opportunities to sell their stolen goods while neutralising the effect of their crimes because they are satisfying demand. Sutton's analysis suggests an effective drug reduction strategy should take supply and demand into account (see chapter 5

for a discussion of the drug market in Haverton). At the time of the research, however, the regime at Haverton was principally concerned with reducing drug supply (discussed further in chapter 6).

Research on prohibition and increasing drug controls outside the prison suggest these can have a dramatic effect on the drug market: the cost of drugs can increase; and periods of drugs shortages or saturation of the market as a result of low level policing strategies can make ingestion more dangerous as users are frequently unaware of the purity or strength of drugs (cf. Stevenson 1994). As changes in the drug market are gauged by the length of time it takes users to find a supply and fluctuations in street prices (cf. Murji 1998), in prison (where space is limited and prices already inflated) it is more difficult to assess the impact reduction strategies have on user demand. Nevertheless, supply reduction alone could increase the value of drugs in prison, resulting in drug dealing becoming profitable which potentially introduces serious problems associated with inmate debt, bullying, fighting and episodes of disorder (Seddon 1996).

Acknowledging there is some continuity between drug use before and during custody could have practical implications for targeting drug testing and treatment by enabling those inmates at risk of 'problem'

drug use to be identified on arrival into the prison. New inmates into Haverton were held on the induction wing for up to a week for assessment. The institution took convicted inmates that were transferred from a remand establishment or another institution and therefore the inmates had usually overcome initial withdrawal symptoms from drugs they had used regularly outside or on remand. Induction gave the institution an opportunity to gather information about past behaviour, including drug use, which was entered on the inmate's prison file. However, as research on remand prisoners has also found (Mason et al 1997), the information given by the inmates was often incomplete and the extent of their drug use underestimated. Inmates were reluctant to discuss drug histories, fearing it would result in them being targeted for drug tests. If drug workers not connected to the prison conducted such interviews confidentially (without the information being entered on the inmate's prison file), they might offer more insight into the level of drug use amongst inmate populations.

The prison staff I interviewed in Haverton suggested utilising the option of drug testing on reception for monitoring purposes. Inmates would incur no punishment if they received a positive test because the drugs may have been taken when the inmate was under another jurisdiction. However, the usefulness of testing depends on how the

information is utilised and whether inmates are offered support or diverted to treatment. This did not happen in Haverton (see chapter 6). With testing resulting in punishment, inmates might be negatively labelled 'drug users'. Stigmatising inmates who have a problem with drugs (rather than reintegrating them by providing support and encouragement to overcome their drug problem or refrain from use) could potentially alienate them and make it more difficult for them to stay out of trouble and integrate into the regime (cf. Braithwaite 1989). In any event, induction testing is unlikely to identify all users because of the sporadic nature of drug use in prison.

Drug choices in prison

The section above highlights the importance of understanding the broader context of inmates' drug use in society, as my research suggests, there is a relationship between drug use outside and inmates' drug use in custody. However, the prison environment also needs to be taken into account because inmates modified their drug use in custody.

While the theory of importation offers a conceptual framework for the drug continuum, the indigenous or deprivation model explains changes

in patterns of drug use that occurred as a consequence of incarceration. The deprivation model subscribes to Goffman's (1961) view of the institution as a totality that encourages behaviour, whose function is to overcome the 'pains of imprisonment' (Sykes 1958). For example, Akers, Hayner and Gruninger (1974) in their study of seven prisons in the United States concluded that inmates' homosexual and drug using behaviour was more a function of the type of prison than the social characteristics the inmates' brought with them. However, to view importation and adaptation as conceptually distinct undermines their explanatory power (Schwartz 1971), as behaviour tends to result from both pre-prison and current experiences.

The prison context influenced the inmates' drug use in Haverton. The next section of the chapter explores the decisions inmates made around their drug use in prison based on assessments of the risk of getting caught for using and the suitability of drug sensations to the prison setting.

Risking drug use

For those I interviewed, crime and drug use outside prison offered exhilarating risky experiences, as one inmate, Paul, a regular user of amphetamines outside prison explained: "drugs are something that you

take to have fun... you sometimes get a buzz out of it and I suppose people do it for that reason." Indeed, Katz (1988) noted the importance of exploring moral motivations and offenders' fascination with crime as explanations for offending beyond background risk factors. The inmates I interviewed would frequently use drugs outside to enhance the thrill and excitement of offending, especially when the crime was more about risk than material gain. Josh often used amphetamines to increase the sensation of the 'speeding' while joyriding. He would inject a concoction to ensure the ultimate high:

> [I used] Es, speed, lots of speed, I used to inject it. I was taking too much of it, I was like thieving, sleeping all day and taking it, getting speed, snorting speed and thieving. I just kept on doing it and kept on doing it and it wasn't doing anything for me anymore. So I started injecting, mixing Es with the speed and injecting it... We used baking powder to check if it was all right... you know a cigarette filter tip, take the brown stuff off and put it in a spoon. You fill the needle with hot water, you pull it in, like you mix [the drugs] with water and pull them through the filter to stop the lumps getting in me arm. You used to get a bang in the back of your throat, then I'd have to sit down, it would really hit you.

When I mentioned how dangerous this sounded, Josh commented: "It is when I think about it now". However, at the time he was preoccupied not with the risk but with achieving the ultimate 'high'. For Josh, drugs kept him awake and as he said "they give you some

bottle". This exposed him to further risks associated with his offending, as he went on to explain:

> I was nearly killed in a car, I was coming up and down a hill doing handbrake turns and all the lads had a video camera, I sat there at the top of the hill, tunes blaring and saw a police car so I thought I'd take the piss out of them. I drove down the hill slowly and waited for them, there was one of them bollards in the road and well, I watched it all on video and it was close, I nearly killed myself. It was a buzz, just laughed it off, we'd watch the video and get stoned, have a laugh out of it.

While the young offenders who participated in my research were at the extreme end of the offending spectrum, their behaviour needs to be located within the general acceptance of risk taking by young people, where "a degree of risk-taking is not deviant but normal amongst young people in all socio-economic positions" (Plant and Plant 1992:138). Therefore, what distinguishes the young people in my research is not the fact they took risks, but the extreme manifestation of their risk taking and their cavalier attitude to danger that often resulted in their behaviour coming to the attention of the authorities.

The meaning of risk has extended in modern society as technological and scientific advances have resulted in the proliferation of risk and alongside it, growing mechanisms that aim to calculate, predict and minimise their potential harm. No longer concerned with the

probability of good or bad outcomes, "*risk* has been co-opted as a term reserved for the negative outcome alone, and has supplanted the terms *danger* or *hazard*." (Fox 1998:665). Therefore, in current society, risk is pervasive. Beck (1992) defined the 'risk society' as one based on negative logic. It is not about seeking good, but preventing the bad from occurring so that the "risk society remains particularly negative and defensive. Basically, one is no longer concerned with obtaining something 'good', but rather with preventing the worst; self limitation is the goal which emerges" (Beck 1992:49 quoted in Ericson and Haggerty 1997). As Ericson and Haggerty (1997:88) note, "a risk society is a knowledge society because scientific knowledge and technologies are sources of major risk and the primary basis of security efforts aimed at controlling such risk". Therefore in the risk society, security is prioritised as society strives to control risk and improve itself by seeking more knowledge to control more risks. The effects of this ongoing reflexivity is that science itself recognises the risk its own technologies might have (Ericson and Haggerty 1997:97), for example, recent advances in embryonic research and cloning and intra-disciplinary attempts to monitor them.

The prison system has not been immune to the growing culture of risk assessment and risk management has also influenced drug control in

custody (see chapter 6). Feeley and Simon (1994) note how the preoccupation with risk in prison has resulted in the paradigmatic shift from an Old Penology, that focused on individual responsibility, intervention and treatment, to a New Penology. The New Penology is more concerned with identifying and classifying groups in order to assess and minimise the risk they pose; therefore "it seeks to regulate groups as part of a strategy of managing danger" (Feeley and Simon 1994:173). This increasingly managerialist approach has resulted in incapacitation being prioritised. This is the least contestable function of the prison because the offender is removed and crime on the street is delayed for the duration of their sentence. However, the theory of incapacitation appears to reintroduce traditional views of the prison and society as distinct entities. By only concerning itself with the removal of crime from the street and not with overall crime prevention, incapacitation ignores criminal behaviour (such as drug use) that persists during incarceration.

Risk calculations influenced the inmates' decision to use drugs in prison. Being in prison also exposes inmates to a range of other risks: "they are placed at a greater risk of suicide, self-mutilation, physical and sexual assault and many kinds of psychic damage than their counterparts in the outside community" (Williams 1997:258; see also

Liebling 1992; Beck 1995; O'Donnell and Edgar 1998). In Haverton, the inmates I interviewed became adept at negotiating risk in order to ensure an adequate supply of cannabis, a safe time to smoke it and wherever possible, to evade positive mandatory drug tests. Inmates suggested cannabis was a 'low risk drug' both in terms of its effect and the penalties use attracted. With cannabis, the inmates felt in control of their drug use (Glassner and Loughlin 1987) because the high was predictable and after use they did not experience powerful urges to consume more.

The low risks associated with cannabis use in prison needed to be reconciled with the high risk of positive mandatory drug tests due to the length of time the drug remains detectable in the body. Therefore, some inmates modified their cannabis use. Jo, a regular cannabis user in Haverton, suggested that inmates might be less inclined to smoke very small amounts of the drug

> I mean what am I gonna do with half a spliff in here, half a spliff don't do nothin'. I mean half a spliff... either you are gonna do it properly or not do it at all. You could get a piss test on Monday and get caught smoking for half a spliff, what's the point? You wanna smoke an eighth or half an ounce or something.

Other inmates disagreed with Jo and smoked lesser quantities because drug supplies had to be stretched between prison visits and less frequent use meant the inmates could smoke less and still achieve a good high. A more common approach to negotiate the risk of detection was to adulterate a urine sample or attempt to evade MDT by drinking substantial amounts of water, orange juice or vinegar. As Kevin described:

> When you smoke in prison you have to drink a lot of water to get it out of your system, so when you have an MDT it won't come up positive, or vinegar, cos thats got acids in it and it kills the stuff in the blood system, then you've got to drink at least two bottles of water... the water flushes it out so your piss, it's see through... so you can bung it down one night and then the next day it won't come up positive. It's a bit shabby.

Kevin's closing comment suggests the evasive procedures he undertook, made drug use more complicated, messier and maybe even less enjoyable. The logic behind the evasive tactics the inmates took was not always clear and the inmates did not fully understand how they might produce a negative result. The inmates were reassured by prison gossip that drinking vinegar, sweating or eating orange and lemon peel had an effect on the tests and had convinced themselves of their value. Drinking copious amounts of water was by far the most popular method of drug test evasion, indicated by the number of inmates who had to stop our interviews to go to the toilet whilst

admitting to me that they had been smoking. Tom preferred drinking water in the belief it would 'flush out his system', but despite his efforts he had a positive test for cannabis use while in the prison:

> Well water, you can do it with water, but you ave to drink it straight away and then go to the toilet twice and then you're ready to go to the toilet for them, but sometimes you ain't got time cos they surprise you.

Clarence, also a regular user of cannabis was found in possession of the drug and placed on closed visits. He had not received a positive test during his time in prison or on remand. While he initially gave the impression that he was sceptical that any approach could evade the drug tests, as we talked he became more confident that exercise and sweating the drug out of his system could be effective

> Water doesn't work, well I don't think so. There ain't no cure for it. I mean sweating makes you do it, yeah, that gets it out of your system, that's the only thing I really know, sweating it out.

Other inmates preferred to adulterate their samples to obscure any traces of drug use. Josh had received a positive test in another prison for cannabis use but had no positive drug tests during my research, despite occasionally using cannabis. He described how he had corrupted tests in the past:

> If you put a little bit of salt underneath your fingernails and then flick it into the water, or you have soap powder in a piece of

tissue and you keep it under your foreskin and you just piss through that and that just messes the test up, but it'll come back contaminated so they'll give you another one, so you just keep doin it, keep on doin it. But in here if it comes back contaminated, you get nicked for that.

Haverton Young Offenders' Institution did initiate adjudication proceedings for a contaminated test. However, where the urine was too dilute the prison was powerless to do anything, as it could not be proved the action was intentional. If the inmates could not corrupt a test and all other avenues of risk negotiation had failed, they were reassured that punishment for cannabis use was considerably less harsh than for other drugs.

The inmates' approach to the risk of MDT at one level involved calculating the risk of getting caught, engaging in techniques they believed would reduce the risk of being caught and, if all else failed, accepting that the outcome of being caught was not too harsh. Their reactions suggested rational thinking, although as Tilley (1997) notes, rationality is rarely achieved because we do not always have all the necessary knowledge (and rationality may not necessarily be in our best interests). The inmates did not really know whether their tactics produced false negatives, which generally is not uncommon in testing procedures (Edgar and O'Donnell 1998a), however engaging in the

tactics made the inmates *feel* like they were being proactive and avoiding the risk. Rather than being rational, the techniques allowed the inmates to rationalise their behaviour.

Cracking the habit because it's just too risky!

Crack was considered by inmates to be a risky drug to use in prison. Seventeen inmates had used the drug before custody. Ten inmates could be termed habitual users, that is, regular users of the drug consuming high quantities at a high cost. Tom, a poly drug user before custody and a cannabis user in prison discussed the cost of his regular crack habit:

> It would be £1000, more [in a week]. I mean at weekends we used to sit down like on a Friday night, put our money down and just smoke crack for the whole weekend, every time you're taking a smoke, it just adds up. Come Monday, you've been smoking, you haven't eaten nothing, just drinking and smoking.

Seven inmates used crack occasionally and recreationally. Often occasional users treated themselves to a drug 'binge' if they had a good financial return from a crime, particularly robbery, when it was not unusual for them to escape with £2000 to £3000. Jo was a poly drug user outside prison and would divide the money he made from his crimes between funding his leisure time, buying clothes and illegal drugs and using crack when he could afford it:

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I'd have one big earner and I'd spend about three quarters of it on clothes and the rest of it on just having a good time and that, a good night out. Or, I'd buy a large amount of drugs, if I had good luck and a good run then I'd be sorted. [When I was smoking crack] say I'd spend 1500 quid over a weekend, I'd spend about £400 of that on drugs. I used to smoke [crack] in a pipe or I used to put it in a rizzler and smoke it like that, but when it was in the pipe it used to be quicker and that. I'd get a 20 quid rock and get four spliffs from it and later would do more spliffs. After a while you get to be a kinda junkie. I was doing speed and trips, well everything really. £400 is just on the drugs, I mean crack is expensive, it's very expensive... I mean when we used to smoke like £300, £400, that's not a lot, well it is, but it ain't a lot to someone who smokes crack regular cos they could like do 100 quid a day for a month and not even think about it. I mean when you're smoking [crack], I was going down and down and down all the time, not up and up.

Despite Jo's comments about crack 'sending him down', the inmates I interviewed considered crack more acceptable than heroin because they perceived it as a drug that could be controlled. As Clarence, a user outside said: "Crack, you can control that, well I can control that but heroin, I can see people take that a couple of times and they're out for it." Descriptions of heavy crack users could not be reconciled with the inmates' notion of being in control of their drug use. Qualitative research amongst crack users indicates that desperation and physical deterioration can be just as obvious for crack, as heroin users (Jacobs 1999a). Crack is also associated with highly unstructured lifestyles where violence is a constant threat (Williams 1992; Bourgois 1995, 1996). Elory had not tried crack and preferred to confine his use to

cannabis, although he had discussed crack with a user in prison and related their conversation during our interview:

> Crack is just calling you. One guy in here said to me, with crack you've finished it and you go crawling on your hands and knees on the floor thinking you've dropped a bit, but y'know you've smoked it. I've seen man [*sic*] on stones [a person taking crack] and they're thirteen, fourteen stone, and then they're ten stone, where's it all gone? And you smell that bubblegum type smell...weed's nothing like that.

Dela, a crack user, agreed that its affect was not dissimilar to heroin:

> Crack's like heroin but not in the same context, cos with heroin when you want it bad enough you wouldn't always have the energy to go out and get it, but with crack, it'll make you go out and get the money, d'you get me? I've seen a lot of friends messed up on that.

The inmates' reluctance to acknowledge the harmful effects of their crack use served to neutralise the consequences of using (Sykes and Matza 1959). Like knowledge of risks in society that generate further risks (cf. Ericson and Haggerty 1997), Griffiths and Waterson (1996:123) suggest drug users are unlikely to acknowledge all the risks associated with their use because it would necessitate change in their behaviour:

> "There are many reasons why substance users are resistant to acknowledging the full extent of the risks that they may be facing. For a start, to openly admit to a problem is to contemplate change which represents hard work, loss and the

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possibility of failure and further damage to self-esteem. In other words, to lay themselves open to new risks."

It was difficult to understand why the inmates made a distinction between crack and heroin. One explanation might be that outside, the association between crack and the recreational drug scene made it appear more glamorous and less damaging. John, a heavy user of both drugs, described the different attitudes towards each drug:

> Crack is seen as quite a glamorous drug, you're standing around drinking champagne and smoking crack, you're thinking you're a superstar and others are thinking, wow, and you're smoking crack, but everyone is thinking, that guy's off his head. Heroin, I can't explain it, I think cos it was seen as a dirty drug, but I took it anyway, just smoked it then... when you come down off the crack and you're just stoned it was a really nice feeling of just comfort and well-being. You had sort of a warm glow, like the ready brek man.

The association with crack and black culture may also have influenced the image associated with the drug. Research suggests heroin is regarded as a 'dirty white man's drug' (Murji 1999), while crack is linked to gang culture and so called 'yardies', seen to personify a masculinity characterised by violence, sexuality and consumption (cf. Murji 1998; 1999), that many of the inmates in my research aspired to through their offending. However, there was little evidence that crack was associated with race in my sample where use outside was fairly evenly distributed across the ethnic groups (six white inmates, eight

African-Caribbean inmates, one Asian inmate and two inmates who described themselves as 'mixed race' used the drug outside). Only white and Asian inmates admitted to using heroin. Pearson et al (1993) also found low levels of heroin use amongst the African-Caribbean community but it is unclear whether the racial differences reflect drug preferences or the low levels of referrals of minority groups to drug services that monitor patterns of use.

No inmates admitted to crack use in Haverton or made reference to crack dealers in my study. This suggests the drug was rarely available through deals in Haverton. As one inmate described: "[Crack] is not what [the inmates who use crack] usually sell... they just want it for themselves... they just like it so much." The assumption amongst the inmates was that if someone was prepared to take the risk of bringing the drug in by calling upon family and friends, they would want to use the drug themselves. As Dela said:

> If people use class A you'd hardly ever know anyway cos they'd get it in on a visit and they'd not tell a soul. They're hooked or whatever they're not telling no one. If they're risking it, they're not gonna tell no one.

The inmates were aware class A drugs attracted a more punitive response compared to cannabis. They also thought that the sweet,

bubblegum like smell of crack and the behaviour of those addicted to the drug, colloquially named 'cats', would attract the attention of prison officers. As Jo, a user of the drug before custody said: "there is so many people that smoke crack and that, it's unreal, you'd just have everyone at your door." While cannabis also had a pungent smell, tolerance and a lower punishment tariff made it far less risky to use.

Seeking the right high - stimulating drug choices inside

Aside from the risks associated with drug use in prison, a further crucial consideration for inmates in terms of their drug choices was how compatible the 'high' was with their current environment. Outside prison inmates sometimes chose drugs to complement certain criminal activities (Cromwell et al 1991). For example, amphetamines kept the inmates awake or alcohol provided a little 'Dutch courage' before offending, as Tony explained:

> The first time I did drink I got a boost. Now if I weren't drinking now, I'd be thinking, ra, if I do this, this could happen now and I could get arrested and I'd think of all the consequences and all that could happen, but if I had drunk something now I wouldn't be thinking of all those things I would go and do it straight away, so I thought it was a good thing.

Some inmates refrained from using drugs, arguing that they were not compatible with crime. Martin feared drug use would reduce his

concentration and increase the likelihood of being caught. He said: "I don't take drugs no drugs before I go and do a crime. Before I go and do a crime I like to keep my head clear. You can't smoke. It will make you feel prang [stoned] and that." Ian agreed, explaining that using drugs when he was offending made him more volatile:

> I've got the confidence (to commit crimes) whether I'm fucking drunk or sober. If I'm straight, off all drugs then I will still go out and commit a crime, do you know what I mean? But when I've been taking drugs then I become more violent, but if I've been taking drugs, like gas or something and do a burglary and I'll do my best to run yeah. If I've been drinking or taking charlie [cocaine] then I won't try to run, I'll fight and all that. If I'm straight and someone hits me then my first thought is to get out of the house, but if I'm on something then I think, fuck it, I'll kill him. I mean I get a buzz out of burgling and nicking things.

While the inmates' patterns of drug use inevitably changed in Haverton, they continued to exercise choices in their use and if anything, became more strategic in their approach. Similar to recreational use outside, inmates prioritised their drug use according to their current life situation. The inmates' drug choices links with rational choice theory, which introduces the idea that offenders, rather than simply conducting crime erratically, make decisions around offending based on particular environmental cues (Cornish and Clarke 1986; Felson and Clarke 1998). Ekblom (1996) differentiates between distal and proximal circumstances that relate to the 'offender in the

situation', where the presence of a likely offender, a suitable target and the absence of capable guardians (Felson 1994) all influences crime. Rational choice theory offers a departure from individual explanations of offending and forms the foundation for situational crime prevention (Felson and Clarke 1998). In terms of the inmates' drug use in prison, rational choice theory is a useful tool because inmates were conscious of the context of their drug use and took this into account in order to seek the right 'high' through using.

Therefore, inmates made rational decisions around their drug use in prison and did not simply use drugs that were available[1]. Parker et al (1998a) also describe 'drugwise' young people, making 'cost benefit assessments' about drug use. Drug choices involve weighing the risk of bad drug experiences and getting caught "against the pleasure and enjoyment of particular drugs and their ability either to blank out stress and distress or most often help deliver cost effective, deserved 'time out' through relaxation and enjoyment from the grind of everyday life" (ibid. 1998a:119-20). Parker et al's description can be closely aligned with the inmates' experiences of drug use in prison.

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[1] An exception was the inmates' use of hash, cannabis in the resin form, which was often a substitute for the preferred weed because it was more available.

Seeking sedation

According to my interviewees, cannabis was compatible with their lives inside. The sedative effect helped them cope better with the lengthy periods when they were locked up alone and became part of a process of managing time (see further discussion in chapter 4). The inmates described how cannabis 'brought you down' and that this was a necessary requirement for any drug in prison. As Elory said: "Now weed man, you smoke it, you kinda like, well, it brings you down a level. You're down, you're relaxed." The popularity of the relaxing effects of cannabis and the inmates' desire for sedation led to the rejection of stimulant drugs, such as amphetamines and crack. As Jo explained:

> A couple of people on the wing can get hold of temazepams... They're quite expensive, but I'd rather smoke a spliff than take a temazepam, I don't need for nothing like that... I've heard there are a couple of people who've got Es in here. It's not often you hear about them kinds of things, d'you know what I mean? Or a bit of whizz, a bit of speed. There are some people who get it in on visits but some don't get visits that often. I mean all it is, is you smoke a spliff and you can get your head down straight away, quicker. I mean it's a good drug for prison, like straight to sleep.

The size of drugs such as ecstasy, speed or LSD meant they would be relatively easy to ingest and smuggle inside the prison and comments

from inmates suggested, while use was not widespread, they were available in Haverton. A number of inmates described 'seeing Es around' or being offered the drug. Marc was aware of 'pills' being passed around his group of friends. He did not know what they were, although it is likely they were an amphetamine substance

> There are these pills goin around prison fast now...They're supposed to make you high or something... I saw them, there are nuff of them goin around on the wing. They're white and tiny, tiny small, they're smaller than Anadin. They're probably shit.

Twelve inmates regularly used ecstasy outside prison, and a further seven used it occasionally (had tried the drug or used it now and again) outside prison. A third of the inmates I interviewed used LSD. Only two inmates said they occasionally used ecstasy inside and none said they had used LSD in Haverton. When inmates used stimulant drugs in prison they were described as a treat and the inmates attempted to recreate the recreational scene outside in their cells using music, as Josh, a heavy user of amphetamines before prison, said: "Well I should've a E (ecstasy) coming up at the weekend...I've got my system [stereo] coming this week as well, a big system, just turn it up."

Generally stimulant drugs were not considered suitable 'in cell' entertainment. The inmates feared urges for alternative activities like going out or wanting more drugs, and that using such drugs would reinforce the hopelessness of their situation inside. Lawrence used ecstasy outside but feared taking a stimulant drug in prison would make his use more noticeable. When I asked if he would take an E in the prison, he said:

> No, there is nothing to do. You'd just be in your cell, in a small cell with nothing to do at all. I'd have too much energy for nothing. I'd sweat too much and when you sit in your cell sweating, they'd [staff] know what was happening. (Lawrence)

It is debatable whether using ecstasy would attract more attention than the smell of smoking cannabis. However the reactions of the staff would certainly differ, not least because ecstasy is considered dangerous and is categorised as a class A substance by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Consequently to be caught taking ecstasy would attract a higher tariff of punishments compared to cannabis.

Other inmates agreed that stimulant drugs were less predictable and using them required space and company. As Tony said: "Never, no never a pill, you need space to do that. I need fresh air and I need people around me and that, so I know it's all right, d'you know what I

mean? I mean you'd be hyper, you'd be thinking there must be a way I can get out." Stimulant drugs did not offer the inmates an appropriate sensation. Martin, an occasional user of ecstasy outside prison described how a drug was only helping him if it calmed him down and he could sleep:

> There is nuff drugs around. I seen Es yesterday as well, but I don't know why they bring Es in here, yeah. A couple of boys come to me yesterday and said about having an E, I said to them, "if I take an E, what am I gonna do?" They said, "turn up your radio and listen to some jungle." But I told them to keep that... see if you're gonna be taking a drug yeah, you can't be taking none of that, I've got to be taking a low drug yeah, otherwise it's not helping me... [On remand] I took an E and was goin loops, I said to the guy, "this drug's rubbish man, I had to stay up all night."

The inmates also suggested crack was not a popular drug to use in prison because the short 'high' and subsequent powerful cravings made it incompatible with confined spaces. Tom, a user of the drug outside, described the difficulty of controlling the 'crack craving' in prison:

> I don't want it when I'm in here. If I was gonna get some, say I was gonna get like 50 quid, then I'd smoke it but after, then I'd be wanting more, but I wouldn't be able to send out to get any more or get anyone to bring any up... just stuck in my cell and can't do nothin'.

Inmates feared that being unable to control the craving would make them more volatile. Dela used crack and cocaine regularly before

custody. He described how using crack would increase the frustration associated with being locked up that soporific drugs tended to ease: "I couldn't smoke crack in my cell, I'd go mad. The thing with crack is you always want more and you couldn't go out of your cell to get more, it's just walls innit. You couldn't even go and get a beer or something."

There was a contradiction between crack being an unsuitable prison drug and the inmates' earlier comments, that if crack were available on the wings many inmates would want to use it. The contradiction indicated the potential for use amongst resolute crack users who had not overcome their addiction, and recreational or occasional users, who binged on the drug after a good return from crime and remembered how much they enjoyed the high. The prison experience probably exaggerated the inmates' selective memory of the effects of crack and the image the drug had, as they tended to think about their lives outside positively, to help them to cope with their sentence (cf. Shover 1996).

Conclusion

This chapter has described the nature of drug use amongst the young offenders I interviewed in Haverton. Three factors influenced the levels of drug use in prison. The first concerned individual levels of drug use outside prison. Inmates were at a higher risk of using drugs in prison if they had used before custody. Since all but one inmate in my research had used drugs outside prison, drug use in prison could be anticipated. The second and third factors related to the structural and context of the prison. Inmates modified their drug use making 'drugwise' choices based on the risk of getting caught and the predictability of drug sensations. This reinforced inmates' preference for the sedative effects of cannabis. As there was a high risk MDT would detect cannabis use, the inmates adopted techniques they thought could evade positive tests or simply accepted the risk of punishment if they were caught. This chapter has described individual and structural factors, highlighting the importance of understanding the broader social context of drug use and the impact the prison setting has on drug choices in custody. The next chapter further explores the impact of the prison structure on drug use, focussing on the relationship between drugs and managing prison time.

CHAPTER 4

DRUG USE AND THE PRISON CONTEXT
Structured lives and passing prison time

The last chapter described the nature of drug use in Haverton. This chapter explores the relationship between the inmates' drug use and the structured environment of the prison more fully, focussing on the way drug use was used as one of a range of coping strategies which helped inmates to pass their time. The chapter considers the theoretical foundations of time and its association with punishment and prison. A comparison is made between time in the context of the inmates' highly unstructured lives outside and time in the structured prison environment. I argue that the experience of prison time is quantifiably different to general experiences of time outside because it is overtly controlled and there are limited resources available to make time flow. Drug use was integral to the range of strategies the inmates adopted to cope with time. The chapter concludes that the prison structure needs to be considered when explaining drug use in prison.

Stressing time

A discussion of time might be anticipated when conducting institutional research, especially in prisons where the control and

structure of time through the length of sentences, the regime and changes in working shifts is central to stability and order. As Sparks et al (1996:350) explained:

> "Time is the basic structuring dimension of prison life for both the prisoners and the staff. Everyone is 'doing time'... Furthermore, time is marked out in particular ways both in terms of the long duration of a career or a sentence but also in the division of daily time by routines, shifts and events. Researchers need to understand these features of time and their activities must in a sense mirror its flow."

Time and imprisonment are integrally linked and the prison sentence represents the quantification of time for a purpose. Time becomes an effective punisher. It is retributive because it symbolises the offender's debt to society and it aims to rehabilitate by offering inmates a period for self-reflection and training (although as discussed in chapter 6, security is currently prioritised over rehabilitation in prison regimes). Such quantification of time is unique to Western industrialised societies (Adam 1990) and the preoccupation with the control of time in prisons coincided with a general move towards its commodification in terms of labour. The construction of everyday life based on time was demanded by industry and resulted in the view of time as a resource, "that may be budgeted, wasted, allocated, sold or controlled" (Adam 1990:104). Waged labour demanded that the economics of time be formulated, which in turn facilitated the

calculation of a tariff of sentences in respect of particular crimes. Sewell and Wilkinson (1992) drew comparisons between the systems of surveillance that operated in the factory and the prison. Noting Mellossi and Pavarini's analysis of the relationship between the prison and factory, they conclude:

> "the concept of a corrective form of punishment based on the denial of liberty for a pre-determined period of time (formulated using an abstract notion of equal exchange between the crime in question and the extent of the period of incarceration), was not only coincident with, but inextricably related to, the development of the factory system and the rise of waged labour."
>
> (Sewell and Wilkinson 1992:272)

While the subject of time is rarely the explicit focus of theorists (cf. Adam 1990; 1995), Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration introduced time into macro theory through the concept of 'time-space distanciation'. Time-space distanciation' referred to the reproduction or "stretching of social systems across time and space" (Giddens 1984:377). Adam (1990) explained that while time is integrated into the key concepts of structuration theory, Giddens does not "pay any attention to the nature of time itself... and is content to utilise and adapt for his own purposes the conceptualisations of time by [other] theorists... [so that] in his contemporary re-working of the conceptions of human being and doing, social reproduction and transformation,

time therefore comes to be of central importance without ever being the explicit focus of his attention" (Adam 1990:10).

Structuration theory notes, "all social life occurs in and is constituted by, intersections of presence and absence in the 'fading away' of time and the 'shading off' of space" (Giddens 1984:132). The theory emphasises the role of the agent in the replication of social structures, where "the reproduction of institutionalised social practices is accomplished in and through the routine doings of knowledgeable human subjects" (Sparks et al 1996:73). The duality of structure is central to the theory of structuration. Action is vital in the reproduction of social structures, and because it is not necessarily constrained by structures, the agent possesses the capacity to effect change, as Giddens (1984:25) notes:

> "Structure is not to be equated with constraint but is both constraining and enabling. This, of course, does not prevent the structured properties of social systems from stretching away, in time and space, beyond the control of any individual actors. Nor does it compromise the possibility that actors' own theories of the social systems which they help constitute and reconstitute in their activities might reify those systems."

Structuration implicates time through the concept of rountinization, which is crucial in Giddens distinction between discursive and practical consciousness. Most individual action is not directly

motivated and we rely on routines to govern our daily activities (Bottoms 1993:85). Practical consciousness "consists of all the things which actors know tacitly about how to 'go on' in the contexts of social life without being able to give them discursive expression" (Giddens 1984: xxiii). It incorporates the things we do which are so automatic, we could not describe how we do them, an example used by Sparks et al (1996), is when a footballer scores a goal but cannot explain how he (she) does it. Such routines are vital "to the continuity of the personality of the agent, as he or she moves along the paths of daily activities, and to the institutions of society, which *are* such through their continued reproduction" (Giddens 1984:60).

Routines are central to life in prison and it took the inmates little time to become accustomed to the formal regime in Haverton. The inmates adjusted to the predictability of their daily lives, although the sameness of life in prison led many to view their sentence as 'time wasting'. Lawrence, serving a four-year sentence, described the sense of repetition. He overlooked any periods when the routine might be different, such as prison weekends when inmates were allowed out of their cells for longer periods, reflecting the extent the routines in prison made each day and night appear almost indistinguishable:

> I've got used to it [the regime in the prison], I mean in other jails they do association during the day and bang up at night [locked in cells], this jail it's association in the evening. When I was in my cell all day I was bored and used to sleep, but now I'm working... it's time wasting cos you don't do nothing, you do the same thing every day. You get up, go to work, eat, have a shower, work, association, bed and then get up in the morning and it's the same again. The same thing every day.

The sameness of prison life did have the advantage of making the inmates feel safe. Giddens highlights the importance of routines for maintaining 'ontological security' (a trust that the social and natural world is as it appears to be, Giddens 1984:375). Without routines the stress of making conscious decisions about every aspect of our daily existence would severely increase individual anxiety. By knowing what is likely to occur in the future we can make plans and be reasonably assured they will come to fruition. Therefore, ontological security is considerably undermined when routines are unexpectedly altered.

Nevertheless, prisons are only selectively routined. While inmates can guarantee with some certainty - the time they will wake; when they will work; when they will eat; and be allowed to associate with others - at other times their experiences are less predictable. Sudden changes in the regime, new rules, transfers to other wings or institutions and the behaviour of inmates and staff can threaten any

control they might be able to exercise over their lives (cf. Liebling 1999*b*). As Bottomley (1994:167) notes:

> "One of the most difficult aspects with which a prisoner has to cope and somehow come to terms is the all-pervasive perception and experience of *uncertainty*. At a day to day level, on the landings and in the workshops, there is an uncertainty and un-predictability of the behaviour of fellow prisoners (and prison staff) in a situation of enforced cohabitation and dependence."

It is a contradiction that inmates need to become adept at managing uncertainty (cf. Sapsford 1983) in an environment where the same thing occurs every day. However, the unpredictability of prison life and living with the enduring feeling that something might happen increased the stressful experience of custody for the inmates in my research. For example, Ian was serving a six-year sentence. His comments reveal his boredom with living in prison and at the same time the claustrophobic experience of prison life. Ian was very agitated with prison life in general. His comments reflect insecurities associated with living with the unknown:

> I get bored of the same place, day after day. I mean that's why it pisses me off being in jail cos I don't even like spending time in the same place when I'm out, people start getting under your skin. I'm not feeling all that nice... I want to kill someone to be quite honest with you; this place is just fucking me off. I'm sick up to here with it... Officers, a lot of them are back stabbing two faced bastards... [and] a lot of the prisoners are just fucked up. I mean when I first came here I didn't care

what people thought of me, I didn't have anything to prove to anyone in here, now I really want to hit them in the fucking face and before I was just willing to walk away. I'm getting agitated and restless being in the same place. I mean you can listen to this and it gets boring (refers to inmates shouting in the exercise yard outside the interview room), but when you have listened to it for ten months, it gets on your nerves.

Before exploring prison time further, some attention needs to be paid to the inmates' lives outside because the ability to cope in prison is related to inmates' ability to cope outside (cf. Zamble and Porporino 1988). Inmates who are poor copers and at risk in prison have usually experienced 'problem' lifestyles before custody (Liebling and Krarup 1993; Liebling 1999*b*). Many of my interviewees' lives before custody were highly unstructured, as they had left school early, been in care or had little experience of employment. Unstructured lives outside, like the highly structured prison environment, left the inmates with an abundance of free time. The following section explores inmates' descriptions of unstructured lifestyles outside prison and the relationship between life structure and drug use.

Living inside, lifestyles outside

Many young people find their time organised around family commitments, education and employment (Hendry et al 1993). The absence of formal structures, such as family stability, school and

employment, frequently left the inmates with an abundance of unstructured free time so that even outside, they were faced with the challenge of making an activity out of doing nothing (Corrigan 1979; Coffield et al 1986; Glassner and Loughlin 1987). Griffin (1993:132) notes how "the wealth of studies concerned with youth unemployment represented the latter [unemployment] as a form of enforced 'leisure', and young people's relationship to leisure was commonly articulated around the concept of 'delinquency' and 'deviance'". This association is further reinforced by studies that highlight delinquents 'disorganised, haphazard and unconstructive' management of unstructured time (West and Farrington 1977).

Criminal careers literature suggests a range of individual and social factors increase the risk of delinquency and reconviction. These include: hyperactivity; low intelligence; poor home environment and social circumstances; lack of parental supervision and family conflict; heavy use of drugs and alcohol (cf. West 1982; Sampson, and Laub 1993; Graham and Bowling 1995; Farrington 1996; Rutter et al 1998). The table below (table 3) outlines five of the key risk factors identified by the literature that were pertinent to my research.

Table 3: Risk factors and the inmates' backgrounds

Risk Factors	Analysis in Literature	Indications of risk factors amongst inmates in my research
Family background and parental ability to supervise.	Adverse family backgrounds, such as poor parental supervision, abuse, neglect and parental conflict have been associated with the onset of delinquency (Farrington 1996). Graham and Bowling (1995) note that young people living in single parent families and with step-parents were most likely to offend (57% young men compared to 42% in families with natural parents). However, the influence of family structure is *not significant* when the quality of relationships is taken into account (also see Sampson and Laub 1993). West (1982) noted that inadequate parental supervision was a key risk factor (32.3% became delinquent). Parental criminality almost doubled the risk of delinquency (51% whose fathers had criminal records were delinquent, compared with 24% whose fathers had no criminal convictions (West 1982:72). Time spent in local authority care can also exacerbate the risks associated with family upbringing, not least because many young people experience care because of a family breakdown (cf. Rutter et al 1998).	Twenty-one (70%) had parents who were divorced and separated. Generally, family contact was sporadic. Eighteen (60%) maintained regular contact with their mothers, while eleven (37%) had occasional contact. Nine (30%) had regular contact with their fathers. Of the thirty inmates I interviewed, 7 (23%) had parents with criminal convictions. Ten inmates (33%) had spent time in local authority care.
School Factors	Truancy and exclusion from school have been associated with delinquency, although it is not clear what specific factors associated with school (such as structure or relationships with teachers) are related to onset, Farrington 1996). In Graham and Bowling's study, 78% of males who truanted once a week committed crimes and there was a strong relationship between exclusion and offending. West (1982) also noted the importance of truancy and below average intelligence in the onset of delinquency (31.1% delinquent). Rutter et al (1998:233) note that as truancy increased the opportunities for misconduct, it is probably a contributory risk factor for delinquency.	Twenty-three inmates (77%) left school before they were sixteen, either because they were expelled or incarcerated before they completed their education. The absence of formal structures appeared to provide more time for offending and drug use.
Peer group influences	Peer group influences become more important as attachment to the family decreases (Graham and Bowling 1995). Socialising with a delinquent peer group can have an impact on offending behaviour, regardless of family or school based risk factors (Elliot et al 1985; Sampson and Laub 1993). Involvement with delinquent peer groups also influences persistence in offending (West 1982; Rutter et al 1998)	Peer groups were important facilitators of crime and drug use for many of the inmates both outside and inside prison
Average age of onset	The prevalence of offending peaks in the teenage years and then decreases in the early twenties (Farrington 1996). In the Cambridge study, the peak age for first conviction was 14 years old (West 1982). Graham and Bowling (1995) found the peak age of onset was 15 years old for both males and females (the mean age of onset was 13.5 years). This age was similar to the age of onset	28 of the 30 inmates discussed age of onset. The mean age of onset for offending was 12.6 years. The youngest inmate was 8, Nine inmates started offending between 11 and 12 years old. The oldest age

Average age of onset	for other anti-social behaviour such as truancy (14 years old) and drug taking (17 years old). Sampson and Laub's (1993) secondary analysis of the Glueck's research (conducted between 1930-1960) revealed that anti-social behaviour occurred early in the case of all 510 reformatory inmates. Rutter et al (1998) also concluded that early age of onset was associated with persistent rather than 'adolescent limited' delinquency. While West (1982) noted that early onset and high frequency of offending might be contributory factors in recidivism. Experiences in custody may also exacerbate risk factors, such as family contact and difficulties associated with employment, an important protective factor (Sampson and Laub 1993).	of onset was 15 (3 inmates). The average age of onset for drug use was 12.4 years. The youngest inmate was 8. Three inmates started using at 9. The majority of inmates (14) used drugs for the first time at 13 or 14. 12 inmates had previous experiences of custody and 8 inmates had been given non-custodial sentences. Of the 9 inmates who discussed their girlfriends, only two had maintained contact during their sentence. 6 inmates had previous experience of employment.
Drug and Alcohol use	While drug and alcohol use is increasingly widespread (Parker et al 1998a), persistent or regular use of drugs remain fairly uncommon (Shiner and Newburn 1997; Aldridge et al 1999). Heavy drinking and drug taking are associated with early onset of anti-social behaviour (Rutter et al 1998). Heavy drug use may increase the risk of crime because of the perceived link between the two behaviours. Nevertheless, the nature of the drug-crime link is complex and open to debate (see table 4 below and discussion in chapter 1)	Inmates' experiences of drugs outside prison varied. Many were poly drug users: 29 inmates discussed their drug use; 28 had used cannabis; 19 used ecstasy; 17 were crack users; 10 used amphetamines; 8 used heroin; 8 used LSD; 5 had used solvents and 2 used prescriptions drugs, such as temazepam (see chapter 3).

Although the criminal careers literature may offer significant benefits to the field of crime prevention and intervention (Farrington 1996), risk factors can have potentially negative effects too. Risk factors are usually associated with people living in poor, working class, marginalised areas, whose status already subjects them to labelling and 'othering' processes in society.

There is an implicit determinism inherent in much of the criminal careers literature which serves to reinforce the status of certain groups as 'outsiders'. The broader structural influences on offending are

ignored, along with the amplification effect that the criminal justice process has on offending. Identifying risk factors, such as low intelligence or hyperactivity (cf. Rutter et al 1998), also suggests crime is an individual problem. Young (1998) notes how exclusion from mainstream society leads to an 'out group' becoming the scapegoat for social problems. As a consequence, the problem of crime is individualised. Increasingly, the prison service has focussed on managing the risk that individual offenders pose (cf. Feeley and Simon 1994), resulting in incapacitation being prioritised to the detriment of rehabilitation (see chapter 6). Indeed, if the inevitability of involvement and persistence in crime by certain individuals, who share particular background characteristics is simply accepted, the potential for society and structures, such as schools and prison, to influence the onset and persistence of crime is not fully realised.

The criminal careers literature is dominated by quantitative studies which include longitudinal (West and Farrington 1972; 1977, West 1982), self-report methods (Graham and Bowling 1995) or secondary data analysis (Sampson and Laub 1993). These approaches have methodological problems. For example, assessing the causal impact of factors on delinquency is difficult because, as supported by my research, they tend to co-exist in the backgrounds of offenders (Utting

et al 1993). Farrington (1996) acknowledges that certain factors will be symptomatic of crime, while others will be causal. However, knowing which is which is more complex.

Interestingly, the criminal careers literature has tended to focus on the risk factors for crime, discussing in passing, the protective factors that influence conformity or desistence (cf. Sampson and Laub 1993; Graham and Bowling 1995; Farrall and Bowling 1999). However, little is known about how, or the extent to which personal and social protective factors moderate the risks associated with onset or persistence of delinquency (Stattin et al 1997).

Understanding the interplay between risk factors and crime was difficult in my research. My discussions with the inmates suggested their backgrounds influenced the process of delinquency, as it increased opportunities to commit crime and access drugs. However, I am uncomfortable exploring the young men I researched in terms of a series of background factors and seeing them as the cause of their offending. Clearly, their backgrounds influenced the opportunities and life chances available to them, but the causes of crime and drug use are complex. Therefore, while it is important to consider the background factors, they need to be located alongside their choices

and motivations and the broader structural context in which they operated (see discussion in chapter 7). The next section focuses on the inmates' family background, education and the area where they lived, to explore the impact the absence of formal structures had on their lifestyles. The chapter considers the relationship between unstructured time and drug use, focusing on an inmate case study.

Living unstructured lives

Jo (16) was one of twenty-three inmates who left school before he was sixteen. He was expelled from school at twelve years old:

> [I was expelled for] all different things, I chucked a cheese and pickle roll at the headmaster, I didn't mean to hit him it was an accident. I done that and set off a couple of fire alarms. I just did no work in class and I weren't allowed to go in for Maths, French, Music and Drama.

Jo had lived alone with his mother, but she was unable to cope with his behaviour after his expulsion. The local authority intervened and Jo was sent to a residential school during the week. When he returned at the weekends he moved between temporary sleeping addresses, staying with his mother or elder brother infrequently. His life was extremely unstructured and he spent much of his time with friends on the street. This situation appeared to increase the opportunity for

crime. Jo described this period in his life as a particularly 'mad time' when he was living on the edge:

> My mum sent me off to boarding school and that. I came back every weekend, stayed with friends and go out and all that. I dunno, it was kinda mad, then I suppose I started getting into a routine. I would just see something and go for it. Then I started to do big offices and shops and things like that and big houses.

Expulsion from school often exacerbated already unstructured lifestyles. Very few of the inmates in my research had any experience of employment, or other 'protective factors', for example supportive relationships or marriage, that are associated with desistence from crime (cf. Sampson and Laub 1993). A long history of anti-social behaviour, a difficulty with managing authority, a lack of formal education, a prison record and a history of drug use, meant most of my interviewees were either unemployable or were infrequently contracted into low status, temporary positions (West and Farrington 1977; Sampson and Laub 1993; Rutter et al 1998). Ethnographic studies outside prison demonstrate that offenders often find it difficult to access and structure their lives through legitimate employment. The few job opportunities that are available to them are unattractive, they do not fill their time and leave them with the need to find money

(Robins 1992; McAuley 2000). Phil's (21) experiences were typical in this respect

> When I left school I got a job as a teaching assistant, I worked in an infant school for about three or four months, cos I was so immature I couldn't get used to being in school and into another school with teachers again and five or six year olds. I still couldn't handle the fact of getting up everyday and going to work to earn £29.50. I thought bollocks, I'm not doing that and I jacked it in. Then my dad kicked me out cos I couldn't pay the rent, so I moved into a lodging house... one of my friends from school, well he wasn't my friend when we were at school, moved in... we met a dealer that lived just around the corner and at that time I was just getting into speed, speed, pot, drink, that's what I was doing then... then I'd help out down the market, unload vans, set up all the goods, sell, load up the vans again, get our wages, fuck off, buy the billy [speed], buy the booze and just go and get fucked up.

Consistent with much of the criminal careers literature, many inmates experienced some family disruption. Ten inmates spent some time in care either because a parent(s) felt unable to cope with disruptive behaviour, or because they had been victims of intra-family violence (6 cases in my research). Josh explained what happened to him after his parents separated:

> I've been in care since I was seven, cos my Dad left us and me Mum and me two sisters and me three brothers and he went away. I was about four or five. Me Mum met some bloke. My little sister, Cindy, she had long blonde hair and she was screaming for my Mum in a shop, like a proper little Mummy's girl. He [my Mum's boyfriend] picked her up by the hair cos she wouldn't stop screaming, cos he couldn't handle it. He

picked her up by the hair and he slapped her. After we was all put into care... it was just foster parents then.

Ironically, while being taken into care was intended to protect inmates, care thrusts young people into more unstructured and unstable environments that further inhibits effective discipline (cf. Hagell and Newburn 1994).

Parental supervision and relationships are regarded as key factors in delinquency (cf. West 1982; Sampson and Laub 1993; Graham and Bowling 1995; Farrington 1996). Many inmates reported family instability, lack of supervision or inadequate discipline. The inmates also suggested their parents had little or no knowledge about the extent of their offending behaviour. As Marc (17) explained:

> My mum has been in prison ... but my Dad has been in like six or seven times for fraud and stuff like that, selling cannabis, possession and robbery. The highest he got, that was for robbery and he got six years. If I don't see my Dad again, I don't really care. He don't really do nothing for me... [but] when I was out I saw my Mum every single day. She is always there but I saw my Dad twice every three years. My mum didn't know what was happening [when I was offending]. I write to her now though, when I write from prison, I tell her everything. I get told off at visits and she says "look what happened now, this is where you end up for doin all that"... At the time, when my mum was telling me off in the front room [of our house] I'd sit there and think I'll do nothing else again, I won't upset her for a while. But see when I got out of the front door and see my friends again I just forget that and I'd do something else. So it didn't make no sense her talking to me.

My dad now he'd tell me off loads, I'd sit there taking it all, then it'd come out this ear and I'd think, ahh, you're chatting shit... Like one time I was in the police station and I came out of the police station, I hadn't seen him [father] for a year or so... [but] he'd come to my house. He lectured me for about two or three hours, he talked to me long, I can't remember what he was talking about. I wasn't even listening really. As soon as he went, I went back outside.

High levels of crime and drug taking have long been associated with poor, working class areas (Chein et al 1964; Parker et al 1988; Social Exclusion Unit 1998) and many of the offenders in my study came from deprived, urban neighbourhoods where criminal and drug networks were readily available. Conducting research in prison made it difficult to gauge the impact of criminal neighbourhoods on behaviour because my research was conducted out of context and the inmates could not be observed outside in their natural setting. Nevertheless, the inmates suggested that where they lived was important. Hardeep, for example, described the area where he lived outside: "Like our area there are a lot of drugs and prostitution... when you're walking along a street corner you can buy anything from a gun to a fucking armoured car, if you've got the money."

The abundance of criminal opportunities and their association with particular neighbourhoods has a long tradition. For example, Shaw and McKay's work in Chicago in the 1920's demonstrated that when

offenders' residences were mapped, crime was concentrated within inner city areas (what Burgess described as the zone in transition) (Bottom and Wiles 1997).

Although area residence is an important factor in terms of criminal opportunities (Bottoms 1997), in my research drug use, crime and managing time became fundamentally interlinked. The inmates described their ritualistic use of cannabis after crime or weekend binges on crack, where time would seem to disappear. McAuley's (2000) ethnographic research on a public housing estate found that young people regularly used drugs to block out the reality of social exclusion and 'fill the void' created by highly unstructured and undirected lifestyles. Pearson (1987b) also explored the relationship between unemployment and heroin use, recognising how instability associated with the former might facilitate the latter. He noted the potential for drug use to structure addicts daily lives in the absence of formal life structures, as Pearson states (1987b:89)

> "On the one hand, daily routines of a heroin habit can be seen as a dismal compulsion from which the user cannot escape. But at the same time they offered people meaningful structure around which to organise their lives in an eventful and challenging way. In the absence of competing routines and structures of meaning and identity, such as might be supplied by work commitments, we can say that it will not only be more difficult to 'come off' and 'stay off' heroin by breaking out of

its routines and replacing them with alternative patterns of daily activity."

Faupel and Klockars (1987), in their study of 'hard core' heroin addicts, noted how life structure and availability of the drug affected patterns of drug use. Life structure was defined as the 'regular occurring patterns of daily domestic, recreational or criminal activity' (ibid:57). High life structure and availability, for example, a user who worked, or had a good income and free access to heroin, resulted in a stable drug using career. Alternatively, low life structure, characterised by unemployment, no money and no reliable dealer, resulted in street junkies who were more likely to engage in erratic crime to support their addiction.

In my research, John's (21) drug-crime career (table 4 below) reflected the relationship between life structure and drug use. While John's drug use and crime was extreme and not typical of the offenders in my research, his background clearly demonstrates the relationship between unstructured lifestyles, drugs and crime. John was a poly drug user. Each new drug he tried did not substitute the other drugs he used but were added to his repertoire until eventually he was using cannabis, ecstasy, crack, heroin and various prescription drugs. There were periods of relative calm in terms of John's drug use

and offending such as when he was in a relationship and had a guaranteed income through his drug dealing. Within the context of heavy drug use in these periods, John was coping, although his lifestyle quickly became exceptionally disordered and it was at these points that he committed his crimes.

John's experience highlights some important issues identified in the drugs literature. Introduced to illicit drugs at eleven by his friend (Glassner and Loughlin 1987), John's drug use and crime were closely related. As his drug use escalated, so did the seriousness of his offending (cf. Chaiken and Chaiken 1990; Cromwell et al 1991). Indeed, drugs and crime were inextricably linked in John's lifestyle, as even in the 'stable period', John was dealing drugs (cf. Walters 1994).

The relationship between structured lifestyles and patterns of drug use has interesting consequences when considering drug use in the prison context. While inmates faced a similar abundance of time inside and outside prison, the inmates' lives were necessarily structured in prison, and as discussed in chapter 3, this produced changes in the inmates' patterns of drug use, as prison became more of a 'dry time' in relation to the extent and frequency of drug use.

Table 4: The development of John's drug-crime career

Age	Drug use	Offending	Process
11 Years Old	**Cannabis** *Ongoing use throughout drug career* **Alcohol** *Consumption increased as drug use developed*	No offences self-reported	Was introduced to drugs by a friend. Highlights importance of access to drugs and peer introductions.
12 Years Old	**Acid** **Ecstasy** *Occasional use* Experimenting broad; lays foundation for ongoing poly drug use	Selling cannabis to friends. Expulsion from school and charged with possession of cannabis. Charged with carrying an offensive weapon (knife) Crime focussed on stealing car stereos	Opportunity to make money increased. Access to drugs meant John could sell on and introduce others. Other crimes were opportunistic for small returns. Typical of many of the inmates' early offending.
13 Years Old	**Crack, Heroin** *Tried once*	Met a dealer who introduced him to new drugs. Worked for the dealer, where he was responsible for cutting cannabis to sell. Burglaries increased and opportunistic crime continued. Arrested for attempted burglary; case dropped.	Dealer increased access to cannabis and other drugs. Dealer was much older. Facilitated access to further drug networks (see Forsyth et al 1992). Drug use was increasing and gradually, frequency of crime increased (see Chaiken and Chaiken 1990). Crimes continued to be opportunistic and not planned.
14 Years Old	**Crack use** *through the dance and club scene. Often replaced use of Ecstasy.* **Heroin use** *increased, mainly smoking*	Dealing Drugs	As drug use proliferated, dealing was the most profitable crime. Generally, the returns were high, so other, more opportunistic crimes decreased, suggesting some choice was involved in selecting which crimes to commit. (cf. Felson 1994)
15 Years Old	Drug use continued	Dealing continued, although other crimes reduced.	John met his girlfriend, also a drug user. His income from dealing increased and he had relatively stable source of money to support his habit and lifestyle.
16 Years Old	**Prescription drugs - Temazepam** *was using drugs when committed current offence*	Possession of firearm because of own dealing. Involved in the robbery of other drug dealers. Life sentence (murder).	John's relationship dissolved. His offending increased and his level of drug use was very high. Committed an armed robbery and shooting.

Prison differs from outside because it offers "inescapable problems rather than difficulties which can be attacked, dealt with or avoided" (Toch 1992:43) and being in prison can be a stressful experience.

Toch (1977; 1992), for example, describes a number of prison stress factors, including the management of time, the potential for violence and being crowded with little space for privacy and introspection. Liebling (1992; 1999*b*) also refers to prison-induced stress, such as withdrawal from drugs and alcohol and general difficulties of adjustment to prison life, noting how they exacerbate individual vulnerabilities (and generally poor coping skills) and increase the risk of prison suicide and self-harm.

Prison altered the inmates' perspectives and experiences of time. Therefore, some account needs to be taken of how prison life is structured and how inmates coped with time. The next section explores the relationship between the nature of structured time in custody and the inmates' drug use, which has not been discussed in the literature on drug use in prison before. I consider the phenomenon of prison time, the inmates' subjective experiences of time and the strategies they employed to help them pass time.

Time the same all over? The phenomenon of prison time

To discuss prison time as conceptually distinct from time experienced outside institutions suggests that the experience of prison time is

quantifiably different. The pervasiveness of time in our everyday lives means that its importance has become taken for granted. As Adam (1990:9) notes: "[Time] is everywhere yet eludes us. It is so deeply implicated in our existence that it is almost invisible." Time is generally experienced at the level of 'practical consciousness' (we know it exists but it is rarely discussed). Generally, our time is controlled by the routines of work, education or other daily activities. Indeed, to return to structuration theory, all time is structured to varying degrees by the routines of daily life and when agents do want to act consciously, their actions are constrained. Giddens (1984) identified three principal forms of constraint: physical, where the individual is constrained by the limitation of their own body; power, where the individual is deterred from action because of the threat of punishments; and structural constraint, where the individual may refrain from action after considering the potential social impact of their behaviour (Bottoms 1993:86). Perhaps this should lead us to examine what is really meant by 'free time'. However, structuration theory might overstate the importance of routines that are regularly broken, sometimes for legitimate reasons (such as illness), or simply to have fun (for example not taking children to school on their birthday).

When the control of time becomes more overt and oppressive, the experience of time moves from 'practical' to 'discursive' consciousness and becomes the explicit focus of attention. Therefore, we become conscious of time when it is problematic, for example, when we have too much (and are bored) or too little time (and are stressed). In prison, time does not pass unconsciously, hence the expression 'doing time'. As Meisenhelder notes (1985:54): "prison time is a burden that must be made to flow or that can be simply waited on by the prisoner. Unconnected to future possibilities, prison time seems strangely jerky and discontinuous". Meisenhelder's comment begins to explain why the inmates in my research regularly alluded to their experience of time. Galtung (1961:113) suggests this response is not unusual amongst prisoners:

> "Time becomes essential and so important that it is almost considered a thing, concrete and materialised... Detailed calculations as to the amount of time left, and meditation on how time could have been spent... certainly are not bed-time reflections only or once an hour thoughts. Concern for time seems to be an almost constant and painful *state-of-mind*."

Changes in the experience of time can be witnessed in other environments aside from prisons, for example in factory employment (cf. Linhart 1978) or among terminally ill patients (Adam 1995). Despite the vast differences between the experience of patients and

the inmates in my research, there were broad similarities in how they conceptualised time. For both, time offered a period for self-reflection and the past, present and future assumed a new relevance. A patient interviewed by Adam (1995) eloquently described the inescapable pressure of time that was also experienced by the inmates in my research

> "Time assumes a different meaning. Time is the passage of phases and interludes until it all stops... In hospital you live on a diet of regimented time. Nothing else exists outside it. The only way you survive is to submit to it. Knowing your illness is important - you cannot compromise it. Your acceptance of what they have to offer has to be conscious choice... Daytime is positive in its distancing quality. Night-time, in contrast, is reaffirmation of everything that is internalised... Night-time enforces a one-to-one relation: you and your conscience, your consciousness, your unconscious, your reality... Time for me used to mean action and action is excitement. Today time is awareness, comfortableness and memory."
> (Brian, cancer patient quoted in Adam 1995:56)

Another feature of prison time identified by Galtung (1961) was the different experience of time intervals where "a month may be an ocean of time and a lost moment for one prisoner but not for others" (ibid. 1961:114). Toch (1977) notes that the psychological experience of time as either long or short affects the impact of prison as punishment, where a slow experience of time can increase the burden of a sentence while time that passes quickly can undermine its deterrent effect. Various experiences of time passing reveals how

"there is no single time, only a multitude of times which interpenetrate and permeate our daily lives" (Adam 1995). Time proceeds at various rates, for example, consider day dreaming when time appears to fly, or listening to a long, mundane lecture, where the passage of time appears to slow down. The variety of time has been overlooked because 'clock time' is taken as the framework for understanding the experience of time, as research by Galtung (1961) and Meisenhelder (1985) demonstrates. Clock time is important but it is not always a priority, as Adam (1995:12) notes:

> "The times expressed through everyday language tend to remain isolated from various parameters and boundaries through which we live *in* time. Matters of timing, sequencing and prioritising stay disconnected from collective time structures, and these in turn form the rhythms, the transience and the recursiveness of daily existence."

Inmate perspectives on time

In my research the inmates' conception of time was influenced by their long sentences of three years to life. The growth in retributive approaches to crime control in recent years has shifted the functions of prisons away from rehabilitation to incapacitation with an increased emphasis on managing risk (Feeley and Simon 1994). Within this increasingly punitive context, the use of mandatory life sentences and a general increase in sentence lengths has resulted in a gradual rise in

the number of long-term prisoners in the prison system (cf. Morgan 1997, also see discussion in chapter 6).

The care of long-term prisoners is complex. Some understanding of the impact their sentence has on their lives and relationships is necessary (cf. Sapsford 1978), alongside management strategies to deal with concerns around security and control that arise due to the seriousness of their offences (cf. Bottoms and Light 1987; Bottomley 1994). When comparing the experiences of prisoners in custody in the Netherlands to those incarcerated in England and Wales, Downes (1988) noted that rather than measuring experiences by the length of punishment, its 'depth' should be explored by comparing conditions of confinement and the extent of deprivation. Arguably, the length of time exposed to such conditions will affect how the 'depth' of punishment is experienced and the extent an inmate is institutionalised (cf. Sapsford 1983).

In Haverton, the inmates I interviewed were preoccupied with time and calculating the impact their sentence would have on the rest of their lives. Elory had received a four-year sentence for robbery. While he accepted that he deserved his sentence because he had committed the crime, in our interviews he only discussed the actual

time he had to serve (two years) and rationalised this time on the basis of incapacitation; if he was in prison, he could not be committing more serious offences outside which might attract an even longer sentence:

> Now if I'm gonna do bird, I'm making sure I'm gonna get something, I'm making sure I get something [from crime] for it. I don't wanna be sitting in my cell with my spars [friends] thinking... oh shit I'm doing bird for nothing. I mean I'm in jail, fair enough, but I went through with it (the crime), do you know what I mean? To me jail ain't nothing, right, cos it's a holiday, cos like if anything, it'll do me good. Cos on road [outside] now I mean I'm walking around, things goin wild, d'you know what I mean? I came in here, in jail now, OK, I got two years, I got the time [the sentence], right, I'm only twenty, right. I'll be twenty one in June, I'll get out, I'll be just gone twenty two. Yeah, I mean fair enough, it's a couple of years off your life, whatever. Like within two years [outside] I could've gone on [committing crimes], not got caught and then get caught for something stupid. You know, I'm coming to jail gettin four, not doin four, doin two [if I came later] I'm gettin like ten, twelve and if I'm gettin twelve, I'm doin ten.

Elory's comments reveal his struggle to rationalise and come to terms with his sentence. In reality, a prison sentence is unlikely to prevent further and more serious offending because offenders often focus on the potential rewards of offending and rarely consider getting caught or the legal consequences of their behaviour when deciding to commit crime (Wright and Decker 1994; Shover 1996). However, Elory's comments are not unexpected, as Shover goes on to note (1996:164):

> "Imprisonment is one of the most important accelerants of the rationalization of crime, the process by which offenders

transform it into a somewhat more calculated affair than it is for most juveniles. Imprisonment promotes criminal rationalization, because, in clarifying previously inestimable variables in the offender's criminal calculus, it also transforms it. By familiarising offenders with the definitions and penalty tables at the heart of the criminal code, imprisonment promotes a keener awareness of the potential cost of criminal behaviour and a more clearly articulated understanding of the price of crime."

(Shover 1996:164)

Others inmates also coped with their sentence by not seeing it as part of their lives but 'a couple of years off it'. Their sentences became a 'time vacuum'. Ericson (1975) explained that as inmates realise the 'meaninglessness' of prison, they adopt an inmate identity that involves engaging in various forms of deviance in prison. However, the inmate prison identity is temporary and serves to protect their personal identity while they were serving their sentence (Ericson 1975: 206). The inmates in my research adopted a similar stance in relation to time. By developing a prison persona, they were able to suspend their outside identity, minimising the impact and ageing effect their sentence would have on the rest of their lives. Ian, serving a six-year sentence, described this process

Say I'm gonna live to be seventy and I do four years of this prison sentence yeah, when I leave here I'll be twenty three, no, I'm gonna be nineteen, more mature than most nineteen year olds. They're just prolonging my life cos I will be seventy four rather than seventy.

The inmates' ages, all between sixteen and twenty-one years, may have influenced their perspectives and made mentally discarding these years off their lives easier. The ageing process itself increases awareness of time, making it more precious and the inmates had yet to reach this stage. Farber (1944) suggested there was a relationship between age and the extent inmates suffered in prison. In his study, young inmates (below twenty-six years of age) and old inmates (over fifty-five years of age), coped better with prison than the middle aged group (twenty-seven years to fifty-four years of age). The middle group were described as 'desperate [with] life slipping by'. While the young group "were relatively sanguine - life lies ahead, they will still be young when they get out. The prison term is merely a temporary marking of time before they begin the exciting business of life outside" (Farber 1944:175). However, Sapsford (1978) noted five principal changes in long sentence prisoners that occurred independent of inmates' age (the study did not include lifers under 17 and over 49, as they did not experience problems typical of long sentence prisoners). The changes included a reduction in future time perspectives; a tendency to think about the past; becoming increasingly introverted and more institutionalised; and a reduced involvement with the outside world.

A futureless time?

Prison time could be described as futureless, characterised by waiting and 'sameness' (Meisenhelder 1985; Brown 1998), it is 'empty and endless' (Sapsford 1983:76). Arguably, maturation of the young offenders in my research was not demanded as they passed through their sentence because their future time in prison would be broadly the same as the present. Prison potentially alters inmates' future perspectives because for the duration of their sentence, their future is laid before them. As Galtung (1961:115) notes:

> "A prisoner with a short time-perspective before incarceration finds himself in a situation where the perspective is elongated, thus, we presume, bringing the reality of the sentence to his constant awareness. Secondly the future becomes uniformly like the present, which again becomes a copy of the past. *Regularity means predictability*, and predictability has two sides to it. It leaves out, after an initial training period, the possibility that situations filled with ambiguity, uncertainty, and threat may arise. It also leaves out the possibility of new challenges, and unknown and unexplored possibilities."

While time continued for the inmates in terms of their day-to-day routines, time stood still in terms of the development of the rest of their lives. Andy powerfully described this. At only eighteen years old, he was coming to terms with an indeterminate life sentence. Initially he found it difficult to grasp the gravity of his sentence and

when I asked him how he felt after hearing he was to serve HMP (Her Majesty's Pleasure), he said:

> I felt gutted innit, for my mum and dad. I was laughin really. I wasn't trying to commit suicide or anythin, I was trying to see the funny side, that way you get through it... when I got life, I thought sweet, I'll be out in ten years. I come here and they said you won't be out in ten years. Nine years you go to parole, then you got cat B and out in twelve or thirteen years.

Andy was convinced his forthcoming appeal would overturn his murder conviction and therefore he did not feel it was necessary to fully consider the consequences of his sentence and he discussed it as a period disconnected from the rest of his life. His comments powerfully describe what Meisenhelder (1985) referred to as the 'futureless' nature of prison time:

> I won't grow up, time stops dead in jail, don't it? You're doin the same thing every day, livin the same life every day, so there is no need to grow up. When I get out I'll still be a seventeen year old, I'll be thirty odd when I get out, but still doin things that a seventeen year old would be doin... I don't think I've grown up, I think I've got more clued up, you don't grow up mate, it's all fun and games innit... time stops dead [in jail]. (Andy)

The length of the inmates' sentences probably inhibited their future perspectives of time because before they could do anything else with their lives, they had to get through their time (cf. Sapsford 1983). However, the inmates generally had some difficulty in developing a

long-term perspective and, if anything, the length of their sentences forced them to look into their future lives more than they had ever done before. This highlights a fundamental difference between the inmates' time perspectives in prison and outside. Outside inmates' lives were principally concerned with short-term gain and immediate gratification (cf. West and Farrington 1973, 1977; West 1982; Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990). For example, the inmates rarely planned their offences or invested the proceeds of their crimes for the future but used the proceeds to fund a hedonistic lifestyle focussed on short-term needs, such as drugs and clothes (cf. Wright and Decker 1994). Indeed, not looking into the future and not thinking about their lives after prison were crucial coping strategies that helped the inmates come to terms with time in prison.

Coping with prison and managing time

Considerable research offers some insight into the stressful experiences of prison (cf. Liebling 1999*b* for overview). While studies in prison sociology have emphasised the pains of deprivation (cf. Sykes 1958), research has suggested that inmates adopt a range of strategies to ensure they cope with life in prison. Zamble and Porporino (1988) highlight the extent to which an inmate's ability to

cope in prison is a correlate of their ability to cope outside and poor coping is generally related to a lack of activity, a lack of stability and long-term planning that was evident in the backgrounds of the inmates in my research. Other qualitative studies have aimed to understand the subjective experience of inmates, their identity and behaviour in prison (Ericson 1975) and the changes that occur in their behaviour over time (Sapsford 1978; 1983).

Liebling (1999*b*) notes that a lack of agreement about the stress of incarceration reveals much about the methodology of prison studies and their failure 'to ask the right questions' in exploring inmates' experiences of custody. The flexibility afforded by my methodology gave the inmates the opportunity to communicate their experiences of time in prison and in one sense, I experienced time with them as I interviewed them over a period of nine months. A grounded theory approach revealed the importance of understanding the function of drug use in relation to time in the prison context. While passing time was not a primary motivation for using drugs inside, when inmates did use them, it helped them to cope with prison time.

It's my sentence and I'll sleep when I want to!

As I outlined in chapter 3, the inmates in my research rarely sought stimulant drugs in Haverton, preferring to use cannabis because it helped them to sleep and relax. As Lawrence suggested at the start of the chapter (see earlier discussion), sleeping was not considered to be time wasting because when the inmates were sleeping, time which was consciously experienced in prison, became unconscious again (Meisenhelder 1985). Drugs offered an escape, a 'mindscape' (Cohen and Taylor 1976:129), where the inmates, unable to change their physical surroundings, sought to 'slip away from reality'. Cannabis made time appear effortless, as Craig (21) who was serving a seven-year sentence described:

> With cannabis you can smoke it at night time and it makes you get your head down, it makes me relaxed and makes me fall asleep. The way I look at it is it makes time go faster, cos there are times when you can't sleep and that.

Martin, serving four years, agreed that drug use helped to fill the days when there was nothing else to do:

> That's the reason you smoke it, you just conk out, go to sleep, quick and wake up the next morning. But if you don't have anythin to smoke, you just lay up and get bored and read books and the day goes long and drowsy. If you smoke cannabis in the day yeah, the day whizzes through.

The sedative effect of both cannabis and heroin explains why the inmates described them as prison drugs, as Ian, serving six years and a heroin user outside and on remand explained:

> Heroin is a prison drug really, cos on the out I was using it, but not to use it then off to sleep, I was using it to get that warm feeling inside and then goin out and doin things. Then [on remand], well everywhere in there, there was heroin, y'know what I mean? It just makes time fly, you take heroin it could be two 'o' clock and you won't go to sleep but then you look at your watch, the next thing it's eight. Time had just passed and it don't even feel like five minutes. I mean then you take a little more and you talk to your next door neighbour and you think you're half way through your sentence and your next door neighbour is fucked as well, and you look at your watch and it's four in the morning... time just flies by, so heroin is definitely a prison drug

In a recent teaching session I conducted with prison mangers, a governor of a women's establishment explained that many young female inmates were taking prescribed drugs to help them sleep. This highlights the potential similarity between the motivations for using illicit and prescription drugs. The young women may have opted to use prescribed sedatives because they were more accessible, although further research on drug use and supply in different prison settings is needed to explore these issues.

The fact that drugs helped the inmates to sleep explained why night time was the favoured time (although by no means the only time) for using. Prison nights presented the inmates with a range of opportunities and risks (most prison suicides occur at night, Liebling 1999*b*). Fewer staff on the wings after association meant there was a lower risk of getting caught or being approached about drug use in cells. However, my interviewees described the nights as a difficult time because they were alone with their thoughts and fears. It was also the time when there was little else to divert their attention, as all but one inmate in my study was in a cell on his own, and while they did call to their friends in nearby cells, it was against the rules and did not continue all night.

Given the difficulties of prison time, drugs (mainly cannabis) were crucial to provide inmates with an escape that helped them to cope with their sentence. Liebling (1992; 1999*b*) suggests drug and alcohol misuse before custody are evidence of poor coping and have been found to increase inmates' vulnerability to suicide alongside a range of other factors, such as poor interaction with inmates and little contact outside prison. However, the experiences of inmates in my research suggests cannabis use in prison might be a protective factor by helping

inmates to overcome other vulnerabilities associated with suicide in prison such as boredom, periods of inactivity and sleeping problems.

While smoking cannabis helped the inmates to pass prison nights, they were faced with days, weeks, months and years to pass. The alternative to drug use and killing time by sleeping was to mark time and invest time using the regime.

Marking time

The inmates adapted elements of the regime to act as markers to track the passage of their sentence (cf. Cohen and Taylor 1972). Roth (1963) and Calkins (1970) both discuss methods of 'marking time' employed by long-term patients whose experiences are comparable to the inmates in my study. In both cases, the 'sentence' can be undefined and there are limited opportunities to fill time. Calkins (1970) describes how to structure their otherwise directionless time, hospital patients organised their days around their favourite television programmes. Roth (1963) noted how patients divided blocks of time into more manageable intervals. The dividing points provided reference markers so that patients could gauge their progress. The studies by Roth and Calkins only conceptualise time as clock time, a

quantity (Adam 1990). However, understanding how time can be budgeted offers an insight into the techniques of time management adopted by the inmates in my study.

Ordering canteen, meal times, work, education, association time, showers and even interviews with me were ways of demarcating prison time. However it was crucial that inmates did not look too far ahead, as this appeared to slow the passage of time. Rather, they focussed on the day-to-day routines. Tony, for example, serving a four-year sentence, rejected visits because they had to be arranged some weeks in advance and to look forward to something made time harder to pass. He also explained how the organisation of the canteen system speeded up the passage of time:

> I used to be getting regular visits, but recently I haven't been sending out the VOs [visiting orders], cos I know if I'm waiting for a visit, time goes slow, so I leave it for a little while and send them out after a few months and have some for a few weeks or something... I come here and time goes fast, it's the way they done things. On Monday you get your canteen form and on Friday you get your canteen and then on Monday you get your form again, it makes it go fast, like you get your canteen, then you get your form, that makes it go fast, little things like that.

The similarities between prison time and labour time are evident as workers use similar techniques of time manipulation. For example, in

his participant observation of working in a car factory, Linhart (1978) described the process of 'going up line'. Workers would work further ahead to accumulate time or would deliberately slip back on their work to overcome monotony by placing themselves under pressure to complete their tasks. However, both inmates and workers were powerless to influence the regime in real terms. The techniques only offered the illusion that time was passing more quickly.

In my research, there was also some evidence of the inmates structuring their days around their use of drugs. Inmates who did not work or were on basic regime, sometimes used drugs to demarcate their days as Derek described:

> When I wake up I'll have a nice one [cannabis spliff] before breakfast, then if I work, I'll take it to work and have one, then a couple over dinner, then back to work and then a little one over that break and association and then later another five or four. When you're out of your cell you can't really stop to do it. I mean if they had you doin things all day long, it'd be all right cos you wouldn't be able to do it

Derek's regular drug use in Haverton was related to his inactivity, as for most of the research he was unemployed. Another inmate, Neil, also increased his drug use when he was locked in his cell all day while on basic regime. This highlights the complex impact the programme of incentives and earned privileges had on the level of

inmates' drug use. While the enhanced wing offered extra privileges, the offenders I interviewed did not consider these to be attractive enough for them to move to a drug free environment (see further discussion in chapter 6). Furthermore, the impact of the basic regime was limited as some inmates used more cannabis when they were inactive and locked in their cells for most of the day (as they were on the basic regime).

Other inmates also used drugs during the day when they had the opportunity. Inmates, such as Elory, enjoyed cannabis at association time when he was relaxing. Both Tom and Kevin worked in the prison gardens and explained that because they were relatively unsupervised they could smoke cannabis in the sunshine.

Investing time

The inmates' behaviour and attitudes towards time changed over the course of our three interviews. This highlighted the usefulness of my methodological approach that offered a longer term view of the inmates' experiences of drug use in custody. The influence of sentence stages on 'prisonised' behaviour has been explored through the 'imprisonment curve' (cf. Wheeler 1961). Wheeler (1961)

revealed that during their sentence, inmates move from pro-social to anti-social phases, where 'the inmates social distance from external reference groups was greatest' (Morris, Morris 1963:182). Wheeler (1961) suggests, as inmates neared the end of their sentence, they revert back to the pro-social phase in preparation for release. While Wheeler's study has been criticised for being too general in terms of the social changes that occur and how the institution influences behaviour (Atchley and McCabe 1968), it highlighted the need for some longitudinal perspective of prison behaviour.

Meisenhelder (1985) applied the 'curve' principle to the passage of time, noting how in the early 'unsocialised' phase, when the inmate had first entered the prison, time passed slowly. In the middle 'socialised' phase, the inmate became focused on the institution and gradually withdrew from the world outside (cf. Goffman 1961; Cohen and Taylor 1972; Sapsford 1983). They socialised with other inmates and the passage of time appeared to speed up. Jo's experiences during the later stages of his sentence supported this 'curved effect':

> I've only got about eight months left. I feel like I'm on a downer for a bit now, d'you know what I mean? The first half of the sentence took the longest... like 18 months, the first nine months was up hill but as soon as I hit nine months it was all downhill... Now I'm on the second half it's seeming to go quicker now. I think it's cos I'm out of double figures, it seems

small now, d'you know what I mean?.. I'm in my cell and think when I get out, but I think I'm planning too far ahead... I know when I get out things are not going to be as good as it should be or I expect it to be.

Other inmates shared similar fears about life back on the streets, as Marc said: "When I come out of here I want to go and get a job, but it's gonna be hard... I want to remember how scary prison was, I don't want to come out of here thinking that went quick or that was easy, I want to say I'm scared, so I don't come back."

A fear for the long-term prisoner is that the mundane regime dulls the senses and forces the onset of a 'prison mentality', where the inmate physically and mentally deteriorates (Cohen, Taylor 1972; Sapsford 1983). Investing in the regime alleviated this fear and helped inmates to come to terms with 'time wasting'. By making their sentence purposeful, described as 'gleaning' by Irwin (1970), some of the inmates were able to justify their sentence by regarding it as a period of self-improvement. Rajiv was serving a six-year sentence. His comments offer an insight into his anxiety about putting his sentence to good use. He wanted to prevent his mind from deteriorating, or as he described it 'going away':

> I think cos I've got such a long bird, when people have got a
> short bird, all they're thinking about is when they come out and

what they are gonna do but cos I've got such a long bird, I've got to plan out these years cos I know I've got to do them properly. If I don't use them properly then I'm gonna waste them and coming out, my mind is going away. That's why I want to keep up with my studies, so when I come out I can just carry on. In jail, time flies so quickly you wouldn't believe it, you're just lying down and reading the paper and thinking and then it's 12, 1 and if you don't use that time to study, them I'm fucked. I have got to use that time [in my cell] or else I'm fucked, cos I haven't got any other time to study.

Elory's comments reveal a similar anxiety towards mental deterioration. He said: "I got two years now, y'know I can do exams or whatever, just to keep my brain active. When I come out there, I'll be stronger, mentally stronger and I'm not gonna make the same mistakes." While prison education programmes provide inmates with access to qualifications and opportunities, research also suggests prison is less likely to prevent re-offending compared to social training programmes delivered in the community that take some account of the risk classification of the offender (McGuire and Priestley 1995).

Aside from relieving the stress of deterioration, simply being active by working, using the gym or going to education, removed the onerous abundance of time. Cohen and Taylor (1976), using the example of prison work, explain how inmates can use the regime as a 'mental escape' from confinement. Instead of not thinking about work or distancing themselves from it, inmates must accept the monotony,

acknowledging how it is useful to help them pass the time. Consequently, inmates in prison seek jobs however menial. Certainly, involving themselves in the regime appeared to speed the passage of time for inmates in my research, as Marc, serving a three-year sentence described:

> Here you've got education and gym. At the weekend you come out for two hours, have lunch and come back for a couple of hours and then it's bang up and that's easy. Time goes more quickly like that. [On remand] you're in your cell all day and come out for an hour, that's bad. You can't come out when the sun is shining outside and you're banged up for the whole twenty three hours, the day just drags on.

Such adaption to the regime might be anticipated over time and may reflect the extent to which inmates had been institutionalised (Sapsford 1983). For example, Toch et al (1989) in their study of coping in prison, noted that maladaptive behaviour was most extreme amongst young, long-term inmates but improved over the course of imprisonment:

> "Prison misbehaviour is a manifestation of youth; it peaks during early phases of imprisonment but it mostly does so for younger inmates and particularly so for younger inmates who serve longer terms in prison. Young inmates maladapt more frequently, but improve with the experience of prison. The longer the imprisonment, the greater the improvement (except for seriously disturbed or 'chronics') but, the greater also the inmates' age"
>
> (Toch et al 1989:251).

It is difficult to discern how far the changes in behaviour are a result of imprisonment or maturation and Toch et al (1989) do not explore the influence inmates' own motivations have on changes in their behaviour over time. The inmates in my research accepted there were occasions when conformity to the regime was more rewarding than confrontation – they played the game (for further discussion see chapter 6). Ironically, the inmates used the very structures that confined them to help them to overcome the boredom and frustration their confinement induced. To return to the comparison with labour, a similar instrumental and calculative involvement with the organisation has been found in industrial settings (cf. Goldthorpe et al 1968).

The inmates' instrumental approach to the prison regime sometimes extended to decisions to desist from cannabis use when the risk of using was considered too high. For example, Dela, Jo and Martin were more reluctant to smoke cannabis, fight or disobey orders as they neared release and did not want their departure to be delayed with the burden of extra days. Dela's calculations of his release date and the extra days he planned to get back for good behaviour had led him to stop smoking cannabis to ensure any test result would be negative:

I'm goin for days back. I'm not actually [due] out for six weeks, so if I got a positive [test result], I would've got extra days and they would've scrapped my days back so I wouldn't be out for two and a half months. I would've been back to square one...I wasn't goin to smoke, not so close to getting out. It's not worth it, is it? I should've been out now, a couple of weeks after I first saw you. I mean some days I think I should've woken up at home.

Dela's decision not to use cannabis as he neared release reflected a cost/benefit calculation of the risk of using versus benefit of using. As Dela had little time left to serve, passing the time was not as onerous and cannabis became less important. As I discussed in chapter 3, there is evidence to suggest that inmates make strategic drug choices in prison and it was not unusual for them to modify their behaviour in the short term. Decisions to desist were related to the context of inmates' drug use and were motivated by immediate wants, such as release or transfer to another prison. As Tom, serving a four-year sentence explained: "I haven't smoked for a while now. I don't want to go back on closed visits and my only aim is to get to Huntercombe (another young offenders' institution), whatever happens from there, we'll see."

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the relationship between time, coping and drug use which is not discussed in previous research on drug use in

prison. The value of a qualitative, unstructured methodology that utilised grounded theory is evident, as I had not appreciated the importance of time and its relationship to drug use in prison before starting my research. The chapter highlights the importance of considering the prison context and how it influenced the inmates' patterns of drug and their motivations for using. However, the relationship between drug use and time in my research may be contextual as I interviewed long-term young offenders. Further research is needed to develop our understanding of the relationship between time and drug use amongst short-term, remand and adult prisoners.

Exploring the inmates' lifestyles and patterns of drug use outside prison suggests some association between unstructured time, offending and drug use. Indeed the absence of formal structures, such as family stability, school and employment in the lives of the inmates outside, created an abundance of time similar to that created by the prison context. However, I argue the inmates' perspectives of time in prison was influenced by the controlled nature of time that caused it to be consciously experienced. Whilst not the primary motivation for drug use in prison, the sedative effect of cannabis helped the inmates to cope with long periods of inactivity in their cells. Other coping

strategies included avoiding future planning and marking time and the inmates sometimes marked their days by using drugs. Interviewing the inmates three times highlighted the value of longitudinal methods, as the inmates' attitudes and behaviour changed during the early stages of their sentence. Finally, the chapter explored inmates' perspectives of time over the course of the three interviews in my research. The inmates became increasingly instrumental in their approach to the regime and recognised that investing in the regime would help them to pass their time. Their instrumental approach and changing time perspectives also influenced attitudes towards drug taking and the inmates would stop smoking drugs to achieve short-term goals such as early release or transfers to other prisons. The next chapter discusses drug supply in Haverton, the inmate culture and its relationship to the drug market in the prison.

CHAPTER 5

GETTING DRUGS INSIDE!
Drug supply and the inmate subculture

The last chapter focussed on the relationship between drug use and coping with prison time. This chapter explores the routes of drug supply into Haverton Young Offenders' Institution. The discussion distinguishes between external routes, via visits with family and friends, and internal routes of supply. Internal supply routes relied on the organisation of the inmate culture that was dominated by a gang called the Red-Strip Posse, known as the RSP. The organisation of the gang, their origins and the impact they had on drug supply, drug culture and levels of violence in the prison are examined.

Trafficking Drugs: supply and meeting the drug demand

Turnbull et al (1994:18), in their study of forty-nine drug users recently released from custody, noted that drug supply in prison is maintained by an ongoing interplay between individual and institutional sources. Turnbull et al's study distinguished between external and internal access routes when identifying six methods of supply: drugs bought in directly from outside; a reciprocal exchange

relationship; an altruistic offer of drugs; the internal market which involves a direct exchange of drugs for goods, money or services; a mediated exchange involving a third party acting as a runner; and finally an exchange inside which is mediated externally. Despite the multitude of access methods available, visits were vital because any subsequent borrowing, exchanging and sharing relied on an adequate flow of drugs into the institution.

The inmates I interviewed described their visits with family and friends as the primary source of drug supply. Inmates were entitled to a visit every two weeks, or once a week if they were on the enhanced regime wing. Visits took place mid-week and over the weekend. Weekends were the favoured time for passing over drugs as inmates knew staffing levels were lower and it was rare for mandatory drug tests to be carried out at the weekends. Inmates appeared to find it relatively easy to get their visitors to bring cannabis into Haverton, and as members of their close family and friends often used drugs themselves, they had little problem accessing them outside. Inmates rarely regarded the request for drugs as coercive, as Marc said when I asked if anyone would bring cannabis into the prison for him:

> I don't even have to ask them, they know to bring it, like when my girl or my friends come they'll just give it to me and I don't have to ask... my mum would bring it [if I asked her] but not my dad really, he smokes it but he wouldn't bring it though.

It was difficult to establish how or whether pressure was placed on family and friends to traffic drugs. Although Jan, a female main grade officer, described her experience of catching an inmate's sister bringing drugs into the prison. The woman said she was afraid and had felt pressured into bringing the cannabis after her brother had organised for his friends to deliver the drug to her home:

> Basically there is this lad, usually it's his mother bringing it... but I actually caught his sister at the weekend, who had a child with her as well so it wasn't very nice circumstances really. I mean I caught her and I hoped it shocked her enough and shocked him enough not to get his family to bring it in for him, but I doubt it.

Occasionally, the inmates became stressed when a visitor refused to bring drugs in or let them down on a visit. They sometimes threatened to withdraw their visits altogether, compounding the difficulties for family members struggling to maintain contact throughout a long sentence. To cope with their sentences the inmates became very focused on their own predicament. This often made it more difficult for them to understand the pressure their visitors experienced. Ian explained the feelings of isolation and helplessness

that he experienced in the initial stages of his sentence that made it difficult for him to cope with anything from outside prison:

> If you're locked up for 365 days a year and you've got things you can't deal with on the out, then y'know? I've got problems on the out and sometimes they wind me up. I mean I had a visit the other day and my mum come up and was telling me all her problems. I mean I don't need to know them problems, I have enough problems of my own and being in jail there ain't nothing you can do about them problems.

Therefore, while not intending to, it was feasible that inmates did not appreciate the pressure they put their visitors under to bring drugs into the prison. Visitors could be prosecuted for supplying drugs if they were caught passing them to an inmate in prison.

While visits were the primary source of drug supply, three inmates in my research suggested that select members of staff would bring items into the prison including drugs, tobacco and magazines. As one inmate explained:

> I can name about two screws in this jail... like you give them an amount, like 50 quid and they'll bring stuff in for you, like a bottle of Barcardi, you give them whatever and they'll keep the change... I can pay someone now and they'll come in with alcohol, cigarettes, duty-free cigarettes and fucking drugs, hash and weed, if you've got the money.

The need for money inside suggested that arranging deals would have to be organised in advance to ensure money was smuggled into the prison or could be passed to the officer by contacts outside.

The extent of illegal activities by prison staff is not known. The officers I interviewed accepted that trafficking was possible if certain inmates had put a member of staff under pressure, but considered this less likely in Haverton because young offenders were regarded as disorganised and less dangerous than their adult counterparts. As Jan said: "I don't think there'd be any pressure here. I'm absolutely sure in a small establishment like this other officers would notice. I mean officers get greedy, very, very occasionally, thank god." Nevertheless, staff did acknowledge that some officers found it harder to define the boundaries of their relationship with inmates than others and this could be a potential difficulty. Richard, a senior officer, suggested that if relationships were too close it would be easier to get drawn into situations where goods were exchanged:

> There is always a possibility you're going to get a bent member of staff, but at the end of the day we're a disciplined service working to very strict rules and guidelines. You shouldn't have a member of staff coming through training who's bent, but you have members of staff who are put under pressure, staff doing silly things with a prisoner, their relationship is too close. It's easy to say, "here is a packet of fags" and the next time it's two packets of fags. Now I'm not

suggesting we've got anybody here who's bent but there is always the possibility.

Richard did not explain what constituted a 'close relationship' and it might be too simplistic to suggest that a close relationship alone places an officer at risk of 'doing favours' for inmates. The officers I interviewed were understandably uncomfortable with thinking about potential corruption amongst colleagues. However, Richard's comments do reveal the conflict faced by prison officers on a daily basis when attempting to reconcile the rules of the job with the reality of their daily interactions with inmates (also see discussion in chapter 6 on the switching of staff).

Finding drugs on their way in

It was not feasible for staff to search all visitors who came into the prison so to prevent drug trafficking in Haverton, staff adopted similar profiling techniques used in policing to target high risk individuals and groups (Feeley and Simon 1994; Ericson and Haggerty 1997). This pragmatic response did not detract from the fact that all visitors were regarded as potential traffickers. As one officer said: "I mean you can stereotype and you find that the majority of the time you're right... I know who I expect to bring drugs in because I do take notice of what's going on in the prison, so

I know who's smoking and who isn't, but I wouldn't let that affect my judgement. I would still search anyone who comes in."

Profiling often meant stereotyping. The inmates were aware that elderly visitors, groups of girls and young children attracted less staff attention. One inmate acted on this knowledge using his child as the vehicle to traffic drugs:

> When he [father] was in jail, my mum used to bring it up for him. Now I'm in jail and they bring it up for me... I try to get them to bring it up with the [his] baby, when you ave it with a baby you can just put it away [hide it].. It's disrespect really with the baby.

The officers held the view that black culture supported drug use more readily than white culture. The assumption that black youth are less conforming than other racial groups (Solomos 1993) is typical in the criminal justice system. Certainly, black youth can find themselves disadvantaged at every stage, from stop, search and arrest by the police, to sentencing by the courts (Hood 1992) and treatment in prison, where black inmates are perceived to be more disruptive and anti-authoritarian (Genders and Player 1989). My own research suggested there was little evidence to support the differentiation between racial groups. From my sample African-Caribbean inmates did use more cannabis (ten of the thirteen black inmates interviewed

used the drug regularly and three used it occasionally) compared to white inmates. Four of the twelve white inmates and one of the three Asian inmates used cannabis. However, the greater intensity of use could not be directly associated with race but was related to the organisation and structure of supply, where black inmates had better access to drugs (see later discussion on the RSP).

Getting and hiding drugs inside

On visits drugs were passed under the table or by using physical contact such as kissing or handshakes. They were frequently put into drinks, confectionery or crisps, which were then offered to the inmate to disguise taking the drug by eating or drinking. Visits took place under the gaze of members of staff and cameras. However, staff felt that the tables not being fixed to the floor in the visits room was a potential weakness, allowing inmates and visitors to pull their chairs close to the table to obscure their behaviour. The inmates found it relatively easy to pass drugs and attempts by the prison to prevent them were not completely successful. Even closed visits, the ultimate trafficking prevention strategy, where inmates were separated from their visitor by a screen, did not prevent drugs being passed. Inmates who were on closed visits suggested they were less

likely to be watched by staff and described the cubical as 'make-shift'. A gap above the screen separating the inmates and visitors allowed bold inmates to have drugs thrown over so that they could collect them by pushing open the door to the cubicle that was often left unlocked. As one inmate described:

> I use puff [cannabis] now and again but sometimes it ain't worth risking it, you get put on closed visits. I mean I've had closed visits and that wasn't good when my mum and sisters used to come. I mean you can still get drugs in on closed visits, these things in here haven't got no roofs and sometimes they don't lock the door so you just chuck it over the top. I mean when they lock the door, sometimes we still chuck it over to see if you can get it as well.

Another inmate agreed that closed visits were not guaranteed to prevent drugs being passed over by visitors:

> I don't really understand why they do it. You get someone else to go on a visit, you get your mates to come up at the same time and they will give it to them... I mean you can get it over the roof anyway. I mean [in here] it is just three boxes with little locks and you can just bang them and open them... usually the roof is covered but here half of the roof is covered and half of it is open, so if they chuck it over all you have to do is pick it up.

After the drugs were passed inmates hid them inconspicuously. This was often more difficult. Increased numbers of strip searches when inmates came off visits meant the only safe place to hide their drugs was to insert them intra-anally, sometimes known as 'bottling' (Turnbull et al 1994) or 'plugging'. This practice had to be

conducted discreetly while the inmate was on the visit. They knew they had to 'deal with it' quickly to reduce the risk of detection. Staff were aware that 'plugging' inhibited their discovery of drugs, as one officer said: "We don't always get it [the drugs] because it's usually plugged. You can do the search and get them to squat but it's so far up that it isn't going to come down. They're not daft."

The inmates had to ensure plugging was adequate to avoid detection while squatting during strip searches. Avoiding detection and a good squat was often something to be proud of as Ian explained:

> I bought in half an ounce and got searched but they still never found it, d'you know what I mean? I mean it was up my arse, but what else can you do?... I did it on my visit with my mum there and a couple of mates, they passed it over when my mum was getting some tea and then after visits they pulled me off for a strip search. I was shitting myself. It wasn't the fact of getting caught, but you feel cuntish [stupid, embarrassed]. The thing that gets me is they stripped searched [another inmate] and gave him a six for his squat, cos they [officers] give you marks out of ten for your squat and they give me an eight and there was a half an ounce of puff squeezed up there.

Those inmates with previous experiences of custody remembered the times when searching was less rigorous and they were able to place drugs in their pockets, socks, in their mouth and under their tongue. Necessity helped the inmates to overcome their repulsion at plugging and swallowing drugs, only to retrieve them later from vomit or

faeces. It was part of confinement and everyone would have to do it in order to maintain their drug supply. Farheem was coming to the end of his seven-year sentence for trafficking. During our discussion I detected his nostalgia for the time when drug use was not targeted as punitively in prison. He noted how changing habits amongst inmates as a result of increasing security were an inevitable fact of prison life:

> [Drugs] are easier to get hold of, no one can't get hold of them in prison, but if you get caught with the drug testing thing, it stays in your system, so what you do now, here, sugar or take salt... put some under this nail on your feet yeah. See officers tell you to wash your hands, they think you've got something under you nails, well they should tell you to wash your feet as well. Inmates will always find a way. I remember when I come to jail, you put your drugs in your shoe, then they started checking your shoes. You've got to be more creative now, anyway you have put it in your bum, then they ask you to squat, so you put it right up your bum. All these things, its prison ain't it.

Once inside, drugs were either hidden in the cell or about the person. It would only be left in their cells if inmates were confident they had found a suitable hiding place where the officers would not find them during a search (spin). As Phil said:

> I've had a cell spin but in your cell there are places to keep your gear and you don't have to worry about it. I mean most people are just sticking it up their arse and they don't need to do that. I mean in my cell there is a window sill and there is a

gap underneath, all you need to do is put the gear in the bag with a bit of string round it and put it in there.

The threat of cell searches and the presence of the drug dog meant drugs could be found while the inmates were at work or education. Therefore, most inmates were sure the safest place was to keep their drugs about their person, this way they felt more in control and able to take measures to avert detection if the risk arose. As Tom noted:

> I put a spliff under for someone and they got caught with it at dinner and they come straight to my cell so I just stuck it in my sugar but usually I just keep it up my bum, and then you squat and I mean it might drop out but it doesn't always drop out. If I know I'm gonna ave cell search, then I'll just keep it up my bum, keep it on my body and if I'm goin to work and I know I'm gonna be searched, after then I'll just keep it in me pocket.

The increased surveillance on drugs in the prison encouraged the inmates to hide them in the intimate areas of their bodies. The irony of this, to refer to Foucault (1977), is how far one expects incarceration, through its control of inmates' space, time and activities, to discipline and control inmates' bodies. Foucault notes (1977:138):

> "The human body [enters] a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it... it disassociates power from the body; on the one hand, it turns it into a 'aptitude', a 'capacity', which it seeks to increase; on the other hand, it reverses the course of energy, the power that might result from it, and turns it into a relation of strict subjection".

Two points emerge from my research that questions Foucault's analysis and the extent the inmates' bodies were under 'strict subjection'. The first is the unintended consequence (Giddens 1984) of increased surveillance. In the case of illicit drugs rather than controlling the behaviour, it was pushed further underground, into more intimate and harder to search regions of the prison. As a result, the scale of the problem becomes difficult to quantify and harder to control.

The second point relates to how the inmates' bodies became sites of resistance. Young (1990) discussed a similar process, where female protestors at Greenham Common overcame their powerlessness by using their bodies in the deployment of power. The women used their physical selves to obstruct, repulse and deter the authorities from breaking down their protest. The inmates' attempt to deploy their bodies in protest can only temporarily subvert power. The resources available to prison officers means they will seize back control eventually, as demonstrated by prison disturbances, such as in Manchester (cf. Bottoms 1999). Nevertheless, in an environment where inmates are deprived of privacy (cf. Cohen and Taylor 1972), autonomy and individuality (Goffman 1961), they continue to express 'ownership' over their physical selves, utilising their bodies

for a range of functions, such as hiding drugs. Other examples of inmates using their bodies include how they become canvasses for expressing vulnerability in incidents of self-harm (cf. Liebling 1992). Using the body to express resistance need not necessarily be negative and abusive; many inmates challenge their position of 'weakness' by investing in their bodies and training to increase their physical fitness.

The organisation of life inside: the inmate subculture

So far this chapter has discussed external routes of drug supply into Haverton. The next section explores the inmates' relationships and the impact they had on the distribution of drugs and levels of violence in the prison. Although current research has become less concerned with the specifics of inmate subcultures, it was the preoccupation of early prison sociology. Clemmer's (1940) pioneering study of the prison community introduced the term 'prisonization' which referred to the "gradual process whereby the person learns enough of the culture of the social unit into which he [sic] is placed to make him [sic] a characteristic of it" (Clemmer 1940:299). Although later research suggested that while inmates did gradually subsume into the existing patterns that persisted in the

prison, as they neared release and looked towards outside, the extent of prisonization appeared to decrease (Wheeler 1961).

The conceptual models of deprivation and importation used to explain patterns of inmates' drug use in prison (see chapter 3), also explain the origins of the inmate subculture. Deprivation theories referred to an oppositional inmate code that was a response to the 'pains of imprisonment' and the mortifying effect of the total institution (Sykes 1958; Goffman 1961). The inmate code was characterised by 'no grassing' and 'not getting too close to staff' (Sykes and Messinger 1960). Similar to research on subcultures outside prison, which suggests they are a response to social conditions in society (see chapter 1; Hall and Jefferson 1976; Brake 1985), prison subcultures make inmates feel less isolated, less at risk, less vulnerable and less oppressed by staff. Given the functions of the inmate subculture, those excluded from it lacked a sense of security (Sykes 1958). In my research, Elory was frustrated that he was not in an adult prison closer to his home town where there would be people he knew. His relative isolation made him vulnerable and wary, as he explained:

> When you're in jail you have to be sly, you can chat to man
> *(sic)* and be safe with man *(sic)* but you have to think for

yourself. I've come to jail by myself and I didn't come with none of these people. I might think this guy is safe but everyone in here is a criminal and everyone is out for themselves. I mean with me, the majority of men I'm not gonna see again, so it's best just to hold it down (be calm and do your time).

The deprivation model overlooks the similarity between the 'focal concerns' (Miller 1958) of inmates and criminal subcultures outside. Research in communities consistently shows similar expectations regarding loyalty and 'not grassing' (Evans et al 1996) outside as inside. The model of importation, or the theory of cultural drift (Schwatz 1971), looks to the broader criminal codes to explain the origins of prison subcultures. For example, Jacobs (1974; 1977) in his study of an American prison, Stateville, noted that gang structures were imported from outside and served similar functions in prison, offering crucial psychological and physical support. Research by Irwin and Cressey (1963) and Irwin (1970) also based in American prisons noted a strong relationship between inmates' identities formed outside prison and how they adapted to prison life, either by improving themselves, for example taking education classes (gleaning), or dealing in goods with other inmates (jailing).

Despite the importance of understanding inmate culture, the extent of inmate solidarity in prison can be exaggerated. The Morris' (1963)

study of Pentonville, for example, noted that inmates often found the company of other inmates distasteful. Indeed, not all inmates overcome the pains of imprisonment through solidarity. Matheison (1965) noted the principal mode of adaption for inmates who did not have access to a subculture was 'censoriousness', where the staff would be made to feel their actions were not legitimate and that they had not exercised their power fairly or judicially.

It is also important not to overstate the homogeneity of inmate culture, as not all inmate cultures may be characterised by collective, oppositional values. For example, Grapendaal's (1990) study of subcultures in two high security prisons and a semi-open Dutch prison distinguishes between traditional subcultures, characterised by oppositional attitudes and organisational subcultures. Each subculture grew out of different ideological systems. The oppositional was based on a 'factional system' where individual interests were prioritised, while a 'system ideology', was based on shared interests which encouraged an organisational culture.

Therefore, it is important to recognise a variety of inmate cultures may co-exist within one institution. Chan's (1996) four critical points made in relation to definitions of police culture are useful to

consider in relation to prisoner subcultures. Chan notes that police culture is usually conceived as being 'monolithic and primarily negative' (Chan 1996:111). In order to develop our understanding of police culture, its diversity, the role of agents in the acculturation process and the social and political context in which it develops needs to be considered. Chan argues that conceptions of police culture as 'all powerful and homogenous' are deterministic and limit the potential for social change. Likewise, accepting definitions of inmate culture as mainly oppositional to staff cultures and prison rules generally (see further discussed in chapter 6), suggests there is little potential to change inmates' behaviour. However, if as suggested above, inmates do not always respond collectively or share anti-authority attitudes, there is some potential to change or at least influence their offending and drug use in prison.

Inmate subcultures in young offenders' institutions are rarely discussed and are usually considered limited and underdeveloped because of young inmates lack of criminal expertise (cf. Irwin and Cressey 1963). As a senior officer, who had previously worked with adult remand and convicted populations, said:

> I think if you were going to study here and then go to an adult dispersal jail you're going to have a certain amount of people

who are more sophisticated than what these are and they're going to have better businesses set up in jails. It's like these in here, although they're long-term young offenders, if you like, they're learning the trade. They're half way up the ladder and if they leave here and they're unfortunate enough to go into the adult system and I do say unfortunate to go into a dispersal setting, it's a completely different ball game and they're having to learn again. A lot of the 'gangsters' we have here will be pawns when they get into an adult system and they'll be used if they're not clued in very quickly.

The prison officers I interviewed agreed that young offenders were too impetuous, unsophisticated and 'out for themselves' to operate as an organised inmate group. However, such traits need not prevent a subculture from forming. For example, Little's (1990) study of young (15-17 year old) males in custody in England found that despite being very individualistic and competitive, young inmates would develop friendship networks for their own material gain, although these associations were often sporadic rather than based on fixed hierarchies with dominant inmate leaders. Furthermore, an early review of prison studies by Bowker (1977) found that young men in custody shared similar criminal values, emphasising peer identification and anti-social attitudes towards their adult counterparts.

The RSP

The Red-Stripe Posse, or the RSP as they were known, were the dominant inmate group in Haverton during my research. While it was almost certainly not the only inmate culture, all thirty inmates I interviewed referred to the group and six inmates were members of the gang. My discussion of the RSP represents the extent to which my research captured a period of time in the life of Haverton. The fact that my opportunistic sample included a number of RSP members was related to how they were arrested, sentenced and allocated to the prison at the same time (see discussion below). The number of gang members I interviewed may have limited the generalisability of my research or inhibited my understanding of other inmate cultures that operated in Haverton, as the majority of prisoners were not members of the RSP. However, interviewing a number of gang members provided an insight into the organisation of the gang on the wings, its functions, the advantages of membership and the impact the gang had on inmates who were outside it. The specific constitution of the inmate culture in Haverton will have changed since my research. Although, the fundamental dynamics of inmate cultures, where certain inmates dominate others, who then find alternative ways of coping with prison, will persist. The

challenge for new research would be to understand their organisation and influence on drug use and distribution.

The RSP was comprised of a group of friends whose relationships had originated from Foxdown, a large urban area and were imported into the prison (cf. Irwin and Cressey 1963; Irwin 1970; Jacobs 1974, 1977). Throughout the research, the inmates referred to the RSP as a gang. I have used this label because the RSP used it and they shared a number of the common features identified in definitions of gangs. While research in Britain originally denied the existence of gangs, highlighting the differences between the United States where gangs appeared more highly structured (cf. Downes 1966; Parker 1974), the phenomenon of 'street gangs' is being found across Europe (Klein 1995).

Theories that explain the emergence of gangs have focused around social disorganisation, originally espoused by Thrasher (1936), that link broader structural changes and the resulting poverty and increasing social inequality to gang development (Sheldon et al 1996). As Fagan (1996) notes: "the future of gangs is tied to the future of urban crises in social control, social structure, labor markets, and cultural process in a rapidly changing political and

economic context." Other explanations for gangs are based on Cohen's (1955) theory of status frustration, where the gang provides status and means of achievement. However, as Klein (1995) argues high levels of violence and gang instability can undermine the positive effects of membership.

The ongoing lack of information on gangs in Britain may be based on some confusion around definition. One of Haverton's inmates was confused about whether the fight he was involved in was gang related or simply rivalry between two estates:

> Where I live there has been gang fights for 30 years... they weren't exactly gangs, I mean they [the police] classed it as gangs, but it was estates. I mean it was all happening before I was born but everyone just carries it on. So you'd ave one estate against another estate, but the 'Old Bill' would classify it as a gang fight.

Saunders (1994) notes that gangs can be distinguished from groups of friends because the former are willing to use deadly violence and usually will have an informal leadership hierarchy. Furthermore, gangs are predominantly comprised of young men and while the duration of involvement in gang behaviour differs, as with current evidence on desistence from crime (cf. Graham and Bowling 1995), the development and duration of gangs is extending further into

adulthood (cf. Fagan 1996). In the United States gangs are usually involved in a variety of criminal behaviour; they are homogenous on ethnic and racial lines and are organised according to territory and age (Moore 1978; Saunders 1994; Klein 1995; Sheldon et al 1996).

All RSP members I interviewed were black and were highly territorial, regarding themselves as being bonded by area. However, they did not see themselves as a 'black gang'. Nevertheless RSP territory, an urban area with a sizable black population, was inextricably linked to race. Murji (1999) notes how definitions of dangerous places are often closely associated with representations of race, drug cultures and violence, so that: "race and place become intertwined as features that demarcate the boundaries of civility, distinguishing the respectable from the disreputable" (Murji 1999:58).

The RSP was organised by age, which is arguably the most important characteristic of gangs because it lays the foundation for various cliques to be formed (Sheldon et al 1996:68). Martin (16), a member of the gang, explained its structure:

> We all hang together innit and everyone knows us as the RSP.
> Like you've got the younger, youngens, they're the same age

and the same year as me but I move with the bigger lot... There is the youngers and that's like the older lot, like 17,18,19 and that's my lot yeah, that's who I move with. Then there is the higher lot, like 21, all up to 30, like big man and that.

Research has shown similar age graded structures in other gangs. For example, Hagedorn's (1988) study of Milwaukee gangs found they consisted of groups of friends who were broadly the same age: the Ancients were twenty years and above, followed by the Seniors (16-19 years old); the Juniors (12-15 years old) and the Pee-wees (8-11 years old). The literature suggests gangs are not organised based on a pyramid structure with a clear leader at the top and I could not identify a leader of the RSP in the prison. However, consistent with the literature where gangs often have a core and a more temporary peripheral membership (Klein 1995), the extent of friendship networks (see figure 1 below) indicated that some inmates were more committed members (such as Martin) than others (such as Ben).

Life in the gang

The type of crime committed by the members of the RSP outside prison supports research that highlights the unspecialised and disorganised nature of gang offending (Thrasher 1936; Decker and Van Winkle 1996). The RSP favoured street and bank robberies.

They relied on their numbers, often committing crime in groups of five or more, so they could charge in, grab the money and charge out. One member was involved in a robbery with a number of other gang members. He was arrested at the scene of the crime following police surveillance of their activities:

> I have my crew, I used to hang with [and] at the end of 1995 I started doing bank robberies. At first I didn't get caught for a while and the money was good so I was kinda happy... you know in the bank where they have got the plastic things where they serve you, you climb over that and after you climb over the shutters will go up and you just take your money and run out quickly. I thought I was going to get off this case, I was only sixteen. I thought I am only sixteen they can't do nothing. I was thinking how I would think, I wasn't thinking how they were going to think. I was thinking I am going to come out of the police station and go home and tell my mum I didn't mean to do it, go back out, do something else to get some money and then stop.

The RSP were motivated to make fast money and they spent their money fast as Marc explained:

> Well everyone was wearing designer clothes, I'd have a Moschino suit and that is a grand, then I'd have something like two grand left, I'd buy trainers, drink, something to smoke, some skunk. [I'd spend] about three grand in four days. When I think of it now, no three grand in four days and I hear people saving like that for the year and I spent it in four days... sometimes I'd get a grand in a week and I'd go out the next day and get four grand and spend that again and keep going spending faster and faster. I used to hide it under my bed and then take some and go out with my girlfriend and then I'd go over the top, buy five champagnes, cos I've got the money, buy five champagnes and come out of there broke.

The role of peer groups in providing delinquent opportunities was important for all the inmates I interviewed, not just RSP members (Glassner and Loughlin 1987; Sampson and Laub 1993; Duncan and Petosa 1995). It was less clear, however, whether peers influenced the onset of crime or simply helped maintain criminal careers. The causal assumptions concerning peer groups and crime often based on learning theories are open to question as learning to offend is dependent on the length and intensity of exposure to delinquent norms (Sutherland 1949). As a consequence, one would expect sibling relationships to be influential for learning crime, as they are intense and often inescapable. However, there is little evidence to support this (Sampson and Laub 1993).

Typically, the inmates' peer groups tended to share general values, norms and beliefs, and therefore provided a suitable, non-judgmental social environment for the inmates' initial foray into drugs, deviance and delinquency (Glassner and Loughlin 1987; Duncan and Petosa 1995). The inmates never said they were coerced into trying drugs or offending, undermining the theory of peer pressure that is often used to explain negative peer group behaviour. As Dan, an inmate with a long drug career and offending history explained:

It was my friends who introduced me to heroin, cos the crack led on from there really... Well a couple of lads from Toreast (an area of his city) were going to this school which was quite near the school I was going to... and I made friends with them... I got into the wrong crowd. Like I said I was no angel but I wasn't bad to the point I would've ended up here... I mean I smoked dope coming up to fifteen. I was travelling to raves. I'd taken acid and that... It was just exciting, like a little adventure. You know when you're little, about with your friends and that and you're going down the docks, it was a good time. Sometimes we were all on acid and taking E's and we'd travel to raves... those were good days. Drugs weren't forced onto me. This guy, he was smoking a rock and I was interested, do you know what I mean? I was curious and I said to him, "Can I have a go?" It was the biggest mistake of my life. I had a go, but it's true, the first time I licked (tried) the stuff I didn't really feel anything, the second time I got a rush.

Dan strongly rejects the idea he was forced to take drugs, describing himself as a willing participant who was in control of his drug use before experimenting with crack and heroin. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) also reject the possibility of peer pressure amongst delinquents. Their 'general theory of crime' noted how low self-control resulted in weak attachments and relationships and because peer pressure relied on strong bonds of attachment to generate the fear of exclusion, it was more closely associated with conformity. Implicit in this conclusion is the suggestion that delinquents are unable to develop strong-bonded friendships. However, rather than not prioritising loyalty, reliability and trustworthiness, the inmates in my research expressed these through their own value system, by not

'grassing' or ensuring their friends had a regular supply of drugs (cf. Miller 1958).

The inmates also described having non-delinquent friends, although it was difficult to know whether this meant they were not involved in crime or were just less involved than themselves. Generally, the role of the peer group in crime prevention is under-researched, although there is some evidence to suggest that negative attitudes towards drug use, for example, may inhibit experimentation (cf. Shiner and Newburn 1997; 1999). In my research, the positive impact of friends was difficult to investigate as I had no direct observations of the context of behaviour or the nature of interactions. However, it is an area ripe for further research.

What are you all doing here? Targeting the RSP

When I interviewed Marc he said: "most of the boys in here, I used to go round with". Like all the inmates who had been involved in crime and were well known to the police, the RSP were frequently challenged and often targeted. Their crimes, race, and the area where they lived, explained why they were targeted. Crime is not evenly distributed geographically, but is concentrated in particular areas or

'hot-spots' which in turn influence police crackdowns (Sherman 1990; Hope 1996). The numbers of gang members in prison during my research highlighted the influence of policing strategies and was testimony to the effectiveness of dedicated policing units and targeted strategies, such as Operation Eagle Eye introduced by the Metropolitan Police, that provided a coherent response to armed robbery (Matthews 1996; Stockdale and Gresham 1998).

Aside from high profile crimes, ethnicity influenced the policing of the RSP. Ericson and Haggerty (1997:257) note how racial identities influence the organisation of police practice and such "differentiation is the relentless product of the panoptic sorting process in risk society. It creates social-group identities for the purpose of differential treatment." Such differentiation is based on a fear of black crime (cf. Pinderhughes 1997) and the perceived link between race and social problems. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, concern grew about the impact the alienation of black youth would have on communities (Solomos 1993). The perceived relationship between race and inner city problems laid the foundations for the social construction of mugging as a 'black', crime closely related to cycles of poverty and deprivation (Hall and Jefferson 1979). Episodic urban disorder throughout the 1980s introduced key factors concerning race

and crime on the political agenda and the nature of rioting and disorder led to links between unemployment, marginalisation and crime (Solomos 1993).

Gradually the debate around the link between race and crime has bifurcated. While the right accepted causality, the alternative view explored the role of the police in constructing black crime as problematic (cf. Cashmore and McLaughlin 1991). The left moved away from the position that black people commit more crime or the police are racist *per-se* and accepted both sides of the debate represented partial truths. As a result of poverty, discrimination and exclusion, black people did commit proportionately more crime but the police also readily responded to black crime. Therefore, "the real increase in crime is amplified as a result of police action and police prejudice" (Lea and Young 1993:168). The synthesis of the debate is not without criticism. Gilroy (1987:75) notes:

> "It is no betrayal of black interests to say that blacks commit crime, or that black law-breaking may be related to black poverty as law-breaking is related to poverty. The possibility of a direct relationship between ethnicity, black culture and crime is an altogether different and more complex issue."

The example of the RSP reveals how in many cases referring to the peer group as a cause of crime is too simplistic, without

understanding how the peer group is perceived and interacts with broader societal structures. It was not just that the peer group facilitated crime but that it also attracted attention to itself, thus increasing the risk of members being caught and sentenced.

Drugs, mugs and fighting thugs: inside with the RSP

Research on gangs in prisons in the United States has shown that despite their relatively small number compared to the overall prison population, it takes few gang members to dominate inside and the impact of gangs on prison life is significant (Ralph et al 1996). When it became apparent during my fieldwork that a number of inmates had some relationship with one another prior to their sentence, I asked if they would explain whom they knew and how they knew them. Figure 1 represents a map of the RSP gang and the members' friendship networks that we drew together during our second or third interviews. It shows RSP and their distribution across four wings of the prison as described by the interviewees.

Of the inmates I interviewed (indicated by bold text), Martin, Ben, Kevin, Gary, and Marc knew one another outside and were all transferred from remand together. All five were serving three or four

Figure 1: The RSP in Haverton Young Offenders Institution

Wing 1

Duxton
(Younger, younger RSP)

Kevin
(a RSP because members
are his friends)

Ben

Wing 2

Martin (younger RSP)

Marc

Smitty

Brody

Wing 3

Gary

Neesom (younger RSP)

Dale

Reedway   **Craig**
(Older RSP)   (Older RSP)

Klienwood (Older RSP)

Wing 4

Patmore

Crow   Hardy

Atwood

Clarence
(Not a RSP but has
friends who are)

Key: **Names in bold**: inmates interviewed for research
——— Transferred from remand together
——— Know from outside
——— Related by family

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years for robbery. Martin was a full member of the 'youngens'. Marc's membership was reinforced by his close relationship with Martin. Gary and Ben identified the same inmates as members of the gang. Kevin was a member because he was from 'south' and his uncle, Patmore, was already in the prison and was also related to another member, Crew. At twenty-one, Craig was the oldest to have an association with the group and serving the longest sentence, seven years. He was less well connected because the RSP was organised by age and while Craig was an 'older RSP', the others were youngers or younger youngens.

The staff were tentatively aware of gangs on the wings but did not know how the RSP was organised. This made staff less capable of tackling the problems that emerged from the gang culture and unable to separate the members or move them to different wings. As Richard, a senior officer explained:

> We had problems in here and we shipped a load out, I had to take some [away]. We were on the bus. We were talking about what had gone off and [the inmates] started talking about the RSP. They were all on a wing, walking around with a handkerchief in their back pocket to be identified as the RSP. I didn't know any of this, this came out on an escort. Course when we come [sic] back we realised that we shipped some of the wrong people out.

The other inmates I interviewed were aware of the Red-Strip Posse. However, perceptions of the gang varied. Some inmates thought the gang was based on territory, which generally was not uncommon in the prison. As Tony, a non-gang member said:

> When you're on the wing with someone from your area, it's funny really, like if I was from south, there are quite a few people from south and it's like south united, d'you know what I mean? I mean cos I was from west, like Declan, he's from west as well, we do the same sort of things when we're out there so we have nuff to talk about.

Another inmate also described how people from his area looked out for each other inside:

> You're from the same manor, so you'll look after each other... It just happens. No fights inside, you just stick together. Y'know each other so you've just got to help each other when you're inside. Like I know someone in ere who's from my manor, even if I wanted to ave it with him I wouldn't cos he is from my manor. It's weird really but it's jail.

White inmates labelled the RSP a black gang. As Dan, a white inmate said: "There are a lot of black people in here... I'd say three quarters black... its sort of black people fighting black people...There is a few lads with bad attitudes." The prison did have a high proportion of black inmates (approximately 40 percent of the inmate population was black). Black inmates are over-represented in the English prison system. While an estimated 2 percent of the general

population above the age of 10 is black (Home Office 1998), ethnic minorities comprise 18 percent of the male prison population (10.2 percent are black). In the female prison population in 1998, 24 percent of women were from ethnic minority groups (White 1999).

Ralph et al (1996) described three primary functions for prison gangs – to provide access to goods and services; to provide solidarity and brotherhood; and to 'beat the man' (exercise violence). The next section discusses how the RSP provided an effective distribution system for drugs and other goods and influenced levels of violence in Haverton.

The inmate culture and the internal drug economy

Exchanging drugs for money or goods and the more altruistic sharing of drugs between friendship groups (Turnbull et al 1994) were the main ways the inmates I interviewed accessed drugs inside Haverton. An unintended consequence of the routine deprivation of goods was that almost all material objects were a potential form of currency. Furthermore, as access to drugs was not evenly distributed amongst all the inmates, an illicit market developed.

It was very rare for drugs to be exchanged for money in Haverton Young Offenders' Institution. Each inmate was allowed to spend a maximum of £10.00 from their wages or private cash on goods from the canteen. This would be spent on luxury food items that the inmates could store in their cells, music and magazines, up to more expensive items including trainers and stereos. As they could not exceed their quota spend, to afford larger goods the inmates saved and went without canteen. At this time it was common for supplies of toiletries and goods to be maintained by dealing and exchanging other items, including tobacco and cannabis. The majority of inmates engaged in some sort of dealing, although it was usually opportunistic to satisfy immediate needs. The prison culture was a culture of exchange where little was received for free. As Elory described when I asked if he ever shared any of his goods:

> Oh no, no, no, no. This is jail man, you don't get nothing for free man, this is jail. As soon as you come to jail you know, it's double back and as simple as that. You might sort man *(sic)* out with a little bit of weed and some burn, like 10 quid, now that's a lot in prison. On road [outside] you might spend like 50, 45 quid, I'd get about three spliffs out of a 10 quid draw, but in prison you don't get drugs everyday, so you'll take draw off and hide it somewhere proper.

Dealing and exchange differed according to the items being traded. Tobacco was exchanged for double the amount; 'double back', which

increased incrementally with every late payment. In the past dominance in dealing goods in adult prison was generally referred to as 'baroning'. In their study of Pentonville, the Morris's (1963) noted how baroning was fundamental to the entire illicit economy inside and commanded considerable power on the wing. However, baroning did not apply in Haverton, either in relation to tobacco or drugs. This was because despite a high demand for tobacco, availability was generally good and the opportunities for supply were highly diffused across the inmate population. Tobacco was mainly bought through the canteen system and an erratic and opportunistic form of dealing only occurred when inmates were not entitled to spend their money or if they had run out of tobacco before they could order more.

My research suggested that drug dealers were scarce in the prison because the close relationship between drugs and the inmate culture left little room for one dominant individual to command the cannabis market, and the market was based on opportunistic dealing or sharing. While heroin use was low amongst the inmates (see chapter 3), the heroin supply in prison appeared to be associated with a particular dealer. A differentiated pattern of drug supply for cannabis and other drugs is found outside prison. Forsyth et al (1992) noted

how certain drugs, those that were usually cheaper, were more available while access to more expensive drugs demanded more specialised networks.

While in the past the tobacco may have been currency in prison markets, in Haverton the currency was cannabis. The market value of goods varied in Haverton. Kevin traded cannabis throughout the prison and explained his prices during an interview:

> Like a spliff is 3 quid in ere, some people charge more but I charge three... Say I give you the spliff and I want cocoa white shampoo, just buy me that. Or give someone 6 quid, I want three months of FHM magazines or GQs. That's the currency of jail, drugs. Hash, like the resin but you get skunk weed and that, people don't want to part with their weed cos it tastes better than the resin. If I get skunk, I'm not doin any deals with that, that's for me to smoke.

Heroin was more likely to be sold than bartered for in Haverton because the potential profit margin was high. As Marc, a non-user of the drug explained:

> People just sell heroin and that cos if you can get it, you can get three phonecards for like £2.50, biscuits, a bottle of drink, you can get a lot of things for that, like from someone's canteen money, that's for a line and it's gone in two seconds and that's all their canteen well gone.

The inmates thought that the addictive nature of heroin would encourage a market for the drug if it was used inside. Tom distinguished between swapping goods for cannabis and exchanges for heroin:

> Say I got a spliff, I might get some shower gel or juice or somethin like that for it, but that's just swapping. Heroin, that's making someone buy it, you give them that and they're gonna want more. They'll deal in anythin, money, canteen.

Dan had used and bought heroin from the dealer in Haverton. He noted the potential for making money from the drug inside:

> Well they don't do it for cannabis cos there is not enough money in it, but with heroin they could make three times as much, you know when it's all cut down and they're selling it on the street, it's got all the crap in it and that. Well they cut it down another three sizes to sell it in prison, so they're making three or four times as much. So for a gram, which cost about 70 quid, they are making 200, a lot of money.

When exchanges were made for money, as was often the case with heroin, it was likely to be mediated externally (cf. Turnbull et al 1994). This was when money was exchanged outside the prison, or sent into the prison by a third party on behalf of the buyer to their dealer. Les, a main grade officer, referred to this practice occurring on the wing and indicated the pressure inmates could potentially place their families under to fulfil their needs in prison:

They fix a price for themselves with whatever they've got... I found out once, there was these guys and I was on mail [opening inmates' letters] and a £5 postal order come in for [one inmate] with an address on the back, and then [another inmate] and I wrote them in the book and the serial number for the [first one] was 01 and then for [the second] it was 02 and I looked at the back and the address was the same. The [second inmate] was getting his family to send [the first inmate] in a tenner and then he was getting drugs.

Drug culture and the role of the RSP

The internal drug market was dominated by the RSP. Those inmates not included in the dominant inmate subculture had more limited access to drugs inside and consequently, their levels of use were often lower. Members or those closely associated with the RSP had better access to drugs through sharing or they would be treated more favourably when making drug deals. Those excluded from the RSP only had access to their own supply and deals for drugs, if available, were expensive. Therefore, it followed that those outside the RSP who I interviewed used less drugs compared to the members or associates of the gang.

Drug use was synonymous with the RSP and the six inmates I interviewed who were members ensured their drug supply by sharing supplies across their friendship networks. Sharing was indicative of the close relationship between cannabis and the inmate culture and

reinforced the camaraderie amongst the RSP. A little altruism went a long way, increasing access to cannabis and ensuring members avoided the perils of deals and debt. As Gary, a member of the gang said:

> I have my own but say I've been on a visit and I have mine but my friend doesn't have any, then I'll give him a few spliffs, I'll settle him a few spliffs, like we'll look after each other.

Gary went on to explain how 'sharing' differed from dealing:

> If my postal order hadn't come and I didn't have any money, then I'd say right, I'll give you two spliffs and you buy me this and this, but that wouldn't be with someone close, I wouldn't deal with my friends.

Craig, another member of the gang agreed:

> I wouldn't say it was like trading but when I need something, if they've got it they'd give it to me and if I've got something then I'd give it to them. I mean there are some people that if they ask for it, I'll give it to them but it depends on whether I like them or not [but] there are people in here I wouldn't rely on, like if I couldn't get nothing, I wouldn't set my mind on that they were gonna give me some.

The general assumption was that amongst friends, drugs would be shared and having to ask for them was unacceptable, as another inmate explained: "Friends I wouldn't ask, they should come and knock on my door. The people who I don't really chat to, them I will go and ask."

The inmates only shared cannabis and while the practice was not confined to the RSP, their size and dominance in Haverton meant their members could intimidate others into giving them drugs and they had a broader reserve to draw from compared to inmates who only had a couple of friends. Generally, sharing involved a precarious distinction between good friends and prison friends. It required trust that another inmate would not inform prison staff of their source if they were caught with the drug. Therefore, because members of the RSP trusted one another, gang exchanges were considered safer.

Advantage, solidarity – disadvantage, alienation

The experience of the RSP with respect to drug supply highlighted the advantages of inmate solidarity. Other inmates also expressed solidarity by not 'grassing on friends', coming to their defence and sharing goods, albeit less organised and on a smaller scale to the RSP. Amongst the inmates I interviewed in Haverton solidarity offered a vital support function and advantages for managing 'routine victimisation' (O'Donnell and Edgar 1998) and potential violence. An example of this was the Friday reading group that studied the

Koran and offered Muslim inmates support. The group was also important for individual identity as Asian inmates are more likely to identify themselves through their religion than race (Beckford and Gilliat 1998). As English prisons face some difficulty achieving a level of equality in religious provision, given that the Christian faith acts as the facilitator of religious services (cf. Beckford 1998; Beckford and Gilliat 1998 for overview of administration of religious services in prison), the presence and support given to this group in Haverton was encouraging.

Members of the group included Farheem and Rajiv. It was Rajiv's first time in custody and Farheem was an important source of support and advice for him, introducing him to the Asian culture in the prison. Clear et al (1992) noted how faith improved inmate's adjustment and their ability to deal with the deprivation of imprisonment and other inmates who felt isolated by the regime returned to their religion to help them cope. For example, the Friday group offered crucial support to Neil, not least because being on basic regime limited his time out of his cell to an hour a day, so that the group provided him with vital social time once a week.

A consequence of solidarity between selected groups of inmates was the alienation of others. Inmates were excluded from the culture for a range of reasons. Some did not want to be included and explained they wanted to keep themselves to themselves. However, inmates had to take care that this was not interpreted as being unable to cope as the machismo of institutional life meant it was important inmates were able to handle their time. The inmates said poor copers were easily identifiable: "Some people you can just look at them by the things they are doin", one inmate said, "Some people just sit by themselves and head down, when you're in here you can just tell, you can just tell if someone can't handle it." Inmates who withdrew from the mainstream were seen as 'fraggling themselves off', especially if they asked to be moved to another wing associated with vulnerable prisoners, colloquially named 'fraggle rock'. Edgar and O'Donnell (1998b) note how such 'routines in custody' can increase the risk of assault. A victim is seen to contribute to their own victimisation simply by displaying signs of vulnerability, as Rajiv explained:

> There are lot of people who think they're gonna get hurt, even for stupid things they take themselves off to protection wing. I mean if you don't stick up for yourself then everyone is gonna take the piss out of you, they're now known as fraggles.

Being excluded from the dominant inmate subculture also complicated inmates' drug supply. Outsiders had to rely on their own source of supply or had to trade their canteen for drugs. This was a risky exercise; outsiders were unlikely to be charged a fair price and could easily fall into debt and expose themselves to further risk of assault if they could not pay inmates back. It made outsiders think twice about seeking a drug supply inside. For example, Phil (21) was white and came from the coast. He had no friends in the prison from his local area or from previous custodial sentences. Being some distance away from his home town and poor family relations meant his visits were infrequent. He decided to buy cannabis from another inmate on his wing. When I asked if it was easy to get hold of drugs in prison, he said:

> Well it is for certain people... If you're black, you're sorted, unless you're some stupid looking little mother fucker, they just set (give) [cannabis] to you... if you're not in with a certain crowd then you're fucked, basically. I mean I'm not interested in doing deals with people, not for 5 quid for a bit of draw and all the hassle you get for it. Like fuck it, I know it sounds tight but 5 quid for a bit of hash.

A deal for drugs did not necessarily follow the desire to make one and often major obstacles had to be overcome. The price of drugs was not fixed and fluctuated according to the perception of the inmate, as Ian explained. While he was not part of the dominant

inmate culture in Haverton, on remand in his local prison he wielded more power:

> Well [on remand], you could sell two or three lines for fucking 15 quid, it all depends on the person, then you would get other people who would sell just over a tenner's worth for a tenner, cos they was all right. It all depends on how much you have got as well. I mean I knew people who would just bring it [heroin] through for other people and weren't even taking it and instead of charging, they would say like £25 on the out and £25 inside.

Violence and the RSP

General levels of violence and victimisation in prison are high (Beck 1995; O'Donnell and Edgar 1998). Bottoms (1999:227) noted in his review of interpersonal violence in prison that younger inmates are more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of violence in prisons, as young men are likely to be victims of violence outside prison (Mirrlees-Black et al 1998). In Haverton violence seemed commonplace, even an inevitable part of institutional life. During the interviews many of the inmates described incidents of routine violence and intimidation, usually focused around the pool table or food. The experience of confinement meant it was not uncommon for small incidents to escalate. For example, the inmates described a fight 'going off' on a wing that was originally caused by the exchange of a packet of biscuits:

> You fight over the little things in prison; on the out you wouldn't think about fighting over stupidness like that. People fight over stupidness, like biscuits, and that. You owe someone biscuits and you go into their cell fighting, why don't they just buy themselves a new packet? (Marc)

The inmates' preoccupation with small incidents was understandable given the lack of control they exercised over their environment and the difficulty they had escaping the issues that arose. As a comparison, one might consider their experience on a long flight, where tempers can flair if passengers feel they are being overlooked, if a toilet breaks down or the food is not up to standard.

The fights I was aware of in Haverton were usually about an inmate saving face and hoping to divert further victimisation by proving their worth, as Jo explained:

> Certain people try to be large in front of their mates and then they're people who won't fight unless they ave a good reason. I mean in jail you fight over different things, cos you can't go down the town everyday or getaway from it, you ave to show them (other inmates) that you won't ave it, that's how you've got to be.

To control the violence and intimidation staff attempted to transfer the main perpetrators from the institution, although despite this, violence persisted. The prison only confronted the symptoms,

overlooking the social context and the underlying cause of violence (Bottoms 1999:207).

Theories of masculinities offer a useful framework to explore violence in prison, because as Sim (1994a) notes, explaining violence through the identification of pathological individuals overlooks the pervasive culture of masculinity and the extent to which violence has been institutionalised and normalised in the regime:

> "Violence and domination in prison can therefore be understood not as a pathological manifestation of abnormal otherness but as part of the normal routine which is sustained and legitimated by the wider culture of masculinity: that culture that condemns some acts of male violence but condones the majority of others. It will be condemned only if it transgresses the acceptable limits of masculinity"
>
> Sim (1994a:105)

Theories of masculinity have drawn attention to the persistent failure of mainstream criminology to engage with issues of gender where studies focus on men without reflexively exploring issues around maleness and masculinity (Canaan 1991; Groombridge 1997; Collier 1998). For example, while gang ideology can be understood in terms of masculinity, little research has explored values through these terms (cf. Hagedorn 1998). An early exception was Miller (1958)

whose focal concerns, that included toughness, trouble, smartness and fate, embodied a lower class male value system.

Masculinities are particularly pertinent to the prison context because the majority of prisoners are male (women prisoners are accommodated into the system which arguably does not meet their needs, cf. Carlen 1983) and as Newton (1994) notes, masculinities influence criminal subcultures "and may be one of the main reasons for the similarities of cultures across male prisons." Certainly prison might be described as a masculine place. Massey (1994) alludes to the gendered order of places in her discussion around women's relationship to the domestic domain:

> "From the symbolic meaning of spaces/places and the clearly gendered messages which they transmit, to straightforward exclusion by violence, spaces and places are not only themselves gendered but, in their being so, they both reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood."
>
> Massey (1994:179)

As the gendered order of place contributes to the construction and representation of gender within them, being in custody may have an impact on how masculinity is expressed. Newton (1994) draws attention to the fact that masculinity in prison is effectively 'under siege' because it is forced to submit to authority and its autonomy is

denied. Prisoners reassert their dominance by constructing a hypermasculine ideal that incorporates the extremes of hegemonic masculine ideology and prioritises toughness and physical force (Toch 1998). The fear of victimisation means more 'feminine' traits, are rarely expressed (Toch 1992; Edgar, O'Donnell 1998*b*). While the inmates in my research were similarly 'under siege' by the police or official agencies and their age and lifestyles placed them at high risk of violence outside prison (Mirrlees-Black et al 1998), in prison the impact of hypermasculinity was less easy to avoid.

Connell's (1987, 1995) notion of hegemonic masculinity has provided the dominant framework for the development of theories of gender and masculinities. The RSP was probably the 'hegemonic' inmate culture in Haverton. Hegemonic masculinity is always negotiable because it is constructed in relation to women and other subordinated masculinities (Connell 1987:186). However, vagueness persists around the concepts of 'maleness and masculinity' (Collier 1998) and there may be some disjuncture between the theory of masculinity and the reality of men's experiences (Jefferson 1994). Connell acknowledged many men would not live up to the normative 'hegemonic' ideal, but suggested they would continue to benefit from it because patriarchy dominated the order of society, although the

extent hegemonic masculinity can accommodate the complexity of male experiences is not explored.

The difference between the experiences of men who share similar ethnic, cultural, socio-economic positions in society can be considerable. While a 'hypermasculine' reaction might be regularly expressed in prison, expressions of masculinity in prison are varied and some prisoners cope with imprisonment by minimising confrontation. In my research, although the drug culture reflected hypermasculinity, the inmates' use of drugs to calm them down or help them cope with time appeared the opposite, but drug use was not considered weak, nor did it undermine inmates' masculinity. Canaan (1991:122) noted, after undertaking an ethnographic study of working class males: "the fact that masculinity can take several forms, even among a small fragment of white working-class heterosexual male youth, suggests that masculinity is not a unified entity." Indeed because gender interacts with race and class "we must comprehend how gender, race, and class relations are part of all social existence-rather than viewing each relation as extrinsic to the others." (Messerschmidt 1997:3).

Not with my mates! Protection and threats

The RSP was an important support mechanism for members as they served their sentence. Throughout the interviews and in informal discussion, inmates admitted they were often afraid in prison. Newton (1994) notes that men are a source of fear for other men and "male solidarity... is a way of assuring a more secure presence within the dangerous world of other men" (Cockburn 1983:139 quoted in Newton 1994:197). The status offered by membership to the RSP was used to intimidate other inmates and the threat of violence served as a protection strategy for the members (cf. Bottoms 1999). Moore's (1978) study of Chicano gangs in Los Angeles noted that the gangs from the street reformed in prison because they offered inmates psychological and social support. However, using the threat of violence as a means of protection is not unique to institutional life. Bourgois's (1997) study of drug dealing in New York's Spanish Harlem community, found dealers' security in dangerous environments relied on individual ruthlessness, threat and their 'capacity for terror' for survival.

Members of the RSP did 'gang time' (Ralph et al 1996) where a code of loyalty meant they relied on the cohesiveness of the gang to

protect themselves from violence but were obliged to assist other gang members in fights. Craig, a member of the RSP and a sex offender felt he benefited from this protection:

> When people used to ask me what I was in jail for, I used to tell them cos I knew I didn't do it and I didn't care what they think, they're not expecting you to say [rape], I ain't had no hassle over it, ain't had no fights over it... I don't want to be on no [protection] wing, it's full of people that are protected and that and I don't want to be one of those. I don't need protecting. If I'm on that wing and I go to education and people say, 'he's on that wing'. Then they'll think I'm an idiot and they'll try to hurt me, that's the reason, I didn't want no one to take no liberties... It's been good for me, if I went into jail not knowing anyone then it might've been different. It's good to know people when something goes wrong. I mean I ain't really had no trouble, well I've had trouble but none I couldn't handle myself, just a couple of fights... but see if my friends are fighting, then I'd fight as well. That's how all of us (the RSP) think when we come to jail, if one of us is fighting then all of us will fight.

Generally the inmates' attitudes towards sex offenders were not positive and Craig's experiences were starkly different to the four other sex offenders I interviewed in my research. Robert, for example, was serving nine years for rape. While Craig denied he had committed the crime, Robert simply did not discuss his crime in our interview. Scully's (1990) study of convicted rapists distinguished between the attitudes of admitters, those who explained their behaviour as rape but did not regard themselves as rapists and deniers, who set narrow boundaries around what constituted rape and

did not see that it pertained to their situation. Scully's study offers some insight into the general perception of rapists as pathological and the view of their crimes as reprehensible but does not explain why certain sex offenders receive differential treatment. Robert felt more alienated and sought protection. As the research progressed, a prison officer explained that he refused to leave his wing because Robert was afraid of being attacked.

Membership to the RSP may not be the only explanation for the different treatment of Craig and Robert, as Ian suggested:

> Like see over there on the wing, when they (the staff) say jump, they expected everyone to jump, but see when the black boys didn't jump, it didn't matter but when the white boys didn't jump, they was on him. They're used to it from the black boys...that's the way they are. I mean if a white boy comes in for rape, he's a dirty bastard, but if a black boy comes in for rape, then he's left alone.

Craig was a black inmate and Robert was a white inmate. Research has suggested black inmates are less likely to be victimised in prison compared to white and Asian inmates (Bottoms 1999: 229). The different treatment of black and white rapists may have been based on perceptions of masculinity. Black criminality is often associated with an archetypal black masculinity, characterised by consumerism, violence and sexuality (Murji 1998), a 'cool pose' (Taylor et al 1994)

and hustling (cf. Pryce 1979). According to Taylor et al (1994), this kind of 'distorted' masculinity emerged as compensation for the marginal position of black men in society and Bourgois (1996) found a similar expression of masculinity amongst marginalised Puerto Rican youths in the United States, who 'took refuge' in a predatory street culture when unable to replicate traditional masculine roles. However, working class men from all ethnic groups are affected by economic marginalisation (cf. MacDonald 1997) and forced to redefine their role in society. Identifying a unique masculinity for black men ignores shared experiences with men from other ethnic groups and reinforces the 'otherness' of blackness which easily reverts to 'popular racism' (Murji 1998).

It was common for all inmates to seek their protection from friends, as Lawrence explained:

> When you come to a different prison, nobody knows you, they don't know what you're like and that's when trouble starts, People want to fight you and take you for a fool but when they see you know this person or that this person is safe towards you, they ain't gonna get you.

However, the number of RSP members in the prison made the policy of 'fight one of us, fight all of us' extremely intimidating and ensured

members of the gang were untouchable. As Martin, a member of the gang, said:

> If I have a fight yeah and I reckon I can take the person I'll say to [my friends], step back, but if I don't say nothing they'll just jump in, just for the fun of it, like on one wing there is a boy from my area and he is small, so when he had a fight we all jumped in and helped him... If I didn't have my friends and that I'd probably have black eyes by now or something. We're on all the wings, all around the place, so if boys go down the block, there are some of us there, or to [basic regime], there is men there, so it's not worth fighting us.

During my research, an interviewee was badly bruised after being struck by Martin. Martin raised the incident in our interview complaining he had been provoked and he felt he had to fight: "He kept cussing my mum and everyone was going: 'Hey, Martin, what's going on?' Cos everyone was expecting me to fight yeah, but I was thinking I've got four months left but I ain't gonna say that cos that's gonna make me look a dickhead." Insults directed towards an inmate's family were unacceptable and the pressure to uphold the masculine ideal left Martin feeling he had little option but to protect the honour of his family using violence. However, despite his association with the gang that would have ensured the involvement of others if the fight were to escalate, Martin chose what might be described as an unconfrontational approach to the fight by hitting the

inmate from behind. He knocked him to the floor so that he could

not retaliate.

The RSP could act tough but rarely had to prove they were tough,

indeed fear of the RSP and the sheer number of inmates connected

with them on the wings effectively reduced confrontation, as one

inmate explained:

> Ian: If someone said something to me on the outside, I'd say
> you're a fuckin' idiot, what's the point in running your mouth
> off if you ain't gonna do nothing about it. I'm a great believer
> that if you've got a problem with someone and you wanna
> fight them, then fight 'em, don't cuss (insult) him and then
> cuss his family, hit him and do him a favour, it's tough shit. In
> here, if someone says something about your family then
> you've got to defend it, y'know what I mean, otherwise it
> looks like you're backing down.
>
> NC: So does that mean that you're often in a situation where
> you have to fight in here?
>
> Ian: Well fighting is not the first thing that comes to mind, if I
> can talk my way out of a situation then I will, but there is only
> so much talking you can do before you ave react. In here,
> they'll go into their own little groups, like people from west,
> south and north [of the city]. I don't get involved in all their
> little troubles, but if you fight one of them, you ave to fight all
> of them.

Goodey (1997) suggests young men often lack the 'emotional

literacy' to communicate their vulnerability as they learn to develop a

'fearless façade' which encourages expressions of exaggerated

masculinity. My research suggested that underneath the inmates' expressions of exaggerated masculinity in prison, their membership of gangs, their threats and seeming willingness to fight was a culture of fear and youthful vulnerability.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored drug supply in Haverton distinguishing between external routes of supply via visits and internal sources of supply that were linked with inmate relationships. In Haverton the inmate culture was dominated by the RSP, a gang imported from outside prison, based on territory and organised by the age of the members. Membership to the RSP increased access to drugs in the prison as inmates shared their drug supplies across their friendship networks. Conversely, access to drugs was limited for those inmates who were not included in the inmate subculture. They had to rely on their own supply or risk debt because deals with gang members could be expensive. The inmate culture also protected inmates from intimidation. The size of the RSP and the threat of violence associated with the gang deterred other inmates from confronting or fighting with the members. The next chapter discusses the staff – inmate relationships and attitudes towards drug control in Haverton.

CHAPTER 6

A QUESTION OF CONTROL
Staff and inmate relationships, legitimacy and drug control

The last chapter explored the nature of drug supply into prison. This chapter focuses on the nature of drug control and staff and inmates' attitudes towards mandatory drug testing in Haverton. The first section of the chapter considers control in prison more broadly, critiquing the theory of total power before considering how control is maintained by negotiation between staff and inmates. In Haverton staff power was continually contested by the inmates who engaged in a 'power game'. It is argued that MDT and drug controls generally lacked legitimacy in Haverton. The theory of legitimacy and how the legitimacy of staff power was established with reference to fairness, consistency and discretion is discussed. The security emphasis of the drug strategy in Haverton, testing procedures, the limited deterrent effect and societal attitudes towards drugs influenced the legitimacy of MDT.

.Confronting control and power in prison

Maintaining control in prison is an ongoing problem exacerbated by the nature of the institution itself because prisoners are held against their will. As King (1985:186) noted "the control problem - of how to maintain 'good order and discipline' - is endemic." The constant struggle to maintain order highlights why, to use Cressey's (1961:2) term, "one of the most amazing things about prisons is how they 'work' at all."

Foucault (1977) explored the nature of penal power, describing it as total, fluid and beyond the limitations of individual action (Garland 1990:138). More concerned with the 'technologies' of power and utilising Bentham's Panopticon, Foucault demonstrated 'the automatic functioning of power' within institutions (Foucault 1977:210). Foucault 'de-individualised' power never tackling the thorny question of why or how power could be exercised in the way he described. Consequently, as Garland (1990:170) notes, power "appears as a kind of an empty structure, stripped of any agents, interests, or grounding, reduced to a bare technological scaffolding." Garland (1990) noted that Foucault's description of power failed to recognise other values

that affected punishment aside from those of power and control[1].

Neither did Foucault explore individual capabilities to resist power.

Even Goffman (1961), writing about the total institution, left room for

resistance where an inmate using 'secondary adjustments' could

potentially 'withdraw', 'colonize', 'convert' or challenge the order of

the institution and the inevitable mortification of their self.

The 'defects of total power' were identified in early prison studies.

While the prison potentially has authoritative power, Sykes (1958)

drew a distinction between the power guards could theoretically

implement in the prison and the reality of their situation, where

"ordinary guards may not feel in a very powerful position at all"

(Sparks et al 1996:42). Sykes noted that despite the range of coercive

powers at their disposal, the guards' effectiveness is limited because

they cannot encourage a duty amongst the inmates to conform. Any

potential inducements to do so are undermined by the inadequacy of

the system of rewards and punishments. Such structural defects in

power forces officers to resort to what Sykes (1958) called

'corruptions', where the friendships and reciprocal relationships

formed with the inmates assist them in their daily task of maintaining

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[1]However, Garland (1990:157) notes the tendency by sociologists to generalise Foucault's work, while not recognising the limitations of a principally historical text where the theory is implicit.

control. However, the balance of power can be distorted. The example of the Maze prison prior to ratification of the Good Friday Agreement that secured its closure, demonstrated that inmates (whose paramilitary contacts outside reinforced the threat they posed to officers) were effectively able to control the regime. In more usual circumstances, order in prison is negotiated (cf. Sparks et al 1996:42) between the guards and inmates. However, prison officers are somewhat more powerful, albeit to a limited degree, because at times of confrontation or inmate protest, they have the resources available to them, and ultimately the power, to restore order to an institution (Bottoms 1999).

Sykes' view that order in prison is negotiated, highlights the importance of compliance (voluntary conformity) and the extent to which prisoners share in the processes of social control (cf. Cloward 1960). It moves away from the authoritarian view of prison power as coercive, although some prisons will certainly be more repressive than others (cf. Scraton et al 1991). Therefore, a model of penal power needs to accommodate the influence of both staff and inmates. Sparks et al (1996) draw on the dialectic of control from Giddens' structuration theory. The dialectic refers to situations where those in 'powerless' positions have the potential to exert influence on the

powerful. As Giddens (1984:16) explains, "power within social systems which enjoy some continuity over time and space", as they do in prison, "presumes regularised relations of autonomy and dependence between actors and collectivities in contexts of social interaction. But all forms of dependence offer some resources whereby those who are subordinate can influence the activities of their superiors."

The dialectic of control has wider ramifications for the reproduction of social structures generally. The nature of power as constraining and enabling means there is potential for change. No social systems are protected simply because they have existed for long periods of time. Prisons may be continually reproduced across time and space but this does not remove the opportunity for change or imply agents collectively agree with its existence (Sparks et al 1996:73). Therefore, despite its central role in the criminal justice system, the existence of the prison is not guaranteed and punishment as a product of historical development will only continue to exist for as long as society supports it. As Garland (1990:21) notes:

> "Punishment may be a legal institution, administered by state functionaries, but it is necessarily grounded in wider patterns of knowing, feeling and acting, and it depends on these social roots and supports for its continued legitimacy and operation. It

is also grounded in history, for, like all social institutions, modern punishment is a historical outcome which is only imperfectly adapted to its current situation."

Giddens states that "human societies or social systems would plainly not exist without human agency but it is not the case that actors create social systems: they reproduce or transform them, remaking what is already made in the continuity of *praxis*" (Giddens 1984:171). Therefore, actors are not unconstrained and their actions will have unintended consequences that will influence the reproduction of social systems in unforeseen ways. Structuration is not simply about understanding the possibility of human action in the light of structural constraint, but is "an attempt to provide the conceptual means of analyzing the often delicate and subtle interlacings of reflexively organized action and institutional constraint" (Giddens quoted in Sparks et al 1996:74).

It could be argued, however, that the existence of the prison is more immutable when a distinction is made between the individual prison and the practice of imprisonment. While episodes of disorder, such as the Strangeways prison riot and the subsequent inquiry by Lord Justice Woolf, might force changes in prison organisation, regimes and management (Stern 1993), the reliance on imprisonment as the

ultimate punishment is rarely undermined. Indeed, Hough and Roberts (1998) study on attitudes to punishment revealed a preference for prison amongst the public when they were asked to sentence an offender for burglary (54% wanted a prison sentence compared to 26% who opted for a community penalty). Despite the public and media's call for harsher sentences, Hough and Roberts found the public also thought it unlikely that prison was the most effective remedy for rising crime. Four out of five people cited solutions outside the criminal justice system, such as schools and the family, as more effective (Hough and Roberts 1998:34).

The public's confused attitude towards prisons is unsurprising precisely because prison fulfils many functions in society, making any assessment of its impact complex. As Ignatieff (1978:210) noted in his historical analysis of prison: "the persistent support for the penitentiary is inexplicable so long as we assume that its appeal rested on its functional capacity to control crime. Instead, its support rested on a larger social need." Therefore, as Garland (1990:282) highlights, "penality should be seen not as a singular kind of event or relationship but rather as a social institution... and to picture it primarily in these terms, gives us a way of depicting the complexity and multifaceted character of this phenomenon in a single master image." To point to

the failures of prison and highlighting its lack of legitimacy overlooks

how the failures become a "tolerated cost of pursuing other objectives

such as retribution, incapacitation and exclusion" (Garland 1990:289).

Even if, as abolitionists argue, the failures of prison are considerable,

as Mathiesen (1990:137) notes:

> The theories of individual prevention - rehabilitation, incapacitation, individual deterrence - are unable to defend the prison. Neither is the other major theory of social defence - the theory of general prevention. And neither is, finally, the theory of justice. The prison does not have a defence, the prison is a fiasco in terms of its own purpose... it may be said that we have prison despite the fiasco because there exists a pervasive and persistent ideology of prison in our society...which renders the prison as an institution and a sanction meaningful and legitimate.

While Mathiesen's claims about the extent to which prison has failed

to fulfil its functions might be questioned, the claims in their extreme

highlight how the function of prison in society is assumed, as prison

has become synonymous with punishment.

Negotiating control: building good relations

Coercion does not guarantee order and control in prison; rather

control relies on a range of normative strategies between prison staff

and inmates. While notions of voluntary compliance at first appear

anomalous in a prison environment where individuals are forced to be

there, the inmates' instrumental attitude to prison life in my research where they draw on resources to achieve their own ends, forms the foundation for a compliant relationship. Generally, research indicates that inmates have an interest in maintaining order and often rely on the status quo of the institution (cf. Cloward 1960). For example, Kalinich (1980) explored the influence the illicit prison economy had on the stability of an American prison noting that the: "existence of contraband is not eliminated by bureaucratic solutions. On the contrary, the flow of contraband contributes to stability in the prison community by supporting the informal power structure that supports order and to some extent deals with the material and psychological needs of the residents" (Kalinich 1980:5). Kalinich's thesis suggests that any decrease in the flow of illicit goods would adversely influence the stability of the institution (as demand is taken to be inelastic) and consequently, both the staff and inmates have an interest in maintaining its flow.

The influence of the illicit market on prison stability could partly explain why it is so difficult to eradicate cannabis use in prison, or the reluctance to introduce measures that would ensure use was almost negligible. The pervasiveness of cannabis (as suggested in previous chapters) means seeking to eradicate use would require punitive

action, which in light of the inmates and staff attitudes towards the drugs (discussed later in this chapter) would create considerable disharmony.

The power game

Applying Giddens' dialectic of control to the prison context suggests the authority and dominance of staff is not guaranteed and their power is continually contested. In my research both the prison staff and inmates referred to this power struggle as a 'game'. Subverting authority is not confined to the prison environment and is a feature of persistent offenders' lifestyles (West 1982), where similar satisfaction is derived from 'getting one over the Old Bill' (Foster 1990:117). While the inmates used drugs because they had used drugs outside and felt it was compatible and worth risking in prison, drug use also became a means to subvert institutional power, as Alan, a senior officer, explained:

> I mean if they can get behind their cell and have one little reefer then they've beat us... they're sneaking the odd reefer here and there, they've got one up on us, it's a game. Some don't take it too seriously but we're not being allowed to stop it, it's not a failure, it's a game and you play the game.

Alan's comments reveal how the inmates' resistance to staff power is inevitable and increases as rules become more pervasive and punitive.

This was clearly demonstrated by Farheem's experiences where after seven years in custody he was able to relate the burgeoning rules and resources targeted towards preventing drug use, with the corresponding reaction amongst the inmates to maintain their drug supply and prevent detection by hiding drugs in more innovative (and intimate) ways (see chapter 5).

The inmates understood the importance of 'playing the game' and that it was in their interests to negotiate with the staff. They agreed that resistance was less fruitful and conforming to the regime was more likely to get them what they needed, as one inmate, Tony, explained:

> I come in here and I started to suss out the way things are, well I get on with the SO (senior officer) and PO (principal officer) and that. Cos I'm getting on with them, then I am all right... there is no point in messing about, you can't beat the system so there is no point in arguing with it. You've got to keep yourself to yourself no arguments and just be happy, you know what I mean? Like when I first come, well they must have seen a difference... I stopped doin this and then that and then they come to my cell and told me to keep it up, cos I was doin good and then you ask the officers for something and they will do it, but if you ask for something and you are all over the place, they won't do nothing for you.

Jo described how it was easier to pass his sentence when he demonstrated good behaviour:

The screws let me get away with certain things and I can go over a bit what I did last time and the time before. They don't go on at me to do this and do that; they're more open with me and that. I mean you can do it the hard way and the screws will come round and stitch you up but you can play the game too and you get a lot more. They kinda respect you for it and you get a lot of extra privileges and that really.

Both Tony and Jo describe the process of learning how to do their time (cf. Morris and Morris 1963:169). Biographical accounts of prison life also reveal that disruptive inmates gradually come round to realise that working against the system is not helpful or necessarily in their best interests (McVicar 1974; Boyle 1977). The inmates in my research agreed that it was important for staff not to perceive them as troublemakers because as Kevin said: "If you don't get nicked and you don't get no piss test, then you're all right. You've just got to mind what you are doin. I'm doin that now by letting them [the prison staff] know I'm not doin certain things."

The inmates' attitudes, with regard to demonstrating good behaviour and using the regime to help pass their time, reflects their instrumentality and how they colluded with the regime as a means to an end. This suggested something interesting about the extent the inmates became implicated in their own confinement. Foucault, theorising about power and the concept of 'governmentality', offers a

useful framework to explore these issues. Garland (1997) explained that governmentality related to the rules used by those in authority to govern and how individuals subject themselves to governance. In the prison this relates to how prisoners are governed through the rules and regulations of the institution and how they exercise their agency and learn to govern themselves. However, inmates are not free to act "on the contrary, the form of agency sanctioned by the institution is that of the self-confining, prudent individual whose behaviour is aligned with the goals of the prison authorities." (Garland 1997:192). Within the context of the 'new penology' that seeks to manage the potential risk offenders pose to society (Feeley and Simon 1994), those who behave prudently, in accordance with the institution, will have their behaviour rewarded through a scheme of earned incentives (cf. Liebling et al 1997).

In my research it was unclear whether 'playing the game' was just that, a game where the inmates managed their public displays of behaviour, as opposed to accepting the value system of the prison (was the inmates' behaviour about growing up or getting 'clued up'?). It would perhaps be surprising if inmates in my study were truly conforming to the regime (i.e. their belief system had changed) because few were exposed to the 'protective' factors associated with

desistence from crime, such as stable relationships (Sampson and Laub 1993; Graham and Bowling 1995) and, as I discussed in chapter 5, all the inmates exhibited anti-authoritarian attitudes. Reconviction rates would also suggest such attitudinal changes are not occurring during prison sentences.

Furthermore, inmates who 'conformed' did not suspend all their deviant practices. They continued to use cannabis throughout their sentence but had outwardly modified their behaviour to appear conforming. This suggested the inmates were conforming to the regime and staff expectations of what constituted a 'good prisoner' in order to achieve recognition, or to ensure officers would not view them as a troublemaker. A good reputation amongst prison staff allowed the inmates to get on with the business of prison life, including smoking cannabis and sharing their possessions, under less scrutiny and attracting less suspicion.

Displays of 'conformity' to the regime by inmates might not be unexpected, as inmates do not necessarily hold normatively deviant views. For example, Benaquisto and Freed (1996) refer to the 'myth of inmate lawlessness' after conducting a study amongst prison inmates in the United States. They found substantial differences

between inmates' private and public expressions of lawlessness. While individual inmates generally believed other inmates were less conforming than them, privately they were more conforming and often shared attributes with prison staff. However, the difficulty for inmates is reconciling their individual beliefs with the norms of the inmate culture that can set itself in opposition to prison rules. Although as suggested by Kalinich's research on contraband, conventional prison culture and inmate culture may be seeking to achieve the same ends - stability. In my research, maintaining the distinction between 'playing the game' and actually committing to the regime was crucial. By doing the former (which effectively had the same result as the latter) inmates could avoid the label 'screw-boy' and protect themselves from victimisation.

Inmates like Tony and Jo benefited from adopting an instrumental approach to the regime. However, other inmates did not manage their interactions with staff so effectively. For example, Martin, as a member of the RSP, found his relationship with staff difficult. He felt misunderstood because the staff did not know 'how it was', referring to his life experiences before custody. At 16 he felt there was a considerable gap between himself and the officers. His belief that the

staff did not like him reinforced his feelings of isolation and powerlessness:

> Like they [the staff] don't know how criminals are, you know what I mean? They don't know the way we are, us boys, they're on a different level. In their life they have never done anything before so they don't know how it is. Like most of the times on the landing they're always shouting at us and most of them don't like us and if they don't like us they shouldn't be here...

During my times on the wings I did not find the officers were 'always shouting', although at particular times during the day, especially meal times, 'bang up', or when inmates were moved off the wing to work or education, the officers were (often understandably) more vocal. Maintaining control at these times was more difficult as inmates would delay going back to their cells (against the prison rules) or take the opportunity to go into their friend's cells (against the prison rules) to borrow and exchange goods (against the prison rules). Martin went on to explain how his perception of officers influenced how he experienced the power and control exercised over him:

> I mean it gets on my nerves but I can't do nothing, they've got the keys yeah and it's not worth arguing with them... some people do but you don't get no where. But outside now, they can't talk to me like that cos they ain't got no power. They have got keys and I have got keys to my own front door... [In here] they have power, at the end of the day they're locking us up. They're putting us in our cells and they're locking us up.

Plus they're bigger people than us, they have power that way as well.

Martin's commitment to the anti-authority RSP (the dominant inmate gang in the prison) probably explained why outwardly, he was resistant and avoided 'playing the game'. Martin also individualised power, associating it directly with the officers (rather than with the police who caught him, or judiciary who sentenced him). Officers possessed keys and had the ability to lock him in his cell (this reassured me that my decision not to carry keys was a good one). Martin overlooked his general powerlessness in society as a young, uneducated, ex-inmate with a serious police record.

Other inmates still thought the 'power game' was alive despite the staff's possession of keys, as Andy explained:

> At the end of the day you're gonna lose to the screws and that's the way I see it, they're the ones with the keys innit, they're the ones that make the rules and that, you can't get no where mate... [but we're] not under their control, they're there to stop it all, like they leave you to do whatever you can do, not take the piss, as soon as you take the piss, that's when they step in and lay down their rules. But till then you're free, not free but have privileges till you step over that mark and that. I mean I don't get on with them but I talk to them cos they're there and there is fuck all else to do...[but] don't try and beat it and all that, it ain't worth it.

Andy's comments highlight how the power game tested the boundaries of staff power and the limits of their own confinement. The inmates not doing as they were told or not immediately 'banging up' after meals and association because they were sneaking into each other's cells all tested the resolve of officers. Even the inmates' use of drugs became a way of testing the boundaries of staff intervention. As Clarence said: "[the staff] will turn a blind eye, but if you take the piss they will probably get you in trouble." 'Taking the piss' amounted to using cannabis more overtly on the wings as opposed to discreetly in the inmate's cell. Smoking cannabis openly on the wings could be interpreted as directly challenging the officers to intervene in an inmate's behaviour.

Nevertheless, the inmates in my research probably expected the staff to intervene and were reassured when their open displays of rule breaking were tackled. For example, Liebling and Price (1999) in their study of staff-prisoner relationships in Whitemoor observed that inmates were uncomfortable if officers backed away from situations where they were expected to intervene. To illustrate this they drew on an incident where an inmate rolled a joint on the wing and was sent by an officer to roll it in his cell. If he did not, the officers threatened to lock down the wing and spin (search) everyone's cell. The inmate

commented: "he put it right on me then, so I said, all right, I'll do it in my cell. So it stopped me walking around with the joint, which is fair enough because I was taking the piss" (ibid: 22). Inmates are uncomfortable when staff do not intervene in situations where they are expected too because (as discussed above) they rely on order and stability in the prison. As Andy said, 'the staff are there to stop it all' and the inmates rely on them doing so to make their experiences of custody more predictable.

In this chapter I have considered the nature of control in prison and how it was negotiated and contested by the staff and inmates in Haverton through the power game. Generally, staff and inmate relations in Haverton were good (although what constitutes a 'good relationship' is open to some discussion, cf. Liebling and Price 1999). In 1998 an inspection of Haverton revealed that 60% of prisoners were satisfied with the way they were treated by staff and that staff classified their relations with the inmates as positive. The next section considers staff-inmate relationships in terms of legitimacy. The first part explores the theory of legitimacy before discussing how staff power was legitimated in Haverton through the exercise of discretion and fairness. The final section evaluates the principles of legitimacy to drug control and MDT.

Legitimating power

A discussion of legitimacy shifts the emphasis away from negotiation to understand how the exercise of staff power and their authority is made acceptable. In a study of two long-term maximum security prisons, Albany and Long Lartin, Sparks and Bottoms (1995; see also Sparks et al 1996) suggested good relationships facilitated the legitimation of authority, and the personal approach of officers to enforcement directly influenced the inmates' views of power. Legitimation equates to justification, as Sparks (1994:14) notes: "the term legitimacy refers to the claims made by government or dominant groups within a distribution of power to justified authority." The theory of legitimacy attempts to explain why control does not rely on coercion alone but that for various reasons, individuals comply voluntarily (ibid:15).

Sparks and Bottoms (1995; also see Sparks 1994; Sparks et al 1996) used Beetham's post-Weberian concept of legitimacy, in which "a given power relationship is not legitimate because people believe in its legitimacy, but because it can be justified in terms of their beliefs" (Beetham 1991:11 quoted in Sparks and Bottoms 1995:48). Sparks and Bottoms (1995: 59) suggest that achieving legitimacy is not

equivalent to pandering to inmates demands because improvements in prison conditions must be justified in terms of broader social, political and moral beliefs. In Beetham's formulation, there is an opposite, illegitimate power for each dimension of legitimate power (Sparks 1994:15; Sparks and Bottoms 1995:47). Where legitimacy concerned conformity and justifiability of the rules and legitimations through consent, the converse illegitimacy was the breach of rules. A legitimacy deficit exists where there is a disjuncture between rules and shared beliefs. Delegitimation was the withdrawal of consent to rules. According to Beetham, all forms of power seek legitimation, although it is rarely perfectly achieved (Sparks 1994) and some forms of power, for example coercive power, require legitimation more than others.

Riots in a number of prisons throughout the 1980s and 1990s and the difficulty of identifying one precipitating cause of disorder highlighted how far individualised explanations of disorder were inadequate. Thomas and Pooley (1980) noted how causal explanations for the riot at Hull prison in 1976 differed for the staff and inmates. The former cited macro-structures and breakdown in communication while the latter referred to conditions and regime as the primary cause of disorder. However, the common explanation for episodic disorder

based on troublesome ringleaders was wholly inadequate (cf. Thomas, Pooley 1980; King 1985; Sim 1994*b*), as King (1985:189) notes:

> "... conceptualising the control problem as the product of difficult or disturbed individuals, and developing a reactive policy towards them has been both partial and self-defeating. Partial in that it ignores all the structural, environmental and interactive circumstances that generate trouble reducing it to some inherent wilfulness or malfunction. Self defeating in that the policy itself becomes part of those very circumstances that generate the trouble: it is likely that among those who get defined as troublemakers there are some who are made into trouble makers as a result of the way they are dealt with in prison, just as there are some who come to prison as troublemakers."

The question of legitimacy dominated the discussion of penal power in the wake of riots in the early 1990s. Trouble in prison, it was argued, was socially constructed and only by examining the regimes and conditions in various prisons could causal explanations be established (King and McDermott 1990). Episodic disorder was symptomatic of a more fundamental crisis in prisons, a crisis of legitimacy, which meant any coercive measures to re-establish control failed. The inmates were frustrated and an increased awareness of their rights reinforced the perception that penal power lacked legitimacy (Sim 1994*b*). After a long period of discontent, the siege at Manchester Prison in 1990 culminated in the Woolf Report and the undeniable fact that disorder was inextricably linked to structural conditions in prisons

and the grievances of inmates. It was recognised that stability in prison rested on a balance between security, control and justice 'to ensure inmates were treated with humanity and fairness' (Player and Jenkins 1994:9).

However the increased justice associated with the liberal regimes of the Woolf era did not engender ordered inmate behaviour, indeed the escapes from Whitemoor and Parkhurst reflected the extreme outcomes of more trusting regimes. The response to the escapes was unequivocal, as Liebling (2000:4) notes: 'the formal took precedent over the informal and we witnessed a return to rules'. The new security era focuses on gathering knowledge within the broader context of managing risk. Such knowledge provided the means to predict and overcome prisoner resistance (cf. Ericson and Haggerty 1997; Feeley and Simon 1994). Therefore, the introduction of MDT phased into all prison establishments by 1996 and more recently the programme of incentives and earned privileges introduced into Haverton at the time of the research, occurred as the prison service was seeking to improve security (Liebling et al 1997). While the prison service drugs strategy had three main strands: to reduce the drug supply; reduce demand; and implement measures to protect the welfare of those inside and outside the prison from drug related harm

(*Drug Misuse in Prison* 1996)[2], the focus of MDT was on deterrence and it aimed to increase 'objective' knowledge about the extent of drug misuse amongst prisoners (Edgar and O'Donnell 1998*a*). The responsibility for treatment programmes lay locally with individual governors, fuelling concerns that drug rehabilitation would be under-emphasised in favour of detection and punishment.

Assessing the impact of the shift to security on prison life is complex, as Liebling (2000) highlights, prisoners today have more rights (as a result of previous conflicts that have improved their material existence), although arguably inmates have less power. Indeed, a return to relying on the substantial technologies of power (as originally described by Foucault), such as CCTV and X ray machines, should render any need for negotiation with inmates to secure order unnecessary. Inmates should not be a threat to order if they are unable to generate collective power and any power they did have as individuals has been eroded. Yet research which focuses on legitimacy (cf. Sparks et al 1996) and the importance of staff and inmate relationships (cf. Price and Liebling 1998; Liebling and Price

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[2] In October 1999 the prison service announced that the CARAT (Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare) schemes would be available in prisons throughout England and Wales. The scheme aim to provide support and information on agencies inside and outside prison, to prisoners with moderate and low drug problems. MDTs remain a core part of the prison service drug strategy (*Tackling Drugs in Prison* 1998).

1999) suggests that despite the technologies of power, agency continues to be important in maintaining order in prisons.

In my research, the inmates discussed their experience of staff power and when they found the exercise of their authority more acceptable. Fair treatment and discretion went some way to legitimise staff power and encourage compliance amongst the inmates. The next section discusses the legitimacy of staff power in Haverton more generally before examining the principles of legitimacy in relation to MDT and the control of drugs.

Exercising discretion

Discretion in the deployment of penal power is a fundamental characteristic of prison life (Sparks et al 1996). In their assessment of authority and legitimacy at Long Lartin, Sparks and Bottoms (1995:57) noted how staff took pride in the fact that order was maintained 'without formally sanctioning every 'petty' infraction of the rules'. Indeed discretion is inherent in all rule enforcement. For example, Dixon's (1997) discussion of law in policing revealed that police work was highly discretionary and officers in the course of their duty draw on knowledge and their occupational culture to assist with

their interpretation of events, despite the potential tension this creates between their working rules and the law. McConville et al (1991) also comment on discretion, noting that while it may not always be visible, police officers usually "decide what they want to do and then fit their legal powers around that decision, rather than assessing their legal powers first and seeing what action might be lawful." Price and Liebling (1998:120) highlighted three reasons why understanding discretion in prison was important. Firstly, it was inevitable either because of the way rules were constructed, the situations they were applied to and what they aimed to achieve. Second, procedural rules were important to inmates and finally, understanding how prison officers made decisions offered further insight into what their job involved.

In Haverton the staff and inmates valued discretion. The inmates disliked overt displays of power and discretion served to make staff power less obtrusive, thereby helping to legitimate the staff's position. The inmates interpreted the meticulous enforcement of rules as an abuse of power and would describe the officers as 'being on a power trip' with 'a bit of superiority going to their heads'. The inmates often interpreted more rigid enforcement of prison rules as the officers deliberately trying to disrupt their lives. For example, one inmate

was disgruntled after he was moved to the enhanced regime drug-free wing where he felt the officers exercised their power more overtly:

> I think the officers are better over on the main prison, they don't care they just talk to you like normal. Over there [on the enhanced wing] they know they can just say get off the wing... they think they have got more power and they take advantage. It's so irritating cos they try and push you so far to try and see how much you can resist, do you know what I mean? They push you and push you, you ask them for things and they say no. When I first went there I was arguing with the officers. On the main prison if you don't go to work or education it's bang up [locked in cell], but here [on the enhanced wing] you have to come out and clean the wing... I mean I want bang up; I need time in my cell to study.

The impact of the incentives and earned privileges regime on the inmates' behaviour was complex. The inmates who I interviewed suggested cannabis use increased when being held on the basic regime, highlighting the counter-productive impact of punishing inmates by making them spend more time in their cells (see chapter 4). Furthermore, the inmates did not perceive the privileges that came with being on the enhanced regime wing (such as extra visits and more time out of their cell) as sufficient enough to encourage them to give up the relatively unrestricted life they lived on the main prison. During the research only one inmate moved to the enhanced regime wing. This suggests the regime in Haverton in its current form was not having the desired impact on inmates' behaviour, although this

may have been associated with the recent introduction of changes into the prison.

At the discretion of staff the inmates on the main prison also accessed a range of extra privileges. With discretion came a kind of freedom for the inmates because certain behaviour, as long as it did not directly impede the regime or threaten the overall stability of the institution, was overlooked. For example, the inmates appreciated being allowed to have extra towels in their kit (rather than the two specified) or an extra half an hour out of their cell during evening association.

Discretion also explained why staff did not act on inmates' cannabis use in their cells. When smoking was hidden, it was not confrontational and did not directly challenge staff power or undermine the stability of the prison. However, staff opinions differed on how far discreet cannabis use represented a significant problem to the maintenance of order. For some officers, the problem of order was inherent when discussing drug use simply because it was against the law, against prison rules and limited supply made the threat of dealing and debt high. For others, the problems associated with drug culture as opposed to the pharmacological effects of cannabis were the primary concern, as one member of staff explained:

> Do I feel drugs are a problem? Well I feel it's the problems that
> stem from the drugs that are bigger now. I don't think we
> suffer so much from the effects drugs have on people here. I
> believe it's more the culture around drugs, the bullying, and the
> assaults, that sort of thing.

Distinguishing between the physiological effects of the drug on the user and the impact on control explains why tolerance only extended to cannabis use and not to hard drug use. However this was an artificial distinction because while the effects of drugs on the individual may differ, their effect on the institution is significant and a number of control problems stem from the drug market generally. The distinction is even more difficult to uphold considering that to access any drug in prison, be they class A or cannabis, requires similar techniques of trafficking and exchange.

Discretion gave the officers an opportunity to deal with inmates' problems informally, which they often preferred. For example, Elory at nearly twenty-one years old was looking forward to serving the remainder of his four-year sentence in an adult institution. It was Elory's first time in prison and he had some difficulty adjusting to the environment and being told what to do. His relationship with officers was often confrontational. However, he explained that he respected prison officers that dealt with incidents 'as he would on the street', by

this he meant informally, not calling on other officials or rules and regulations to resolve a problem. He explained that one officer on his wing did not call for reinforcements when dealing with two inmates fighting, but separated them and let the situation calm itself down. Elory explained: "my man can relate to him and talk to him, other man [*sic*] they're on a power trip like cos they've got a black and white uniform on." Discretion and informality emphasised staff autonomy and their ability to maintain their identity and individuality despite having to work within the rules of the institution. It was a struggle the inmates faced themselves and, as Elory's comments suggest, it was this shared perspective that made inmates more able to relate to members of prison staff.

The officers, like the inmates, sought protection through their own work culture. Prison officer culture needs to be understood in relation to the nature of prison work, just as Chan (1996:131) stresses with police culture, that it "should not be understood as some internalized rules or values independent of the conditions of policing". Often alienating (the officers have little notion of a successful end product) and risky, prison work can potentially make officers feel powerless and isolated (Poole and Regoli 1981). Kauffman (1988) notes that prison officers' culture emphasises solidarity and support, where

positive concern must be expressed for other officers and care must be taken not to be too sympathetic with inmates. As with the police, prison officers' culture provides a 'shield of secrecy and solidarity' (Chan 1996:121).

Discretion enabled prison staff to decide to what degree they should exercise their authority. Liebling and Price (1999) in their study of Whitemoor found prison staff used discretion as part of their role as peacekeepers. That is, officers were more likely to under use their power, than abuse power (although the potential for abuses of power needs to be acknowledged such as a recent case brought by prisoners against officers in Wormwood Scrubs who used excessive force on them). In my research, the inmates discussed how important it was for officers to be consistent when they interacted with the inmates and, as discretion goes largely unregulated, there was potential for consistency and therefore fairness to be undermined. Gilbert (1997) noted that models of power in prison that denied the existence of discretionary power resulted in that discretion being overlooked and going unmonitored; "by default, classical management in a prison leaves the discretionary behaviour of correctional officers almost totally unguided under paramilitary guise of rigid control" (Gilbert 1997:58). In such situations the principles that guide discretion

become unclear. For example, whether discretion is exercised in the interest of maintaining order and therefore essentially peacekeeping, or whether it is an expression of favouritism towards certain inmates, which could encourage discontent amongst other inmates on the wings.

Consistency: seeking a fair deal

Consistency when enforcing prison rules and exercising discretion was important for the inmates because treating the inmates' cases and rule infractions alike increased the inmates' perceptions of officers' fairness. Therefore consistency was also closely aligned with fair treatment (Liebling and Price 1998), which allowed the staff and inmates to build a tolerable relationship. The inmates liked to know where they stood with the staff, as Dela said: "[good officers] are the ones that don't let you take the piss or nothing, just give you what you're entitled". Tyler (1990) highlighted the importance of fairness in fostering voluntary compliance and establishing the legitimacy of authority. Rejecting the instrumentalist view of justice procedures, where compliance and legitimacy rested on the perception of outcomes, Tyler (1990) noted the impact of normative issues and how the perception of procedures as fair increased their legitimacy and

nullified the impact of negative outcomes. Factors that contributed to the perception of fair treatment included the opportunity to be heard and the perceived quality of justice.

Research on fairness in prison reveals that fairness of the prison regime matters less to inmates than the perceived fairness of the prison staff (cf. Bottoms and Rose 1998). Support for the idea that the fairness of interactions impacts on the perception of the overall fairness of an institution can be found in Paternoster's et al (1997) study on the impact procedural fairness had on rates of recidivism in cases of domestic violence. Paternoster et al's research found that the interaction with the police officers at the point of arrest was important and fair procedures affected future conduct and criminality, while unfair procedures weakened support for systems of criminal justice and undermined the inhibitors to further criminal behaviour (Paternoster et al 1997:193). The Paternoster study was undertaken at the point of arrest. My research focussed on inmates who had been processed through the criminal justice system, which is likely to influence how they conceived what was fair and unfair.

The fairness of staff towards inmates was undermined in the view of the inmates I interviewed by what they referred to as the 'switching of

staff'. This occurred when, after a period of being friendly and relaxed, inmates would suddenly find the staff more distant. As Laurence explained: "[an] officer who talked to me when I got nicked, all of a sudden he has changed. I didn't even do nothing." The inmates did not see themselves as the cause of the change blaming officers for suddenly changing the boundaries of their relationships. However, as good relations relied on inmates playing the game and conforming to the regime, the fact Laurence was 'nicked' may have influenced the officer's attitude towards him. This highlights how far the rules of the 'power game' favoured the officers. Although inmates could play for various concessions, it is at officers' discretion that the game goes on at all.

The potential for officers to 'switch' deterred many inmates from attempting to build relationships with staff as one inmate, Clarence explained:

> They've all got the same job to do yeah, but like some of them you can have a little laugh with them once in a while, do you get me? But you don't get too close with any of them, don't do it, like you can be safe with one of them and like all of a sudden they just switch, do you get me? Like I've seen it happen to people. Like the person is safe with the officer and then the officer just switches on them and gets them into trouble, do you get me?

However, the very changeable relationship Clarence experienced with the prison officers was probably based in some part on his history of adjudications that kept him on basic regime for the main part of my research.

The inmates' experiences of switching points to a core tension for prison officers, how to reconcile the roles of enforcer and carer. Examples of prison healthcare (Ralli 1994) and research in Grendon reveals that it is possible to reconcile both functions, although it can influence how confident officers feel in their job (cf. Genders and Player 1995). Switching could be interpreted as a reactive response where, in order to overcome the difficulty of getting too close to inmates, the officers would re-assert their authority, as one inmate Kevin said: "You'd get friends with them...and they'd switch and say, hey I'm in charge of you and start acting like an officer again... I dunno, I think they're just trying out some authority over you." The unintended consequence of this reaffirmation was the inconsistency introduced into the staff-prisoner relationships, so that rather than reinforcing their power, it potentially undermined its legitimacy in the eyes of the inmates.

However inevitable, predictable or expected switching might be, the way it was experienced by the inmates in my research reflected how poorly the staff communicated their positions and how personally the inmates took the changes in their behaviour. Their reactions reflected long histories of vulnerability and rejection outside prison (cf. Liebling 1999*b*). For example, the inmates in my research who had been taken into care interpreted this as abandonment that reinforced their sense of being a lost cause. In Jo's case, being taken into care at twelve years old irrevocably damaged already strained family relationships and when I spoke to him about his mother he had not spoken or seen her for nearly two years. Dela experienced a similar sense of abandonment when he was taken into care and attended a residential school. He had lived on his own from the age of fourteen as his school closed down and he did not want to go home after a violent encounter with his mother's new partner. Like Jo, Dela's offending and drug use increased during this period. Dela saw his mother's inability to cope with his behaviour as partly responsible for his current position, although as the causes of crime are multiple, this was probably a reflection of his anger and feelings of abandonment:

> My mum wants to help me this time [when I come out of prison], it made me feel quite good actually, I haven't really felt like this since I was young. My mum didn't really want me. I always blamed her [for being taken into care] cos I always

think that if I had kids no matter how bad they got I wouldn't give them up... I suppose some people are just stronger minded than others... I think if my mum never did that I wouldn't be here now. It would've just stayed with what I was doin like coming home late and not doin what I was supposed to be doin.

As Braithwaite (1989) suggests, drawing together what is known about crime, labelling, control and social learning theories, stigmatisation, like that experienced by Dela, is a key factor in encouraging further offending. By excluding the offenders, they become more isolated and turn to form subcultural groups that support their deviant behaviour. Therefore, reintegrating offenders into law abiding communities is crucial in preventing a chain of events that exacerbates, rather than reduces delinquency.

For the inmates I interviewed, attempting to forge any links at all with staff after a history of being let down reflected their need for support. The switching of staff, however understandable, was another disappointment and reinforced the 'mistake', as one inmate, Dan, described it, of 'letting the staff see what he was about.' Effective communication of the experiences on both sides might go some way to overcome the sense of mistrust generated by the switching of officers, although a defensive staff culture and a lack of emotional vocabulary amongst the inmates inhibits this.

Legitimacy of MDT: control and care

This section explores the legitimacy of drug controls, focussing particularly on MDT in Haverton. MDT was not the only mechanism of drug control in Haverton, although the staff and inmates focussed on drug testing during our interviews. The recent introduction of incentives and earned privileges into the regime in Haverton aimed to control drug use and encourage inmates onto a drug-free wing. My research indicated that the changes to the regime did not necessarily reduce the level of inmates' drug use. The inmates I interviewed on the basic regime tended to increase their use of drugs, while the incentives associated with the enhanced regime wing were not significant enough to encourage inmates to become 'drug free. Before exploring the attitudes of staff and inmates in Haverton, it is useful to consider a major piece of recent research on MDT that raises some similar issues.

A review of MDT by Edgar and O'Donnell.

The Home Office commissioned researchers from Oxford to undertake an assessment of the impact MDT had on the nature and extent of drug misuse amongst inmates (Edgar and O'Donnell 1998a).

The study was undertaken in five prison establishments located in different parts of England: a category C training prison; a women's prison, a young offenders' establishment; a local prison and a dispersal prison. In order to investigate the inmate and staff response to MDT, semi-structured interviews with inmates and staff were undertaken during an initial two month fieldwork period and over a series of return visits. A total of 146 staff and 148 inmates who had been tested were interviewed and the details of all mandatory drug tests and adjudication records in the prisons were consulted.

The conclusions of the study are broad reaching. A fundamental problem highlighted by Edgar and O'Donnell was that MDT was not a reliable indicator of drug use in prison because of the number of false negatives (negative tests of inmates who admit to being drug users) underestimated the extent of drug misuse. This questions the extent mandatory drug testing can be regarded as a reliable key performance indicator and how managerial approaches to measuring performance may not necessarily reflect practice.

The attitudes towards MDT varied throughout the prison organisation. Generally, the management believed punishment reinforced the deterrent effect of MDT, while the staff felt the deterrent effect was

over emphasised to the detriment of treatment. MDT was also considered to disproportionately punish cannabis use, although staff did not feel this had affected order in the establishments.

The inmates' perceptions and reactions towards MDT also varied. While MDT was probably the main factor that produced changes in the inmates' levels of drug use, changes were dependent on other decision-making processes, such as the inmates' perceptions of risk around getting caught and punishment. For those inmates who wanted to stop or reduce their consumption of drugs (two thirds of the sample) MDT was considered helpful; two-thirds said they were directly motivated to reduce their drug consumption by MDT; fourteen who had wanted to stop found MDT was not helpful and thirty-six inmates did not stop and did not think MDT had any effect on their drug use at all. Less than one in three inmates thought testing was fair, although the perception of fairness was slightly higher in the YOI with over two-thirds of the inmates accepting it was fair. Many inmates suggested it had increased tension with the staff and encouraged some resentment.

My research supports some of the conclusions of Edgar and O'Donnell's study. Exploring staff and inmates' attitudes towards

MDT within the broader theoretical framework of legitimacy, however, takes the conclusions to their next logical stage, to question the extent to which staff and " attitudes reflect a lack of legitimacy of mandatory drug testing. In order to discuss this question the next section draws together themes raised by previous chapters and focuses on four main points: the security emphasis of MDT; the process of testing; the lack of deterrent effect and the disparity between the values testing is espousing and the values staff, inmates and society in general hold.

It's all about security

At the time of the research the only drug treatment available in Haverton was an educational programme and a weekly visit from a local health authority drug counsellor. Access to counselling was restricted to inmates with more serious problems and those nearing release, when it became more urgent to tackle their problems. Generally, security was prioritised in Haverton and the supply of drugs was tackled before demand. The governor at the time of the research explained how security measures were resourced:

> Well the drug dog will cost me a whole prison officer basically and all the dog costs, so we're talking about £25, 000, plus a months training, that's a one off training but the dog doesn't

live forever unfortunately, so the annual cost of the dog will probably be in the region of £25, 000 or £26, 000, at least. We then have the other element, I mean MDT costs in staff time, it's not far short of a prison officer overall so that's another £25, 000. To which we add slightly more hidden costs. I mean the staff involved in searching. Now that's not entirely devoted to drugs, it's about weapons and money and all other issues. We do X-ray the inmates and visitors coming into the prison and the X-ray machine costs us, probably £25, 000 per year to staff and run. The visits cameras cost us about £13, 000. Each year I would guess that the control or the security measures related to drugs could cost us at least £75, 000, at least. That's quite a lot of money. I mean some of it's mandatory, like the drug testing, we have to do that. I mean certainly it's expensive and we will probably have to put more money into the drug addiction counselling etc.

The focus on security meant the prison effectively managed the drug problem without really getting to the heart of it. The governor found it difficult to assess whether the expensive security measures were value for money, "It's difficult," he said, "If I didn't have those measures, would the place be a wash with drugs?" Assessing the direct impact security interventions have on levels of drug use is notoriously difficult to quantify both inside and outside prison because the market is hidden. The impact of seizures on the drugs market can only be guessed at by monitoring price fluctuations and the time it takes to find a drug supply (cf. Murji 1998). Security measures were expensive and with limited budgets there was little left for rehabilitation. Therefore, the drug strategy could not tackle the dynamic relationship between drug supply and demand.

Mandatory drug testing was often aligned with control and punishment by the prison staff. However as a healthcare officer explained:

> I have a conflict of interest because in healthcare, I don't see why I should be involved in punishing somebody. That would be doing the discipline officers' job. That's a terrible thing to say because security is my job but we should be involved in the more caring side of things, the helping side, dealing with problems and what not. That is not to say we should neglect our duty to security, nor should we, but MDT is fair and square a discipline procedure, and I don't think we should be involved in it.

Conflicts also arose because inmates would sometimes discuss drug problems with healthcare officers partly because they did not work on the main prison and were responsible for distributing the prescription drugs and arranging medical appointments.

The lack of drug treatment in the prison had a significant impact on staff morale and general attitudes towards testing procedures (cf. Keene 1997*b*). Without the benefit of a comprehensive drug strategy, the staff thought the potential of testing had only been partially unleashed and by prioritising punishment, they questioned the aim of the drug testing programme. As Kate, a basic grade officer explained:

You'll never stop [drug use] but [testing] is the only way we have a kind of control and it isn't even that, it's only a form of punishment. We don't do anything with them, you get your added days and whatever and so what. We don't give them any counselling or anything, we don't even give them a bloody drug leaflet, just, you failed your tests, you're nicked.

Another officer agreed that follow up was crucial:

It's no good unless we follow through and give them help... we can get them but there is no point in getting them unless you are going to do something with them, the whole picture has to be there. If you just nick them for nicking sake, then you will lose them and I'd say that is what that [MDT] is.

Therefore, as Lesley, a basic grade officer explained, the overall effectiveness of testing was undermined because inmates were only tested, punished and returned to the prison community without drug issues being addressed:

MDT is only a tool and it's not the sharpest tool in the bag and the tool is not being used properly. If you find a guy who is using cannabis [I'd say] 'what have you got to say for yourself?' [He'd say] 'Not guilty.' [I'd say] 'Lose fourteen days pay and association and fourteen days on your sentence'. Then on you go and it's finished.

The attitudes of the officers reflected their perception of drug problems as care issues, and as highlighted by Edgar and O'Donnell, the staff in Haverton agreed that MDT focussed too much on control and punishing drug users.

No discretion, no knowledge: targeting testing?

In my research, a fundamental problem identified by the officers was the infrequency of mandatory drug testing. To fulfil national requirements the prison had to randomly test 10% of the inmate population every month (some 30 tests in Haverton). However, the staff felt that random tests did not really give an accurate picture of the drug problem in the prison, and there was a need to combine them with 'suspicion tests' (also allowed under the policy; see chapter 1) because many of staff knew which inmates used drugs on the wings. Alan, who had formerly been responsible for administering the testing programme, noted the disparity between random and suspicion test figures:

> I think when we first started [testing] 17%, I think it was, tested positive in the first couple of months. Now that's very low, 17%, that's the random side...but then on the other hand when we picked them out on suspicion, the ones we thought were taking, we had like a 70% positive rate on that. But with the figures, they only use the random figures and not suspicion ones, so it's not a true picture of what's going on

Therefore, the KPI (key performance indicator) reflected the figure of 17% from a random sample of 10% of the inmate population, suggesting a low use of drugs. Edgar and O'Donnell (1998a) note that some balance needs to be achieved between random and

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suspicion testing because overuse might lead to high numbers of negative tests or inmate complaints of harassment by staff. In Haverton, the officers felt they were able to exercise more discretion through suspicion testing and these made better use of their knowledge. The officers I interviewed were confident they knew who the drug users were on the wings, although there was a danger this assertion was nothing more than stereotyping and reflected officers' bias (see chapter 5).

At the time of the research the officers' requests for suspicion tests were rarely fulfilled because the MDT staff did not have time to do more than the required number of random tests (and sometimes did not achieve that). As Colin, a senior officer explained:

> We can do the randoms but not the suspicions, so you put a notice in about suspicions, it doesn't happen, so staff will soon become 'oh well, I'm not going to bother'. Then it starts to become a bit of a farce because it's more, I mean when you're doing your suspicions that's when you are targeting the real users more, because the officers will know who's using and at the moment it's not working. That's purely because of resources.

Another officer, Richard, agreed that testing was not carried out effectively because of the lack of resources:

I think [MDT] is a tool that has been introduced at the right time for the right reasons, if it helps combat the problem then fine, but again, [it is] resources, and sometimes we don't have the staff [to do the tests].

Compulsory testing of the whole population was seen to be more reliable and able to catch drug users who previously evaded positive test results. As Jane, a basic grade officer on the main prison said:

You're gonna get some who don't give a damn and will smoke it anyway, but it just depends if they get caught because they could be smoking and not be tested for a year and they've smoked all that time. I'd be happy if it was compulsory.

Bob, a senior officer agreed that MDT would only be effective if the whole inmate population was tested:

If you're going to do something, then you've got to do it properly or don't bother. I don't think any prison is going to be drug free, there're always ways around things, but testing, maybe that's going some way towards it. I mean even if you don't catch everyone at least we would be going some way towards it, not playing halfhearted games.

However, the demands on resources and officers' time meant a complete testing programme was not viable and, given that inmates valued staff discretion, it would not be desirable.

Inmates and the process: it's all behind our backs!

Inmates felt the mandatory drug tests, particularly suspicion tests, had

altered the way staff and inmates interacted, as one inmate, Elory

explained:

> The screws [officers] now they try it on, they go behind your
> back to try and do things. I must have been on association
> now, and went on a visit and come back, must have got a little
> something [drugs] yeah, I was just sitting there now watching
> tele, bung it down [smoke the cannabis], screws don't say
> nothing, there is a whole heap of us [smoking] and they don't
> say nothing, they bang us up and half an hour later they bust
> [open] on my door and take me down to MDT and give me a
> drug test, all right it comes back positive. I get 14 days no
> association, 14 days on my sentence and 14 days half pay.

The prison staff I interviewed agreed that suspicion tests would be

requested without telling the inmate concerned. This proactive, yet

unconfrontational approach, highlighted the range of resources

available to staff and could be interpreted as a reassertion of power.

However, staff fairness in carrying out MDT procedures may be more

important than the perceived fairness of the procedure itself (cf.

Bottoms and Rose 1998). I did not ask the inmates I interviewed

directly about the fairness of MDT, although extrapolating from their

general perceptions towards drug use and procedures for dealing with

drugs in Haverton, any controls that inhibited their use were regarded

with some impunity. Edgar and O'Donnell (1998*a*) and Liebling et al (1997) note that while adult prisoners tend to rate MDT as unfair, young offenders rate it as fair more frequently. Haverton's status as a long-term YOI may limit comparisons to short-term establishments.

Prison officers and inmates have a range of reactions to prison, which can disguise their fear and vulnerability (see chapter 5). Colin, a senior officer on the main prison, suggested officers' reluctance to confront inmates might be based on fear:

> Some staff don't like to confront [inmates], some like to be prisoners' friends. I'm not saying we should be nasty to them, that is just antagonising everybody. But at the end of the day we have a job to do and we must do it and if you can't do it then maybe you should leave.

Richard, a senior officer agreed that on occasions staff did not feel able to confront the inmates who were smoking together for fear of the ramifications it would have:

> Some of it might be down to [staff's] tolerance, some of it is down to fear and there is fear. There are staff in this establishment and every other one in the country that are frightened, [prisons] are not nice places and I'm the first to admit it, there are times I've been frightened in these places, if anyone turns around and said they haven't, then they're liars.

In other circumstances where inmates do not feel staff fairness is undermined, a less confrontational enforcement of prison rules may

not ultimately be harmful to order and may even be more desirable. Heidensohn (1992) has noted the growing 'feminization of social control' in organisations that have adopted a more negotiated style of interaction. The feminization of control may not be directly related to the number of women within an organisation, as Gregory and Lees (1999) note, such changes have not always been accompanied by more women entering criminal justice organisations, but prevailing constructions of masculinity and femininity. Carrabine and Longhurst (1998:173) note that prisons are sites of contestation and negotiation in the construction of gendered identities and that masculinity is central to prison organisation and is drawn on to 'oil the wheels of potentially difficult management interaction'. For example, officers making derogatory remarks about women to relieve stressful situations with inmates. There were similar areas of 'shared ground' between officers and inmates in my research, including general attitudes towards sex offenders and tolerant attitudes towards cannabis.

The officers 'feminised' the masculine nature of penal power by seeking less confrontational ways around problems such as listening to the inmates and being supportive. Alan, a senior officer, explained his approach to controlling inmates:

You see some of the younger staff and the way they are, the macho way to do their job is nicking them [the inmates]. What they don't realise is you don't have to because you're reinforcing everything that lad has had in his life, his parents are shouting at him and hitting him across the back of his head and all that. What you've got to show them is that there is another way... I mean you can talk to them, [if] they want to have an argument, well go in the cell and have it out of the way, you don't need to punch them. They can swear at me as much as they want as long as it is between them and me. Let the pressure off, let them unload, and that is the way to deal with it. That's the way I am and there are a lot of officers like that but they won't admit it because they are the hang 'em and shoot 'em kind of thing. We still have got that now with officers working with YOIs but they're in the wrong jail, they need to go to a local [prison] where prisoners pass through all the time. I mean in here no matter what is around [the inmates] are by themselves, they're dealing with things by themselves and you've got to go in there and help them with their problems and sometimes it comes out as violence towards us. It's not really at us but it's at the problem they have that we haven't noticed... we have to listen to them as a lad not a prisoner.

Research undertaken in the United States suggests a less confrontational and more nurturing style amongst prison officers could also have some influence on the levels of drug use in prison. Stevens (1997) found less drug trafficking in a regime characterised by more relaxed staff-inmate relationships, where staff were proactive in helping inmates to solve their problems, compared to 'restrictive' environments based on more formal staff-inmate relationships. However, more research is needed to understand how the dynamics of staff-inmate relationships might influence levels of drug use.

Deterring drug use

As suggested by Edgar and O'Donnell (1998*a*), the frequency with which tests were performed and punishments influenced the deterrent effect of MDT. However, as I described in chapter 3, the inmates I interviewed assessed the risks associated with drug taking and did not regard mandatory drug testing as a deterrent because tests were not performed frequently enough or covered a wide enough section of the population to make them feel they were likely to be caught. Von Hirsch et al (1999), in a recent review of deterrence literature, highlighted the significance of the certainty of being caught on deterring behaviour compared to the severity of the sentence. Relating this to mandatory drug tests, the inmates knew that the number of tests conducted made it unlikely they would be caught. By making themselves 'knowledgeable', the inmates increased their defences against testing and were crucially aware of the members of staff likely to submit an application for a suspicion test and the times tests were more likely or less likely to occur and they adapted their behaviour accordingly.

Staff opinions differed about whether the punishments for a positive MDT deterred drug use in the longer term. The officers suggested it was a short-term control mechanism, as Colin a senior officer on the main prison, explained:

> I tell you what you tend to get, you probably get a circle where you catch a few, they probably go on closed visits, get their heads down and get off it, so for every ten that you get off, you'll have three that will stay off and the rest will go back again. They'll dabble again and take their chances, they'll think, 'oh well, I've been tested so it won't happen again for a bit'. This is where it comes back to MDT and the testing because they're the people who should be frequently tested but the resources aren't here and you can't do it.

Staff considered closed visits the most potent punishment for drug use because of their impact on the inmates' physical freedom. However, closed visits did little to increase the threat of drug tests as inmates rarely confronted the potential implications of a positive result or the effect it might have on the course of their sentence. The inmates were also aware of ways to get drugs through on closed visits (see chapter 5). Only when their friends in the prison were punished did inmates think about what it might mean to them and their families if they were to have restricted visits.

Often inmates opted to go without visits if they were closed. Martin's attitude was typical of many offenders. He said: "I can't be bothered

with no closed visits, like talking to my people behind glass and all that, no way, I will just ride it, bang up." 'Riding bang up' was especially attractive as closed visits were limited and needed to be booked a long way in advance after the number of positive tests had increased the number of inmates on closed visit status. Forward planning was required for closed visits, a process avoided by inmates because of the negative impact it had on time management (see chapter 4). Inmates also wanted to avoid the potential disappointment of being let down by a visitor unable to keep an appointment booked months in advance.

The punishment of added days onto an inmate's sentence was considered less effective by staff than closed visits because with good behaviour an inmate could apply to have up to half of the extra days taken off his sentence. Inmates shared this view. Clarence, said extra days were not problematic: "cause you can get them back, they're a minor." Long sentences also tended to undermine the impact of extra days. There was a sense that fourteen days for using cannabis was insignificant compared to the scale of other punishments for breaking the rules and their sentence, as Phil explained:

> I'm doin four and a half years, if I get caught for smoking puff what the fuck is gonna to happen? I'm doin four and a half

years, they are gonna to give me fourteen days, what's fourteen days when I'm doin four and a half years... I mean I lost fourteen days for getting up late, I'd rather lose fourteen days for smoking a spliff.

Whose values are we enforcing anyway?

Cloward (1960:35) stressed that tolerance amongst the prison staff was functional in maintaining order in an institution and while it could be extended towards all behaviour, in my research tolerance towards cannabis was regularly alluded to as 'turning a blind eye'. Indeed, as Edgar and O'Donnell noted, a lack of support for MDT was based on the fact it punished cannabis use, while inmates and staff in Haverton generally made some distinction between cannabis and other drugs. While none of the officers said they ignored drug use or accepted the inevitability of drug trafficking, they sometimes expressed tolerant attitudes towards cannabis and this made them acutely aware of the potential for 'corruption'. The difficulty of reconciling personal attitudes and the rules of the job often confused officers' feelings towards cannabis use, as Colin explained:

> I have a very tolerant attitude towards cannabis, from what I've read they have no positive proof it has an effect on your health, well compared to things like nicotine, so I'm very tolerant towards it but at the same time we're in prison... To be honest my tolerant attitude is different to a lot of people's. Their tolerant attitude is that it keeps them quiet and keeps them happy, if they're happy, then it's not problem for me. My

attitude is the fact, well it's an illegal drug but I'm very cynical about the fact we allow tobacco and alcohol [outside prison] but we don't allow cannabis. I mean I know the argument, if you try cannabis then you know, but it's the same with drink... [But] at the end of the day I work within the rules of prison and society.

A number of inmates suggested staff were not overly concerned about cannabis use, as Kevin explained:

I don't think officers do really care about you smoking drugs... cos we're staying here overnight, they're goin home... cos at the weekends we'll be smoking weed in front of the T.V. and like, they can smell it, they just can't be bothered and they just say "you'll get a piss test" and [they] don't worry about it. That's what they're like on my wing, on another wing they're like DRUGS, DRUGS and start goin mad.

Other inmates agreed that officers' attitudes towards cannabis influenced whether it would be punished or ignored, as Dela, coming to the end of his sentence for robbery, explained: "...there are some staff and they come in your cell, you're smoking in your cell and they don't really give a toss. Some would say get out of your cell and cell spin – it's different." Another inmate Laurence agreed and assumed officers were tolerant because they also used the drug: "I mean at the weekend you get locked up at 5 and the officers stay on till 10 and they can smell it, but they ain't bothered. I mean half of them smoke it, you can hear them talking about it." Only one officer I had interviewed admitted to trying cannabis in the past.

While staff acknowledged their colleagues might feel intimidated about confronting inmates to confiscate drugs, this was not accepted as an excuse for 'turning a blind eye', as Richard explained:

> [The job] needs support, I don't want these [the inmates] out here putting staff under pressure and at the same time I don't want officers to be abusing the uniforms and putting pressure on these [inmates]. We're here to do a job, we're professional people and you can't do your job if you're backing off and turning a blind eye.

As discussed in chapter 3, the general perception that attitudes towards cannabis in society were lenient made the condemnation of the drug in the prison harder to maintain, as Kate a basic grade officer explained:

> It's a problem because on the out, people won't go out unless they have an 'E' or whatever. I mean it's tolerated, not up the local pub, but if you go night clubbing then it's in your face. You've got to deal with it or just not go out.

Alan, a senior officer, highlighted the difficulty Haverton had tackling visitors' attitudes towards trafficking cannabis. His comments also reveal the different response to cannabis compared to 'harder' drugs outside that reinforced its use as less harmful and more acceptable (cf. Edgar and O'Donnell 1998a; Howard League 1999):

99.9% of the drugs comes from visits. You get the mothers and the fathers who used the drugs with their sons, they come in and they have their visits and the first thing they do is pass their drugs... there was a [police] officer in here and he couldn't believe what we were on in here, that lads would lose twenty eight days, all they do to them, he said, is go and give them a warning.   I mean, of course, that's some drugs [such as cannabis] on the outside.

Jan also suggested the deterrent effect of being caught was undermined as the police rarely prosecuted traffickers:

When I was in [another prison] I probably arrested about 350 women... only three were sentenced to prison and that was for a very short time, two was three months and one had six months and the rest of them just got off with a caution because it was their first time and their first offence.

Alan and Jan's comments point to a tension between criminal justice agencies and their approach to drugs. The surprise of police officers at the prison's response to cannabis suggests they are enforcing laws and advocating values that have less validity outside in society. More fundamentally, the expectation the prison service has placed on itself to target (and eradicate) all types of drug use perhaps overlooks the extent of the problem, that is not confined to their environment, but one common amongst society and youth in particular, as reflected by research on drug cultures and normalisation (cf. Parker et al 1998*a*; South 1999).

The legitimacy attached to MDT in Haverton was low because it was primarily a control strategy tackling what was perceived to be a care issue. MDT procedures did not reflect the knowledge of staff (thereby undermining their position) and could potentially exacerbate relationships with inmates by undermining fairness. Furthermore, as cannabis was the main drug used by inmates in Haverton, MDT mainly punished cannabis users, which was at odds with the attitudes of inmates, staff and arguably other criminal justice agencies and society in general. In the past a lack of legitimacy has been associated with increased disorder, however there has been little protest after four years of testing. This may reflect the powerless position of inmates or a lack of ability to protest collectively, as discussed above (cf. Liebling 2000). Nevertheless, the critical attitudes of the staff and inmates in Haverton questions the principles of MDT and appears at odds with commitment by management to testing in its current form.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the attitudes towards mandatory drug testing in Haverton to assess legitimacy of the strategy. The first section of the chapter explored the nature of power in prison; critiquing the notion of total power and highlighting the extent to

which control in prison relies on negotiation. The inmates in Haverton continually tested the boundaries of staff power through the power game, although there were times when inmates wanted staff to intervene and it was recognised that ultimate power rested with the staff. In this chapter I have also explored the principles of legitimacy. This suggests legitimacy of staff power was established in Haverton through discretion, fairness and consistent treatment. The inmates disliked overt displays of power and felt uncomfortable with what they termed as the switching of staff, when their attitudes changed towards them.

The chapter considered theories of legitimacy in relation to mandatory drug testing in prison. Research by Edgar and O'Donnell in five prisons indicated support for MDT was limited amongst prison staff and inmates. In my research, the focus on security, testing procedures, the limited deterrent effect and the degree testing did not reflect inmates, staff and general attitudes towards cannabis, suggested the legitimacy of MDT was low. The impact on general order in prisons in light of the apathy towards and low legitimacy of MDT appears to be limited, although there is a growing disjuncture between the attitudes of inmates, staff and management. The next chapter draws together the main themes discussed in this chapter and

the rest of the thesis, to consider the principal influences on institutional drug use.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION:
Understanding drug use in prison

This thesis has focussed on a small group of young offenders and explored their experiences of drug use in prison. The aim of this final chapter is to draw out the themes from my research and explore how they might contribute to understanding drug use in prison more generally. Four main factors are identified as important: *individual*, *structural*, *relational* and *societal* factors. Each area will be discussed in turn to understand the impact they have on the level and type of drug use in custody.

What influences drug use in prison?

The previous chapters have discussed individual drug choices in prison (chapter 3) and the impact of the prison, particularly prison time, on inmates' patterns and motivations for using drugs (chapter 4). The nature of drug supply into Haverton and the role of the inmate culture in drug distribution, staff-inmate relationships and attitudes towards drug controls, particularly MDT, were also discussed (see chapter 5 and 6). Although my research was conducted over a relatively short period in the life of Haverton YOI,
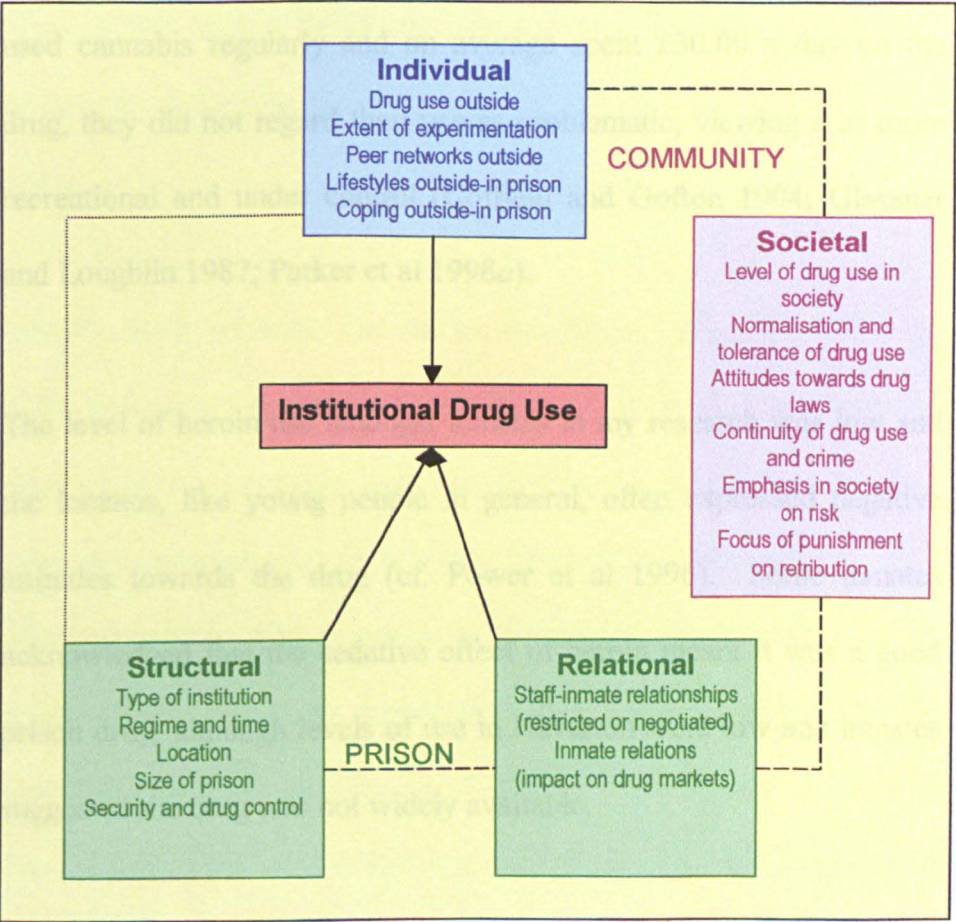
a number of broader factors can be drawn from the data that are useful in explaining the prevalence and nature of drug use in custody more generally.

The diagram below (Figure 2) summarises the various influences on drug use in Haverton discussed in chapters 3 to 6. It illustrates the relationship between drug use inside and outside, the impact that interactions in the prison had on inmates' propensities to use drugs, the wider social context that influenced attitudes towards illicit drugs and the continuity of drug problems amongst the young offenders in my research.

The diagram emphasises four principal factors which influence drug use in prison: *individual*; *structural*; *relational*; and *societal*. Individual factors relate to inmates' behaviour before custody. It is important to consider the pattern and meaning of drug use in inmates' lives outside prison. The extent of drug use is also crucial because, as discussed in chapter 3, inmates were at greater risk of using drugs in prison if they had some experience of using outside. The structural factors in the diagram relate to the structures and systems in prison. The organisation of prison life influenced when drugs were used and the motivation for using drugs in custody. Relational factors refer to

the impact staff-inmate relationships and the relationships between inmates themselves had on levels of drug use and drug supply in prison. Finally, societal factors take some account of the broader structures, such as general attitudes towards drug use, the continuity of drug problems and societal expectations about the functions of imprisonment, that affects how the prison system approaches and deals with the problem of drug use.

Figure 2: Dynamics of drug use in prison

The following discussion looks in depth at each of the four factors.

Individual: *Levels of drug use outside - the drug continuum*

The research outlined in chapter 3 indicated that patterns of use outside influenced the nature of drug cultures inside prison. The inmates I interviewed were predominantly poly drug users outside (Measham et al 1994; Parker et al 1995; 1998*a*). Cannabis was the most popular drug, often used in conjunction with a range of other substances including crack, ecstasy and LSD. Although the inmates used cannabis regularly and on average spent £30.00 a day on the drug, they did not regard their use as problematic, viewing it as more recreational and under control (Coffield and Gofton 1994; Glassner and Loughlin 1987; Parker et al 1998*a*).

The level of heroin use amongst inmates in my research was low and the inmates, like young people in general, often expressed negative attitudes towards the drug (cf. Power et al 1996). Some inmates acknowledged that the sedative effect of heroin meant it was a good prison drug, although levels of use in Haverton were low and inmates suggested the drug was not widely available.

Studies on drug use in prison that have included young offenders confirm they use less heroin in custody compared to their adult counterparts (Keene 1997*a*; Edgar and O'Donnell 1998*a*). Explanations link the difference in heroin use between young and adult inmates with the limited use of heroin by young inmates outside. For example, research with adult inmates shows that persistent patterns of heroin consumption outside are continued in prison (see discussion of Dan's drug use in chapter 3; Turnbull et al 1994). Furthermore, the relationship between supply and demand (cf. Murji 1998; Sutton 1998) suggests the low use of heroin outside prison may have influenced demand for the drug and its availability inside.

Indeed, supply networks and the nature of drug markets in YOIs may differ from adult prisons. There was a drug market in Haverton, although it was primarily based on dealing or sharing cannabis (see discussion on relational factors and chapter 5). However, as adult offenders may be a stage further in their drug careers at the point of incarceration, they may be more likely to have access to the sophisticated drug networks associated with the supply of class A drugs (cf. Forsyth et al 1992), thereby influencing the availability of heroin in prison.

Drug markets in local prisons may also reflect regional variations and preferences in drug use (Keene 1997*a*; Parker et al 1998*b*).

Understanding inmates' drug preferences outside can offer some insight into a) which drugs might dominate the inmate culture in prison and b) which substances individuals might be at risk of using in custody. However, information on drug taking gathered when inmates are inducted into prison may underestimate their use as inmates are uncomfortable revealing this to officers or prison personnel, fearing it will result in them being targeted for drug tests (cf. Mason et al 1997; chapter 3). Ensuring information on drug use is confidential and even using non prison personnel to conduct interviews on drugs (similar to the process in some police stations where drug workers rather than police officers explain drug arrest referral schemes to users), might enable prisons to gain a more accurate picture of inmates' levels of drug use before custody.

Understanding inmates' drug histories means prisons are better placed to address the connections between drug use inside and outside. The new CARAT (counselling, assessment, referral, advice and throughcare) schemes, introduced into prisons in England and

Wales in 1999, aim to tackle the continuity of inmates' drug problems by providing support and information on agencies, inside and outside prison. However, the success of the schemes will be based on the quality of multi-agency partnerships with probation and local drug services. Good partnerships are sometimes difficult to establish, especially if agencies seek different outcomes, such as care or control, through treatment (cf. Edmunds et al 1999; Newburn 1999).

The connections between inmates' drug use outside and inside can also be taken a stage further, recognising that drug problems in custody can influence drug taking when inmates are released. For example, using heroin in prison, where the potency and quality of the drug is often lower than outside, can increase the risk of overdose on release. More positively, the reduced consumption of drugs in prison, as demonstrated by the extent to which prison was a dry time for inmates in my research, may offer an opportunity for drug intervention to sustain and support a further reduction in use.

Lifestyles and drug use

Drugs were an integral part of most inmates' lifestyles before custody. However, conceiving the drug-crime link narrowly (as heroin equals acquisitive crime) significantly undermined its complexity, and overlooked how various types of drug use, including recreational use, and different types of crimes, were closely related in the day to day existence of the young offenders in my study.

The absence of formal structures in the lives of inmates outside, typical of offenders identified by criminal careers literature (cf. West 1982; Sampson and Laub 1993; Graham and Bowling 1995; Rutter et al 1998), was important in my study because in many cases unstructured lives became structured around drug use and crime (cf. Faupel and Klockars 1987; Pearson 1987*b*). 'Problem' lifestyles, that lack appropriate structure, support, opportunities and intervention, are, unsurprisingly, often associated with problem drug use (Aldridge et al 1999). Furthermore, there is some indication that coping with drug and alcohol problems and poor coping skills generally, apply in the prison setting and represent a risk factor for suicide and self-harm (Liebling 1992; Liebling and Krarup 1993; Liebling 1999*b*).

If prisons want to tackle drug problems, it is vital they appreciate the context of inmates' drug use and how it is linked with offenders' lifestyles outside. Drug use in prison is essentially 'out of context'. This influences the extent of drug use (that decreased in my research) and inmates' motivations for using in custody. Therefore, while understanding the continuity of inmates' behaviour inside and outside is important, the impact of the prison context and how inmates change or adapt their patterns of drug use is also crucial (as highlighted in chapter 4).

Structural: *The impact of the prison*

Prison is a powerful social institution, although as discussed in chapter 6 with reference to Giddens' (1984) duality of structure, power in prison is contestable. Control in prison is based on negotiation between staff and inmates (cf. Sykes 1958; Sparks et al 1996). Therefore, while theories of total power suggest inmates are in a powerless position (cf. Foucault 1977), theories of control based on negotiation highlight the opportunity for inmates to exercise power and agency while they are in custody.

The contested nature of penal power was demonstrated in my research by 'playing the game' (see chapter 6). The 'game' allowed inmates to access a range of extra privileges by outwardly behaving like a model inmate (cf. Garland 1997). However, ultimate power in prison rests with the staff and it was at their discretion the game went on at all (cf. Bottoms 1999).

In many ways the inmates' drug use in Haverton reflected the struggle between structure and agency, as the prison aimed to limit drug use, while inmates tried to overcome the structures to continue using. In my research the prison did constrain drug use as the levels, frequency and breadth of inmates' drug taking reduced inside.

The main structural inhibitors of drug use were the regime and security that reduced drug supply. Limited visits and single cell accommodation also inhibited supply and distribution between inmates. However, despite the regime, security and penalties for drug use, it continues in prison. In my research, by making themselves knowledgeable about the regime and prison staff, inmates maximised the limited drug using opportunities available to them. To overcome the regularity of strip searches and limited supply, inmates hid drugs more discreetly and stretched their supply by sharing drugs

with friends on the wings. Drug using opportunities were inadvertently punctuated by the structures and routines of prison life. Subsequently, low inmate activity and jobs that were less well supervised provided time for drug use.

The prison regime limited drug use but also influenced inmates' motivations for using drugs. This is clearly articulated in my research through the inmates' experiences of prison time (see chapter 4). As in other settings, where time is highly controlled, the prison influenced the inmates' perspectives of time (cf. Galtung 1961; Meisenhelder 1985; Adam 1990, 1995). The structured prison environment created an abundance of time, similar to that experienced by the inmates outside prison as a result of their unstructured lifestyles. While not the primary motivation for using drugs, the inmates in my research suggested cannabis use helped them to cope with time and long periods of inactivity. The sedative effect of the drug enabled them to sleep, so that time, which was consciously experienced in prison, became unconscious again (Meisenhelder 1986).

As the regime influenced how drugs were controlled and inmates' motivations for drug use, the nature of drug use will probably vary

according to the individual characteristics of institutions. During a recent teaching session, I asked a group of 20 prison managers studying for a Diploma/Masters in Applied Criminology and Management (Prison Studies), to assess how problematic drugs in prisons is based on their professional experience. The extent of knowledge about drug problems differed. Generally, the governors were very knowledgeable about the control problems associated with drug use in prison (such as the risk of debt, bullying and drug markets). However, they knew less about inmates' motivations for using drugs in prison and the link between drug use outside and inside, although, as I have discussed in previous chapters, there is less research in this area.

Using a scale of one to ten, where one was least problematic and ten was most problematic, the governor's marks varied according to their experience. Young offenders' institutions were marked at an average of seven out of ten compared to closed male and female institutions (marked at an average of eight out of ten). The governors explained that high marks were given because drugs were connected to other problems in prison, including control, violence, and staff corruption (cf. Seddon 1996). An open female institution received a mark of five out of ten from the governor because, while drugs were not a

problem in the prison, many of the prisoners had drug problems. The low score may also reflect less repressive staff-inmate relationships in the open system. As Stevens (1997) suggests, levels of drug trafficking are lower when staff-prisoner relationships are less restricted (see relational factors). It appeared that drugs were primarily an operational problem, as managers based at prison headquarters gave an average mark of four out of ten or lower.

The variations between drug problems in different prisons highlights the need for a focussed strategy that incorporates a local understanding of drug problems. Furthermore, the fact prison drug problems are local stresses the need for further research to understand how the dynamics of drug use may differ between institutions.

While the organisation of prison life can significantly inhibit drug use, the inmates' ability to continue using highlights the limitations of formal control mechanisms. Indeed, as discussed in the next section, relational aspects of prison life and developing informal social controls can play an important role in drug supply and control.

Relational: *Inmate-inmate relations: drug markets in prison*

Early prison studies have highlighted the importance of inmate subcultures (cf. Sykes 1958; Irwin and Cressey 1963; Irwin 1970; Jacobs 1977). Generally, inmate subcultures have been characterised as oppositional to staff, however, inmates have a variety of responses to prison that are not necessarily based on solidarity or opposition (cf. Mathiesen 1965; Grapendaal 1990; Benaquisto and Freed 1996). In Haverton, the inmate culture was dominated by the RSP, a group of young men whose relationships were established outside prison and continued in the prison context. In an environment that restricted supply, friendship networks increased access to drugs through dealing or sharing. Those excluded from the inmate culture in Haverton could not access drugs as easily or frequently, so tended to use them less. Therefore, understanding links between peer networks outside, their maintenance in prison and the dynamics and organisation of inmate cultures, can offer considerable insight into drug markets, supply and drug distribution in prison.

Staff-inmate relations and drug control

It is recognised that relationships between prison staff and inmates affect prisoners' experiences of custody (Bottoms and Rose 1998;

Liebling and Price 1999). The role of staff is relatively under researched in relation to drug use in prisons. Some staff and inmates in my research acknowledged the potential for staff to be corrupted by drugs. Indeed the risk of corruption may be increased if officers are in debt, feel under pressure or have close relationships with inmates where the boundaries of their formal role become less distinct. The current movement towards local recruitment of officers may further complicate this, especially in local prisons where there is a potential for officers and inmates to share similar networks and knowledge about outside.

While the risk of corruption needs to be considered, it is crucial to appreciate the positive impact good staff-inmate relationships can have on levels of drug use. Research by Stevens (1997) suggested less drug use occurs in regimes with more supportive staff-inmate interactions, although Stevens does not explore the dynamics of this in detail. However, supportive relationships may offer inmates more resources to help them cope with their sentence and the passage of time. More contact with staff could also increase the risk of detection when using drugs. Indeed, positive staff-inmate relationships by establishing 'bonds' with inmates, may be a way of generating informal social control in prison. This is especially pertinent to

cannabis, as informal control is probably more likely to develop where the formal rules are less fixed. The tolerant attitudes of staff towards cannabis influences how they enforce formal rules, which might be sacrificed to maintain the overall harmony between inmates and staff on the wings (cf. Sparks et al 1996). The impact of staff-inmate relationships and attitudes towards control on levels of drug use in prison requires further research.

Adopting a different approach to dealing with cannabis in prison may be more successful than targeting use through punishment. During my discussion with the prison governors, one mentioned that prisons might have more success preventing cannabis use if they approached the problem in the same way that alcohol misuse is tackled amongst inmates. This approach would more closely reflect inmates' and officers' tolerance of cannabis and its illegal status would not define the prison reaction towards drug use.

Considering the difficulties associated with formal drug control, the potential for informal social control in the prison, through staff relations, or the inmate culture, where negative attitudes towards certain drugs might be emphasised (such as heroin as discussed in chapter 3), is worthy of further exploration.

Legitimacy, deterrence and drug control

In my research the importance of staff-inmate relationships and drug use was linked to attitudes towards drug controls. MDT was introduced into prisons during a period of increasing control, when prisons were preoccupied with managing the risks offenders posed to society, rather than their rehabilitation (cf. Liebling et al 1997; Liebling 2000). Research by Edgar and O'Donnell (1998*a*) highlighted how inmates felt MDT could increase tension between inmates and staff because it was generally perceived to be an unfair policy that disproportionately punished cannabis use. In my research the legitimacy of MDT was low because:

- The prison staff I interviewed classified drug use as a care issue, while MDT focused on security and control;

- Random testing limited staff discretion and took no account of their knowledge of inmates. Some inmates suggested the process of testing could undermine staff fairness because staff need not directly confront inmates about their drug use, but could take action without their knowledge;

- The staff suggested the deterrent effect of testing was limited in the absence of treatment (because users were perpetually identified and punished and were not helped), while inmates suggested the infrequency of testing and lack of punitive punishment undermined the threat of MDT;

- Finally the focus of MDT on punishing cannabis was contrary to the tolerant views held by inmates and some of the prison staff that reinforced the perception of MDT as unfair (Tyler 1990).

The attitudes of prison staff and inmates expressed in the four points above would seem to suggest that the legitimacy of drug control is low. If, as Sparks et al (1996) suggest, the legitimacy of power is important and related to order, low legitimacy of MDT may influence control in prison more generally. Each of the above points will also individually affect prison life. For example, officers seeking to care in a prison service that prioritises control, combined with the perceived lack of discretion, may increase officers' sense of alienation in their work as it becomes devoid of purpose (cf. Poole and Regoli 1981). Furthermore, the fact that inmates and staff shared a tolerant view of cannabis meant both sides felt there was little legitimacy, opening up potential for staff corruption. This is clearly an area worthy of further research.

However important the local context of the prison and staff-prisoner relationships within it are, broader social and political factors are also crucial to the way prison operates. Many of the factors identified

above, such as the emphasis on drug control and tolerant attitudes towards drugs, are reflected in prison.

Societal: *Attitudes towards drugs*

Neither the prison, staff or inmates are immune to changing attitudes towards drugs. As I discussed in chapter 1, the normalisation thesis suggests attitudes towards particular drugs are very tolerant amongst certain groups in society (cf. Coffield and Gofton, 1994; Parker et al 1995, 1998a; South 1999). In my research both the staff and inmates I interviewed expressed highly tolerant attitudes towards cannabis, although hard drugs, especially heroin amongst inmates, and crack and heroin amongst the prison staff, were considered more harmful. Locating the problem of drug use in prison into wider societal structures explains why controlling drugs represents such a difficult challenge for the prison service. Indeed, drug control in prison may be a potential site of conflict not only between inmates and staff, who implement control, but also between staff and the system responsible for the control strategy. Officers in my research suggested, despite their tolerant attitudes, that drugs created problems in prison because of the dynamics of supply. Therefore, officers' tolerant attitudes did not influence how they enforced prison rules. Nevertheless, the

attitude of the staff and inmates reveals an interesting 'shared ground' (also see chapter 2) which will almost certainly influence experiences of prison life.

Continuity of crime and drug use outside prison

Although the inmates' long sentences represented a significant interruption in their drug and offending careers, the focus on security meant the prison did not address the linkages between drug use and crime, suggesting inmates' lifestyles would not change substantially on release.

Structural changes in the organisation of labour exacerbated the extent to which the inmates in my research constituted an excluded category in society. A significant proportion of young people in general, not just young offenders, find themselves 'growing up on the margins' of society with no prospect of work (Coffield et al 1986). Global economic changes have reduced the demand for youth labour (Maguire and Maguire 1997) and have severely restricted the potential for young people to become financially independent, which is known to have an affect on desistence (Graham and Bowling 1995). Young (1998) charts the relationship between increased crime

rates and the shift from an inclusive to an exclusive society, characterised by 'disagregation', individualism and changing labour markets. To protect themselves against increasing crime, society engages in 'defensive exclusion' where the 'out group' "becomes a scapegoat for the troubles of the wider society; its members are characterised as the underclass, who live in idleness and crime" (Young 1998:79). While the definition and how far marginalized youth can be said to constitute an underclass is contested (cf. MacDonald 1997), globalisation, economic restructuring and increased technology have altered the face of youth labour, reducing the demand for a low skilled workforce, traditionally filled by male working class youth (Bottoms and Wiles 1996). This lack of opportunity reinforced and exacerbated the highly unstructured lives of the inmates in my research.

Crime and drug use offered significant economic opportunities to the inmates. The 18 inmates who committed robberies did so because they were lucrative and required no specialist skills (cf. McIntosh 1971). Drug dealing was also very lucrative and could potentially have a significant economic redistributive effect (Johnson et al 1990; Fagan 1992). Money was the inmates' primary motivation for offending, as Phil explained: "It [the motivation] would be cash, there

it is and it's not fucking 300 quid. I mean it's the green [money], that's what it boils down to, it's the green." Phil's attitude and that of the other young offenders I interviewed, relates to what Neary and Taylor (1998:87) refer to a monetised social life:

> "Crime is not just an ethical or moral or cultural or environmental or societal or economic or psychological or cognitive problem. It is all of these things, but they are only expressions of a more fundamental problem, i.e. a problem of real biography: the impossibility of social existence without money in a world where the social has been monetised."

For those who participated in my research crime meant money and money facilitated the consumption of drugs, clothes and other luxury goods (cf. Collison 1996), which they could not access through legitimate means. As Sullivan (1989:231) notes, it is crucial to understand the economics of youth crime:

> "Youth crime for gain must be understood in economic terms in at least two senses: that of the individual youth as an economic entrepreneur, and that of the inner-city neighbourhood as an economic environment shaped by structural economic transformations of worldwide scope. If a young male's actions are not seen within this structural context, they appear irrational, and it becomes easier to conclude that street crime is only the product of low intelligence and defective personality and not a response to existing economic incentives."

Sullivan (1989) explores the redistributive effects of crime through the process of 'getting paid' where youth subscribe to mainstream

values but achieve them through different means and 'getting over', where youth achieved some success that they were not expected to achieve. In my research 'getting over' was important, however, it went alongside the thrill of offending as the inmates sought to fund a hedonistic lifestyle of drug taking, expensive clothes and cars (cf. Wright and Decker 1994). As one of my interviewees, Keith, reflected when he said: "It was the clothes, just for the glamour, cars, gold, things like that... it's great to go in there [shops], 'I'll have that, I'll have that, I'll have that.' It's brilliant I love that. I reckon that is the best buzz there is by loads and loads." Unfortunately the redistribution effect of crime was short term because the money earned from crime was immediately spent. None of my interviewees had invested the proceeds of their offending to change their material existence in the longer term.

In an exclusive society, the problem of crime and drug use is individualised and theories of crime no longer seek to explain the reasons for offending but focus on assessing and managing the risk offenders pose to the included aspects and individuals in society (cf. Feeley and Simon 1994; Ericson and Haggerty 1997). However, drug using and criminal lifestyles are difficult to escape from. Tom was eighteen and serving a four year sentence. Like many of the

inmates in my research his background was highly unstructured. He had left home at thirteen and spent much of his time in care following a family break up. His comments communicate the lack of opportunities which all of the inmates in my study faced before and especially after serving time in custody:

> I mean what can I do when I come out. I've got no qualifications, nothing. I mean even if I do get some qualifications, there are no jobs. I think I'll probably come back to prison. I want to stop offending but I just can't see myself doin' it. I mean it's a big system, and I'm in it, I just can't get out of it now. A criminal system, prison and offending, it's all one system and I'm stuck in it.

The emphasis on security in prisons in many ways reinforces Tom's feelings of powerlessness. The current focus of prison regimes on risk, security and containment tends to disassociate time in prison from inmates' lives outside, as incapacitation is prioritised over rehabilitation. Liebling (2000) suggests the increasing 'technologies of control' associated with the management of risk and maintenance of security in prison limits inmate power and their ability to protest. However, alongside the reliance on technology to maintain order, staff-inmate relationships are also important (cf. Bottoms and Rose 1998; Liebling and Price 1999).

Maintaining control through technology is coercive and in many ways reflects the very masculine nature of prison environments (cf. Massey 1994; Newton 1994). However, staff-inmate relationships offer an opportunity to humanise, even feminise control (cf. Heidensohn 1992), as the staff I interviewed were mainly non-confrontational and wanted to understand the inmates' situations.

Focussing on individual drug use overlooks the extent to which drug use may also be influenced by social circumstances. Clearly, Haverton was not responsible for causing inmates' drug use. Although arguably, its failure to challenge the demand for drugs or offer any adequate support to inmates led it to become another factor complicit in maintaining drug use in custody. The fact prison was a relatively 'dry time' for inmates in my research suggests it may be a good time to intervene in their drug use. Making the connections between inmates' lives in prison and their lives outside should enhance our understanding of how intervention can be developed to ensure a short-term modification in use becomes long term.

The *individual, structural, relational* and *societal* factors discussed above and illustrated in figure 2 helps to explain drug use in Haverton. While drug use is influenced by the context in which it

occurs (hence drug problems in prison may be largely specific and local), exploring generic issues, such as inmates' patterns of drug use before custody, the relationship between staff and inmates and general attitudes towards drug use in other custodial settings, may offer some insight into a range of different prison drug cultures and problems.

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