

# **Multidisciplinary Rehabilitation in Prison: a Values, Interests and Power Analysis**

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## Abstract

Over the last twenty years the Victorian Justice System has recognized that incarceration of offenders alone does little to rehabilitate prisoners. As a result, it has implemented additional therapeutic programs within prisons. This has resulted in an influx of therapists into prisons and created two distinct work groups with no historical working culture. As research suggests that rehabilitation works best when officers and therapists are united, the present investigation involved interviews with twenty three therapists and twenty one prison officers. All participants have had experience with dedicated rehabilitation programs in Victorian prisons. A qualitative research approach was used, with a particular focus on the role that values, interests and power played in participants' encounters with conflict. Three types of conflict were identified: intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational conflict. Whilst the notion of conflict typically generates negative connotations, the present research used conflict to identify power disparity between officers and therapists and also between them and the prison organization, thus expanding upon Foucault's theory that power is best understood via conflict. Whilst officers and therapists were united regarding their value of rehabilitation, the different methods preferred by each group were a source of conflict. The methods employed by the prison organization to introduce extra rehabilitation programs were found to cause conflict between officers and therapists. Therapists and officers were often required to abandon their values in order that their group or personal interests could be served. This

subordination of values to interests was particularly common when individuals felt disempowered. The results identified many sources of conflict for therapists and officers, often residing in power disparity. Recommendations from the research included ways in which officers and therapists could develop better methods of adhering to their professional values and interests, and manners in which power relationships may be addressed. Additionally, a checklist was generated for the prison organization. This check list was developed as an ethics audit and was intended to maximize opportunities for the prison organization to ensure that their visions fitted with what was occurring at a location level.

## Part 1: Introduction and Literature Review

### *Chapter 1: Introduction*

... At the first drum-roll, the prisoners must rise and dress in silence, as the Supervisor opens the cell doors. At the second drum-roll, they must be dressed and make their beds. At the third, they must line up and proceed to the chapel for morning prayer. There is a five minute interval between drum-rolls (Faucher, 1835, cited in Foucault, 1977, p. 6).

Prisons have historically been places where the various machinations of power play out, often in an effort to control and manipulate those deemed to have offended against society and its rules. Prisons have historically been places *for punishment*, that is, the process of punishment was expected to continue beyond the act of incarceration. However, prisons are now viewed *as punishment enough*, with a new thrust directed toward rehabilitation (Coyle, 2003; McGuire, 2000; Ward, 2002a). Still, some people resist the efficacy and morality of this notion.

The change of focus in prisons, from punishment to rehabilitation, is arguably a response to the realization that most prisoners are going to be released from prison at some stage, and that such a release is more likely to be successful if the rehabilitative process has been achieved, or, at the very least, initiated behind the prison walls (Ben-David, Silfen, & Cohen, 1996; McGuire, 2000; Sparks, 1994; Stojkovic, 1986; Ward, 2002, 2002a). Of course, the “successful” release of prisoners is multi-faceted and

includes not only the productive potential of prisoners, but also the safety of any community where they might reside.

In addition to evidence which supports the efficacy of rehabilitative programs, there is some indication that punishment alone, without a specific dedicated focus on rehabilitation, can actually increase recidivism rates among prisoners (Birgden, 2002; Califano, 1998; McGuire, 2000). This is probably not surprising when one considers the negative types of stimuli which are likely to be competing for a prisoner's attention while incarcerated. Prisons are notorious for their ability to act as cradles of crime and any engagement which can steer offenders in pro-social directions must be taken seriously by any progressive prison authority.

However, it is clear that the relatively new rehabilitative focus of prisons presents somewhat of an operational challenge as the more traditional, punitive focus of incarceration has a long and well established history. I will argue that prisons in Victoria are undergoing an operational paradigm shift as they struggle with "old school" visions of prisons and prisoners, and with the perception by some "stakeholders" that rehabilitation and a shift toward a focus on personal enlightenment is the "softer" option for prisoners (Carlson & Sutton, 1975; Eccleston & Sorbello, 2002; Morison, Kershaw, Happell, & Smith, 1998; Thies, 1994).

As noted, prisons in Victoria have struggled to find a fit between the traditional security functions of prison and the current rehabilitative mandates of the Office of the Correctional Services Commissioner (OCSC). It could be argued that one of the reasons for this is that there continues to be a general lack of faith in the effectiveness of the basic



concepts of rehabilitation. Whilst this lack of faith is often evidenced by custodial staff within the prison setting (Jackson & Innes, 2000; Kleinig, 2001), there is some anecdotal evidence which suggests that this attitude both mirrors and is mirrored by some sections of the community (Hollin, 2002). However, it is the (frequently) obstructive power of such negative attitudes at the prison coalface which will be of interest in the current research (Peat & Winfree, 1992; Shuford & Spencer, 1999).

Before the 1980s most penal agencies in Australia adopted an attitude of “nothing works” toward rehabilitation. This somewhat defeatist notion was not questioned on a systemic basis until the implementation of various attempts to seriously challenge the status quo in terms of prisoner reform. Such attempts were borne out of increasing research interest overseas, and particularly in the U.S. (Birgden & McLachlan, 2002; Thies, 1994). During the late 1980s several Victorian prisons adopted the practice of Unit Management (KPMG, 1999).

Whilst Unit Management tended to focus specifically on detailed management of individuals and small groups of prisoners by Dedicated Officers, this program, and the theoretical shifts required to implement it, was arguably the impetus for the current popularity of program delivery by external mental health and related support service staff. Primarily, it is the introduction of such professional work-teams into the prison setting, and the associated opportunities and frequent challenges which ensued, which occupy the main focus of the present research (Jackson & Innes, 2000; KPMG, 1999; Morison et al., 1998).

With the introduction of more rigorous models of rehabilitation, prison operators have had to face the difficulties inherent in accommodating multi-disciplinary work-groups. This is particularly difficult when the work groups have no traditional shared culture of cooperation.

Whilst it is true that a range of non-custodial staff have always been employed in prisons, such as dentists, doctors, chaplains and nurses, it is argued here that the relatively new focus of prisons as places of dedicated rehabilitation have resulted in the employment of staff groups which have not had a traditional role in prisons as valuable work-groups. It is acknowledged that whilst many prisons have historically employed the services of mental health professionals such as psychologists, criminologists and social workers, such workers have usually operated in relative isolation and have not been traditionally incorporated into the working culture of prisons (Morison et al., 1998). That is, they have generally remained “outsiders” who operated at the prison periphery.

One of the most difficult tasks for prison operators has been the provision of ethical and rewarding work conditions for therapists and custodial staff, as co-workers, within the prison environment.

Whilst the employment of multidisciplinary work-groups within the prison setting can be very rewarding, particularly in terms of cross-disciplinary training and diverse ways of viewing “old” prison problems, it is also clear that the close working conditions of prisons can exacerbate any problems inherent in the different approaches each work-group practices. Typically prisons have attempted to address inter work-group

difficulties by attempting to train outside workers into the operational life of prisons in general, and also in terms of specific locations.

Generalized custodial training for outside work groups and individuals usually takes the form of a global orientation to work within the custodial setting. Issues which are addressed include familiarization with management structures within prison (such as officer rankings, where outside workers are given homework which consists of placing the correct ranking badge image next to an officer's title), and the role of the various stakeholders within the Justice System itself.

More specific location-wise training is usually somewhat idiosyncratic and tends to focus on such issues as work industries, muster times, shift rosters of officers, and general movements of prisoners depending on the focus of that particular prison. For example, maximum security prisons in Victorian prisons do not offer day leaves, but some medium security (and all low security) prisons offer day leaves which can interfere with access to prisoners. Access to prisoners is important to rehabilitative program staff, making prisoner movements vital information for the meaningful implementation of professional duties.

In addition to the pragmatic challenges of accommodating multidisciplinary work-groups, prison operators have also been required to address the different values and praxes which such groups may typically bring to the prison environment. Whilst there are different values, expectations, modes of operation and power structures within and across a range of work-groups in the prison setting, it is argued here that these

differences are particularly salient when discussing rehabilitative staff (therapists) and prison officers specifically.

Therapists are usually required to adhere to fairly prescriptive issues around duty of care, confidentiality and unconditional positive regard for their clients (if not via their professional affiliations, then almost certainly as a result of their training and supervised practice). Such creeds generally work well in the community at large but can be particularly problematic in the prison environment, with its focus on security and a general operational reliance on information sharing (often known as Intel, Collation, or, General Intelligence). Such matters of what to share, and with who, are clear in terms of the personal safety of clients. Most therapists are familiar with the “rules” regarding limits to confidentiality. However, there exist nebulous areas of information sharing in prison, and therapists frequently struggle with issues around their own responsibilities both in terms of their clients and as members of the larger prison staff team.

Perhaps because therapists are often reluctant to share information regarding their clients, prison officers tend to have the perception that therapists are not vigilant around security matters. Therapists and their methods of practice in prisons are frequently seen by officers as, at best naïve, and, at worst, dangerous untrained threats to the security of the prison environment.

In addition to their reluctance to share information, therapists are frequently criticized by prison officers as agents of empowerment for

prisoners (Ulmer, 1992). This criticism is possibly grounded in the notion of “insight as power” which many therapists espouse for their clients.

When prisoners are empowered, via a range of psycho-educational and therapeutic programs during the process of rehabilitation, prison officers arguably perceive a displacement of their traditional power bases. This displacement usually occurs as a result of officers’ perceptions that prisoners have been given power which they do not deserve and that the traditional militaristic hierarchy of prisons is potentially threatened by such a shifting of power. Prisoners can become argumentative and difficult to manage on an operational level when, for example, their communication skills are increased.

Additionally, increasing prisoners’ levels of insight into their offending behaviors typically has the concomitant effect of increasing their levels of belligerence (Morison et al., 1998). Such emotional changes can, of course, make their operations in the prison difficult and the people most likely to be affected by this are the ever-present prison officers.

Victorian prison officers have been trained to expect an environment sympathetic to a paramilitary structure, and the majority of their training has left officers ill-prepared for the influx of non-custodial, non-paramilitary-trained staff members in the prison environment (Ben-David et al., 1996; Stohr, Hemmens, Marsh, Barrier, & Palhegyi, 2000).

Considering the different training bases of prison officers and therapists it would probably be surprising if there were no conflict between the two groups in the prison environment. Of course, the governing bodies of Victorian prisons, specifically The Correctional Enterprise (CORE;

responsible for the running of public prisons in Victoria), the two private prison operators and the Office of the Corrections Services Commissioner (OCSC), have made attempts to orient each group to the other's role, but this has typically been seen by officers and therapists as somewhat tokenistic and half-hearted.

Whilst the limited orientation process to rehabilitation has some flow-on effects for therapists, they would appear to be a group well acquainted with strategies to organize support networks for themselves (and this is typically the case even for "lone operators" or therapists who work without other therapists in a particular location). It is perhaps the officers themselves who feel the most displaced by the relatively new rehabilitative focus within Victorian prisons.

Although there is ample anecdotal evidence which suggests that officers and therapists experience both overt and covert conflict between the two groups, there is also some evidence that officers tend to become cynical toward prison administration when they feel that they are not heard at a management level. This can have the effect of officers acting in a hyper military fashion, adhering strictly to operational manuals, adopting more stringent custodial positions and, generally, rejecting the more subjective rehabilitative frameworks, or, at least, subordinating them to custodial duties (Morison et al., 1998; Ulmer, 1992).

It could be argued that whilst organizations such as the OCSC, and private and public prison operators may be philosophically aligned with the principles of rehabilitation, the orders they pass on to locations regarding aspects of rehabilitation have to be actually carried out, or, at

least facilitated by prison officers. Officers clearly have some power to assist or impede instructions, and therapists have some power over how they react to this situation.

Even as there has been some research in the area of prison operations, there is, to date, none which focuses specifically on the working relationship between therapeutic and custodial staff. That research which is available tends to focus either mainly on the custodial staff (Kerik, 2000; Shuford & Spencer, 1999; Stohr et al., 2000), the prisoners (Califano, 1998; Dolan, Wodak, Hall, & Kaplan, 1998; Sternbach, 2000), or the cost-effectiveness and/or efficacy of prison based therapeutic programs (Griffith & Hiller, 1999; Terry-McElrath, McBride, Vander Waal, & Ruel, 2002; Wexler, Melnick, Lowe, & Peters, 1999).

Additionally, prisons have tended to remain an unknown quantity in the community, and their usually remote locations serve to contribute to the mystique of prison as taboo. Detective programs and true-crime-type works of fiction often illuminate the seedier or more titillating aspects of corrections, but frequently make little comment about the working life of a prison. Hence, these depictions are of limited value as sources of politico/social comment. My specific area of interest in this research is the working relationships between therapists and custodial staff.

A few years ago I was attending a full community meeting of a small rural treatment prison<sup>1</sup>. All community members attended this meeting every Monday morning, including custodial staff, teachers,

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<sup>1</sup> I was attending this meeting as part of my duties as senior therapist and treatment program manager. For more detailed information regarding my prison work see Chapter 10: Reflections.

medical staff, psychologists, and, of course, prisoners. Upon entering the room I identified a person known as Peter. I had been working with Peter for some 18 months. I decided to sit with him and chat while we waited for the room to fill up. After a few minutes a group of well known and outspoken prisoners arrived at the entrance to the meeting, followed by about 5 officers who were late as they were clearing the wing to prepare for the community meeting. I said to Peter jokingly “oh no here comes trouble, the baddies are here”, he looked toward the group and agreed. Then he added the following; “..I know how you feel about the ‘blue’... you therapists really don’t like us do you?”

I was shocked by Peter’s comments. Peter is a prison officer who always performed his job efficiently and with as much compassion as I have always thought was possible under the circumstances. When I made my statement about the new “arrivals” I was referring to the prisoners. Why did Peter assume I meant the custodial staff? Did he really believe that all therapists disliked officers? Did he genuinely believe that I viewed officers as an amorphous mass to be disliked and, possibly worse still, that I had enough disrespect for Peter to insert this view into a casual conversation in a crowded room?

I pondered the above incident for a few days and discussed it with some other therapists in my team. I did not speak to any custodial staff about it. Eventually I rather arrogantly passed it off as a type of professional cringe on Peter’s part. Peter is part of a profession that is generally not held in high esteem, neither by prisoners, nor by society in general. After I was satisfied that I had adequately analyzed the incident, I



forgot about it briefly. However the issue between Peter and me never really disappeared and I found myself being suddenly drawn to it at unusual times. Sometimes I pondered the incident at Senior Management meetings with custodial staff, sometimes when consulting the Governor, and often whilst watching my own staff's interactions with officers on an individual and group level.

The current research originated in experiences of this kind. Such experiences, in my view, warrant systematic study of the prison as a diverse working environment. Over the last fifteen years or so prison operators have begun to recognize that the rehabilitation process is complicated. As discussed earlier, the emerging incarceration philosophy in Australia is that prisons exist *as* punishment rather than *for* punishment. That is, past concepts such as *hard labor* for inmates are no longer appropriate, the community now accepts that deprivation of liberty is the punishment component of sentencing and it is not the role of prisons to mete out punishment, their role should be one of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation of inmates serves the community and in this way prisons have a responsibility to address the presenting issues of prisoners. Increasingly prisons are augmenting their current services by contracting large programs to outside organisations (Day, 2002; Doyle, 1999; Terry-McElrath et al., 2002). In addition, many Victorian prisons are currently attempting to implement their own therapeutic teams. Such attempts would no doubt benefit from an understanding of some of the current and past issues around conflict within multi-disciplinary work groups in the prison environment.

Although conflict itself is a useful area of social study, the present research will broaden this by looking at several types and dimensions of the construct. Conflict around values, interests and power are the main areas of interest but sub-categories will include intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal conflict and, organizational conflict.

## *Chapter 2: Literature Review.*

While the previous chapter located the research in terms of contemporary needs, the present section examines the available literature. Issues of values interests and power will be discussed, both as separate and intertwined entities. Conflict and collaboration will also be discussed. The chapter ends with the objectives of the present study.

### *2.1 Definition of Values.*

Any attempt to offer an absolute definition of values is bound to be both complicated and enriched by the amount of academic thought which the concept continues to provoke. The Macquarie Dictionary (Dellbridge, 1988) devotes much space to the conception of values, but a distilling of the most useful ones for the present purpose deals with: “worthiness”; “desirability”; “utility”; “high or specified opinion”; “attach importance to”; “merit”, and “pride” (p. 1882). Of course, it is arguably up to those interested in the social sciences to give such concepts an operational definition in human and social terms.

Whilst Flyvbjerg (2001) tends to collapse the concepts of values with interests I will argue that the two notions, whilst at times seemingly similar, are fundamentally different. I will further argue that the concepts of values and interests become more separate and worthy of individual study when the issue of power is introduced.

Rockeach (1968) argues that values are linked to beliefs and attitudes. However, he maintains that values differ from beliefs and attitudes in important ways. Firstly, individuals may have hundreds and

thousands of beliefs and attitudes, but we generally have a limited number of values. Values are yardsticks against which we measure ourselves and others and they tend to guide actions, attitudes and beliefs. Finally, unlike attitudes and beliefs, values exist in hierarchical order; we may find it hard to rank the importance of our attitudes and beliefs, but it is generally possible to assign an order of importance to values (Rockeach, 1968).

Nelson, Prilleltensky, and MacGillivray (2001) argue that people tend to sacrifice their values (often temporarily) when they feel that their personal interests are being threatened. In their study of oppressed groups, the authors argue that values alone are not enough to promote change in a given situation, and that the interests of all parties must be considered where value-based change is attempted (Nelson, Prilleltensky, & MacGillivray, 2001).

Vidich and Lyman (1994) expand on the concept of values, suggesting that individuals bring a set of values to their overall world views. They suggest that whilst values may be difficult to shift, world views can be challenged to bring about changes in values (Vidich & Lyman, 1994). It could be argued, however, that a focus on worldviews is as one-dimensional a way of exploring values as the study of values are to an understanding of interests.

Pollock (1998) offers a definition of values as: "...elements of desirability, worth or importance" and that: "Values and judgments of worth, are often equated with moral judgments of goodness" (p. 13). The author argues that most people do tend to act according to their

values but that values are more a representation of opinion rather than truth and that they tend to drive peoples' moral beliefs (Pollock, 1998).

The idea that values are subjective phenomena rather than a set of objective facts is evidenced by the shifting notions of values across time, environmental conditions and, in some cases, political climates. Individuals are only free to act according to their values if they are truly free to make choices (Prilleltensky, 2001). That is, if they feel as though they have sufficient power (Judge, 1999; Ulmer, 1992).

Ulmer (1992) further suggests that when individuals share values and attitudes with a common reference group they are more likely to operate within common social norms. Of course this type of communalism may be mobilized for good (as in pro-social community action groups), or, it may be misdirected (as with formal and informal racist groups).

If it can be accepted that there is some merit in treating values and interests separately, then I argue that Nelson and Prilleltensky's (2005) definition of the place of values is useful (if not sufficient) for the present study. The authors define values as: "...guid(ing) the process of working towards a desirable state of affairs. They inform personal, professional and political behavior" (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005, p. 4).

Prilleltensky (2000, 2001) argues that individuals can use personal values to check the integrity of actions. The author further offers a breakdown of values to incorporate those which embrace: self determination; health; personal growth; social justice; support for

enabling community structures; respect for diversity, and, collaboration and democratic participation (Prilleltensky, 2001, p759). Prilleltensky's expanded definition of values is useful to the present research and assists toward a greater understanding of how (and if!) values operate within organizations.

For the present study I have defined values as the beliefs and aspirations people bring to a range of situations, including working environments. Values may be based on personal backgrounds and social influences but they may also shift and change according to new information. Additionally, it is possible to maintain a set of values but operate in environments where adherence to them is not possible. For example, one may value freedom of speech but recognize that this is not always possible in all situations. Values may be commonly shared, but I argue that many personal values are deeply private and not easily identified, either by others or those who hold them. I suggest that scrutinizing values according to intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational conditions may lead to a novel understanding of the construct.

## *2.2 Organizational Values*

Whilst the present study does not attempt a definitive exploration of organizational values, these are of interest in terms of the fit between them and the individual values of workers. Many modern organizations would argue that their values are transparent. Such phenomena as mission statements and position statements are designed to alert all to the types of values individual organizations espouse (Wright, 2001). However,

Prilleltensky (2000) warns against the dangers of setting up possibly vacuous mission statements as they are frequently merely tokens to sets of values.

Bolman and Deal (2003) claim that organizations that espouse mission statements often fail to attend to strategic matters necessary for their implementation. Thus, such visions are doomed to remain an “illusion.” (p. 206). Furthermore, these mission statements are prone to lulling workers into a (possibly false) belief that the organization has taken the broader issue of values into account. There is frequently a poor fit between the values of an organization and the individual either working within, or a client receiving the services of many organizations (Fisher & Ury, 1999; Locke, 2002).

Prilleltensky (2000) argues that organizations are not, and indeed cannot be, value free. There are many dynamics at play within organizations. These dynamics are largely masked by the perception of workers that the organization is somehow an amorphous mass devoid of human choice and individual value implementation. That is, there may be a perception that the values an organization espouses do not reflect the individual values of policy makers. Of course, the larger the organization the more removed workers down the hierarchy are likely to be from the process of policy formation, thus creating a stronger perception that the organization acts as an entity rather than as a reflection of a set of values of individuals (Bradshaw, 1999; Denison & Sutton, 1990; Prilleltensky, 2000).

Bursztajn, Gutheil and Cummins (1987) suggest that collective values contribute to a depth of understanding in regards to ethical principles within an organization. However, the authors also argue that unrecognized personal value conflict across the hierarchy of workers can inhibit an individual's ability to act ethically and according to their own values. This may mean that, as Bourdieu (1999) suggests, relatively small numbers of individuals are actually acting in ways which run counter to their own values but maintain the status quo in terms of serving the interests of powerful others. Bourdieu argues further that such individuals may actually end up being subsumed by the values of the more powerful without realizing that they have sacrificed their individuality and, in some ways, their own principles and ethics (Bourdieu, 1999).

History has demonstrated the capacity of individuals to act counter to their own personal values in a given set of circumstances. This is particularly the case when the guiding principles and values of an "organization" seem sound or are in the interests of those charged with the task of acting on the prevailing values. In order to understand the processes by which values may be compromised or subordinated to powerful others, it may be useful to examine, in micro-mode, some of the value-conditions which need to be met in order that ethical practice can exist.

Prilleltensky (2000) offers three sets of values which are necessary to guide ethical practices within and across individuals and organizations, with a particularly critical glance at leadership. Values for personal wellness are those which address issues of self determination, autonomy,



health and personal growth; values for collective wellness are those which speak to social justice and support for community structures and values for relational wellness are those which encompass a respect for human diversity, collaboration and democratic participation for all (Prilleltensky, 2000, p. 8).

Prilleltensky (2000) is most interested in the notion of leadership in organizations, and offers the above to facilitate value-based practices in this area. Whilst an understanding of leadership is vital to any examination of values within an organization, it is also useful to look at the role of values within parity (but multidisciplinary) work-groups.

Jehn, Northcraft and Neale (1999) conducted a multi-method study of 92 different multidisciplinary work- groups. The researcher's goals were to explore those factors which contribute to (and/or impede) efficient and effective multidisciplinary work groups. Jehn et al (1999) discovered that for teams to be effective they should have high information diversity and low value diversity. Information diversity refers to the knowledge which group members have of what other workers' roles involve, whereas value diversity tended to refer to the understanding and appreciation each member had for the job in general or a task at hand. This suggests that different work-groups can be very effective but their values should be closely matched (Jehn et al., 1999).

In addition to the previous finding, Jehn et al. (1999) further discovered that for a multidisciplinary work-group to enjoy high morale<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> High morale was defined as: High Satisfaction; Intent to Remain in the job, and, Commitment to the job (Jehn et al., 1999)

or to consider itself effective, it was also necessary that there existed low value diversity. In addition, the authors suggest that value diversity becomes more important as a predictor of performance over time whereas factors such as age, race, and gender tend to become less important over time. The above study provides evidence that the most important condition for inter-group productivity was closely matched values (Jehn et al., 1999).

Hirsh and Sheldrake (2000) offer four types of values which organizations and leaders can adopt to enhance work-place relations and productive business outcomes. The authors suggest that organizations should have: integrity; not treat people as objects or use labels to describe employees and treat each person as an individual; maintain an eye on service; listen to major stakeholders, including employees; care, including care for the sensibilities of all in the organization and keeping abreast of staff culture; and, hope, maintain a faith that employees can be trusted and give them opportunities to reward such faith.

Kotter (1988) claims that people will often stay in jobs, even ones that pay below their competencies, if the organization has a clear set of values which workers also share. Such values as treating employees well, acting quickly on unnecessary politics in the workplace, respecting individuals, and allowing employees to take risks and develop initiatives free from criticism, are cited as important conditions for a productive organization. The notion of risk-taking is viewed by the author as a vital element in the partnership between individuals and groups, and the organisation.

Kotter and Judge argue that people who are not permitted to take risks, or are not protected from management when they sometimes fail, tend to stagnate and become cynical within organizations (Judge, 1999; Kotter, 1988). Of course, autonomy and innovation are likely to be more easily nurtured in organizations where the workers have similar values and visions. Work places which employ multidisciplinary staff from diverse backgrounds may struggle to commit to individuality and risk-taking, particularly those which answer to the wider community.

I would maintain that few workplaces are more diverse than a prison. In fact prisons arguably represent micro-worlds, where professionals such as nurses, teachers, doctors, dentists, hairdressers, and psychologists are frequently expected to work cooperatively. Of course, prison guards are not a part of the “outside world,” but it could be argued that, for the most part, the prison is the prison officer’s traditional domain, a domain which policymakers and researchers alike are pushing to expand to incorporate more therapeutic environments for prisoners (Birgden, 2002; Birgden & McLachlan, 2002; Califano, 1998; Davies, 1994; Day, 2002; Gendreau, 1996; Knight, Hiller, & Simpson, 1999; Knight, Simpson, & Hiller, 1999; KPMG, 1999; Ward, 2002a)

### *2.3 Values in the Prison Environment*

Research which has focused on values and prisons largely tend to concentrate on the values which prisoners display regarding their incarceration (Ahuja, 1983; Arbuthnot, 1984), values and conformity among prisoners (Brandmiller, 2001), the values prisoners have regarding each other (Cowburn, 1991), values among specialist prisoner groups, such

as dual diagnosis prisoners (Davis, Yu, Durden, & Pease, 1991; Landsberg & Smiley, 2001), or young offenders (Fischer, Teichman, & Geiger, 1985; Hautaluoma & Scott, 1973). Whilst such research is no doubt useful, the present study aims to focus on the values which prison workers bring to the prison as a workplace, and, indeed, to some extent the values the organization itself holds.

Where there has been inquiry about staff values in the prison environment, it has largely focused on the need for good relationships between therapeutic and custodial staff to facilitate rehabilitation of prisoners. Thies (1994) suggests that:

For an effective rehabilitative climate to exist, all personnel must hold a set of shared beliefs about the pathology of the offender, how this pathology develops, how change can occur and what is expected of the offender (p. 1)

Whilst Thies (1994) does not explore directly the concept of values, it could be argued that a “shared set of beliefs” incorporates the notion of shared values also. It could be reasoned that work-groups may hold the same beliefs about prisoner rehabilitation but not necessarily value the process of rehabilitation itself. For example, all work-groups may value a decline in recidivism; however, prison officers may see this end being met with “hard labor” and value the traditional custodial process, whilst therapeutic staff may value the concept of positive regard for the prisoner in efforts to encourage them to examine offending behaviors within a therapeutically safe framework.

Perkins and Abramis (1990) conducted research on a treatment prison in the US. Their findings identified a treatment facility which worked very well. The prison utilized a multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation and involved psychologists, local managers, counselors and case workers in a process called “teaming”(Perkins & Abramis, 1990). This teaming was conducted with each prisoner on a tri-monthly basis (there were 750 prisoners in the facility). During this process each location stakeholder had the opportunity to collate information on the prisoner’s progress and use this information to decide matters such as transfers and prisoner privileges. Although the researchers did not specifically discuss the values of the work groups, it becomes clear that these groups did have a very cohesive set of values in terms of prisoner progress. This was a necessary component of the treatment journey as prisoners were frequently prone to attempts to split the teams. While prison officers did not have substantial input into the teaming process, mental health workers were very much centre and front (Perkins & Abramis, 1990).

Scott (1985) argues that psychologists who operate in the prison environment face a range of ethical dilemmas, particularly regarding their professional values. The author recognizes that there is a role for psychologists in prison, but that values which the profession holds in esteem, such as positive regard and personal empowerment for the client, are difficult to fully engage in the harsh environment of the prison. In particular, the necessary security functions of a prison frequently run counter to professional values and security is always the main focus in prison (Scott, 1985).

Scott (1985) further argues that when psychologists choose to work in the prison milieu they often find themselves operating within the dual roles of individual counselor, and consultants for the environment. That is, psychologists, given their expertise, are frequently consulted by other prison staff about peripheral issues (see also Perkins, 1990). Scott (1985) argues that this dual function can present the psychologist with some serious ethical dilemmas in terms of their obligations to the client (prisoner) as opposed to their obligations to the employer (in this case the prison). The problem of third party obligations of psychologists is not unique to the prison environment, but it is to date largely unexplored regarding this environment.

Emmons (1976) questions the direct involvement of psychologists with prisoners. The author argues that since custodial staff spends more time with prisoners than psychologists, it makes sense to use the expertise of psychologists to train custodial staff in more therapeutic methods of dealing with prisoners. In this way, Emmons suggests, the skills which psychologists can offer would be maximized in that custodial staff are in a better position to catch the range of maladaptive behaviors displayed by prisoners on an almost permanent basis (Emmons, 1976).

Hesketh, Rawlings and Allen (1996) expand upon Emmons' (1976) thesis, suggesting that, whilst there exists some value in the work of psychologists with prisoners, the profession of psychology (and particularly in the organizational field) has been largely underutilized. The authors argue that a value-added approach would see organizational psychologists augmenting the work of (mostly forensic) psychologists by

taking on the role of advisors in an environmental capacity. Hesketh et al. (1996) maintain that the role of psychologists in prison has largely been in the fields of evaluation and treatment of prisoners. However, the authors propose a model which incorporates psychologists being involved in areas such as staff selection, staff training, career development, ergonomics and job design (Emmons, 1976).

The authors acknowledge that there will be some ethical dilemmas regarding who the client actually is, but suggest that this can be overcome if psychologists are clear about their function at any given time (Hesketh et al., 1996). Whilst this model of duality seems sensible, given that the psychologist is highly accessible and a good organizational resource, it could be argued that the psychologist is bound to be compromised, particularly around issues of security and information sharing. It is doubtful that there will always be clear demarcation around role function in the highly charged prison environment.

Janik (1995) further blurs the role of psychologists in prison by suggesting that they should actually be working directly with custodial staff in a therapeutic role. The author argues that custodial staff is prone to compassion fatigue as a result of the time they spend with prisoners, and it is implied that psychologists working in the prison system are in a prime position to both detect and act upon such phenomena in the work environment.

Whilst Janik (1995) does not specifically state that prison psychologists should be the first option regarding counseling for custodial staff, the absence of a workable alternative would suggest that this is the

proposition. It could be argued that prison psychologists' therapeutic treatment of custodial staff could result in a non-workable relationship between therapists and officers. After all, who wants to see their therapist at work! Additionally, prison officers need to maintain a professional distance from prisoners – one could argue that this particular line would be difficult to maintain in the event that the prisoner and the officer share a therapist.

Currently, there is much debate about the role that therapists should assume in the Victorian prison system. The Office of the Correctional Services Commissioner (OCSC) has recently mandated a model which incorporates the utilization of therapists directly employed by prisons. Whilst the extra focus on rehabilitation is to be applauded there is some trepidation that prison administrators are fully aware of the special needs regarding the integration of the multidisciplinary work-group dynamic. Such conflict is particularly salient in regard to the potential value conflict regarding therapists and custodial officers, both of who have personal and professional interests which the prison environment may or may not be capable to attend to.

#### *2.4 Definition of Interests*

The Macquarie Dictionary (Dellbridge, 1988) defines interests in several different ways. Interests can be defined as: “advantage or profit”; “phenomena in which one is concerned”; “personal concerns”; “specific and not impartial or disinterested” or, “selfish pursuit of one's own welfare” (p. 910).



It is possibly the last definition which is the origin of a range of misunderstandings regarding the importance of personal interests. Personal interests have frequently been viewed as anathema to community wellbeing. That is, if people pursue only their personal interests then they are apt to act in selfish ways, possibly at the expense of more community-inclusive methods of wellbeing.

As stated earlier, some theorists prefer to collapse interests with values; however, I will not be operating along these lines. I argue that interests are often closely aligned to values but that interests themselves are worthy of separate consideration and an important construct creditable of investigation. The theorists referred to here do not use the term ‘interests’ to describe amorphous egoistic pursuits, but rather tend to use interests to explore a range of needs including, social, psychological, community and positional.

Habermas (1987, 1988, 1996) devotes much time to an understanding of interests to the human and social worlds. Habermas (1987, 1996) argues that human interests can be conceptualized in part as a simple gratification of needs, but the author takes care to expand this notion out to embrace the social continuum of needs. Such social needs may be evolutionary in nature, such as the different needs and interests humans have had at different times in history, but, Habermas argues, interests are also organic and contain an element of social context (Habermas, 1996). That is, interests can also be served by meaningful employment, empathic governments and moral judgments which, ideally, take place within sound democratic process.

Foucault would argue that the perception of sound democratic process can lull individuals and groups into a sense that their interests are being considered, even if they are not (Foucault, 1970, 1982). Such a sense can have the effect of breeding inertia, and it is only in times of social struggle that groups and individuals come to understand the illusion that their interests have been met (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

Prilleltensky (2000) suggests that personal interests are a more self-serving concept than values, but acknowledges that personal interests must be met in order that values can be acted upon. The author argues that individuals are not able to act according to their values in the event that their pragmatic needs (or immediate interests) are being ignored. Failure to address the tensions between values and interests has resulted in a failure to comprehensively engage communities in value-based partnerships and leadership practices<sup>3</sup> (Nelson et al., 2001; Prilleltensky, 2000).

For the purposes of the present study, I define interests as any activity or situation where individuals or groups are able to meet a range of needs. These needs may include only the personal, but can also include broader interests. Such broader issues may serve professional, social, political, and emotional interests. The concept of examining intrapersonal, intrapersonal and organizational interests is intended to recognize that interests are not necessarily limited to selfish pursuits, but rather can also serve broader useful functions.

## *2.5 Interests: The Community and Organizations*

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<sup>3</sup>The author also addresses Power issues. This will be expanded upon in the chapter dealing with power.

Bourdieu (1977) examines the position of interests across a range of social conditions and argues that there is frequently disparity between the interests of individuals and certain groups. Of course, this notion is not unheard of in the social sciences, but Bourdieu does a particularly elegant job of elucidating in a pragmatic sense what most of us experience or witness when groups, and particularly powerful ones, are operating.

Bourdieu (1997) suggests that the serving of personal individual interests, when they run counter to the values (interests) of a wider, more powerful group, serve to alienate individuals from the group. The level of dependence of individuals from groups can alter over time and across situations. For example, it may not always be important for groups of friends to agree on such phenomena as eating habits, meeting points, gymnasium timetables and other areas of shared culture, however in the prison environment it is vital that prisoner friendship groups always operate according to a set of established rules regarding the above matters.

Political parties also frequently have similar rules about the role of individual and group interests. For example, conservative political organizations may take an anti-abortion stance, but this does not mean that all members of the party (politicians and party faithful alike) agree. There simply exists a cultural expectation that individual views which run counter to the wider interests of the group (in this case a perception of unity on a conservative issue) must remain private. This is also further evidence that individual values (in this case pro-choice) can be subordinated to personal interests (in this case, membership of a particular political party).

Bourdieu contends that the more highly structured, regulated and/or politicized a group is, the less able the group is to tolerate the pursuit of individual interests (Bourdieu, 1977, 1999). Such groups usually operate under the assumption that the greater community good is served by cohesion and servitude to a shared, often historical, culture. But it could be argued that failure to deviate from the status quo or “what has always been”, result in static communities and disenfranchised individuals (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005).

Bolman and Deal (2003) suggest that organizations are places where there are a range of individuals and groups operating, and that each of these is likely to have a variety of interests which they all desire to have served. The authors argue that because many of these interests may be competing, organizations are, by their very nature, political places. Fisher and Ury (1999) do not see this political aspect as particularly damaging, but argue that it must be acknowledged and managed by all players, particularly management (Fisher & Ury, 1999).

Kotter (1988) argues that effective leaders and managers need to take into account the legitimate interests of others in the organization, while Pfeffer (1992) warns that the politicizing of the work place is often the result of individuals and groups lobbying to serve their own narrow interests rather than that of the organization as a community.

Whether or not individuals perceive their work place as a community may, in fact, have a lot to do with their perceptions that they are being heard and their interests are being considered. Fisher and Ury (1999) believe that people are more likely to be satisfied in an organization

if they view management as credible, competent and sensible. Individuals and groups will be most effective within the organization if they are able to accept that interests often differ but that broader interests are served by the elimination of destructive work place practices, such as self-interest agendas which are manipulative (Fisher & Ury, 1999). Of course, people are not likely to ignore their own interests if they have no faith in the true values and vision of the organization. In this way values and interests can be seen to have a symbiotic relationship.

Whilst the notion of values and interests are useful as areas of examination, such an examination is doomed to uni-dimensionality and fragmentation unless the role of power is also scrutinized.

## *2.6 Definition of Power*

The Macquarie Dictionary (Dellbridge, 1988) defines Power as: “the ability to do or act”; “Government, influence, authority (over one)”; “having influence”; “personal and/or political ascendance”; “influential person body or thing”, further, Powerful is defined as “having great power or influence” and, “potency”. Additionally, Powerlessness is simply described as the absence of power and influence (p. 1334).

Most social commentators touch on the issue of power in many forms. Power has been described in social, political, personal, organizational and global terms. In addition, power has been analyzed in terms of levels of manifestation including socio/political, structural and historic. The present section is not intended as an exhaustive explanation of all things relating to power, but instead attempts to draw on the existing body of knowledge of the construct, not only in an individual sense, but

within and across diverse groups and organizations and as a force for (or against) social justice.

Prilleltensky (in press) argues that power is multifaceted and ubiquitous. Among other clarifications, Prilleltensky identifies power as the: "...capacity and opportunity to fulfill or obstruct personal, relational, or collective needs" (Prilleltensky, in press, p. 4).

Prilleltensky (in press) defines capacity as dependent on volition and ability; that is, the desire or drive individuals or groups may have to exert power. Opportunity, in turn, refers to the prevailing structures (social, historical, economic) which afford individuals or groups elements of power.

In addition, personal needs are identified as those which pertain to health, self determination, meaning, spirituality and opportunities for growth; collective needs are tied to issues such as environmental protection, adequate welfare and health structures; while relational needs refer to a respect for diversity and collaboration and involvement of individuals in democratic process (Prilleltensky, in press, p. 4).

Of course, it does not necessarily follow that individuals or groups who have power are guaranteed to use that power in pro-social or productive ways (Bolman & Deal, 2003). There are many examples of small, often well positioned groups of people or individuals who have the capacity to realize their power within structures which are socially and historically amenable, thus offering opportunities to, at times, influence the thinking of the wider population (the Spanish Inquisition, Ku Klux Klan, Stolen Generation (in Aboriginal communities in Australia)).

Prilleltensky and Nelson acknowledge that there is always the danger that people and groups will use power for its own sake and, further, that the acquisition of power can alter individual and collective values so that the original struggle for justice is subsumed by, and subordinated to, a narrow set of interests (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Nelson et al., 2001; Prilleltensky, 2000, in press). For example, in Australia we have a group known as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) which was formulated out of a legitimate need to address a wide range of social, economic, political, educational, and health needs for our Indigenous peoples. Whilst ATSIC was well intentioned in its formulation, the management of the organization has seen many problems, including, but not limited to, accusations of misappropriation of funds and nepotism. Without expanding unnecessarily on the politics of ATSIC, it could be argued that this organization is a tangible example of the ways that acquisition of power can divert attention from an original, well formulated community need, to a study in the ways in which power can divert original values of a large group towards the interests of a few.

Prilleltensky (in press) thinks that people can use power to promote wellness, campaign for liberation or oppress others, but that the ways we use power are dependent on contextual variables and the options are always open. Thus, however we operationalize a concept, that concept is always at the mercy of a range of social, psychological, emotional, economic, and historical variables, all of which operate within a given, often invisible, context.

Michel Foucault argued that power is, indeed, almost always invisible and that citizens' faith in the efficacy of democratic process can result in social inertia (Foucault, 1970, 1977, 1982, 1987; J. Miller, 1993). Foucault was particularly concerned with the power invested in various apparatus of social control, such as prisons and mental institutions, and suggested that such institutions were both influenced by public opinion and frequently used as political vehicles by those with power to influence the beliefs of the masses (J. Miller, 1993).

Foucault used the perceptions of mental illness to demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between public perceptions and the invisible power of democratic process. He argued that "madness" is often viewed as a static set of diagnoses but that the perception of madness has changed over time. What has been considered mad in one set of circumstances, over time may be referred to as eccentric brilliance (Foucault, 1987). When one considers the serious personal and social consequences of institutionalization, the power of perceptions and the ubiquitous nature of classification become apparent. It is, I believe, easy to see why Foucault explored the invisibility of power and also espoused its importance for a full understanding of a range of social issues.

Because Foucault viewed power as largely invisible, and therefore difficult to capture in a pragmatic and theoretical sense, he suggested that the most useful place to begin when attempting to define and locate this slippery construct is in conflict (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Foucault, 1982; J. Miller, 1993). Foucault's central thesis is that power can not be fully understood unless one scrutinizes the conflict surrounding power. This is almost a



post-mortem approach, where the detritus of power bases are viewed through the lens of human struggle. Whilst this view may seem somewhat far- fetched, it could be argued that most of what we now know about despotic, dysfunctional, inhumane societies and policies is understood via social struggles to change them. Such struggles may occur as revolutions, however, Foucault's thesis may also be useful in an examination of smaller, quieter conflicts, such as in the home or workplace, where the illusion of true democracy may be challenged.

Jurgen Habermas takes a different view to Foucault. He argues that the path to an understanding of, and equitable distribution of power, is smoothest through the implementation of a functioning democratic process (Habermas, 1987, 1988). Whilst Foucault is interested in conflict, Habermas prefers to use the notion of consensus in efforts to promote social justice.

Habermas suggests that citizens and groups are best positioned to influence governing bodies if they mobilize their "communicative power" (Habermas, 1996). Communicative power is defined by Habermas as the ability by citizens to reach consensus and then act toward social change, possibly via legislation. In this way, the author suggests, strategic change can occur.

Of course, communicative freedom is not always a given and Habermas acknowledges further that communicative power itself does not guarantee that legislation will always reflect the wishes expressed in the communicative *process* (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Habermas, 1996).

Habermas suggests that laws should be viewed as the media which translate communicative freedom into administrative power (Habermas, 1996), however, this is just the type of belief that Foucault expressed as the invisible nature of power. That is, bad laws (and practices) can be accepted by communities as “their own”, when, in fact, such laws may be serving the (largely un-declared) interests of powerful others. Whilst democratic process may give the illusion of inclusiveness - after all, people in democracies vote- there may exist within such democracies a level of infantilisation which citizens are largely unaware of. An example of this may be the current Christian ideals of the Australian Government, governing at a time when religious beliefs have never been so diverse, nor agnosticism more prevalent.

Flyvbjerg (2001) is particularly critical of Habermas’ approach to an understanding of power. Flyvbjerg suggests that Habermas ignores the role of power in political processes and takes an “idealistic” position (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 107), a position which fails to recognize that the development of a constitutional model alone is not enough to ensure good democratic process. In this way, Flyvberg argues, Habermas pays little attention to the actual dynamics of power (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

It could be argued that the theses of Habermas and Foucault are not mutually exclusive and each thinker has much to offer in terms of an understanding of power. If Habermas’ ideal of consensus is not a workable solution to the inequitable distribution of power, then Foucault’s conflict seems certain to occur. All that seems to be needed to incorporate the notion of conflict to the strategy of consensus is recognition that conflict

itself is the result of lack of consensus or, at least, a questionable definition of what consensus actually entails.

Whilst theoretical discussions about power and its import in a range of processes are useful, it is also salient to explore some more “hands-on” models of power. The following models of organizational power offer not only valuable additions to the theoretical argument around power but, I suggest, workable clarifications of the construct via their simplicity and pragmatic approaches.

For the present research I define power as the extent to which individuals and groups are able to act according to their own interests and values. I suggest that powerful people are able to act according to their values and interests, but that such interests and values are not necessarily productive, or in some cases, moral. Additionally, levels of power are not necessarily constant. People may be very powerful in one situation, such as in the home, but less powerful in other locations, such as in the community. As with values and interests, power will be examined using the categories of intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational.

### *2.7 Organizational Power*

In her article *Paradoxes of Power and Paths to Organizational Change*, Bradshaw (1999) explores power dynamics within organizations by presenting different manifestations of power. The author argues that presenting such a thesis is useful to an understanding of power because the construct frequently represents a dynamic set of circumstances, often with opposing tensions but with an ability to co-exist, particularly within organizations (Bradshaw, 1999, p. 123).

Firstly Bradshaw asks the reader to consider "...to what extent power resides in the agency of individuals as opposed to the extent to which power relations are fundamentally determined by the structures of organizations" (Bradshaw, 1999, p. 124). This is a fairly simple concept but is arguably an important fact to determine if power is to be understood within systems, especially systems which allocate power according to strictly defined positions, such as ranks and promotion (structural power), rather than systems in which power is achieved by individuals' abilities (or, merit). Of course, it is possible that individual abilities can attract promotion and advancement to power, but clearly this is not always the case, particularly within structures which may be blind to merit where it occurs outside of traditional gender or cultural frameworks.

The second differentiation of power Bradshaw (1999) offers is between "... surface or observable power and deep, invisible power" (p. 124). This concept speaks directly to Foucault's argument that power can, and often is, invisible (Foucault, 1977, 1982). Clearly, the observable surface power within organizations is overt and understood by all whom operate within the organization, and even if individuals are uneasy with this power, it is a known quantity and can be dealt with on some levels. It is the deeply entrenched invisible power which is the area most worthy of study because it is largely nameless and unacknowledged, particularly by those who possess it (Bradshaw, 1999). Deep power bases may be found in the ways individuals are prevented from advancing in an organization. An example of this may be a woman in middle management not being asked to after-work drinks with her male colleagues (or not able to attend due to

family commitments) and so excluded from the informal networks which frequently serve to alert workers to job advancement opportunities.

Bradshaw (1999) synthesizes the various manifestations of power in a somewhat radical model of power within organizations. The author suggests that we should look at: surface structural power; surface personal power; deep structural power, and, deep personal power in efforts to deconstruct power relations and, in this way, transform organizations (Bradshaw, 1999). Such transformation, Bradshaw contends, is best facilitated via the avenues of restructuring, personal action, and deconstruction, which the author has defined as paths to change.

Bradshaw (1999) suggests that restructuring "...draws on the surface-structural perspective of power" (p. 15) and involves the redistribution of roles in order that power may be more fairly distributed. The author is not suggesting that first year office workers be promoted to managing director; the restructuring may be quite small and seem insignificant. However, Bradshaw argues that small changes can result in challenges to the status quo so that larger possibilities become illuminated.

In terms of personal action, Bradshaw (1999) suggests that individuals can critically analyze their own bases of power and create change on a surface level. Of course, both restructuring and personal action do somewhat rely on individuals possessing a certain amount of power to begin with.

Bradshaw (1999) discusses the concept of deconstruction as a critical tool which can be useful in challenging existing bases of power on a systemic level. Deconstruction is viewed as facilitating the "silences" in

organizations or societies, and operates at a deep structural level

(Bradshaw, 1999 p. 17).

Whilst Bradshaw's (1999) model is quite simple, it is also somewhat extreme because it attempts to understand power at a deep and relativistic level. That is, it illuminates the relationships between different kinds of power. However, whilst the author presents a good description of possible power dynamics within organizations, there is not an analysis of why individuals or organizations would want to change the existing power bases within the model itself. For this reason the usefulness of the model is possibly limited to specific organizations and/or individuals who have expressed a desire for change.

Bradshaw (1999) does acknowledge that just because individuals or organizations are offered ways to transform power dynamics, it does not necessarily follow that they will do so in positive ways. Changes of power, by their very nature, can be misused. However Bradshaw suggests that a greater understanding of paths of power can diminish this risk. It could be argued that Bradshaw's model takes away some traditional hiding places which power dynamics have historically employed.

As with Bradshaw, Prilleltensky (2000) suggests that power bases within organizations do not operate within a vacuum and that there are a range of dynamics at play which should be considered in an attempt to understand power. The author offers a model of understanding which examines the interplay of values, interests, and power (VIP) within organizations. He also suggests that tensions exist within and across citizen groups, workers and leaders.

Citizen groups, workers and leaders are identified as key stakeholders, all of whom have an interest in the value-based practices of an organization (Prilleltensky, 2000). Citizen groups (frequently consumers of a service) can have their service improved, workers can experience enhanced satisfaction from their jobs, and leaders can experience increased organizational harmony and productivity, if steps are taken to understand the dynamics between values, interests and power within organizations.

Prilleltensky (2000) argues that people who feel they have the power to protect their own interests are more likely to act according to a set of pro-social values. Of course, as discussed earlier, there exists no guarantee that power alone warrants adherence to values, or even that those values are necessarily pro-social. Prilleltensky (2000) cautions that a mere understanding of the relationship between values, interests and power is not necessarily sufficient for pragmatic change to occur within organizations. Instead there must be proactive steps taken to foster and validate the incorporation of values and interests into power dynamics.

Pfeffer (1992) argues that it is not possible to understand organizational success unless one also understands the dynamics of power. The author defines power as the ‘...ability to influence behavior, to change the course of events, to overcome resistance, and to get people to do things they would not otherwise do’ (Pfeffer, 1992 p. 30). The author also contends that power is used through processes and actions of politics and influence but that it is potentially dangerous if it exists in the absence of moral values (Pfeffer, 1992).

Pfeffer suggests that managers should be encouraged to use their power to improve productivity and the fact that this is often achieved through greater employee satisfaction is a happy by-product of the theory. Pfeffer reasons that if managers are to use their power to transform they need to identify the dependence and interdependence of groups and individuals in the organization. The notion behind this idea is one of cooperation. By identifying the ways in which groups and individuals rely on each other, it is also possible to identify how power dynamics are played out (Pfeffer, 1992). It makes sense to examine dependent relationships in order to identify power and powerful relationships. If one person or group depends on another to get their own job done, say in a production line, then it is important that the groups cooperate well. A withdrawal of one element of the product is an act of power. Of course such power can be very useful and give a social voice to the disempowered; many unions use this tactic with varying degrees of success.

Bolman and Deal (2003) indicate that the amount of power we have determines the amount of influence we have over our environments. Also, whenever the interests of individuals and groups are conflicting there is always going to be power struggles. In such struggles those with the most power will inevitably win, thus adding to the political aspects of organizations. Those with the most power are often in management positions.

Judge (1999) argues that managers have a serious responsibility to use their power in moral and useful ways. Good managers should



empower those around them and encourage others to be leaders. However, Himmelman (2001) cautions that sometimes people indicate that they feel disempowered but eschew the extra responsibilities which extra power necessarily entails. Bolman and Deal also warn that organizations which have a history of disempowering practices and hidden agendas can not expect employees to jump at empowering opportunities, such as promotions and extra consultation. Such organizations breed a culture of mistrust and cynicism which can be difficult to infiltrate (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Foster-Fishman and Keys (1997) offer ways in which organizations and managers can in some cases regain, and in others build upon trust. The authors argue that such measures are worthwhile as happy employees tend to become organizational citizens. Organizational citizens are those who trust their managers and the organization; believe in organizational visions and are willing to work toward them even if they occasionally conflict with their own interests. These citizens consider that their participation is substantive and not merely tokenistic (Foster-Fishman & Keys, 1997). Organizational citizens feel invested in the success of their organization and trust the decisions of management if they feel they are not only acknowledged, but heard by management.

### *2.8 Power in the Prison Environment*

There can be no doubt that prisons operate as autocracies (Sparks, 1994). No matter what the political climate in terms of governments which control correctional systems, natural justice is always suspended in prison and any illusion that prisons are democratic are just that (Foucault, 1977;

Stohr et al., 2000; Stohr, Hemmens, Kifer, & Schoeler, 2000a). Stohr et al (2000) argue that the paramilitary structure of prisons means that power and communication are regulated by middle-level managers and other staff under their control.

Historical controls and power bases are not unique to prisons. It could be argued that schools, hospitals and other institutions operate under similar “shared cultures”, where the rules are usually operationalized for the purposes of enforcement, but the “real” rules, those which make sure that everyone knows their place and remain there, are frequently more subjective and less clear to the uninitiated.

Where issues of power are examined in schools, hospitals, prisons and other organizations it is common to focus on the “consumers” (pupils, patients, prisoners), and there is an increasing body of knowledge in these areas. The present research seeks to stray from this more traditional form of inquiry and look instead at the power relations between different work-groups in the prison environment.

As the present research is quite specific in its inquiry, it is not surprising that there exists a paucity of available literature in the area of power relationships between different work-groups in prisons. Much of the research and thinking about prisons has tended to focus on the relationships between prisoners and custodial staff (Ahuja, 1983; Bigelow & Driscoll, 1973), but since the concept of outside workers, and particularly therapists, is relatively new, this paucity is probably not surprising (Birgden & McLachlan, 2002; Brown, 2002; Daly, 2000; Hollin, 2002).

Stojkovic (1986) used a qualitative methodology to study power types among administrators of a large prison in mid-western United States. The researcher was, once again, interested in the relationship between custodial staff and prisoners, however this research is useful because of the three types of power practice he discovered. It should be noted however that the research was conducted in a particularly volatile and dysfunctional prison, where issues of power and control were almost always at the forefront; therefore the research can not be considered representative of all prisons.

Stojkovic (1986) used data collected from interviews with prison administrators, officers and prisoners in an attempt to identify the different types of power correctional staff used to control prisoners. The researcher identified three main types of power: coercion; reward, and, access to information. Coercion was identified as the main type of power use in prison and involved threats of punishment and/or transfer of difficult prisoners. Reward was also used to control prisoners and included the lure of specialized jobs within the prison and early parole. Access to information included using prisoners as sources of knowledge regarding what was happening in the prison.

Stojkovic (1986) found that coercions tended to dichotomize the prison leading to a sub-culture of prisoners versus custodial staff, and as this is the current primary source of power in prisons, reflects most prisoner-custodial staff relationships today. Rewards were seen as so few and far between that the reward system was viewed as elitist by prisoners, with powerful prisoners viewed as enjoying an increased elevation based

on the power they already enjoyed. Finally, using prisoners to gain information led to potentially volatile situations where some prisoners were seen as informants by the wider prisoner population, a highly dangerous situation (Stojkovic, 1986).

Whilst Stojkovic (1986) is fundamentally interested in the power relations between custodial staff and prisoners, it seems reasonable to consider whether or not staff-groups within prisons also employ the methods of coercion, reward or information to exert power over other workers in their working environment.

## *2.9 Conflict in General*

The notion of conflict is often viewed as a negative phenomena and almost always something to be avoided at all costs (Bursztajn et al., 1987; Shuford & Spencer, 1999). The Macquarie Dictionary (Dellbridge, 1988) defines conflict as: “..to come into collision; clash, or be in opposition or at variance; (to) disagree... struggle (or), fight” (p. 392). However, it is clear that conflict is much more complicated than some definitions suggests, and that the presence of conflict can indicate productive opportunities for revelation, transformation and positive change, as well as the more one-dimensional indication that people are just not getting on well.

McConnon and McConnon (2002) argue that, because of the competition for attention to different interests, and the complicated nature of human systems, any type of human interaction is likely to produce conflict of some sort. Whilst the presence of conflict usually has connotations of negativity this is not always the case. The fundamental internal conflicts inherent to the human condition arguably provide

excellent opportunities for personal growth (consider the “tasks” of Erikson or the “stages” of Freud (Arlow, 1995; Gill, 1990; E. Miller, 1993)). However, Cloke and Goldsmith (2000) point out that, whilst conflict can offer opportunities for creativity and transformation, most people are more likely to be exposed to the types of conflict which are unhelpful and destructive. Whilst the authors mention power as a means of resolving or settling disputes, they avoid a full analysis of the part power can play in conflict (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2000).

As mentioned previously, Foucault argued that the most effective method of understanding power is to turn attention to conflict (Foucault, 1977, 1982; J. Miller, 1993). This is because power itself is largely invisible, whereas conflict is often observable and tangible. Historically, it is clear that resistance and conflict frequently offer the most salient understandings of power machinations. I am thinking here of the conflict around the Vietnam War, and more recently, the war in Iraq. It could be argued that conflict and dissent in response to these types of social issues facilitated further examination of both political process and community apathy.

Pollock (1998) argues that society is generally comprised of several competing and conflicting interests, and that those with the most power are able to ensure that their own interests are served, rather than the greater good. This type of phenomena is known as the Conflict Paradigm. However, Pollock (1998) also offers the notion of pluralism. The author argues that whilst a pluralistic view of conflict and power would not necessarily eschew the notion of competing interests, a pluralistic view

encompasses more than dual interests, and also “... recognizes that the power balance may shift when interest groups form or coalitions emerge” (Pollock, 1998, p. 113).

It could be argued that, whilst a conflict paradigm approach sees power as always serving narrow interests, a pluralistic approach allows for the emergence of conflict within a system, particularly in terms of factional alliances, and uses such conflict to examine sources of power in order to redistribute it. Whilst Pollock (1998) tends to be discussing mainly those issues surrounding law and justice, it is clear that the author’s concepts of conflict could usefully be applied to a broader organizational context.

For the present research I define conflict in several ways. The type of conflict I refer to as interpersonal is likely to be the most tangible and overt. It incorporates verbal altercations between people and groups, or operational standoffs, where an individual or group refuses to give in to the other. Intrapersonal and organizational conflict is more subtle and less obvious. It involves incongruence and dissonance between what is expected and what is actually happening, and between what one believes should be happening and what is actually occurring. Incongruence and dissonance occur in many instances and are usually adjusted rather quickly (such as seeing a person in one location when we would normally only ever expect to see them in another). However I am referring to deep, personal and professional incongruence which is often unresolved, or even acknowledged. In this way conflict is used here to refer to internal and external processes.

### *2.10 Organizational Conflict*

Kindler (1996) suggests that organizations which are able to effectively manage conflict around the diverse backgrounds of staff produce environments which are less stressful, experience good work relations between staff at all levels, boost productivity, and help to build commitments to a shared organizational vision. The author suggests further that workplaces would benefit from developing cultures where diversity among workers is seen as a valuable asset rather than a source of potential conflict (Kindler, 1996). It could be argued that the conflict experienced around cultural differences is what identifies the need for solutions in the first place. Hence some theorists' position that conflict can, at times, be useful as an area of investigation.

Whilst some view conflict as a potential agent of change, others argue that conflict is a negative force which should be avoided where possible. DeVoe (1999) suggests that one way of avoiding conflict in the work place is to conduct a type of organizational audit, where the values and goals of individuals are aligned with those of the organization. The author advises that where there are gaps between the goals and values of the organization and individuals, this is where conflict is likely to emerge. DeVoe's (1999) theory is based on a business model and requires that all areas of an organization also check their business goals to make sure they remain aligned with the larger organization. However, there is no comprehensive discussion of the role of power in these processes, nor is there an attempt to explore the possibility that conflict itself is not a simple construct.

Rowh (1999) offers a similar business-like model of conflict within organizations, but suggests further that conflict should be dealt with primarily through the avenue of clarification of job expectations and role responsibilities. The author argues that a shared understanding of work place policies is important, as is timely communications around individual and organizational grievances. Rowh (1999) concludes with an acknowledgement that examination of conflict can provide innovative ways of viewing and understanding a working environment (Rowh, 1999).

Whilst Rowh's (1999) and DeVoe's (1999) theories around work place conflict may be sound in theory, there exists no concrete formula for the practical implementation of either author's ideas. In addition, there is no acknowledgement by the authors of the role of power in either the conflict, or its resolution.

Cyert and March (1992), and Trickett and Ryerson-Espino (2004) do acknowledge the role of power in conflict and argue that conflict can provide opportunities for transformation. However, Cyert and March warn that the competing interests of an organization, individuals and group are rarely closely aligned. Additionally, interests and values do change over time and circumstance, meaning that any alignment achieved is going to be difficult to sustain long term (Cyert & March, 1992).

Shaw (1990) explored conflict between individuals and groups among two mental health teams in a large hospital. The author discovered that the blurring of roles and responsibilities between staff members was a source of much conflict as was the multidisciplinary nature of the teams. Additionally, team members had trouble identifying the values and goals



of the hospital and this tended to result in members relying on the values of their own disciplines to breach the gap. This caused some conflict between the groups as it sometimes led to a lack of consistency in treatment protocols (Shaw, 1990).

Shaw (1990) used his in-depth observations of two treatment units, one which worked well and one which didn't, to formulate a four step plan to manage conflict. Firstly, clarity of mission refers to the organization's ability to communicate what it is actually doing. Shaw found that the hospital he studied had two central purposes: to offer both treatment and training, but staff frequently were confused about which aim had priority, some staff believed training was more important while others thought that treatment deserved precedence.

Secondly, Shaw suggests that organizations should concentrate on task design. The author found that ambiguity around group and individual tasks was greatest in the unit which housed long term patients. The short term unit had more clarity around task objectives. Thirdly, Shaw found that group boundaries were an important factor in determining the effectiveness of a team. Because the teams were multidisciplinary there was often confusion around where one fitted. Also, because of shift work, roster changes, and the training program, the teams were quite transient and enjoyed little professional cohesion. This was amplified by the constant change in team leaders (Shaw, 1990).

Finally, Shaw suggests that leadership issues needed to be addressed in both teams; people were often promoted into leadership roles to which they were unsuited. Sometimes the unsuitability was based on an

individual's training, but frequently it had more to do with their style (Shaw, 1990).

The above study illuminates the value of examining conflict to transform organizations and the way individuals and group coalesce (Wolff, 2001b). Of course, any diverse group is always likely to experience conflict of some type, it is the way it is recognized and managed which determines whether it is a negative force or an opportunity for growth (Chavis, 2001).

Jehn, Northcraft and Neale (1999) conducted a multi-method study of 545 employees in an American household moving business. The researchers looked at social diversity (identified as the social worlds people came from and moved in), informational diversity (linked to education and knowledge bases) and value diversity (defined as the personal values people retained). These constructs were examined in an effort to discover how each of them might interact and create, or diminish, conflict within an organization.

Jehn et al (1999) found that conflict was minimized when there was low value diversity. That is, when work-groups, no matter how diverse they may seem, hold similar values within and across groups there is likely to be minimal conflict. In addition, the researchers found that work-groups which were more efficient – that is, had high morale and retention rates and good attendance records, as well as perceptions of effectiveness – also showed evidence of low value diversity. Efficient groups also reported low conflict levels with both co-workers and management (Jehn et al., 1999). Whilst the above research did not examine

conflict in terms of values and interests, the research methodology could no doubt be applied successfully to a prison work-environment.

I suggest that an examination of the interplay between conflict, power and interests would seem to be useful to an understanding of how most structures operate. However, as argued in previous sections the notion of values is often not expanded upon, or it tends to be subsumed with interests. It is possible that conflict, along with power, can not be fully explored unless values and interests are looked at separately.

### *2.11 Conflict in the Prison Environment*

Naturally perhaps, when the notion of conflict in a prison environment is considered, most people turn their attentions to conflict between prisoners themselves or between prisoners and staff in general. For this reason, there exists little research which specifically examines the issue of conflict within staff groups working in prison. However, as Ulmer (1992) suggests, functional operations of a prison, including the implementation of prisoner-based rehabilitation programs do rely, in part, on harmonious relations *among* custodial staff within prisons. Ulmer (1992) further suggests that such relationships can be strained if officers themselves are cynical toward prison administration (operators and location managers).

Ulmer (1992) collected quantitative data from 198 “line officers” (custodial staff working in daily contact with prisoners) in a medium security prison in the US. Whilst the researcher was not specifically interested in conflict per se, he was concerned with cynicism and oppositional styles and positions of officers. It could be argued that

cynicism, and styles and positions of opposition, are likely to relate to conflict in the work environment. Oppositional styles and/or positions may be a cause or an effect of conflict, or, indeed, both.

Ulmer (1992) discovered that officers who were stressed and frustrated in general tended to be more cynical of and oppositional toward prison administration. The researcher suggested that cynical and oppositional sub-cultures among officers had a negative impact on new staff, possibly because such sub-cultures were quite vocal and also because they tended to be entrenched to the point that their positions impacted on the current culture of the work environment, thus informing new groups of recruits (Ulmer, 1992).

Further, Ulmer (1992) found that those officers who possessed a strong orientation to the rehabilitative principles of the prison tended to be less oppositional and cynical toward prison administrators. This is a very interesting finding as it suggests that embracing rehabilitation ideology can have a flow-on effect in that it also may lead to a less oppositional and cynical position of officers toward prison management. Of course, it is also possible that those officers who were less oppositional *to start with* were more amenable to the notion (both operationally and theoretically) of rehabilitation principles.

However, it is also possible that where conflict exists between prison officers and the enactment of rehabilitation principles, the conflict may actually reside within management relationships rather than the rehabilitation process itself. Oppositional attitudes may be transcendental and apply to all orders given by management. Ulmer (1992) suggests that

officers who perceived themselves as having more influence with prison management were significantly less cynical toward management than those who perceived themselves as having little or no influence. This speaks to the issue of power relations within the prison environment and, whilst it is acknowledged as an area of interest, the concept of is not explored further.

Shuford and Spencer (1999) conducted and implemented the findings of a small action research study to address the issue of conflict resolution among correctional staff in the Philadelphia region of the US. The researchers acknowledged that work-place conflict among officers could lead to low morale, increased stress and health problems, poor work attendance, and impede and decrease work-effectiveness within officer work-groups. The training program which was developed as a result of the research utilized a range of experiential strategies, including active listening and cooperative team-work, all of which were found to be useful in the reduction of conflict among prison officers (Shuford & Spencer, 1999).

Whilst Shuford and Spencer's (1999) study into conflict management might appear to be quite narrow in its usefulness to the current research, it is important to note that the greater the diversity among work-groups, the better the outcomes of their training program. However, Shuford and Spencer (1999) offer no real analysis of what *better* or, *diversity* actually entail. It is clear that diversity does offer the opportunity for individual and organizational growth and improvement. However, I would argue that notions such as these are doomed to vacuity in the

absence of an understanding of how collaboration in the work place can contribute to organizational structure.

### *2.12 Collaboration in General*

The Macquarie Dictionary (Dellbridge, 1988) identifies collaboration as: “To work, one with another; (and) cooperate (in) combination with”, or to “..co-operate treacherously with the enemy” (p. 368). For the purposes of this review, I will use the former loose definition rather than the latter!

In her discussion of collaboration and group analysis of research data, Janice McDrury (1999) suggests that collaboration with others can yield results which would not be possible if working alone. McDrury (1999) highlights the need for collaboration between individuals working on a project and argues that it is not just important to let others know what our thoughts are, but also to communicate the thinking process itself. This is an interesting concept and closely mimics the processes involved in clinical supervision. Most clinical supervision consists of both content, the actual strategies used in a clinical situation, and process, the thinking around the use of such strategies and their outcomes. Good clinical supervision is indeed highly collaborative.

McDrury (1999) contends that when groups are working collaboratively ideas are pooled and this provides the opportunity for individuals and groups to think about solutions to problems in different ways. Whilst the concept of working collaboratively with diverse groups may be particularly challenging, there also clearly exists the opportunity to

think about problems and solutions using the different professional and experiential frameworks from the diversity at hand.

While there is a great deal of material which describes collaboration, there is also much to be learned from discussions of community coalition. Community coalitions generally refer to relatively disempowered groups mobilizing and meeting to affect some change in their communities (Himmelman, 2001; Wolff, 2001a, 2001b). The notion of community coalition usually refers to individuals and small groups acting, sometimes with the aid of researchers, to have their needs listened to by those who can effect change. What I like about the concept is its continual examination of the role of power in the coalition process. And such power dynamics are not only restricted to bureaucrats and managers; the power relations between researchers and the individuals and groups they are working with is also vital. For these reasons I will sometimes use ideas from community coalition studies, and apply them to broader ideas of collaboration.

Himmelman (2001) describes collaboration as: "...exchanging information, altering activities, sharing resources, and a willingness to enhance the capacity of another for mutual benefit and a common purpose" (p227). Further, the author suggests that the condition requires high levels of trust, risk, rewards, resources and time. But that the efforts are worthwhile if healthy collaboration can be achieved (Himmelman, 2001).

However, Pfeffer (1992) argues that humans are frequently encouraged to pursue individuality, and that early and middle education

systems tend to pit individuals against each other instead of encouraging cooperation and collaboration with others. The author argues that this mindset is not useful in organizations, and many workers actually have to unlearn some of these individualistic practices.

For the present research I have defined collaboration as the process of working together to achieve a common aim. Individuals may collaborate but I see it more as a group activity. Because it is largely a group process there are bound to be political issues whenever collaboration is attempted. Much of the politics will necessarily be found in and played out with power, and I argue that this means that true collaboration does take commitment and trust, and the paradox here is that people may frequently be required to place trust in individuals and groups who have proven to be historically undeserving of such trust.

The collaborative process should involve sharing of information; willingness to shift ground, even if temporarily; distribution of resources, and perhaps most important of all, collaboration should always involve a shared set of aims, even though these may change frequently, and often with every formal meeting.

Finally all stakeholders should be invited into collaborative processes in genuine ways. Group and individual diversity may well result in greater conflict among goal/task oriented groups, but the extra depth from including all can provide opportunities for problem solving which may not have otherwise been present.

### *2.13 Collaboration in Organizations*



Cloke and Goldsmith (2000) argue that possibly the greatest impediment to collaborative relationships in organizations is a failure to recognize and/or respond to conflict. The authors cited a research project where a communications company was attempting to implement large structural changes. The company was frustrated by the levels of resistance to change and referred to the attitudes of workers as “public compliance and private defiance” (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2000, p. 43). When the researcher investigated the paradoxical nature of the differences between the covert and overt positions of the employees, they discovered that the conflict and disagreements which the process of change elicited were largely being ignored by management (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2000).

Cloke and Goldsmith (2000) suggested reflecting on ways to foster collaboration by responding more positively to conflict. Some of these responses included recognizing that conflict can be a positive experience and an opportunity for growth and exchanging of ideas, using empathy to attempt to understand the position of others, being prepared to relinquish power in order to satisfy the interests of all parties where possible, not just settling an argument for the sake of peace as this will likely be temporary- the parties should look beyond to where full resolution might reside, always be honest, speak and act with integrity, search for collaborative alternatives which increase co-operation, and, create common ground and focus on shared interests (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2000).

I would suggest that the value of Cloke and Goldsmith’s (2000) work lies in its simplicity and step-wise approach to developing a collaborative environment. Further, the authors clearly acknowledge the

efficacy of considering a range of variables in the pursuit of collaboration. Whilst conflict is an obvious one, the position of power, values and interests are also considered by the authors. All of these variables are important to an examination of collaborative processes, both with individuals and groups, and within organizations.

Fisher and Ury (1999) warn that collaboration and negotiation should always produce wide agreement, be efficient and improve rather than damage the relationships between parties (p, 4). The authors further suggest that individuals and groups should not attempt to negotiate over positions as this is too concrete. For example, rather than: “I am the cleaner and I need you out by 6.00pm,” we would do better letting others know of our legitimate interests, such as: “look, my job is to clean, but if I can’t get into your office before 6.00pm, I miss my ride home, have to take the bus and then I miss the pick-up time for my kid’s crèche.” Fisher and Ury (1999) suggest that the latter type of negotiation leaves relationships intact as it removes egos from the process and it also gives others a stake in the outcome (in this case largely altruistic).

Although collaboration may evoke images of solidarity and cohesion, the reality is that the different goals, interests and values of the collaborators frequently mean that collaboration is difficult and protracted (Bond & Keys, 1993; Kotter, 1988; Trickett & Ryerson- Espino, 2004). Additionally, there are often diverse backgrounds present in the collaborative process. Such diversity can be vital to the development of strong inclusive outcomes. Trickett and Ryerson-Espino (2004) take this notion further by suggesting that we should not only encourage diversity

but challenge any homogeneity which may serve to merely support the status quo instead of meaningful change or movements forward. The authors suggest that for this to happen, it is necessary for leaders to share power and information. Whilst Trickett and Ryerson-Espino (2004) are primarily discussing community coalitions, their ideas seem a healthy standard for any type of collaboration.

In addition to collaboration within organizations, there is an increasing body of research which has examined the types of collaboration which can occur between organizations. Hardy, Phillips and Lawrence (2003) conducted a multi method qualitative study of a small Non Government Agency (NGO) in Palestine. The researchers were interested in the ways the NGO collaborated with other organizations (one of which was the Australian Embassy) and aimed to identify specific types of collaboration, and their ability to facilitate or impede useful collaboration.

Hardy, Phillips and Lawrence firstly utilized available literature to identify three central types of collaboration effects (2003): (a) Strategic effects of collaboration, or collaboration which resulted in specific benefits to the organization, (b) knowledge creation effects of collaboration, where the collaboration leads to enhanced knowledge within the organization as well as the transferring of information across organizations, and (c) political effects of collaboration, which were defined as that collaboration which increases the profile, and therefore potentially creates more power for the organization (Hardy et al., 2003).

In addition, the researchers identified two dimensions of collaboration which were seen as vital in the production of one or more of

the above collaboration effects (Hardy et al., 2003). These were involvement; where there was evidence of deep interactions and partnerships, and embeddedness, where there was good interaction with third parties. (Hardy et al., 2003).

Hardy et al. found that:

Collaborations that are both involved and embedded are more likely to be associated with knowledge creation effects; those that are only involved are more likely to be associated with strategic effects; (and) those that are only embedded are more likely to be associated with political effects (Hardy et al., 2003, p. 336).

The value of the above study is that it highlights the interaction between different types of collaboration effects, and deepens an understanding of such interactions with the extra dimensions of involvement and embeddedness. Whilst the study was particularly interested in NGOs, there exists the possibility that the model could be applied to other organizations, including prisons, and their inherent relationships with key stakeholders in the field.

#### *2.14 Collaboration in Prisons*

In his editorial in *Corrections Today*, James Gondles (2000) explores the issue of collaboration among prison service providers, custodial staff and prison administrators, in a macro sense. The author suggests that self interests have largely driven the corrections industry, and that logical steps towards a collaborative approach within a rehabilitative framework should include the setting of realistic goals, stimulation of innovation and radical ideas, the decentralization of decision making

processes (that is, the inclusion of location staff in decision making), the promotion of flexibility when dealing with the conflicts of prison work, and the realistic measurement of prisoner program outcomes (Gondles, 2000).

Importantly, Gondles (2000) acknowledges the issues of equality and power within the prison environment, citing the historical militaristic structure of prisons as not particularly conducive to collaborative processes. Whilst this last is undoubtedly valid, it could be argued that an examination of the impediments to collaboration by a person in a position of power (Gondles was a high ranking prison administrator at the time his article was published) is a brave attempt to challenge existing norms in terms of prison administration and rehabilitative principles. Unfortunately, such courage would appear to be in short supply. Most discussions such as Gondles' (2000) tend to occur from a distance, with little practical examination by key stakeholders into the collaborative processes between multi-disciplinary work groups in the prison environment.

Veal and others (2001) discuss the clinical challenges facing psychiatric nurses working in a correctional environment. Whilst the issue of collaboration is mentioned, this is limited to a position that nurses working in prisons should be fully cognizant of the need to constantly attend to the security focus of prisons. There is no discussion of a dissemination of role definition across work groups, nor is there a more fulsome exploration of the ways in which psychiatric nurses themselves can contribute to collaborative processes within the correctional setting (Veal et al., 2001).

In their quantitative study of psychiatric nurses working in an in-treatment facility in Chicago Corrigan and Williams (1998) argued that psychiatric nursing staff needed to feel fully supported in their work place in order to remain positive about the implementation of new behavior therapies within the facility. Whilst the study does not mention collaboration per se, the researchers cite a lack of collegial support, in terms of lack of empathy and assistance, as the primary reasons for poor attitudes to behavioral therapies. Lack of support and empathy were also offered as possible reasons for psychiatric nursing staff burn-out rates. Additionally, Corrigan and Williams (1998) found that, whilst quality of support systems was vital to protect against professional burn-out, larger support networks were also important. This may be a reflection of the perceptions people have when they work within systems with large frameworks. There may be safety in numbers!

Thies (1994) contends that all staff operating within the prison setting should collaborate in the treatment and rehabilitation process of prisoners. The author maintains that one of the primary reasons why rehabilitation programs are so difficult to implement in prison is a fundamental lack of clarity, and understanding, of the roles and responsibilities of custodial and treatment staff.

Thies (1994) suggests that prisoners are frequently capable of adhering to rehabilitation principles (for example; not swearing, treating others with respect; adhering to prison rules) whilst therapists are present, but that such behaviors are prone to deterioration when therapists are absent. That is, prisoners may be therapeutically compliant, but the skills

may not be transferable to other aspects of their life. The author argues that a more collaborative relationship between custodial staff and therapists would likely result in a dissemination of information regarding prisoner behaviors which would enhance pro-social learning.

Perkins and Abramis (1990) studied a large Midwest correctional facility dedicated to a multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation. The researches found that the facility worked very well because most staff members were involved in a tri-monthly evaluation of prisoners (teaming) which involved all major stakeholders. All staff were clear about their professional missions, both in terms of prisoners and the requirements of the organization. Although the above findings support many of Theis' notions about what was needed to create a collaborative approach to offender rehabilitation (staff cohesion; shared goals and a structured approach to offending behaviors), it is also true that most general custodial staff were not involved in the process. The research left me wondering how custodial staff felt about their minimal role in the teaming practice, and perhaps more importantly, whether or not the program may have been enriched by their increased involvement.

In summarizing the literature review it becomes clear that there is a relationship between values, interests and power. Further, this is no more apparent than when one looks at the interaction between multidisciplinary work groups in an organizational setting.

Several authors argued that values are often subjective and fluid, and tend to shift over time (Judge, 1999; Prilleltensky, 2001; Ulmer,

1992), with Prilleltensky (in press, 2001) suggesting a breakdown of values which are important to individuals and groups.

Wright (2001) and Bolman and Deal (2003) suggested that organizations can use missions statements to make employees aware of the values of the organization, but many theorists warn against using such statements in place of actually gauging the fit between organizational values and those of individuals and groups (Fisher & Ury, 1999; Locke, 2002; Prilleltensky, 2000). Indeed, any type of tokenism on the part of organizations was found to be quite damaging in terms of employee satisfaction and loyalty (Foster-Fishman & Keys, 1997).

Jehn et al. (1999) found that multidisciplinary work-groups could differ across a range of conditions but that a matching of values was important to effective work practices. Kotter (1988) argued that workers who felt valued by their employees were more likely to be personally and professionally satisfied.

Thies (1994) and Perkins and Abramis (1990) found that multidisciplinary workers in a correctional setting needed to have a shared set of values and practices to treat offenders, however, it was evident that not all workers were invited into the treatment process (Perkins & Abramis, 1990).

Scott (1985) identified the value of psychologists in the prison setting but warned that they could encounter ethical problems around professional values. Emmons (1976) argued that the duality of the therapeutic role was problematic for psychologists and the prison



organization, suggesting that psychologists should restrict their operations to training custodial staff in the handling of prisoners.

Hesketh et al. (1996) agree that prison psychologists should maintain a strong involvement with the prison environment, particularly in areas such as staff selection and environmental ergonomics, while Janik (1995) sees the interests of the prison best served by a model where psychologists and therapeutic staff work exclusively with correctional staff. While the notion of using therapists and psychologists to inform the environment seems sound, the above authors do not offer a model of change to accommodate the suggestions, nor is there a clear understanding of how the interests of individuals groups or the organization can all be considered in such models.

Habermas suggests that human interests can be served in a range of ways but that sound democratic process is the key (Habermas, 1987, 1988, 1996). Foucault argues that the notion of democratic process can lull individuals and groups into the belief that their interests are being served even if this is not the case, and that the identification of tokenistic gestures toward democracy often lead to the types of conflict which identify power imbalance (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Foucault, 1970, 1982).

Bourdieu contends that individuals are likely to experience alienation when their own interests run counter to larger, more powerful groups, and that this is more evident when the larger group is highly structured and regulated (Bourdieu, 1977, 1999). Bolman and Deal, Kotter, and Fisher and Ury argue that the range of conflicting interests in organizations make the environment highly political, competitive and,

often, non-cohesive (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Fisher & Ury, 1999; Kotter, 1988).

Nelson et al. (2001) and Prilleltensky (in press) argue that individuals and small groups are often required to sacrifice their values in order that their immediate interests can be met, and this subordination is a reflection of a lack of power.

Prilleltensky (in press), Nelson and Prilleltensky (2005), and Bolman and Deal (2003) suggest that power is ubiquitous and multifaceted and warn that there is no guarantee that individuals or groups will use power for social good. Foucault further cautions that power is largely invisible and is apt to hide in perceptions of democratic process (Foucault, 1970, 1982, 1987). However, Habermas contends that democratic process, and particularly communicative power, are useful vehicles for the equal distribution of influence (Habermas, 1987, 1988).

Bradshaw (1999) synthesizes the seemingly opposing positions of Habermas and Foucault, and offers instead a theoretical model of organizational power as paradox: Prilleltensky (2000) expands on Bradshaw's thesis and argues for a consideration of the roles of values and interests to an understanding of power dynamics within organizations.

Pfeffer (1992) suggests that power without moral values is dangerous and argues that managers should identify areas of dependence and interdependence within organizations to transform organizational relationships. Foster-Fishman and Keys (1997) offer the notion of employees as "organizational citizens": Organizational citizens move

companies forward in productive and healthy ways because the organization does likewise for its employees.

Whilst there has been little research regarding prisons and power relationships among staff groups, Stojkovic (1986) identified three power-types which prison staff used to control prisoners: It may be possible to extrapolate these “types” of power associations to the frequently combative relationship between therapists and officers in the prison environment.

While the idea of conflict can evoke negative connotations, many have argued that an examination of conflict between individuals and/or within organizations offers a unique opportunity to understand power issues and also resolve deep inherent problems which may have been previously masked (Cyert & March, 1992; Foucault, 1977, 1982; Pollock, 1998; Rowh, 1999; Shaw, 1990; Trickett & Ryerson- Espino, 2004; Wolff, 2001a, 2001b).

Jehn et al (1999) found that conflict was minimized in organizations and among groups where there was little diversity concerning values, while Ulmer (1992) suggested that harmonious relations between staff in a prison setting were often conflicted if officers were cynical toward management. Additionally, Ulmer (1992) discovered that officers who were dedicated to the philosophy of rehabilitation tended to be less oppositional and cynical toward prison management. Shuford and Spencer (1999) found that conflict among prison officers was minimized when strategies for collaboration were introduced via a research-based training program.

McDrury (1999) informs that collaboration with others has the effect of pooling intellect, and can often lead to vibrant and inventive solutions to a range of concerns. While collaboration may be entered into with an eye on improving organizational outcomes (whatever they may be), many theorists contend that true collaborative processes involve listening, understanding values and interests, frequently relinquishing power, exchanging ideas and sharing turf, a willingness to empathize with the needs of others, faith in the collaborative process, creation of knowledge and, a genuine desire to include a diverse range of thought and input (Bond & Keys, 1993; Hardy et al., 2003; Himmelman, 2001; Pfeffer, 1992; Wolff, 2001a, 2001b).

### *2.15 Research Rationale*

There is no doubt that prisons operate in similar ways to a range of social institutions: Prisons offer mental health services to those in need, but not all require this assistance; they frequently treat drug and sexual offenders, but not all fall into this needs category; they offer education, however this is not always taken up and medical and dental services are available but few require it. Prisons are a services conglomerate with a common aim; healthy reintegration of prisoners into our community.

Because prisons are multifaceted there has always been a need to employ specialist groups external to custodial staff and management. However, the militaristic structure of prisons often means that uninitiated professionals do have some trouble operating in the environment. Issues to consider include mismatching of professional values with the prison operations, lack of understanding across the board regarding the role of

non-traditional staff (including the professionals themselves in some cases), negotiating the often confronting relationships between prisoners and staff (usually custodial), and maintaining professional development, including supervision, when others who have not worked in the environment may have difficulty understanding the nuances of prison work.

My own experiences of working as a psychologist in prisons have been mixed. I have generally found the work rewarding, but the often obstructive nature of the rules and regulations can make it almost impossible to carry out professional duties at times. Additionally, prison staff and non-custodial staff frequently talk past each other. There does not seem to be closely matched beliefs and world views between the two groups, and prison management has tended to collude in this relationship by an absence of acknowledgement that it can make professional lives difficult for all staff.

As Victorian prisons are now employing more staff to augment existing rehabilitation programs there is a need to understand the relationship between officers and non-custodial staff. The present research examines the affiliation between custodial prison staff and specialist rehabilitative staff, particularly those devoted to drug and alcohol and sex offender programs.

Most of what we know about staff relations and offender rehabilitation suggest that it is vital that both custodial and non-custodial staff share a belief in rehabilitation. This is particularly important where prisoners may be in therapy and a global approach is needed to monitor

their progress. Officers frequently have special insight into prisoners' behavior, but this information is useless unless the two groups speak to each other, and in language which is understood. Additionally, prisoners are perceptive and any friction between officers and therapists is likely to be used by prisoners to further split the groups. For these reasons I believe it is vital that the two groups maintain a united front.

In order to achieve shared professional goals it is important to understand the conflict dynamics between groups. To achieve this I will be looking at conflict around values, interests and power, and also broadening these constructs out so that we can understand intrapersonal, interpersonal and organization conflict. In this way I expect to capture that conflict which is overt and observable and also more subversive and covert forms of conflict. To date there is no research which examines conflict around values, interests and power between custodial and therapeutic staff in a prison environment.

### *2.15 Research Objectives*

The guiding principles of this research project are integrity and meaning. I remain constantly aware that my research participants are giving their time generously and with faith. They trust that I will handle their thoughts sensitively, honestly and without judgment. I am particularly interested in conducting research which makes use of the voice of those people who actually live my topic of interest. In this way the research is not confined to an academic exercise but may also be a forum for expression, even if in a limited sense initially. Thus, my first objective is to conduct ethical and useful research.

The second objective of the research is to examine intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational conflict around values, interests and power between two groups: custodial officers and therapists who work or have worked in Victorian prisons. Such research will add to the current literature as no such study is available and there is little research which specifically looks at the working relationship between the two groups.

The final objective of the research is to develop strategies from the findings which prison management and workers can employ to facilitate enhanced collaboration. The suggestions will be aimed at increasing collaboration between officers and therapists, and between these groups and the prison as an organization.

## Part 2: Method

### *Chapter 3: Methodological Rationale*

The previous literature review explored relevant theoretical notions of values, interests, and power at individual, group and organizational levels. The review justifies a deeper examination of the relationship between these constructs – their interconnections remain unexplored in the prison environment.

In addition, the review examined the intricacies of conflict and collaboration, placing these notions within personal, group and organizational frameworks. This chapter moves us from the theoretical to the methodological.

Flyvbjerg (2001) suggests that one way of gauging the usefulness of social research is to adopt the Aristotelian notions of *episteme*, *techne* and *phronesis*. *Episteme* refers to the universality of scientific knowledge and the processes of induction and deduction to scientific pursuits. To date the commonly accepted *epistemology* of science remains faithful to the naturalistic methods of scrutiny, or quantitative methodology. However, this is not to suggest that qualitative researchers should ignore the importance of Aristotle's *episteme* to non-positivistic methods of discovery. Certainly issues such as induction and deduction should always remain important constructs for researchers, particularly, perhaps, when employing the more reflexive qualitative modalities in some social



research methods (Boyle, 1999; Huberman & Miles, 2002; Rennie, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Whilst the three Aristotelian concepts of *episteme*, *techne* and *phronesis* are all important to consider in terms of research frameworks, the notions of *techne* and *phronesis* are perhaps the most vital to understand when one considers qualitative research. *Techne* refers to the craft and/or art of an activity and speaks to the importance of producing something useful, such as a piece of research, based on the skills and knowledge of the person doing the producing, in this case the researcher (Flyvbjerg, 2001). The concept of *phronesis* speaks largely to the values and ethics of research and involves the use of ‘practical common sense’ in the research process (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 56). In short, *techne* may refer to the usefulness of the research methodology employed by the researcher, based upon individual skills and abilities, whereas *phronesis* mainly concerns the worthiness of both the research process and the research outcomes. In other words, is the research useful, worthwhile *and* ethical (Fals Borda, 2001)?

Flyvbjerg (2001) argues that a set of questions need to be considered in order that ethical and valuable research can be conducted. These questions include: “Who gains, and who loses? Through what kinds of power relations? What possibilities are available to change existing power relations? And is it desirable to do so? And, (possibly more importantly) of what kinds of power relations are those asking the questions themselves a part?” (Flyvbjerg, 2001 p. 131). I would argue that such questions as these are vital to ask when conducting qualitative

research, particularly within large established organizations and with research participants for whom power issues are likely to emerge (Albee, Joffe, & Dusenbury, 1988; Bond & Mulvey, 2000; Bradshaw, 1999; Chaplow, Chaplow, & Maniapoto, 1993; Farmer, 1999; Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997; Hill, Bond, Mulvey, & Terenzio, 2000; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Peelo & Soothill, 2000; Prilleltensky, in press; Stein & Mankowski, 2004).

Maxwell (1998) further suggests that researchers should consider why we are doing the research in the first place, what practices the results might influence and why anyone should care about the results at all! The inference here is clearly toward a mindfulness of the local and global values of, not just the research process, but also the worth of its possible outcomes.

One way of ensuring that issues such as values, power and ethics are considered in social research is to adopt a critical approach to the research process (Huygens, 2001; Jones & Elcock, 2001; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Prilleltensky, 2001). A critical approach to psychology in general and research in particular, requires that all dimensions of possible imbalance are considered. In addition, research subjects (and clients) should be invited to participate in the processes in which they are engaged. To borrow from Kemmis, participants involved in a critical inquiry are asked to interrupt *what* it is that they are doing and reflect on the reasons *why* they are acting and *which* factors impact on the actions (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997; Kemmis, 2001).

The notion of a critical approach does not adhere to the more traditional ideals of “science” as objective and distant, with the researcher investigating a range of variables and then extrapolating them to other, sometimes fundamentally dissimilar, areas of interest (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995; Jones & Elcock, 2001). A critical approach to research tends more toward the richness of the stories of those being investigated, the ability of the investigators to interpret those stories, their willingness to engage the participants in this interpretative process, and, the general willingness of researchers to acknowledge the subjectivity of their interpretations and the possible unequal positions within which all the actors in the research process may be positioned (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997; Gomm, 2000; Hollingsworth, 1997; Huygens, 2001; Jones & Elcock, 2001; Miller & Fredericks, 1999; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Critical research also mines the wealth of theories derived from a Feminist psychology research approach. Feminist inquiry asks the researcher to acknowledge issue of power imbalance inherent in the researcher-researched relationship, and asks the researcher to “come clean” about their own biases (Bond & Mulvey, 2000; Hill et al., 2000; Stein & Mankowski, 2004). Also, feminist inquiry asks researchers and readers to question the truth of research and to locate it within biases, but it also implores researchers to use their finding as tools of transformation, illumination and empowerment. Feminist psychology research theory does not seek to exclusively address the issues of women (although was this was fundamentally inherent at its inception (Bond & Mulvey, 2000)): it is

a framework which seeks inclusiveness for many minorities, be those economic, social, gender and/or political. Critical psychology owes much to feminist psychology (Jones & Elcock, 2001).

It should be noted here that whilst a critical approach is not in itself a research method, it is a paradigm which lends itself to those research methods which tend to be more inclusive of participants and cognizant of the environments in which they operate. A critical approach to research allows the deconstruction of previously unquestioned beliefs about individuals and their environments and offers the opportunity to ask new and often exciting research questions. Additionally, a critical approach to research enables the voices of those being researched to find their way into the final artifact, be that a report, a thesis or an article (Jones & Elcock, 2001). This in turn offers the opportunity for pragmatic responses to the issues raised to be developed within the environments in which they were located (Park, 2001; Wadsworth, 2001). A critical approach to research does not necessarily value the notion of extrapolation, it is sometimes more useful to study and act upon phenomena within more narrow environments and later, of course, to look at the broader implications of the findings.

As noted earlier, a critical approach to research is not a model in and of itself. Rather it is possible to apply a critical approach to existing research methodologies. Whilst some research methods would no doubt flounder under the imposition of a critical approach, and I am thinking here of the more “objective scientific” approaches to psychology such as behaviorism (Skinner, 1987; Watson, 1913), qualitative approaches to

psychological research offer a rich opportunity to apply a critical consideration to those social phenomena which involve difficult-to-quantify constructs such as: power, values, interests, collaboration and conflict.

Whilst there are several types of qualitative research methods available, I have chosen to adhere mainly to the qualitative research technique of grounded theory, particularly regarding the management of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory increasingly emerges as a more mainstream research method and relies on the researcher taking a more inductive rather than deductive approach to a specific area of research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Star, 1998).

Nelson & Prilleltensky suggest (2005) that grounded theory offers the opportunity for the research to remain open-ended and free from hypothesis until such time as the researcher becomes satisfied that he or she has uncovered something relevant. This open-ended approach also allows the possibility that many facets of the phenomena under examination can emerge free of any pre-conceived ideas about outcomes. Grounded theory should be hypothesis generating rather than hypothesis driven (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Star, 1998). While I did employ guiding constructs such as values, interests, power and conflict, I could not tell ahead of time the ways in which they interact or synergize to create positive or negative outcomes for inmates or workers alike. In a sense, then, this research is grounded theory inspired, but does

not follow grounded theory orthodoxy, in that guiding precepts informed the analytical framework.

Of course, it would be arrogant to suggest that, just because one conducts research using a qualitative methodology the researcher is necessarily more responsive or sensitive to participants, or that there is no danger of researcher bias. All research involves decisions by researchers about what they will study, who they will study, where they will conduct the research and the specific methods of data collection they will employ. In addition, qualitative research is not immune to interference by a range of interest groups or powerful individuals. I argue, however, that qualitative research methods in general do offer legitimate opportunities to examine and report bias on the part of the researcher, the position of power in the research process and the rights of participants to inform the research at several point along the research journey. And, whilst grounded theory differs from quantitative methods, it is not without a range of very specific validation techniques which can be applied to a range of data. Such techniques include but are not limited to; observation, transcripts, meeting minutes and personal diaries (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

I find myself particularly drawn to the opportunity to involve research participants in the research process. Given that my research interest lies in prisons, notorious for their historical lack of consultation among both work-groups and prisoners, and given that prisons in Victoria seem to be on the “precipice” of innovative prison management strategies, there would appear to exist a stimulating prospect to involve previously “whispered” voices in the change process. That is, the relatively new ideal

of prisons as places of rehabilitation, and not merely punishment vehicles, offers an opportunity to involve the expertise of a range of specialists in this process. And given that the role of officers and therapists is pivotal to the rehabilitation of prisoners, it seems timely to ask them how their own relationships with each other might enhance or inhibit the rehabilitative process. Particularly since officers form part of the “old guard”, whilst therapists arguable personify the “renaissance” in prisoner rehabilitation. How might these two groups experience the other?

As stated earlier, I am particularly interested in the role of values, interests, and power in the working relationship between officers and therapists, but I have also become increasingly interested in the dual roles of conflict and collaboration. With conflict being viewed in terms of its manifestation with values, interests and power, and, collaboration being incorporated into a discussion of ways in which the other four constructs can inform the future of multidisciplinary work groups in a the prison environment, I see an opportunity to make a contribution in the field of rehabilitation.

In addition, I will also be examining these five constructs as they present in terms of the individual, interpersonal and organizational phenomena.

Whilst it would undoubtedly be possible to assign “values” to these constructs and expose them to a quantitative analysis, I believe that, particularly in this somewhat embryonic stage of more progressive prison rehabilitation principles, a broad qualitative approach provides the most salient opportunities to uncover results which are both “useful”, and “worthwhile” in a pragmatic sense, whilst the lens of critical psychology

offers the opportunity to attend to the “ethos” of the research, both in terms of process and content (Flyvbjerg, 2001).



## *Chapter 4: Procedure*

While the methodological rationale was intended to orient the reader to the methods and frameworks employed in the present research, it is now possible to attend to the more specific nuances of the study. The following chapters will outline the recruitment processes used, the interview techniques, and the profiles of participants. In addition, there will be some discussion regarding data analysis protocols and the organization of the data set.

### *4.1 Participant Profiles*

Twenty three therapists and 21 prison officers were interviewed for the current research. Both males and females were interviewed with the ratio almost evenly matched. Gender of the participants was not a specific area of interest in this study.

All therapists had worked in both the public and private prison system. Two therapists were employed in the private system at the time of interviewing and two were no longer working in the system at all. Both of the therapists no longer employed as prison workers were still practicing within the justice system. The majority of therapists had worked with both male and female prisoners.

Almost all of the prison officers had worked in both the private and public prison systems at the time of interviewing. Four officers were working in the private system, and all were employed within the general prison system at interview point. Every officer interviewed had worked

with both male and female prisoners. Three officers were employed in management positions at the time of interview and two were governors. Whilst no managers were singled out in terms of their positional input, given the relative small size of Victorian prisons, their views did impact on the recommendations at a location management level, however their input was deemed more valuable in terms of the experience they had as officers who had “come up through the ranks”.

All participants were over the age of 18 as this is a requirement for employment in Victorian prisons. At the time of the interviews, Victoria had 11 public and 3 private prisons. Over the course of the research a private prison operator lost its contract to operate one prison, and the Victorian Government assumed operational management of that location under the auspices of CORE.

In the development stages of the research it was planned to interview senior staff from either the OCSC or the justice department in general. However, due to the instability caused by one private operator being required to relinquish control of a large prison to public control (CORE), the justice department felt that such interviewing was untimely and would have caused undue pressure to senior management staff. However, the department in general was highly supportive of the research and made no attempts to obstruct the process. On the contrary, the justice department of Victoria was highly cooperative and made every attempt to assist in the development of the present research.

#### *4.2 Recruitment of Participants*

In the initial phases of the interviewing process therapists were mainly recruited via advertising in “in house” publications. Most program providers have their own publications which are generally distributed via pay advice to employees. Most of the private therapy providers (about eight at the time of this research) were willing to cooperate with the research, however not all provided the opportunity to advertise in their publications.

Private and/or Not- For- Profit prison program providers were selected on the basis of their *therapeutic* rehabilitative program service delivery in Victorian prisons. Some providers tended to focus on one type of program, such as Drug and Alcohol or Sex Offender programs, whilst others had a multi-program approach and were involved in general counseling services within the prison setting.

Organizations with a “traditional” welfare focus (i.e. religious organizations) were included in the recruitment process, but this was limited to those organizations which augmented their role with dedicated rehabilitation programs. Such programs included Drug and Alcohol and Sex Offender programs, as well as participation in general programs aimed at addressing recidivism with a therapeutic approach.

It should be noted that some prisons (both private and public) also provide dedicated rehabilitation programs within certain prison locations. Therapists employed within these programs are not trained officers and are generally not perceived as being aligned with prison officers or the “system”. Several participants interviewed had been or were currently working within such systems and all were registered psychologists.

Approximately half of the therapist participants in the study were recruited via advertising and about half came to the research via “snowballing” and/or “networking” (Huberman & Miles, 2002; Kendall, 1999a; Miller & Fredericks, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Prison officers were recruited to the study via two main methods: advertising with CORE and via Operations Managers at several individual locations. The CORE newsletter is limited to distribution among Victoria’s public prisons; however several officers working at private locations demonstrated interest in the research having viewed the article, and many officers were generally recruited via the newsletter.

In addition to advertising, the OCSC was very cooperative with the research and the Senior Research Officer from that department emailed all prison locations asking that the Managers (both Operational and Program) assist with the facilitation of the research. As a result, about half of the officers interviewed came to the study via general information sessions at individual locations.

All individual prison Managers approached were willing to share information about the research with officers, and several distributed Plain Language Statements (Appendix I), but not all were in a position to allow staff time off for the interviews. In these cases it was possible to arrange times for interviews outside of work hours. Where managers organized the interviews it became clear that they would know the identity of some officers who were included in the study. In these cases the matter was discussed with the officers and all agreed to continue participation in the

study. It should be noted that these recruitment methods were approved by the university ethics committee and the OCSC ethics committee.

All officers had worked with male and female prisoners and about half had worked in both the private and public Victorian prison system. All prison locations were represented in this research. Such representation speaks more to the transitory nature of prison officers' work than accuracy in sampling. There is no indication that "word of mouth" played a part in the recruitment of prison officers to this research. The poor response from officers is likely to be a function of some of their previous experiences of prison research in general<sup>4</sup>.

#### *4.3 Interview Process*

Upon expression of interest in the research, potential participants were sent a copy of the Plain Language Statement and a Consent Form (Appendix II). After a few days each prospective participant was contacted by phone to ascertain their willingness to be interviewed. Each potential participant was given the opportunity to either proceed to interview or not. All of the officers and therapists who expressed an initial interest in being interviewed maintained their interest to interview stage.

It should be noted that several officers had been given a copy of the Plain Language Statement by either their Operations or Program Managers, but not all of these officers contacted the researcher. An expression of interest was defined as those people whom actually made contact with the researcher.

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<sup>4</sup> For a more detailed discussion of officers past experience of research please refer to the findings section of this research.

Interviews were conducted in either the participant's home; the researcher's home or office; individual prison locations, or premises of the service provider (for therapists). The CEO of the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO) offered the use of its offices for the purposes of interviewing and several interviews took place at this (Melbourne city business district) location. Where interviews were conducted within a prison location this was done in an unsecured area of the prison. Unsecured areas are typically defined as places where prisoners do not have access. All interview areas, regardless of location, were considered to be sound-proof, private and free from interruptions as far as possible.

In order to ensure that the interviews stayed on track, and to facilitate full coverage of the areas of interest, a broad interview schedule was used (Appendix III). Participants were not specifically shown this tool but were aware of its use during the interview process.

Each initial interview lasted for at least one hour and most lasted for two or, in a few cases, three hours. Whilst it was initially envisaged that there would be at least one follow-up interview with each participant (and all participants were expecting this), such follow-ups were necessary in only just over half of the cases and there were only ten cases where a third interview was necessary. Of the final interviews, about half were conducted via telephone. Only a few of the second and third interviews were fully transcribed. There was no need to fully transcribe second and third interviews where the area of interest was a clarification of terms, thoughts and missed words. Additionally, several participants emailed the

researcher with subsequent thoughts and ideas about expansion on their previous interview/s.

All interviews were taped and transcribed with the participant's authorization. About a third of the participants took up the offer of an opportunity to view their transcripts. Despite being given the opportunity to do so, no participants requested a withdrawal of their input, nor did any participants wish to change any aspect of their interview transcript/s beyond the additions mentioned previously.

#### *4.4 Materials.*

Plain Language Statements (Appendix I) and Consent Forms (Appendix II) were distributed to participants prior to commencement of the interview. Each individual interview was tape-recorded using a clean cassette tape/s for each participant.

A broad Interview Schedule (Appendix III) was consulted during the interview process. Participants were aware of the use of this tool but did not view it prior to the interview.

Each interview tape was transcribed using a device dedicated to this purpose. Individual transcripts were pass-word protected and stored on a personal computer in the researcher's home.

#### *4.5 Data Analysis*

In keeping with much writing about grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goulding, 1998; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995; Kendall, 1999b; Rennie, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998), I utilized several bases of data in order to validate the accuracy of the final results. Included in such data were the interviews themselves, email follow-ups with

participants, the use of my own diaries (including one I began when I first started working in prisons several years ago), several White Papers (all in the public domain), and available peer reviewed and less formal literature. Whilst all areas of information were useful, none matched the rich, honest and revealing quality of the information provided by participants themselves, although this data, by its sheer volume, was the most troublesome to manage!

In the initial stages of data analysis there was, naturally, a large amount of participants' words and thoughts to organize in some coherent manner. From the start I was interested in the notions of values interests and power so these were logical areas of interest for me. However, mindful to not allow these concepts sufficient power to blind me to other concepts, I started out with a loose, open coding strategy for dealing with the data. (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). This largely involved making notes on the transcripts, highlighting areas of interest and, particularly, asking questions of the data: such as, is this important? Why might it be important? Do other participants make the same types of comments? Indeed, do officers and therapists say the same types of things? This last question was vital as the two work-groups often used different language to describe the same phenomena. Additionally, the two groups sometimes used the same language to describe very different phenomena.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For example, when referring to prisoners, therapists and officers had very different ideas about what constituted 'potential'. I soon learned not to take anything for granted and early on recognized the value of transcribing tapes between interviews. Each transcription taught me more about how to conduct the next interview, particularly in the early stages.



Following the initial, broad analysis of data, I was able to organize the material according to my specific areas of interest as they were clearly relevant and emerged as natural themes. A matrix was developed which looked like the following:

Table 1: Initial raw data matrix: Values, Interests, Power:

Participant	Example/ values	Example/ interests	Example/power
1A	Copy text from transcript	Copy text from transcript	Copy text from transcript

Of course the above matrix became larger as the analysis progressed as most of the interviews had revolved around the above themes. The next task was to identify where the areas of conflict might emerge in terms of the above themes. A second matrix was developed which incorporated the notion of conflict:

Table 2: Conflict around values, interests and power:

Participant	Conflict and values	Conflict and Interests	Conflict and power
1 A	Copy text from transcript	Copy text from transcript	Copy text from transcript

Once the previous two matrices had been developed and refined, it was time to merge the two to examine the validity of my initial feelings about what was happening between the two groups in the prison

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environment. I had expected conflict between the two groups, and it had clearly been reported, but did the concepts fit together to make a worthwhile story? Strauss (1998) refers to this process as axial coding.

The next matrix developed may seem to be more intricate and confusing but in fact it helped to clarify the data and the emerging themes, and became the nexus for the way data was ultimately organized in the research paper. The following represents a matrix devoted to an exploration of values interests and power (VIP), and their manifestation in terms of: intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational conflict. For the purposes of space, only the values matrix is shown. A matrix was also developed for interests and power, the format was identical.

Table 3: An intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational analysis of values and conflict:

Participant	VALUES		
Conflict type	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	organizational
1A	Data	Data	Data

Once matrices were complete, and there had been sufficient cross-checking of data, the actual reporting of results was ready to begin. As noted earlier, whilst data such as White Papers, personal diaries and literature were vital, none was as useful or interesting, in my mind, as the

stories told by the participants. These stories genuinely captured in a personal sense both the theories I had read about the two groups and, perhaps more importantly, gave life to the anecdotal information therapists and prison officers have always reported in my professional life as a prison therapist and therapy manager.

Following the completion of the results section I mailed out a synopsis of findings to most of the research participants. Fortunately I was able to locate all but one therapist, but locating officers was not so successful. Prison officers tend to be quite nomadic, professionally speaking (!), and as a result I was only able to contact about half of them. However, all officers had been sent a copy of their transcripts, so they were able to view their interviews in the early stages.

The idea behind the information mail out was to ensure that participants were satisfied that their thoughts had been adequately captured in the research. I considered the practice to be attendant to a critical approach to research as it provided an opportunity for participants to engage with the research at a different level. Ever-mindful of my own subjective interpretation regarding officers and therapists and prison work, I wanted to make sure that the interpretations were not contaminated by my own experiences.

I received several responses to the mail-out and no participants contacted were unhappy with the representations, or, indeed, my interpretations of their interviews. However, several participants did feel that their “point” was not made strongly enough, nor was it granted the

space it deserved. In some cases I did revisit the results and make some minor adjustments.

#### *4.6 Operational Definitions*

The operational definitions offered here derive from both the literature and field experience. While some definitions are commonly accepted in general, others, such as a definition of Head Office, are quite specific to prison workers.

Intrapersonal conflict is defined here as conflict between an individual's core beliefs, values and/or experiences and the phenomena they encounter in their work as prison officers and therapists in the prison setting. At a micro-level such conflict may encompass the duties the officers and therapists are expected to perform, while the macro-level generally incorporates broader concepts such as community expectations versus personal beliefs in human rights.

Intrapersonal conflict was described by participants in a number of ways. Sometimes intrapersonal conflict was overt, that is it was easily identified and explained (as with identification with some prisoners). In other instances intrapersonal conflict was more covert and required further questioning, of both the participants and later the data, to illuminate examples.

Interpersonal Conflict is generally defined as any conflict experienced with another person (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2000). However, for the purposes of the present research, detailed explorations of interpersonal conflict was mainly confined to that conflict experienced between officers and therapists. Of course, several examples were given of

conflict with prisoners, visitors, community workers and a range of other people, and these stories were often included to facilitate a broader picture of prison in general and the phenomena of conflict in particular.

Organizational conflict is defined for the present research as any conflict an individual has with a broader governing body. This may be what is often referred to as “Head office”, which is usually the Correctional Enterprises’ (CORE) office in Melbourne, or, the Commissioners Office (OCSC) in Melbourne. In the case of private prisons, head office was usually referred to as the provider’s office in Melbourne<sup>6</sup>, or (more usually) the OCSC which oversees all Victorian prisons regardless of whether they are operated by private contractors or as public institutions.

Generally, the two work groups referred to the Organization as specifically to do with prisons. This was despite the fact that the majority of therapists worked for their own organizations, both private and community based. Intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational conflicts were separated into three broad areas of examination. These areas encompassed values, interests, and, power.

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<sup>6</sup> At the time of writing this research both private prison providers were based overseas (the UK and US), however, Head Office was still viewed as Victorian-based by the participants.

### Part 3: Findings

The previous sections have dealt with both pragmatic and theoretical issues. The introduction and literature review situated the current research in historical and scholarly context surrounding issues such as values, interests, power, conflict, and collaboration. Following these theoretical and pragmatic conjectures there was some discussion around methodological rationale and research procedures. The remaining chapters discuss the actual findings of the research and examine in depth some of its implications. In addition, there is a range of recommendations for future practice within a prison environment.

The findings of officers and therapists will be presented separately, starting with the former. The separation of the two groups was necessary for clarity purposes. The order of presentation is intended to acknowledge the importance of the officers to the study, as well as to dispel any perceptions of favoritism given my own position as a therapist.

#### *Chapter 5: Conflicts Related to the Experience of Prison Officers*

##### *5.1 Intrapersonal Conflict and Values*

Officers frequently had difficulty discussing values outside the formal manifestos of the Operational Manual. This is not seen as surprising given that these manuals largely represent the guidelines and rules which govern the ways in which prison officers conduct themselves professionally. Discussions around personal values frequently returned to community values which may have indicated a level of disassociation from the subject.

Some officers reported a level of intrapersonal conflict (both professional and personal) when they closely identified with prisoners. This was particularly salient where a prisoner may have been a part of their own community. As Anne<sup>7</sup> stated:

...I knew this boy ... I see his mum and sister in the supermarket all the time...at first I couldn't look them in the eye...I was worried they would ask about 'k'..but they didn't... I guess they were embarrassed too... I felt like I had put him in jail, that's dumb... but there you go...

In addition to community identification, some officers described an empathic response where the prisoner was perceived as similar to a member of their own family. Many reported conflict around having to treat prisoners according to their professional training when their own personal values may have dictated otherwise. Leonard described daily interactions with a prisoner who reminded him of his son:

...yeah, I see him waltzing around and I just want to kick him where it hurts. You know, but you can't can you? I have these ops (*operational rules*) I have to work to and I look at this kid and I think: 'Fuck, if someone did to you what I want to do to you when it counted you might be sitting in a university somewhere instead of cleaning out the fucking toilets in prison...'. But you can't, can you?...

However, Simon had a different view:

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<sup>7</sup> All participant's names have been changed to protect their identity.

Look, if I'm working with a crim... whose a bit like my son, or something like that, yeah sometimes I feel sorry for them but no, no, no they mainly deserve what they get, shit, how would you like it if your grandmother was grabbed by some young thug, no, no... I don't think I really value the crims.

Several officers, and particularly the older ones, felt that their primary prisoner management training had been fairly combative and confrontational in nature. However, many reported an increased reliance on the personal management tools of insight, identification, and communication.

As Ron reported:

I like to be able to talk to somebody rather than use other types of force... although ultimately that's part of the job if it needs to be... but I like to be able to think that we can talk somebody into... seeing the other side of things... I prefer that rather than go in and do it harder...much better...

Ron further stated that officers with more experience were more likely to utilize the subtle tools of negotiation as these skills relied on a confidence that came with '...time on the clock...'

Where officers discussed individual human rights there was division among the ranks. All officers reported that they valued individual rights and most were able to justify their custodial roles as protecting the rights of the wider community. As Barbara stated:

Look, I come from a country where people are thrown into prison for all sorts of stupid reasons... but here... the whole



process is different, look, yes, I do value freedom but I also value our justice system. If they are in there then they are in there for a good reason.

However, some officers clearly experienced some conflict around their values regarding freedom of the individual and their work in the prison setting:

I value individual rights but, ah, I guess that's a bit strange and then to turn around and work in a prison, I don't know...

(Anne)

Many officers struggled to discuss personal values, possibly based on a diminished ability to clearly identify where organizational expectations and rules end, and where personal values begin. This in itself may be defined as an intrapersonal conflict around values. As will be discussed later, it is possible that officers avoid contemplation of their own values in the prison environment and that such avoidance serves as a protective mechanism to enable officers to carry out the many unpleasant tasks required of them. Many officers reported areas of incongruence between their own values and their operational duties.

If discussions with officers around intrapersonal conflict and values were difficult, this was not the case with intrapersonal conflict and interests. The following section deals with intrapersonal conflict but this time examination is facilitated via the concept of personal interests.

### *5.2 Intrapersonal Conflict and Interests*

Many officers reported feeling that any type of formal conflict resolution in the prison environment was flawed and that more covert

methods often served personal interests best. Marty suggested that he had had “unsatisfactory” results with formal conflict resolution and now “prefer(*red*) to just suck up to the right person on the ground...,” when he was negotiating shifts and rosters to avoid staff he did not like working with. Marty and others reported feeling personally conflicted by these methods as most had initially had faith in prison operational methods and the “Ops Manual”.

Further, many officers felt that the operational manual was given a credibility which was not always worthy. This seemed to be particularly true where operational procedures attempted to capture and address workplace conflict with co-workers. As Anne stated:

... it's (*the operations manual*) really just smoke and mirrors... you have a problem with someone and they pull out the ops manual... you go through the thing, I mean, it can be a good guide, it really can in lots of ways but sometimes... you just have to go and have a beer, or play some squash with the person... that's not on (*in*) the book...

These informal and often subversive processes were frequently cited as the quickest and most effective methods of overcoming conflict in the workplace. All officers interviewed expressed concern that reliance on such processes were seen as undermining the official processes, thus resulting in a personal incongruence between the overt (operations manual: rules) and the covert (the way processes were actually negotiated and outcomes achieved).

Most officers were particularly concerned about specific operational shortfalls in conflict resolution. The prison environment was described by all officers as a place where there existed frequent conflict and power struggles.

### *5.3 Intrapersonal Conflict and Power*

Many officers reported a belief in the processes of formal conflict resolution, when it was done in a positive manner (or, indeed at all), however all still reported times when they had just let conflict “pass” for the sake of peace. As Amy stated:

....sometimes it’s just better to let it (*conflict in the workplace*) go....you know....it feels a hell of a lot better than going through the ...fucking procedures.

Amy and others indicated that their idea of positive conflict resolution was not so much dependent on the efficacy of the procedures themselves but rather the personal relationship they had with the “players” in the resolution process.

The factors involved ranged from the actual person whom the conflict was with, the personality of senior people on staff at the time of the incident (in those cases where the conflict was indeed around an incident rather than a chronic “dripping tap” issue with a particular staff member), and the level of trust the worker had in senior management at the location.

However, almost all officers mentioned the importance of the culture of the specific work environment as the most salient influencing variable in a positive conflict resolution process. In addition, most officers

were able to recall times when they probably should have reported workplace conflict but did not. This is despite the fact that many of those interviewed reported an experience with conflict when the work environment was perceived as nurturing and, presumably, conducive to positive conflict resolution processes, at least in some cases.

In addition to specific incidences of conflict, many officers felt that non-professional behavior from fellow officers was frequently ignored across a range of conditions and at a number of levels. That is, prisoners accepted it, non-custodial staff (not therapists) tolerated it and other custodial staff turned a blind eye. Additionally, it was frequently felt that management, both local and at more senior levels, colluded in the protection of officers who displayed unprofessional behavior. This collusion was generally described as more covert than overt.

Bradley, a senior officer with over 20 years experience described his interactions with a “problem” staff member over many years. At the beginning of Brad’s career he encountered the famous “Julie” and originally saw her as a dangerous person to be around because she treated prisoners badly and thus was likely to attract animosity, consequently putting both herself and other officers in danger.

Apparently the prison system (both local and head office) recognized Julie’s interpersonal problems as over the next decade or so Julie remained in “the job” but was granted few promotions. Eventually, and to this day according to Brad and others, Julie only worked night shift to minimize her interactions with prisoners. Additionally, there was a type of “draw” among her colleagues to see who “had” to work with Julie.

Brad noted that the officer in question has never been officially reported nor has there ever been a formalized process to capture her working operations. Therefore, there has not been the opportunity to really address the problem of Julie and her work practices.

Brad described the negotiation of rosters around inter-staff conflict in the following manner:

...just personality clashes, you try to resolve it in a manner where, at least try to work together but, you know, try and keep the personalities out of it... 'You don't have to be friends or...put it on' (*just work together*). The separate work areas tend to work well, yeah that tends to work ok.

Clearly Brad is describing a non-formal approach to an ongoing and serious operational problem. This type of scenario was described by over half of the officers interviewed, and all expressed a personal frustration that they were unable to alter such situations in an uncomplicated manner.

In addition to managing conflict among their uniformed colleagues, some officers claimed a willingness to report bad work-practices and/or conflict with mental health workers although none interviewed had done so.

One officer described an incident where a psychiatric nurse had given chocolate to a prisoner. This is considered a serious breach of security in a prison and is defined operationally under the auspices of "trafficking". Earlier on in the interview the officer in question had stated

clearly that he would report breaches by any staff, however in regards to the psychiatric nurse he stated that...

...on the outside...you know...its not viewed as an offence

I mean if that is how you are brought up...in a hospital or a

...nursing home wherever you may come from....

It could be argued that the above represent incongruence between what officers say they would do and what they actually report having done. It is possible that the mere knowledge that they have the power to report, and that it is likely to be acted upon, particularly where non-custodial staff are concerned, satisfies the requirements of the “appropriate actions” (or lack thereof) regarding breaches of operations mentioned by many officers.

In addition to general conflict, several officers reported witnessing actual aggression and threatening behavior between officers whilst in the presence of prisoners. It is generally accepted in prison that such behavior is a direct threat to custodial power and all attempts should be made to minimize the possibility of such occurrences. Paul described the use prisoners make of such events:

... I mean, they (*prisoners*) will just try and get anything they can to use against us. Seeing arguments, or, I think there was one time where staff came to blows, its just ammunition to them...they have all the time in the world to watch and wait for ... an opportunity to get what they want...

The above indicated an understanding that officers need to present a united front regarding prisoners, despite any personal or professional

conflicts which may be present. Such a notion could arguably run counter to personal beliefs that where conflict is present it must be addressed immediately, particularly since some officers may go months without seeing some colleagues, depending on rosters and shift changes. Such factors could arguably lend immediacy to informal conflict resolution within the prison, even though this may at times manifest itself in inappropriate ways. The connection here between intrapersonal conflict and power seems clear.

#### *5.4 Interpersonal Conflict and Values*

Many officers felt as though therapists did not understand the relationship custodial staff had with prisoners. Several officers expressed frustration that therapists seemed to think they knew the prisoners better than “anyone” because they had mental health/academic credentials, when, in fact, officers spent more time with prisoners. Harry felt that often officers’ finely tuned communication and environmental detection skills were not fully utilized or valued by therapists:

... yeah, yeah, we know what’s happening (*in the prison*)  
better than anyone... the crims know that so they stay close to the  
therapists hoping they’ll stick up for them.... ‘oh, poor little me,  
I’m just really mis, ah, misunderstood’, boo hoo... ha ha I say.  
Look, I see the value in the programs, I really do, I mean I was  
trained in that stuff, but no one ever asks us what we think do they?  
That is, apparently, until there is trouble. As Donna said:

The therapists are happy to push buttons and that, you  
know, they don’t mind stirring the crooks up, but I tell you what, as

soon as there is trouble they'll be asking for a custodial staff member....we can have our uses (*laughing*).

Additionally, several officers felt that therapists were prone to over- value the efficacy of programs as they were not usually in a position to witness the large number of prisoners who returned to prison. This was especially true of those who had participated in rehabilitation programs.

As David stated:

Look, you do get a bit depressed, the numbers of them that come back, but I look at it like this. The shrinks don't see the potential in them the way we do. We know they will probably come back. Also, the therapists don't see the danger potential we do...yeah, you can see the arguments brewing over that one... (*between Therapists and officers*).

Almost all officers interviewed expressed similar concerns regarding recidivism of prisoners with many clearly believing that therapists were not aware of the return rate of prisoners. Paradoxically, most officers also expressed a degree of faith in rehabilitation programs. It is possible that officers were displaying some level of conformity being aware that the interviewer was a psychologist.

Many officers felt that where there was conflict between therapists and themselves it was more likely to be a generalized personality clash rather than related specifically to values. As Paul stated, some officers: '... just hate everybody'.

Although there were instances of reported conflict between the two groups, many officers felt that both work groups had the same values in



terms of handling prisoners, but that the methodology was different.

Vanessa believed that:

... (*officers and therapists*) are both in the business of stripping the crims down...officers strip them down and search from the outside...therapists do it from the inside...

There was a general feeling among the officers that, whilst therapists and officers had rehabilitation as their goal, the methods employed by the two groups were vastly different. There was also the feeling that neither group really understood what the other group did. However, it is interesting to note that several officers reported a belief that therapists actually had a better understanding of what their job involved than off-location management staff (head office). This may be because therapists and officers frequently work in close proximity to each other and for long hours. In fact, in some rural prisons both work groups are able to lodge in units at the location. It is also possible that “Head office” can be viewed as a common enemy and provides a convergence of views for the two groups in terms of discussion topics.

### *5.5 Interpersonal Conflict and Interests*

As stated earlier, many officers acknowledged that officers and therapists each had a job to do and most believed that each group had a contribution to make in the rehabilitation of prisoners. However, many officers felt that therapists did not fully grasp the tangible consequences officers faced when their operational duties were made difficult by increased rehabilitation programs. Most officers discussed frustration that they were frequently behind in their Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

as a result of limited access to prisoners.<sup>8</sup> Such problems with access ranged from prisoners being needed in Drug Programs when they were due for review by the officer assigned as their case worker, to Industry Managers falling short of their throughputs due to increased program activity in a location. As Ron stated:

... like, I know the prison's changing, these blokes need to get ready for the outer... that stuff's important... but nobody changes what we have to do... I mean you can't say to the promotion board: 'look I know my KPI's aren't great, maybe my unit couldn't urine as many bodies as they were meant to, but hey, I'm a great officer.'

Perhaps because of the increased focus on Drug and Alcohol programs in prisons, the issue of urinalysis was a particular source of frustration for many officers. Several officers admitted that where their units were required to conduct a particular number of urinalyses, and where prisoners' increased attendance in the programs made this a logistical problem, there was frequently temptation to collect urine samples from the more available groups of prisoners. Specifically, those not involved in drug and alcohol programs. There was a clear suggestion

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<sup>8</sup> KPI's are an important performance assessment tool in a range of industries with professional competence being measured in several pre-determined areas. All Victorian prisons rely on KPI's to audit and assess individual workers and locations. An example of this would be cross-checking to ensure that officers have made the correct number of entries in the files of prisoners in their case load, to do this, officers need to be able to prove their presence in such formats as formal prisoner reviews at the location.

that this was done to protect the integrity of a unit's KPI's. Clearly the performance of a particular unit has implications for the interests of individuals assigned to that unit. Both therapists and officers need to work to KPI's but officers felt that therapists were often insensitive to this dual need.

Some officers reported a belief that therapists were often aware of how "unpredictable" the client group could be but that they chose to ignore this knowledge because it suited their professional purposes. Sally described an incident where she was talking to a particularly "nasty" prisoner at the unit desk:

... the therapist was leaning down under the desk to get some paper, 'H' (prisoner) came up and started (*yelling*) 'fucking' this and 'fucking' that. .. the therapist stood up and looked straight at her, you should have seen the change in the crim... later on I asked the therapist about how she felt, you know, seeing her 'baby' acting like that... she pretended she hadn't heard it... I was pissed off, I mean, how could you not have heard that... I guess it was better than admitting that... all the Anger Management and shit in the world wasn't going to...work.

Sally was understandably hurt by what she saw as the therapist's collusion with the prisoner's poor behavior. Whilst there were no other anecdotal stories such as the above, many officers reported a suspicion that therapists often displayed selective sight and hearing when it came to their clients.

### *5.6 Interpersonal Conflict and Power*

All officers reported a belief that they possessed an enhanced understanding of prisoners as a result of the time they spent with them. Most reported that therapists' understanding of prisoners was limited to the "office hours" spent in locations. Mike suggested that:

...they (*therapists*) don't really know what the crooks can really be like, yeah, like when they aren't there, and yes, we're there all the time so we really get to see them..

While Evan stated that:

...they (*therapists*) don't see the potential ... of a prisoner... you know, one who may be disruptive in prison... they see them for maybe about five or ten minutes and they see the good side of a person and sometimes refuse to believe that when you are away from them that this person ... can play up and can be quite nasty.

Clearly some officers felt that their traditional power over prisoners and within the prison setting, inside knowledge based on proximity and time, was being devalued by the more "expert" knowledge of the therapists. Such feelings of displacement clearly led to problems between officers and therapists.

Officers reported frustration that therapists were relatively new to the system and tended not to respect issues around security. As previously discussed, officers felt that therapists used their academic knowledge around therapeutic issues to devalue the fundamental (security) aspects of prison work and therefore, in some ways, minimize the traditional knowledge, and power, which officers possess.

Officers further reported that therapists frequently abused their power in the prison by breaching security and then leaving custodial staff to “cop the blame” for the subsequent fall out. One such concern was the fact that therapists often retained prisoners over musters. As David stated:

...like with musters and that, one minute you have the count right then a therapist ... grabs a crim and the muster's stuffed up, and we wear it... just stuff like that (correct musters are audited as KPI's for units within prisons, and for prison locations in general).

Some officers reported that they were limited in their abilities to challenge the therapists as they just “analyzed everything to death”, and made officers feel inadequate. Clearly some officers felt that their traditional power in the environment was being eroded by the presence of the therapists and that therapists were mysterious and, often, manipulative in a range of ways.

Some officers elaborated on their frustration with the language used by therapists, stating that talking to them was like trying to “..argue with lawyers”. Others felt that therapists maintained their power within the prison by sticking together. This allegiance was seen as both theoretical: “They all agree with each other and talk the same way,” and physical; “What do you call a flock of them?”

Whilst the above may be concerning, it could be argued that such a shared culture within work groups is relatively normal and probably extends to custodial staff also.

### *5.7 Organizational Conflict and Values*

Many officers felt that Head office had some “great” ideas for rehabilitation but did not spend enough time considering how such programs would be implemented and “managed on the ground.” As Paul stated:

... I mean, there was a classic example of when CORE brought out the Anti Bullying Policy... but then nobody exercised it ... we found that in the end it was too hard to move a trouble maker, I mean we knew who the bullies were but... management wouldn't act on it...

Other officers used the example of the Anti Bullying Policy to identify examples where head office policy made life so much harder for the “foot soldiers” at the location level. Some officers felt that they were often called upon to embrace and act on new policies but a lack of support from peripheral departments (for example Sentence Management, Community Corrections) made it look as though directives were not being well managed at a local level. For example, one officer described a situation where he had identified and isolated a bully. The plan was to transfer the prisoner to another location. However the Sentence Management Unit (SMU, the unit responsible for prisoner transfers and placements) refused to authorize a transfer for the prisoner. This, of course, caused problems as the bully was subsequently released back into the general prison community at that location and the perception was that he “got away” with his anti social behaviors. This caused something of a chain reaction among prisoners and there was much unrest at the location

as officers were perceived by prisoners as unable to implement the Anti Bullying policy or manage the prison in general.

Additionally, many officers felt that their value as daily managers of the prisoners in their care was undermined by head office's practice of bringing in therapists to perform duties that they themselves had been trained to do. There was also a perception that therapists were likely being paid more for the types of services which officers had previously provided. As Vanessa stated:

I used to do the jocks and socks stuff (*general welfare*) really well, I mean I was known for it, you know: 'you have a problem go and see... Vanessa,' then all of a sudden we've got CCO's (*Community Corrections Officers*) running around everywhere and I'm just forgotten....forgotten I guess...

Clearly some officers felt that head office only valued their contribution where there was not a more qualified person for the job. It is not difficult to image the types of adjustment people like Vanessa have had to make. Similarly, it is not difficult to predict that under such circumstances of potential resentment, many officers were likely to have experienced difficulties in acclimatizing themselves to non-custodial therapy and/or welfare staff.

Many officers were concerned that their past contribution – and their future potential - regarding the rehabilitative process remained particularly unacknowledged in the “new style” prisons, with the focus on rehabilitation via programs. They felt that the prison as an organization (head office) had failed to acknowledge the value of officers to

rehabilitation programs, or that if they were valued then there was a failure by head office to communicate this.

### *5.8 Organizational Conflict and Interests*

Many officers felt that head office had spent a lot of time and money training officers “up” for Unit Management and had used the lure of extra pay, improved conditions and increased, often transferable, skills to “massage” the custodial staff into the necessary additional training. However, some felt that the extra time and effort they had put into the training process was rendered useless by the subsequent employment of therapists to do the jobs they had been prepared for. Mike questioned why his extra training was: ‘... suddenly not enough?’

Additionally, some officers were frustrated at the perceived reluctance by head office to follow through on some fundamental “promises” they had made regarding management of prisoners in dedicated rehabilitation programs. Specifically, the lack of response from Sentence Management in moving difficult prisoners was cited as a problem. As May stated:

... there was... very little trust in management... we need to put a prisoner somewhere (*else*) ...and he just stays there (*in the original location*) ... sometimes its probably outside local management... and its in someone else’s hands... so the prisoner continues on his merry behavior because you’ve got nowhere else to put them... you can’t lock them up 24 hours a day...and he needs to be moved...and you’re telling him: ‘ look mate, keep up that malarkey and you’re out of here’ and then... he’s not. It’s not



much of a management tool and leaves us looking like a bit of dick heads.

Many officers interviewed expressed similar frustrations, with some suggesting that head office was deliberately hampering their ability to implement strategies. There was a concern that any inability to implement strategies and directives from head office was reflected in performance assessments as a personal deficiency. Clearly any officer with operational deficiencies was not a candidate for promotion and/or pay increases.

The suspicion that head office was deliberately hampering officers' ability to facilitate rehabilitation programs was also raised with regard to group programs. Some officers had been encouraged to participate in selected prison-based group programs; with varying levels of success. Whilst many officers felt that officer participation in groups was a good idea, most felt that head office was only "paying lip service" to the notion as there was no facility to offer extra staff to cover the absence of officers from operational duties while they were attending programs. Clearly if an officer is in programs there is a need to supply extra staff to cover their duties, otherwise there is likely to be conflict among the officers as work loads are increased.

Additionally, whilst most officers understood that their inclusion in programs took an observer or co-facilitation role, a few officers felt that the program should have provided space for them to air their own issues and were frustrated that this had not been the case. As Barbara stated:

I went into the group program with plenty that I wanted to say... there wasn't time for that, its all about the crims... what about us? Don't we deserve programs too...

Barbara's view was repeated by several officers interviewed.

Whilst the notion that officer's feel they need programs may be of some concern, it is likely that this reflects a deficiency in formal prison debriefing and operational supervision. Clearly officers' interests are not being well served if they feel the need to air professional and personal issues in prisoner rehabilitation groups.

### *5.9 Organizational Conflict and Power*

Several officers reported feeling that head office (and, in some cases, in collusion with local senior management), often "promoted up" ill-prepared staff. This was seen as an attempt to be perceived as inclusive in terms of female and other minority staff, so giving the illusion that extra responsibilities, and power, were globally attainable. As Kate stated:

... they just promoted me into this senior position with...

lots more responsibility and not much more money... but there wasn't enough training. I felt like everyone was just waiting for me to fall on my fucking face... and I did didn't I?

Additionally, many officers reported feeling frustrated that they had, at a certain time in Victorian corrections history (mid 1990s) been trained up to implement the new "Unit Management" model of offender care and prison operation. This model required officers to take on a case load whereby they would be responsible for the management of designated prisoners across a range of program, health, rehabilitation and, community

and family integration factors. The unit management model saw many officers trained in a range of additional interpersonal and individual management skills within the prison setting. Such officers were also trained in the skills required to liaise with various community organizations. As Peter stated:

...I mean, you talk about offender services... we had it back then with Unit Management... they throw all this money at extra training, let us do it and get really close to the crims and then, fuck me dead if... they don't bring in a bunch of psychs (*therapists*) to take over...what a fucking waste of their money and our time...

There was a clear perception among some staff that they were being displaced by the therapists. There still exists some animosity toward head office for convincing officers they had extra “power” via enhanced responsibilities, when, in the final analysis, the officer’s roles were quite minimal.

Additionally, many officers felt that rehabilitative and other programs were often placed in prisons without much thought about their implementation “on the ground”. As Mike said:

They just seem to have the light globe go off and bang, you have a ... new program, yes, or a new person you are supposed to work with, yes work with, and get on with. And ... I don't know sometimes it seems like not a lot of thinking is done at the top... they have the traveling road show (*a group of administrative staff*

*and program service providers*) come out and no-one really asks what it's like to do this... program.

All officers interviewed expressed concern at the lack of consultation about what was actually needed in the prison at a given time. A frequently reported perception was that therapists were “thrown” into prison, displacing officers and given the type of power and freedom that would take officers several years to “earn”.

Additionally, several officers reported that the working relationship they had with therapists could have been improved if head office gave more thought to the work-place dynamics on location. Joint training between officers and therapists was most often cited as the preferred remedy to the problem of conflict between officers and therapists, however this was mainly seen as a way to “open up therapist’s eyes...” to what was involved in custodial work.

As discussed earlier, many officers reported a lack of faith in any of the formal conflict resolution processes available to them in the prison system. Some officers were concerned that such processes were designed by head office to exert power over officers. This power was seen as particularly odious in the event that any officer involved in the process was being scrutinized for promotion or other professional benefits.

David had never been involved in official conflict resolution but knew others who had and believed that: “...it stays on your file forever and never goes away....”

Whilst this statement may be accurate, and many officers consider that it is, there would seem to be a need to manage perceptions of the

process and the outcomes of conflict resolution. There was a clear belief among the majority of the officers interviewed that head office wielded a lot of power over employees and that formal processes were primarily a means to catch out officers and ear mark them for demotion and/or termination. Such a belief manifests as the most salient example of the conflict between officers and the organization. This type of conflict speaks directly to issues of power and the way officers view the organization's bases of power.

## *Chapter 6: Conflicts Related to the Experiences of Therapists*

The previous chapter related the findings based on the interviews of prison officers. Several examples of intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational conflict were evident as they pertained to values, interests and power. The present chapter follows the same format as the previous one, but with a focus on therapists.

### *6.1 Intrapersonal Conflict and Values*

All therapists interviewed expressed internal conflict regarding their ability to adhere to the values they had regarding their professional responsibilities to the client group. They saw such responsibilities as often incongruent with the security functions of the prison environment. All therapists were able to cite examples of the narrow applications of their professional frameworks in prison. Furthermore, they indicated that such poor fit between their frameworks and the prison environment tended to compromise personal and professional values.

Freudian psychologists had to be careful of free association lest they uncover some material which they may be required to report according to “future threat” clauses in prison operational requirements. Those with a specialty in family dynamics were not able to explore the possibility of future therapeutic sessions with other family members (or, if they were it was very limited and such a “production” that it was rendered almost useless). Welfare workers were limited in their ability to network for clients as any outside advocacy by a prison worker must first be

cleared by local and/or organizational management; and any therapist with a zeal for any level of hypnosis was forbidden to practice this craft.

Belinda succinctly captured the notion of intrapersonal values conflict when she lamented that:

... you have to really ask yourself what your value is as a professional... I mean, if you can't stand up for what you believe in then what good are you...?

Others felt that their values were somewhat corrupted by the prison environment. There was a fear among some therapists that they had become desensitized to human misery and people's stories and that:

....those that come to the job with very strict ideas about their values and their profession are quickly brought down to the generic value systems of the prison... *(if they are not careful)*  
(Rose).

All therapists interviewed expressed a strong belief in the process of clinical supervision in order to keep their professional "compasses tuned up," while several informants indicated that a large portion of their supervision was taken up with exploring community perceptions of their work in prisons in general and with offenders in particular.

Many therapists felt that wider community beliefs about prisoners had the effect of inhibiting any meaningful progress they could make in terms of rehabilitation. Further, some felt that community beliefs were somewhat hypocritical and that their professional governing bodies were a reflection of such beliefs and as such were limited in their usefulness to

accurately reflect the special problems inherent in corrections work. In short, some felt that professional bodies perpetuated middle-class values.

Jane took this concept further. She reported a belief that, in many ways, prisoners were more honest than some:

... the non-middle class are way more able to acknowledge their behavior than the middle class...there is very little bullshit there...

Therapists provided many examples of intrapersonal conflict and values. This was a concept they were able to explore in some depth and may reflect the introspective training and professional supervision which their various disciplines often require. Whilst most intrapersonal value conflict tended to focus mainly on professional training, and community perceptions of offenders and prisons, the area of intrapersonal conflict and interests focused mainly on personal integrity, safety, and therapist's ability to actually function as professionals in the environment. The ability to function as professionals spoke to the issue of work satisfaction.

## *6.2 Intrapersonal Conflict and Interests*

Most therapists described the preparation period leading up to their prison work as involving donning the "armor" to protect themselves emotionally, professionally and physically for their work with prisoners. All therapists expressed surprise that the most difficult aspects of the work were not the prisoners but the officers and the prison environment in general: as Mark said:

...its interesting isn't it? ... that most of my positive experiences were the dealings with the prisoners themselves...not



with the custodial staff. There was this power thing with prisoners where they (*officers*) could assert themselves and get what they wanted but I don't think they really knew how to deal with us to be honest...

And then:

And I would walk through those gates, and shit... it felt so demoralizing, it was such an inhuman environment... it just flew in the face of everything I believed in terms of human rights and how people should be treated...not saying they don't deserve to be there... they do, but what a shitful place to try and be a good psychologist.... You had to wonder how much difference you could really make...

Here Mark was clearly questioning both his ability to make a difference for his clients and his own ability to attain meaningful work satisfaction in the difficult prison environment.

In terms of the work- place, many therapists felt that their professional orientation had failed to prepare them for work in the prison environment and that the environment itself was steeped in a pervasive, historical culture which made it somewhat impenetrable. As Mark said:

... yeah, I mean... we (*psychologists*) are a protected species aren't we... we go about our day to day lives... and I was sort of aware that it was one... one against this incredible history and culture... it was sort of daunting and a bit overwhelming...

Almost all therapists interviewed reported feelings which mirrored Mark's. Embedded in the therapists' questioning their ability to operate

with integrity in the prison was a general concern that a lack of power contributed to obstacles to their work.

### *6.3 Intrapersonal Conflict and Power*

Many therapists reported an empathy with the powerlessness they perceived prisoners experienced. Wally described the time he presented to work only to find the prison locked down by the Dog Squad for a general cell search and total (prison location-wide) urinalysis (a common occurrence in prison):

I arrived and immediately knew something was... going on. The doggies were checking everyone... but they checked me out the most. Every little thing on my possession was scrutinized and examined... they turned over my lunch and while they were doing this custodial staff were just breezing through... the word got out amongst the prisoners and it got to a Chinese whisper... type of thing and suddenly I had been 'strip searched'... of course I hadn't but that was the common thing of that particular day... it was funny I guess, and I could have kicked up... but it did give me some insight into what it must be like to have that as your... every day thing...

Whilst most therapists acknowledged that prisoners needed to be managed and that this was frequently made difficult by the environment, some also experienced internal conflict in their limited ability to advocate on behalf of prisoners. Many therapists reported awareness that officers saw them as closely aligned with prisoners and often questioned their choice to work with prisoners at all. As Uri reported:

...you know, they would just see us as crim lovers, just there to hold hands and um, not really hold prisoners accountable for their actions. Or they would say ‘why don’t you go out and work with decent people, why do you work with the scum of the earth?’

Most therapists interviewed reported an internal professional and personal conflict between their fundamental belief in empowerment of the client and their willingness to work in an environment which they perceived as basically disempowering: Sharyn reported that:

... there is this basic type of conflict ‘cos we (*as therapists*) are supposed to be empowering the client but, um, ah we are in this really disempowering environment. I mean, its like that for everyone... prisoners, us, officers, visitors, just really oppressive and soul destroying at times, so how can we... empower them? Should we even try?

In addition to the above issues around power and intrapersonal conflict, many therapists stated that they almost felt guilty that they were able to leave the confines of the prison while such freedom was not available to prisoners. As Naomi said:

... I know it’s strange, but I sometimes feel like I am just pretending... I don’t really understand do I? I mean, I get to leave at night and the prisoners don’t.. I sometimes think the world views them as modern lepers...

Several therapists reported similar feelings of guilt and confusion regarding their role within the prison, and often relayed a sense of bemusement at the varying degrees of respect their work attracted.

Therapists reported a belief that working in the officious prison environment was an infantilizing experience. Such perceptions forced many therapists to frequently reevaluate their own personal and professional power bases. Reevaluations as reported above often led to an examination of the status which the general community tended to bestow upon “elite” professions, and the seeming ease with which such status disintegrated during the course of prison work.

Kay recounted an experience she had when attempting to implement a spiritual program into the prison where she was located. The program had been cleared by prison management (both local and head office) and involved delivery by a range of community professionals. However, when Kay and her colleagues attempted to enter the prison they were “held up” by a senior staff member and isolated in a small waiting area while he “checked them out.” Eventually Kay and the others were refused entry and the program was abandoned. Kay wondered whether the officer knew that:

...we had, you know, other jobs too... he didn't ask and we didn't tell him, he sort of thought that we were naïve sorts of people, not a bunch of committed professionals who believed in what we were doing because we had already seen it work at some levels...

Whilst Kay's encounter was somewhat unique in its function, many other therapists reported similar experiences as a matter of process. Where such obstruction was reported, therapists generally felt that power issues were being played out and that their belief in the efficacy of their work was being pitted against their ability to make contact with the client group. In short, they were frequently forced to surrender their professional integrity to the "whim" of some officers in particular and, frequently, to the prison environment in general. This is unmistakably aligned to issues of intrapersonal conflict and power.

Many therapists felt that the power they had to elicit change in their clients, the prisoners, was based in a fundamental need for reciprocal trust. However, trust was often compromised as the therapists were required to constantly be vigilant around security issues. Such security factors frequently refer to therapists needing to carry and protect keys, frequently carry distress alarms, report concerns about individual prisoners and liaise with the prison about the progress of prisoners (both generally and specifically). In fact, many therapists reported feeling as though they were almost "pseudo officers" (in fact all non-custodial staff working in prisons are effectively deputized as officers as a matter of course according to the global prison operating procedures, a fact which has never really been tested in a Victorian prison to date).

As Belinda stated:

One day I was at (*prison location*) and an officer threw me a set of keys... I knew I was not really meant to have access to this area and it... would have been so easy to just open the door, for, I

guess him and me... and I thought: 'no, what does this mean? I'm not an officer'. ... and I threw them back and said: 'hey mate, that's your job'. ... and we both laughed, but it was a close one.....officer Belinda huh? I don't think so.

The above would indicate that there are times when therapists are required to act as though they are officers, and, at other times, are treated as though they can be trusted little more than prisoners. It is small wonder that there often exists an intra personal conflict around role perceptions, and that this conflict is frequently reported in terms of inconsistencies around personal power.

#### *6.4 Interpersonal Conflict and Values*

All therapists reported feeling frustrated by the "pseudo competition" created in the prison environment. This competition tended to take the form of stake-holding and access to prisoners. Many felt that each prisoner was a type of commodity in the prison and there was almost a competition to see who would ultimately get access to them. As Kay stated:

...particularly when I was working at (*a large maximum security prison*) everyone had to have their piece of the prisoner...industry had to have their throughputs, education had to have theirs and psych services... well we had to have ours. Yeah, the officers would pull rank, you know stuff like: 'oh, that prisoner can't go there today, he's not cleared,' and you knew he was the industry super, flu was going around and he wasn't going to meet his KPI's if some bloke came to me for a methadone assessment...

Clearly, many therapists felt as though officers did not see the value in therapy work. One therapist suggested that as many of the officers were older males they tended to really only value traditional work ethics, so that essentially only hard physical work by prisoners was seen as valuable.

Additionally many therapists felt that officers did not value the work that they did because it was viewed as disloyal to the wider community. That is, officers felt that prisoners were not deserving of “special treatment” and that the “bleeding hearts” and “care bears” who “look(ed) after” them had distorted and displaced value systems. Almost all of the therapists reported that officers had asked them why they weren’t working with victims or giving programs to officers.

In fact, several therapists reported their experiences of delivering programs either specifically aimed at officers or, at least, where officers were included. The idea of including officers was to increase their understanding of what prisoners experience in programs. This type of program was reported as limited in its success. Failure was often attributed to either: the “stuck-ness” of officers in an “obstructive culture”; an “over identification with prisoners”; or, as Lee stated: a tendency to fall into “... a pseudo counseling role with prisoners... (*which the officers were*) often uncontained in...” The latter indicating that officers were not suited to a counseling role as they lacked the necessary boundaries.

One of the reasons why officers were not able to work effectively in groups may have been a result of their inherent lack of faith in rehabilitation in general. Most therapists reported conversations they had

had with officers where the issue of recidivism was raised. Brenda felt that officers held unrealistic, often concrete, expectations of rehabilitation and this tended to cause them to view therapists with a measure of skepticism and undervalue the programs therapists were administering. Brenda, and others, felt that this skepticism was a source of much conflict.

... they (officers) see these blokes come back time and time again.. this is what they measure success by, it's very concrete, they don't ask the difficult, more subjective questions like: 'how long were you out for this time?' or, ... 'what is your attitude like now?' ... like what are their prospects like this time...he or she may well do much better but how can a custodial member really measure this? Its all black and white isn't it?... (James).

Whilst many therapists reported feeling that officers did not understand their work, all therapists suggested that neither work group sufficiently understood what the others' job actually involved.

Interestingly, most therapists felt that officers had had to do a lot more adjusting to the presence of therapists than they were given credit for. As John stated:

...I didn't have to deal with the soul destroying aspect of what they have to deal with every day... having to deal with politics and bureaucracy... which must wear people (officers) down...

However, many therapists felt that they were viewed by officers as "hand holders" and "do gooders". There was clear frustration that officers engaged in conflict with therapists as a means of avoiding any attempts at



understanding the therapist's role. But some therapists felt that officers adopted a negative attitude as a means of protecting themselves. Such protection was needed to ward off the "internal conflicts" experienced as a result of the more unpleasant duties officers had to carry out (such as sometimes needing to strip search prisoners' family members-including children- on visit days).

Conversely, therapists frequently reported that the negative attitude with which many officers viewed their presence in the prison was probably reflective of the way the general community would value their therapeutic role within the prison, if they understood it at all.

Several therapists admitted that they often avoided discussing their professional roles in social situations, and were reluctant to "fess up" to working in prisons. They tended to do this to avoid confrontation regarding the ethics of working with prisoners, as many people would offer first hand knowledge of a victim of crime, thus questioning the value of therapeutic work in general and the presence of therapists in prisons at all.

Such an unwillingness to disclose the nature of their work was often expressed with some regret by therapists, with some suggesting that community views about the efficacy of their work was mirrored by prison officers.

Many therapists felt that officers were negative toward the programs in general and any attempts to change this had been largely useless. Therapists reported that the pessimistic attitude of some officers was tiring. They further reported that officers' passive/aggressive attempts

to sabotage the implementation of programs on location were a serious threat to therapists' attempts to remain faithful to professional values. As Tim stated:

... nothing that you could do could really change that...

well, mainly the therapeutic staff sort of gave the inch... sort of gave in all the time. I never thought it was very healthy really...

And Ruth: '...we are different animals... basically...'

Some therapists felt that the different accountability models between the two work groups were often mistaken for a difference in general values. Wally discussed his dealings with a potentially suicidal prisoner and his interactions with officers around the client:

You (*officers*) report something and the next highest level says... 'yes or no,' and that's fine. They don't have a problem with that because they've passed the information on and that's it.

Whereas, I would have thought that I would have still have... some responsibility. My responsibility toward the client would not have ended at just reporting it higher up the tree...

Therapists generally felt that their responsibility to prisoners was more subjective and less "operationally defined" in nature: "providing they (*officers*) haven't broken the rules they don't have to defend what they do" (Tim).

### *6.5 Interpersonal Conflict and Interests*

Many therapists described instances where they had been forced to sacrifice personal values for immediate interests. Dana described a time where she had been doing art therapy with a prisoner in solitary

confinement. Dana was very concerned about this particular prisoner and had implemented a specific art therapy program when all other therapeutic approaches had failed. The program was cleared with both local management and head office. However, on one occasion Dana showed up at the allotted time, with the cleared art materials, and was refused permission to see her client if she insisted on taking the art materials with her. Dana elaborates:

... I had this stuff cleared, I was allowed to take it in, I mean I really value art therapy and was wrapped that the prison had the insight to see the value of this type of work with this bloke... and then its: 'no sorry, I am having a bad day so have decided that I won't let you in' ... I thought to myself: ' what a power trip this bloke is on, how fucking dare he': and then I just realized.... I wasn't going to get anywhere, he didn't... want me there at all... so I made a compromise, I left the art stuff with (*officer*) and just took myself in. We had a meditation session instead...

And later: "Yeah it was a compromise I guess. But what the hell, I still got to see the bloke, just not on my terms..." Several therapists described similar situations to Dana, however most were philosophical about the situation preferring to take the path of least resistance and make some compromises for the sake of the client, who therapists clearly saw as having little enough access to resources without losing the therapy as well.

### *6.6 Interpersonal Conflict and Power*

Numerous therapists reported a belief that therapists and officers were frequently confused over role definitions. Such confusion tended to

manifest in conflict between the two groups and this frequently culminated in both overt and covert power struggles.

Such conflict was commonly reported as the most salient when it came to access to prisoners. The two work groups often acted as stakeholders with each believing that their access to prisoners was paramount. Owen described a situation where he had been cleared to work with a prisoner who was in solitary confinement:

I actually saw them (*officers*) misuse policies....they would argue the fact and I remember one officer saying that the prisoners were not to be released from solitary confinement for anything, and that was very confusing and I know I remember going back and saying: 'well, which one (*policy on solitary confinement*) is it.'

Whilst the above is an obvious description of interpersonal power conflict, such conflict was frequently described in more subtle terms. One therapist had been working with a long term prisoner for several months. This person was disliked by many officers as he was very out-spoken and quite articulate in his demands for both himself and others. The prisoner was, according to Mark, making good therapeutic progress in terms of insight but this insight also extended to escalation of his awareness of rights in the prison, making him more difficult in the eyes of the officers. Mark stated that he knew the particular prison wanted to transfer his client but had no legitimate reason to do so. As Mark reported, eventually a senior officer at the location discovered that the prisoner was a painter by trade. The officer deemed that a unit in the prison needed painting and Mark's client was the only person qualified to carry out the work. The

prisoner was “billeted” as a painter. All of the prisoner’s time was taken up in “essential services” and he had no available time for his therapy. When the painting project was over the prisoner was “rewarded” with a placement in a lower classified prison. Mark believed that this was a subversive mechanism for removing his client from his care. Mark felt that there was a power struggle and, via the “hierarchy of needs” in the prison, he (and his client) had lost.

Where there was conflict with officers some therapists exerted their intellectual power over officers by treating them as pseudo clients. During the interview process many examples were revealed of this type of “project” based treatment of conflict with officers.

Typically, therapists would describe the process of identifying officers who were likely to be “difficult”, and “grooming”, “oiling”, or, “dancing” with them.

An example of this is found with James, who admitted that:

... there is very little conflict that is overt...if he (*officer*) has an issue with power... then in some ways he is a project of mine in the prison, he doesn’t know it but I suppose in non-psychological terms, I plan to love him to bits.

Such tactics would have likely gone unrecognized by most officers, as they have not had a long history of interacting with therapy staff in the prison environment.

All therapists interviewed believed that the relatively recent rehabilitative focus of prisons translated into a perception by officers that they had been “invaded” or “superceded” by therapists. Many therapists

felt that this represented an undermining of individual power bases by officers and that their response was frequently to turn to the operations procedures, and to overly rely on the hierarchical culture of prisons.

As the rehabilitative focus of prisons is a relatively recent phenomenon and most Victorian prisons are quite old, it necessarily means that there is a paucity of appropriate program areas. Most program areas in prison are ad hoc affairs and additionally serve a more traditional operational function.

Several therapists reported that they were frequently interrupted mid-therapy sessions under the auspices of the space they were using being required for an original function. An example of the original function may be a group room being needed for the containment of prisoners awaiting urinalysis.

Such reliance on operational hierarchy was frequently reported as a source of frustration by therapists. James described a situation where an individual counseling room was suddenly required for an administrative function by an officer:

He was just flexing his muscles because if he and I had the same access to the prisoner and the spaces in the prison then that meant there was not hierarchy between us... the hierarchy is what keeps the officers safe...

In addition to the culture of hierarchy, many officers subjected therapists to practical jokes which frequently were viewed by therapists as "initiation ceremonies." Several therapists reported incidents where they felt that officers were "putting us in our place" under the guise of harmless

practical jokes. Whilst some of the incidents may have appeared harmless on face value most, as with the following, represented significant potential for disaster.

Kay told the story of being asked by an officer to have a “session” with a prisoner who had just discovered his father was ill:

When I got to the unit they had locked ‘A’ down (*in his cell*) ... they said he was upset and it was ok for me to go in, they would keep an eye on me. Well there was a shift change and as a joke they decided not to let the next shift...know I was there. I wasn’t scared but pretty soon we both knew I had been forgotten... it was pretty funny I suppose in hindsight... that bloke (*prisoner*) became my new best friend...

Other therapists reported similar incidents with varying degrees of danger potential. Possibly the most dangerous was an incident reported by Maxine, where she was asked to see a prisoner by an officer. What the officer had not told Maxine, but she discovered after she had entered and been locked in the cell with her client, was that the prisoner was almost unmanageable with grief and anger. He had just discovered that his brother-in-law had died from a drug overdose and the prison had delayed telling him. The prisoner was furious and the officers had called Maxine after they had locked the prisoner in his cell for the safety of all in the unit. Maxine did not feel that her safety was seen as particularly important that day.

Despite the fact that many therapists felt that officers could be manipulative, most therapists reported an understanding that their presence

in the prison often represented an increased difficulty in the operational functions which officers were required to perform.

As Daniel stated:

...look we swan in and we swan out...we skill these blokes up, stuff like Anger Management, Conflict Resolution, Communication Skills, we piss off and they use this stuff on the officers...we don't see the day to day stuff...the abuse and just plain niggliness, we don't live there but in some ways the officers do...

Evidently, many therapists understood the difficulties that their presence sometimes created for officers. However it is not clear that any attempts were made to convey this to officers in a formal sense. Clearly issues of interpersonal conflict around power are likely to emerge in such a climate.

### *6.7 Organizational Conflict and Values*

Various therapists felt that head office had some good ideas about rehabilitation in prisons but that these ideas were doomed to failure if they were not marketed well at the local level. Some therapists felt that they had been wrongly targeted by officers as the “mouthpieces” of head office. They were frequently seen as the public face of the particular program in question. Gay stated that:

When I walked into the prison I felt all eyes on me... I'd been told that there'd been a training course... or something... for custodial staff but, ah, there wasn't... some officers treated me really well, I mean, really well, but others... ah, well let's just say I



wasn't exactly the flavor of the month around (*prison location*)... I was pissed off...(*I was*) set up in a way...

Other therapists reported similar concerns and felt that head office had not followed through with initial assurances that custodial staff on location would be briefed about pending programs. In fact the issue with communication processes was often cited as a problem which was becoming worse with more non-custodial staff and programs in prisons.

As stated, many therapists felt that communication "down the chain of command" was flawed. Problems with communication included that between head office and the locations, and within the locations themselves. Therapists felt that at an organizational and senior management level rehabilitation was valued but that officers on location were poorly briefed about the expectations management had of them in terms of program implementation.

As Jane stated:

I really value rehabilitation for my clients, ah... and I know Head office value it... but I'm not sure that the custodials are able to share that value... I mean, they're not really very powerful in the job... just getting by really, so do they really want to go that...extra mile for their superiors? I always wonder if they are as well oriented to programs as they should be...

Most therapists felt that officers' lack of orientation to additional programs was evidence that the organization did not respond well to issues of care for custodial staff.

Whilst most therapists believed that both the prison organization and their own affiliated organizations cared reasonably well for them, they did not feel that either was particularly caring toward officers. Therapists acknowledged and were generally appreciative of the “filtering”, or “buffering” role their own organizations afforded them in terms of any problems which existed with program staff and head office. Additionally, those therapists who were directly employed by a prison drew their clinical support via membership of a professional body and/or individual and peer supervision and support. As Gail stated:

I get supervision where I can... (*in this way*) I am always doing a constant audit of my values and my practice... I feel very supported but sometimes it's hard to get people to understand the problems ... working in a prison.

Many therapists acknowledged that the implementation of extra programs for prisoners caused additional work loads and frustration for officers, but also felt that officers were not offered the same “safe” opportunities to explore their own positions in this process. Sandra described an interaction she had recently had with an officer after her program team had conducted their weekly debrief/supervision session:

... and ‘Jo’ (*officer*) had actually interrupted the session a few times, you know stuff like... ‘do you need such and such’.. I realized he was curious about what we were all doing in there.... He asked if we were ‘slacking off’ in a joking way and I decided to ask him about what he did to let off steam... he said... ‘Oh, we go and get pissed’...I asked him about supervision and described a bit

of what we'd been doing. 'Well,' he said 'we have handover at the end of the shift.' I mean, Handover? That's not supervision... it's about knowing whose who in the zoo... I guess we have different ways of viewing safety...for them it's the body and the prison... for us it's the mind and the profession (*social work*)...

All therapists interviewed expressed concern that officers were not offered the same opportunities to access processes of self care as they were. However, many therapists also felt that if such processes were available, then the suspicious nature of officers would mean that they would probably have been unlikely to participate.

#### *6.8 Organizational Conflict and Interests*

Many therapists discussed what they believed to be a poor fit between their own personal views of human rights and transparency, and the requirement by head office for all prison workers to remain publicly silent about their work. Such frustration did not reside in observations of cruelty toward prisoners, although many were concerned that they may observe cruelty and not be able to expose it, rather the concern was that prisons were not understood by the general public. Such a lack of general awareness of prisons and prisoners was believed by therapists to result in diminished community tolerance of prisoners, their families and their post release needs.

Brian described an incident where a prisoner working in the outside garden of a walled rural prison unwittingly interacted with a member of the public:

.... And the poor bastard was working with his head down... just working and minding his own business, ...then this kid came running up to him and said 'hello', I mean, I saw all of this... the prisoner responded with a quick hello and smile... it was that quick... and he was shanghaied (*removed from the medium security prison to a maximum security prison*) ... I went in to bat for him but it was clear he had broken the rules... I was pissed off, I mean this bloke was due for release, I'm thinking: 'This time next week he'll be making love to his wife, but this week he can't say hello to a kid'... post release preparation? I don't think so. These are members of our community, why do the powers that be allow them to be invisible? In whose interests is that?

Tania described a similar incident where a group of prisoners at a rural location were taken to a local entertainment area for a weekly outing designed to prepare them for release. A member of the public had written to a local paper in outrage that there were these 'dangerous people amongst our children.'

... what an insult... 'amongst their children' indeed... look most of these bloke were young fathers themselves... I was really annoyed... I wrote a letter of reply, I really wanted to respond, the Governor agreed but the District Manager put the frighteners on it... why can't the powers that be respond to basic, fundamental unfairness?

Issues such those described above clearly caused therapists some distress as they were not able to respond as they would have in the general

community. As all therapists described basic human rights as issues they were passionate about, it is clear that any inability to respond to perceived injustices caused some moral dissonance. However, in order to serve the community they had chosen to work with, such broad values were rendered subordinate to immediate interests. That is, in order to keep working in the prison therapists had to “keep their mouths shut”.

### *6.9 Organizational Conflict and Power*

As noted earlier, many therapists reported feeling that there was a poor fit between the organization’s rehabilitative agenda for prisons and the knowledge that location officers had of such agendum. There was a general perception amongst those interviewed that officers were poorly trained for a rehabilitative focus of modern corrections or the role that therapists were required to play regarding such goals. As Daniel stated:

...I don’t think for the custodial staff themselves that it’s a goal that they have but it’s a goal that the system they work in has...they didn’t really see you as an important cog in the wheel..

This reference to goals pertains to the actual program implementation, rather than the goal to decrease recidivism. Most therapists believed that they and officers shared goals around keeping prisoners out of prison, but that the methods to do so were different. This has been interpreted in terms of a shared destination for both groups but a completely different journey.

There was a perception among therapists interviewed that the militaristic structure of the organization allowed officers to abdicate personal responsibility for both their own actions and the care of prisoners,

and that rules (via the operational manuals) were often scrutinized for ways in which things could not happen, rather than ways that they could, particularly where therapy was concerned.

Tim described a situation where he had been counseling a prisoner, with the Operations Manager's consent, over musters for several weeks. At one stage he had a "run in" with a "particularly difficult" officer. Later on Tim saw the officer conferring with several of his colleagues over the local operations manual, the officer later pointed out a "clause" in the manual which clearly outlined the fact that Tim's therapeutic interventions were not "within the rules of the prison." Tim did not take the matter any further as the officer threatened to report the matter to the operations manager as an "Operational Breach".

All therapists made mention of the fact that the historical operations and structure of prisons meant that officers had difficulty adjusting to the relatively new rehabilitative framework. Most therapists felt that their very presence was a threat to traditional power bases which officers had previously enjoyed, and the main reason for this threat was often cited as the increased accountability which officers were exposed to by the "scrutiny of outsiders."

Some therapists further reported that they felt that the officers saw them as "the eyes and ears of management." That is, they were there not only to work with prisoners, but to report back on the officers also. As Sharyn stated:

*(I was)...*not so sure that our role was really ... well

explained by head office...I feel like I am always putting out fires

and justifying what I am doing there... perhaps more training before we started would have been a good thing...after all, we all have to work together...trust is an issue and I'm not sure it couldn't have been better handled in the early stages...

As previously discussed, therapists felt that many of the problems they encountered with officers were due to communication problems within the organization itself. In particular some therapists believed that communication via email left too many opportunities for misinterpretation and/or mismanagement of directives from head office. Therapists generally felt that location staff often felt isolated from many decision making processes and that greater opportunities to actually see the processes in action might make officers more likely to "own" the changes which were ordered from head office. Several therapists suggested that officers should spend some time on secondment to head office so that they had "first hand" experience of how decisions were made.

It is interesting to note here that therapists did not report personal experiences of organizational conflict and power in terms of the head office. They generally felt that the prison, as an organization, "looked after them" but was frequently quite neglectful of officers. When it came to organizational conflict and power most therapists deferred to officers' experiences when discussing this concept.

## Part 4: Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it is now possible to scrutinize some of the conflict issues. In the following chapters I will draw on the research material presented and discuss the concerns raised by my participants, linking much of the material to the issues identified in the introduction and literature review. The discussion section will merge the issues of therapists and officers and present them alongside each other rather than separately.

Recommendations for practical action will be offered in chapter eight. These will be based mainly upon the research findings and existing theoretical knowledge in the area, as well as my knowledge of working in prisons in general. Recommendations for action will focus on officers and therapists separately; this is an acknowledgement of the specific frameworks required for each group. Finally, a conclusion will be presented followed by a personal reflection on the research journey.

### *Chapter 7: Discussion regarding Values Interests and Power*

#### *7.1 Intrapersonal Conflict and Values*

The results indicate that therapists and officers experienced intrapersonal conflict concerning values. I have termed this type of conflict *the war of internal frameworks*. Both groups experienced incongruence at a professional and personal level. Officers tended to identify with prisoners, particularly if they knew the prisoner or their family, or if the prisoner reminded them of a family member. Therapists were concerned about their ability to remain true to values, or internal frameworks, in the



harsh environment of the prison. Therapists were also very concerned about becoming desensitized and “corrupted” by the prison.

Especially for therapists, there was some evidence that values were sometimes subordinated to interests. This is possibly because therapists are accustomed to such introspection via supervision.

Bourdieu (1977) suggests that when individuals find themselves conflicted between their values and their interests, the power that they have in a given situation is likely to be important to consider. Those with substantial power are usually able to act according to their values and their interests in unison, or, at least, there is such a close match between the two that any conflict is minimal and possibly unrecognized. Also, people who enjoy higher levels of power arguably have fewer sources to which they are answerable thus fewer opportunities for intrapersonal conflict in general.

Prilleltensky (2000) identified a number of values classifications as useful tools for value-based practices. Three sets of guiding principles were; values for personal wellness (such as self determination and autonomy), values for collective wellness (social justice and support for community structures) and values for relational wellness (respect for human diversity, democratic collaboration). Whilst all are arguably useful to an understanding of values structures, and particularly within organizations, this research found that where there existed intrapersonal conflict around values both therapists and officers referred to a higher-value need for social justice. Prilleltensky would identify this type of focus as satisfying a personal desire for “collective wellness” (2000).

People may focus on issues of collective wellness when their internal frameworks are conflicted. As the participants here suggested, internal conflict can be difficult to reconcile and quite painful on a very personal level. Focusing on the values of social justice and the greater good would allow workers to continue with their professional lives even if conflicted about their own values and the reality of the environment. So, collective wellness becomes the macro-picture which enables individuals and groups to minimize their own internal conflicts.

Also, when officers felt they were personally conflicted around values they frequently gained some comfort from the operations manual, seeing this tome as having historical validity. The operations manual is regarded by many officers as the “bible” of prison work: it is additionally the major training tool for new officers and the one constant in what is sometimes an uncertain work environment. Ultimately the operations manual is a generalized document geared toward a prison-wise approach to questions, rather than a tool to address individual needs. In this way, operations manuals in general may also serve a greater-good purpose. As with social justice values and collective wellness, instructional manuals allow individuals to focus on something greater than their own personal material.

Scott (1985) argues that therapists are particularly prone to value conflict when they work in the prison environment. The author argues that therapists are often conflicted in terms of their professional ethics and the additional role of environmental consultants they are frequently required to fulfill. This type of conflict was often referred to by therapists in this

study. Several therapists felt that the prison organization required them to be the “eyes and ears” of the prison, and report back to management with “useful” information, whilst their professional bodies required them to attend to matters of positive regard and confidentiality.

This notion of being the eyes and the ears of management is an important fact to consider. Most organizations will introduce new work-groups into the environment at some stage and it is vital that all workers understand the role of the newer groups. I would suggest that the paranoia which the introduction of the therapists caused was less a function of officers’ overreaction and more likely to be based in their distrust of prison management in general. The introduction of new groups into an existing environment needs to be well managed so that the seeds of mistrust are not planted in the vital formative period.

Finally, it is interesting to note that therapists and officers were not able to identify what might be the other group’s values. This may not be a problem in many work environments but I would argue that a prison, where there are many, often amorphous “stakeholders” operating as professional satellites (health, education, industry, community groups, justice), it may be important that the actual groups which have the most contact with prisoners, and of whom the most is expected by the general community, also develop an understanding of each other’s values.

### *7.2 Intrapersonal Conflict and Interests*

Therapists and officers identified several instances where there seemed to be intrapersonal conflict around interests. Therapists felt conflicted as they had initially thought that prisoners would be difficult to

work with, however it frequently eventuated that officers were the more difficult group. Also, therapists felt that the culture was pervasive and impenetrable and they constantly questioned their ability to operate meaningfully in such an environment.

Officers were conflicted over the formal conflict procedures. Most officers had initially believed in the efficacy of conflict resolutions, but the reality meant that subversive methods were necessary where there was discord between staff members. I identify intrapersonal conflict and interests as traceable to *impenetrable cultures and subversive operations*. That is, the culture of the prison is difficult to operationalize in concrete ways and if a culture can not be accurately identified and explained then it almost attains the status of a secret society. As with any secret society the rules must be understood by all but they are not always easily disseminated. Members must first of all be scrutinized for suitability to membership, and only then are they able to understand the invisible, often highly politicized rules which govern the society.

Habermas (1987, 1996) argues that interests are fundamentally organic in their nature and encapsulate not only those aspects which incorporate self preservation and survival but that interests also relate to the political and social worlds in which individuals operate, with phenomena such as language, power, and work frequently serving (or hindering) individual interests. Habermas (1987) describes human interests by examining the socio/politico/cultural conditions which may serve toward a definition of what constitute personal interests at any given time and among a range of individuals.

Habermas (1987) argued that personal interests were best served when individuals engaged in democratic processes in communicative and consultative ways. However, Foucault argued that democracy was often a myth and that any belief citizens had that they were part of the process of democracy was often a misconception (Foucault, 1970, 1977, 1982). Foucault believed that the best way to observe an imbalance of power was through conflict (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Foucault, 1977, 1982; J. Miller, 1993). I build upon this premise and argue that the notion of conflict is also a useful way to examine interests and whether or not people feel as though their interests are being served.

Many officers felt personally conflicted by the organization's tendency to over-rely on the operations manual as the panacea for all problems prison-wise. Officers generally felt that the operations manual was an attempt to capture the values of prisons at an organizational level, but that sometimes the manual was unworkable from a practical position and often ran counter to the interests of officers. This was particularly the case where programs were concerned. It is also possible to argue that the operations manual itself is an example of Foucault's (1977, 1982) argument that democracy is frequently an illusion, with the shortcomings of such an illusion only truly apparent in conflict.

Officers felt that they had to compromise their own professional requirements to facilitate the smooth running of programs because rehabilitation was seen to have a moral element. I contend that the operations manual represents communication between the organization and workers but it is not a communicative process. The operating

procedures do not require reflection or feedback; rather they are intended to be adhered to and accepted. Conflict is likely to emerge if such processes fail to attend to the interests of workers.

Cloke and Goldsmith (2000) warned that workers who are not fully consulted about organizational initiatives will not be committed to their implementation, particularly if they interfere with professional interests. The authors argue that in these circumstances workers may be likely to publicly comply with new initiatives, but privately sabotage them. The results of the present study lend support to this thesis (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2000).

Many therapists felt personally conflicted around the fact that they espoused values, such as the freedom of speech for their clients, whilst the environment precluded this possibility. In such cases, therapists frequently found it necessary to ignore their own values, in terms of their professional beliefs, in order to operate professionally within the prison environment. If they were not able to do this, then ethical work became impossible.

The experiences of therapists regarding intrapersonal conflict and interests arguably reflect their ability to make sound moral judgments which are aligned to their own interests. Prilleltensky (2001) suggests that moral judgments (aligned with values) are frequently disregarded in order to serve interests (in the case of therapists, advancement).

As with other matters relating to intrapersonal conflict, therapists were better able to explore these matters than officers. Where intrapersonal

conflict existed for therapists, it tended to revolve around moral issues, whereas for officers they often cited the operations manual.

It is possible that given the credence which the prison organization have historically bestowed upon the operations manual, this item serves as the “moral compass” for officers when they are at work. If this can be accepted then it may explain why officers experienced intrapersonal conflict around their interests largely when their interests were seen as compromised if the operations manual were to be followed.

Of course many organizations, particularly large structured ones, do rely on prescriptive operating procedures. The results of the present study suggests that these procedures can offer comfort and direction to staff, but that they may cause intrapersonal conflict for workers when they do not resolve the needs of staff members.

### *7.3 Intrapersonal Conflict and Power*

Of all the constructs considered, officers and therapists felt the most passionate about issues of power in the prison. Given that prisons fundamentally operate on power relations it is not surprising that staff were able to describe these processes in much detail.

Regarding intrapersonal conflict and power, therapists felt an empathy with the powerlessness of prisoners, as they too were disempowered by the oppressive environment and the extra security scrutiny they frequently attracted. Also, therapists felt somehow guilty about their own freedom; a freedom which their clients were not able to enjoy. Therapists also believed that the respect they attracted in the

community was not matched in the prison setting, particularly among officers.

Officers reported a conviction that therapists often colluded with prisoners and used their power to manipulate operational decisions. Also, officers were very conflicted about their lack of power regarding program implementation and particularly a perceived lack of consultation, and generally felt displaced by the presence of therapists.

Intrapersonal conflict around power often involved issues of displacement and poor communication processes. Also vital here is *the contribution of tokenism to infantilization*. When individuals or groups offer small gestures of power to others, rather than real opportunities to transform environments, tokenism and infantilization take place. And as with children, people may come to recognize that the power is not real and therefore react in non-productive ways.

Power has been described by many theorists as comprising a range of social, political, personal and global elements. In addition power is never static, nor does it remain constant across all situations. For example people may have much power in one environment, such as the home, but little in other situations, such as in their professions or broader social lives.

Prilleltensky (in press) suggests that power is the “... capacity and opportunity to fulfill or obstruct personal, relational or collective needs” (p. 4). Whilst the author offers a definition of what personal needs may represent (health, self determination, opportunities for growth), power and intrapersonal conflict are somewhat more difficult to define.



When discussing the issue of intrapersonal conflict, I am thinking about the types of conflict which may arise when there is a lack of power (either real or perceived) on the part of individuals. Of course, it is possible that internal conflicts arise when people have power also, but it could be argued that most people with power are less likely to be attuned to their own internal conflicts, if they are present at all, because the enjoyment of power may render other personal examinations redundant in some cases (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Nelson et al., 2001).

The findings suggests that where intrapersonal conflict around power arose for officers, it was related to a belief that the organization should have been capable of taking care of such matters as conflict resolution among staff and prisoners, and intrapersonal divergence was the result when this was not seen to be done. Such frustrations often led to internal conflict for officers as they had initially had faith in the organization's ability to "look after them" regarding this matter. This often led to a degree of disillusion. Foster- Fishman and Keys (1997) contend that workers who do not feel professionally valued often become frustrated and angry. It is what happens with this frustration which should concern us.

While other types of conflict may be observable, intrapersonal conflict is generally deeply private and often unrecognized, particularly among individuals who do not have opportunities to explore intrapersonal matters. When people who have had a lot of power feel that it is under threat they can become volatile. It is not difficult to imagine how difficult

it may be for all workers in this type of environment. It is for these reasons that a deep understanding of power and conflict is so vital to organizations.

While Foucault argued that power is almost always invisible, the theorist was mainly interested in a discussion of power in terms of the social and political (Flyvbjerg, 2001; J. Miller, 1993). Within the present research I was interested in social and political forms of power but also in that power which is held by individuals and the ways in which such personal power, or lack of it, may interact with other forms of power.

Many officers reported witnessing inappropriate behaviors by a range of individuals within the prison setting. However, where such behaviors involved therapists, no officers had taken action in terms of formal reporting. Such a lack of reportage could, of course, be a reflection of officers' lack of faith in the efficacy of such a process, and therefore a reluctance to use the power at their disposal. However, this also mirrored the ways that officers tended to react when they witnessed inappropriate behavior by other officers, thus tending to lend a consistency to the often-held belief that formal processes did not always work. It is possible that officers may have been flexing their political power, to abide by the rules or not, rendering therapists beholden to individual officers, and also colluding in deviations from formal processes with a shift toward the subversive processes discussed earlier.

Therapists felt that where matters of security were concerned they were often singled out by prison security staff as of special interest, over and above officers. This was viewed by therapists, and also some officers, as a lack of faith in therapists' trustworthiness as they were not trained as

officers, despite the fact that all workers in prison are officially deputized to officer status whilst they are on location.

Many therapists felt that some officers and security staff used security functions to exert power over them and “put them in their place” by reminding them that they were not truly “of the prison” in an historical sense. In such situations therapists reported feeling personally conflicted, as they viewed themselves as capable and trustworthy with a certain amount of status in the community. However, the powerful operations of the prison environment tended to negate their professional power and status. Additionally, the fact that such power was not exerted in a consistent manner, either by the prison environment in general or individual officers in particular, rendered some therapists feeling as though the productive delivery of their professional duties was always in the hands of an amorphous, and inconsistent, powerful “other”.

Professionals such as therapists are generally well respected and quite powerful in a professional sense. However the present findings support the notion that power is indeed a transitory and contextual construct; we may have power in one situation, such as private practice, but not in others, such as when working for a large organization and with multidisciplinary work-groups. Pfeffer (1992) advises that large organizations may have trouble identifying the power relations among workers, such attempts at location would undoubtedly be hampered by shifting power relations and different power contexts.

Habermas argued that the way to an equitable distribution of power was through democratic process (Habermas, 1987, 1996). However, the

communicative power which he espoused as the optimum vehicle toward democracy may not always reflect the wishes or interests of small groups or individuals (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Additionally, the perception of individual power may result in the question of power and its machinations never being adequately addressed. This may be particularly salient in environments where increased levels of power are frequently bestowed according to political relationships, such as males who participate in the social culture of an organization, whilst women frequently do not; being promoted according to their relationships with (usually male management staff) rather than merit (such as the amount of time a person has spent in a particular position as well as their professional performance).

Several officers in the present study reported feeling highly conflicted over management's inability to adequately handle "difficult" officers. Some officers felt that prison management were reluctant to take action where officers were acting unprofessionally, and this was seen as particularly insidious where a questionable officer had attained a high rank. In these cases, prison management were seen to be collusive in their handling of serious conflict and officers felt conflicted, at an intrapersonal level, between their belief that prison management set official guidelines for behavior of staff but largely left poor behaviors unchecked, particularly where the officer in question was highly ranked.

There is no doubt that prisons operate under an entrenched, historical shroud of secrecy. Prisoners almost never report each other or staff, and staff have been known to turn a blind eye to inappropriate, even criminal, behaviors of other officers or managers. It is precisely this

secrecy which, I believe, contributes much to the dysfunctional elements of prison life, particularly the reliance on non-formal (subversive) management practices.

It is likely that this type of secrecy occurs in other industries as well. The medical profession is notorious for shielding its own and the military services also engage in this type of protection. It is possible that the issue of power is the key element in secrecy. Management and other workers understand that highly structured work places also have highly structured formal warning systems in place. Because these systems have such an impact on individual workers there may be a reluctance to implement them. It is also possible that whistleblowers understand that their actions will impact seriously on their own work relationships and professional development. In Australia we have witnessed the professional fallout for police, military, and political whistleblowers, particularly in the last few years, with many individual whistleblowers losing their jobs and being subjected to public ridicule.

Officers felt frustrated that management frequently attempted to involve them in strategies to improve current practices, but did not seem to act on the feedback. While management may have been genuinely interested in the views of officers the default position tended to be a reversion to the status quo, at least this is how officers viewed it.

That prison management frequently asks officers their views on matters pertaining to the work-place in general, and programs in particular, does not, I argue, speak to Habermas' (1987) confidence in the communicative process. Rather, prison management's perceived

unwillingness to act on the information provided by prison officers, results in a lack of faith by officers in the communicative process and leads to a tendency for officers to circumnavigate operational processes. As Foucault argued, it is the process of conflict which illuminates the true location of power (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Foucault, 1982).

Finally it was clear to me that, as with other matters intrapersonal, officers were less inclined to explore this type of conflict than therapists. I believe that the level of professional (clinical) supervision which therapists participate in, serves to assist them to “tune into” a range of intrapersonal issues. It is also possible that such supervision provides the language which individuals require in order to explore these issues in a face-to-face situation, such as the interviews presented in the current research. I argue further that the disparity in the care which officers and therapists glean from their respective professional managers accounts for much of the conflict between the two work groups.

#### *7.4 Interpersonal Conflict and Values*

Officers and therapists experienced both overt and covert conflict with each other and much of this conflict was related to values. Therapists felt that officers did not understand their roles or value therapeutic processes. Therapists also felt that officers questioned the value of working with prisoners in therapy and frequently used this view to justify the sabotaging of programs. Officers believed that therapists did not understand the difficulty of custodial work or value the input of officers. Further, officers expressed frustration that therapists “stirred up” trouble with prisoners and then expected officers to step in and intervene. Much of

the conflict between therapists and officers was caused by the diversity of the two groups, and is identified as *values-conflict caused by blurred boundaries and ill-defined professional roles*.

Jehn et al's (1999) study of various work groups found that a range of conditions needed to be met in order that work groups maintain productive work practices, good morale and low employee turnover. Jehn et al (1999) found that three basic types of diversity could be described among various work groups: social category diversity, information diversity and value diversity. The authors also explored the concept of conflict using two main types: task conflict and relationship conflict.

Whilst Jehn et al's (1999) findings were of interest and the methodology employed certainly identified a range of previously unexplored concepts, perhaps the most interesting finding regarding this research is that work-groups can be diverse along a range of issues without indication of negative consequences in terms of either productivity or morale. In fact high social diversity was positively related to high workplace morale. This is possibly because diversity can provide a level of vibrancy which is useful to the work place.

However, Jehn et al (1999) found that low value diversity, that is, workgroups with a diverse range of personal and professional values, displayed lower morale, decreased work satisfaction and intention to remain in the job, as well as low commitment to the group. The authors suggest that, over time, low value diversity becomes more important than demographic indicators such as race, age and social economic status in predicting morale, intent to stay in the job and productivity.

The present study suggests that both prison officers and therapists felt frustrated by the fact that the other group made little attempt to understand the work that the other was doing. This lack of understanding resulted in each group lacking a shared set of general, personal or professional values. As Jehn et al (1999) suggested, groups work best when they are closely matched in terms of values, however the two work-groups examined here reported that they did not know what the other's values were. Although Jehn et al argued that there should be low value diversity, the authors did not explore whether or not each group needed to understand the values of the other (Jehn et al., 1999).

It is possible that research which looks at value-matching actually has the effect of illuminating the concept for workers with the result being that groups have their own, and others' values clarified. This may ultimately be what is being captured alongside the actual matching of values.

Perkins and Abramis (1990) found that role definition and boundaries were important to harmonious professional relationships and the present research supports this thesis. Both groups identified these concepts as vital in their contributions to inter group conflict. As with many other organizations, prisons do require workers to, at times, cover other people's duties and temporarily augment their own. The problem may be when this happens as a result of staff shortages and on a regular basis, as it did in the prison.

Also, when staff are unsure about the values which individuals and groups hold they may be less able to tolerate deviations around standard



duties. This may be particularly salient when there is a large pool of staff, where staff are quite transitory, and the roles and responsibilities of staff have never been particularly clear (Denison & Sutton, 1990; Shaw, 1990). Additionally, I argue that role definition and boundaries are particularly important where multidisciplinary groups are required to work in close proximity to each other.

While Scott (1985) argues for therapists to take a more proactive environmental role in prison, Hesketh et al (1996) suggest that the primary role of therapists in the prison environment should be predominantly as staff members whose fundamental function should be to help other staff, particularly officers, manage prisoners. Whilst the authors are mainly referring to psychologists, and specifically organizational and forensic psychologists, others have suggested the idea is pertinent to all psychologists (Emmons, 1976) or counselors (Janik, 1995) who work in prisons.

Although such work with officers and other staff may be useful as a management strategy, the present research would tend to indicate that there would need to be some professional “fence mending” before therapists would be either accepted in this role, or indeed, express an interests in its implementation. Whilst it may be useful to employ therapists as environmental consultants it is possible that such a notion could include a type of cross-collaboration where each work-group informs and enhances the rehabilitative process in general by enhancing the relationship of the two work groups.

Whereas the previous discussed a broader role for therapists in prisons, Janik (1995) expands upon this notion (or, perhaps, narrows it down), suggesting that therapists would be more productively employed by working solely with officers. The author argues that officers themselves are prone to such high levels of stress in their work that they are possibly more in need of counseling than prisoners themselves.

As discussed earlier, Janik (1995) is not clear about whether or not he is referring to an expanded role for current prison therapists or whether officers should have access to what I call external clinical supervision. If the suggestion is for external clinical supervision, this seems a good idea in light of the current findings. However, if Janik is suggesting that current prison therapists expand their roles and begin counseling officers I would argue that the notion has the potential to further widen the gap between officers and therapists, as it would add to the existing problem of role definition and blurred boundaries (Janik, 1995).

In terms of interpersonal conflict and values, I believe that, whilst officers and therapists do share the value of rehabilitation of prisoners, the journey is different for each group. I argue that this is the source of much interpersonal conflict. For example, how do therapists and officers integrate the different ways each group treat the client? Furthermore, how does this impact on their relationship with each other? There is a role for the organization both in the ways it disseminates and markets the organizational commitment to rehabilitation, and perhaps more importantly, the ways in which it manages these constructs at a location level (Gendreau, 1996).

As stated earlier, prisons and other structured organizations are micro worlds which often have an uncanny ability to mimic the wider community. There are two major work factions operating in prisons and they have different political agendas.

By and large prison officers are quite authoritarian, tend to rely on structure, dislike change and find comfort in the status quo. Therapists however are more likely to agitate for change, often push operational boundaries, and challenge authority. Of course this is a generalization and not all officers or all therapists belong in the liberal or conservative group but I doubt anyone who has worked in a prison would challenge the theory.

### *7.5 Interpersonal Conflict and Interests*

The results of the present study reveal that officers and therapists experience some inter-group conflict regarding interests but that it is quite minimal. While the interests of therapists often saw them acting counter to values, this was almost always a result of personality clashes with officers. Officers reported that increased programs made prisoners less available for other prison tasks which led to poorer work outcomes and throughputs for officers. They also felt that therapists were invested in the rehabilitation of prisoners making them less likely to acknowledge anti-social behaviors of prisoners. I define these types of conflict as *the battle over prisoners as commodity and currency*.

In all societies, and across a range of situations, the scarcer the commodity the greater its value and the struggle to access it: gold, oil and

precious gems are expensive because there is a limited supply; highly specialized professions have few able to offer services so they attract handsome conditions and remuneration, and elite services such as private schools and hospitals offer limited access and charge accordingly.

As with other commodities, Victorian prisons are relatively small with relatively few prisoners, but there are many stakeholders. Custodial staff need to access prisoners for urinalysis throughput numbers and case management reports. Education staff also has throughput requirements and therapists need to access prisoners to meet their own operational requirements. For this reason prisoners are a rare commodity and access to them necessarily causes conflict between various prison staff as each strives to serve their own professional interests.

Bourdieu argues that the serving of personal interests tends to alienate individuals from wider groups, and that this alienation is particularly potent if the personal interests are different to the values of the wider, often more powerful group (Bourdieu, 1977, 1999). This notion is supported by the present study which also found that therapists were more likely to defer to officers in an immediate sense, or at flashpoints. However, officers felt that their own interests were subservient to the needs of therapists in a more constant and insidious manner.

Whilst officers reported several instances of interpersonal conflict and interests, therapists reported such phenomena less frequently. Where therapists did discuss interpersonal conflict and interests it was mainly around the fact that they felt they had been “forced” by officers to abandon

their own professional and personal values so that they could function proficiently in the prison environment.

Bolman and Deal suggest that the political aspects of organizations are created as a result of the competing interests of a range of individuals and groups (Bolman & Deal, 2003). These interests are difficult to accommodate so that conflict is almost always apparent. There may be times when conflict around interests is a simple micro phenomenon, such as personality clashes between certain staff. However, entrenched unresolved conflict concerning interests should be seen as a management issue as it is arguably a symptom of poorly designed strategies and ill-defined implementation processes.

Fisher and Ury suggest that organizations and management can improve productivity and worker satisfaction if they cast a sympathetic eye over the competing interests of staff (Fisher & Ury, 1999). The authors are not suggesting that every minor staff interest be met, this would be unworkable, but that organizations become more compassionate and sensitive so that workers develop trust in the organization. It could be argued that a compassionate and sensitive organization would better serve the professional interests of most staff as there would be an automatic perception that staff interests were valued.

### *7.6 Interpersonal Conflict and Power*

Officers and therapists discussed many instances where they conflicted with each other, and much of this conflict involved issues of power. Therapists felt that overt power struggles were frequent, but that these were easier to manage than the more covert, subversive conflicts they

frequently experienced with officers. Therapists generally agreed that their presence in the prison caused a range of problems for officers and many resorted to treating officers as projects to be managed, and in some cases manipulated. Also, therapist felt that, once again, role definition was a problem for both groups.

Officers seemed to recognize that they were sometimes being manipulated by therapists, and this was frequently a result of the convoluted language therapists often used in their communications with officers. Further, officers felt that the behaviors of therapists often eroded officers' ability to manage prisoners in traditional ways and they were particularly concerned that therapists did not respect many security issues.

I have identified the power-conflict between officers and therapists as *a problem with shifting power and professional invasion*. The increasing presence of therapists has tended to magnify traditional power bases in prison operations, and caused all involved in prison life to examine the merit and efficacy of such power structures; even if such an examination may be at a subconscious level.

Whilst Habermas' theories of power, democratic process and consensus are no doubt useful to an understanding of power and its distribution (Habermas, 1987, 1996), I have tended toward an exploration of Foucault's theory that a true understanding of power and its concomitants is best understood through an examination of the conflict which occurs when power is disparate (Foucault, 1970, 1982). Whilst such conflict can occur at an intrapersonal level, it is, perhaps, never more clear

than when one turns to interpersonal conflict and power, particularly within organizations.

Many officers reported direct conflict with therapists when they failed to acknowledge officers' claims that they (officers) enjoyed a level of insight into the true nature of prisoners, their offending behaviors and appropriate types of rehabilitation. Officers also felt that therapists used their therapeutic power (sometimes called "voodoo") to "push prisoners' buttons", but when matters went awry it was the officers whom therapists tended to rely upon. Therapists themselves acknowledged the above, but felt that any insight officers had into prisoners was largely unhelpful as officers were frequently witnessing prisoners' responses to the officers, and in terms of pushing prisoners' buttons, many therapists felt that this was their job in some respects and that officers were required to manage prisoners through a number of prison issues, including their responses to therapeutic processes.

The above represents a fundamental failure to orient the work practices of each group to the other. It would seem that officers and therapists were left to negotiate this important ground- work at an operational level, rather than at program development and implementation stages. Foster-Fishman and Keys warn against this practice as it can lead to confusion among groups and result in overall distrust of management (Foster-Fishman & Keys, 1997). The problem with large organizations may be that decision making is too decentralized; that is, the people who make decisions about organizational change are not actually in positions to

see how such changes impact on the work environment (Cyert & March, 1992).

Therapists felt that officers saw the presence of therapists in the prison as a threat to their traditional power bases. Officers indicated a perception that they felt they had been displaced in the power chain. Therapists did not generally feel that officers had a lot of traditional power in terms of prison management. However, they had traditionally been powerful in relation to prisoners and this power was fundamentally based on the established ways officers interacted with prisoners. Therapists felt that this interaction with prisoners had largely been poor, with officers and prisoners acting as combatants. Conversely, the positive regard which therapists displayed toward prisoners meant that prisoners were frequently treated as equals, thus offering them a relatively new way of relating to other adults. This tended to throw their own relationships with officers into sharp relief and they were, possibly, no longer satisfied with the ways officers interacted with them.

Whilst therapists' relationships with prisoners caused much conflict between officers and therapists, it certainly helped therapists to connect with the prisoner group, albeit at the expense of their relationships with officers. In this way it can be seen that giving extra power, via communication, to one group (prisoners) actually removed power from another (officers). Nevertheless, it is possible that this traditional power was in fact unjust and non-productive, with the conflict between officers and therapists illuminating this reality.



Stojkovic (1986) investigated the different power strategies employed by custodial prison staff in the US. Whilst the researcher was not particularly interested in multi-disciplinary work groups as such (the research examined the ways in which officers controlled prisoners) I believe the results may be of use in the present study. Stojkovic (1986) identified three main types of power which officers used to control prisoners; coercion, reward, and access to information. The researcher found fault with all three types of power and suggested that new ways of controlling prisoners should be found.

There were examples of therapists using coercion to manage interpersonal conflict with officers, particularly where the conflict was around access to prisoners for programs. The types of coercion therapists employed involved pointing out to officers that prison management had sanctioned access to prisoners by therapists and any failure to honor such sanctions may reflect poorly on officers. In addition, I argue that the project approach often taken by therapists in their dealings with officers is also a type of coercion. I argue this because therapists are operating in a subversive manner with officers when they treat them as projects, and this may be viewed as somewhat dishonest.

Whilst officers themselves were not cogently aware that they were sometimes being managed by therapists as though they were the client, several officers stated that they avoided conflict with therapists because of a feeling that they tended to use their intellectual powers to analyze situations, and used jargon to the point that some officers reported that negotiating with therapists was similar to arguing with lawyers. Clearly, if

officers do not feel sufficiently equipped to manage direct conflict with therapists, then they would be further likely to engage more subversive methods to communicate their concerns. It is possibly not surprising that such strategies often involved attempts to obstruct access to prisoners, and this frequently involving officers' employment of the power which formal security instructions afforded.

Stohr et al. (2000) argue that the nature of prisons, particularly the strict paramilitary structure, mean that command and communications are managed by powerful location and head office personnel. And that the collective and shared historical culture of the prison environment both perpetuates and benefits from such control (Stohr et al., 2000; Stohr et al., 2000a).

Many officers felt that therapists failed to see the dangerous potential of prisoners. They also reported a belief that therapists were not in a position to see the many prisoners who returned to prison so tended to over-value therapeutic interventions. Several officers stated that they had experienced conflict with therapists over the recidivism of prisoners. The belief that officers were uniquely placed to witness recidivism was clearly not accurate.

Most therapists interviewed had additional professional lives which involved them working with prisoners post- release, or at least having professional involvements with agencies which did so. Such post-release work involved therapists tracking the discharge of prisoners and they were acutely aware of the recidivism rates for their clients. Whilst officers believed that they were uniquely placed to view the return of

prisoners, this was not the case, and as some therapists reported, officers were not well placed to witness the frequently seamless reintegration of prisoners as their roles restricted them to issues of incarceration only.

Whilst Jehn et al. (1999) found that work groups did not need to know a great deal about each others' work in order for productive work relations, I would argue that in such a sheltered work environment, full understanding of the roles and functions of all groups in prison can only be beneficial. Particularly if the work groups are to operate toward the common goal of rehabilitation for prisoners, and ultimately the safety of the general community (Gendreau, 1996; Hollin, 2002; Jackson & Innes, 2000; McGuire, 2000; Ward, 2002, 2002a).

Therapists reported frustration that officers tended to rely on operational procedures to manage conflict in a range of areas within the prison, but particularly with therapists. In spite of this, many therapists also believed that officers operated in this manner because formal procedures kept officers safe. Therapists generally felt that operational procedures served as a safety net for officers, in much the same way that clinical supervision protected therapists from the less palatable, frequently vague aspects of prison work.

It is interesting to note that, despite their frequent conflict with officers, therapists were quite empathic regarding the difficulty of officers' responsibilities. This suggests that groups are capable of exploring the plight of others even when their own situations are less than ideal. The reason for this may be that difficult environments motivate some to use

their own struggles to understand the position of others. That is, the environment becomes the catalyst for broader reflection and analysis.

### *7.7 Organizational Conflict and Values*

Therapists and officers reported many instances where they had experienced conflict with the organisation as a result of values-conflict. Therapists felt that the organization valued therapy programs but had failed to consider the impact extra programs would have on officers and the dynamics of the prison. All therapists reported a belief that they were well served by professional supervision, and felt that officers were badly let down by the prison organization's failure to provide the same opportunity for custodial staff.

Officers felt that the organization put a lot of effort into setting up programs but did not support them in a pragmatic manner once they were in place. Also, officers felt displaced by therapists as they had frequently been given training in more therapeutic modes of prisoner engagement, but that such skills were rendered redundant by the presence of extra therapy staff.

Both groups were suggesting that the organization did not equally value the contribution of therapists and officers, and that officers were more likely to suffer as a result. I propose that the above represent a failure by the organization to *value professional diversity, or address the "favorite child" mentality* which is evident in prisons.

Both therapists and officers felt that there were serious issues in terms of a conflict of values between individuals and the prison system in general. Such organizational conflict appears to have most likely stemmed

from poor communications from head office, and as with many conflicts in the prison environment the impact was frequently most salient when it came to prisoner programs.

Ulmer (1992) based his research into officers' cynicism on surveys from 198 operational officers from a medium security, medium sized US prison. The author found, among other phenomena, that when prison officers perceived themselves to have more influence on those whom were ranked above them they tended to be less cynical toward prison administration in general. Individuals who shared values and attitudes with a common reference group (in this case management) were more likely to operate within the social worlds of the organization and less likely to be cynical toward management.

Ulmer (1992) further found that officers who were less cynical toward prison management were more likely to adhere to rehabilitation values (espoused by management). Ulmer's (1992) study speaks to the need for prison staff, and in this case officers, to respect the directives of prison management. The findings of the present research suggest that officers and therapists did not have a great deal of professional confidence in prison management.

Kotter (1988) contends that people are more professionally satisfied when they feel that their organization cares about them and their interests. However, I argue that organizations which are geared toward human services and community welfare outcomes are frequently found wanting in care for their staff. This may be because staff in these areas is expected to be more contained, but it is equally possible that the burden of

answering to an increasingly vigilant society means that client outcomes are the primary area of focus by management. Of course the paradox here may be that those outcomes are affected by a failure to look after the “carers”.

When organizations implement new initiatives into the environment it is inevitable that there will be some teething problems. And this is particularly likely if specialist groups are introduced to “take over” duties which may have been provided by others.

Additionally, new initiatives are likely to result in the opening of the corporate wallet, and possibly in an environment where the existing staff may have been crying out for extra resources for some time. I liken this to giving a treat to one child in a family where another child has always been denied. It seems a given that the newly introduced professional/s would be perceived as receiving extra support and concessions and that this favoritism would render the transition for specialists as somewhat problematic.

The challenge for organizations is to develop and act on policies which deliver the message to existing staff that their historical roles are valuable to the organization. This may require a regrouping of managers and policy makers with an eye on creating meaningful professional opportunities and partnerships for their traditional staff members (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Foster-Fishman & Keys, 1997; Judge, 1999).

Bradshaw (1999) and Prilleltensky (2000) argue that larger organizations are more likely to be removed from the impact of their policies and that such organizations also typically display a removal of

“commoners”, or those charged with implementing changes. The current research certainly found that both therapists and officers felt as though they were removed from important decisions regarding rehabilitation and program implementation, although therapists felt less removed than officers. This may also impact on existing staff perceptions that the introduced professionals are the ‘favorite children’ of management.

Previously I argued that relatively powerless individuals whom operate within powerful structures often act according to the perceived values of the organization even if these run counter to their own values. I further argued that this was a survival tactic and an example of the subordination of values to personal interests. The present research revealed that some officers felt they had to act as though the decisions of head office in terms of location programs were workable, and the arrival of therapists were welcome, even when they were feeling professionally displaced. Several therapists acknowledged a suspicion that this was the case, citing incidences of passive aggression by officers and a general feeling that officers tended to rely on the operations manual to discover ways in which programs could not happen (arguably an additional form of passive aggression). In this way, I suggest, core staff transfer their values-conflict with the (powerful) organization onto their relationships with the (relatively powerless) introduced staff.

In conclusion, values, in general, were surprisingly similar for officers and therapists. Clearly both groups valued the principles of rehabilitation, albeit via different processes. For example, therapists valued therapeutic processes and saw them as vital to the safety of both prisoners

and any community they were released into, whilst officers generally saw the incarceration period itself as the vehicle for rehabilitation. Whilst it has been noted that incarceration itself does not rehabilitate (Gendreau, 1996; Hollin, 2002; McGuire, 2000) and incarceration without rehabilitation is potentially more damaging to already damaged individuals (Birgden, 2002; Ward, 2002), it is clear from this research that both officers and therapists have adopted greater community-good as the value that guides them. This is what I have termed elsewhere “a shared value in terms of the destination...”, but a sharp divergence regarding the journey!

Additionally, given the fact that officers feel that they have untapped knowledge of prisoners’ behaviors, and therapists themselves often acknowledged this fact, it would seem prudent to advance the cause of a knowledge cross-sharing rather than an imposition of therapeutic principles onto officers. Officers and therapists may have much to learn from each other. In fact each group recognized the usefulness of understanding the professional orientations and values of the other and, also, recognized that this area was not one which had not been historically well addressed. I argue that this cross-sharing of professional values, praxes and goals is valuable for any organization which relies on multidisciplinary work-groups to achieve productive outcomes.

### *7.8 Organizational Conflict and Interests*

Officers and therapists cited many examples where their interests conflicted with that of the prison organization. Officers felt that the organization did not adequately commit to programs and this sometimes made officers feel and appear foolish. Additionally, officers felt that



management merely paid lip service to rehabilitation because officers' feedback was not taken into consideration. Officers also believed that the organization valued the interests of prisoners over custodial staff.

Therapists thought that the organization perpetuated the invisibility of prisoners and their post-release needs because there was no transparency of process. Also, therapists felt that the suspension of natural justice in prisons meant that prisoners' interests were poorly served by management, and that this conflicted with therapists' investment in social justice for disempowered groups (in this case prisoners). Conflict around interests and the organization is defined as *deficiencies in organizational initiative processes*.

As discussed earlier, Foucault argued that the perception of democratic process was potentially dangerous as it tended to lull individuals into a false sense of their own inclusion in such a process (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Foucault, 1977, 1982; J. Miller, 1993). Whilst Foucault's thesis has been criticized, particularly by Habermas, as too radical in its critique of Marxism (Habermas, 1996), this research found that workers felt particularly alienated from management where management had made tokenistic efforts to include them in decision making processes. These findings lend support to the Foucauldian notion that false democracy is ultimately counterproductive.

Prilleltensky (2000) suggests that a failure by organizations to address the tensions between values and interests can result in an inability to fully engage value-based partnerships and good leadership in an organizational sense. The results of the present research suggest that

officers and therapists alike experience much tension between values and interests, and that the prison organization seems to be largely non-responsive to or, more likely, unaware of such tensions.

Many officers felt that the prison organization valued therapy for prisoners but did not offer them the same access to therapy. Although it may seem unusual for officers to expect the same support as prisoners, it has been suggested by Janik (1995) that officers may benefit from counseling and by Emmons (1976) that psychologists would profit the prison environment by focusing exclusively on staff relationships rather than prisoners.

While it may be possible for therapists to focus on custodial staff, it could also be argued that such a need illuminates deficiencies in training procedures and the operational management of custodial staff. If prison management were willing to provide meaningful supervision to officers, and require its use as a regular operational function rather than as a response to crisis, there may be no need to redirect the services of therapists. However, prisons do arguably share a distrust of supervision with other organizations which operate along military lines: Police and the armed forces are notoriously suspicious of therapeutic techniques which tap into an individual's feelings; it tends to undermine perceptions of resilience and resourcefulness, and also withdraws the focus from the group structure to individual needs.

Bourdieu argues that the more structured an organization or group, the less well it can accommodate the pursuit of individual interests (Bourdieu, 1977, 1999). This is possibly because the very structure limits

the opportunities for individuality. Prisons are highly structured institutions and the historical paramilitary methods of operation employed within prison serve, not only the structure, but the perceptions of structure and strict role definitions. Such structural and role definitions arguably disallow the pursuit of individual interests and, perhaps, particularly where officers are concerned, as they are trained, professionally, through such stringent, identifiable structures.

The above discussion regarding interests and organizational conflict lends support to Bourdieu's argument that the pursuit of individual interests is somewhat restricted within organizations where there exists a high degree of formal composition (Bourdieu, 1977, 1999). Prisons are highly structured and almost fully engaged in military operational models. Such historical engagement has resulted in a strong group identity by officers, not merely because of the standardization of uniforms, training and procedures, but because officers' experiences with locations and management mean that organizational conflict and interests seemed to be so closely matched within the research group.

I would maintain, based on the reports of my participants, that the matter of individual interests within prison was never really addressed until the interests of prisoners was raised, and may explain why many officers felt that programs offered to prisoners should have been available to them also. When individual interests were never a consideration for prisons then all appeared well. When the matter was addressed in terms of prisoners, and the status quo was challenged regarding the importance of personal interests, officers, too, found the organization wanting in terms of

their own interests. Foucault (1977, 1982) would no doubt argue that it was the moment of conflict around the personal interests of officers which illuminated the fact that all was not really “well” to start with!

It is not surprising that therapists viewed the interests of prisoners as professionally aligned with their own interests. I do not perceive this as an over-involvement or over-identification with the client group.

Therapists’ professional efficacy is frequently aligned to a range of prisoner issues, such as prisoners’ reversion to drug use, sexual deviance, and recidivism to general criminal behaviors. Frequently such recidivist behaviors were measured in a subjective sense, such as officers informing therapists of a particular prisoner’s return to prison, but more frequently, and increasingly, such matters as recidivism have come to be measured in more objective, quantifiable terms. This means that therapists’ performance as agents of rehabilitation is substantially linked to the outcomes of their client group.

There can be no doubt that rehabilitative outcomes of prisoners are inherently linked to the professional interests of therapists and that these types of interests are mirrored across the spectrum of community services. The question really should be why officers do not also identify with this link? And, what can be done to breach this philosophical gap?

### *7.9 Organizational Conflict and Power*

Therapists and officers reported power conflict between themselves and the prison organisation. Therapists felt there was little trust between officers and therapists and that this was mainly due to lack of planning and care by head office when programs were increased. They also felt that

head office did not care well for officers and that the lack of communication between all staff and management was disempowering. When therapists were discussing conflict and power they mainly referred to this concept in terms of its impact on officers.

Officers experienced conflict with the organization when they felt that professional promotions were granted to unsuitable people, and when head office failed to consult them in a meaningful way. Moreover, officers felt that management tricked them into thinking they would gain credibility and career advancement via extra training regarding rehabilitation for prisoners, when in the end therapists were introduced to replace them. While officers and therapists both thought that the two groups should engage in joint training, officers viewed this as an opportunity to teach therapists about the difficulties of being a custodial officer.

I suggest that organizational power conflict is linked to *consultation, communication, and trust as an empowering tool*. Bradshaw (1999) argues that the construct of power within organizations presents two specific, but not mutually exclusive paradoxes. These paradoxes are defined by Bradshaw as; individual agency versus organizational structural power, and observable or surface power and invisible, entrenched power (Bradshaw, 1999). The paradox is that none of the types of power explored by the author operates in a vacuum; they can co-exist, even if there is tension between them. Bradshaw suggests that power within organizations is frequently complicated and resides with individuals, and within and between groups (Bradshaw, 1999).

In the present research, some officers reported a belief that head office sometimes “promoted up” minority groups within the organization in an attempt to be seen as proactive. However, without enough training such staff members were likely to fail, thus offering a rationalization for the continuation of the mainstream (usually white, middle aged males) occupation of more powerful roles in prison locations.

I argue that such situations as the above offer support for Bradshaw’s (1999) theory that some types of power within organizations are invisible and entrenched, and that this type of power is the most difficult to challenge because of its highly pervasive, yet intangible nature. And given that the invisible and entrenched power within prisons also has an historical element, coupled with a militaristic operational structure, the possibility that power is often invisible and entrenched seems doubly problematic.

In addition to the paradoxes offered above by Bradshaw (1999) the author also suggests that power within organizations can incorporate any of the following; surface structural power, surface personal power, deep structural power, and deep personal power. The above example would appear to speak to the deep structural power of the organization and the surface personal power of most officers. It could further be argued that even where officers appear to be in positions of power, such power is mostly at the surface level given that it would almost always be subordinate to the deep structural power of the organization.

It may be that the larger the organization the more fragmented its power structures, also large organizations with an entrenched cultural

history may use that very culture to exert power. I am thinking here about the invisible rules of prison, but this could be applied to places such as hospitals, schools and military organizations. Not informing all workers about the invisible rules may result in the innocent breaking of them. Sometimes this may be done to initiate the worker; most building sites play the same jokes on apprentices as do shearing sheds and hospitals, however, sometimes information may be withheld to exert power of one person or group over another.

One of the major causes of frustration for officers, and in turn a point of conflict with both therapists and the organization, was the fact that many officers reported times where they had been trained to manage prisoners in line with more traditional welfare principles, but that this training was negated by the arrival of therapists. Officers felt that the organization did not value the contribution that officers could make to the welfare of prisoners and this was reflected by the limited value therapists also placed on officers' roles within prison.

The displacement of officers, or at least abandonment of their additional welfare training, is clearly an example of the paradox of individual agency versus organizational structural power. Furthermore, this example represents the deep structural power of the organization versus the surface personal power of the individual (Bradshaw, 1999).

Prilleltensky (2000) suggests that individuals who perceive themselves as having the power to protect their own interests are more likely to act according to a set of pro-social values. However, the author

cautions that there is no guarantee that people will act morally just because they have the power to do so (Prilleltensky, 2000).

As suggested earlier, many officers were conflicted with the organization as they felt that their extra training had not been incorporated into prisoner management and rehabilitation. Additionally, officers felt conflicted with prison management as the organization did not acknowledge that the extra rehabilitation programs in prisons required additional custodial staff. Whilst some officers felt that this was a mere oversight by management, many officers believed that management were well aware of some of the problems on location but did not care enough to act. Clearly, prison management is quite powerful and was seen by officers, and most therapists, as possessing the power to act according to the organization's values but, as Prilleltensky (2000) suggested, merely possessing the power does not guarantee that good choices will follow.

Of course, it could be argued that Victorian prison management has made good moral choices by virtue of the fact that a greater emphasis is being placed on prisoner rehabilitation. However, a failure to address the extra pressures such programs appear to have on a range of prison staff, including therapists and officers, has given many officers the perception that they are not valued by prison management.

As Prilleltensky (2000) argues, an understanding of values and interests may be useful to a more inclusive understanding of power, but it does not necessarily follow that such an understanding is sufficient to facilitate organizational change. Prilleltensky (2000) suggests that organizations should take steps to foster and validate the integration of



values and interests into the dynamics of power. This would seem a particularly challenging notion when one attempts an examination of organizations which are endeavoring change at a local level, but working within operational structures which have a deeply historical (and militaristic) culture. Such a culture as exists in prisons may result in the organization going through the motions of progressive change, and arguably with very good intentions, whilst remaining largely unwilling to challenge the existing (and historical) bases of power.

Although both groups generally agreed that the prison had not done a thorough job of orienting officers or therapists to each others' praxes, therapists felt that officers themselves were so far removed from the decision making processes of head office that they did not feel personally invested in the decisions themselves or, perhaps most important for therapists, in their implementation. Further, most therapists felt that officers were not able to communicate their frustration to prison management, as the organization was seen as too powerful to "take on", so officers' frustration frequently manifested as conflict with therapists. Presumably conflict with therapists was seen by officers as safer than conflict with management.

Many organizations invest a lot of money and time into implementing programs to improve services. But good intentions are not enough; if staff does not feel that they can communicate with management, or perhaps more importantly, that management does attempt to communicate with staff, then any program or structural implementations are likely to disappoint. Perhaps organizations would do well to consider

introducing communication programs which breach this gap, this may be particularly vital where there is diversity among workers. Diversity in workplaces can be highly beneficial but it is not much use if communication is poor.

Kindler (1996) proposes that workers are more likely to act according to a shared set of organizational values if the organization is able to effectively manage diverse backgrounds of workers, and negotiate a stress-free working environment despite worker diversity. Kindler (1996) also argues that diverse backgrounds of workers, whilst often a source of conflict, can be a valuable asset if managed well at an organizational level. Additionally, diversity should be viewed by organizations as a potential asset rather than a source of guaranteed conflict. As Kindler (1996) suggests, it is the perception which management have of the potential for diversity which can be the best predictor of the impact diversity actually has on a work environment.

It is interesting to note that therapists did not report any actual conflict around power with the prison organization as such. Therapists generally felt that the organization looked after them quite well. Conversely, many therapists felt that the organization sometimes treated officers with contempt and did not consult with them adequately, particularly when significant changes were to be implemented in the prison. However, officers also did not specifically report conflict regarding power at an organizational level. It is possible though that much of the conflict between therapists and officers resulted from the absence of any realistic ability for officers and therapists to actually engage in conflict

negotiations with the organization. After all, the organization is indeed very powerful, and the consequences of any conflict between it and therapists and/or officers may seriously compromise individual worker's ability to operate in the prison environment.

It would seem that the organization also has some work to do in terms of the ways officers and therapists are oriented to the relatively new role of prisons as dedicated places of rehabilitation. I would argue that not only has the organization not managed this orientation well, but also that officers and therapists perceive such as indicating a lack of commitment by management to the rehabilitative process in general.

The fundamental research goals of the present study were related to values, interests and power, and their different types within an organizational environment. It becomes obvious, however, that the types of conflict which individuals and groups experience may be of interest in themselves: that is intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational conflict may have a relationship to each other which merits exploration. While the possibility of a relationship was briefly mentioned, I would like to explore this notion further.

The following diagram illustrates my thinking around these types of concepts and offers a possible conflict model which may be at play in large organizations, including prisons.

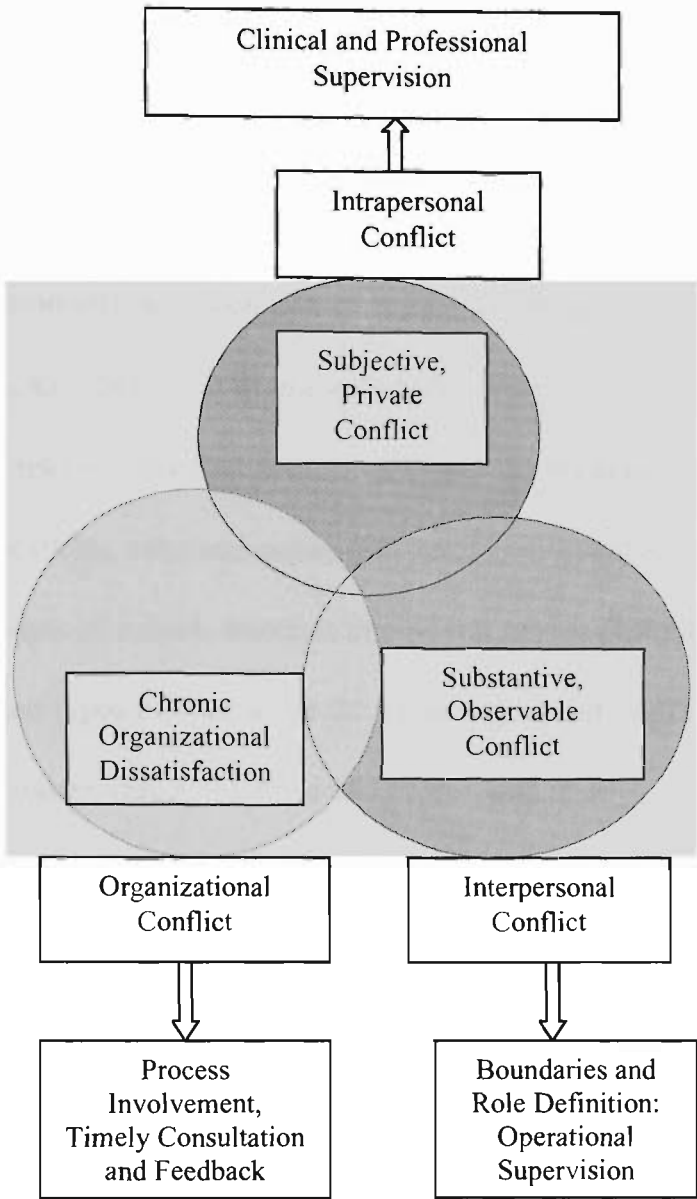


Figure 1: Conflict relationships: Intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational

The diagram above illustrates different types of conflict. Intrapersonal is described as subjective and private, interpersonal substantive and public, while organizational conflict is defined as chronic dissatisfaction. Each definition includes an arrow box highlighting the general solution to the conflict problems.

The circles in the figure overlap and are non-directional because it is possible that not all types of conflict are present, and if they do exist together, it is not clear which began first. For example, people may become increasingly frustrated with an organization; this may lead them to take out frustration on others, which in turn results in intrapersonal conflict if people are acting in ways incongruent with their values.

While the field of organizational psychology often explores these three conflict types (intra, inter and organizational), I believe that including the concepts of values, interests and power may highlight the relationship between types of conflict in the same way that it highlighted the relationship between values interests and power, and at an intrapersonal and interpersonal level throughout the current research.

Chapter 8: Recommendations for Action

Now that the theoretical implications of the research and its findings have been explored, it is possible to think about some strategies which may address the types of conflict which have been identified. The suggestions are presented separately for prison officers, therapists, and the organization. Additionally, recommendations are offered according to intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organisational change. Each table summarizing the recommendations is divided into agencies of values interests, and power.

The following tables offer propositions regarding pragmatic ways in which officers, therapists and the prison organisation may address matters of intrapersonal conflict. The tables are derived from what has been learned from the findings about intrapersonal conflict and its interaction with values, interests and power. The recommendations also draw on the reviewed literature regarding collaboration ideologies.

Table 4: Suggestions for the management of intrapersonal conflict:

Officers

Agent of change	Intrapersonal conflict: Officers		
	Values	Interests	Power
Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek out useful ways of debriefing</li><li>• Attempt a values audit. Are there areas in work where there is a poor match between organizational and personal values?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resist temptation to ignore internal conflict. Your interests may only be served superficially when this occurs.</li><li>• Seek out a trusted person to discuss these conflicts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not tolerate inappropriate behaviors between staff, particularly in front of prisoners</li><li>• If formal conflict resolution is inadequate, communicate this</li></ul>

Agent of change	Intrapersonal conflict: Officers		
	Values	Interests	Power
		with, but preferably not at the pub.	to the organization and local management <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The perception that personal interests are being served will be minimized if communication occurs in a global sense rather than a reaction to a situation</li></ul>
Therapists	Invite officers to participate in therapy changeovers where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand that officers do become conflicted around their own interests.</li><li>• Attempt an understanding, via dialogue, of what officers interests may entail</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attempt an understanding that officers do experience conflict around power; the obvious accoutrements of power (such as the uniform) may serve to mask conflict</li></ul>
Local management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage a culture where debriefing is built in to officers' work description</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not assume that officers' interests are served via adherence to the ops manual</li><li>• There may be areas where adherence to the ops manual represents conflict for officers. They should be free to make this known</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revisit conflict resolution processes: do they consider the role of power among all players?</li></ul>

Table four suggests that officers should seek out ways to debrief in more positive manners than the traditional ad hoc ways which currently operate. It is also recommended that officers act on conflict in proactive ways, and that they discuss internal conflict with people they can trust to respond in helpful ways. Therapists are encouraged to recognize that officers are often conflicted around power and its displacement, and that they maintain dialogue with officers. Local management is encouraged to change debriefing from ad hoc to a default position.

Table 5: Suggestions for the management of intrapersonal conflict: Therapists

Agent of change	Intrapersonal conflict: Therapists		
	Values	Interests	Power
Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss with therapists those areas where you might feel conflict; this will open up dialogue</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convey an understanding that therapists’ interests may be compromised and that this is normal in such a difficult work place; perhaps share some personal examples of conflict in this area</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Therapists should be viewed as one work group attempting rehabilitation, they are not on prisoners’ “side”</li></ul>
Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agitate for professional bodies to provide guidelines for ethical work in prisons and ensure the input of people who have actually done this work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain regular clinical/professional supervision and separate it out from operational issues where possible</li><li>• Preserve contact with professional bodies and participate in professional development opportunities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leave prisoner advocacy to specialist agencies, such as VACRO and welfare workers on site</li></ul>
Local management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand that whilst therapists are usually well contained professionally, they are still prone to personal conflict</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that therapists do not feel singled out regarding security</li></ul>

Table five offers strategies for therapists to become more involved in understanding operational issues. Regular meetings are viewed as important, particularly where officers may have prisoners in their case load who also participate in programs. Deeper interactions between officers and therapists offer greater opportunities for the values of each group to inform the working practices of the other and minimize intrapersonal conflict. Additionally, local management should be encouraged to “own” therapists as part of a multidisciplinary, cohesive work group. And officers are



encouraged to recognize that therapists do frequently feel professionally and personally compromised.

The following tables draw on the research findings by suggesting ways in which therapists, officers, and management might be able to rectify some of the interpersonal-conflict experienced by and between officers and therapists, and also the organization.

Table 6: Suggestions for the management of Interpersonal conflict: Officers

Agent of change	Interpersonal conflict : Officers		
	Values	Interests	Power
Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access program manuals to gain understanding of therapy</li><li>• Invite therapists to discuss the values officers bring to the prison.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attempt a better understanding of what therapists’ interests are.</li><li>• Attend regular meetings with therapists so that your own interests are aired in a professional space, not where the conflict is likely to occur.</li><li>• Where meetings are operational, allocated time should be set aside so that security matters are protected</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use meeting times with therapists to impart historical knowledge of individual prisoners in a cased managed manner</li><li>• Understand that therapists often have legitimate reasons to breach the ops manual, and there may be additional directives which reflect this.</li></ul>
Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make attempts to understand the values of officers.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Involve officers in your regular meetings and establish where their interests may be compromised. It may be necessary to allocate a time for this so that confidentiality of clients is not compromised</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attempt to introduce officers to the types of language you use, do not deliberately use therapeutic “jargon” to alienate officers</li></ul>
Local management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organize meetings with workers to address values matching across groups.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that officers are encouraged to liaise with therapists around a range of program issues</li><li>• Negotiate with head office to provide more custodial staff to</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Generate a glossary of terms which officers and therapists use in their working life. Include jargon</li></ul>

Agent of change	Interpersonal conflict : Officers		Power
	Values	Interests	
		allow officers the necessary time to meet with therapeutic staff	

Table six suggests that where therapists and officers are able to arrange regular meetings, exclusive time should be allocated for security and therapeutic matters. Local management should ensure that officers’ interests are not compromised by negotiating extra duty staff to cover meetings. Also, officers should attempt to understand that the operations manual may be deviated from, and that therapists may be sanctioned to do this. Therapists should not use unnecessarily convoluted language in their dealings with officers and others in the prison.

Table 7: Suggestions for the management of interpersonal conflict: Therapists

Agent of change	Interpersonal conflict: Therapists		Power
	Values	Interests	
Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Find out where therapists may be struggling to carry out their work and offer useful feedback</li><li>• Arrange regular meetings with therapists regarding prisoners in your case load</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attempt an understanding of what therapists’ interests are</li><li>• Understand that officers may have different interests to therapists but that a collaborative work environment requires compromise and empathy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A case managed approach to rehabilitation means that there are many stakeholders, therapists have no more or less right to access prisoners than officers do</li><li>• Do not engage in dangerous practical jokes with colleagues</li></ul>
Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read the ops manual and ask officers questions about how it works</li><li>• Ask for officers’ feedback when tailoring programs for prisoners, particularly where an officer has a prisoner case load</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attempt an understanding of what officers’ interests might be and aim to respect these</li><li>• Convey your own interests to officers but be prepared to subordinate these to the security of the</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not treat officers as clients</li><li>• Make sure that officers know before hand if you are going to use a security area for programs</li></ul>

Agent of change	Interpersonal conflict: Therapists		
	Values	Interests	Power
Local management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arrange regular meetings with officers and therapists and encourage a culture of safety and sharing.</li><li>• Be aware that therapists may be professionally bound to keep a range of prisoner issues confidential.</li></ul>	<p>prison at times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If subordination is trivial, report back to your own providers. Inform local management of your actions</li><li>• Regular operational and clinical meetings between officers and therapists would likely enhance professional harmony</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that duty staff know when therapists are using security areas for programs</li></ul>

Table seven proposes that therapists maintain contact with their professional bodies, resist treating officers as clients and engage them in dialogue around each group’s interests. All workers in the prison need access to prisoners and no one group has more stakeholder rights. Close communication with provider and location managers would ensure that feedback about program problems is timely and useful. Communication with all staff should be an organizational goal, as people feel empowered and valued when they consider themselves included.

The following table makes suggestions regarding the management of organizational conflict between officers and therapists, and also between these groups and the organization.

Table 8: Suggestions for the management of organizational conflict: Officers

Agent of change	Organizational conflict: Officers		
	Values	Interests	Power
Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mobilize diplomatic officers to</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not be tempted to agree with head</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enlist the services of the</li></ul>

Agent of change	Organizational conflict: Officers		
	Values	Interests	Power
	communicate operational incongruence to head officer.	office directives if they are unworkable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assertiveness is acceptable; head office will likely appreciate direct contact with them about unworkable directives but be prepared to offer practical alternatives, not just complaints.</li></ul>	union to ensure that “word of mouth” promises regarding additional training are translated professionally
Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Negotiate with service providers to ensure they understand where head office’s values may conflict with therapy programs.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage officers to become involved in consultative processes with head office. Therapists are often included and officers should be also</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Negotiate shifting powers of officers in a responsible way; be aware that your presence may represent reduced power for officers.</li></ul>
Local management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that the values of the organization are understood <i>and</i> workable.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facilitate officers’ ability to make contact with head office</li><li>• It is important that this process is facilitated rather than merely monitored from the paranoid position</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not accept the promotion of staff without legitimate merit</li><li>• Represent officers’ concerns regarding the impact programs have on their operational duties</li></ul>

Table eight advises that officers should let head office know if formal processes are not working, and understand that therapists do not deliberately breach prison. Therapists can alleviate organizational conflict by being more inclusive of officers and the organization can help by understanding and responding to concerns officers have regarding programs. Therapists should also understand that their presence can be disempowering for officers. Officers should be encouraged to develop strategies to communicate concerns to head office; local management can assist with this.

Table 9: Suggestions for the management of organizational conflict: Therapists

Agent of change	Organizational conflict: Therapists		
	Values	Interests	Power
Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't assume that therapists' values are the same as head office, nor that these two groups are working against officers in cahoots</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appreciate that head office may not be concerned with the interests of therapists but more concerned that they are able to simply deliver the programs mandated to them.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not always revert to the ops manual where a conversation may be more useful</li><li>• Understand that therapists are in the prison to work with prisoners, they do not report back to head office regarding officers</li></ul>
Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet with head office about program delivery, or become involved in steering committees at program development stage</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain communication with own providers</li><li>• Feedback should be timely</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diminish the perception that you are there to "spy" on officers by engaging them more fully as coworkers.</li></ul>
Local management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where there is discussion of programs with head office, ensure that therapists are viewed as prison workers. They should be viewed as part of a valuable team.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop strategies to streamline operational directives with requirements for extra programs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage personal responsibility of officers, formal supervision would help here</li></ul>

Table nine suggests that therapists and officers should view each other as co-workers with a common aim. The perception that therapist are on location to check up on officers is not helped by their frequent “project” approach to their relationships with officers and leads to the belief that they have more power than they actually do. Officers should not automatically assume that therapists are the mouthpieces of head office, and therapists could help here by shifting the ways they tend to engage officers.

While there are many strategies which individuals and groups can employ to address issues of conflict around values, interests and power, there is undoubtedly a role for the organization also. The following table outlines possible ways in which head office could address much of the conflict between officers and therapists and also, enhance its own profile as an organization which cares for the rehabilitation of prisoners and for the working relationships between its key staff groups.

Table 10: Strategies for managing conflict: Organizations

Values
Values within and across work staff teams should be monitored as closely as possible.
Clear role descriptions with information regarding such to be made available to all workers at a macro and micro level. Such information should maximize potential for individual workers and groups to be valued in terms of their contribution to the goals of corrections work.
Each staff member, regardless of role and/or power should be equally valued in terms of their personal and professional status and their potential to contribute to the goals of corrections work.
Interests
Group and individual interests to be subservient to the rehabilitation goals of the prison. Note: such goals may vary according to the profile of individual prisons.
In the interests of individual work satisfaction and attainment of organizational Key Performance Indicators, each individual worker and work group should have easy access to the client group within security abilities. Changes to be clearly communicated from head office.
Each organization that has a presence in a prison should develop an operations manual, which clearly outlines the goals and interests of that organization.
To ensure that each organization's interests and expectations are always transparent, local and global operations manuals should be easily accessible to all workers and updated regularly.
Power
As teams and individual workers are introduced into the prison they should be given timely and appropriate orientation to both the principles of corrections work in general (including organizational rehabilitation goals), and, orientation specific to the location. Similarly, teams and/or organizations being introduced to the prison should orient that prison and organization to their profile. Power is often wielded by the withholding of information. Thorough, reciprocal orientation should aim to empower all workers in the prison environment.
Orientation can serve as an opportunity to provide appropriate feedback to organizations and individuals contemplating prison work. In this way people who are not suited to the work can best avoid being caught up in power struggles where their naïveté may be exploited.
Power structures among and within organizations to be clearly identified. Unambiguous definitions of roles and responsibilities should be paramount.
Communication to be regular, comprehensive and timely, at both the organizational and location level.
Officers to be externally supervised regarding their case loads and program issues in general.
To avoid misunderstandings about who has power (and when they have it) formal local dispute

resolution processes, inclusive of all work groups, should be developed which incorporate non-traditional work groups.
Development of enhanced conflict resolution processes should include consultation with location work groups and be work-shopped as to its efficacy.

Table ten identifies strategies which the prison organization can utilize to address some of the conflict issues identified by the officers and therapists in the present research. Key here is a more streamlined and timely approach to communication, both at an organizational and location level, and also between service providers and the organization. Additionally, orientation should be more comprehensive and include reciprocal information which may help locations understand the role which therapists are likely to play in the additional implementation of rehabilitation programs.

Further, it is suggested that the organization require officers to participate in regular welfare and/or program supervision and that this should be external. Currently any supervision of officers is restricted to operational matters, or formalized debriefing as a result of critical incidents at a location level. I am suggesting that regular welfare and/or program supervision should be built into officers' role descriptions as the default position, rather than an ad hoc requirement around critical incidents. In this way, it is possible that such issues may never reach the critical stage.

As discussed elsewhere here, the recommendations generated by the research findings will be of interest to the Victorian Justice System. While this research is not a partnership project between the organization and the researcher there are clearly several key stakeholders. Upon

successful completion of this study the Commissioners Office (OCSC) will be made aware of the recommendations. It is envisaged that the OCSC will want to offer feedback to the suggestions and that the researcher will collaborate in this process. Long term it is hoped that recommendations will be acted upon at a training level within the Department of Justice. It is also hoped that the Organizational management of conflict table finds its way into the formal Operational Procedures Manual, so that it might become a resource for all prison workers.



### *Chapter 9: Conclusion*

Overall, I believe that the results of the present study justify the original decision to separate values and interests rather than treat them as the same construct. Although interests and values were sometimes the same, they often represented different things to participants. Also, there were several instances where officers and therapists cited examples of their values being subordinated to their immediate interests, and this was linked to a lack of power.

The research revealed that officers and therapists shared similar values in a macro sense, such as the need for rehabilitation of prisoners which I described as a shared value in terms of the destination. Despite this similarity, the different operational methods used to reach the destination - different journeys - frequently resulted in conflict between the two work- groups.

Although others have advised that values-matching is important for multidisciplinary workers' cohesion and productivity, I tend to question whether or not values should be matched or simply *understood* by work groups and individuals. It is possible that it is merely the lack of knowledge of others' values that is important, and not that values should be the same.

As with much of the conflict between officers and therapists, it was often perceptions around issues which were the source of conflict rather than what was actually taking place. Whether real or perceived, such conflict and division between officers and therapists is arguably counterproductive in terms of rehabilitation or general operations of the

prison environment. The productive implementation of rehabilitations programs and the general good operational order of a prison can serve the interests of all involved, including prisoners, officers, therapists, other prison workers, and most importantly perhaps, prison management. Neither work group really had an appreciation of the rehabilitative import regarding cohesion and harmony. Although both groups acknowledged that the lack of it provided dangerous opportunities for prisoners to split the two groups.

It is clear from the results that there were many types of value and interest conflict between therapists and officers. It seems that much of this conflict originated in frustration and dissatisfaction with the organization itself. The shifting interests and values which are inherent when any organization attempts to introduce new and innovative changes to a workplace, can provide vibrant opportunities for reevaluation of existing practices. But the historical power structures of prisons, and the hierarchy of positions and roles at both a location and organizational level arguably represent challenges to any attempts to introduce concepts which examine the role of values and interests.

In terms of interpersonal conflict and power, both officers and therapists felt that they possessed the skills to construct an accurate depiction of prisoners, but did not have the power to demand that their respective views be considered. Both groups cited the unwillingness of the other to recognize such specialized skill as a source of much conflict between officers and therapists. It was interesting to note that whilst each group talked about the “potential” of prisoners, this had entirely different

meanings. When therapists talked about potential they were referring to the potential for change. When officers mentioned potential, they meant the potential for violence. This is clearly an example of the ways in which officers and therapists tend to talk past each other!

It could be argued that the deep, ingrained structural power inherent in the prison culture mean that power is really only meted out in traditional ways. Where more enlightened attempts are made to redress the balance, they largely end up being tokenistic possibly because of a lack of support from the higher echelons of the prison hierarchy. Therapists suspected that the above was occurring, and whilst they felt that such deep power structures also affected them, they mostly recognized that they were somewhat less exposed and more protected by their own organizations and/or access to clinical supervision. Additionally, therapists felt that they operated at the periphery of the prison culture, and were largely “off the radar” where such power struggles were concerned. Such invisibility could be a useful tool for therapists, it is possible that they manufacture this phenomenon and utilize it to their advantage.

It should be noted that while the present research attempted to separate values, interests and power, there were clearly some instances where the constructs were related and a few instances where one type of conflict may have involved values, interests and power at the same time. However, I suggest that the examination of the three types of conflict possible, intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational helped to develop a method where categories were not quite as concrete as they may have been. It has been argued throughout the present research that human

understanding can never be one-dimensional or static as it changes over time and across situations. Hopefully the present research has illuminated some previously erroneous aspects of the ways in which different workgroups can experience conflict in the difficult prison environment.

Finally, while I have offered possibilities to both deal with and benefit from conflict around values interests and power these remain untested notions at this stage. It is hoped that in the future it will be possible to interview managers of the prison organization so that their input can be measured against the reports of officers and therapists. Were such interviews possible it would seem prudent to develop strategies for testing the suggestions, possibly via training programs and evaluation. While it was not necessary (or possible at the time) to interview head office management, given that the research always intended to focus on the experiences of officers and therapists, such input would enhance the development of training strategies and foster useful ways for implementing such at a location level. Additionally, given that officers and therapists did not feel that officers were adequately consulted regarding programs, the fact that many officers had input into the present research should provide custodial staff with an enhanced sense of ownership over any training which occurs as a result of this research.

## *Chapter 10: A Personal Reflection: Beginnings, Journeys and Futures*

While it is hoped that the previous discussions around this research have been convincing, both in terms of the usefulness of the research methodology and its findings, the present section aims to place it in a historical personal context, and also offer some reflections on the research process itself. I will also discuss some of the highs and lows of the journey, and finally suggest practical ways in which the research can move forward.

In the mid 1990s I was employed by a private forensic provider as a researcher in a small dedicated drug treatment prison in rural Victoria. Over the next six months I conducted the qualitative aspect of an efficacy study into the entire drug program at this location. After my task ended I was retained by the private company and over the next four years or so worked across a range of prison locations as a therapist, a coordinator, and finally as the program manager of the drug program where I had begun my prison work.

Following my departure from full-time prison work in 2000, I worked for a number of prison focused organizations and also began a small private psychological practice. In my practice I worked mainly with (and still do) released prisoners, prison officers and young people ‘at risk’ who are yet to be sentenced in the adult system.

During the course of my prison involvement it was always clear that the environment was tension filled. There was an almost constant

tension between prisoners and officers and occasionally between prisoners and therapists. But while tensions which involved prisoners were constantly monitored, researched, and to a lesser extent perhaps, acted upon, the tension between officers and therapists was never really stated, and therefore remained unexplored territory.

My general knowledge of academic work regarding custodial based therapeutic programs indicated that the relationship between custodial and therapeutic staff was important; however there seemed to be a gap in the knowledge. When there were problems between the two work groups what was the source? Were there areas where officers and therapists actually agreed? Were officers and therapists aware of the differences and similarities between their roles? And perhaps more importantly, did management have a role here? Of course, there were no immediate answers to these questions, and as is often the case in these matters, attempts to uncover them ultimately tended to lead to more questions.

My decision to embark on the present research was driven by my curiosity regarding the physically close but theoretically distant working relationship between prison officers and prison therapists. As stated earlier, prison management tended to act on prison tension by examining the actions of prisoners. I wanted to do something different and look at the ways in which tensions between officers and therapists may have impacted on the prison setting, with particular focus on the operational and therapeutic implementation of rehabilitation programs within prisons.

Once I had decided on a direction for my research I discussed the matter with colleagues who worked in the prison setting (both ex-officers

and therapists). It became clear that my feeling about the tensions between officers and therapists was not mine alone but the source of the conflict remained elusive. It was this lack of clarity which indicated to me early on that my research needed to be guided by a critical investigative approach; that is, the research would be fundamentally qualitative and would be driven by the stories of the research participants. Essentially, the research would need to be 'all ears', at least until I had a feel for what it was that I was uncovering (if anything!).

While the research design was based on many of the principles of grounded theory methods, and these had served me well in my early days as a prison researcher, it was obvious that I had accumulated too much knowledge about prisons and prison workers to investigate the subject void of expectations and assumptions, the lack of which are basic requirements of pure grounded theory. Together with Isaac I developed a design utilizing grounded theory interview techniques and data management but implementing a unique research lens.

As I was interested in the types of conflict between officers and therapists it was decided, over many months and with ample measures of reflection and discussion, to investigate the values, interests and power conflicts of prison officers and therapists. Additionally, the research intent was to separate these constructs according to intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational factors.

Once the broad direction of the research was established I contacted the Department of Justice to get a feeling for their reactions. The Department of Justice management made it clear that the research had

value but that this would not be a partnership as I was not employed by them. I was required to submit my application for research to their own ethics board but only once university ethics had been granted. When both ethics applications were approved the Victorian Department of Justice did not expect to view the dissertation until the research award was approved.

Although the Victorian Department of Justice was not an official partner in the research they were most helpful and made it clear that I could expect full cooperation from them. This position was most helpful, particularly during the recruitment of officers.

Once I began the process of interviewing officers and therapists it became clear that much of my initial intuition regarding the conflict between the two groups was accurate! However, it was also evident that there were many issues which I had simply failed to recognize as a prison worker, and failed to consider as a researcher in my early 'thinking' days.

Whilst I was aware that officers felt that therapeutic programs and therapists placed a burden on the day to day operations of the prison, I was not aware that officers actually felt displaced and hurt by this process. I had always assumed, when I was employed in prisons, that the orientation officers were given by management regarding programs was adequate and their concerns were just 'grumbling'. It would appear I was inaccurate on both counts. Most officers interviewed felt a deep sense of pain that they were being left behind and that their expertise was being underutilized. I was not expecting such confronting material.

I was also quite alarmed that the level of knowledge which therapists had of officers' displacement was quite high, but that this was



not an area therapists had acknowledged with officers or raised within their own professional forums; I would have expected that the insight which therapists are trained to foster would have seen them outraged by such matters. I am reasonably certain that they would have acted if prisoners had voiced similar concerns.

The above suggests to me that, whilst officers were often considered to be 'concrete' in their management of conflict within the prison environment (as discussed previously, the use of the Operations Manual as the bible of prison work), therapists themselves are frequently guilty of such specificity; they are given the task of working with the issues of prisoners but may be insensitive to officer's concerns.

Had I been required to produce a report of my own experiences of working in prison I would, undoubtedly, have missed much of the rich material which the present research revealed. In many ways the reports of my participants were counter intuitive, and frequently challenging, to say the least. Many aspects of prison work occur 'under the radar' and it is only with questioning, distance and reflection that the most salient matters are revealed.

There can be no doubt that, at least for now prisons are here to stay. They are the places where we commit our worst offenders; our most troubled characters, and in some cases sadly our most psychologically and physically vulnerable members of society. The purpose of this research can be simplified as twofold; to suggest ways in which rehabilitation can be improved via harmony between officers and therapists, but also, it

suggests that there needs to be an acknowledgment that prisons are also places of work.

We already know via vast research in the area that we gain much of our self worth from feelings of safety, harmony, value and productivity in our working environments. Whilst it is right and just that attention should be paid to the lives of prisoners, particularly given that they are so very powerless, I suggest that issues of values, interests and power are also worthy of consideration when looking at the lives of the two major work groups under consideration in this research. Prison officers and prison therapists provide a service to prisoners but their roles also impact on each other; both theoretically and pragmatically.

In moving the present research forward, it is anticipated that the Justice Department of Victoria will react to the research generally, and the recommendations specifically once the degree has been awarded. I intend to develop a program which utilizes the recommendations and implement this within existing orientation programs for work within Victorian prisons. In the long term, I hope to develop a training package which can transform current training for officers and therapists directly engaged by the Justice Department. For workers employed via private program and prison operators, this will be negotiated with the service providers directly. In a perfect world it is hoped that any training programs developed from the present research will not simply be 'add-ons' (there are already enough of these), but rather work as agents of transformation. Initially such transformation will be largely be a professional one between officers and therapists, however, as discussed throughout this research an improvement

in relations between the two groups will only improve the delivery of therapeutic programs, and ultimately improve the rehabilitation of prisoners. Time and tenacity will tell!

## Appendix 1

## INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS.

Thank you for your interest in the research project entitled::  
**Rehabilitative Work in Prisons: Cooperating Toward a Mission of Community Welfare<sup>9</sup>**. This project will contribute toward a Doctoral thesis currently being undertaken by Kerri Kershaw from Victoria University of Technology. The research is being supervised by Professor Isaac Prilleltensky from the psychology department. The following outlines the general themes, procedures and objectives of the research.

Prison officers and therapists/mental health workers are frequently required to work together toward the rehabilitation of prisoners. The relationship between these two professional groups is of interest to the researcher. The researcher would like to explore this working relationship and will be particularly interested in issues such as: personal and professional values and beliefs; work conflict; and, individual coping mechanisms within the prison environment. The researcher proposes to interview participants so that their own experiences become the data of interest. This is often called a subjective narrative and is particularly useful for allowing individual voices to find a place in research.

It is expected that the research will reveal that custodial and non-custodial staff have similar aims in their work (the rehabilitation of prisoners) but they have different ways of doing their work. I believe that there is real potential for the two groups to learn from each other and enhance their work environment. This research is a result of that belief and will hopefully open up dialogue in this area.

The researcher will interview approximately 25 therapists/counsellors and 25 prison officers separately for the project. All interviews will be taped and the tapes will then be transcribed. Tapes will be destroyed and the transcripts will be kept in the principle researchers' office for the prescribed time (5 years). No participant will be identifiable via the transcript and no-one other than the student researcher and supervisor will have access to the transcripts or tapes. Each participant will be given the opportunity to read their own transcript and edit it as they see fit. Additionally any participant may wish to withdraw from the research process at any time and this includes withdrawal of the interview transcript from the research.

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<sup>9</sup> This was the original title of the project; it is not considered that the title change altered the aims of the research as such change was largely stylistic.

It is expected that each participant will be interviewed twice. The initial interview will be relatively unstructured and will be about an hour long. The second interview will be shorter, possibly about 1/2 an hour, and will be more structured. That is, the researcher will have identified some issues of interest from the first interview and will have a list of questions to ask. This interview may be conducted over the phone or via email

Interviews will take place in a location mutually agreeable. This may include offices at a Victoria University campus (City, Melton, Sunbury, St Albans, Werribee), in the participant's home or an office at VACRO in Melbourne. If the participant particularly wants the interview to take place in their work location this may be possible, however, an area not identified with the principal workplace would be preferable.

You need to be aware that whilst interviews may seem a relatively safe form of research, there is always the risk that participants will wander into material which is distressful for them to discuss. Also, many people do not realize until later on that some things they have talked about have caused distress. The researcher will take all precautions to make sure that interview material is 'safe' for the participant. At the end of each interview there will be a debriefing time and if the researcher and/or yourself feel that you should follow up on some issues you will be invited to call one of the numbers below to arrange some debriefing. You may choose to debrief with the researcher or another person can be arranged for you. There will be no cost involved to yourself

Once again, thank you for your involvement. Please call me on one of the numbers below to arrange a meeting time and place.

Kerri Kershaw

Professor Isaac Prilleltensky (research supervisor) ph. . 9365-2335:  
Student researcher: Kerri Kershaw ph. 0412605115

Appendix II

Victoria University of Technology  
Consent Form for Research Participants

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:

We would like to invite you to be a part of a study into the working relationship between Prison Officers and therapists/counselors in the prison environment.

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I,  
of

Certify that I am at least 18 years old\* and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the research entitled: **Rehabilitative Work in Prisons: Cooperating Toward a Mission of Community Welfare**

Research being conducted at Victoria University of Technology by: Professor Isaac Prilleltensky and Kerri Kershaw.

I certify that the objectives of the research, together with any risks to me associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the Research, have been fully explained to me by: Kerri Kershaw and that I freely consent to participation involving the use on me of these procedures.

**Procedures:** the research will involve at least two taped interviews. First interview may last up to one hour, the second interview should last no longer than half an hour and may be conducted over the phone or via email. If a third interview is required it will be conducted over the phone or via email, where a third interview is required it will likely be for clarification purposes and will not be recorded verbatim. Interviews will be conducted at Victoria University, the researcher’s home or work location (Melbourne) or any other location mutually agreeable.

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this research at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed: ..... }

Witness other than the researcher: }                      **Date:** .....

.....}

Appendix II Cont.

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher (Name: Professor Isaac Prilleltensky ph. 9365-2335: Student researcher: Kerri Kershaw pf. 0412605115 ). If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MC, Melbourne, 8001 (telephone no: 03-9688 4710).

[\*please note: where the subject/s is aged under 18, separate parental consent is required; where the subject is unable to answer for themselves due to mental illness or disability, parental or guardian consent may be required.]

## Appendix III

## Draft interview schedule

## Objectives

1. Contribute to an **understanding of how groups with opposing values and philosophies co-exist** and how they can collaborate toward a mission of community welfare.
  2. Contribute to an **understanding of how individuals experience conflict in their working environment** and how they cope with it.
  3. Contribute to an **understanding of how two groups can develop more collaborative forms of working together** toward their common goals.
- 1.1 I wonder if you are able to say why you do the work you do? (Make sure to get here who the worker is serving: is it the prisoner, the community, are there differences in 'customer' between and within the two groups?)
  - 1.2 Just thinking about your values: can you identify what values you bring to your work?
  - 1.3 What values are important to you in your work?
  - 1.4 How do you make sure that you are true to your values?
  - 1.5 Can you give me some examples of how your values play out at work?
  - 1.6 Are your values different from other staff?
  - 1.7 Do you think your personal philosophies are different from other staff?
  - 1.8 Are your values reflected in the work you do?
  - 2.1 Do you experience conflict in your workplace?
  - 2.2 Can you give me some examples of conflict which stick in your mind?
  - 2.3 What type of conflict do you experience directly with officers/therapist?
  - 2.4 How did you deal with the conflict in the short and long term?
  - 2.5 Do you think that others in the workplace experience conflict?
  - 2.6 Do you ever discuss issues of conflict in the workplace?
  - 2.7 If so, how and where do you discuss it (i.e informally or formally).
  - 2.8 Does the way you deal with conflict in the workplace differ from the ways you might deal with it outside of the prison environment?
  - 2.9 How does the prison as an organization deal with conflict?
  - 2.10 Have you ever let conflict 'go' because you didn't want to cause trouble?
  - 2.11 If yes, do you think this had an impact on your work relations in general?
  - 3.1 In general, how do you think the two groups work together?
  - 3.2 In what ways do you think the relationship could be better?
  - 3.3 Do you think that Therapists (or custodial staff) are aware of the work that you do?
  - 3.4 How do you think the other group would react if they really understood what you do?
  - 3.5 Are there many aspects of the work that involve the two groups working together?
  - 3.6 Do you think the two groups have common aims?

## Glossary of terms



<b>Billet</b>	A trusted prisoner who is given dedicated duties rather than attending general prison industries, such as; functioning as the prison painter or cook. Jobs as billets are ideally earned by good behavior, however from time to time prisoners are given such roles based on their field of expertise.
<b>CCOs</b>	Community Corrections Officers. Usually welfare trained staff employed by CORE to work in public prisons and also community based corrections overseen by the OCSC, as CORE is. CCOs wear modified prison uniforms when they operate in prisons and a business uniform when in the community.
<b>CORE</b>	The Correctional Enterprise. Overseen by the OCSC and, more broadly, the Department of Justice, and responsible for the operations of all Victorian public prisons.
<b>Department of Justice</b>	Governmental department devoted to all matters to do with criminal justice. Includes parole boards, victims' reparation, public defense and broad prison issues.
<b>Dog Squad</b>	Also known as "the doggies". Overseen by the OCSC and working closely with Victoria Police to attend to matters of security in Victorian prisons. The dog squad has the power to lock down a prison and search for contraband.
<b>District Manager</b>	Also known as the Regional Manager. A senior officer responsible for a cluster of public prisons, usually within a given region. All prison managers are answerable to a specific District Manager.
<b>Foot Soldiers</b>	Also known as "line officers", or workers "on the ground". Officers who have close contact with prisoners and responsible for the day to day operations of prison units.
<b>Grooming</b>	Frequently used to refer to the types of practices which sex offenders use to prepare their (usually young) victims for offending behaviors. This may involve infiltrating the victim's family and setting up a trusting relationship. Generally, grooming is a preparation period. It can take hours or days, even, in some cases, years.
<b>Head Office</b>	Also known as HO. Head office refers to the OCSC or

CORE for public prisons. For private prisons Head office refers to specific companies and usually their local city offices. HO is off location and usually the offices are in the city of Melbourne, or, in some cases, in larger regional towns.

<b>Industries</b>	Specific dedicated work which prisons negotiate with (usually) private companies. Jobs are generally menial and the pay structure for prisoners is not in line with that of the general community. In country locations industries may involve a partnership with an existing small business, with the view to augmenting that business and providing “meaningful” employment to prisoners. In some cases prisons negotiate to construct whole items, such as chalk boards and outdoor furniture which larger manufacturers include in their existing ranges.
<b>Justice System</b>	Usually refers to the entire system of justice, including parole matters, community corrections, prisons, courts and judges. Also amorphously known as “the system”.
<b>Location Managers</b>	Also know as Governors, most prisons, and particularly larger ones, have a range of managers. These include security managers, operations managers, industries managers and programs managers. Whilst managers are generally uniformed staff and come up through the custodial ranks, most programs managers have a welfare background and usually wear a modified custodial uniform.
<b>Lock Down</b>	Refers to the practice of isolating prisoners in their cells, restricting movement of staff to designated areas and searching prisoners’ cells and person for contraband.
<b>Muster</b>	Usually performed up to eight times per day, a muster involves assembling prisoners wherever they are and counting them. All information is then collated to a central location within the prison to establish that the numbers of prisoners correspond to the total prison inmate population. Officially, prisoners are expected to return to a central location depending on their movements. Much like a fire drill.
<b>OCSC</b>	Office of the Correctional Services Commissioner. The Correctional Services Commissioner is appointed by the (Governmental) Minister for Prisons (now minister for Police and Corrections) but is seen as independent

from political process. The OCSC is responsible for the management of all matters to do with corrections, including prisons and community-based orders.

**Officers**

Uniformed custodial staff responsible for the day to day running of prison units and prisoners. Private and public prisons train officers with parity. Officers are answerable to their location managers or unit managers where appropriate and all are overseen by the OCSC.

**Operational Manual**

Also called the “Ops Manual”. Considered the “bible” of prison work. It includes all of the broader and local prison rules, including Mission Statements and the goals of prison work. The manual is added to regularly with the OCSC keeping master copies. Also, individual locations can add to the manual as changing location circumstances dictate. All in prison have access to the ops Manual, including prisoners.

**Prison Administration**

Generally viewed as Head office and also known as the Organization. Based in metropolitan offices. In larger prisons the prison administration is also frequently seen as the various management structures within the location. Generally prison administration is seen as management whom general prison staff have little contact with.

**Program Managers**

Usually welfare or community development-trained. program managers are responsible for a range of programs delivered to prisoners. Not all programs are directly rehabilitative (such as drug and alcohol, or sex offender programs) and may involve the management of activities, such as debating teams and craft work. Most program managers are non-uniformed, but trained in custodial duties. In some small locations program managers are drawn from the available custodial ranks.

**Private Prisons**

At the time of initial candidature Victoria had three private prisons and one custodial centre operated by two service providers. One in the US and one in the UK. During the interview phase a private operator lost control of one of their prisons and CORE resumed management of this location. Private prisons are overseen by the OCSC.

**Sentence Management**

Also known as the SMU. A unit dedicated to the transportation and placement of prisoners, both initially and during their sentence. Sentence management also

conducts bi-yearly reviews of prisoners who have large sentences, much like the parole board. SMU is charged with responding to location requests, but is frequently hampered by the available space in Victorian prisons.

### **Therapists**

For the present research, therapists were defined as any person affiliated with a relevant professional body (social worker, welfare worker, nurse, psychologist, and/or criminologist) who had actually engaged with prisoners in a therapeutic role, and specific to rehabilitation issues. Whilst many nurses may not necessarily engage prisoners therapeutically, those whom are charged with the distribution of methadone frequently do and were included in this research.

### **The Outer**

Colloquialism for the outside community, or freedom. As in, “when I am on the outer”.

### **Trafficking**

Any exchange of items or information within the prison which is not legally approved by location management or the OCSC. The rule of trafficking is an attempt to stop the trafficking of illegal substances, such as drugs and alcohol, or items such as pornography, falling into the hands of prisoners. Trafficking can also include such items as gum, food, books, and information, some of which are required for a range of programs. Trafficking is generally accepted in prisons as a very grey area as it is open to interpretation, particularly at a location level, where programs are geared toward special needs, such as books for prisoners studying, or scissors and needles for prisoners whom are engaged in craft programs.

### **Unit Management**

Method of managing and caring for prisoners needs, based on a welfare model. Unit management involves assigning individual units within prisons to a senior custodial staff member, and, assigning a “case load” of, perhaps six to ten prisoners, to an individual custodial staff member. All matters pertaining to prisoners within the case load are coordinated by the allocated custodial staff member. The main aim of Unit management was to encourage custodial staff to view themselves as pertinent stakeholders in prisoners’ welfare. Unit Management still exists, however, the concept has been somewhat diluted by the increasing role of therapists in the working- life of prisons.

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