

Doing Jail Time: The Socialization Process of a County Jail Environment

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Abstract

The socialization process that occurs within a custodial environment has primarily been examined through the lens of the prison inmate. However, largely ignored in this analysis of the development of inmate behavior has been the socialization process that actually begins with incarceration in the local county jail system. Interestingly, current research in this area has ignored the socialization process and the custodial acculturation experience of the jail officers tasked with guarding the inmates housed in the jail system.

This paper will examine the socialization process that occurs within the county jail system, how this socialization process effects the acculturation of the jail officer, and the social and criminal justice policy polemic posed by this jail socialization process.

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Introduction

The experience of doing jail time can be life altering for those trapped in the jail system, whether they are inmates or jail employees. For the most part, the experience of doing jail time is largely ignored in the reporting of public information by the media and masked from public view by politicians and officials of the criminal justice system. Sussman observed that: “Prisons are surrounded by high walls, walls of concrete and razor wire, of course, but also walls of secrecy and stereotype. The public is protected from whatever physical danger might be presented by prisoners, but it is also ‘protected,’ less legitimately, from the knowledge of what goes on behind those walls. The secretiveness that has come to characterize many of our country’s prison systems hampers the public’s ability to help shape government policy, to correct abuses, to understand crime, to evaluate prison programs and practices, and generally to reassess our costly and ineffectual system of criminal justice sanctions” (Sussman, 2002:258). The same secrecy that protects the prison system also shrouds the environment within local jail systems and has the potential to produce abnormal police behavior.

Arguably, the primary reasons for this lack of public scrutiny of the discordant jail environment can be traced to the political avoidance of debate on issues surrounding the deplorable conditions that exist within many of the jails around the country, and a public indifference towards the well being of incarcerated individuals who have been labeled as society’s misfits and deviants. As society transforms from one that cherished the value of persons and property to a “disposable” society where persons and property can easily be discarded without thought or concern, just as easily as disposable razors, plastic bottles, and used toys are discarded, the plight of the disadvantaged and disenfranchised who are locked away in dissonant jail systems should be cause for concern, for fear that they too may become disposable objects. Sussman succinctly noted, “It is far easier to barricade one’s fears behind walls of concrete, rolls of razor wire, and reams of clichés than to deal with the realities of criminal experiences in our troubled society. But the people society have put out of sight and out of mind

continue to exist, and they are shaped, or warped, by the conditions to which we have relegated them” (2002: 275). Jail officers too become influenced by the jail conditions for which they are relegated, resulting in a professional development that is shaped by the conditions of an artificial and less-than normal functioning jail environment.

Current criminology literature on inmate incarceration has extensively documented the prison inmate experience and the long-term effects of prison incarceration. Tonry and Petersilia (1999: 1) underscore the fact that effects of America’s contemporary experiment with mass imprisonment might be clearer twenty-five years from now, but that answers to some important questions, including whether vastly increased use of imprisonment has substantially enhanced public safety, might never be clear. In 2002, it was estimated that approximately 635,000 prison inmates were released from custody in America (Petersilia, 2003), which on average was approximately 1740 prison inmates released daily. Interestingly, not included in that figure was the number of jail inmates released during the same period. As Petersilia (2003) alludes to, prisoner re-entry and re-integration into society should be of paramount concern to those in leadership positions in the criminal justice system, politicians, and community members, based upon the portion of the prison population that is released annually. Confronted by the issue of prisoner re-integration society can ill afford to wait twenty-five more years for answers to the vexing questions surrounding jail confinement and its effects on socialization processes and aberrant behavior.

Prisoner re-integration poses significant challenges for policy makers, law enforcement and other criminal justice officials, and community members; but just as imposing a challenge is the issue of jail officer entry and integration into a patrol assignment within the urban community. The urban county jail system harbors some of the harshest conditions found inside custodial institutions in the United States. These harsh conditions are characterized by over crowding, widespread cases of inmate mental illness, volatility resulting from racial and ethnic segregation, an increasingly low socio-economic and poorly educated inmate population, limited and under-funded inmate educational and vocational rehabilitation programs, and epidemic

proportion health issues. The daily exposure to these as well as other conditions can have the same debilitating affect and influence on the jail officer's social and professional development and behavior as it has on the incarcerated inmates.

It is common in most large urban cities that operate county jail systems to find jail officers initially assigned to perform jail guard duty upon graduation from the police academy. After completing their jail guard duty, which can range from several months to several years, the jail officer becomes eligible to transfer from this initial custodial assignment to the more esteemed police assignment of street patrol. However, the transition from guard duty in the custodial environment to the police assignment of street patrol can pose problems for the jail officer who has developed aberrant and professionally dysfunctional behavioral traits, while working inside the county jail. Arguably, it is these aberrant and dysfunctional tendencies, displayed by the former jail officer during encounters with citizens in their patrol assignment, which underscore the fragile state of urban police and community relations. Just as successful prisoner re-integration programs require pre-custodial release preparation that includes vocational as well as professional counseling, the issue of jail officer patrol integration too should be considered as important and post-custodial preparation that includes counseling which focuses on social and professional reconditioning to mainstream social and professional thoughts, values, and behaviors should become a component of the patrol transitional training program for jail officers. If law enforcement officials are sincerely interested in improving urban police and community relations they can ill afford to assume that jail officers, after doing time in a county jail environment require no re-adjustment period prior to their release from the custody assignment, and transiting into the street patrol assignment which is responsible for enforcing laws and making life and death decisions.

Contrary to public beliefs, "doing jail time" is not restricted to individuals arrested and forced to endure the social isolation and personal humiliation of incarceration. Jail officers too experience the effects of social isolation and the personal and professional degradation of "doing jail time" as they go through a jail socialization process that can be life altering. This article will

examine the environment of the urban county jail and its impact on the socialization and acculturation processes of the jail officer, and the social and policy polemic this jail socialization process poses for urban police and community relations.

The Influence of the Jail Environment

To what extent does mainstream social norm deprivation negatively influence the professional development of the jail officer? Exposure to the social values, norms, and standards of an established and functioning community, in most cases, fixes the foundation for the healthy social development of an individual. However, the jail officers' social and professional development, in the police subculture, occurs in a physical environment bereft of common mainstream social values, norms, and standards, and one in which is characterized by an "oppositional culture" that has established its' own system of social values, norms, and standards. Elijah Anderson (1999) introduced the idea of the "oppositional culture" in his book *Code of the Street*, as he theorized how the social and economic isolation of the urban underclass has resulted in the development of a sophisticated oppositional culture that includes behavior, norms, and values which are in stark contrast to the system of behavior, norms, and values embraced by mainstream America. Anderson described several salient characteristics woven into the fabric of the oppositional culture that included the acceptance of and belief in physical aggression as a means to establish one's reputation and to gain respect of others; a display of a lack of consideration and concern for others in order to elevate oneself above or to achieve a status greater than someone else; and an overt disrespect for rule of law and symbols of mainstream authority. Thurman (2004) posed that people who are police officers have a tendency to develop their own particular ethos, an ethos centered on three specific traits that are central to the police profession. Thurman identified these specific traits as consisting of a high value placed on bravery, autonomy, and secrecy. Thurman's findings suggest that within the police subculture an oppositional culture can develop and is sustainable as new officers migrate into that culture's system of thought and practice.

Law enforcement scholarship has established that a police sub-culture, which ascribes to its own established set of beliefs, values, and norms, has developed based upon shared experiences of those in the profession (Thurman 2004). To accentuate the influence of the police sub-culture on the social and professional development of the law enforcement officer, Thurman noted an observation by retired Minneapolis Police Chief Anthony Bouza, who suggested that the nature of police work and the police subculture itself can ruin the altruism of well-intentioned new recruits (Thurman 2004:167). Arguably, this police sub-culture is similar to the “oppositional culture” described by Anderson in that it is shaped by the social and professional isolation of the law enforcement profession from mainstream standards, and thus diminishes the altruistic views and hopes held by officers, as noted by Bouza; and it is this “oppositional culture” that fixes the foundation for the abnormal socialization and professional development of the jail officer, in the jail environment. Lyman (2005: 212) noted salient behaviors within the police subculture and that define the “oppositional culture” that are a result of the abnormal socialization and professional development processes of the police occupation. These behaviors include violations of formal ethical standards, such as in the use of force, the acceptance of preferential or discriminatory treatment, use of illegal investigation tactics, differential enforcement of laws, lying and deception, and the use of perjury to protect yourself or get a conviction on a “bad guy.” It is important to note that characteristics of the police subculture are not always viewed as being injurious. Roberg (2005: 281) noted that Crank, in *“Understanding Police Culture”* (1998), suggested that the police culture emerged from the daily practice of police work and that the police culture does not make the police different from the public. Roberg observed that Crank theorized that the police culture humanized the police by giving their work meaning and rejecting the notion that the police culture was a “dark force,” Crank argued that the police culture was carried in police common sense, in the way in which everyday activities are celebrated, and in the way police deal with death and suffering. Roberg noted that Crank concluded that in order to understand the police culture, one must examine the physical setting in which police work occurs and the groups with which police interact.

Davis (2002) observed that a shift in criminal justice policy towards a more retributive and punitive posture in the sentencing of offenders not only resulted in an increase in the incarceration rate, but prompted significant changes in the policies and practices of all sectors of the criminal justice system. With increased rates of incarceration for those arrested for drug offenses and violent crimes the jail environment has indeed changed. The jail landscape has transformed from a custodial environment that primarily housed non-violent offenders to one that now houses offenders that would be considered dangerous as offenders who have been convicted and sentenced to state and federal prison systems. A consequence of this violent and socially isolated jail environment is the negative impact and influence it has had on the socialization and professional development of the jail officer.

Mauer (1999: 45) noted that a growing number of sociologists have come to view crime as essentially a learned behavior that is a rational, but illegal, response to a set of isolating social conditions. He and other sociologists suggest that efforts to reduce crime should focus on changing the social conditions that precipitate these learned behaviors, in crime plagued environments. Jail Officer exposed to the discordant conditions in the jail system to learn and practice behaviors that become rational and justified in their response to the taxing social conditions they encounter daily. These behaviors include condescending and discriminatory treatment in order to define the roles of authority figure and subordinate, verbal belittling and threat conveyance in order to establish a status of superiority and the use of unnecessary force in an attempt to maintain physical as well as mental control of the jail. Arguably, it is these rational responses to the dangerous conditions of the jail that become the set of values and norms by which they survive. However, it is also these same rational responses, in the form of newly adopted values and beliefs, which accompany the jail officer as they transition into the coveted patrol assignments.

For most jail officers the custody assignment is their initial contact with socio-economically disenfranchised populations, and to some extent, their initial contact with a compilation of ethnically diverse minority males and females. Pattillo et al. observed that

incarceration has become highly concentrated. Their research found that nine out of ten prison inmates were male, most were under the age of forty, blacks were seven times more likely than whites to be in prison, and nearly all prisoners lack any education beyond high school. Although they discovered that less than 1 percent of the United States population was incarcerated in 2001, around 10 percent of black men in their late twenties were in fact in prison. Interestingly, the prison and jail incarceration rate of young black men who have dropped out of high school exceeds 30 percent (Pattillo et al. 2004:1).

Arguably, the socio-economic and minority status of those housed in the jail system has the most significant influence on the professional development of the jail officer. The myths surrounding the violent nature of the Black and Hispanic cultures and the mythical beliefs that they should be treated different, become believable when encountered daily in a jail environment where the majority of individuals incarcerated comprise males and females from those two cultures and who have been labeled as the most violent and dangerous members of the society. Travis succinctly noted, “That in an era when the symbolic denunciation of criminals has become politically rewarding and that the people who go through the criminal justice system are mostly poor, urban, and minority males, the opportunity to deny these offenders the largess of the welfare state, because they have few friends in high places, has become too tempting” (Travis, 2000: 15). The social and professional development of the new jail officer is influenced by this symbolic denunciation of the criminal offender the social perception that incarcerated individuals are different and less deserving of normal treatment and the rights afforded valued members of mainstream society.

Pattillo et al. take special note of the fact that, “Because prison and jail inmates tend to be disproportionately drawn from a small number of largely poor and minority communities, the collateral consequences of incarceration are highly spatially concentrated. The spatial concentration of incarceration is disruptive for the social networks of kin and friendship that typically promote economic opportunity and social stability” (Pattillo et al: 5). This would suggest that the collateral consequences of incarceration are not just disruptive for the social

networks of the individuals incarcerated, but are disruptive for the professional development of the jail officer as well. This should be cause for concern for criminal justice officials, politicians, and community members in that the conditions of the jail environment can serve to significantly alter the behaviors, beliefs, and values, while also disrupting the social network development of the jail officer, in ways that are not only detrimental to the well being of the jail officer, but also in ways that pose long-term harmful consequences for any community in which these jail officers are assigned to patrol.

The Conditions that cause the Omnipotence of the Jail System

Both Tonry (2004) and Bottoms (1999) discuss the interpersonal violence that has become a permanent characteristic of the custodial environment, but Bottoms also makes a special note of the interpersonal dynamic that occurs between the inmate and jail officer in the social context of the jail environment. Bottoms (1999: 205) observed that prisoner on prisoner violence presents a paradox. He noted that even with the pervasiveness of the rule of force within the inmate society there is also a surprisingly high level of day-to-day prisoner safety. This same paradox might be used to explain the jail officer's response to the discordant jail conditions. By developing non-traditional or "oppositional" values, norms, and behaviors to cope with their day-to-day personal and professional safety needs, the jail officer is able to survive. As Bottoms alludes to, as in other organizations, the reiteration of a daily routine is central to the prison's nature as an institution (1999: 209). However, the jail officers' daily routine should not be envisioned as acceptance of the oppositional cultures that develop inside the jail. Nor should criminal justice officials dismiss the professional development of the jail officer as characteristic of a daily routine necessary for survival.

As was mentioned earlier the environment of the jail system escapes direct public view, however, the public does not escape the consequences of the influences of the jail environment. The effect of incarceration on the social development of offenders is well documented, but little is actually known about the effects of "doing jail time" on the social and professional development of the jail officer. For jail officers who have had limited exposure to the conditions

of urban poverty, social isolation and disenfranchisement, the jail experience can be life altering. Coming into the jail environment for the first time, new jail officers are exposed to the degradations of human life behind bars and the jail systems' dependence on the use of power and authority to maintain control over the inmate population. Historically, power and authority has been used by the social elite to perpetuate the deplorable social conditions existent in urban areas and to impose human degradations upon ethnic minority groups; and it is this same concept of power and authority within the police subculture that is significantly influential in the social and professional socialization process of the jail officer.

Much of the custodial scholarship which has addressed the conditions of incarceration focuses on the sexual abuse and violent assaults that permeate the daily lives of inmates. However, there are other jail conditions that are more constant and occur on a daily basis that have far greater influence on the social and professional development of the jail officer. The jail officer is exposed to human degradation that can only be found in the most economically and socially isolated populations and social institutions of the United States, and therefore, is no wonder why this same human degradation has become acceptable in the jail environment. The constant exposure to jail conditions such as inmates using laboratory facilities which provide no privacy for the care of personal needs; the humiliation of living in despicable housing environments that force from six to a hundred or more inmates to share common toilets; the racial isolation and segregation that characterizes daily custodial life, but an isolation and segregation that becomes necessary for survival; the inmate exchange of clean bed linen and clothing sometimes once a week, but not more than twice a week in most cases which would be considered unsanitary in most social circles; and finally, the requirement that inmates be allowed outside exposure to fresh air and exercise for only three hours a week, while the remaining days and hours of the week find the inmate confined to life inside a cell, impact and influence the social and professional development of the jail officer.

The social deprivation of the jail custodial environment and its experience can have lasting effects the mental well being of the jail officer. However, in the law enforcement sub-culture the

jail officer is expected to endure the socialization process of the discordant jail system while becoming indoctrinated into a law enforcement system that harbors its own “oppositional culture” of beliefs, values, and norms. This “oppositional culture” within the law enforcement system does not allow for compromise of its beliefs, values, and norms, nor does it allow for the open expression of empathy towards individuals incarcerated in the jail system. Therefore, jail officers must assimilate themselves to the aberrant behaviors that have preceded them, without deviation.

More research the jail socialization is needed before we can actually determine how this fixes the foundation for the development and acceptance of oppositional values, beliefs, and norms of the jail officer. Roberg et al. (2005) posed that socialization theory as a body of knowledge about police behavior increased during the 1960s with social scientists suggesting that police behavior was determined more by work experiences and peers than by pre-employment values and attitudes. They argue that individuals in law enforcement are socialized as a result of their occupational experiences leading to a police behavior that is sometimes good and sometimes bad. Interestingly, in discussing the socialization of police officers they also examined the theory of predisposition. Predispositional theory suggests that the behaviors of police officers are primarily explained by the characteristics, values, and attitudes that the officer had before he or she was employed. Predispositional theory also centers on the idea that the policing occupation attracts people with certain attitudes and beliefs, thus concluding that socialization has less explanatory value (Roberg et al., 2005). However, I would pose that the jail officer’s perception of the poor, urban, minority inmate, as an overly violent and dangerous individual, deserving of the less than human services and conditions found in the jail environment are strongly influenced and made acceptable by law enforcements’ closed subculture and its quiet acceptance of the inherent “oppositional culture” that has developed within the police subculture.

As the jail officer evolves in the jail socialization process less is actually known about the impact the process has on the aberrant behaviors, such as condescending and discriminatory

treatment, verbal humiliation, and physical aggressiveness that develop and are on display during police and citizen encounters in the street patrol environment. However, in the indoctrination of the jail officer during the jail socialization process, jail inmates become faceless figures to the jail officer, which would suggest that this same faceless image is transferred to citizens in the community. Another salient characteristic of this process is the jail officers' interpersonal communications with the jail inmate and how those communications become subordinated and condescending. This diminished ability to effectively communicate with citizens in urban minority communities has long been a source of complaint for the poor police and community relations. Another salient characteristic of the jail socialization process of the jail officer, that has had negative consequences on police and community relations has been the development of less empathy for the well being and safety of the jail inmate. This indifference for the well being of the jail inmate is characterized by a harsh and often callous approach to most interactions with the jail inmate, and again, has been a primary source of complaint by minority citizens in urban communities, during police encounters.

In order to be accepted into the occupation of law enforcement, the jail officer must suppress most mainstream values they possess regarding the dilemma of individuals incarcerated. As with any normal process of socialization the need for acceptance by peers can become predominant. This predominance to please one's peers can cause the jail socialization process to become stressful not just from the need to be accepted into the brotherhood of law enforcement, but also due to the internal social conflict that the discordant jail conditions can cause. The internal conflict of holding onto one's mainstream values and beliefs about humanity versus the oppositional values and beliefs of a system that has basically devalued the status of the jail inmate can be stressful for the jail officer. This internal conflict becomes life altering as the jail officer struggles to adjust to the discordant conditions of the jail environment and the sub-culture of law enforcement, while at the same time struggling to maintain a connection with values and beliefs of mainstream America.

The correctional system has increasingly become America's social agency of first choice for coping with the deepening problems of a society (Currie, 1998). The Los Angeles County jail system, where over 3,000 of the more than 20,000 inmates were said to be receiving psychiatric services, is now said to be the largest mental health institution in the United States with annual cost estimated to be near \$10 million, and according to some accounts, serves, ironically, as the largest "homeless shelter" in America (Currie, 1998; Elsner, 2004). According to the latest figures (2002), American jails house approximately 665,475 inmates (Elsner, 2004), making them not a pleasant or easy work environment for individuals with limited exposure to the realities of the obscure and complex social problems facing America. The discordant conditions of the jail environment play a significant role in the social and professional development of the jail officer and in the development of behavior that is adopted by the jail officer who eventually transfers to a street patrol assignment.

It is important for law enforcement officials to develop an understanding of the intricacies of its own occupational subculture and socialization processes, in order to adopt strategies to counter the effects of the jail socialization process. Law enforcement officials can ill afford to mask the jail socialization process and its negative effects on the social and professional development of the jail officer when the consequences of any masking attempt can lead to further deterioration of police and community relations, as of result of aberrant behavior by former jail officers. Just as inmate re-integration requires pre-release preparation, jail officer integration into urban patrol assignments also require both pre and post-custody release assistance that seeks to modify the developed "oppositional" and sometimes aberrant behaviors that are learned during the jail socialization process. Other aberrant behaviors not previously mentioned, that require modification and are learned by the jail officer during the jail socialization process include abuse of authority in the form of acceptance, ignoring, and even participating in the physical abuse of inmates through the use of excessive force; the psychological abuse of inmates through the use of verbal assault, harassment, or ridicule; secrecy and the protection of fellow officers by adherence to the police sub cultural practice of the "code

of silence;” and the violation of inmate’s constitutional, federal, or state rights through the use of inaccurate or deceptive report writing (Roberg, 2005: 294).

The late Supreme Court Justice William Brennan wrote, “Prisoners are persons whom most of us would rather not think about. Banished from everyday sight, they exist in a shadow world that only dimly enters our awareness. They are members of a ‘total institution’ that controls their daily existence in a way that few of us can imagine” (Elsner, 2004:16). The jail officer too is a person to whom little attention is given by law enforcement officials as well as members of the community. The jail officer exists in an environment with which few members of society are familiar. However, what makes their existence critical for any community lies in the fact that the jail officer will leave the jail environment with dysfunctional behavior tendencies, as a result of the jail socialization process, and enter communities with the authority to use discretionary powers to enforce laws and even make life and death decisions. Therefore, the need to prepare jail officers for release from the jail environment and integration into the urban community environment is no less significant than the preparation that is undertaken to prepare ex-offenders for community re-integration.

Release into the Community and the Social Polemic

Criminologists have documented that over time ex-offenders become “embedded” in criminality, and they gradually weaken their bonds to conventional society. After years of engaging in a criminal lifestyle, reestablishing these bonds with mainstream society becomes very difficult (Petersilia, 2003: 40). Reestablishing societal bonds is a crucial aspect of all successful ex-offender re-integration. In order for jail officers to be successful in their transition from jail guard duty to the street patrol assignments they too must re-connect with mainstream societal values, beliefs, and norms. Not unlike the criminal offender, the jail officer becomes embedded in the oppositional cultures of law enforcement and the jail environment that weakens and even prevents the re-connection to conventional societal behaviors. It is this detachment from conventional society that Petersilia (2003) posits as one of the primary reasons that job-training programs have not produced the positive outcomes for ex-offenders as proponents had

hoped. Professional training for the jail officer that encompasses occupational and vocational style patrol training, though important, does not provide the jail officer with the necessary skills to re-establish the disconnected social bonds with the community.

Successful integration into patrol assignments requires that the jail officer disconnect from the oppositional culture of the jail environment and re-establish bonds with mainstream perspectives on social values, beliefs, and acceptable social practices. In many cases the socialization processes of law enforcement indoctrination, during the initial jail phase of employment, can serve to distort the mainstream perspective, while accentuating the conservative doctrines embraced by the law enforcement culture. For this reason emphasis must be given to the development of a community integration program for jail officers that will prepare and assist them in their efforts to re-connect with the mainstream community.

Doing jail time isolates and prevents the jail officer from developing an understanding of the established bonds that exist between community institutions and community members. With limited knowledge of such bonds the jail officers' transition to the street patrol assignment becomes even more difficult. Perceptions, beliefs, values, and practices acquired while doing time inside the jail system can routinely carryover to the street patrol assignment. Internalized perceptions of a devalued and dehumanized incarcerated population of poor urban minorities can lead the transitioning jail officer to display aberrant behavior tendencies associated with acceptable "oppositional culture" practices that were learned during the socialization process in the jail system.

Can the behaviors of a jail socialized officer, transitioning into a street patrol officer assignment, lead to negative outcomes during citizen encounters? Research on the influences of the police subculture on behaviors of officers would suggest that learned aberrant behaviors from the jail environment, if unmodified, have the potential to lead to injurious citizen encounters. Community integration programs, created for the jail officer, that attempt to modify aberrant behaviors and re-establish social bonds with the values, beliefs, and norms of mainstream America, might prevent these injurious citizen encounters. In addition to pre- and post-

community integration programs for the jail officer, programs that bring understanding to the socialization process of the jail environment should also be developed, with the goal of limiting the negative influences of the jail socialization process for the jail officer.

Community integration of the jail officer should be of concern to members of both political and community institutions. However, effective and successful community integration will not be possible until the polemic between the tough on crime position and the question of humane treatment of individuals incarcerated is resolved. The socialization process in the jail system, which tacitly supports the degradation of jailed inmates through the dehumanizing practices inherent in the jail system, has roots in the tough on crime position advocated by many politicians, law enforcement executives, managers, and supervisors, and uninformed community members. It is this tough on crime rhetoric that has helped shape the harsh policies and practices that characterize the discordant conditions of the jail systems in America. It is also this tough on crime rhetoric that prevents jail officers from ascribing to more conventional and mainstream thoughts on the subject of inmate welfare.

More research is needed on the pre and post effects of the jail socialization process on the jail officer. However, conducting this research may prove to be difficult because of the closed and secret nature of the law enforcement profession. While many law enforcement executives embrace a public position of openness their actions regarding public review of their organization are in stark contrast. Refusal to grant surveys of and interview with not only inmates housed in local jails, but with personnel also assigned to these jails will only prolong the negative outcomes resulting from the current jail socialization process and our failure to understand the life altering effects of the jail environment.

British Sociologist Anthony Giddens argued everyone's daily life contains a significant element of routine, and that social theorists need to pay close attention both to how everyday routines structure and sustain social institutions over time, and to how individuals assimilate new routines and, in time, are thus enabled to cope with many aspects of contemporary life by developing everyday skills that they hardly realize they have (Bottoms, 1999:209). The jail

officer too assimilates into a daily routine, one that espouses the oppositional values, beliefs, and norms of the jail environment, in order to cope with the discordant conditions of the jail system. A key task for law enforcement jail administrators will be to help the jail officer realize their assimilation of jail oppositional values, beliefs, and norms that are in stark contrast to mainstream perspectives, and to provide alternative methods for coping with the deplorable conditions of the jail environment.

Conclusion

This paper was based on the author's personal observation of the socialization process encountered by jail officers, inside a maximum security county jail. Many of the conclusions presented in this paper as well are based upon the authors twenty-six years of law enforcement experience in both the custody and patrol environments, and through the investigation of alleged aberrant behavior of police officers. Though the law enforcement agency responsible for the security of the county jail system, where many of the observations for this paper occurred, denied a request to conduct interviews of its employees and the inmates housed in the jail system, my employment with this agency enabled me to observe the jail environment during the course of my daily assignment. For outside researchers we can only hope that the erected barriers preventing independent examination of the jail environment will in the future be dismantled.

At this point, I can offer no suggestions to fellow researchers on how to penetrate the closed jail environment or how to convince law enforcement executives that this research is not only important but necessary for the healthy development of the law enforcement organization. However, from personal experiences and observations, I can attest to the discordant jail conditions and the fact that the socialization process resulting from these conditions, continues to have a negative impact on the professional development of the jail officer and law enforcement services provided to the community. The learned behaviors of condescending attitudes, discriminatory treatment, abuse of authority, and deceptiveness in reporting information will continue to plague police and community relations should law enforcement executives continue

to ignore their significance. Again, further research is needed on the long-term effects of the jail socialization process and its impact on the jail officers' interpersonal relationships with the community member, upon transition to community patrol assignments. But again, personal experiences and observations has led me to conclude that relationships between urban minority communities and law enforcement agencies who transition jail officers into street patrol assignments, suffer strain as a result of the oppositional values, beliefs, norms, and perceptions acquired during the jail socialization process and brought into these mainstream communities by the former jail officers.

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