

A comparative perspective on officer wellness: american reflections from norwegian prisons

Veronica L. Horowitz, Emily R. Greberman, Patrick E. Nolan, Jordan M. Hyatt,
Chris Uggen, Synøve N. Andersen & Steven L. Chanenson

To cite this article: Veronica L. Horowitz, Emily R. Greberman, Patrick E. Nolan, Jordan M. Hyatt, Chris Uggen, Synøve N. Andersen & Steven L. Chanenson (2021): A comparative perspective on officer wellness: american reflections from norwegian prisons, Criminal Justice Studies, DOI: [10.1080/1478601X.2021.2001231](https://doi.org/10.1080/1478601X.2021.2001231)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1478601X.2021.2001231>



Published online: 23 Nov 2021.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



A comparative perspective on officer wellness: american reflections from norwegian prisons

Veronica L. Horowitz^a, Emily R. Greberman^b, Patrick E. Nolan^c, Jordan M. Hyatt^d, Chris Uggen^c, Synøve N. Andersen^e and Steven L. Chanenson^f 

^aDepartment of Sociology, University at Buffalo, SUNY, Buffalo, NY, USA; ^bDepartment of Criminology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA; ^cDepartment of Sociology, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities; ^dDepartment of Criminology and Justice Studies, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA, USA; ^eDepartment of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo; ^fVillanova University Charles Widger School of Law

ABSTRACT

Correctional officers in the United States experience severe work-related stressors and are generally physically unwell compared to similar public employees. An innovative and new approach to improving American corrections that is starting to gain momentum stems from looking at the workplace dynamic in alternative international models, such as in Scandinavian prison systems, for models of workplace reform. This study examines the perspectives of staff and leaders from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections who traveled to Scandinavia as part of a correctional exchange. Each day of the trip, correctional staff recorded their qualitative reflections and completed a basic survey about their observations and experiences. This article examines both forms of data to explore correctional officer wellness from the perspective of American correctional officers. Five key themes are discussed: morale, stress, danger, dynamic security, and communication. Survey results corroborate this pattern, as US correctional officers reported somewhat lower stress and more positive interactions during their time in Norway. Key takeaways and implications for policy are discussed.

KEYWORDS

Correctional officers; correctional officer wellness; dynamic security; Norway; stress; morale

Introduction

Just as the well-being of a society can be judged by the nature of its prisons, the well-being of prison staff is inextricably bound up with the well-being of those who are incarcerated (Churchill, 1910). There is much evidence that US prisons have become unhealthy places for both groups. This paper provides a unique vantage on officer wellness by examining the daily reflections of American correctional officers (COs) working in Scandinavia on a weeks-long correctional exchange. After briefly reviewing the foundational ideologies of Scandinavian and American prisons and their contrasting corrections systems we examine research on the key drivers of CO wellness and the costs of unwellness in US prisons. We then introduce the Scandinavian Prison Project (SPP) and the unique daily reflection data this paper analyzes. In these reflections, we find that the

Correspondence to Veronica L. Horowitz  vhorowit@bufflao.edu  Department of Sociology, University at Buffalo, SUNY

American officers speak directly to the key challenges and opportunities surrounding officer wellness. These include discussion of morale, stress, danger, security, and communication. Finally, we conclude by noting the mutually reinforcing relationships between the social organization of prisons and the well-being of COs and incarcerated individuals.

Penal excess and penal exceptionalism: correctional officers and approaches to security

Prisons in the United States have long been recognized for their sheer capacity, large populations, austere environments, and the dehumanizing effect that these conditions can have on both incarcerated people and staff. Prisons in Scandinavia, on the other hand, are widely perceived as more humane and, in some cases, as 'exceptional' (Pratt, 2008a). The fundamental philosophical differences in prominence within these frameworks for incarceration – American retribution vs. Scandinavian rehabilitation – are reflected in myriad ways inside of their prisons (Hyatt, Andersen, & Chanenson, 2020). One of the most striking and salient distinctions, though difficult to observe and to quantify, is the nature of relationships between staff and incarcerated persons and how they impact each other's wellbeing.

Likewise, the contrary approaches to prison safety emphasized by these nations must have distinct impacts on the wellness of COs employing these methods. American prisons generally emphasize the need to control the carceral environment for practical and punitive reasons. This has translated to a strong and uniform emphasis on 'static' security. These means include the prototypical characteristics of a prison: locks, bars, and walls. The goals of the static security apparatus are to utilize barriers and power to enforce rules and regulations in a highly depersonalized way to limit disruptions to orderly and safe prison operation (Sykes, 1958). While static security measures are clearly present in Scandinavian prisons as well, those penal environments also emphasize another approach to security often lacking in the United States. 'Dynamic security,' an approach to security in which human relationships – especially those between staff and incarcerated people – is paramount in Scandinavian facilities (Høidal, 2018). Dynamic security emphasizes policies and practices based on continuous individualized, human interaction and adaptation of restrictions based on those relationships (Høidal, 2019; Pratt, 2008a). Dynamic security allows for the use of the least restrictive means necessary for security, the tailoring of responses, and ongoing engagement for staff and incarcerated people.

In Norway, the emphasis on rehabilitation and 'dynamic security,' though generally accepted today (Shammas, 2016), required effort to implement in Scandinavia. In the late 20th century, Scandinavian countries, including Norway, began reconsidering the purpose and operations of their prisons. Toward the end of the 1970s, Nordic countries had become increasingly critical of the reliance on 'outdated and overly severe criminal codes' and the 'excessive use of custodial sentencing' (Hinkkanen & Lappi-Seppälä, 2011; Lappi-Seppälä, 2007). During this period, Scandinavian countries began transitioning from a punishment-focused authoritarian model to a rehabilitative model (Hinkkanen & Lappi-Seppälä, 2011). The model that was implemented reflects the egalitarian nature of the Scandinavian welfare state and policies that are rooted in a humanist ethos (Pratt, 2008a, 2008b). The model was based, in part, on the idea that the most appropriate methods for in-prison rehabilitation were through the development of positive relationships and

personal growth in an environment that reflects the community (Johnsen, Granheim, & Helgesen, 2011; Liebling, 2004; Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2018). The extent to which Nordic nations live up to this aspirational ideal is a matter of some debate, as the state must exercise an overwhelming and paternalistic authority over those in custody (Barker, 2013; Smith & Ugelvik, 2017).

Although correctional ideologies, especially at the national level, can include elements from across the philosophical continuum (Morris, 1974), certain paradigms can become dominant. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, for example, rehabilitation was the preeminent approach in American corrections (see Menninger, 1968), though scholars challenged the role and applicability of rehabilitation through imprisonment (e.g. Von Hirsch, 1976) in the decades following. Despite a relatively recent shift towards a stronger emphasis on a more rehabilitative agenda, American prisons still function primarily as a punitive environment for retributive, deterrent, and incapacitating purposes (Lambert, Hogan, & Jiang, 2010; Sykes, 1958). As Phelps (2011) points out, there remains a gap between the rhetoric regarding the intended treatment of incarcerated people and the realities in prisons. Simply put, many American prisons are overcrowded and understaffed (Gaes, 1985; Garland, 2001) making it difficult to ensure security and hindering correctional staff from developing positive relationships with incarcerated individuals.

Consistently, a recent study by Ferdik and Hills (2018) found that many COs believe rehabilitative programming within prisons was not worth the monetary investment. Historically, and despite movements toward a rehabilitative model of custody from a strictly retributive one, little focus has been put on correctional officer wellness and the potential impact of prosocial relationships in the penal environment. American CO attitudes about their role remains strongly rooted in maintaining the perception of control and security rather than engaging in the rehabilitation of incarcerated people (Cullen, Lutze, Link, & Wolfe, 1989; Ferdik & Hills, 2017; Liebling, 2011). This may place staff and incarcerated people in persistently distant, and occasionally adversarial, roles, which could contribute to an unhealthy and stressful work environment. This punitive attitude is further reinforced by institutional concerns about COs informally communicating with (often referred to as fraternizing) incarcerated people. Such constraints on positive relationships between staff and incarcerated people can result in aggression from incarcerated people and decreased CO tolerance for disruption (characterized by the excessive use of coercive and potentially illegitimate means of attaining control) (Ferdik, 2018; Lambert et al., 2010; Liebling, 2011). The absence of rapport reinforces how the use of different security practices and policies in prisons serve as a tool that can either build or burn alliances between incarcerated people and COs. The ongoing tension which develops may contribute to officer unwellness.

Contrasting correctional contexts: organization and population composition

The friction between COs and incarcerated persons in the US reflect American society more broadly which is rooted in hierarchical structures and varying levels of power. Thus, similar dynamics occur between COs and those in positions of greater authority in US prisons. Department of Corrections utilize a quasi-military structure, where rankings are intended to distinguish between those with authority and diminish their interpersonal relationships across these positions (Jermier & Berkes, 1979). This structure provides strict

organization; relying on a clear chain of command which heavily diminishes the staff's ability to form personal and positive relationships at work. This power structure also depersonalizes interactions between staff, making it harder to create positive relationships and disincentivizing connections (Jermier & Berkes, 1979).

In contrast, Norway's model, like the society more broadly, is rooted in egalitarianism (Pratt, 2008a, 2008b). The emphasis on dynamic security encourages open communication between correctional staff, those in their custody, and their superiors. Through interaction positive relationships with both trust and respect can form. Norwegian COs tend to emphasize individual-level relationships, both among staff and between staff and incarcerated people (Bruhn, Nylander & Johnsen, 2017). This may be driven by a system-wide emphasis on multiple forms of rehabilitation (see e.g. Hean Willumsen & Ødegård, 2017) and it is reinforced by a training program that emphasizes humanistic, as well as security, principles (Eide & Westrheim, 2020). When compared to their American counterparts, the Norwegian model of dynamic security encourages the exercise of discretion. Such relationships are paramount in shaping the climate within prisons (Crewe, 2011).

Alongside the contrast in correctional ideology and security emphasis another key point of difference between prisons in the US and Norway is the racial composition of prisons. In the US, racial minorities (especially black and brown men) constitute a dramatic overrepresentation of those in prison (Nellis, 2016) while those employed in correctional facilities are primarily white (DataUSA, 2014). Norway, conversely, is characterized by its great degree of racial homogeneity (Uggen, Stewart, & Horowitz, 2018). The shared characteristic of Whiteness within the Norway correctional system may help foster grater connections and personal relationships between correctional employees and those in custody while the discrepancy between staff and prison populations in the US may hinder the development of open, positive relationships. These differences may also influence institutional power-dynamics and the adaptability of Norwegian practices in the US.¹

Correctional officer (un)wellness in the United States

Extant literature on CO experiences focuses almost exclusively on CO *unwellness*, and identifies problematic levels of stress, burnout, and mental health problems as an epidemic within the profession (Brower, 2013; Ferdik & Smith, 2017; Mack & Rhineberger-Dunn, 2021; Stack & Tsoudis, 1997). Like those they supervise, COs are exposed to the violent and abusive conditions of prisons. They are not passive witnesses; their work as COs occurs in close proximity to the individuals they oversee. Further, they are tasked with enforcing rules and regulations in varied contexts. This can create cognitive dissonance and role ambiguity (Cullen, Link, Wolfe, & Frank, 1985; Liebling, 2000). COs experience disproportionately higher levels of stress, mental health problems, physical injury, and ailments compared to the general public and law enforcement officers (Brower, 2013; Ferdik, 2018; Harrell, 2011; Lambert, Hogan, Paoline, & Clarke, 2005; Walters, 2020) and have fewer resources for addressing their stress (Ferdik & Smith, 2017). Studies have estimated their life expectancies at 62 ½ years (Parker, 2011) with other estimates even 59 years, 16 years lower than the national average (Cheek, 1984; New Jersey Police Suicide Task Force, 2009). Relatedly, research indicates the suicide rate of COs in New Jersey is

twice that of police officers (New Jersey Police Suicide Task Force, 2009) and national estimates indicate their suicide rates are around forty percent higher than people of similar demographics in other professions (Stack & Tsoudis, 1997; Violanti, 2017).

CO stress has been linked to numerous factors: the degree of danger present and/or perceived within an institution, feeling unsupported by managers and supervisors, experiencing interactional problems with prisoners, feeling overworked, receiving inadequate compensation, struggling with role conflict and role ambiguity, and exhibiting a punitive orientation towards prisoners (Ferdik & Smith, 2017; Lambert, Hogan, & Barton, 2002; Liebling, 2011). COs must also navigate adherence to the rules of their institutions and deviations necessary to manage the environment. This inconsistency strains officers (Gilbert, 1997; Liebling, 2000). Role conflict or role ambiguity for correctional officers can lead to stress, burnout, and high rates of turnover (Leip & Stinchcomb, 2013; Matz, Wells, Minor, & Angel, 2013; Minor, Dawson-Edwards, Wells, Griffith, & Angel, 2009).

Stress is another major factor negatively impacting COs. Highly stressed officers are more likely to experience depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and feelings of ineffectiveness (Ferdik, 2018; Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail, & Baker, 2009) and job stress also negatively impacts COs' commitment to work (Ferdik, 2018; Hogan, Lambert, Jenkins, & Wambold, 2006; Lambert et al., 2002). Stress and its consequences may lead to job burnout and work conflict. High turnover and absenteeism due to chronic occupational stress can result in understaffed and less secure facilities which have been linked to in-prison assaults (Ferdik, 2018; Lambert, 2004; Steiner, 2008). Thus, stress creates imbalances in the social dynamic of a prison which may result in situations that further erode correctional officer wellness.

Improving correctional officer wellness

Policy recommendations for improving CO wellness often emphasize the need for greater administrative support, such as creating open channels for communication from staff to incarcerated people, staff to staff, and among incarcerated people (Ferdik & Hills, 2018; Ferdik & Smith, 2017; Management and Training Corporation, 2011). Another suggested policy is to improve the intake process to better identify individuals who may pose particular threats to the institution upon arrival.²

Another set of recommendations for improving CO wellness focus on stress reduction. These have largely been instituted from the literature on policing, although Ferdik and Smith (2017) acknowledge a lack of evidence on efficacy. Other scholars found no evidence of benefit on stress-level outcomes after conducting a meta-analysis of programs (i.e. crisis intervention, stress management, exercise programs) intended to increase CO well-being (Evers, Ogloff, Trounson, & Pfeifer, 2020; Walters, 2020). An under-explored but promising opportunity for improving CO wellness revolves around the relationship between COs and those in custody (Steiner, 2009).

The formulation of positive relationships between COs and their superiors, peers, and with those in their custody holds great potential to improve prison culture and CO wellness. Open communication, if prioritized, can foster greater transparency leading to improved trust between COs and the incarcerated people they monitor. Norway provides a promising model to look to for facilitating positive relationships between COs and incarcerated people. While we noted several factors that currently inhibit the creation of

positive relationships in US prisons, many of these could be mitigated by shifting towards greater emphasis on dynamic security practices and the removal or revision of policies prohibiting substantive communication between COs and people in custody.

Thus, we posit, applying Norwegian principles/practices in US prisons will likely improve the wellbeing of American COs. In line with this supposition, several American states have started to experiment with Norwegian (or more broadly, Scandinavian) principles in corrections, including California (Ahalt, Haney, Ekhaugen, & Williams, 2020); North Dakota (Hilliard, 2020), and Pennsylvania (Hyatt, Andersen, Chanenson, Horowitz, & Uggen, 2021) – the latter of which is the focus of the present study. This strategy has been descriptively linked to improved wellness of COs and improved job satisfaction (Ahalt et al., 2020). Our study builds on this small body of work.

Given the interdependence of CO wellness with the successes of other aspects of the prison system, our study adds to the current literature through first-person accounts of how COs in the US view aspects of officer wellness based on their observations and experiences in Norwegian prisons. Despite a growing body of research on COs and their (un)wellness, few studies seek to examine the perceptions of workplace safety and wellness from the perspective of COs (Ferdik & Smith, 2017). The present research will assist in developing a better understanding of CO perceptions and may aid in conceptualizing the adaptability of foreign penal policies intended to increase wellness of COs (as well as the wellness of those in custody) in the US.

Current study

This is a case study that examines correctional officer wellness from the first phase of a correctional initiative: the Scandinavian Prison Project (SPP). The SPP is a multi-phased international exchange and correctional reform program. The goal of this program was to provide American COs and leaders with the knowledge and experience to develop a housing unit in a Pennsylvania prison using principles and procedures adapted from Scandinavia. Of the 12 participants in the exchange, eight were COs and four were in leadership positions. In Phase 1 of the project a group of COs and the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PADOC) leaders traveled to Scandinavia to learn about, and work in, Scandinavian prisons. The correctional exchange was developed to provide the participants with a grounding in Scandinavian penal theory, applied correctional policy and, in the latter phases of the exchange, hands-on experience working in several Norwegian prisons. (See Chanenson et al., 2021; Hyatt et al., 2021 for a more comprehensive summary of the history, challenges, objectives, and curricula from the program.)

In the first part of this phase, members of the group toured juvenile detention facilities, high security prisons, halfway houses, and other institutions in Norway (e.g. national headquarters, training academy), attended workshops, participated in weekly focus groups, and attended educational programs. During the second part, and in coordination with the Norwegian Correctional Service (NCS), the American COs were assigned to one of three Norwegian prisons, and each was given a Norwegian CO mentor with whom they worked daily. The American COs wore Norwegian uniforms and worked in the prisons in roles roughly equivalent to theirs in Pennsylvania. The research team accompanied the

American officers and leaders for all components of this exchange to conduct systematic observations and to facilitate the collection of contemporaneous data (including the narratives examined here).

Study participants

Of the 12 participants in the exchange, 8 were correctional officers and 4 were leaders. All 12 participants volunteered to be part of the exchange program and were then selected by the prison Superintendent. American officers were then paired with mentors in Norwegian prisons based on an assessment of who the warden of each Norwegian prison thought would be the best fit. Regarding race/ethnicity, 7 participants were Black, 2 were Hispanic, and 3 were white. Eight of the participants were female and 4 were male and their ages ranged from 23–63. Their tenure in the prison ranged from under 2 years to over five, and their educational attainment ranged from a high school diploma to a master's degree.

Data and methods

At the end of each day in Scandinavia, members of the research team collected two types of data from each American correctional employee: daily audio reflections and surveys. Audio reflections were recorded, in private, using a digital personal recorder. A semi-structured, optional guide was provided for the reflection (see Appendix B). Survey data were gathered using a paper-and pencil instrument that included several Likert-style items (anchored at strongly agree and strongly disagree) regarding their experiences and feelings at work that day. A single panel of interview and survey data was also collected prior to the beginning of the program and a follow-up survey administered on the last day in Norway.

During the program, recordings were immediately uploaded to secure cloud storage then deleted from the recorders which were returned to the corrections employees for the following day. Audio files were subsequently uploaded to Trint (transcription software), then cleaned by the research team. These transcripts were imported into NVivo for coding and analysis. A complete list of the codes used in this paper, the number of individual recording files that contain each code, and the number of times each code was referenced can be found in Appendix A.

The number and nature of recordings varied by participant. Some individuals recorded only one reflection per day, while others recorded many; time in Scandinavia also varied between two and three weeks. As a result, the number of reflections from each individual ranged from 13 to 79 with a mean of 35 reflections per individual, totaling 422 reflections analyzed in this paper. The survey data were collected both pre-trip (May 2019) and on the final day in Norway (June 2019). We compare Likert-scale responses from seven categories relevant to CO wellness (see Appendix C for survey questions).³

Findings

Coding the daily audio reflections in NVivo, we identified five wellness-focused themes: morale, stress, danger, dynamic security, and communication. These themes were not described in mutually exclusive ways by our participants, but for clarity we organize our findings by theme.

Morale

By drawing on the perceptions and observations of COs exposed to a wholly new context, our data and project provide a novel, and perhaps unique, vantage on correctional officer wellness. In line with the literature on the importance of workplace morale (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Minor, Wells, Lambert, & Keller, 2014; Sudom, Dursun, & Flemming, 2006; Weakliem & Frenkel, 2006), we found that one of the most pervasive themes that emerged in US officer reflections was the high morale observed amongst officers in Norwegian prisons. For instance, on the third day of the trip Johnston noted:

Everyone respects their coworker top to the bottom. Everyone speaks when you come in. Good morning. When you're leaving. Have a nice day. The simple things matter as far as staff morale and morale is very high around [this Norwegian prison].

This observation connects morale among Norwegian prison staff to mutual respect, both laterally amongst officers and hierarchically. The lack of hierarchical difference makes sense given the comparatively flat (less hierarchical) organization of Norwegian society (Pratt, 2008a) relative to the United States. Another major difference observed by the American officers was the quality and nutrition of the food. In Norway, unlike in the US, the COs and incarcerated persons ate dinner together sitting around a dining room table in their own unit. The meals consisted of fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats (without preservatives). As Steward stated:

The food is like real food, it's just, it's just amazing. It was the reason why the jail has such high morale and a reason why things are so stress free and easy going.

American officers were acutely aware of a relationship between morale and stress on one side and the well-being of both themselves and incarcerated persons on the other. Many saw the SPP as an opportunity to improve the lives of both groups simultaneously. For instance, as Carroll emphasized:

I just feel optimistic. I think that this is going to be a turn and a start of maybe a better corrections for everyone involved, not just staff, not just inmates, for everyone. I'm feeling hopeful and optimistic. I definitely think now more than ever is the right time for change. I feel hopeful. So, it looks like they're encouraging each other. Oh, they [Norwegians] said "There's hope for everyone." It's like their motto they stand by. It's definitely impressive, that slogan itself, it instills hope in the prisoners and hope in the community, it just makes ... everything is positive to promote a better feeling ...

A similar comparison was made by Newcomb who pointed out the difference between those who choose to work in corrections in Norway versus the US:

They choose the profession mainly because they want to help people. Norway takes pride in the product that they produce. And both inmates and former inmates and their staff. In Pennsylvania, I think that employees come to work for the pay, and they see inmates as job security.

This observation was echoed by many Americans who were reminded throughout the trip that Norwegian officers received substantially greater education, training, salaries, and benefits than they did.

Identity and Uniforms: A subcomponent of morale unanticipated by the research team was the significance of the Norwegian prison uniform. When the American COs entered Norwegian prisons, they were given Norwegian correctional uniforms to wear during their shifts. These Norwegian uniforms were markedly different from the uniforms they were accustomed to wearing in the US; The American uniforms were gray and made of stiff material, resembling dress pants with a matching top, the Norwegian uniforms were dark blue and made from softer cotton-based fabric with cargo-style pants and a polo-style top. Upon receiving these uniforms and wearing them, their importance, and their role in the development of the morale of the American officers became apparent. In their reflections, American COs described an immediate shift in their appearance and confidence. As Newcomb's observation illustrates, the comfort of these new uniforms improved their demeanor and interactions with incarcerated persons.

I really like the fact that the uniforms felt so comfortable, they felt so different. Having these [formal uniforms] and polos just gave it . . . gave us a different aura, gives a different outlook on what we are coming to work for. You know, the fact that we were initiating this helping process. The fact that we were comfortable and relaxed and that the inmates could view us in a more approachable way . . .

Additionally, American COs noted that they would need to change their uniforms when returning to their own prisons in order to facilitate a shift in the way that those in custody perceived and interacted with them. As Johnston explained:

The uniforms we currently have been the uniforms for forever. Inmates know these uniforms as the authority, the . . . those that have us in bondage, those that are the cops. They know these uniforms. Oppression.

Moreover, American COs believed that changing their uniforms in the US would provide them with a sense of pride and shared identity, boosting work morale and enthusiasm for the project. Upon first seeing the Americans in Norwegian attire, Raymond reflected:

. . . It was rather impressive to see [American COs] in a uniform looking good. They expressed them, which they felt comfortable in those uniforms, felt less intimidating, less formal. They looked great. And it was somewhat emotional in that I felt a little tickle, you know, run through the body, a sense of pride, proud of them, happy for them.

Stress

Stress is a second theme that emerged as pertinent. The relationship between the comparative prison conditions in Norway and work-related stress was frequently observed by American officers, who offered varied explanations for their perception of reduced stress among Norwegian COs. For instance, Newcomb noted the impact of Norwegian vacation and break policies on officer stress:

... Today is maybe the first day a lot of officers will be going on holiday. And it is mandatory that they take three weeks during the summer, three weeks at the same time, consecutive three weeks. That is very different than what we do in Pennsylvania. You do get an allotted time for vacation, but you take it at will one day at a time if you would like to. But they have to take three weeks at the same time. I thought that was different. I think [time off] is very helpful. I think it reduces stress. We talked about the fact that during the day they get one and a half or two hours break. We talked about how beneficial that can be for an officer if they want to sleep, if they want to get on a computer, if they want to walk around the facility. How those are all stress relievers.

Raymond attributed the stress differences between Norwegian and American officers to structural features of the workplace environment.

There is no way that I'm going to be [in corrections] 20 years. The stress of it would kill you. But he [the Norwegian officer] does not. There has to be a link between working in an environment like this, then not working an environment like I have. They have inner yards that ... evoke a sense of calmness and a sense of peace. So, I was shown that there is a place separate for the officers in where peace, quiet is really invoked, that they can then have their lunches here and it just allows them to be away from the hustle and bustle, as the gentleman says it can get very hectic and very loud.

Raymond similarly described the calming nature of Norwegian prisons and connected this feeling of tranquility to a feeling of safety:

And they seem to be working hard and enjoying themselves. There's this sense of calm and peace here that doesn't feel like a prison. No one seems threatening. No one gives you the feeling that makes you feel uncomfortable. Very, very different. I felt calm, felt safe ...

The relative absence of stress among Norwegian COs was explained by Young as a result of CO interaction, both among prison staff and between COs and incarcerated people. This observation connects with both the themes of *dynamic security* and *communication* detailed in subsequent sections.

... Lack of stress. We noticed that here, in the Scandinavian project, was less stress. We are COs. We have come on your blocks at each of these prisons and we have duly noted how relaxed the atmosphere is, how cohesive the inmates and the staff get along.

Danger

The idea of safety, noted in Raymond's quote in the preceding section, is interwoven with officers' perceptions of danger, which previous studies have identified as a key driver of poor health (Lambert & Paoline, 2008; Walters, 2020). American officers frequently

highlighted the many items that people incarcerated in Norwegian prisons could potentially use as weapons, but also observed that despite this risk Norwegian officers and staff felt secure. For instance, Johnston noted:

We are now at the visiting house unit for the inmates. And we do notice that cutlery is allowed. They have knives, scissors for cooking. Unlike prisons in the US. I was impressed with the fact that there was very little violence against their staff. And we're noticing a lot of the tools that they're using are unsecured, which is very different from what we're used to in the US. Even the tools and equipment is not tethered. So, you know, I'm feeling like they want to be there and they don't want to mess it up, it's that honor system. This is the way Scandinavians have grown up throughout their life, you know, treat each other fairly and properly. And it just overflows it to the Department of Corrections, like I said, they're on honor. There was shears everywhere, files, metal. That could be turned into weapons. And I spoke with the instructor and he said he's never felt unsafe. He's never been afraid. Likewise, the wood shop instructor said the same thing.

While the American officers were generally impressed by the high level of trust between Norwegian officers and those incarcerated, they also expressed apprehension and fear due to the potentially dangerous items that were readily available and the relative lack of weaponry at the Norwegian officers' disposal. As McPherson explained:

I'm a little tense already because I know already, OK? Hey, I'm going in to this institution, what, 1,300 inmates? What's going to happen today? What can you know, do, or not do, to make sure we walk out in one piece? I'm just amazed how comfortable prison officers were in that environment. No. No. Oh, see? No handcuffs. Nothing to defend themselves but a pack. Yes, a pack. An alarm system, you just button hit something, you know? And then everybody rushes in and rescues you. They're looking at the inmates warning them if they got to pick it up and beat the crap out of me. They'll cut my head off or decapitate me. Beyond that, we discuss basic, you know, what our inmates do and how they deal with the equipment. You know, that trust factor is something else. I just still can't bypass that. But it's dangerous.

Graham also expressed misgivings about the potential danger Norwegian officers faced due to their trusting practices:

Now the atmosphere is definitely more relaxed, but we still have to remember that they are inmates, we can't . . . I don't think you always have your back to 'em. That concerns me when I see a guard escorting an inmate and he's directly in front of them a few inches. And it's just like red flags going off in my head like that. You should not be in front of the inmate.

Dynamic security

Despite concerns about the potential for officer safety in Norwegian prisons as described in the section above, American officers had positive reactions to the Norwegian officers' heavy use of dynamic security strategies. For example, Steward stated:

Their [Norwegian officers'] theories and their practices are basically conversation, conversation, pieces, conversation tools to mediate anything there needs to be solved is always to sit them down and talk to them or to try to calm them down through verbal communication versus hands on altercations. It is a different type of knowledge of the inmates, their relationship in their meaningful activities. They basically feel like they're that dynamic pieces. Their relation and individualism creates a more relaxed and better order present. So that's their goal is to create a relaxed atmosphere, to create an atmosphere that is you create in your next-door neighbor. You're creating the person that you want to live next to, because

eventually they will get out because they do not have life sentences in Norway. These essential elements in dynamic security establish a positive relationship. They establish meaningful . . . they make them interact with meaningful activities.

When discussing dynamic security, another common observation American COs made was the recognition that American officers were already using this strategy, just not necessarily labeling it as such. As Jackson reflected:

There was one thing that stood out to me when they mentioned dynamic security at first. You know, I jokingly said like, well, we've heard of the word dynamic, and we've heard of the word security, but we don't use it together. And that was actually false. After hearing what they referred to as dynamic security, just having a close knowledge of the inmates and relationship and getting them involved in meaningful activities, I do believe, at least in [my department], we do that. I can only speak for myself, but I spend about an hour to an hour and a half sometimes with inmates that have been incarcerated for more than 10 years . . .

However, American officers perceived barriers in implementing dynamic security principles at home due to the culture of corrections in their prison and the fraternization policy. Young's reflection described this contrast in culture:

Now we're told not to be open with inmates. We're told not to be transparent. There's a culture of what we do. And we look at the idea of personal relationships really being a huge part of that process of reintegrating into somebody, somebody into society. You look at the way that we do it and you have a small amount of staff of the large amount inmates and everything's piecemeal And it's really the exact opposite of the way that you would want to foster relationships with people.

Clark likewise drew attention to the fraternization policy barrier to establishing meaningful relationships between officers and incarcerated persons:

Another thing I saw today that differs from what we see in the P.A. prisons are the fact that we can sit down and have a meal with the inmates. At my prison, we can't sit down and have a meal with inmates. We can't talk to them for more than more than a five-minute span at any given time or it'll be considered fraternization.

The recognition that the fraternization policy required by their state corrections department was a barrier to fully implementing dynamic security was echoed by Jackson:

But some of our policy and procedures do actually need to be changed. I was so happy and grateful that someone mentioned fraternization yesterday and how the definition how that policy has to be changed, because there's no way that our staff can engage and socialize and really get to know someone on that level that's expected under dynamic security in the current system the way it is. So, in the current system, we would be terminated for fraternization if we did utilize the Norwegian way immediately when we went back. If they tell us in paper or an e-mail or something that says that this is the new policy, then we can be truly engaging. Other than that, I don't see COs truly engaging with inmates with the current policies and procedures in place.

Communication

Another theme that emerged in the reflections of American COs was the lack of efficient communication with fellow staff in Pennsylvania. Participants reported that between each shift, the departing Scandinavian officers would relay information to the CO taking over

regarding what occurred on the unit. American officers believed that this process both kept all officers up to date about current events and prepared them with greater knowledge of the type of environment they would be working in during their shift. This point was emphasized by Stevens:

One thing that I take away that I appreciate it is the morning meeting and how both shifts meet all parties responsible for working in the area to actually sit down at a table and they review specific points from the log and anything that needs to be addressed Everything isn't communicated to the entire shift, to the entire staff. So, I believe their way of conducting the morning meeting would be more beneficial for us.

Study participants reported these meetings were transparent and that they facilitated a flow of information between prison staff. The result of this information sharing was reduced stress, as uncertainty about their workday diminished through this process. In addition to the between shift staff meetings, another opportunity for communication between staff occurred mid-workday in one prison during a 30-minute break. Carroll's reflection also provided insight into the varied types of staff meetings, indicating that even short meetings in which everyone gave quick check-ins and updates, were enough to make a difference in the social dynamic of staff.

At 8:30 we had a staff meeting So that was the staff meeting. That was at a big group staff meeting. We were in the cafeteria and everyone from each block sort of just talked about what was going on on their unit, etc.

Survey results

Overall, these results affirm the contemporaneous observations reported in the audio reflections and the differential manner in which Norwegian prisons were experienced. These officers generally responded favorably to questions about their work experiences in both Pennsylvania and Norway, though they rated the Norwegian prisons somewhat more favorably on each question. Although our 5-point Likert items are ordinal rather

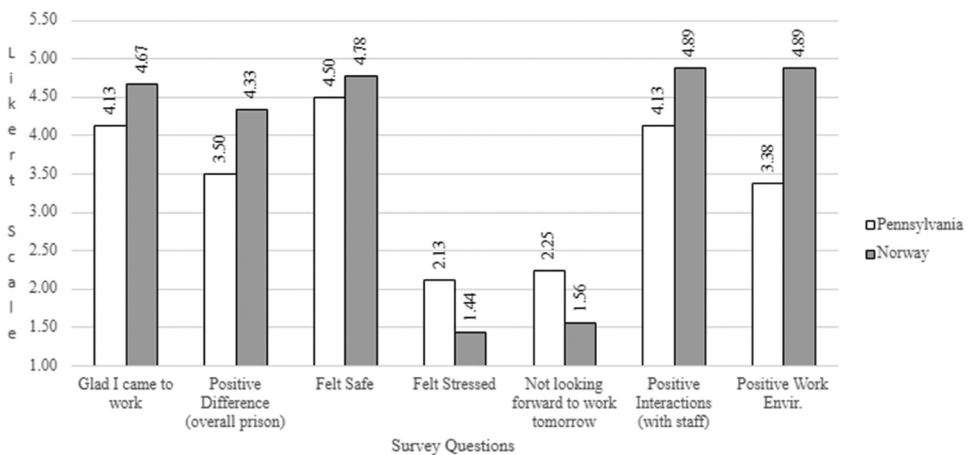


Figure 1. Co pre and post trip attitudes.

than interval-ratio measures, we present mean values for the simple comparisons shown in [Figure 1](#) (with items coded 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for agree, and 5 for strongly agree), but note that we observe the same pattern of results when the variables are dichotomized to indicate either agreement or strong agreement.

Given our small sample of 9 COs, we do not present statistical tests of the differences between their experiences in Norway and Pennsylvania but show a descriptive comparison in ([Figure 1](#).) The COs reported feeling somewhat less stressed and safer during their shifts in Norway than in Pennsylvania, though they generally agreed they felt safe in both settings. While in Norway, they were also more likely to say they were glad they came to work, that they made a positive difference in the overall prison environment, that they had positive interactions with staff, and that the prison provided a positive work environment. While in Norway fewer COs said they were not looking forward to coming to work the next day.

It is possible that the differences observed across the two settings (which ranged from .54 to 1.51 on our 5-point scale) reflect the excitement of international travel or the 'honeymoon' experience of a new setting. Nevertheless, the increase in positive attitudes and corresponding decrease in stress and negative outlooks corroborates the qualitative results, suggesting that Norway's prison system may be conducive to the wellness of COs.

Discussion, limitations and policy implications

Reflections from American COs throughout their trip served as a self-documenting, ethnographic recording of how prison culture and CO wellness in Norwegian prisons were perceived. In line with past research (i.e. Ferdik & Smith, 2017) these interview and survey data highlight the perceived relationship between the prison environment and job stress for COs. Comparing their experiences in Norway and in Pennsylvania, using both audio and survey data, illustrates the degree of differentiation within these two environments, with participants placing an emphasis on relationships, not on architectural or programming differences as might be expected. Though not establishing a causal relationship, the lower rates of stress and negative perceptions observed in Norway suggest that American prisons can reduce levels of stress – and the attendant harms – for COs by adapting some Norwegian policies by encouraging positive interactions between COs and those in custody; and through improving the conditions of employment for American COs (i.e. providing fresh healthy meals, frequent breaks, comfortable clothing), corroborating the suggestions in prior research on Norwegian corrections (e.g. Ahalt et al., 2020).

The SPP broadly, and the exchange more specifically, were intended to provide COs and corrections staff with the opportunity to reconceptualize their roles in prisons and consider the impact that changes could have on their own well-being and the well-being of incarcerated people under their supervision. As a 'bottom-up' reform effort, the COs in the exchange focused on their work and what they would be able to change on the SPP housing unit. Their reflections, as reported here, reinforce that focus. While possibly constrained by the resource limitations and policy restrictions within the PADOC, the work that followed the exchange would be an effort to demonstrate the adaptability and transplantability of the Scandinavian approaches on a hyper-local level. Additional expansion of these efforts would require buy-in from a range of stakeholders, including

leadership at other prisons, agency leadership and, where additional fiscal resources and political support are needed, the legislature. The emphasis of the SPP, however, lies in these officers, their experiences, and the unit they will eventually oversee.

While this study contributes to the limited literature on CO well-being, its limitations should be acknowledged. First, the rich reflection data analyzed came from a small number of correctional employees (12) and as such, results should be interpreted with caution. Relatedly, the corrections staff that chose to participate in the SPP may be more receptive to adapting their perspective than corrections workers in the US as a whole. Similarly, these findings derived from COs in Pennsylvania may not be applicable to COs from other US states, and finally, the SPP is a unique project that will be difficult to replicate. That said, this study reveals several pertinent findings and future research should address the extent to which they are reproduced in other regions and correctional populations.

Notably, throughout these data, American COs emphasized the importance of trust among prison staff and with persons in their custody. This trust facilitated meaningful relationships which in turn were seen as improving officer security. In line with the goals of dynamic security, officers felt that deeper connections with incarcerated persons would help de-escalate conflict and reduce violence against staff. Over time, participating officers seemed to appreciate the benefits of reorienting staff-incarcerated people relationships in line with the new (to them) principles of dynamic security. While this would require modifying multiple rules in Pennsylvania, including the core definition of impermissible fraternization, these policies could radically reform the communication, behavioral and rehabilitative dynamic in those prisons. Fraternization policies act as a barrier to communication between COs and people in custody due to the fear of reprimand and penalty a CO can receive for interacting too personally with those who are incarcerated. Revising this harsh policy would allow an opportunity for open dialogue and communication – improving the quality of relationships between incarcerated people and prison staff. While power differentials and different life experiences between those in custody and those employed persist, improvements in positive relationships between these groups could help decrease emotional and situational distance and enhance the well-being of both populations.

Likewise, developing trust and transparency among staff could be beneficial. Frequent communication among prison staff may reduce stress, as it can improve the safe and smooth operations of facilities and alert staff to potential risks, ultimately improving safety. In support of this goal, participating officers suggested implementing a meeting between shifts, to both facilitate communication and to allow for relationships to develop. These changes would require reforms to the current organizational hierarchy of American prisons but could significantly improve the prison environment and the wellness of those within it.

Finally, the experience of American officers in Norway highlights fundamental differences in the priorities of corrections, visible both through contrasting emphases in prison security *and* shown by the conditions, amenities, and considerations of COs wellbeing. While it may be impossible to replicate the structure and benefits of the Norwegian prison environment and the larger welfare state, there are some simple lessons that can be learned. For example, our findings suggest that providing quality food to COs while at work, considering the comfort of their uniforms, and increasing the duration of at-work

breaks for COs could improve both morale and reduce stress. This is consistent with past scholarship indicating that morale is crucial to workplace well-being (Minor et al., 2009, 2014; Sudom et al., 2006). In turn, these policy shifts are likely to help reduce levels of unwellness that are so pervasively documented among American COs today.

Conclusion

Comparative studies provide powerful leverage for informing both science and policy. Looking outward to Scandinavia, a region in which both incarcerated persons and COs fare better than in the US, provides a means to better understand and address US CO *unwellness*. In the SPP, the purpose of American COs shadowing their Norwegian counterparts was to identify, recognize, and adapt components of Scandinavian corrections that could improve American corrections. As we show, a number of key drivers of CO unwellness in the US are mediated through methods used in Scandinavian prisons. The relationships officers cultivate with fellow officers, as well as incarcerated individuals, are crucial to positive work-attitude and wellbeing and can reduce CO stress and improve health. Implementing new US communication protocols and expectations can promote a healthier and safer work environment for COs and incarcerated persons alike.

Notes

1. However, in our project we address this issue to some degree through our site selection. The prison from which the SPP officers were selected was chosen in part because it diverges from national trends and has the most racially diverse staff of prisons in the state.
2. Other recommendations include enhancing static security and even greater reliance on coercive measures, such as the use of solitary confinement to increase safety and thus officer wellbeing (Fredrik & Smith, 2017). However, such static security practices have been shown to have negative effects (such as the well-known deleterious effects of solitary confinement (Smith, 2006).
3. Due to the relatively small number of DOC officials and COs who are involved in the SPP we do not differentiate between the types of correctional employees in our findings, nor do we identify their races or genders. We reference our participants using last-name pseudonyms.

Acknowledgement

The authors gratefully acknowledge support for this Article and the broader Scandinavian Prison Project from Arnold Ventures, the Norwegian Research Council for Criminology (“NSfK”), the Scandinavian-American Foundation, and Drexel University. This project would not have been possible without the support of the Norwegian Correctional Service, and the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Steven L. Chanenson  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0744-9567>

References

- Ahalt, C., Haney, C., Ekhaugen, K., & Williams, B. (2020, January 1). Role of a US–Norway exchange in placing health and well-being at the center of US prison reform. *American Journal of Public Health*, 110(S1), S27–S29.
- Barker, V. (2013). Nordic exceptionalism revisited: Explaining the paradox of a janus-faced penal regime. *Theoretical Criminology*, 17(1), 5–25.4.
- Brower, J. (2013). Correctional officer wellness and safety literature review. US Department of Justice. Retrieved from <http://www.middlesexsheriff.org/CorrectionalOfficerWellnessSafety%5fLitReview.pdf>
- Bruhn, A., Nylander, P.Å., & Johnsen, B. (2017). From prison guards to ... what? Occupational development of prison officers in Sweden and Norway. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 18(1), 68–83.
- Chanenson, S. L., Andersen, S. N., Hyatt, J. M., Hoidal, A., Eason, K., & Connor-Council, P. (2021). "Ice in the Stomach": Reforming Prisons at Home and Abroad. *Am. Crim. L. Rev.*, 58, 1775.
- Cheek, F.E. (1984). *Stress management for correctional officers and their families*. Alexandria, VA: American Correctional Association.
- Churchill, W. (1910, July 20). Speech before the house of commons on the treatment of criminals. Retrieved from http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1910/jul/20/class-iii#55CV0019P0_19100720_HOC_288
- Crewe, B. (2011). Soft power in prison: Implications for staff–prisoner relationships, liberty and legitimacy. *European Journal of Criminology*, 8(6), 455–468.
- Cullen, F.T., Link, B.G., Wolfe, N.T., & Frank, J. (1985). The social dimensions of correctional officer stress. *Justice Quarterly*, 2(4), 505–533.
- Cullen, F.T., Lutze, F.E., Link, B.G., & Wolfe, N.T. (1989). The correctional orientation of prison guards: Do officers support rehabilitation?. *Federal Probation*, 53, 33–42.
- DataUSA. (2014). Bailiffs, correctional workers, officers, jailers. Retrieved from <https://datausa.io/profile/soc/bailiffs-correctional-officers-jailers>
- Eide, H.M.K., & Westrheim, K.G. (2020). Norwegian prison officers' perspectives on professionalism and professional development opportunities in their occupation. *Journal of Prison Education and Reentry*, 6(3), 316–332.
- Evers, T.J., Oglloff, J.R., Trounson, J.S., & Pfeifer, J.E. (2020). Well-being interventions for correctional officers in a prison setting: a review and meta-analysis. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 47(1), 3–21.
- Ferdik, F.V., & Hills, P. (2018). Analyzing further predictors of correctional officer professional orientations: The role of turnover intentions. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 62(6), 1668–1693.
- Ferdik, F.V., & Smith, H. (2017). *Correctional officer safety and wellness literature synthesis*. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice.
- Ferdik, F.V. (2018). Correctional officer risk perceptions and professional orientations: Examining linkages between the two. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 45(2), 264–285.
- Gaes, G.G. (1985). The effects of overcrowding in prison. *Crime and Justice*, 6, 95–146.
- Garland, D., (Ed.). (2001). *Mass imprisonment: Social causes and consequences*. London: Sage.
- Gilbert, M.J. (1997). The illusion of structure: A critique of the classical model of organization and the discretionary power of correctional officers. *Criminal Justice Review*, 22(1), 49–64.
- Griffin, M.L., Hogan, N.L., Lambert, E., Tucker-Gail, K., & Baker, D.N. (2009). Job involvement, job stress, job satisfaction and organizational commitment and the burnout of correctional staff. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 37(2), 239–255.
- Harrell, E. (2011). *Workplace violence, 1993-2009*. Washington, DC: U.S.Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Hean, S., Willumsen, E., & Ødegård, A. (2017). Collaborative practices between correctional and mental health services in Norway: Expanding the roles and responsibility competence domain. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 31(1), 18–27.
- Hilliard, T.E. (2020). *The impact of formal and informal controls on recidivism in Norway and the United States: The case of North Dakota prison experiment*. Greenville, NC: East Carolina University.

- Hinkkanen, V., & Lappi-Seppälä, T. (2011). Sentencing theory, policy, and research in the Nordic countries. *Crime and Justice*, 40(1), 349–404.
- Hogan, N.L., Lambert, E.G., Jenkins, M., & Wambold, S. (2006). The impact of occupational stressors on correctional staff organizational commitment: A preliminary study. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 22(1), 44–62.
- Høidal, A. (2018). Normality behind the walls: Examples from halden prison. *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 31(1), 58–66.
- Høidal, A. (2019). Prisoners' association as an alternative to solitary confinement—lessons learned from a norwegian high-security prison. In *Solitary confinement: effects, practices, and pathways toward reform* (pp. 297). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hyatt, J.M., Andersen, S.N., & Chanenson, S.L. (2020). Prison cells as a grounded embodiment of penal ideologies: A Norwegian-American comparison. In Turner J., Knight V. (eds), *The prison cell* (pp. 45–70). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-39911-5_3
- Hyatt, S.N., Andersen, S.L., Chanenson, S., Horowitz, V.L., & Uggen, C. (2021). 'We can actually do this': Adapting scandinavian correctional culture in Pennsylvania. *American Criminal Law Review*, 58(3), 1715–1746.
- Jermier, J.M., & Berkes, L.J. (1979). Leader behavior in a police command bureaucracy: A closer look at the quasi-military model. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24(1), 1–23.
- Johnsen, B., Granheim, P.K., & Helgesen, J. (2011). Exceptional prison conditions and the quality of prison life: Prison size and prison culture in Norwegian closed prisons. *European Journal of Criminology*, 8(6), 515–529.
- Johnsrud, L.K., & Rosser, V.J. (2002). Faculty members' morale and their intention to leave: A multilevel explanation. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 73(4), 518–542.
- Lambert, E.G. & Paoline, E.A. (2008). The influence of demographic characteristics, job characteristics, and organizational structure on correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. *Criminal Justice Review*, 33(4), 541–564.
- Lambert, E.G. (2004). The impact of job characteristics on correctional staff. *Prison Journal*, 84(2), 208–227.
- Lambert, E.G, Hogan, N.L., & Barton, S.M. (2002). The impact of work-family conflict on correctional staff job satisfaction: An exploratory study. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 27(1), 35–52.
- Lambert, E.G, Hogan, N.L., & Jiang, S. (2010). A preliminary examination of the relationship between organizational structure and emotional burnout among correctional staff. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 49(2), 125–146.
- Lambert, E.G, Hogan, N., Paoline, E.A., & Clarke, A. (2005). The impact of role stressors on job stress, job satisfaction and organizational commitment among private prison staff. *Security Journal*, 18(4), 33–50.
- Lappi-Seppälä, T. (2007). Penal policy in Scandinavia. *Crime and Justice*, 36(1), 217–295.I.
- Leip, L.A., & Stinchcomb, J.B. (2013). Should I stay or should I go? Job satisfaction and turnover intent of jail staff throughout the United States. *Criminal Justice Review*, 38(2), 226–241.
- Liebling, A., & Arnold, H. (2004). *Prisons and their moral performance: A study of values, quality, and prison life*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Liebling, A. (2000). Prison officers, policing and the use of discretion. *Theoretical Criminology*, 4(3), 333–357.
- Liebling, A. (2011). Distinctions and distinctiveness in the work of prison officers: legitimacy and authority revisited. *European Journal of Criminology*, 8(6), 484–499.
- Mack, K., & Rhineberger-Dunn, G. (2021). What matters most? Comparing the impact of individual, job, and organizational factors on job stress and job satisfaction among juvenile justice personnel. *Criminal Justice Studies*, 1–20. doi:10.1080/1478601X.2021.1929207
- Management and Training Corporation. (2011). *Correctional officers: Strategies to improve retention*. Centerville, UT: Author.
- Matz, A.K., Wells, J.B., Minor, K.I., & Angel, E. (2013). Predictors of turnover intention among staff in juvenile correctional facilities: the relevance of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 11(2), 115–131.
- Menninger, K. (1968). *The Crime of Punishment*. New York, NY: Viking Press.

- Minor, K.I., Dawson-Edwards, C., Wells, J.B., Griffith, C., & Angel, E. (2009). Understanding staff perceptions of turnover in corrections. *Professional Issues in Criminal Justice*, 4, 43–57.
- Minor, K.I., Wells, J.B., Lambert, E.G. & Keller, P. (2014). Increasing morale: personal and work environment antecedents of job morale among staff in juvenile corrections. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 41(11), 1308–1326.
- Morris, N.(1974). *The Future of Imprisonment*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Nellis, A. (2016). The color of justice: Racial and ethnic disparity in state prisons.
- New Jersey Police Suicide Task Force. (2009). *New Jersey Police Suicide Task Force Report*. Trenton, NJ: New Jersey Police Suicide Task Force. Retrieved from [https://www.nj.gov/oag/library/NJPoliceSuicideTaskForceReport-January-30-2009-Final\(r2.3.09\).pdf](https://www.nj.gov/oag/library/NJPoliceSuicideTaskForceReport-January-30-2009-Final(r2.3.09).pdf)
- Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police. (2018). Punishment that works—less crime—a safe society: Report to the storting on the norwegian correctional services (english summary). *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 31(1), 52–57.
- Parker, J.R. (2011). Florida mortality study: Florida law enforcement and correctional officers compared to florida general population.
- Phelps, M.S. (2011). Rehabilitation in the punitive era: The gap between rhetoric and reality in US prison programs. *Law & Society Review*, 45(1), 33–68.
- Pratt, J. (2008a). Scandinavian exceptionalism in an era of penal excess part I: The nature and roots of Scandinavian exceptionalism. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 48(2), 119–137.
- Pratt, J. (2008b). Scandinavian exceptionalism in an era of penal excess: part II: Does Scandinavian exceptionalism have a future? *The British Journal of Criminology*, 48(3), 275–292.
- Shammas, V.L. (2016). The rise of a more punitive state: On the attenuation of Norwegian penal exceptionalism in an era of welfare state transformation. *Critical Criminology*, 24(1), 57–74.
- Smith, P.S., & Ugelvik, T. (2017). *Punishment and welfare in Scandinavia*. In *Scandinavian penal history, culture and prison practice* (pp. 511–529). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Smith, P.S. (2006). The effects of solitary confinement on prison inmates: A brief history and review of the literature. *Crime and Justice*, 34(1), 441–528.
- Stack, S.J., & Tsoudis, O. (1997). Suicide risk among correctional officers: A logistic regression analysis. *Archives of Suicide Research*, 3(3), 183–186.
- Steiner, B. (2008). *Maintaining prison order: Understanding causes of inmate misconduct within and across Ohio correctional institutions* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Cincinnati.
- Steiner, B. (2009). Assessing static and dynamic influences on inmate violence levels. *Crime and Delinquency*, 55(1), 134–161.
- Sudom, K., Dursun, S., & Flemming, S. (2006). *Perstempo in the canadian forces: The role of coping and cohesion in the relationship between job stress and morale*. Ontario: Department Of National Defence Ottawa.
- Sykes, G. M.(1958). *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison*. Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press.
- Uggen, C., Stewart, R., & Horowitz, V. (2018). Why not minnesota? Norway, justice reform, and 50-labs federalism. *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 31(1), 5–13.
- Violanti, J.M. (2017). Suicide behind the wall: A national analysis of corrections officer suicide. *Suicidology Online*, 8, 58–64.
- Von Hirsch, A. (1976). *Doing Justice: The Choice of Punishments*. New York, NY: Hill & Wang.
- Walters, G.D. (2020). Getting to the source: How inmates and other staff contribute to correctional officer stress. *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 1–14. doi:10.1080/0735648X.2020.1862696
- Weakliem, D.L., & Frenkel, S.J. (2006). Morale and workplace performance. *Work and Occupations*, 33(3), 335–361.

Appendices

Appendix A: Codebook.

| Name | Description | Files | References |
|---------------------------------|---|-------|------------|
| Danger | Any reference to danger | 12 | 59 |
| Direct Comparison International | Any direct international comparison. | 12 | 208 |
| Discipline-CO | Any reference to COs being disciplined | 1 | 1 |
| Discipline-Pris | Any reference to disciplining people in prison | 11 | 51 |
| Dynamic Security | Any mention of dynamic security | 12 | 231 |
| Exercise | Any mention of exercise | 11 | 39 |
| Food-Nutrition | Any discussion of food or nutrition | 11 | 67 |
| Fraternization | Any reference to the DOC's fraternization policy | 8 | 62 |
| Health depends on pris. | Any mention of how CO health depends on the wellbeing of incarcerated people. | 10 | 25 |
| Health-Mental | Any discussion of CO mental health | 8 | 13 |
| Health-Physical | Any discussion of CO physical health | 10 | 15 |
| Morale | Any discussion of correctional officer morale—positive or negative | 12 | 116 |

| Name | Description | Files | References |
|----------------------|--|-------|------------|
| Staff-Prisoner ratio | Any discussion of staff-prisoner ratio | 6 | 41 |
| Stress | Any reference to work-related stress | 11 | 47 |
| Treatment by pris. | Any discussion of how incarcerated people treat COs/ | 11 | 66 |
| Treatment by sup. | Any discussion of how COs are treated by their superiors | 9 | 45 |
| Uniforms | Any discussion of correctional officer uniforms | 11 | 41 |
| Weapons | Any discussion of weapons | 8 | 25 |

Appendix B: Guide for Officer Daily Reflections

Correctional Officer Daily Diary Instructions

2019 PENNSYLVANIA CORRECTIONAL OFFICER DAILY DIARY

At the end of each day, use your recorder to answer the following questions: 15-45 min.

- Start by giving the date and time.
- Describe what you did during the day and where you were.
- What are the key things you learned?
- What, if anything, surprised you?
- How does what you saw today differ from what you see in Pennsylvania?
- What, if anything, stands out about the day?
- How do you feel about the day's experience?
- Record any other thoughts, feelings, or reflections you have about the day or your time in Scandinavian corrections to date.

Appendix C: Survey Instructions, Questions, Scoring

Survey Instructions:

For this section, think about your overall experience during this shift/day. Respond to each of the following statements indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree.

Exact Language of Questions Used in Figure:

- (1) I am glad that I came to work today.
- (2) I made a positive difference in prison life at least one inmate today.
- (3) I felt safe during this shift/day.
- (4) I felt stressed out during this shift/ day.
- (5) I am not looking forward to coming to work tomorrow.
- (6) I had positive interactions with other staff.
- (7) This prison provides a positive working environment.

Survey Response Options and Scoring:

Each survey item is coded on a 5-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree). The specific survey questions are as follows; (1) I am glad that I came to work today; (2) I made a positive difference in the overall prison environment today; (3) I felt safe during this shift/day; (4) I felt stressed out during this shift/day; (5) I am not looking forward to coming to work tomorrow; (6) I had positive interactions with other staff; (7) This prison provides a positive working environment.