



“Relational Re-entry” of Disordered and Disruptive Offenders in the US

Professor Beth Angell

Rutgers University,
and Visiting Fellow, Prisons Research Centre, IoC

Institute of Criminology Public Seminar Series

Thursday 23rd February 2012, 5.00pm (new time!)

Seminar Room B3, Institute of Criminology,
Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA

A drinks reception in the basement foyer will follow this seminar for attendees

Over the two past decades, increasing attention has been paid to the rise of mental health problems among offender populations in the United States. Competing discourses are employed to account for these trends, the most prominent of which is the “criminalization of mental illness” narrative that views mentally disordered offenders as a product of the hydraulic shifting of bodies between diminished (asylum) and expanding (prison) institutions. This discourse has produced a new category of prisoner, the “mentally disordered offender,” for whom specialized services are being developed which aim to halt the cycle of reincarceration by addressing both psychiatric and criminological needs. The styles and methods of such programs vary according to the degree in which they construct the subject of intervention as ill (and thus in need of therapeutic intervention) or criminal (and thus in need of punishment and control). Based on 18 months of fieldwork in a program designed in the therapeutic style of intervention in Chicago, this presentation will examine the experiences of staff and offenders in the first nine months following release from state prisons. In particular, the presentation will focus on the uniquely relational forms of power that are used in these interventions by service providers who lack the capacity to invoke “hard leverage” to influence disordered and disruptive behaviour.

Beth Angell is Associate Professor in the School of Social Work and the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, where she is also an affiliate of the Center for Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Research. Her research programme focuses on mental disorder, coercive treatment processes, staff-client relationships, stigma, and the criminal justice-mental health interface, and her published work appears in journals such as *Crime and Delinquency*, *Social Service Review*, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, and *Psychiatric Services*.

This seminar is free, and is open to all interested in attending, with no ticket required.

If you wish to be added to the seminar mailing list, please contact: Joanne Garner, on: jf225@cam.ac.uk

For full listing of IoC Seminars: <http://www.crim.cam.ac.uk/> For directions: <http://www.crim.cam.ac.uk/where.html>