



Butler Trust Lecture
16 September 2015


***Prisons, trust and the role of the
prison officer***

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Outline

- 2 case studies of 'ordinary' but outstanding prison work
- A methodologically creative study of the location and building of trust in prison, and its rationale
- Some findings: important prison differences (and what happened next)
- I-It, I-Thou relations and the concept of 'emergent personhood'
- Why intelligent trust matters in the 'good use of authority'.
- Why outstanding prison officers/prison staff are special and why we need more of them (but fewer prisoners)



What happened next (letters from prisoners/post- research visits)

- ▶ *A Wing Relationships Committee*: 'to make a difference to our lives and those of our fellow residents by attempting to improve the relationships between residents and between residents and the staff'. Mission statement: 'All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person'. ICCPR, Article 10(1) (full notes of proceedings: research, description, and change – 'addressing issues': Council, competitions, 'diversity awakening' – ask questions) FS, May 2015 (including a Butler Trust award nomination signed by whole wing)
- ▶ 'Our interactive educational progression group are currently engaging in an excellent initiative by the new No.1 Governor here called '*working together*'. We meet once a month: inmates, the No.1 Governor, Heads of Depts, and any other people who can forward the initiative. Separate meetings are held on the wings that feed into the main meeting ... We have been busy, and the prison is trying' .. (Lots of ideas implemented: peer inductions, a progression folder, 'transformative education' workshops with visitors). 'The efforts of you and your colleagues at Cambridge are not in vain'. (Prisoner, Frankland, August 2015)
- ▶ 'Alison, try and *arrange a seminar within the establishment* with your team which will continue to open the doors of equality and justice' (Prisoner, Full Sutton, September 2015)



2 case studies of 'ordinary' but outstanding prison work

- ▶ A horticulture instructor 'grows prisoners'.
- ▶ Officers 'feel their way' with a complex and challenging prisoner, and support a downgrade. It is successful.
- ▶ (Countless other 'people person' examples – a DTO at FS, a PO PEI, a probation officer, a chaplain, a PO/CM: clear/secure professional identities, values-driven, non-partisan, aim = to move people forward, on their/negotiated terms)

Transforming Social Science (ESRC)

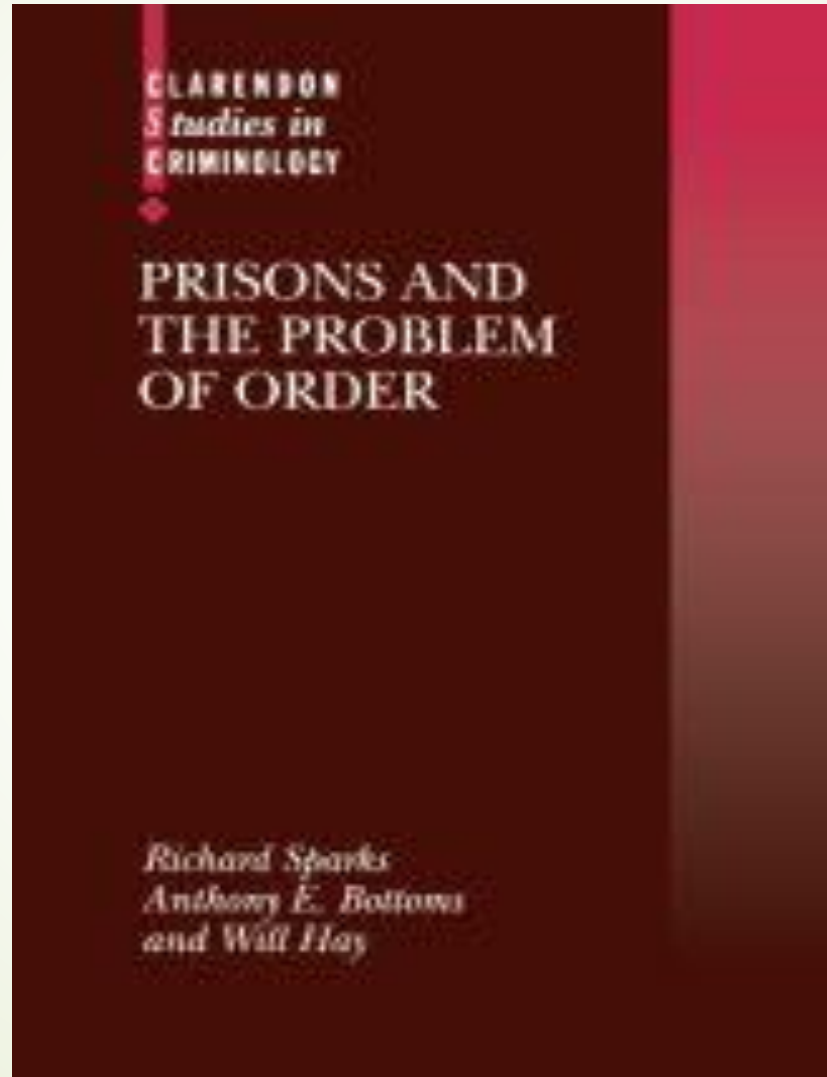
July 2013 - May 2015

Locating trust in a climate of fear: religion, moral status, prisoner leadership, and risk in maximum security prisons

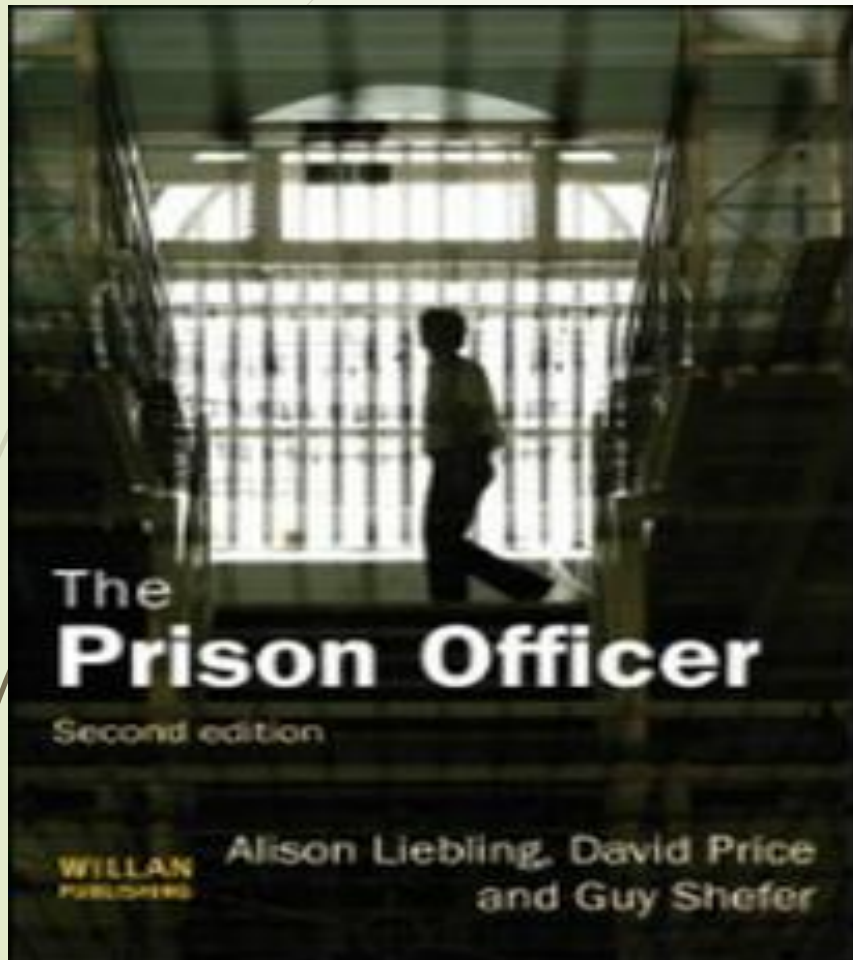
Alison Liebling, Ruth Armstrong,
Ryan Williams, Richard Bramwell



Prisons and the Problem of Order



The Prison Officer and 'Whitemoor 1'





Ministry of
JUSTICE
National Offender
Management Service

**An exploration of
staff – prisoner relationships at
HMP Whitemoor: 12 Years On**

Revised Final Report

Alison Liebling, Helen Arnold and Christina Straub

**Cambridge Institute of Criminology
Prisons Research Centre
November 2011**

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217381/staff-prisoner-relations-whitemoor.pdf

Outcomes: Violence and damage to character?

(Jonathan Jacobs, John Jay College of Criminal Justice/CUNY)

‘There are reasons to conclude that the prison experience often *undermines the civil disposition* or impedes the formation of one. In prison there is very little experience of rule-governed activity apart from the requirements of compliance for the sake of order ... Thus, prison is often a context in which there is rule-governed activity with no *telos* (apart from maintaining order) and, in addition, the enforcement of rules can appear inscrutable or uneven in ways that aggravate demoralization.

Jacobs, J (in progress) ‘Agency, Character, and the Criminal Sanction’



Key message

- *Empirical differences in levels of trust in prison have major consequences for life in those prisons.*
- 

Locating trust in a climate of fear: religion, moral status, prisoner leadership, and risk in maximum security prisons

Methods

- 2 contrasting high security prisons: Full Sutton, Frankland
- 'Slow entry in the field..'
- Dialogue
- **Appreciative Inquiry**
- Observation/Shadowing
- Long interviews
- Trust diagram (people/places)
- Participation
- Relevant previous studies (e.g. Sparks et al 1996)
- Social Field Generator
- MQPL (revised – trust, intelligent trust, hope and political charge)
- The team: (expertise in prison sociology and measurement, theology, networks, hip-hop/black culture, trust-religion-risk relationships, social psychology)
- 3rd prison .. Long Lartin

Revised dimensions measuring the moral quality of prison life in high security (2014) MQPL

- **Harmony**
- Entry into custody
- Respect/courtesy
- Staff-Prisoner relationships
- Humanity
- Decency
- Care for the vulnerable
- Help and assistance
- ***Trust*
- ***Intelligent trust*

- **Professionalism**
- Staff professionalism
- Bureaucratic legitimacy
- Fairness
- Organisation and consistency

- **Security**
- Policing and security
- Prisoner safety
- [Prisoner adaptation]
- [Drugs and exploitation]

- **Conditions and Family Contact**
- Regime decency
- Family contact

- **Wellbeing and Development**
- Personal development
- Personal autonomy
- [Wellbeing]
- [Distress]
- ***Political charge*

Mark S. Hamm (2013)

Clashing Viewpoints on Prisoner Radicalization

- 1) Western prisons are incubators for radical Islam and terrorist ideology.
- 2) Prisoner radicalization is non-existent; if anything, Islam contributes to rehabilitation.
- 3) Radicalization occurs only under specific conditions of confinement.
- 4) 'Failed state' (mismanaged, understaffed) prisons generate 'political charge' (anger and alienation).



Political charge

- My time in prison has made me angry.
- The prison authorities are guiltier than I am for wrongdoing.
- I feel more like fighting back in this prison.
- I dislike this prison's treatment of people like me.
- I feel shame for what I have done to get here.
- The level of suspicion in this prison is too high.
- I have become more tolerant of (other) faith groups in this prison.
- The problems we are facing in this prison need action now.
- I have seen things happen to other prisoners in here that are simply wrong.
- I accept that there is a reason for me being here

Example from Nvivo node – 'political charge'

- ▶ They are playing with your life. I had just finished a seven year sentence for robbery with firearms. I had to go and see the Probation Officer... She asked me my views on suicide bombers and the world's current affairs. So just to be sarcastic and cheeky, because I was pissed off by that, I said 'Yeah. I can round up a 100 soldiers and they will do damage... I am all with the suicide bombers... " Whey, what happened is, she got in touch with the Anti-terrorist team, police, and I got recalled, sent to prison for 8 months. I kept insisting, 'Listen I was asked by a Probation Officer, my views on the world current affairs'. All I have been drumming about is I need help in employment, I need help in CV. I need help to stand on my own two feet, but I wasn't getting no help. All I was being told is that you are not there to help me, you are just there to monitor me. What are you trying to insinuate... I don't understand it. So basically I got sent to prison. I got eight months. I got out. I was out for three, four years, now I am back in. Now this gets brought up every year. *That is when I say that I don't trust the system, because I find the system evil. How can I put it? The spawns of the devil, that's what they are.* Anyone that believes in God, whether they are Christians, whether they are Jewish, whether they are Muslims, the system is made up to break them down.
- ▶ Do you feel part of society?
- ▶ No. Never. I've never felt I was part of society, and I wanted to... This is what I was screaming out at my probation officer. I was begging her, I need help. I need a job. I have got no money, please help me. The only two questions. My views on suicide bombers and my views on world current affairs. What's that got to do with benefits? They don't help you, give you information on how to go about looking for jobs, or job interviews. How to dress, how to talk, how to present yourself. They don't teach you all of this, so it is a vicious circle, which is done deliberate to keep them in their jobs. If there was no prisons they wouldn't be in a job, so they need us ... to keep the water, the cash flowing.

Political charge (TACT offender)

Can you tell me about this period where you became pro Black, like what led up to it?

- Obviously it formed almost definitely because of racism ... I grew up in a predominantly white area, occasionally I would come into contact with racists ... shouting racial insults or whatever. This sort of thing made me reflect, obviously I've had interaction with racist teachers as well. So this makes me think mmm ... I don't like these guys. But at the same time I could never be fully racist, because some of my closest friends were white, so I knew it wasn't all white people but I developed an animosity to those who wanted to look down on me. There was a never ending conflict with police. To me they represented the State, the Government and if they were able to legally harass, stop me in the street, search me in front of everybody, in front of strangers ... *I began feeling as though the State is against me, or against people like me ...* [My white friend] genuinely couldn't believe the police will stop and harass somebody for no good reason. To me, that showed the government allow the police to do this, it has to be corrupt ... You know calling us 'scum', 'black scum bag', things like that. Like they wanted to harm us. *You could see the racism in their eyes. At the time I thought, I have to counter this racism with a racism of my own, so I became pro Black.*

Political charge

	Full Sutton 2014 Mean	Long Lartin 2014 Mean	Frankland 2014 Mean
All	2.61	2.72	2.95
White	2.70	2.67	3.00
BME	2.46	2.74	2.67
Muslim	2.49	2.52	2.63
Threshold/Tipping point?	2.50	2.50	2.50

Intelligent Trust

Item	Full Sutton 2014 Mean	Long Lartin 2014 Mean	Frankland 2014 Mean
The right people are trusted for the right reasons in this prison.	2.79	2.76	2.91
I feel recognized as the person I am in this prison.	2.58	2.80	3.02
I have opportunities to show I am trustworthy in this prison.	2.70	2.98	3.19
This prison is good at placing trust in prisoners.	2.21	2.29	2.49
I feel I am trusted quite a lot in this prison.		2.68	
Dimension mean	2.57	2.71	2.91
$\alpha =$.74	.83	.78

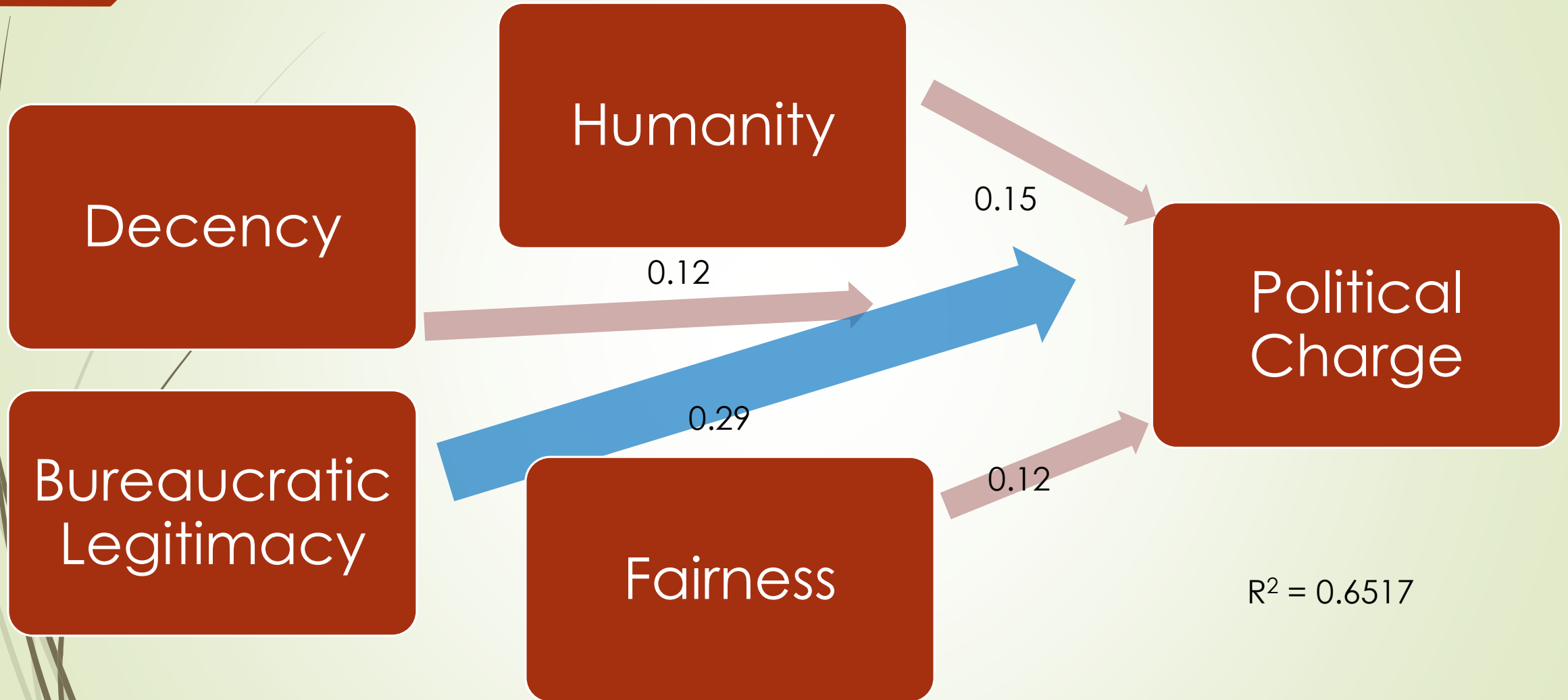


Hypotheses

- 1. Some intelligent trust generates constructive faith exploration/identities or 'spiritual capital', as well as personal growth; and lowers risk.
- 2. Higher levels of trust characterise a prison, and become extended into staff groups and between departments as well as between all staff groups and prisoners.
- 3. 'Failed state prisons', paralysed by distrust, generate more 'political charge' and (therefore) more dangerous faith identities.
- 4. Different types of prisoners are esteemed, or rise to the top of the prisoner hierarchy, carrying influence, in these different kinds of climates.

	Whitemoor	Full Sutton	Long Lartin	Frankland
	2009 N=159	2014 N=167	2014 N=174	2014 N=165
Entry into Custody	2.76	2.69	2.76	2.94**
Respect/Courtesy	2.76	2.86	3.08*	3.19***
Staff-prisoner relationships	2.60	2.71	2.85	3.06***
Humanity	2.55	2.61	2.77†	2.92**
Decency	2.56	2.57	2.73*	2.83**
Care for the vulnerable	2.91	2.91	2.95	3.14**
Help and assistance	2.88	2.86	2.95	3.00†
Staff professionalism	2.67†	2.84	2.93	3.14**
Bureaucratic legitimacy	2.13	2.00	2.14†	2.34**
Fairness	2.44	2.42	2.45	2.69**
Organisation and Consistency	2.52*	2.71	2.62	2.84
Policing and security	3.29***	3.50	3.12*	3.45***
Prisoner safety	3.04*	3.24	3.23	3.26
Prisoner adaptation	3.62	3.58	3.59	3.65
Drugs and exploitation	3.07	3.00	2.82†	3.01
Conditions	3.43***	3.75	3.59†	3.85
Family contact	2.92	2.88	3.19**	3.10
Personal Development	2.66	2.59	2.74	2.85**
Personal autonomy	2.54	2.64	2.63	2.81*
Wellbeing	2.39	2.45	2.49	2.75
Distress	3.41	3.56	3.35*	3.48
Hope		3.07	3.02	2.94
Trust		2.65	2.66	2.85*
Feeling intelligently trusted		2.57	2.70	2.91
Political charge		2.61	2.72†	2.94
Quality of life score (1-10) mean	4.49	4.70	5.06	5.44†

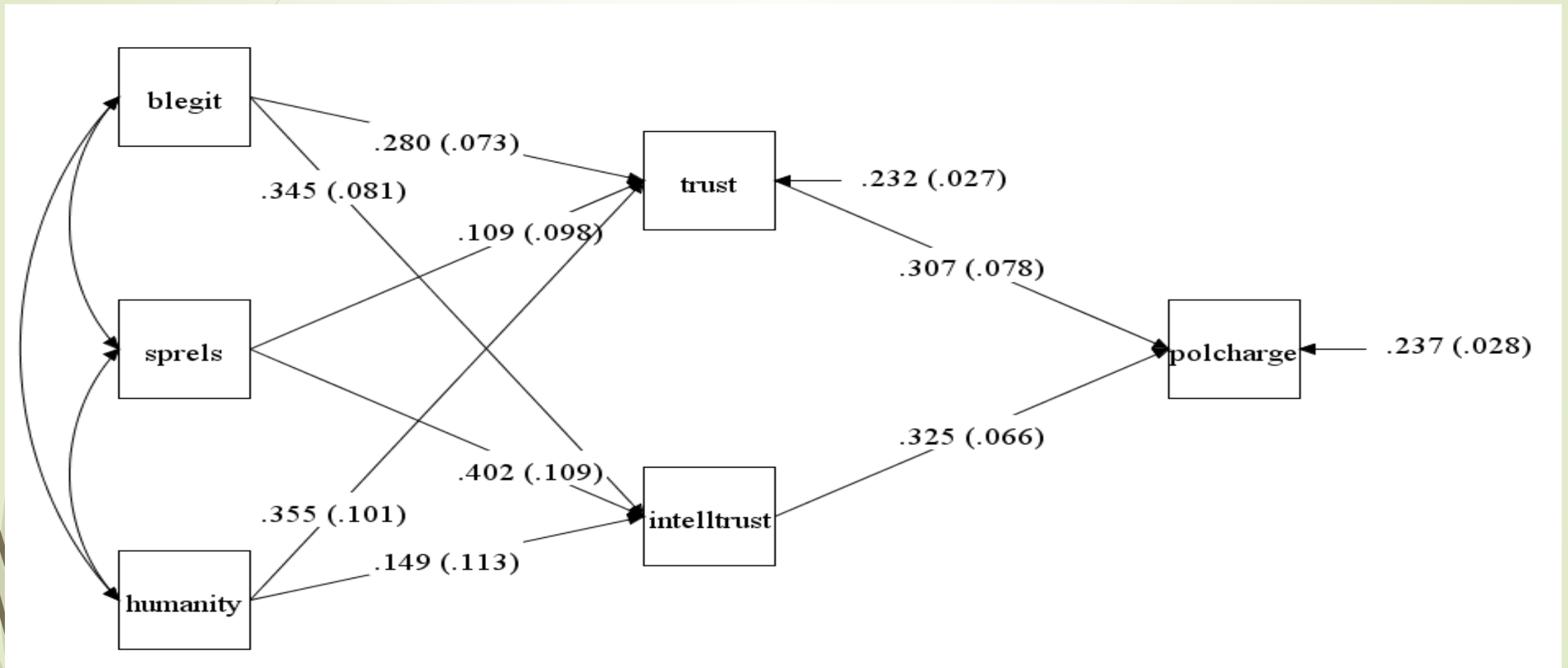
Explaining the Variance in Political Charge



HMP FULL SUTTON Dimension means by wing

	N=19	N=22	N=19	N=19	N=23	N=23	N=9	N=2	N=7	N=143
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Healthcare	Seg	Total
Entry into custody	2.90	2.64	3.19	2.60	2.73	2.65	2.87	2.80	2.67	2.77
Respect/courtesy	2.87	3.01	3.35	2.94	2.58	3.05	3.35	3.13	3.07	2.99
Staff-prisoner relationships	2.75	2.92	3.22	2.63	2.38	2.76	3.03	2.79	2.69	2.78
Humanity	2.82	2.70	3.15	2.59	2.44	2.75	2.93	2.94	2.60	2.74
Decency	2.79	2.73	3.16	2.65	2.46	2.70	2.76	2.20	2.73	2.73
Care for the vulnerable	2.95	3.02	3.32	3.21	2.88	2.87	3.18	3.10	2.93	3.03
Help and assistance	2.91	3.02	3.41	3.12	2.61	2.80	3.22	3.33	2.97	2.99
Staff professionalism	2.88	2.87	3.19	2.84	2.65	2.95	3.24	2.89	2.86	2.91
Bureaucratic legitimacy	2.12	2.15	2.54	2.36	2.01	2.28	2.16	2.79	2.22	2.24
Fairness	2.55	2.63	2.89	2.55	2.35	2.57	2.65	2.42	2.47	2.58
Organisation and consistency	2.72	2.82	3.31	2.85	2.67	2.72	2.74	2.67	2.62	2.82
Policing and security	3.52	3.47	3.62	3.54	3.57	3.75	3.31	3.67	3.65	3.56
Prisoner safety	3.05	3.18	3.76	3.18	3.25	3.21	3.18	3.32	2.85	3.24
Prisoner adaptation	3.42	2.63	4.26	3.77	3.51	3.35	3.26	3.83	3.39	3.61
Drugs and exploitation	3.10	2.98	3.39	3.09	3.26	3.35	2.62	3.50	2.65	3.14
Conditions	3.55	3.84	4.20	3.71	3.69	3.79	3.94	4.00	3.42	3.79
Family contact	2.70	2.94	3.22	3.09	2.81	2.65	2.96	2.17	2.11	2.85
Personal development	2.63	2.72	3.13	2.89	3.44	2.68	2.89	2.83	2.35	2.73
Personal autonomy	2.86	2.67	3.28	2.68	2.74	2.72	2.90	2.88	2.79	2.82
Wellbeing	2.60	2.55	3.13	2.51	2.39	2.74	2.44	2.75	2.38	2.63
Distress	3.68	3.33	3.66	3.62	3.70	3.54	3.41	3.33	3.02	3.54
Quality of life score (1-10) mean	4.53	5.40	6.69	4.78	4.14	5.05	5.13	3.00	6.00	5.05

HMP Frankland Political Charge Path Analysis



	N=20	N=15	N=14	N=21	N=20	N=24	N=24	N=8	N=5	N=8	N=164
	A	B	C	D	F	G	J	Seg	PIPE	Westgate	TOTAL
Entry into custody	2.76	2.77	2.67	2.94	2.89	3.03	3.03	2.60	3.60	3.28	2.92
Respect/courtesy	3.38	3.13	3.00	2.97	3.01	3.28	3.19	2.90	4.03	3.55	3.18
Staff-prisoner relationships	3.14	3.19	2.88	2.92	2.59	3.13	3.02	2.76	4.10	3.65	3.04
Humanity	3.06	2.86	2.69	2.67	2.58	3.08	2.90	2.79	3.91	3.45	2.91
Decency	2.82	2.88	2.67	2.76	2.55	2.82	2.76	2.80	3.96	3.23	2.81
Care for the vulnerable	3.21	3.49	3.00	3.09	2.75	2.97	3.06	3.11	3.88	3.75	3.13
Help and assistance	3.08	3.13	2.87	3.00	2.70	3.01	2.85	2.76	3.80	3.48	2.99
Staff professionalism	3.27	3.18	2.79	3.14	2.76	3.19	3.00	3.00	3.87	3.64	3.11
Bureaucratic legitimacy	2.43	2.31	2.04	2.48	1.94	2.31	2.40	2.25	2.64	2.81	2.32
Fairness	2.91	2.72	2.27	2.73	2.12	2.73	2.67	2.65	3.60	3.17	2.67
Organisation and consistency	2.84	2.87	2.58	2.93	2.38	2.96	2.86	2.93	3.63	3.23	2.84
Policing and security	3.46	3.34	3.55	3.33	3.39	3.44	3.55	3.52	3.67	3.51	3.45
Prisoner safety	3.49	3.27	3.16	3.20	3.12	3.28	3.30	3.06	3.80	3.00	3.25
Prisoner adaptation	4.12	3.47	3.57	3.59	3.60	3.61	3.53	3.48	4.27	3.58	3.65
Drugs and exploitation	2.85	2.64	2.94	2.75	3.15	3.18	3.38	3.01	3.48	2.83	3.01
Conditions	3.90	3.93	3.66	3.67	3.72	4.05	3.75	3.68	4.60	4.19	3.86
Family contact	2.75	3.09	2.74	3.22	3.18	3.06	3.26	2.88	3.67	3.42	3.10
Personal development	2.99	2.87	2.43	2.94	2.46	2.81	2.78	2.08	4.15	3.65	2.83
Personal autonomy	2.94	2.92	2.27	2.88	2.52	2.75	2.92	2.64	3.50	3.13	2.80
Wellbeing	2.99	2.52	2.45	2.80	2.37	2.90	2.85	2.64	3.30	2.97	2.75
Distress	3.58	3.09	3.14	3.60	3.65	3.65	3.69	2.83	4.00	3.13	3.48
Hope	3.11	3.07	2.41	3.04	2.51	2.94	2.95	2.58	3.80	3.53	2.93
Trust	3.00	2.72	2.49	2.73	2.63	2.93	2.85	2.46	3.57	3.32	2.83
Feeling intelligently trusted	2.99	2.98	2.41	2.90	2.30	3.13	2.97	2.68	3.55	3.53	2.89
Political charge	3.23	2.94	2.66	3.00	2.47	3.00	2.94	2.82	3.62	3.26	2.94
Prison social life	3.30	3.20	3.07	3.23	3.04	3.06	3.30	2.91	3.84	3.08	3.17
Changing lives	3.08	3.14	2.74	3.18	2.73	2.94	3.02	2.49	3.63	3.31	3.00
Quality of life score (1-10) mean	5.76	6.21	4.00	4.89	4.30	5.96	5.81	4.75	6.20	6.88	5.42

Pipe, Westgate, Grendon and Warren Hill MQPL Scores

	N=5	N=8	N=107	N=99
	PIPE	Westgate	Grendon	Warren Hill
Entry into custody	3.60	3.28	3.74	3.46
Respect/courtesy	4.03	3.55	3.99	3.67
Staff-prisoner relationships	4.10	3.65	3.93	3.60
Humanity	3.91	3.45	3.86	3.50
Decency	3.96	3.23	3.90	3.50
Care for the vulnerable	3.88	3.75	3.80	3.28
Help and assistance	3.80	3.48	3.73	3.34
Staff professionalism	3.87	3.64	3.79	3.47
Bureaucratic legitimacy	2.64	2.81	3.26	3.03
Fairness	3.60	3.17	3.53	3.21
Organisation and consistency	3.63	3.23	3.60	3.16
Policing and security	3.67	3.51	3.45	3.51
Prisoner safety	3.80	3.00	3.69	3.71
Prisoner adaptation	4.27	3.58	4.07	3.77
Drugs and exploitation	3.48	2.83	3.33	3.60
Conditions	4.60	4.19	4.20	4.01
Family contact	3.67	3.42	3.71	3.50
Personal development	4.15	3.65	4.11	3.32
Personal autonomy	3.50	3.13	3.78	3.38
Wellbeing	3.30	2.97	3.17	3.40
Distress	4.00	3.13	3.60	3.65
Quality of life score (1-10) mean	6.20	6.88	7.32	6.79

'Enabling' vs 'Disabling' environments

What impact do you think imprisonment has had on your personality?

It's destroyed me, really, in many senses. I am going to get upset now (Prisoner, 2014)

You know something, living bitter and twisted in prison, it eats you up. It eats you up. It takes away... saps away your energy. Physically, it takes it out of you. Sitting there sharpening knives in your head, it's just... it's draining' (Prisoner 2015).

SEG example – 'well, what did you expect?' (Importance of following stories through)

'5 words': Disappointing, surprising, heartbreaking, suffering, Restricted. Bullied. Lack of autonomy. Controlled. Misunderstood, lied about, sad, miserable, cornered... Unsettled. Lost, lonely. Stagnant. Routine. Hell. Intense. Dangerous. Strict. Depressing. A Shit hole. Hard. Dreadful. Numbing. Life zapping. Traumatizing, Circular, Slow. Uncomfortable. Frustration. Disappointed. Anxious.

'They are creating monsters, undermining trust. 'Belmarsh had said I was so dangerous they couldn't speak to me'.

A speculative model of prison social organization, leadership and identity

	1. power-seeking	2. The cooperative model	3. the 'good life'	4. rehabilitative culture
staff-prisoner relationships	---	--	++	+++
Social Structure/solidarity	+++	++	+	+
prisoner environment	competitive	cooperative	diffuse	supportive
Power / hierarchy	prisoners / certain groups of prisoners	prisoners / certain groups of prisoners	Diffuse	Diffuse
source of prisoner status	conformity to group ideal type	conformity to group ideal type	individual skills	Self-development/progress
Stability	--	--	++	+++
religious identity	extrinsic/intrinsic	extrinsic/intrinsic	Extrinsic, intrinsic, quest	quest
mode of conflict resolution	violence, intimidation	mediation/violence	between individuals / through staff	through staff
staff views: status of prisoner (I-thou)	object	object	subject	subject

Figure 1: Towards a 'Failed State' Theory of Prison Effects

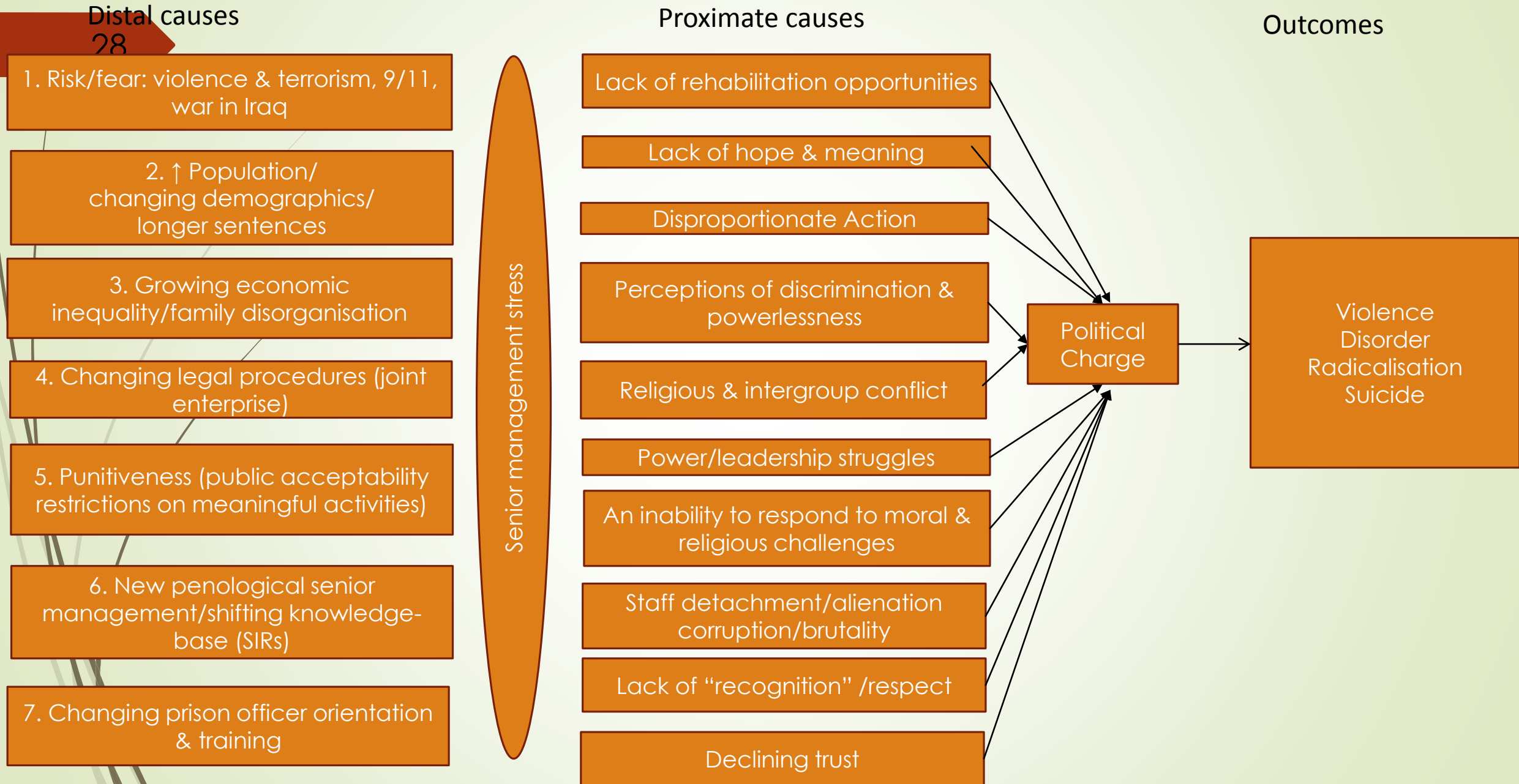
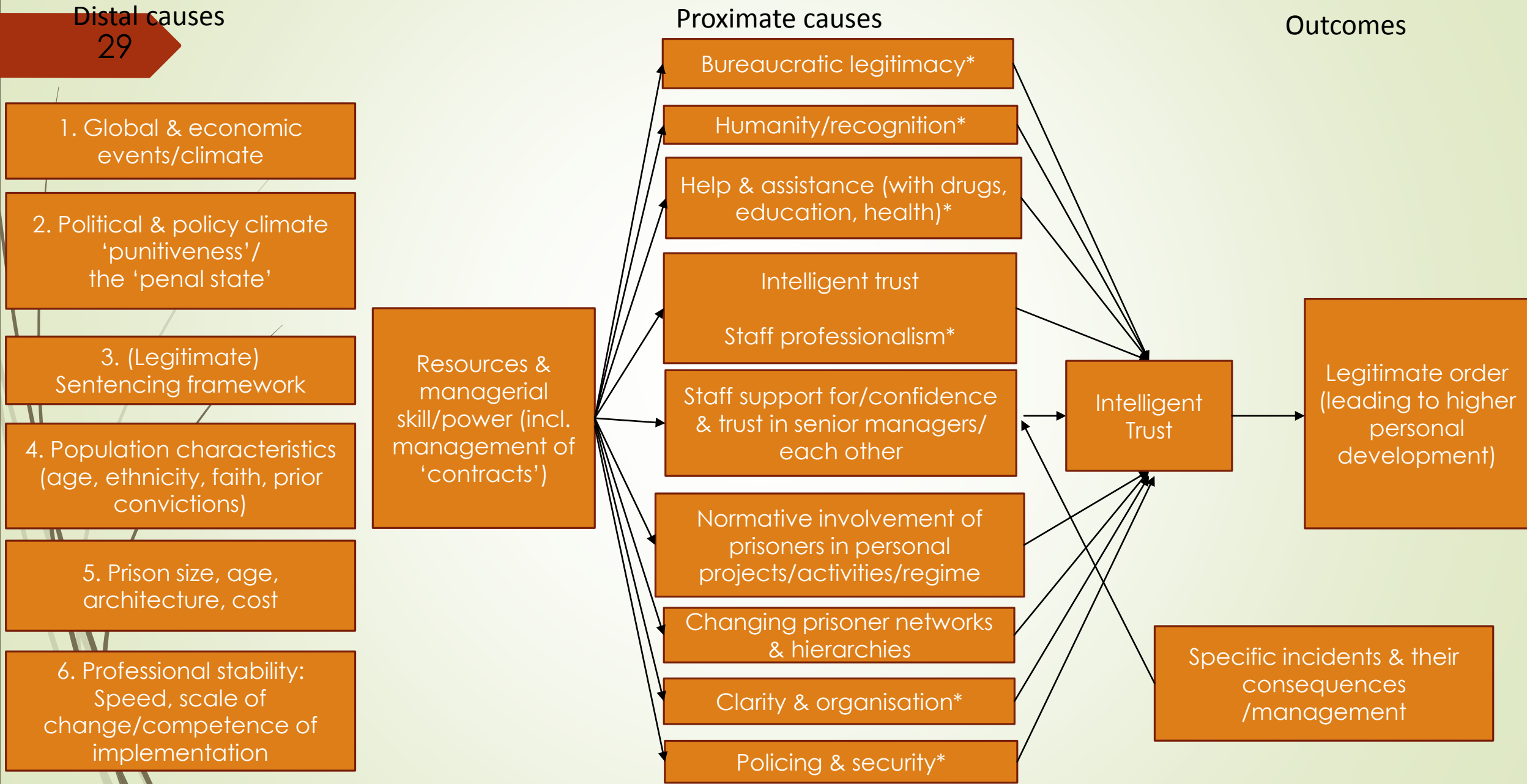


Figure 2: A Grounded Generative Theory of Legitimate Penal Order



I-It, I-Thou relations and the concept of 'emergent personhood'


An I-Thou relationship with prisoners (Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue): enters into a direct relationship with a whole person (I-Thou), not merely an identity (I-it). Not objectifying/reduced to the content of others' experience.

'This is the best place I've been in my 21 years in prison. I couldn't say what set it off. This was a break from the madness. I started reading books about people who transformed'. (Prisoner)

'It's all about transformation' (Prisoner 2015). 'You get acknowledged in here'.


'We humans characteristically suffer some kind of brokenness or disorder or alienation that prevents the realisation of our completeness, perfection, integration, and wholeness ... The mental capacity that is responsible for many of the best aspects of being human also underlies our most serious deficiencies and problems ... No human [or institution] is exempt from susceptibility to moral brokenness' (Smith 2010: 75-7).

Person-centred social science: what makes a person *human* is building, with others, a common world of 'speech with meaning'.



Why outstanding prison officers/prison staff
are special and why we need more of them
(but fewer prisoners)

- The most crucial moral virtue is a kind of attentiveness to detail, a wise, trained capacity for vision, which could see *what was really going on in a situation and respond accordingly.* (Murdoch)
- Ethics is built not on a system of rules, but on individual human beings who possess character, judgment, and wisdom. (Jollison 2013)



Why intelligent trust matters in the 'good use of authority'.

- ▶ A lack of elementary trust in the possible intentions of others leads the individual to avoid catching their gaze, which might precipitate a potentially hostile engagement (Giddens 1990: 82).
- ▶ Trust lubricates cooperation'. 'Social relations are mainly responsible for the production of trust' (Miztal 1996: 3-4).
- ▶ There are limits to trust. Outstanding prison officers feel their way to where these limits are. We can't 'go on' if we give up faith in trust.
- ▶ 'The problems of trust are directly connected with the most urgent and important questions of the modern world. In order to be able to address these problems we need to know more about trust and its properties'. Miztal 1996: 8).

Conclusions

High security prisons differ far more than we think in their cultures, climates and outcomes, including in the generation of political charge. Much can be learned from these differences.

- Climates with higher levels of intelligent trust have lower levels of political charge and allow 'whole people in transition/on a journey' to find ways out of violence.
- Explanations?
- .The 'right' use of authority
- And some difficulties ...

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Lack of fairness, anger, alienation and distrust

'it's not right...they make me hate the system more, make me hate the country more...There's no trust when I was not a Muslim, now when I became Muslim I am doubly not trusted'. (Prisoner interview)

He didn't go up to anybody else, he just went up to him because he's...like he's got a big beard and...and this is what he did, this is what the officer did. That's just blatant like...and this officer is ex-army, he used to be in Iraq, you know what I'm saying, so it's...there ain't no trust, you can't trust them because we know that they don't like us. (Prisoner interview)